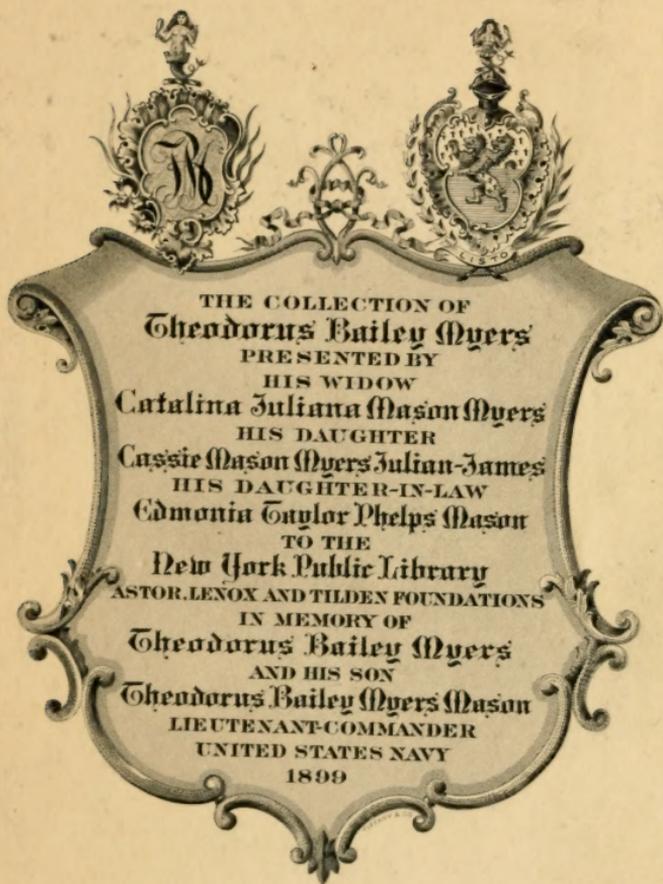


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THE COLLECTION OF  
**Theodoras Bailey Myers**

PRESENTED BY

HIS WIDOW

**Catalina Juliana Mason Myers**

HIS DAUGHTER

**Cassie Mason Myers Julian James**

HIS DAUGHTER-IN-LAW

**Edmonia Taylor Phelps Mason**

TO THE

**New York Public Library**

ASTOR, LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

IN MEMORY OF

**Theodoras Bailey Myers**

AND HIS SON

**Theodoras Bailey Myers Mason**

LIEUTENANT-COMMANDER

UNITED STATES NAVY

1899

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F. Halpin, sc.

REV. WILLIAM JAY.

*(Mounted)*

T H E  
L I F E  
O F  
J O H N J A Y :

W I T H  
S E L E C T I O N S F R O M H I S C O R R E S P O N D E N C E  
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B Y H I S S O N ,  
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I N T W O V O L U M E S .  
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N E W - Y O R K :  
P R I N T E D A N D P U B L I S H E D B Y J . & J . H A R P E R ,  
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NEW YORK  
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MISCELLANEOUS AND OFFICIAL  
CORRESPONDENCE.

---



THE  
LIFE OF JOHN JAY.

---

MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE.

---

TO COLONEL M'DOUGALL.

Philadelphia, March 23d, 1776.

DEAR COLONEL,

When the clerk of the Congress gave me the printed papers which I enclosed you, he told me they contained the navy establishment. Whatever deficiencies there may be in them as to that matter, will I hope be supplied by the extract now enclosed.

As to continental colours, the Congress have made no order as yet concerning them, and I believe the captains of their armed vessels have in that particular been directed by their own fancies and inclinations. I remember to have seen a flag designed for one of them, on which was extremely well painted a large rattlesnake, rearing his crest and shaking his rattles, with this motto, "*Don't tread on me,*" but whether this device was generally adopted by the fleet, I am not able to say,—I rather think it was not.

I am by no means without my apprehensions of danger from that licentiousness which in your situation is not uncommon; nothing will contribute more to its suppression than a vigorous exertion of the powers vested in your

Convention and Committee of Safety, at least till more regular forms can be introduced. The tenderness shown to some wild people on account of their supposed attachment to the cause, has been of disservice. Their eccentric behaviour, by passing unproved, has gained countenance, and has lessened your authority, and diminished that dignity so essential and necessary to give weight and respect to your ordinances. Some of your own people are daily instigated (if not employed) to calumniate and abuse the whole province, and misrepresent all their actions and intentions. One in particular has had the impudence to intimate to certain persons that your battalions last campaign were not half full, and that Schaick's regiment had more officers than privates; others report that you have all along supplied the men-of-war with whatever they pleased to have, and through them our enemies in Boston. By tales like these they pay their court to people who have more ostensible consequence than real honesty, and more cunning than wisdom.

I am happy to find that our intermeddling in the affair of the test is agreeable to you. For God's sake resist all such attempts for the future.

Your own discernment has pointed out to you the principle of Lord Stirling's advancement; had the age of a colonel's commission been a proper rule, it would have determined in favour of some colonel at Cambridge, many of whose commissions are prior in date to any in New-York. The spirit you betray on this occasion becomes a soldier.

The enclosed copy of a resolve of Congress will, I hope, settle all doubts relative to rank, which may arise from your new commission. The consequence you drew from that circumstance was more ingenious than solid, for I can assure you that the Congress were not disposed to do any thing wrong or uncivil; and I can also add, that your not having joined your regiment last summer has been ex-

plained to their satisfaction, as far as I am able to judge. With respect to this, however, as well as some other matters, I shall defer particulars till we meet. In a word, with some men in these as in other times, a man must either be their tool and be despised, or act a firm disinterested part and be abused. The latter has in one or two matters been your fate, as well as that of many other good men. Adieu.

I am, dear sir,  
Your friend,  
JOHN JAY.

TO COL. M'DOUGALL.

Philadelphia, 27th April, 1776.

DEAR COLONEL,

Accept my thanks for your friendly letter of the 16th instant, and its enclosures, which contain useful as well as agreeable information. I am glad to see New York doing something in the naval way, and think the encouragement given by your Convention to the manufacture of arms, powder, saltpetre, and sea salt, does them honour.

Many of the reasons you allege for delaying taxation are weighty, and I confess did not occur to me. It is certainly unreasonable to impose on the city, in its present circumstances, so great a share of the public expenses.

The late election, so far as it respects yourself, has taken a turn I did not expect, and am at a loss to account for, except on the principle of your holding a military office, or that mutability which from various causes often strongly marks popular opinions of men and measures in times like these. But whatever may have been the reason, I am persuaded that the zeal you have shown and the sacrifices you have made in this great cause will always afford you the most pleasing reflections, and will one day not only merit, but receive the gratitude of your fellow-citizens. Posterity you know always does justice. Let no circumstances of

this kind diminish your ardour ; but by persevering in a firm, uniform course of conduct, silence detraction and compel approbation.

I am much obliged to you for your kind attention to my house ; and be assured that I shall omit no opportunity of evincing the esteem and sincerity with which I am

Your friend and humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Claremount, 20th March, 1776.

DEAR JOHN,

Your letters of 26th Jan., 25th Feb., and 4th inst., are all before me. They are written with so much friendship and affection as to afford me great consolation, and convince me, notwithstanding my heavy losses, that in you I have more left than falls to the lot of most of my fellow-mortals. May the blessing be continued to me, and I know how to value it.

I sympathize most sincerely with you in your melancholy apprehensions about your parents. I know and I can feel such a loss ; but you draw your consolation from a never-failing source, which will enable you to bear this misfortune whenever it shall happen, with that resignation to the will of Heaven which becomes one who is satisfied both of its wisdom and goodness. If we could shake off human frailty in the hour of affliction, we should certainly think it less reasonable to lament the death of a good man than to complain of the absence of a friend, who by that absence infinitely increases his happiness ; to wish them back is selfish and unworthy of true friendship, and yet we may, we must grieve when we are not permitted to take leave. It is, I am sensible, a weakness, but I cannot help suffering myself to be afflicted at this circumstance. I know the pleasure that the best of fathers always took in my company and conversation ; and when I indulge the thought, I am un-

happy that by my absence I lessened any of his enjoyments. But where am I running—God bless you—farewell.

Your friend,  
ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

FROM ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Philadelphia, 21st May, 1776.

DEAR JOHN,

I am much mortified at not hearing from you. I wrote to you last week, and am just now setting out for Bristol in order to meet Mrs. Livingston. I could wish to find Mrs. Jay there also. Pray send some of our colleagues along, otherwise I must be more confined than either my health or inclination will allow. You have doubtless seen the account brought by the Rifleman from London, by which it appears we shall have at least 34,000 commissioners.

If your Congress have any spirit, they will at least build fourteen or fifteen light boats capable of carrying a twelve-pounder, to secure Hudson River, which is to be the chief scene of action. The carpenters employed on the frigate would build two or three a day, if they were built in the manner of batteaux, which is the true construction.

I wish you would direct Gaine to send me his paper. God bless you.

Yours, most sincerely,  
R. R. LIVINGSTON.

TO R. R. LIVINGSTON.

New-York, 29th May, 1776.

DEAR ROBERT,

The pleasure I expected from a junction of all our families at Bristol has vanished. Dr. Bard tells me the waters there would be injurious to Mrs. Jay's complaints; so that I shall again take a solitary ride to Philadelphia, whenever

the Convention, who directed me to abide here until their further order, shall think proper to dismiss me.

Messrs. Alsop and Lewis set out next Saturday for Philadelphia. Mr. Duane informs me that he is about to return home, and considering how long he has been absent from his family, I think him entitled to that indulgence. I pray God that your health may enable you to attend constantly, at least till it may be in my power to relieve you. Is Mr. Clinton returned?

Our Convention will, I believe, institute a better government than the present, which in my opinion will no longer work any thing but mischief; and although the measure of obtaining authority by instructions may have its advocates, I have reason to think that such a resolution will be taken as will open a door to the election of new or additional members. But be the resolution what it may, you shall have the earliest advice of it. And should my conjectures prove right, I shall inform the members of Duchess of your readiness to serve, and advise them to elect you.

Don't be uneasy at receiving so few letters from me. I have been so distressed by the ill health of my wife and parents, that I have scarce written any thing.

I am, dear Robert, your affectionate friend,

JOHN JAY.

TO EDWARD RUTLEDGE.\*

Fishkill, 11th Oct., 1776.

DEAR RUTLEDGE,

Be so kind as to forward the enclosed by the first opportunity to your brother. It is in answer to one from him to Messrs. Duane, Wm. Livingston, and myself, mentioning the losses sustained by General Lee in consequence of entering into the American service, and recommending a compliance with the resolution of Congress for indemnify-

\* Member of Congress at Philadelphia.

ing him. As he has doubtless written to you on the subject, I forbear enlarging on the propriety, policy, or justice of the measure. I am for my own part clear for it, and wish with all my heart that it may take place: I shall write to my colleagues on the subject.

Let no considerations induce you to excuse General Mifflin from the office of quarter-master-general. Moyland acted wisely and honestly in resigning. Try no new experiments: you have paid for the last. Let me repeat it—keep Mifflin.

Although extremely anxious to be with you, the circumstances of this State will not admit of my leaving it. Governor Tryon has been very mischievous; and we find our hands full in counteracting and suppressing the conspiracies formed by him and his adherents.

What is your fleet and noble admiral doing? What meekness of wisdom and what tender-hearted charity! I can't think of it with patience. Nothing but more than lady-like delicacy could have prevailed on your august body to secrete the sentence they passed upon that pretty genius. I reprobate such mincing, little, zigzag ways of doing business: either openly acquit, or openly condemn.

If General Lee should be at Philadelphia, pray hasten his departure—he is much wanted at New-York. I wish our army well stationed in the highlands, and all the lower country desolated; we might then bid defiance to all the further efforts of the enemy on that quarter.

I am, my dear Rutledge,

Your friend,

JOHN JAY.

FROM EDWARD RUTLEDGE.

Philadelphia, Nov. 24th, 1776.

MY DEAR JAY,

I expected long ere this to have been seated quietly at home; but the progress which the enemy had made, and

seemed likely to make, into your country, induced me to suspend my resolution which I came to several months ago, and assist with the whole of my power (little enough, God knows) a State which appeared to be marked for destruction. The storm, however, has passed away; and though I have reason to dread its bursting upon the heads of my countrymen, I cannot but most sincerely congratulate you upon the event. I wish you may improve the time; and if you can concur with me in sentiment, it will be improved in the following manner. Let Schuyler, whose reputation has been deeply wounded by the malevolence of party spirit, immediately repair to Congress, and after establishing himself in the good opinion of his countrymen, by a fair and open inquiry into his conduct, concert with the House such a plan as he shall think will effectually secure all the upper country against the attacks of the enemy; which plan being agreed to by the House, give him full power to effect it, and send him off with all possible despatch to carry it into execution. Let steps be taken to place *real* obstructions in the North River, at least in that part of it which can be commanded by Fort Montgomery, and the other fort in the highlands. If these things be done, and that soon, your country, I think, will be safe; provided you establish a good government, with a strong executive. A pure democracy may possibly do, when patriotism is the ruling passion; but when the State abounds with rascals, as is the case with too many at this day, you must suppress a little of that popular spirit. Vest the executive powers of government in an individual, that they may have vigour, and let them be as ample as is consistent with the great outlines of freedom. As several of the reasons which operated against you or Livingston's leaving the State are now removed, I think you would be of vast service in Congress. You know that body possesses its share of human weakness; and that it is not impossible for the members of that House to have their attention engrossed by subjects which

might as well be postponed for the present, while such as require despatch have been—I had almost said—neglected. This may be the case with the measures which should be taken for the defence of your State. It is therefore your interest and your duty, if you are not prevented by some superior public concern, to attend the House, and that soon: you have a right to demand their attention, and I trust they will give you early assistance.

Every intelligence from New-York for the last ten days convincing me that the enemy are preparing to attack the State with a large body of troops, I shall take the wings of the morning and hasten to my native home; where I shall endeavour to render my country more service in the field, than I have been able to render her in the cabinet. I have therefore little time to write, and none to lengthen this letter. I could not, however, think of quitting this part of the continent without writing you what appeared to me of consequence; especially when I consider that it is probable, at least possible, that this may be the last time I may have it in my power to give you any evidence of my affection. I shall add no more than that you have my best wishes for your happiness, and that if I fall in the defence of my country, it will alleviate my misfortune to think that it is in the support of the best of causes, and that I am esteemed by one of the best of men. God bless you. Adieu, my friend.

Yours, sincerely,

E. RUTLEDGE.

FROM GEORGE WASHINGTON.

[Private.]

Middlebrook, March 1st, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I have been a little surprised, that the several important pieces of intelligence lately received from Europe (such parts of it, I mean, as are circulated without reserve in conversation), have not been given to the public in a manner

calculated to attract the attention and impress the minds of the people. As they are now propagated, they run through the country in a variety of forms, are confounded in the common mass of general rumours, and lose a real part of their effect. It would certainly be attended with many valuable consequences if they could be given to the people in some more authentic and pointed manner. It would assist the measures taken to restore our currency, promote the recruiting of the army and our other military arrangements, and give a certain spring to our affairs in general.

Congress may have particular reasons for not communicating the intelligence officially (which would certainly be the best mode if it could be done), but if it cannot, it were to be wished that as much as is intended to be commonly known could be published in as striking a way, and with as great an appearance of authority as may be consistent with propriety.

I have taken the liberty to trouble you with this hint, as sometimes things the most obvious escape attention. If you agree with me in sentiment, you will easily fall upon the most proper mode for answering the purpose.

With great esteem and regard, I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient servant,

GEO. WASHINGTON.

TO WILLIAM LIVINGSTON, GOVERNOR OF NEW-JERSEY.

New-York, 22d March, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

Your obliging letters of the 18th ult. and 3d inst., after passing through various hands and places, were at length delivered to me two days ago. Your elegant panegyric on the amiable character and benevolent designs of his Britannic majesty meets with general approbation; and some do not hesitate to predict that it will stimulate your gracious prince to embrace the first opportunity of exalting you. On reading the proclamation against picking and

stealing, I could not forbear wishing there had been one pasted on the foreheads of our late protectors. Nothing but the chance of their being predestined to go to heaven can save them from a campaign in the opposite regions. The least they can expect, with any degree of modesty, is to be decimated. They seem to have acted as if they thought themselves tenants in common in all the good things they met with, and that posterior, instead of prior occupancy, enabled them to hold in severalty.

At a time when the most strenuous efforts are necessary to our political salvation, it is to be regretted that any of our measures should bear the marks of feeble or dispirited counsels. Your militia bill should have been so framed as to give birth to strong and decisive executive powers. I should have thought the spirit of the speech, added to the remembrance of the barbarous ravages of the enemy, would have diffused through the Legislature a degree of resentment, determination, and enthusiasm, which would have been productive of regulations better adapted to the times.

I am, my dear sir,  
 With the greatest respect and esteem,  
 Your most obedient servant,  
 JOHN JAY.

TO MRS. JAY.

Kingston, 25th March, 1777.

MY DEAR SALLY,

Accept my thanks for your affectionate letters of the 17th and 21st instant. I am happy to hear of the health of yourself and son, and am pleased with your candour and sincerity on that subject.

We have lately received an uncertain, though unpleasant, account of the enemy's landing at Peekskill. How did your nerves bear the shock? My father and mother, I apprehend, were very uneasy. I should be happy, were it

in my power, to bear all their as well as your misfortunes. The infirmities of age, added to the terrors and calamities of war, conspire in depriving them of ease and enjoyment. I most sensibly feel for and pity them. God grant them the only remedy against the evils inseparable from humanity—fortitude founded on resignation. The moment I may suspect you to be exposed to danger I shall set out for Fish-kill. As yet I think you very safe; for, if the reports we have heard be true, the enemy's force is not sufficient to penetrate the country.

I congratulate Peter on his recovery and return. Remind him of sending to Captain Platt's for the barley. Let not the fear of the enemy deter him from pursuing the business of the farm. The same Providence which enables us to sow may enable us to reap.

I am, my dear wife,

Your very affectionate

JOHN JAY.

TO LEONARD GANSEVOORT.

Kingston, 5th June, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Cuyler informs me, that some of my friends in your county have done me the honour of naming me, among other candidates, for the office of governor.

In my opinion I can be more useful in the place I now hold; and therefore, though the other is far more respectable as well as lucrative, yet, sir, the regard due to the public good induces me to decline this promotion.

I thought it necessary that you and others should be informed of my sentiments on this subject; and it would give me pleasure to hear, that the electors in Albany had united in a design of voting for some one gentleman whose spirit, abilities, and reputation might recommend him to that important office.

Our constitution is universally approved, even in New-

England, where few New-York productions have credit. But, unless the government be committed to proper hands, it will be weak and unstable at home, and contemptible abroad. For my own part, I know of no person at present whom I would prefer to General Schuyler.

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO MRS. JAY.

Kingston, Sunday, 6th July, 1777.

MY DEAR SALLY,

Having a few leisure hours allotted me by this day of general rest, I shall divide them between Heaven and yourself; being persuaded that while I do my duty to both, my expectations of happiness will not be vain.

When I consider that one of the reasons assigned for the creation of woman was, "that it is not good for man to be alone," I find my present situation condemned, not only by my own feelings, but by divine authority. I assure you, I am tired of it; and, were there not many reasons to conjecture that the enemy will bend their course this way, we should not remain much longer separated; but, as it would be cruel to expose you to scenes of anxiety and distress, I must endeavour to bear your absence at least with patience, and to please myself with the expectation of shortly seeing the return of those happy days, when we shall again "sit under our own vine, and under our own fig-tree, and there be none to make us afraid."

As soon as the Council of Safety dissolves, which will be at the meeting of the Legislature, you may expect to see me for a few days; but when that event will take place is uncertain. Should this State become the seat of war, and be attacked on both sides, it will not be practicable to convene the Legislature, nor indeed would it be proper for me, in such a conjuncture, to be absent.

As the enemy are now expelled from Jersey, and Liberty Hall is again free, I fancy Susan has become as joyous as ever, and that the whole family are not a little anxious to put an end to their exile.

I returned last Wednesday from Fishkill. My father declines fast. His late loss affects him exceedingly; he gives way to silence and retirement, spending hours every day in that melancholy room; and though he appears calm and resigned, the effects of this inauspicious event are visible upon him. How few possess such sensibility, or are capable of affections so permanent and so delicate!

Whenever leisure and opportunity offer, remember, my dear Sally, how acceptable a line from you always is to

Your very affectionate husband,

JOHN JAY.

FROM GENERAL SCHUYLER.

Saratoga, November 6th, 1777.

MY DEAR SIR,

When I did myself the pleasure to write you on the 17th ult., I was not apprized of the enemy's progress up Hudson's River, nor of the barbarous devastation they have been guilty of committing at Kingston, and other places in the vicinity. It is no consolation to me that I have so many fellow-sufferers: I feel, however, a very sensible one, in the fate which has attended General Burgoyne.

Is it not probable that the enemy, in a future campaign, will make another attempt to sail up Hudson River? If they do, and at the same time attack the Eastern States, will there not be a want of bread in those States? As in that case little or none can be conveyed to that quarter, would it not be prudent to form very considerable magazines of flour on the east side of the Green Mountains? And does it not appear necessary to throw such obstructions in Hudson River, as to render it impracticable for shipping to penetrate beyond the highlands? Perfectly to obstruct the

navigation of Hudson River is certainly a very arduous task, but not attended with so many difficulties as may at first view be imagined. And I am persuaded, that a spirited director, at the head of four hundred men, would completely prepare every thing in the course of the winter, so as to sink the works in the course of six weeks after the ice shall have quitted the river. The British engineers and officers confess, that if the works in the Lake, at Ticonderoga, had been completed, it would have been impossible to have opened a passage in less than ten days, if they had been possessed of every requisite for such a business, and if not the least molestation had been given them. Very early in the war I urged the necessity of securing Hudson River; I have repeated my wish more than once, and I shall be extremely happy to see a business completely executed, on which I am persuaded much of the safety of the United States in general, and this in particular, depends. If I had any interest with the Senate and Assembly, I should venture to address them on the subject; but as I have not, I must leave it to you, if you are in sentiment with me on the necessity of the work, to mention it to your friends in both Houses.

As I shall shortly be altogether out of public life, I am earnestly engaged in building me a house at this place, that I may be as far out of the noise and bustle of the great world as possible. I am confident (provided we repel the enemy), that I shall enjoy more true felicity in my retreat, than ever was experienced by any man engaged in public life. My hobby-horse has long been a country life; I dismounted with reluctance, and now saddle him again with a very considerable share of satisfaction (for the injurious world has not been able to deprive me of the best source of happiness, the approbation of my own heart), and hope to canter him gently on to the end of the journey of life.

When Congress will send for me to inquire into my conduct, I cannot even make a guess at. I have entreated that

it may be soon, and respectfully observed, that from my past services I ought not to remain longer than needs must be in the disagreeable situation in which I now stand.

Where are you lodged—and where is your father's family? Can I be of any service? Some tory tenants of mine have lost fine farms, either for grain or stock, between this and Albany; two or three of them in good fence, with small tenements on them. If these or any of them can be of any use, I am sure they are much at your service. What further buildings are necessary may be cheaply and speedily erected, as the frame of a whole house can be sawed, boards and every other material procured at the cheapest rates. I will not let any of these farms, except such as I am confident would not do for you, until I have the pleasure of hearing from you; or rather, until I have had the happiness of giving you a bed in the new house, which I began upon on the 1st instant, and which will be under cover, and have two rooms finished by the 15th instant, unless the weather should prove remarkably wet: but observe that it is only a frame house, sixty feet long, twenty-one broad, and two stories high, filled in with brick.

I hope pains will be taken to recruit our army; we ought not to grow negligent, and trust too much to our good fortune: there is danger in too much confidence, and I apprehend that Britain, like a desperate gamester whose affairs are on the brink of ruin, will make a bold push to retrieve the loss, if yet it is possible.

Pray make my compliments to the governor, the chancellor, speaker, R. Yates, and such other of my friends as are in your quarter. I do not mention Morris, because I hear he is gone to relieve Mr. Duane. It is rather hard upon the latter to be obliged to such a constant attendance. Adieu: my best wishes attend you through life.

I am, dear sir, with great esteem and affection,

Your obedient humble servant,

PHILIP SCHUYLER.

## TO GENERAL SCHUYLER.

Fishkill, 11th Dec., 1777.

DEAR GENERAL,

Your very friendly letter of the 6th ult. was this moment delivered. I am happy to find your firmness unimpaired, and your attachment to your country unabated by its ingratitude. Justice will yet take place, and I do not despair of seeing the time when it will be confessed that the foundation of our success in the northern department, was laid by the present commander's predecessor. I am nevertheless anxious that such authentic evidence of the propriety of your conduct, should be transmitted to posterity as may contradict the many lies which will be told them by writers under impressions and under an influence unfriendly to your reputation. This subject merits attention. Facts, and not a single resolution of Congress, will in my opinion be effectual to do the business. I have thought much of this matter, but more of this when we meet.

Your offer of a farm, &c., is very obliging: be pleased to accept my thanks for it. I am at present at a loss how to determine. Let not my delay, however, be injurious to you. This place, at which all the family now reside, is by no means agreeable or convenient, if secure, which is also doubtful. I purpose doing myself the pleasure of seeing you this winter, and shall then avail myself of your advice.

The rapidity with which the desolation of your seat at Saratoga is repairing, does not surprise me. I remember the despatch with which the preparations for our first expedition into Canada were completed. I wish the repair of our forts, &c., in the river was in the same train.

As to your loss of influence among a certain body, it is less so than you may imagine. The virtuous and sensible still retain their former sentiments. The residue ever will be directed by accident and circumstances. Few possess honesty or spirit enough openly to defend unpopular merit,

and by their silence permit calumny to gain strength. These, however, are temporary evils, and you do well to despise them.

I am, my dear sir, very sincerely,

Your friend and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

Camp, Valley Forge, Feb. 1st, 1778.

DEAR JAY,

Congress have sent me here, in conjunction with some other gentlemen, to regulate their army, and in truth not a little regulation hath become necessary. Our quartermaster and commissary departments are in the most lamentable situation. Opportunities have been neglected last campaign which were truly golden ones, but omnipotent fatality had, it seems, determined that the American capital should fall. Our sentiments on this occasion are so perfectly coincident that I will not enlarge. The mighty Senate of America is not what you have known it. The continental currency and Congress have both depreciated, but in the hands of the Almighty Architect of empires, the stone which the builders have rejected may easily become head of the corner. The free, open, and undisturbed communication with the city of Philadelphia debauches the minds of those in its vicinage with astonishing rapidity. O, this State is sick even unto the death, and in Sir William they have certainly got a most damnable physician. Just before the reduction of the forts, the enemy balanced exactly upon the point of quitting the city, and a straw would have turned in either scale. Our troops; *Heu miseros!* The skeleton of an army presents itself to our eyes in a naked, starving condition, out of health, out of spirits. But I have seen Fort George in the summer of 1777. Next campaign I believe we shall banish these troublesome fellows. For Heaven's sake, my dear friend, exert yourself

strenuously in the great leading business of taxation. To that great wheel "a thousand petty spokes and small annexments are morticed and adjoined." I earnestly entreat you and my other friends, *fortia opponere pectora* to that fatal system of limitation, which, if carried into execution, would be downright ruin, and in the ineffectual attempt will carry us to the brink of it. Yorktown and its neighbourhood, although nearly ninety miles from Philadelphia, already considers our money almost as waste paper. At taverns, take as specimen the following rates: breakfast and supper each, seven shillings and sixpence; dinner, ten shillings; one night's hay for one horse, seven shillings and sixpence; oats, per quart, one shilling; toddy, per bowl, ten shillings; rum, per gill, seven shillings and sixpence; wine, per bottle, from thirty to forty shillings, and the like; you will observe this is proclamation. Hay, they tell me, hath been sold in some places at £20 proc. per ton. My love to Livingston. I shall write to him by this opportunity, if I can find time to send a long letter, which, indeed, I owe him. Remember me to Mrs. Jay, and believe me, yours,

GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

TO GENERAL SCHUYLER.

Poughkeepsie, 12th February, 1778.

DEAR GENERAL,

I hope you will seriously determine to serve your country, at least in a legislative capacity. Class yourself with those great men of antiquity, who, unmoved by the ingratitude of their country, omitted no opportunities of promoting the public weal. In this field malice cannot prevent your reaping laurels, and remember that the present state of our affairs offers you a plentiful harvest. Set about it then, my dear sir, in earnest. I know not who will be the bearer of this letter, and therefore forbear enlarging.

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

## TO GENERAL SCHUYLER.

26th February, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

As an opportunity of going to Albany will not probably be given me during the session of the Legislature, and as I have too long kept you in suspense relative to the farm you was so kind as to offer me, I ought now to acquaint you that I am under a necessity of denying myself the pleasure of being your neighbour. My father's infirmities have so increased as to render a removal to Saratoga so inconvenient and painful, if practicable, that he cannot prevail upon himself to undertake it. So that, my dear sir, filial obligations will constrain me to continue in his neighbourhood.

He is greatly obliged by your friendly offer, and believe me, it will ever excite the gratitude of your obliged and

Affectionate friend and servant,

JOHN JAY.

## TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

11th March, 1778.

DEAR MORRIS,

Your favour of the 1st of February came to hand last week. It gives me pleasure to hear you was then at headquarters, especially on business so important and perplexed. It is time that inquiries, as well as punishments, should become more frequent. I wish better, or rather more, use was made of courts-martial. Why is the inquiry directed to be made into the causes to which we are to ascribe the loss of fort Montgomery, &c., so long delayed. Had it been immediately after that event took place, the river would now have been well fortified, and a general at the head of the troops in the southern part of the State.

Pennsylvania, I believe, is sick unto death. It will nevertheless recover, though perhaps not soon. Weak and bad constitutions incline to chronical disorders.

Were I sure that this letter would reach you uninspected, I should commit many things to paper worth your knowledge, but which would give you little pleasure or surprise; but as it is uncertain who will be the bearer, they must be reserved for the present. God bless you, and give you diligence and patience. Where you are, both are necessary.

I am your friend,

JOHN JAY.

FROM GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

Yorktown, 28th April, 1778.

DEAR JAY,

I won't dispute who has written most. I have written more than twice what you acknowledge to have received, but this is of no consequence.

I am sorry for your session, but I wished you had marked out what taxes have been laid, what salaries given, and a few more striking outlines of legislation. These, with what I know of your men, would have enabled me to imagine proper lights and shades.

I choose that my friends should write freely, and those who know me must know that such freedoms need no apology. I never thought the person you allude to so steady as could be wished. We have all of us our weak sides; would to God that were the worst.

What you mention relative to our plan of rights shall be attended to. I am a busy man, though, as heretofore, a pleasurable one.

Let your governor cleanse the Augean stable in his State, which no public body would do though it stink under their noses. I am labouring at arrangements of various kinds. God prosper me, and give me patience and industry. It was a good wish from one who knew my wants.

We have ordered troops from the highlands, but we will send thither a general, who shall be empowered to call forth

the swarms of the eastern hive. Men were necessary at the Valley Forge. I have a good knack at guessing. I guess the enemy won't attempt Hudson River.

I do think of Vermont: and unless I mistake, matters shall be managed to effect, without bellowing in the forum, which I believe hath been a little too much the case. But why should I blame impetuous vivacity,—hath it never led me into an error?

Putnam will soon be tried. The affair of Schuyler and St. Clair laboured under awkward circumstances. Their friends and their enemies appear to me to have been equally blind. I enclose extracts from the minutes made the other night to possess myself of the real state of facts. There are some other entries from time to time. It was erroneous to order a committee simply to collect facts; they should have been directed to state charges. This morning, my colleague being absent, I got a committee appointed for the latter purpose: Sherman, Dana (Massachusetts), and Drayton (South Carolina). This was unanimous, and yet I would have undertaken to argue for it in a style which would absolutely have ruined the measure. You know it would have been easy to say, *justice to those injured gentlemen*, instead of *justice to an injured country* requires, &c.

Great Britain seriously means to treat. Our affairs are most critical, though not dangerously so. If the minister from France were present as well as him from England, I am a blind politician if the thirteen States (with their extended territory), would not be in peaceable possession of their independence three months from this day. As it is, expect a long war. I believe it will not require such astonishing efforts after this campaign to keep the enemy at bay. Probably a treaty is signed with the house of Bourbon ere this; if so, a spark hath fallen upon the train which is to fire the world. Ye gods! what havoc doth ambition make among your works.

My dear friend, adieu. My love to your wife. Remember me to all my friends of every rank and sex.

I am yours,

GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

P.S. I meant to have said, the present is within the spirit of our constitution, a *special occasion*.

TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

Albany, April 29th, 1778.

DEAR MORRIS,

My last to you was written about a week ago. I am now engaged in the most disagreeable part of my duty, trying criminals. They multiply exceedingly. Robberies become frequent: the woods afford them shelter, and the Tories food. Punishments must of course become certain, and mercy dormant—a harsh system, repugnant to my feelings, but nevertheless necessary. In such circumstances lenity would be cruelty, and severity is found on the side of humanity.

The influence of Lord North's conciliatory plan is happily counterbalanced by the intelligence from France. There was danger of its creating divisions. A desire of peace is natural to a harassed people; and the mass of mankind prefer present ease to the arduous exertions often necessary to ensure permanent tranquillity.

What the French treaty may be, I know not. If Britain would acknowledge our independence, and enter into a liberal alliance with us, I should prefer a connexion with her to a league with any power on earth. Whether those objects be attainable, experience only can determine. I suspect the commissioners will have instructions to exceed their powers, if necessary. Peace, at all events, is, in my opinion, the wish of the minister. I hope the present favourable aspect of our affairs will neither make us arrogant or careless. Moderation in prosperity marks great minds,

and denotes a generous people. Your game is now in a delicate situation, and the least bad play may ruin it. I view a return to the domination of Britain with horror, and would risk all for independence; but that point ceded, I would give them advantageous commercial terms. The destruction of Old England would hurt me; I wish it well: it afforded my ancestors an asylum from persecution.

Parties here are still in a ferment. I hope it will be the means of purging off much scum and dross. I can't be particular. This letter may never reach you.

I expect in a few days to see General Schuyler; and my importunities shall not be wanting to urge him to join you without delay. The people grow more reconciled to him.

The military departments here, I believe, are well managed. The commissary deserves credit. Handsome things are said of the quarter-master; and there is one at the head of the artillery, who appears to me to have much merit. The park elaboratory and stores are in high order. There is the appearance of regularity, care, and attention in all the public works. As to the hospital I can say little, not being as yet well-informed. Conway is pleased with Schuyler, and manages the Vermont troops properly; but of this say nothing. I fancy he does not well understand the views of his patron. Neither of them ought to know this.

The clothier-general, once the Duke of Bolton's butler, is an anti-Washington. An ignorant butcher is issuing commissary. Let me again hint to you the propriety of restraining the staff from trade: besides general reasons, there are particular ones. Many good cannon remain yet at Ticonderoga—strange neglect. Remember Vermont. Why do the marine committee keep Tudor in pay? I can't hear that he does any thing for it.

I am, and will be your friend,

JOHN JAY.

FROM EDWARD RUTLEDGE.

Charleston, Dec. 25th, 1778.

MY DEAR JAY,

It is a long time since we have had any correspondence, but I see no reason why it should be longer, when we have any thing to say, and leisure to say it in. Such is just my situation; for it is Christmas-day, and all the world (i. e. my clients) being either at their devotions or their amusements, I have time to tell you, and I fear with some reason (as it comes north about), that a damned infamous cabal is forming against our commander-in-chief, and that whenever they shall find themselves strong enough they will strike an important blow. I give you this hint, that you may be on your guard; and I know you will excuse me for doing so, when you recollect that there are some men of our acquaintance who are in possession of all the qualities of the devil, his cunning not excepted. Recollect the indirect attempts that were repeatedly made against the command and reputation of poor Schuyler, and the fatal stab that was at last aimed at both; and let us be taught how necessary it is to oppose a cabal in its infancy. Were it in my power, I would stifle it in its birth. Conway, the \*\*\*\*, and \*\*\*\*\* are said to be at the bottom of this, besides an abundance of snakes that are concealed in the grass. If these are not encouraged to come forward, they will continue where they are; but if the former are permitted to bask in the sunshine of Congressional favour, the latter will soon spread themselves abroad, and an extended field will be immediately occupied by the factious and the ambitious. The fate of America will then be like the fate of most of the republics of antiquity, where the designing have supplanted the virtuous, and the worthy have been sacrificed to the views of the wicked. Indeed, my friend, if the Congress do not embrace every opportunity to extinguish that spirit of cabal and unworthy ambition, it will

finally be more essentially injurious to the well-being of this continent than the sword of Sir Harry and his whole army. I view the body of which we were for a long time members, as possessing, in a very eminent degree, the powers of good and evil. It depends on those who manage the machine to determine its object. I hear you have returned to Congress, and I hope you will have your full share in the management. I do not know what gentleman we shall send from this State. We have some fine plants, nay, saplings, that will do wondrous well in a few years, but are too tender at present to bear up the weight of this continent. Were it now to be imposed upon them, it might check their growth, or, as they are the production of a southern clime, it is possible they might be blighted by a northern wind. When you write me, let me know how Robert R. Livingston is. Remember me to him, for I esteem him highly. God bless you, my dear Jay, and believe me to be, with great sincerity,

Your affectionate friend,

EDWARD RUTLEDGE.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Philadelphia, 13th January, 1779.

DEAR ROBERT,

Not a single line have you received from me since my arrival. This, you may say, does not look very friendly. I confess it, and, what is more in my favour, feel it.

Business, I know, cannot excuse a total silence, though it may palliate a partial one. I won't plead it, for I never admitted it; nor do I now write merely to keep fair with my own principles. Inclination, more than consistency, prompts me on this occasion.

I presume your Legislature is by this time convened. Now is the season for exertion. Attend regularly. Confirm those who esteem you and their country. Convert or confound those who would sacrifice either to private views.

Will any consideration induce you to visit another quarter of the globe? I don't know that you will be called upon, but I am not sure that you may not. My conduct will be greatly influenced by your inclination.

I had almost persuaded myself to write a letter to your brother Ned, urging him to come to this college, and offering my service to prepare the way for his reception. But as, on reflection, I apprehend it might stimulate him to a measure in which, perhaps, his mamma or brother might not concur, I decline it for the present. I cannot forbear, however, observing to you, that, in my opinion, his genius and his years call for a further degree of cultivation than can be obtained at Hurley. I wish to be useful to every lad of talents and cleverness; and I assure you that desire will always be increased, when these recommendations are possessed by 'one so nearly connected with a gentleman and a family who have particular claims to my esteem and respect.

I am your friend,

JOHN JAY.

P.S. Don't be too lazy or too busy to let me know how you do.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Philadelphia, 16th February, 1779.

DEAR ROBERT,

Your favour of the third instant came to hand this morning. The satisfaction my letter afforded you flatters as well as pleases me. It argues a remembrance of former times; for which, and other reasons, I shall give you no more opportunities of joining the assembly of angels in rejoicing over penitent mortals. Not that I mean on the one hand to enter the state of reprobation and become a hardened sinner, or on the other enlist with those saints who slip not with their foot.

This letter, written on the very day I received yours, will become evidence of my having gone through the whole process of amendment. Divines, you know, describe it as consisting of conviction, contrition, and conversion. Whether I shall persevere or not is a subject on which time will utter the surest prophecies.

The complexions of resignation, of soft complaint, and joyless sensibility, are so blended in your letter, that if anonymous, one would suppose it written by a wayworn traveller through this vale of tears, who, journeying towards his distant haven through sultry and dreary paths, at length lays his languid limbs under some friendly shade, and permits the effusions of his soul to escape in words. My friend, a mind unbraced and nerves relaxed are not fit company for each other. It was not a *man* whom the poet tells us *pined in thought, and sat like patience on a monument smiling at grief*. In such rugged times as these other sensations are to be cherished. Rural scenes, domestic bliss, and the charming group of pleasures found in the train of peace, fly at the approach of war, and are seldom to be found in fields stained with blood, or habitations polluted by outrage and desolation. I admire your sensibility, nor would I wish to see less milk in your veins; you would be less amiable. In my opinion, however, your reasoning is not quite just. I think a man's happiness requires that he should condescend to keep himself free from fleas and wasps, as well as from thieves and robbers.

When the present session of your Legislature is ended, take a ride and see us. You will find many here happy to see you. I have something, though not very interesting, to say to you on the subject of politics, but as it is now very late, and I have been writing letters constantly since dinner, I am really too much fatigued to proceed. Make my compliments to Mrs. Livingston, who I presume is with you. Adieu. I am, your friend,

JOHN JAY.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Philadelphia, 15th February, 1779.

SIR,

When characters rendered amiable by virtues and important by talents, are exposed to suspicions, and become subjects of investigation, the sensibility of individuals as well as the interest of the public are concerned in the event of the inquiry.

It gives me, therefore, great pleasure to transmit to you an unanimous act of Congress of the 11th instant, not only acquitting your conduct in the transaction it relates to of blame, but giving it that express approbation, which patriotism in the public, and integrity in every walk of life always merit, and seldom fail ultimately to receive.

I am, sir,

With great respect and esteem,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY,

*President of Congress.*

TO MISS KITTY LIVINGSTON.\*

Philadelphia, 27th Nov., 1779.

DEAR KITTY,

\* \* \* \* \*

A report has just reached here that the enemy have visited Elizabethtown, and burnt your father's house. This, if true, is a misfortune to the family, which I hope they will bear with proper fortitude and dignity. Similar losses have been my lot: but they never have, and I hope never will, cost me an hour's sleep. Perseverance in doing what we think right, and resignation to the dispensations of the great Governor of the world, offer a shield against the

\* Mr. Jay's sister-in-law.

darts of this sort of affliction, to everybody that will use it. Adieu.

I am, dear Kitty,  
Your affectionate friend and brother,  
JOHN JAY.

TO R. R. LIVINGSTON.

Philadelphia, 14th March, 1779.

DEAR ROBERT,

Mr. Sands delivered me your favour of the 4th inst. yesterday. It gave me much pleasure. The length, the subject, and the spirit of it pleased me: unless the pain my last occasioned was severe, I don't regret it. That you have deserved well of your country is confessed, and that you became latterly a little relaxed is not disputable. You have never been thrown out or distanced in the pursuit of virtue; but, like some game horses, you sometimes want the whip. This is a coarse simile. Friendship will pardon it.

That full confidence which induced you to think loud, flatters me. The like returns are due, and shall be paid. But letters in our days are dangerous conveyances of our sentiments on many subjects. I seldom write without adverting to the consequences of miscarriage; and hence the reserve and caution which mark all such of mine as are trusted to common carriers, or doubtful bearers.

The state of your politics is much as I expected. I fear some of your measures are more severe than wisdom or humanity will justify. Posterity will think dispassionately, and probably condemn, especially when informed that they were hastened lest the influence of resentment should be lost.

My silence on a certain subject arose from reflecting that an explanation ought not to be on paper. The probability of it turns on an event not yet determined. If I discern right, there will be *room*.

We shall be exceedingly happy to see you. I hope your visit will not be delayed longer than the roads may render necessary; and manage matters so as to stay here at least a month.

I am, dear Robert,

Your friend and servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM COLONEL ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

Head-quarters, March 14th, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Colonel Laurens, who will have the honour of delivering you this letter, is on his way to South Carolina, on a project which I think, in the present situation of affairs there, is a very good one, and deserves every kind of support and encouragement. This is to raise two, three, or four battalions of negroes, with the assistance of the government of that State, by contributions from the owners, in proportion to the number they possess. If you should think proper to enter upon the subject with him, he will give you a detail of his plan. He wishes to have it recommended by Congress to the State; and, as an inducement, that they would engage to take those battalions into continental pay.

It appears to me that an expedient of this kind, in the present state of southern affairs, is the most rational that can be adopted, and promises very important advantages. Indeed, I hardly see how a sufficient force can be collected in that quarter without it; and the enemy's operations there are growing infinitely serious and formidable. I have not the least doubt that the negroes will make very excellent soldiers with proper management; and I will venture to pronounce that they cannot be put into better hands than those of Mr. Laurens. He has all the zeal, intelligence, enterprise, and every other qualification necessary to succeed in such an undertaking. It is a maxim with some great military judges, that with sensible officers, soldiers can hardly be too stupid; and, on this principle, it is thought

that the Russians would make the best troops in the world, if they were under other officers than their own. The King of Prussia is among the number who maintain this doctrine, and has a very emphatical saying on the occasion, which I do not exactly recollect. I mention this, because I hear it frequently objected to the scheme of embodying negroes, that they are too stupid to make soldiers. This is so far from appearing to me a valid objection, that I think their want of cultivation (for their natural faculties are probably as good as ours), joined to that habit of subordination, which they acquire from a life of servitude, will make them sooner become soldiers than our white inhabitants. Let officers be men of sense and sentiment, and the nearer the soldiers approach to machines, perhaps the better.

I foresee that this project will have to combat much opposition from prejudice and self-interest. The contempt we have been taught to entertain for the blacks, makes us fancy many things that are founded neither in reason nor experience; and an unwillingness to part with property of so valuable a kind, will furnish a thousand arguments to show the impracticability, or pernicious tendency, of a scheme which requires such a sacrifice. But it should be considered, that if we do not make use of them in this way, the enemy probably will; and that the best way to counteract the temptations they will hold out, will be to offer them ourselves. An essential part of the plan is to give them their freedom with their muskets. This will secure their fidelity, animate their courage, and, I believe, will have a good influence upon those who remain, by opening a door to their emancipation. This circumstance, I confess, has no small weight in inducing me to wish the success of the project; for the dictates of humanity and true policy equally interest me in favour of this unfortunate class of men.

With the truest respect and esteem,

I am, sir your most obedient servant,

ALEX. HAMILTON.

## TO GENERAL SCHUYLER.

Philadelphia, 21st March, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

So uncertain has been the fate of letters during the course of this war, that I very seldom write one without adverting to the possibility and consequences of its miscarriage and publication. This precaution has on a late occasion given me much consolation. Two of my letters to Mrs. Jay fell into the enemy's hands at Elizabethtown; they contained nothing that would give me uneasiness if published. Prudential considerations of this kind have, since my arrival here, restrained me from writing several confidential letters to you; and I should now be equally cautious had I not full confidence in the bearer of this, and under little apprehension of danger from accidents on the road.

Congress has refused to accept your resignation. Twelve States were represented. New-England and Pennsylvania against you. The delegates of the latter are new men, and not free from the influence of the former. From New-York south you have fast friends. Mr. \*\*\*\*\*'s disposition is at least questionable. Delaware was unrepresented.

What is now to be done? You best can answer this question. Were I in your situation, I should not hesitate a moment to continue in the service. I have the best authority to assure you that the commander-in-chief wishes you to retain your commission. The propriety of your resignation is now out of question. Those laws of honour which might have required it are satisfied: are you certain they do not demand a contrary conduct? You have talents to render you conspicuous in the field; and address to conciliate the affections of those who may now wish you ill. Both these circumstances are of worth to your family, and, independent of public considerations, argue forcibly for your joining the army. Gather laurels for the sake of your

country and your children—you can leave them a sufficient share of property—leave them also the reputation of being descended from an incontestably great man—a man who, uninfluenced by the ingratitude of his country, was unre-mitted in his exertions to promote her happiness. You have hitherto been no stranger to these sentiments, and therefore I forbear to enlarge. Would it not do you honour to inform Congress that, while in their opinion your services ought not to be withheld from your country, neither the derangement of your private affairs, the severities you have experienced, nor regard to your health already impaired in their service, shall restrain you from devoting yourself to the execution of their commands; but that whenever the situation of our affairs may cease to call you to the field, you hope they will permit you to retire and attend to the duties you owe your family.

Should this be your resolution, would not the main army be your proper object? there you may be best known, and there best acquire military influence. Consider: this campaign will in all human probability be decisive, and the last. Can you, therefore, employ six or eight months better.

I will not apologize for the freedom with which I write, being persuaded that although our opinions may vary, you will consider this letter as some evidence of the sincerity with which I am

Your friend and servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO MAJOR GENERAL LINCOLN.

Philadelphia, 2d April, 1779.

SIR,

Although I have not the honour of a personal acquaintance with you, yet I am so well informed of your character as to believe you will always be happy in leading a young soldier to glory, and to afford him that countenance and

protection which a brave and generous youth seldom fails to invite. Permit me, therefore, to recommend to you Major Matthew Clarkson, who is now going to place himself under your command; and be assured that you will confer an obligation on me by becoming his friend as well as his general.

I am, with great respect and esteem,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Philadelphia, 6th April, 1779.

Mr. Jay presents his compliments to General Washington, and encloses an extract from a letter in a certain degree interesting.

*Extract of a letter from Major-General Gates, of the 15th March, 1779, to the President of Congress.*

“The enclosed copy of my letter to General Washington, of the 4th instant, in answer to his of the 14th ult. from Middlebrook, will give Congress a true idea of my opinion respecting our entering Canada, and the only route which we can take with reasonable hopes of success. Individuals, and not the public, will be benefited by an expedition into Canada by either of the routes from Albany. That of Co-os alone is practicable, but not without the co-operation of the allied fleet.

“General Washington’s letter of the 14th of February is enclosed. It being the only letter I have received from his excellency since December, Congress will immediately judge of the extent or limitation which it is proper to observe in their instructions to me.”

FROM GEORGE WASHINGTON.

[Private.]

Head-quarters, Middlebrook, }  
April 14th, 1779. }

I have received your several favours of the 2d, 3d, and 28th of March, and 6th of April. I thank you for them all, but especially for the last, which I consider as a distinguishing mark of your confidence and friendship.

Conscious that it is the aim of my actions to promote the public good, and that no part of my conduct is influenced by personal enmity to individuals, I cannot be insensible to the artifice employed by some men to prejudice me in the public esteem. The circumstance of which you have obliged me with a communication, is among a number of other instances of the unfriendly views which have governed a certain gentleman from a very early period. Some of these have been too notorious not to have come to your knowledge; others, from the manner in which they have been conveyed to me, will probably never be known, except to a very few. But you have perhaps heard enough yourself to make any further explanation from me unnecessary.

The desire, however, which it is natural I should feel to preserve the good opinion of men of sense and virtue, conspiring with my wish to cultivate your friendship in particular, induces me to trouble you with a statement of some facts which will serve to place the present attack in its proper light. In doing this I shall recapitulate and bring into view a series of transactions, many of which have been known to you; but some of which may possibly have escaped your memory.

An opinion prevailing that the enemy were likely, shortly, to evacuate these States, I was naturally led to turn my thoughts to a plan of operations against Canada, *in case that event should take place*. A winter campaign, before the

enemy could have an opportunity of reinforcing and putting themselves in a more perfect state of defence, appeared to promise the most speedy and certain success, and the route by Co-os offered itself as most direct and practicable. In this I fully agreed with General Gates and some other gentlemen whom I consulted on the occasion; and on the 12th of September last I wrote to Congress accordingly, submitting it to them, whether it would not be advisable to be laying up magazines, opening a road, and making other preparations for the undertaking. They approved the project, and authorized me to carry it into execution. I the more readily entered into it from a consideration, that if circumstances should not permit us to carry on the enterprise, preparations towards it could easily be converted into another channel, and made serviceable to our operations elsewhere *without any material addition of expense to the continent*, because provisions, which would compose the principal part of the expense, were at all events to be purchased on Connecticut River, the only doubt being whether they should be used in an expedition against Canada, or transported to Boston—circumstances to determine this: with truth it may be added, that, excepting the articles of provision and forage, which, as before observed, would have been bought if no expedition by the way of Co-os had been in contemplation, the “incredible expense,” mentioned by General Gates in his letter of March 4th, amounted to the purchase of a few pair of men’s shoes, and some leather for moccasins *only*. If any other expense has been incurred, it is unknown to me—must have been by his order, and he alone answerable for it.

In October following, Congress entered into arrangements with the Marquis de la Fayette for co-operating with the court of France, in an expedition against that country. In this scheme, one body of troops was to proceed from Co-os and penetrate by way of the river St. Francis; others forming a junction at Niagara, were to enter Canada by

that route ; and while these were operating in this manner, a French fleet and a body of French troops were to go up the river St. Lawrence, and take possession of Quebec.

*You* are well acquainted with the opposition I gave to this plan, *and my reasons at large for it*. From what has since happened, they seem to have met the full approbation of Congress. The ideas I held up were principally these : that we ought not to enter into any contract with a foreign power, unless we were sure we should be able to fulfil our engagements—that it was uncertain whether the enemy would quit the States or not ; and in case they did not, it would be impracticable to furnish the aids which we had stipulated—that even if they should leave us, it was doubtful whether our own resources would be equal to the supplies required ; that therefore it would be impolitic to hazard a contract of the kind, and better to remain at liberty to act as future conjunctures should point out. I recommended, nevertheless, as there were powerful reasons to hope the enemy might go away, that eventual preparations should be made to take advantage of it, to possess ourselves of Niagara and other posts in that quarter, for the security of our frontiers, and to carry our views still further with respect to a conquest of Canada, if we should find ourselves able to prosecute such an enterprise.

This, Congress in a subsequent resolve, approved, and directed to be done. It was not the *least motive* with me for recommending it, that operations of this nature seemed to be a very favourable object with this honourable body. The preparations on Hudson River were undertaken in consequence.

Upon a nearer view of our finances and resources, and when it came to be decided that the enemy would continue for some time longer to hold the posts they were in possession of, in the course of the conferences with which I was honoured by the committee of Congress in Philadelphia, I suggested my doubts of the propriety of continuing our

northern preparations upon so extensive a plan as was first determined. The committee were of opinion with me, that the state of our currency and supplies in general would oblige us to act on the defensive next campaign, except so far as related to an expedition into the Indian country for chastising the savages, and preventing their depredations on our back settlements; and that though it would be extremely desirable to be prepared for pushing our operations further, yet our necessities exacting a system of economy forbade our launching into much extra expense for objects which were remote and contingent. This determination having taken place, all the northern preparations were discontinued, except such as were necessary towards the intended Indian expedition.

Things were in this situation when I received a letter from General Bailey (living at Co-os), expressing some fears for the safety of the magazine at Co-os; in consequence of which I directed the stores to be removed lower down the country. This I did to prevent a possibility of accident, though I did not apprehend they were in much danger. Sometime afterward I received the letter (No. 1) from General Gates, expressing similar fears, to which I returned him the answer of 14th February, transmitted by him to Congress, (No. 2.) Knowing that preparations had been making at Albany, and unacquainted with their true design, he inferred, from a vague expression in that letter, that the intention of attacking Canada was still adhered to, but that I had changed the plan, and was going by way of Lake Champlain or Ontario: either of these routes he pronounces impracticable, and represents that by Co-os as the *only* practicable one. He goes further, and declares, that "in the present state of our army, and the actual situation of our magazines, to attempt a serious invasion of Canada by whatever route, would prove unsuccessful, unless the fleet of our allies should at the same time co-operate with us, by sailing up the river St. Lawrence." Though I differ with

him as to the impracticability of *both* the other routes, I venture to go a step beyond him respecting our ability to invade Canada; and am convinced, that in our present circumstances, and with the enemy in front, we cannot undertake a serious invasion of that country at all, even *with the aid of an allied fleet.*

You will perceive, sir, that I have uniformly made the departure of the enemy from these States *an essential condition* to the invasion of Canada, and that General Gates has entirely mistaken my intentions. Hoping that I had embarked in a scheme which our situation would not justify, he eagerly seizes the opportunity of exposing my supposed errors to Congress; and in the excess of his intemperate zeal to injure me, exhibits himself in a point of view from which I imagine he will derive little credit. The decency of the terms in which he undertakes to arraign my conduct, both to myself and to Congress, and the propriety of the hasty appeal he has made, will, I believe, appear at least questionable to every man of sense and delicacy.

The last paragraph of the extract with which you favour me, is a pretty remarkable one. I shall make no comments further than as it implies a charge of neglect on my part, in not writing to him but once since December. From the beginning of last campaign to the middle of December, about seven months, I have copies of near fifty letters to him, and about forty originals from him. I think it will be acknowledged the correspondence was frequent enough during that period; and if it has not continued in the same proportion since, the only reason was, that the season of the year, the troops being in winter-quarters, and General Gates's situation unfruitful of events, and unproductive of any military arrangements between us, afforded very little matter for epistolary intercourse; and I flatter myself it will be readily believed, that I am sufficiently occupied with the necessary business of my station, and have no need of increasing it by multiplying letters without an object. If you were to

peruse, my dear sir, the letters that have passed between General Gates and myself for a long time back, you would be sensible that I have no great temptation to court his correspondence, when the transacting of business does not require it. An air of design—a want of candour in many instances, and even of politeness, give no very inviting complexion to the correspondence on his part. As a specimen of this, I send you a few letters and extracts, which at your leisure, I shall be glad you will cast your eye upon.

Last fall it was for some time strongly suspected that the enemy would transport the whole, or the greater part, of their force eastward, and combine one great land and sea operation against the French fleet in Boston harbour: on this supposition, as I should go in person to Boston, the command next in importance was the posts on the North River. This properly would devolve on General Gates; but from motives of peculiar scrupulousness, as there had been a difference between us, I thought it best to know whether it was agreeable to him, before I directed his continuance. By way of compliment, I wrote him a letter containing the extract No. 3, expecting a cordial answer and cheerful acceptance. I received the evasive and unsatisfactory reply, No. 4. A few days after this, upon another occasion, I wrote him the letter No. 5, to which I received the extraordinary answer No. 6, which was passed over in silence.

The plan of operations for the campaign being determined, a commanding officer was to be appointed for the Indian expedition. This command, according to all present appearance, will probably be of the second, if not of the first importance for the campaign. The officer conducting it has a flattering prospect of acquiring more credit than can be expected by any other this year, and he has the best reason to hope for success. General Lee, from his situation, was out of the question. General Schuyler, who, by the way, would have been most agreeable to me, was so un-

certain of continuing in the army, that I could not appoint him. General Putnam I need not mention. I therefore made the offer of it (for the appointment could no longer be delayed) to General Gates, who was next in seniority, though perhaps I might have avoided it, if I had been so disposed, from his being in a command by the special appointment of Congress. My letter to him on the occasion you will find in No. 7. I believe you will think it was conceived in very candid and polite terms, and merited a different answer from the one given it in No. 8.

I discovered, very early in the war, symptoms of coldness and constraint in General Gates's behaviour to me. These increased as he rose into greater consequence; but we did not come to a direct breach till the beginning of last year. This was occasioned by a correspondence, which I thought made rather free with me, between him and General Conway, which accidentally came to my knowledge. The particulars of this affair you will find delineated in the packet herewith, endorsed "Papers respecting General Conway." Besides the evidence contained in them of the genuineness of the offensive correspondence, I have other proofs, still more convincing, which, having been given me in a confidential way, I am not at liberty to impart.

After this affair subsided, I made it a point of treating General Gates with all the attention and cordiality in my power, as well from a sincere desire of harmony, as from an unwillingness to give any cause of triumph to our enemies from an appearance of dissension among ourselves. I can appeal to the world and to the whole army, whether I have not cautiously avoided every word or hint that could tend to disparage General Gates in any way. I am sorry his conduct to me has not been equally generous, and that he is continually giving me fresh proofs of malevolence and opposition. It will not be doing him injustice to say, that besides the little underhand intrigues which he is frequently practising, there has hardly been any great military question

in which his advice has been asked, that it has not been given in an equivocal and designing manner, apparently calculated to afford him an opportunity of censuring me, on the failure of whatever measures might be adopted.

When I find that this gentleman does not scruple to take the most unfair advantages of me, I am under a necessity of explaining his conduct to justify my own. This, and the perfect confidence I have in you, have occasioned me to trouble you with so free a communication of the state of things between us. I shall still be as passive as a regard to my own character will permit. I am, however, uneasy, as General Gates has endeavoured to impress Congress with an unfavourable idea of me, and as I only know this in a private confidential way, that I cannot take any step to remove the impression if it should be made. I am aware, sir, of the delicacy of your situation, and I mean this letter only for your own private information; you will therefore not allow yourself to be embarrassed by its contents, but with respect to me, pass it over in silence.

With the truest esteem and personal regard,

I am, dear sir,

Your obliged and obedient servant,

GEO. WASHINGTON.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Philadelphia, 21st April, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Accept my thanks for the long and friendly letter of the 14th inst. which I have had the pleasure of receiving from you. It was, for many reasons, grateful to me. I value the esteem and regard of the wise and virtuous; and had wished to know the particulars of transactions respecting which only vague and unsatisfactory reports had come to my knowledge. Delicacy forbade my breaking the subject to you when here. I was sure of your politeness, but not certain of more than a usual degree of confidence. The

latter has now become manifest, and permit me to assure you it shall be mutual. The impression attempted to be made has not taken. It passed without a single remark. Your friends thought it merited nothing but silence and neglect. The same reason induced me to take no notice of it in my answer.

I have perused the several papers with which you favoured me. The delicacy, candour, and temper diffused through your letters form a strong contrast to the evasions and design observable in some others. Gratitude ought to have attached a certain gentleman to the friend who raised him; a spurious ambition, however, has, it seems, made him your enemy. This is not uncommon. To the dishonour of human nature, the history of mankind has many pages filled with similar instances; and we have little reason to expect that the annals of the present or future times will present us with fewer characters of this class. On the contrary, there is reason to expect that they will multiply in the course of this revolution. Seasons of general heat, tumult, and fermentation favour the production and growth of some great virtues, and of many great and little vices. Which will predominate, is a question which events not yet produced nor now to be discerned can alone determine. What parties and factions will arise, to what objects be directed, what sacrifices they will require, and who will be the victims, are matters beyond the sphere of human prescience. New modes of government, not generally understood, nor in certain instances approved—want of moderation and information in the people—want of abilities and rectitude in some of their rulers—a wide field open for the operations of ambition—men raised from low degrees to high stations, and rendered giddy by elevation and the extent of their views—a revolution in private property and in national attachments—laws dictated by the spirit of the times, not the spirit of justice and liberal policy—latitude in principles as well as commerce—suspension of edu-

cation—fluctuations in manners, and public counsels, and moral obligations—indifference to religion, &c. &c., are circumstances that portend evils which much prudence, vigour, and circumspection are necessary to prevent or control. To me, there appears reason to expect a long storm and difficult navigation. Calm repose and the sweets of undisturbed retirement appear more distant than a peace with Britain. It gives me pleasure, however, to reflect that the period is approaching when we shall become citizens of a better-ordered state; and the spending a few troublesome years of our eternity in doing good to this and future generations is not to be avoided nor regretted. Things will come right, and these States will be great and flourishing. The dissolution of our government threw us into a political chaos. Time, wisdom, and perseverance will reduce it into form, and give it strength, order, and harmony. In this work you are, to speak in the style of one of your professions, a master-builder; and God grant that you may long continue a *free* and *accepted* mason.

Thus, my dear sir, I have indulged myself in thinking loud in your hearing; it would be an Hibernicism to say in your *sight*, though in one sense true; it is more than probable I shall frequently do the like. Your letter shall be my apology, and the pleasure resulting from the converse of those we esteem, the motive.

I am, dear sir,  
 With perfect esteem and regard,  
 Your most obedient servant,  
 JOHN JAY.

FROM GENERAL WASHINGTON.

Middlebrook, April, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

In one of your former letters you intimate, that a free communication of sentiments will not be displeasing to you. If, under this sanction, I should step beyond the line you

would wish to draw, and suggest ideas or ask questions which are improper to be answered, you have only to pass them by in silence. I wish you to be convinced that I do not desire to pry into measures the knowledge of which is not necessary for my government as an executive officer, or the premature discovery of which might be prejudicial to plans in contemplation.

After premising this, I beg leave to ask what are the reasons for keeping the continental frigates in port? If it is because hands cannot be obtained to man them on the present encouragement, some other plan ought to be adopted to make them useful. Had not Congress better lend them to commanders of known bravery and capacity for a limited term, at the expiration of which the vessels, if not taken or lost, to revert to the States—they and their crews, in the mean time, enjoying the exclusive benefit of all captures they make, but acting either singly or conjointly under the direction of Congress? If this or a similar plan could be fallen upon, comprehending the whole number, under some common head, a man of ability and authority commissioned to act as commodore or admiral, I think great advantages might result from it. I am not sure but at this moment, by such a collection of the naval force we have, all the British armed vessels and transports at Georgia might be taken or destroyed, and their troops ruined. Upon the present system, our ships are not only very expensive and totally useless in port, but sometimes require a land force to protect them, as happened lately at New-London.

The rumour of the camp is, that Monsieur Gerard is about to return to France; some speak confidently of its taking place. If this be a fact, the motives doubtless are powerful; as it would open a wide field for speculation, and give our enemies, whether with or without real cause, at least a handle for misrepresentation and triumph.

Will Congress suffer the Bermudian vessels, which are

said to have arrived at Delaware and Chesapeake Bays, to exchange their salt for flour, as is reported to be their intention? Will they not rather order them to depart immediately? Indulging them with a supply of provisions at this time will be injurious to us in two respects: it will deprive us of what we really stand in need of for ourselves, and will contribute to the support of that swarm of privateers which resort to Bermuda, from whence they infest our coast, and, in a manner, annihilate our trade. Besides these considerations, by withholding a supply, we throw many additional mouths upon the enemy's magazines, and increase proportionably their distress. They will not and cannot let their people starve.

In the last place, though first in importance, I shall ask, is there any thing doing, or that can be done, to restore the credit of our currency? The depreciation of it is got to so alarming a point that a wagon-load of money will scarcely purchase a wagon-load of provisions.

I repeat what I before observed, that I do not wish for your reply to more of these matters than you can touch with strict propriety.

Very truly I am, dear sir,  
Your most obedient and affectionate servant,  
GEORGE WASHINGTON.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Philadelphia, 26th April, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

The questions contained in your favour of the — April instant are as important as the manner of introducing them is delicate.

While the maritime affairs of the continent continue under the direction of a committee, they will be exposed to all the consequences of want of system, attention, and knowledge. The marine committee consists of a delegate from each State; it fluctuates; new members constantly

coming in, and old ones going out; three or four, indeed, have remained in it from the beginning; and few members understand even the state of our naval affairs, or have time or inclination to attend to them. But why is not this system changed? It is, in my opinion, convenient to the family compact. The commercial committee was equally useless. A proposition was made to appoint a commercial agent for the States under certain regulations. Opposition was made. The ostensible objections were various. The true reason was its interfering with a certain commercial agent in Europe and his connexions.

You will, if I am not greatly mistaken, find Mr. Gerard disposed to be open and communicative. He has acquired an extensive knowledge of our affairs; I have no reason to believe he will use it to our prejudice. There is as much intrigue in this State-house as in the Vatican, but as little secrecy as in a boarding-school. It mortifies me on this occasion to reflect that the rules of Congress on the subject of secrecy, which are far too general, and perhaps for that reason more frequently violated, restrains me from saying twenty things to you which have ceased to be private.

The state of our currency is really serious. When or by what means the progress of the depreciation will be prevented, is uncertain. The subject is delicate, but the conduct of some men really indicates at least great indifference about it. It will not be many days before measures having a great, though not immediate influence on this subject, will be either adopted or rejected. I shall then have an opportunity of being more particular.

I am, my dear sir,

With perfect esteem and regard,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Head-quarters, Middlebrook, }  
May 10th, 1779. }

I seize a moment of leisure to thank you, my dear sir, for your obliging favours of the 21st and 26th of April. My friendship for you will always make me take pleasure in cultivating the esteem and confidence of which you so politely assure me.

You give an affecting summary of the causes of the national evils we feel, and the still greater we have reason to apprehend. To me it appears that our affairs are in a very delicate situation; and what is not the least to be lamented is, that many people think they are in a very flourishing way; and seem in a great measure insensible to the danger with which we are threatened. If Britain should be able to make a vigorous campaign in America this summer, in the present depreciation of our money, scantiness of supplies, want of virtue and want of exertion, 'tis hard to say what may be the consequence.

It is a melancholy consideration that any concerned in the conduct of public affairs should discover an indifference to the state of our currency. Nothing, in my opinion, can be more manifest, than that if something effectual be not done to restore its credit, it will in a short time either cease to circulate altogether, or circulate so feebly as to be utterly incapable of drawing out the resources of the country. This is nearly the case now.

With every sentiment of esteem and regard,

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient servant,

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY SAMUEL HUNTINGDON,

President of Congress.

Philadelphia, 4th Oct., 1779.

SIR,

It gives me very sensible pleasure to find, from the act of Congress enclosed in your excellency's polite favour of the 1st inst., that my conduct in the chair and in the execution of public business has been honoured by the approbation of Congress. The testimony given of it by this act, demands my warmest acknowledgments. Be pleased, sir, to assure the Congress, that my happiness is inseparable from the welfare and esteem of my country, and that my endeavours to promote the one and merit the other, shall continue unremitted.

I have the honour to be,

With great respect and esteem,

Your excellency's most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM R. R. LIVINGSTON.

Kingston, 6th October, 1779.

DEAR JOHN,

I have just now heard that you are upon the point of leaving us. I might have expected to have received this intelligence from yourself, rather than from loose report, since there is scarce a transaction in the world in which I feel myself more interested. I rejoice at it as it advances your fortune and reputation. I lament it, as it adds to the losses I have already felt in the course of this war, that of a friend whom I had sense enough to value, even before age had ripened my judgment, and whom an after acquaintance with the world has taught me to think inestimable. I call it a loss, for I have but little prospect of seeing you here again. You will now move in a more enlarged sphere, and will hardly think of recrossing the Atlantic, till

the blood runs too slowly in our veins to keep up the ardour of friendship. I was going to give you a long detail of State politics, but they are now unworthy your attention. Besides that, I by no means feel myself disposed at this moment to view them in any other than the most contemptible light, or to execrate them for detaining me here, when I so ardently wish to receive your last adieu. When do you embark, and where? If from Boston, tell me when to meet you at Fishkill, and perhaps (if the Legislature adjourn) to accompany you. If this pleasure is denied me, believe that you and yours are attended by every tender wish which the sincerest friendship can dictate. I will not wrong you so much as to ask you to omit no occasion of lessening the pain I feel in your absence, by writing to me by every conveyance; your own heart has and will for ever suggest that thought. Adieu, my dear John;

May you be as happy as I wish you,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

FROM GEORGE WASHINGTON.

West-Point, October 7th, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Among the number of your friends, permit me also to congratulate you, and my country, on your late honourable and important appointment. Be assured, sir, that my pleasure on this occasion, though it may be equalled, cannot be exceeded by that of any other.

I do most sincerely wish you a pleasant and agreeable passage, the most perfect and honourable accomplishment of your ministry, and a safe return to the bosom of a grateful country.

With the greatest regard, and sincerest personal attachment, I have the honour to be,

Your most obedient and

Affectionate humble servant,

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Philadelphia, 14th October, 1779.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your very kind letter of the 7th inst., gave me all that pleasure which accompanies marks of cordial esteem and attachment from those whose commendation is praise, and whose friendship is discriminate.

Among the objects of my mission are some which, however just, will not be easily attained, and therefore its success will be precarious, and probably partial. The only satisfaction I promise myself from this appointment, will flow from the rectitude with which the duties of it will be discharged, and not from a prospect of general approbation.

God grant that the time may not be far distant when peace and liberty shall lead you from the field, to enjoy, in silence and retirement, the luxury of reflecting that you had saved your country.

Adieu, my dear sir,

With sincere affection and esteem,

I am your friend and servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM EDMUND PENDLETON.

Edmundsbury, October 11th, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I congratulate you, sir, upon your appointment to represent the American States at the court of Madrid; the just testimony of that confidence which the honourable body you have presided over, have in your abilities and integrity. May health, success, and every felicity accompany you; but, while I am sensible of the advantages we shall reap from your eminent services there, I have my fears that they will be missed, importantly, where you now are; and that the spirit of party, almost laid to sleep, will revive upon your absence. I cordially wish you may be able to heal

the new-made breach between Spain and Britain, since France appears disposed to peace, and I am mistaken if the court of London are not ready to make up with us, if nothing respecting our allies hinders it. Indeed we want an honourable peace; but I hope there lives not a wretch who wishes it upon terms of dishonour to our noble allies.

I am, sir, with unfeigned regard,

Your most obliged and obedient servant,

EDMUND PENDLETON.

FROM BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Passy, June 13th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

Yesterday, and not before, is come to hand your favour of April 14th, with the packets and despatches from Congress, &c., which you sent me by a French gentleman to Nantes.

Several of them appear to have been opened, the paper round the seals being smoked and burnt, as with the flame of a candle used to soften the wax, and the impression defaced. The curiosity of people in this time of war is unbounded. Some of them only want to see news, but others want to find (through interested views) what chance there is of a speedy peace. Mr. Ross has undertaken to forward the letters to England. I have not seen them; but he tells me they have all been opened. I am glad, however, to receive the despatches from Congress, as they communicate to me Mr. Adams's instructions, and other particulars of which I have been long ignorant.

I am very sensible of the weight of your observation, "that a constant interchange of intelligence and attentions between the public servants at the different courts, are necessary to procure to their constituents all the advantages capable of being derived from their appointment." I shall endeavour to perform my part with you, as well to have the pleasure of your correspondence, as from a sense of

duty. But my time is more taken up with matters extraneous to the functions of a minister, than you can possibly imagine. I have written often to the Congress to establish consuls in the ports, and ease me of what relates to maritime and mercantile affairs; but no notice has yet been taken of my request.

A number of bills of exchange, said to be drawn by order of Congress on Mr. Laurens, are arrived in Holland. A merchant there has desired to know of me, whether, if he accepts them, I will engage to reimburse him. I have no orders or advice about them from Congress; do you know to what amount they have drawn? I doubt I cannot safely meddle with them.

Mrs. Jay does me much honour in desiring to have one of the prints that have been made here of her countryman. I send what is said to be the best of five or six engraved by different hands, from different paintings. The verses at the bottom are truly extravagant. But you must know that the desire of pleasing by a perpetual rise of compliments in this polite nation, has so used up all the common expressions of approbation, that they are become flat and insipid, and to use them almost implies censure. Hence music, that formerly might be sufficiently praised when it was called *bonne*, to go a little farther they called it *excellente*, then *superbe*, *magnifique*, *exquise*, *celeste*, all which, being in their turns worn out, there only remains *divine*; and when that is grown as insignificant as its predecessors, I think they must return to common speech and common sense; as from vying with one another in fine and costly paintings on their coaches, since I first knew the country, not being able to go farther in that way, they have returned lately to plain carriages, painted without arms or figures, in one uniform colour.

The league of neutral nations to protect their commerce is now established. Holland, offended by fresh insults from England, is arming vigorously. That nation has madly

brought itself into the greatest distress, and has not a friend in the world. ·

With great and sincere esteem,

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

TO EGBERT BENSON.\*

Aranjuez, June, 1780.

DEAR BENSON,

When shall we again, by a cheerful fire, or under a shady tree, recapitulate our juvenile pursuits or pleasures, or look back on the extensive field of politics we once have trodden? Our plans of life have, within these few years past, been strangely changed. Our country, I hope, will be the better for the alterations. How far we, individually, may be benefited, is more questionable. Personal considerations, however, must give way to public ones, and the consciousness of having done our duty to our country and posterity, must recompense us for all the evils we experience in their cause.

I wrote to you from Martinico. I have been four months in this kingdom without receiving more than three letters from America, and those not very interesting, being of old dates and not particular. You are among those from whom I wish often to hear, as well because I am interested in what concerns yourself, as on account of the intelligence respecting the affairs of our State, which I hope you will sometimes favour me with. Write nothing, nevertheless, that you would wish to be entirely private; your letters may be inspected before they reach me; that practice being general in the post-offices of France and Spain.

I flatter myself you sometimes visit your Fishkill friends. I know they esteem you, and always derive pleasure from your company. What arrangements have been made in

\* Attorney-general of New-York.

your official departments? Are your taxes paid? Do the people continue firm? A few more glorious exertions will give them peace, liberty, and safety. What says Vermont?

Tell me how your mother and brothers do. Remember me to them, and my other friends. God bless you, my friend.

I am sincerely yours,

JOHN JAY.

FROM JAMES LOVELL.\*

July 11th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

By a letter from Messrs. Gardoqui and Sons, of May 3d, received yesterday, I have the pleasure of knowing you were then well. In a postscript to one of his former of February 24th, the P. S. not dated, he says he hears of you *every week*. This creates a chagrin, as we have none of your favours later than March 3d. You are not to suppose that I dare to *complain*; I have read my Bible to better purpose. I am not entitled to throw the "first stones," but I have as good a title as anybody to palliate my own faults, and to shift them upon others. There is said to be a committee of foreign affairs. Each member is loaded with a variety of business; two have amiable wives near Philadelphia; I miss the gentlemen, therefore, frequently. Mr. Livingston is now absent, but you have, herewith, a letter he sent to my care a few days ago. The weather is murderous hot, and I cannot go up and down to the offices, in search of those authenticated papers, which ought to be regularly forwarded to you, and other dignified officers abroad. You will be pleased therefore to know from me, *individually*, and by way of a resolve of Congress of June 21st, certified by me, that Mr. Dohrman, of Lisbon, is appointed our agent in Portugal.

\* Member of Congress.

Mr. Searle is the bearer of this, via France, and Mr. Laurens will either go for Holland in the same ship, the *JAY*, or will sail in a few days by another opportunity for Holland. The former gentleman is on business for the State of Pennsylvania, and, perhaps, for some mercantile companies also. You already know Mr. Laurens is to negotiate a loan. Indeed, an instruction was given to a committee to bring in a draught of a letter to the ministers plenipotentiary of these States at Versailles and Madrid, directing them to inform his most Christian and Catholic Majesty of the appointment of Mr. Laurens, and to solicit the aid of their majesties, respectively, on this occasion.

I am, sir, your friend

And very humble servant,

JAMES LOVELL.

TO JAMES LOVELL.

Madrid, 27th October, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 11th July gave me much pleasure; there is a degree of ease and cordiality in it, which, as a mere letter of business, it did not require. I am the more obliged to you for it.

It is true that I might write to Congress very often, indeed by every vessel, and there are many of them; but how are my letters to get to the seaside? By the post? They would be all inspected, and many suppressed. There is scarce a man in any of the ports, except Mr. Harrison, at Cadiz, with whom I would trust them; so that if under different covers I could get them there, the danger would not end. To write often, and write nothing material, would be useless; and when you see my public letter by this opportunity, you will perceive that to be well understood I must write a great deal. I would throw stones, too, with all my heart, if I thought they would hit only the committee without injuring the members of it. Till now I have

received but one letter from them, and that not worth a farthing, though it conveyed a draft for one hundred thousand pounds sterling on the bank of hope. One good private correspondent would be worth twenty standing committees, made of the wisest heads in America, for the purpose of intelligence. What with clever wives, or pleasant walks, or too tired, or too busy, or do *you* do it, very little is done, much postponed, and more neglected.

If you, who are naturally industrious and love your country, would frequently take up your pen and your ciphers, and tell me how the wheel of politics runs, and what measures it is from time to time turning out, I should be better informed, and Congress better served. I now get more intelligence of your affairs from the French ambassador, than from all the members of Congress put together.

I had written thus far when I received a letter from Mr. Le Couteux, at Cadiz, enclosing a letter of the 16th of September, written at St. Ildefonso from me to Congress. It had been enclosed in one to Mr. Harrison, and that again put under cover to Mr. Le Couteux, and under these two covers was put into the post-office. Now mark its fate. The director of the post-office at Cadiz showed it to Mr. Le Couteux, naked and stripped of its two covers, of which he made no mention. He said it came from Bayonne, but Le Couteux, knowing my handwriting, paid the postage and returned it to me.

This is only one among the many instances of the fate to which my letters are subjected. To avoid it I must now be at the expense of sending Colonel Livingston to the sea-side with my despatches.

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Philadelphia, 26th August, 1780.

DEAR JOHN,

I received yours of the 23d May from Madrid, with duplicates thereof, and the letters you wrote from Cadiz and Martinique.

Your remembrance of the pleasurable days of our youth, and the scenes in which we mutually bore our parts, together with the attractions which this country still has for you, afford me the most pleasing hope that neither time nor absence will weaken a friendship which has so long stood the test of both. This indeed I expected from the steadiness of your temper; but I must confess that I had little hopes that your early return would afford me a prospect of deriving that consolation from it in the decline of life, to which I looked even while it directed the pursuits and animated the pleasures of youth.

You mistake your own heart when you say you are unambitious; and without the assurance contained in your letter, I should have believed that the love of glory would have always kept you in the line in which you now are, more especially as the general satisfaction that your appointment and conduct since has given, renders it the wish of everybody less interested in your return than I am, to keep you abroad.

I have not been able to procure at this place the key to the cipher that you directed me to, though I believe I have it at home; besides that, it is very intricate and troublesome; I shall therefore be obliged to confine what I have to say to mere common occurrences. I enclose you a cipher which is very simple, and not to be deciphered while the key is concealed, as the same figure represents a variety of letters. In order that you may know whether it comes safely to hand, I have in this letter used the precaution mentioned in yours.

Nothing astonishes me more than the confidence with which the British ministry and their dependants assert, that America sighs to return to their government, since the fact is that we never were more determined in opposition, nor, if we except the derangement of our finances (which the loan of half a million would re-establish, if remitted in specie or merchandise), were we ever so capable of resistance. Our crops are uncommonly fine, and the militia of every State north and east of Delaware, is armed, disciplined, and inured to the duties of a camp. The southern militia are now at school, and I have no doubt will improve by the lessons they receive from the enemy. Our friend Smith, who has probably contributed to this ministerial madness, uninstructed by his repeated disappointments from the beginning of the war, is said to have advised Kniphausen to erect the royal standard in the Jerseys before General Clinton returned from Charleston, persuaded that our troops, and particularly the militia, would flock to it, and thus he have the honour of reducing the country, without sharing it with Clinton. He accordingly came over with great parade, with his whole force, scattering exaggerated accounts in printed handbills of the loss of Charleston, which, instead of discouraging, only animated the militia. They were all in motion upon the first alarm, and though opposed only by them and less than a thousand continental troops, he was disgracefully driven out with the loss of 500 men killed, wounded, and taken, after having penetrated ten miles from the shore, and done us no other injury than the burning of a few houses, and the abuse and murder of some women; since which they have been more cautious and less sanguine. Adieu; remember my compliments to the colonel and Mr. Carmichael. I am, dear John,

Most sincerely yours,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

TO T. MATLACK.

St. Ildefonso, 17th Sept., 1780.

SIR,

Accept my thanks for your favour of the 21st April, which was delivered to me the 27th August. Knowledge is essential to the duration of liberty, and Pennsylvania is wise in making them both the objects of public care. I have read your oration with pleasure. The subject is a fine one, the field large, and you have interspersed it with useful remarks and entertaining reflections. I put it into the hands of the Count D'Estaing and the French ambassador. They both said civil things of it.

The society\* have done me much honour by placing me on the list of their members. I shall endeavour to evince the sense I have of it, by now and then sending them whatever I may find here worth their attention.

I congratulate you on the glorious spirit spreading from your city through America. Your bank is the subject of much conversation and encomium, and the patriotism of the ladies renders them very celebrated. Such marks of union and public spirit are worth a victory. To be respectable abroad, we must be respectable at home, and the best way to gain friends is to be formidable to our enemies. But you know these things as well as I do, and I am persuaded your endeavours will not be wanting to place our country in both these points of light. Dr. Foulke may rely on my omitting no opportunity of being useful to him; we must take care of young Americans. Much depends on the rising generation, and no pains should be spared to render them equal to the task that devolves upon them.

Be assured that it will give me pleasure to continue this correspondence, and that I am, sir,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

\* The American Philosophical Society.

FROM BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Passy, October 2d, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I received duly and in good order the several letters you have written to me of August 16th, 19th, September 8th, and 22d. The papers that accompanied them of your writing gave me the pleasure of seeing the affairs of our country in such good hands, and the prospect, from your youth, of its having the service of so able a minister for a great number of years. But the little success that has attended your late applications for money mortified me exceedingly; and the storm of bills which I found coming upon us both, has terrified and vexed me to such a degree that I have been deprived of sleep, and so much indisposed by continual anxiety, as to be rendered almost incapable of writing.

At length I got over a reluctance that was almost invincible, and made another application to the government here for more money. I drew up and presented a state of debts and newly-expected demands, and requested its aid to extricate me. Judging from your letters that you were not likely to obtain any thing considerable from your court, I put down in my estimate the 25,000 dollars drawn upon you, with the same sum drawn upon me, as what would probably come to me for payment. I have now the pleasure to acquaint you that my memorial was received in the kindest and most friendly manner, and though the court here is not without its embarrassments on account of money, I was told to make myself easy, for that I should be assisted with what was necessary. Mr. Searle arriving about this time, and assuring me there had been a plentiful harvest, and great crops of all kinds; that the Congress had demanded of the several States contributions in produce, which would be cheerfully given; that they would therefore have plenty of provisions to dispose of; and I

being much pleased with the generous behaviour just experienced, I presented another paper, proposing, in order to ease the government here, which had been so willing to ease us, that the Congress might furnish their army in America with provisions in part of payment for the services lent us. This proposition, I was told, was well taken; but it being considered that the States having the enemy in their country, and obliged to make great expenses for the present campaign, the furnishing so much provisions as the French army might need, might straiten and be inconvenient to the Congress, his majesty did not at this time think it right to accept the offer. You will not wonder at my loving this good prince: he will win the hearts of all America.

If you are not so fortunate in Spain, continue however the even good temper you have hitherto manifested. Spain owes us nothing; therefore, whatever friendship she shows us in lending money or furnishing clothes, &c. though not equal to our wants and wishes, is however *tant de gagne*; those who have begun to assist us, are more likely to continue than to decline, and we are still so much obliged as their aids amount to. But I hope and am confident, that court will be wiser than to take advantage of our distress, and insist on our making sacrifices by an agreement, which the circumstances of such distress would hereafter weaken, and the very proposition can only give disgust at present. Poor as we are, yet as I know we shall be rich, I would rather agree with them to buy at a great price the whole of their right on the Mississippi, than sell a drop of its waters. A neighbour might as well ask me to sell my street door.

I wish you could obtain an account of what they have supplied us with already in money and goods.

Mr. Grand, informing me that one of the bills drawn on you having been sent from hence to Madrid, was come back unaccepted, I have directed him to pay it; and he

has, at my request, undertaken to write to the Marquis D'Yranda, to assist you with money to answer such bills as you are not otherwise enabled to pay, and to draw on him for the amount, which drafts I shall answer here as far as 25,000 dollars. If you expect more, acquaint me. But pray write to Congress as I do, to forbear this practice, which is so extremely hazardous, and may, some time or other, prove very mischievous to their credit and affairs. I have undertaken, too, for all the bills drawn on Mr. Laurens, that have yet appeared. He was to have sailed three days after Mr. Searle, that is, the 18th July. Mr. Searle begins to be in pain for him, having no good opinion of the little vessel he was to embark in.

We have letters from America to the 7th August. The spirit of our people was never higher. Vast exertions making preparatory for some important action. Great harmony and affection between the troops of the two nations. The new money in good credit, &c.

I will write to you again shortly, and to Mr. Carmichael. I shall now be able to pay up your salaries complete for the year; but as demands unforeseen are continually coming upon me, I still retain the expectations you have given me of being reimbursed out of the first remittances you receive.

If you find any inclination to hug me for the good news of this letter, I constitute and appoint Mrs. Jay my attorney, to receive in my behalf your embraces. With great and sincere esteem,

I have the honour to be, dear sir,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Madrid, 30th Oct., 1780.

DEAR SIR,

The pleasure given me by your letter of the 2d instant, may more easily be conceived than expressed. I am greatly obliged by your attention to my embarrassments. In my last on that subject which you received, was a copy of my letter to Count De Vergennes, from which it appeared that the sum I should have occasion for would probably be considerable, and far exceeding 25,000 dollars. Bills to the amount of 100,000 dollars have arrived. A loan cannot be effected here. What the court will do is as yet uncertain, and will long continue so. I should have replied to your letter before, but as I daily expected to hear from Count De Vergennes, I waited, with a view of mentioning the import to you. The enclosed copy of a note I received from Count Montmorin, contains all the advices I have on that head. My situation continues unpleasant, and though my endeavours are not wanting to better it, future events are too uncertain to be relied upon. To be active, prudent, and patient, is in my power; but whether I shall reap as well as sow and water, God only knows.

I have often been told of the former supplies, and asked how they were to be reimbursed. My answer has uniformly been, that I knew neither their amount nor terms, and that I wished to be furnished with an account of both, &c. &c. As yet I have not been able to obtain it.

Some mistake must have given occasion to any of the bills drawn on me being returned without acceptance. The fact is, that though I often delayed (with the consent of the holders), yet I never refused to accept any of them.

I have written several letters to Congress, requesting them to forbear drawing further bills till proper funds should be established for their payment. Mere contingent assurances, or flattering inferences drawn from flattering expres-

sions, ought never to be considered as a sufficient foundation for serious measures.

Cornwallis, it seems, has cropped some of Gates's laurels; and Mr. Laurens is in the Tower. European politicians will, I suppose, though often deceived in the same way, again think America on her knees in the dust. Had Ternay been supported, the campaign would have had a different termination. Much money and spirit has been wasted by this disappointment. Of the latter, indeed, we shall never be in want, and I should be happy if the like could be said of the former. The conduct of France towards us has been friendly; and though I cannot forbear to think she has been too inattentive to this object, my gratitude towards her is not impaired by it. I regret it as a misfortune, not blame it as a designed omission.

I wrote to you last week, and now enclose a duplicate of another letter. You may rely on my reimbursing you the advances on account of our salaries, out of the first remittances I receive.

I have often congratulated my country and myself on your being at present in France. I once expected to have seen you there, and to have profited by the lessons which time and much experience have taught you. Miracles have ceased, and my constitution does not promise length of days, or I should probably desire you, when you ascend, to drop me your mantle. That you may long retain it is one of the prayers of

Your friend and servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Madrid, 19th Nov., 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I have lately received a letter from Francis Child, a lad whom I had taken by the hand after his father's death, and put apprentice to Mr. Dunlap, your printer. He complains

that Dunlap refuses to give him the clothes stipulated in the indentures, and requests that I will save him from nakedness. You will oblige me by giving him twenty-five hard dollars, or the amount of it in paper. If you can conveniently discover how he behaves and is like to turn out, I beg you will inform me ; for, as his father had a warm and steady attachment to me, I feel myself interested in the welfare of this son, who it seems was his favourite.

My friend, you are not a little indebted to me on the score of letters. One only has reached me. I am content to go on writing two or three for one, but really you must let us hear sometimes of you and Mrs. Morris. There are some hearts which, like feathers, stick to every thing they touch, and quit each with equal ease. Mine is not one of this kind ; it adheres to few, but it takes strong hold ; you must, therefore, write to me ; and if you would make your letter very agreeable, dwell on the objects you will find at or near the hills, and within your own walls. Mrs. Jay writes by this opportunity to Mrs. Morris, whom she loves and esteems for many reasons unnecessary to repeat to you.

Should the following cipher reach you safe, we may afterward write with less reserve. Entick's Spelling Dictionary, printed in 1777, paged backwards. The last page in the book is numbered 468. Let this be page the first, and mark the first page (which is the titlepage) 468. Count the words from the top, distinguishing the columns by a [.] over the first figure for the first column, and a [.] over the second figure for the second column. For instance, the word *absent* is the fifth word in the *first* column of the 434th page, and is to be thus written : 5.434.

Remember me to your friends, Mr. and Mrs. Mease, and your other usual guests near the hills. I wish I had a few such honest, open-hearted companions here. God bless you.

I am, dear sir, very sincerely, your friend, &c.

JOHN JAY.

TO EGBERT BENSON, ESQ.

Madrid, Nov., 1780.

DEAR BENSON,

There seems to be a spell in the pens of my friends in New-York. Except Livingston, I have not had a line from either of them since I left America; not even from either of my brothers, nor from you, who also are several letters in my debt. I have a favour to ask of you; it is that you would make a visit to my father, and send me a minute account of his health, and that of the family. Make a half dozen copies of your letter, and send them either to some friend at Boston, or to Mr. Robert Morris, at Philadelphia, to be forwarded in different vessels. Don't neglect to do me this friendly office. You can easily conceive how painful it is to be so long in ignorance and suspense, about the situation and welfare of persons so near and dear to me, as many of those are to whom I allude. Tell me also how your mother and brothers do; and believe me to be, as I have long been, your

Affectionate friend,

JOHN JAY.

TO E. GERRY, OF MASSACHUSETTS.

Madrid, 9th Jan., 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I should have much wondered what could have detained my letter, mentioned in yours of 20th September last, so long from you, had not my correspondence been strangely interrupted ever since my arrival.

Your Constitution gives me much satisfaction. It appears to me to be, upon the whole, wisely formed and well digested. I find that it describes your State as being in *New-England*, as well as in America. Perhaps it would be better if these distinctions were permitted to die away.

Your predictions respecting the fate of Lord Cornwallis

have, thank God! been verified. It is a glorious, joyful, and important event. Britain feels the force of that stroke, and other nations begin to doubt less of the continuance of our independence. Further successes must prepare the way for peace; and I hope that victory will stimulate, instead of relaxing our exertions.

Although myself and my family have most severely suffered by the continental money, I am resigned to its fate. Provided we preserve our liberty and independence, I shall be content. Under their auspices, in a fruitful country, and by patient industry, a competence may always be acquired, and I shall never cease to prefer a little with freedom, to opulence without it.

Your account of the plenty which abounds in our country is very flattering, and ought to excite our gratitude to the Hand that gives it. While our governments tax wisely, reward merit, and punish offenders, we shall have little to fear. The public has been too much a prey to speculation. Economy and strict accounts ought to be, and continue, among the first objects of our attention.

I have not heard any thing for a long time respecting our disputed lines. In my opinion, few things demand more immediate care than this subject; and I differ from those who think that such matters had better be postponed till after the war. At present, a sense of common danger guaranties our union. We have neither time nor inclination to dispute among ourselves. Peace will give us leisure, and leisure often finds improper occasions for employment. I most sincerely wish that no disputes may survive the war; and that on the return of peace, we may congratulate each other on our deliverance and prospects of uninterrupted felicity, without finding ourselves exposed to differences and litigations, which never fail to make impressions injurious to that cordiality and confidence which both our interest and our duty call upon us to cultivate and cherish.

Mrs. Jay charges me to present her compliments to you. I am, dear sir, with great and sincere esteem,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Madrid, 21st Feb., 1781.

DEAR SIR,

Your favour of the 15th ult., with the packets mentioned in it, arrived in good order. I regret your long silence, though I am strongly inclined to rejoice in the cause of it: a fit of the gout, it is said, often prolongs life.

Affairs here begin to wear a better aspect. I am promised 3,000,000 rials, that is, 150,000 dollars, which, though inadequate to the demands upon me, is still a great consolation, especially as men who are at the pains of planting and watering trees, seldom let them perish for want of a few drops extraordinary.

I scarcely know how to desire you to make further advances on account of our salary, four months of which is now due, and yet I find myself under a necessity of doing it. My expenses here, notwithstanding the most rigid economy, are very great.

Since writing the above, I have had the pleasure of receiving yours of the 27th January, and sincerely congratulate you on your recovery. The amount of my bill on you shall, agreeable to your request, be considered as part of the 25,000 dollars. Your reckoning, as to our salaries, corresponds with mine, though we have been losers by the exchange.

As to the residue of the 25,000 dollars, my drafts shall be entirely regulated by my necessities, and I shall be happy if they permit me to leave a considerable proportion of that sum in your hands. I shall be constrained, however, to call for a part of that sum shortly; but whether by a bill,

or by means of the marquis,\* is uncertain. As to that gentleman's complaint of my reserve towards him, I could make many remarks, which, though proper for your perusal, ought not to go further.

A few days after my arrival here, a person, whom I was told was the marquis, was introduced to me. He said he came to pay me a visit by *order* of *Mr. Grand*. I did not then know I was indebted to that gentleman for a letter of recommendation to the marquis, it not having come to my hands. This singularity struck me, though I appeared not to observe it. The civilities usual on such occasions passed between us, and at parting the marquis gave me a general invitation to dine with him whenever I should find it convenient. I returned his visit, but as general invitations from strangers pass with us for mere matters of compliment, I declined doing myself the honour of dining with him. Interchanges of visits were continued, and the general invitation to dine once or twice repeated. In this line my connexion with the marquis remained, until I received the offer of the king's responsibility for a loan, &c. Several reasons induced me to think it expedient to consult the marquis as to the manner of making this offer useful to us. I waited upon him for that purpose. He told me he could not intermeddle in these affairs *without instructions from the court*; but was nevertheless very civil, and expressed a desire of doing me services, &c. As he declined entering into particulars, I did not press it; nor had my ideas of his importance risen so high as to reconcile me to the extraordinary and unnecessary measure of applying to the court for the instructions in question. I did not, however, let him know my sentiments or intentions on the subject. It seems he had heard of Mr. Grand having been desired by you to make inquiries for money for me, and he advised

\* The Marquis D'Yranda.

me to write to him on the subject, which I accordingly did. In his answer of the 21st October, he says, "I am very unhappy to hear you are not benefited on the spot by the facility tendered to you by the court of Spain, so much more so that the nature of circumstances here does not admit of the least hope of success. Too many attempts, all vainless, have already been made for the good of your credit; adding any more to the number would be destructive to it entirely, at this particular juncture chiefly when our government is about raising a sum of money much more enticing and advantageous in its conditions. This perplexing situation suggested me an idea I communicated to Dr. Franklin," &c.

"Meanwhile it is highly important to avail yourself of the favourable disposition of the court of Spain, and get it to authorize and charge the marquis to help you in your finance business. He writes me that without orders he cannot take it upon himself. It will be better for your excellency not to consult him before making the application to government," &c.

You, my good friend, have seen and thought too much of men and things to need any of my remarks on this letter. I replied to it on the 1st November as follows:

"SIR,

"I have had the honour of receiving your letter of the 21st October last. I had flattered myself that a loan on reasonable terms and adequate security might have been effected for the United States in France; but as that court is raising money on conditions more advantageous and agreeable, I am not surprised at our having little prospect of success.

"The hint you gave Dr. Franklin was a good one, and I hope will be productive of good consequences.

"Your obliging advice relative to the marquis, shall meet

with all the attention due to its importance; and if that measure should, on further consideration, appear expedient, it shall be pursued in the manner you recommend.

The marquis repeating his general invitation about this time, I dined with him. He received and entertained me very politely. We parted, to appearances, pleased with each other; but he has not been at my house since, though a great many visits in my debt.

Ever since my arrival, I have been particularly cautious to avoid offending any person of any rank; to endeavour to please all, without becoming the property or sycophant of any. My disagreeable situation was not unknown to him, but the inferences he drew from it proved fallacious. I never find myself less disposed to humility, or improper compliances, than when fortune frowns. I have uniformly been very civil, though not confidential, to the marquis, nor has any thing harsh ever passed between us. He is a man of business, abilities, and observation, and (what is of much importance here) of money. He keeps the most, and indeed only, hospitable house here, and persons of the first rank and fashion are found at his table. His consequence at court is unequal to his desires, and I think to his capacity of being useful. In a word, he has a good share of sagacity, ambition, and pride. I think it probable that we shall yet be on more familiar terms; for though I will never court, I shall with pleasure cultivate his acquaintance.

The Count de Montmorin continues very friendly. I believe him to be an able minister, and well attached to our cause.

Mrs. Jay desires me to make her compliments to you. I am, dear sir, with sincere attachment and esteem,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO EGBERT BENSON.

Madrid, March, 1781.

DEAR BENSON,

Either some very singular fatality must have attended the letters of my New-York friends to me, or they have given me abundant reason to complain of them as correspondents; not one letter to me, dated in our State, has reached me since I left America.

I have written to you from Martinico, from Cadiz, and from this place; some of these letters, I have reason to think, arrived safe, though several others have probably miscarried. Your governor is largely in my debt, and so is General Schuyler, whom I always thought a very punctual correspondent. How am I to account for this? I cannot persuade myself that neglect is among the causes. Business seldom continues a good excuse for a year together, and indolence, often a real, is never an admissible one.

The vulgar proverb, *out of sight, out of mind*, always appeared to me in the light of a vulgar error, when applied to old *friends and companions*. I hope I have not been mistaken, especially as the contrary of that proposition is true with respect to myself. I never loved or admired America so much as since I left it, and my attachment to my friends in it seems to have increased, in proportion as distance of time and place separated me from them. The remark that we seldom estimate blessings justly till we are about to lose them for a time, or altogether, is, I believe, frequently true, and perhaps that circumstance has tightened the cords which bind me to my friends and country. I could carry your recollection back to days that are past, and entertain you with the shades of many departed pleasures, in which we had been partakers. These shades speak a language that I hope your heart understands as well as mine, and I still flatter myself that their voice, though not loud, will be sufficient to awaken a remembrance

of the sincere attachment and regard, with which I have long been, and still am,

Your affectionate friend and servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Madrid, 29th March, 1781.

There has long, my dear sir, been something about my heart which urged me to write to you; but I thought it selfish to diminish your few leisure moments by an additional correspondent, especially as your punctuality and attention would probably have led you to consult my wishes rather than your own convenience. The time, I hope, will come, when the return of tranquillity will give me an opportunity of conversing with you on several interesting subjects. I have, however, concluded to allow myself the pleasure of writing you a few lines now and then. Indeed, I ought to have recollected, that while I was giving myself credit in my own mind for self-denial, you might have been charging me in yours for inattention; and, therefore, that it might have been more prudent, and perhaps not less generous, to have troubled you with letters, than with inducements to suspect that my heart, like a feather, would, with equal ease, stick to, or quit any man on whom the breath of whim or interest might blow it on or off.

The firmness and delicacy observed in the case of Major André, is exceedingly admired here. I am happy Colonel Beverley did not succeed in renewing his acquaintance with you. You have really been very fortunate in having so long resisted the attacks of open enemies, and escaped the snares of secret ones.

I take the liberty of sending you a cask of Packaretti, the favourite wine of our late friend, Don Juan, whose death I much lament. His place will, I believe, be soon filled by a gentleman who will probably deliver you a letter of introduction from me.

Mr. Harrison, a very worthy kinsman of your secretary, is shipping from Cadiz the clothing taken by Admiral Cordova, and presented by France and Spain to Congress. I have desired him to send you invoices of each parcel.

Mrs. Jay has more than usual health, and seems as much interested in your health and safety, as if you was her own father, as well as that of her country. Be pleased to present our best wishes to Mrs. Washington; and when you write to your honest friend, Colonel Harrison, remember me to him. I hope Arnold has not spoiled his mill-dam. God bless you, my dear sir.

I am, with perfect esteem and regard,

Your friend and servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Madrid, April, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

Notwithstanding my repeated and earnest applications to the Count de Florida Blanca, I have as yet been able to obtain only \$34,880 of the \$150,000 expressly promised me in December last. He has, on the contrary, assured me that this promise cannot be complied with in less than six months. It therefore became necessary to communicate my embarrassments to the ambassador of France, and to request his friendly aid and interposition. You will perceive, by the enclosed account, that the bills I have accepted and what still remain to be paid (exclusive of those at two months' sight, for the payment of which you authorized me to draw upon you) amount to \$231,303; of which

\$89,083	will be payable this month,
96,288	“ in May,
18,027	“ June,
9,025	“ July,
15,086	“ August,
3,794	“ September.
<u>\$231,303</u>	

The ambassador was very sensible of the pernicious consequences which would follow a protest of these bills, and, I must do him the justice to say, interested himself warmly in endeavouring to extricate me from that necessity. He has had different conferences with the Count D. F. B. on the subject, and yesterday he promised the ambassador positively to pay the \$89,083 which will be due in April, in the course of six months, in six equal payments, reckoning from next May ; but as this money still left me without relief as to the April bill, he engaged the Marquis d'Yranda to advance the sums necessary to pay them, and which I shall accordingly receive from him. Thus, my dear sir, I have been, as it were, reprieved by the kind offices of the French ambassador, from protesting any of the bills due this month ; but every ensuing month will bring with it new dangers and solitudes, and particularly the month of May, in the course of which I shall be called upon for no less than \$96,288. I am in a cruel situation, and without the least expectation of succour except from France. I therefore think it necessary to inform you of the delicate state of our affairs here by express, and to entreat you to use your utmost endeavours to provide me, by his return, with funds adequate to the bills accepted, and which at *present* amount to \$142,220, without including either those which may yet arrive, or the \$89,083 due this month, and for the payment of which I expect to reimburse the Marquis d'Yranda with the money promised by the minister in the monthly payment before mentioned.

The Marquis d'Yranda, whom I saw yesterday at the French ambassador's, has further agreed, at the ambassador's request, to furnish me with the further sum of \$142,220 as I shall have occasion for it, provided Mr. Grand will accept his drafts to that amount. It is therefore of the last importance that arrangements for this purpose be immediately taken with that gentleman, and that I receive, by the return of the express, his order on the marquis to fur-

nish me at least with the sum of \$142,220; without which it will be impossible for me to pay these bills.

The ambassador will also write by this courier, and I have little doubt but that your court will generously interpose on this, as they have on several other occasions, to prevent events prejudicial to America in particular, and the common cause in general. I am also constrained to add, that our situation here is daily becoming more disagreeable from the want of our salaries. To be obliged to contract debts and live on credit is terrible. I have not, to this day, received a shilling from America; and we should indeed have been greatly distressed, had it not been for your good offices. Endeavour, I beseech you, to provide us with supplies on this account, and deliver me, if possible, from the many disagreeable sensations which such a variety of unpleasant circumstances naturally creates. Remember that new bills are still arriving.

Be pleased to communicate this letter to Mr. Laurens, who, I am persuaded, will cheerfully afford you all the aid in his power.

I have directed the courier to wait your orders, and then return without further delay.

I am, dear sir,  
Your friend and humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

P.S. You will perceive, from the enclosed account, that I shall be under the necessity of drawing upon you for ten or twelve thousand dollars, on account of the twenty-five thousand, before it will be possible to hear from you on the subject.

TO CHARLES THOMPSON.

Madrid, 23d April, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

On the 30th January last, I had the pleasure of receiving your very acceptable letter of the 12th October, 1780.

The able manner in which it treats the important subject of American finances induced me to give that part of it to the minister, and to send a copy of the same extract to Dr. Franklin, who, in his answer, says—"I thank you for communicating to me the letter of the secretary of Congress on our finances. It gives light which I had not before, and may be useful here."

I wish in my heart that you was not only secretary of Congress, but secretary also for foreign affairs. I should then have better sources of intelligence than gazettes and reports.

My public letter contains a state of our affairs here. I flatter myself that Congress will never again attempt to form an alliance on principles of equality in *forma pauperis*.

Before their ingenious letter on our right to the Mississippi arrived, it was known in Europe; and the subject of my last instructions on that head was no secret here before they reached this side of the ocean. I would tell you more, had I now time to write in ciphers; but the gentleman who is to carry these despatches is waiting for them.

The want of a regular and safe communication between Congress and their foreign ministers gives occasion to various inconveniences. Every letter known or suspected to be for or from me, that gets into the post-offices, is opened, often kept back for a while, and, to my certain knowledge, sometimes suppressed entirely.

Hence it happens that Congress receives from me fewer letters than I could wish, or than their affairs may demand. The expense of private couriers is intolerable, nor can many in that character be found who merit confidence.

The unseasonable arrival of bills, without being preceded by funds, and the train of perplexing consequences resulting from that and other causes not in my power to prevent, have given me some anxious hours, and often rendered my situation uneasy.

It is my business, however, to reflect, that pleasure was not the object for which I came here, and that obstacles should rather excite than repress perseverance.

Be pleased to present Mrs. Jay's and my compliments to Mrs. Thompson, and believe me to be with sincere regard and esteem,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM ROBERT MORRIS.

Philadelphia, June 5th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I must freely acknowledge the justice of your charge against me as a bad correspondent, for the force of truth would convict, were I to deny, and perhaps friendship will hardly bear with palliatives; but knowing well your attachment to, and practice of sincerity, I shall honestly tell you I did not like to write on political matters, and in what may be called domestic, you had constantly better information than 'twas possible for me to give, having also very ample employment for my time: you will reflect, that all these circumstances combined to make me silent, although not inattentive or forgetful of my friends abroad.

I have three letters from you, dated the 28th May, 16th September, and 19th November last, and feel myself exceedingly indebted to that partiality which prompted you to say many civil things; these are stamped with an unusual value, not because I suffer myself to think they are merited, but because you thought so. We have heard more of you and Mrs. Jay than these letters tell me, and upon the whole have not found much cause to be pleased with your situation. Hers must too often have been very disagreeable; the loss of the little *one* was truly distressing, and your almost constant absence extremely hard. But you must comfort yourselves with the reflection that still more cruel things might have happened, had you remained in your own

country. Suppose you had been with your father, when some of the enemy's ruffians broke into the house, and after satiating themselves with plunder, they had carried you, my dear friend, a prisoner to New-York. Think of the triumph of your enemies, the distress of your friends, and what you must, under such circumstances, have suffered: happy that you have escaped such an event, I will not prolong the idea of it.

Our friend Gouverneur has acquainted you with my appointment to be superintendant of finance; the motives of my acceptance are purely patriotic, and I would this moment give much of my property to be excused; but pressed by my friends, acquaintances, fellow-citizens, and almost by all America, I could not resist. I will therefore most assiduously try to be useful, and if in this I do but succeed, my recompense will be ample. Gouverneur and others have promised me the assistance of their abilities. Congress promise support; if the Legislatures and individuals will do the same, we will soon change the face of our affairs, and show our enemies that their hopes of our ruin, through the channel of finance, is as vain as their hope of conquest.

This campaign, as usual, opens to our disadvantage; but I expect it will also, as usual, close favourably for us. The vices and follies of our enemies may justly be counted among the number of our fast friends. They never fail to work for our relief in the hour of distress; for at those times the pride, insolence, and tyranny of the British heroes are too insufferable to be borne, even by the peasantry of America. It affords me much pleasure to find the assistance I have given towards delivering supplies at Havannah, is known and approved by the ministry at the court of Madrid; as a favourable impression there may be serviceable to my administration of the finances, and I hope still to return more important services for those I expect from

them to this distressed country. Adieu, my dear sir: with sincere affection, I am

Your obedient, humble servant,

ROBERT MORRIS.

TO J. SMITH.

Aranjuez, 5th June, 1781.

SIR,

So many letters both for and from me miscarry, that I take this opportunity of informing you, that I have had the pleasure of writing to you by the way of Cadiz, and that I consider myself much obliged by your favour of the 27th Feb. last, which did not come to my hands till long after it must have arrived here. The intelligence communicated by it was no less welcome than interesting. We wait with impatience for further information respecting the military operations in the southern States. Lord Cornwallis's expedition bears some marks of rashness, and I cannot but expect he will have some reason to repent it. I think his temper and measures well calculated to enrage and discipline the southern militia; if so, his victories will render his enemies more numerous and formidable than ever. The ratification of the confederation, and the firm establishment of civil government in the different states, are circumstances very friendly to the American cause, and should be viewed by our enemies as insurmountable obstacles to our again becoming their subjects. Such, however, is their infatuation and their obstinacy, that there appears very little reason to flatter ourselves with a speedy peace, unless this campaign should produce events greatly to their prejudice. I hope, therefore, that our countrymen will not suffer themselves to be amused with such delusive expectations, but on the contrary will persevere vigorously and systematically in preparing to prosecute the war.

I am, sir, your most obedient and humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Madrid, July 9th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

Many weeks have elapsed since I have been favoured with any letters from you. I have received a letter from Colonel Laurens, dated at sea, and covering the one herewith enclosed for you. A vessel has arrived at Bilboa, in twenty-four days from Salem. I received by her some family letters, which came from Bilboa under cover to a gentleman here. She brought for me a large packet, which was put into the post-office, and ought to have come to hand a week ago. I have inquired for it, but in vain. This is not an uncommon case, and shows how necessary it is that Congress should take some other means for conveying intelligence to and from their ministers than the European post-offices. Be pleased to make my compliments to your grandson, and remind him that he is three letters in my debt.

You will also find herewith enclosed a copy of a letter I have received from Silas Talbot, a prisoner at Plymouth, requesting aid.

This gentleman gives a true description of himself. He has on various occasions acted like a very brave and enterprising officer, and the journals of Congress contain ample evidence of it. I sincerely lament his situation, and regret that my own does not put it in my power to afford him relief. The far greater part of the money which the public demands require here, I draw from you. The amount of the bills drawn upon me by Congress far exceeds that of the funds prepared for their payment, and the debts already incurred on account of distressed American seamen still remain unpaid. It would not be delicate in me to advance money to Colonel Talbot, and then request the favour of you to replace it, especially as his situation places him more immediately under your care

than mine. All that I can therefore do with propriety is to make you acquainted with his case. He has served his country zealously, and has a right to her care; gratitude as well as policy dictates it. I fear too little attention has in general been paid to our captive seamen. I often hear of many entering into the enemy's service for want of bread, and for ill treatment not retaliated; even those who have had the good fortune and address to escape, are frequently obliged, in seeking opportunities to return home, to wander about from place to place, friendless, penniless, ignorant of the language of the strangers through whose land they pass, making known their wants only by the voice of distress, and subsisting on the wretched husks cast to them by the frugal hand of charity. Nor is this all: although their misfortunes, on finding American vessels bound home, ought to recommend them to their brethren, yet it too often happens that masters of American vessels inhumanly refuse (unless paid passage-money) to carry home these unfortunate people, though offering to do duty without wages as sailors during the voyage.

I am, dear sir, with sincere esteem and regard,

Your obliged and affectionate servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO CAPT. SILAS TALBOT.\*

Late of the Washington, ship of war.

Madrid, 14th July, 1781.

SIR,

Although I have not had the pleasure of your acquaintance, I am not a stranger to your merit.

On receiving your favour of the 11th ult., I sent a copy of it to his excellency Dr. Franklin, and warmly recommended your case to his attention. I am persuaded he will do all in his power for your relief, and that the distinguished

\* A prisoner of war in England.

manner in which you have served our country, will always be considered as giving you a title to her care and protection.

Not being authorized by Congress to provide for American prisoners in England, I could not justify undertaking it, and therefore referred your application to Dr. Franklin, within whose department that business appears to me to fall.

I shall always be ready as an individual to contribute to the relief of my distressed countrymen, and should now give you proof of it; but as your case and that of your fellow-prisoners ought to be, and probably are provided for by the public, I think assistance should there be asked and denied, before it can become the duty of private benevolence to supply public omissions.

If the application to Dr. Franklin should be fruitless, I shall then consider myself bound, as a good American, to contribute towards the relief of a fellow-citizen, who has so nobly fought in the cause of our country; and I shall in that case desire Mr. Williams, at Nantz, who forwarded your letter to me, to advance you fifty dollars on my private account; which sum you will repay to me whenever you may be in circumstances to do it, for should misfortunes delay or prevent your being in that situation, it would be more agreeable to me to advance you a farther sum, than to demand the repayment of this.

I am, sir, with real esteem,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO FREDERICK JAY.

Madrid, 31st July, 1781.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

We have heard (though not from you) that a number of armed robbers have paid you a visit, and taken from the family their money, plate, &c.; it is also said that they

behaved towards our father, Peter, and Nancy, with more decency and respect than people of that class generally observe. I am very sensible of the distress which this misfortune must have occasioned; my having, however, in two of my former letters, which I hope have arrived safe, desired you to draw upon me for one hundred pounds sterling, in two sets of bills of fifty pounds each, gives me much consolation; should this not be adequate to your exigences, you may draw upon me for thirty pounds sterling more. While I have any thing, a share of it shall be appropriated to the wants of the family. I thank God that by means of economy, I shall be able to afford them some assistance from time to time, and in some measure mitigate the calamities brought upon them by the war, and the transmutation of their gold into paper.

On the 25th of June last, Mr. Harrison, at Cadiz, shipped at my request, and on my account and risk, by the Black Prince, Captain John Robertson, bound from thence for Philadelphia, one bale marked I. Jay, to be delivered to Mr. Robert Morris, and containing  $67\frac{3}{4}$  Spanish yards of coarse cloth, and  $70\frac{1}{2}$  yards of baize for lining.

If this arrives safe, it will help to keep your servants warm next winter. A Spanish yard is somewhat less than an English one. Miss Katy Livingston writes me, that one little parcel of salt I sent you, was then safe in Mr. Morris's custody, and that she had by letter informed you of it. I have since sent another parcel of a dozen or fifteen bushels. I think you would do well to write to Mr. Morris now and then, and enclose to him such of your letters for me as you may intend to go by vessels from Philadelphia.

On considering the state of the family, I am really at a loss to see how the number of it can be considerably reduced. As to the old servants, who have expended their strength and youth for the family, they ought and must be taken good care of, while we have the means

of doing it; common justice, and I may say gratitude, demands it.

Upon the whole I believe it will be best, considering the age, infirmities, and various afflictions of our good old father, not to press him upon these, nor indeed any other points that may not be very important, but by leaving his mind as much as possible undisturbed, and endeavouring daily to soothe and quiet his cares, to render the evening of his days as calm and composed as the complication of perplexities which surround him will permit.

I am told Peggy behaved like a Roman matron, and in her conduct towards the robbers showed great firmness and presence of mind. Present to her my commendations on the occasion.

I flatter myself that my father's fortitude did not forsake him, and therefore, that though he lost money, he did not lose health by those rude visiters. Your letter made me happy by assuring me that his strength continued as when I left him. God grant that I may find it the same on my return. I really regret Nancy's\* ill-health; it should be better if my prayers and wishes could avail. You must endeavour to keep up each others spirits, and oppose misfortunes with manly firmness and cheerful resignation.

We are all well. Remember us affectionately to all the family.

I am, dear Frederick,

Your very affectionate brother,

JOHN JAY.

TO PETER JAY, ESQ.

Madrid, 1st Aug., 1781.

DEAR SIR,

Several letters I have received from Jersey and Philadelphia mention your having been robbed in April last by

\* Mr. Jay's blind sister.

a number of armed men. It is said, they behaved with uncommon respect to you, and humanity towards Peter and Nancy. If this be true, they deserve credit for the manner in which they executed their purposes. The loss sustained on that occasion must have been the more severely felt, as the situation of the country, and the injuries you had suffered from the enemy, and the depreciation of the paper money, rendered it difficult for you to repair it. I thank God, however, that you lost nothing but property—your lives were spared. I beseech you not to permit an improper degree of delicacy to prevent your deriving such succours from me as may from time to time be convenient. I assure you, the reflection that my absence may be the means of rendering the situation of the family less distressing, makes me more reconciled to it than I otherwise should be. You have denied yourself much for the sake of your children; and I am much mistaken if some of them have not inherited dispositions somewhat similar to those of their parents. Had you been less attentive to my education, I should not have been as and where I am. Economy will enable me to give you aid, for though I shall spare no expense here which my situation may require, yet a tax upon avoidable pleasures, amusements, and luxuries, will produce a little fund that may and shall be useful to you. In my letter to Frederick I have been more explicit on this subject. My love to all the family.

I am, dear sir,

Your dutiful and affectionate son,

JOHN JAY.

TO WILLIAM BINGHAM.

St. Ildefonso, 5th Sept., 1781.

DEAR SIR,

Among other letters brought by Major Franks, I had the pleasure of receiving one from you, dated in July last. From the few of mine that have reached you, it appears

they have been very unfortunate, and with many others, have probably perished in the ocean.

I am therefore to repeat my congratulations on the happiness you derive from the most delicate of all connexions with one of the most lovely of her sex. As I am always pleased to find those happy who I think deserve to be so, it gave me very sensible satisfaction to hear that you had both made so judicious a choice, notwithstanding the veil which that sweet fascinating passion often draws over our eyes and understanding. Be pleased to present my compliments and best wishes to Mrs. Bingham, and to add and accept those of Mrs. Jay, who never speaks of Martinico without expressing how much we are indebted to you for the agreeable manner in which we passed the time we staid there.

Your representation of the state of our affairs is flattering, and affords reason to hope that the enemy will soon cease to deceive themselves and others by groundless expectations of conquest.

Peace and the negotiations for it are the prevailing topics of conversation here, and perhaps in America also. I hope, however, that our countrymen will not suffer themselves to be too much influenced by prospects, which may prove no less delusive than they are pleasing. To prepare vigorously for war is the only sure way of preparing for a speedy and valuable peace.

The Duke de Crillon is in possession of every part of Minorca, except Fort St. Philip, which, unless pressed by want of provisions or ammunition, will not, I suspect, soon or easily change masters.

I should mention some other public intelligence; but before this letter can possibly come to your hands, as Major Franks will go from hence to Paris, it will cease to be new in America.

It is natural for you to expect that my letters should

now and then contain some traits of this country, its manners, government, and principal characters. With respect to the three first, I make it a rule to be perfectly silent in all my letters. The latter is a very delicate subject, and men should be well acquainted with a character before they attempt to describe it. Much injustice is often done by taking reports as facts, and forming opinions of men from the suggestions which may arise from envy or interested partialities. Though not very old, I have lived too long to credit all I hear; and having been deceived by fair as well as unpromising appearances, they have ceased to decide my judgment of men.

Whenever you write to me, which I hope will be often, recollect that your letters will, in nine instances out of ten, be inspected before they reach me; write nothing, therefore, that you would wish concealed. But as this necessary caution may sometimes restrain you from communicating what you may think interesting for me to know, I cannot omit this opportunity of giving you a cipher, viz. Entick's New Spelling Dictionary, printed at London in 1777, which you will easily find at Philadelphia; I bought mine at Bell's book-store. Add twenty to the number of the page, and ten to that of the word you use. Distinguish the first column by a dot over the first figure, and the second column by a dot over the second figure. For instance, the word *duration* is the first word in the first column of the 139th page, and must be thus written,  $\dot{1}39 \dot{1}1$ . Again, the word *beauty* is the tenth word in the second column of the 60th page, and must be thus written,  $8\dot{0} 20$ . But as it may often happen that you may want to write names or words which you will not find in the dictionary, use the following alphabet in such cases:

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z  
n m l k i h f i e d c b a l y v x t u r p w s z o y

The design of this alphabet is obvious; use n for a, m for b, &c.

I must now remark that you will have it in your power to give me advices of such matters as, though often interesting, I am seldom favoured with by any of my correspondents. I mean the state of parties, the views of leading individuals, and such intelligence respecting our friends and others, as though I might wish to know, ought not to be public, and can only be safely communicated in cipher.

Send your letters for me, under cover, to His Excellency the Count de Montmorin, the Ambassador of His Most Christian Majesty at this court.

I fear you will find a correspondence of this kind a little troublesome, but I know your industry, talents, and disposition to oblige, and therefore, though my letters may not always afford an adequate compensation, I flatter myself you will not decline it, especially as you may be assured of the utmost prudence and secrecy on my part.

Be pleased to remember us to all our friends in your circle. With sincere regard and attachment,

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO GENERAL KNOX.

Madrid, 10th Dec., 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I thank you sincerely for your very friendly letter of the 21st October last, which I had the pleasure of receiving on the 7th inst. I rejoice most cordially with you and every other good American, in the important event you communicate, and to which you had both the honour and the satisfaction of essentially contributing.

General Washington has favoured me with copies of the articles of capitulation, and returns of the prisoners, &c. It gives me very sensible pleasure to find that he commanded

in person on this glorious occasion, and had the satisfaction of bringing deliverance to his native, and consequently, favourite part of America. If Providence shall be pleased to lead him, with safety and success, through all the duties of his station, and carry him home with the blessings of all America on his head, I think he will exhibit to the world the most singular instance of virtue, greatness, and good fortune united, which the history of mankind has hitherto recorded.

The harmony subsisting between the French troops and ours, is an agreeable, as well as an important circumstance, and I am glad that the Marquis De La Fayette had an opportunity of cutting some sprigs of laurel on one of the enemy's redoubts. He has given strong proofs of attachment to our cause and country, and as military glory seems to be his mistress, he has my best wishes that she may be as constant to him as he has been to us.

General Greene has deservedly acquired great reputation. He has nobly surmounted a variety of difficulties, and his country has fortunately found resources in his talents and perseverance, which the peculiar situation of the southern States rendered no less seasonable than important.

This campaign ends gloriously for us. How far the British counsels may be changed by these events, is as yet uncertain. I am much inclined to think that another campaign will precede a general peace. In my opinion, our country would do well to continue making the most vigorous efforts to render peace more essential to her enemies than herself.

It would give me pleasure to transmit to you some interesting advices from this quarter of the world. The sieges of Gibraltar and Fort St. Philip continue. When they will be terminated, is impossible to divine. The Dutch are praying for peace, and neglecting the means necessary to obtain a proper one. The people do not appear to want

spirit, but their government and their rulers subject them to numberless embarrassments.

France is full of joy and ardour, and will, I believe, do her best endeavours to make the next campaign active and brilliant.

The emperor is regulating the internal police of his dominions, encouraging commerce, and extending toleration, without suffering himself to be incommoded by ecclesiastical privileges or immunities. He seems to be seriously preparing to be great and formidable. He undoubtedly possesses the means of power, and it is said, has talents to use them to advantage.

With great regard and esteem,

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO GOVERNOR CLINTON.

Madrid, 23d Feb., 1782.

DEAR SIR,

My last to you was written on the 16th November, since which I have not had the pleasure of hearing from you.

I congratulate you on the successful issue of the last campaign, to the brilliancy of which the late surrender of Fort St. Philip, at Mahon, has much contributed.

Your hemisphere brightens fast, and there is reason to hope another vigorous campaign will be followed by halcyon days.

Mr. Benson writes me that your judges are industriously serving their country, but that their country had not, as yet, made an adequate provision for them. This is bad policy, and poverty cannot excuse it. The bench is at present well filled; but it should be remembered, that although we are told that Justice should be blind, yet there are no

proverbs which declare that she ought also to be hungry. Assure these gentlemen of my esteem; and believe me to be, dear sir, with sincere attachment,

Your friend and servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Passy, April 22d, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I have undertaken to pay all the bills of your acceptance that have come to my knowledge, and I hope in God no more will be drawn upon us, but when funds are first provided. In that case your constant residence at Madrid is no longer so necessary. You may make a journey either for health or pleasure, without retarding the progress of a negotiation not yet begun. Here you are greatly wanted, for messengers begin to come and go, and there is much talk of a treaty proposed, but I can neither make, nor agree to propositions of peace, without the assistance of my colleagues. Mr. Adams, I am afraid, cannot just now leave Holland. Mr. Jefferson is not in Europe, and Mr. Laurens is a prisoner, though abroad upon parol. I wish, therefore, that you would resolve upon the journey, and render yourself here as soon as possible. You would be of infinite service. Spain has taken four years to consider whether she should treat with us or not. Give her forty, and let us in the mean time mind our own business. I have much to communicate to you, but choose rather to do it *viva voce*, than trust it to letters.

I am ever, my dear friend,

Yours most affectionately,

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

FROM BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Passy, April 24th, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

The Prince de Massaran being so good as to desire carrying a letter to you, I sit down to write you a few lines, though I hope soon to see you.

Enclosed I send a copy of one of Mr. Deane's letters; I shall show you more when you come.

In consequence of a proposition I sent over, the parliament of Britain have just passed an act for exchanging American prisoners. They have near 1100 in the jails of England and Ireland, all committed as charged with high treason. The act is to empower the king, notwithstanding such commitments, to consider them as prisoners of war, according to the law of nations, and exchange them as such. This seems to be giving up their pretensions of considering us as rebellious subjects, and is a kind of acknowledgment of our independence. Transports are now taking up to carry back to their country the poor, brave fellows, who have borne for years their cruel captivity, rather than serve our enemies, and an equal number of English are to be delivered in return. I have, upon desire, furnished passports for the vessels.

Our affairs in Holland are *en bon train*; we have some prospect of another loan there; and all goes well here.

The proposal to us of a separate peace with England, has been rejected in the manner you wish, and I am pretty certain they will now enter into a general treaty. I wrote you a few lines by last post, and on the same day a few more by the court courier. They were chiefly to press your coming hither to assist in the affair.

With great and sincere esteem,

I am ever, dear sir,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Madrid, 25th April, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

Some of my letters to you have, I find, miscarried by the capture of the vessels that were carrying them; and there is reason to suspect that two others were stopped here, as the letters enclosing them did not reach the persons at the seaports to whom they were directed.

I have heretofore mentioned the receipt of the picture you was so kind as to send me, by Mr. Ridley, and the arrival of your sons. I don't know the fate of that letter, and that uncertainty induces me to repeat my thanks for the one, and my congratulations on the other. The estimation in which I hold your friendship, and the marks I have received of it, interest me in every thing which concerns you and yours, and be assured that no opportunity of giving higher proofs of it shall be omitted.

Mrs. Jay's time is much employed in nursing and amusing herself with her little girl. She is writing to Mrs. Morris. We are cheerful, and not unhappy, though distant from our friends, and deprived of the pleasures which result from that free and unreserved conversation which can only be indulged in the company of safe companions, or in a country like ours.

We remove next week to Aranjuez, where I expect again to spend some agreeable weeks. It is a charming place, containing a tract of several miles in circumference, and divided into gardens, meadows, parks, cultivated grounds, and wilds, full of fine trees, fine roads, and fine walks, and watered by a slow winding river, which, if more clear, would be very beautiful. But still, my friend, it is not America. A genius of a different character from that which presides at your hills and gardens reigns over these. Soldiers, with fixed bayonets, present themselves at various stations in these peaceful retreats; and though none but inoffensive

citizens are near, yet horsemen with drawn swords, guarding one or other of the royal family in their little excursions to take the air daily, renew and impress ideas of subjection. Power unlimited, and distrust misplaced, thus exacting homage and imposing awe, occasion uneasy reflections, and alloy the pleasing sensations which nature, smiling in such delightful scenes, never fails to excite. Were I a Spaniard, these decorated seats would appear to me like the temporary enchantments of some despotic magician, who, by re-extending his wand, could at pleasure command them to vanish, and be succeeded by galleys and prisons.

Nothing is more true, than that all things figure by comparison. This elegant seat being surrounded by exclusive wastes, appears like a blessed and fortunate island in a dreary ocean. The contrast heightens its charms, and every traveller arrives with a mind predisposed to admire and enjoy them; but as the first impression wears away, and he begins to recollect the more happy, though less magnificent abodes in his own country, the attractions and allurements of this insensibly diminish. I have more than once experienced this, and though not difficult to please or be contented, yet I confess that I find little here that resembles, and nothing that can compensate for the free air, the free conversation, the equal liberty, and the other numerous blessings which God and nature, and laws of our making, have given and secured to our happier country. I would not be understood to insinuate, that good society and agreeable companions are wanting here. They may, perhaps, abound more in some other parts of the world, but they are also to be found here, though an unsocial kind of policy requires unceasing attention to the most austere rules of caution and prudence. The little that I have seen and observed of this people, induces me to think that (except the generality of those who compose the highest and lowest orders), they possess many qualities which are praise-

worthy ; and that two or three long and wise reigns would make them a very powerful, and an amiable nation. But as I have not had sufficient opportunities of mixing with, and personally knowing many of them, time and further information may either confirm or alter this opinion. The evident suspense and indecision of the court respecting us, has kept many at a distance, with whom I should otherwise have been on a very familiar footing, and some of them have been so candid as to tell me so. This is a kind of prudence which naturally grows out of a jealous and absolute government, under which the people have, for many generations, been habituated to that kind of dependence, which constrains every class to watch and respect the opinions and inclinations of their superiors in power. The prosperous tide of our affairs, however, has for some time past run so strong, that I think many of our obstacles here must soon give way. Shyness will then cease, and I shall not afterward find it difficult to be received into more of their houses, and that in the only manner I ever wish to be received into any—I mean, at the front door, by direct invitation from the masters of them, and without the precursory good offices of upper servants and unimportant favourites, whom I never can submit to court. Until this period arrives, I shall continue to cultivate the few acquaintances I have, and without giving offence to any, endeavour to increase their number, whenever it may be done with propriety and to advantage ; but I shall, as heretofore, avoid embarrassing and intruding upon those who, in the mean time, may think it necessary to be reserved. Self-respect joins with prudence in pointing out this line of conduct ; and as I have no enemies of my own making, I am persuaded that instead of losing, I shall eventually be a gainer, by adhering to it, especially as those who may have been led to ascribe this conduct to improper motives, will then immediately find themselves undeceived.

Be pleased to present our compliments and best wishes to Mrs. Morris, and our friends with you.

I am, dear sir, with sincere regard,

Your affectionate friend and servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO COUNT DE MONTMORIN.\*

Paris, 26th June, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I devote this first leisure moment which has occurred since my arrival, to the pleasure of writing a few lines to you.

Our journey was pursued, without any avoidable intermission, to Bayonne, where it became advisable to rest a few days, and where we received many kind attentions from Mons. Formalaguer, to whom, it seems, you had been so obliging as to make friendly mention of us. That city is turning its attention to the American trade, and its situation, in certain respects, is favourable to that design.

Your friend, Mons. Risleau, at Bordeaux, pleased me much; there is a frankness in his manner, and a warmth about his heart, that is very engaging. I made some agreeable acquaintances in that city, and wish I could have staid longer with them. Commerce appears to flourish there; and if their trade with America could be properly protected, there is reason to think that it would soon become an object of great importance.

On leaving Bordeaux, Mrs. Jay caught an intermitting fever, which, with the great demand made for post-horses made by the Prince du Nord, delayed us greatly.

I went with Dr. Franklin to Versailles the day after our arrival. The minister spoke of you in terms very friendly, and very just, and my next visit would have been to the Countess de Montmorin; but as we learned that a mail was

\* French Ambassador at Madrid.

to be dismissed for Philadelphia to-day, we returned immediately to prepare our despatches, so that I have been obliged to deny myself the honour of paying my respects to a lady, whose character and connexion with you render me particularly desirous of seeing. To-morrow we are promised a visit from the Marquis de La Fayette and his lady, after which I shall take the first opportunity "*me poner a los pies de la Condesa Le Montmorin.*" I am not sure that this is good Spanish; if not, I wish the inspectors of the post-office may be so obliging as to correct it.

I had written thus far when a variety of interruptions prevented my proceeding for several days, and then I became violently attacked with the influenza, from which I am now just beginning to recover. It has been very severe on all my family. Mrs. Jay has been obliged to struggle with that and the intermittent fever together, and this is the first day she has been out of the house since our arrival.

I am very much mortified at not having yet seen the Countess de Montmorin. The day before I was taken sick I did myself the honour of calling at her house, but she was from home. As soon as the doctor sets me at liberty, the first use I will make of it will be to renew my visit.

What I have seen of France pleases me exceedingly. Dr. Franklin has received some late noble proofs of the king's liberality, in the liquidation of his accounts, and the terms and manner of paying the balance due on them. No people understand doing civil things so well as the French. The aids they have afforded us received additional value from the generous and gracious manner in which they were supplied; and that circumstance will have a proportionable degree of influence in cementing the connexion formed between the two countries.

I think the late resolutions and conduct of America, respecting Mr. Carlton's proposed correspondence with Congress, must have given you pleasure. As Mons. de Clonard passed through Spain, he doubtless brought you

copies. Some letters and instructions I have received by the same vessel, contain strong evidence of the determination of Congress to consult the interest and wishes of France upon all occasions.

I have seen and dined with the Count d'Aranda ; his conversation leads me to suspect that his court is, at last, in earnest. This, however, is a question which facts, and not words, must determine. It is hard to judge of men, especially of old politicians ; at present I like the count, for he appears frank and candid, as well as sagacious. They say he is a little obstinate, but, for my part, I prefer plain-dealing, obstinate men, to those unstable ones who, like the moon, change once a fortnight, and are mere dispensers of borrowed light.

I cannot forbear mentioning, that I am particularly indebted to the polite attention of your friend, Count d'Estaing. He is at Passy, enjoying *otium cum dignitate*. There is a singular taste displayed in the ornaments of his house. The very walls (like Portius in Addison's Cato) are ambitiously sententious, and show that they do not belong to an ordinary man.

I am, dear sir, with great esteem and attachment,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 13th August, 1782.

DEAR ROBERT,

Almost ever since my arrival here I have had, and still have, a sick family. The epidemic disorder which has spread through the northern part of Europe has been severe upon us. I am free from it at present, but it has taken from me some flesh and much strength. Mrs. Jay has frequent attacks of an irregular intermitting fever, and our little girl is not yet wholly out of danger.

Your letter of the 22d May, and the one enclosed with it

from your good mother, contain the first advices I received of my father's death. My last letter from Frederick was of an earlier date. That intelligence was not unexpected. I wish I had been with him; but it is a temporary separation, and I am resigned. It has added to the number of my inducements to walk in his steps, and thereby arrive at the same home.

I feel very sensibly for Peter and Nancy. They are ever in my thoughts. I thank you sincerely for becoming my agent. Dr. Franklin had paid me nine months' salary a few days before your letters arrived, and too great a part of it was pre-engaged to admit of my repaying it and waiting for bills.

I must request the favour of you to pay twenty pounds York money to Miss Kitty Livingston on account of my little boy, and one hundred and fifty pounds like money to Frederick, Peter, and Nancy,—to each fifty pounds. Arrange this through Mr. Benson. I hear my father has given some of the servants free, and that some other of the older ones have been put out. Old servants are sometimes neglected. Desire Mr. Benson to keep an eye over them, and not let any of them want; and for that purpose, place fifty pounds in his hands, which he will apply according to his discretion, as necessity may, from time to time, require. He must also reimburse himself for any expenses he may be at on this account. I should write to him also on this subject, but have neither health nor time, having at present a violent headache and a little fever, and my letter must be sent to the Marquis de La Fayette's this evening. Adieu, my friend.

Yours, &c.

JOHN JAY.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Paris, 13th October, 1782.

MY DEAR SIR,

Wherever and however occupied, I remember my friends, and always find my own satisfaction promoted when I have reason to think that I am conducing to theirs. This has led me to make your sons the subject of this letter. It is an interesting one to you, and therefore not indifferent to me.

On my arrival here, I found them placed in a *pension* at Passy. My daughter was ill with a whooping-cough, and, lest your sons should catch it, we denied ourselves the pleasure of having them with us until after that obstacle had ceased. I have frequently seen them at Dr. Franklin's, as well as at my own house. They had promised to dine with us every Wednesday, but Mr. Ridley prolonged it to every other Wednesday. They are fine boys, and appear to possess a full share of natural talents. I am told that they have made a progress in French proportionate to the time they have been learning it. Of this I am not an adequate judge myself, and therefore must depend on the judgment of others. The *pension* at which they are has been so far well enough; but I think, with Mr. Ridley, that a better is to be wished for, and to be sought. He is at present making the necessary inquiries, and I have every reason to believe that the trust you have reposed in him will be conscientiously and faithfully executed.

Mr. Ridley finds it difficult to decide on the expediency of carrying them to Geneva; and, from what I have heard, I think he has reason to entertain doubts on that head. As I have no materials to judge from but the report of others, and those perhaps not altogether well-founded, it is difficult for me to form a decided opinion on the subject. I can only say, that I have heard more against it than for it.

My opinion may perhaps seem singular, and the more so

as it cannot be properly explained in the compass of a letter. I think the youth of every *free* civilized country should, if possible, be educated in it, and not permitted to travel out of it till age has made them so cool and firm as to retain their national and moral impressions. Connexions formed at school and college have much influence, and are to be watched even at that period. If judiciously formed, they will often endure and be advantageous through life. American youth may possibly form proper, and perhaps useful, friendships in European seminaries, but I think not so *probably* as among their fellow-citizens, with whom they are to grow up, whom it will be useful for them to know and be early known to, and with whom they are to be engaged in the business of active life, and under the eye and direction of parents whose advice, authority, and example are frequently of more worth than the lessons of hireling professors, particularly on the subjects of religion, morality, virtue, and prudence.

The fine, and some of the useful, arts may doubtless be better acquired in Europe than America, and so may the living European languages; but when I consider that a competent knowledge even of these may be gained in our country, and that almost all of the more substantial and truly valuable acquirements may, in my opinion, with more facility and certainty be attained there than here, I do not hesitate to prefer an American education.

I fear that the ideas which my countrymen in general conceive of Europe are in many respects rather too high. If we should ever meet again, you shall know my sentiments very fully on that head.

But your sons are here, and what is to be done? Mr. Ridley is about doing what I think, with him, is the best thing that can at present be done, viz. to put them in one of the best *pensions* that can be found, and to give them the advantage of such extra tutors as may be requisite.

Perhaps further information may place Geneva in a more

favourable light. You shall have frequent letters from me on this subject; and while I remain here, you may be assured of my constant attentions to these promising boys.

I am, dear sir,

With great esteem and regard,

Your affectionate friend and servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

Paris, 13th Oct., 1782.

DEAR MORRIS,

I have received your *festina lente* letter, but wish it had been at least partly in cipher; you need not be informed of my reasons for the wish, as by this time you must know that seals are, on this side of the water, rather matters of decoration than of use. It gave me nevertheless great pleasure to receive that letter, it being the first from you that had reached me, the Lord knows when. I find you are industrious, and of consequence, useful; so much the better for yourself, for the public, and for our friend Morris, whom I consider as the pillar of American credit.

The king of Great Britain, by letters patent under the great seal, has authorized Mr. Oswald to treat with the commissioners of the *United States of America*. His first commission literally pursued the enabling act, and the authority it gave him was expressed in the very terms of that act, viz. to treat with the colonies, and with any or either of them, and any part of them, and with any description of men in them, and with any person whatsoever, of and concerning peace, &c.

Had I not violated the instructions of Congress, their dignity would have been in the dust; for the French minister even took pains, not only to persuade us to treat under that commission, but to prevent the second, by telling Fitzherbert that the first was sufficient. I told the minister that

we neither could nor would treat with any nation in the world on any other than on an equal footing.

We may and we may not have a peace this winter. Act as if the war would certainly continue. Keep proper garrisons in your strong posts; and preserve your army sufficiently numerous, and well appointed, until every idea of hostility and surprise shall have completely vanished.

I could write you a volume, but my health admits only of short intervals of application.

Present my best wishes to Mr. and Mrs. Morris, and such other of our friends as may ask how we do.

I am, dear Morris,

Very much your friend,

JOHN JAY.

FROM GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Verplanck's Point (on the Hudson), }  
18th Oct., 1782. }

DEAR SIR,

Not having received from your excellency, during the last winter or summer, the acknowledgment of any letter, except of my public despatches of October last, I apprehend that some private letters, which I have had the pleasure of addressing to you since that time, have miscarried. I resume my pen, therefore, to repeat the thanks which were contained in one of them, for the wine you had the goodness to present me with; and to assure you that I entertain the friendly sentiments towards you which I have ever experienced since our first acquaintance.

We have now passed another campaign, and no very important occurrence has intervened on this side the Atlantic. The evacuation of Charleston was considered by General Greene, in his last letters to me, as an event that would certainly take place; and from other circumstances I am induced to believe it is effected by this time. Part of the garrison (the British troops) will probably go to the

West Indies, and the Germans to the northward. Admiral Pigot is now in New-York harbour, with twenty-six heavy ships, ready wooded and watered for sea; but the present circumstances, though somewhat equivocal, do not indicate that New-York will be abandoned this year; notwithstanding there have been many reports and conjectures of the kind some weeks ago.

The Marquis De Vaudruille is in Boston harbour with twelve sail of the line (three excepted, which are at Portsmouth), having unfortunately stranded and lost the *Magnifique* on entering that bay. But Congress have presented to his most Christian Majesty the ship *America*, of 74 guns, built at Portsmouth, and now nearly fit for sea.

The changes in the British ministry, and the fluctuation of their councils, are the subjects of universal speculation. We wait with impatience to hear the result of the negotiations, and not being very sanguine in our expectations, endeavour to hold ourselves prepared for every contingency. I am certain it will afford you pleasure to know that our army is better organized, disciplined, and clothed, than it has been at any period since the commencement of the war. This you may be assured is the fact.

I shall always be happy to hear from you, especially at the present important crisis of European politics; and beg you will be persuaded, that with the warmest wishes and most respectful compliments to Mrs. Jay, I am, with sentiments of the highest regard and esteem,

Dear sir, your excellency's most obedient

And humble servant,

GEO. WASHINGTON.

TO LADY JULIANA PENN.

Paris, 4th Dec., 1782.

I shall always be exceedingly happy, my lady, in every opportunity of confirming the favourable opinion with which your ladyship and the amiable friend to whom I

believe you allude, have been impressed. The misfortunes incident to war are always to be regretted, and humanity will not cease to sympathize with those on either side, who, without deserving, have experienced its rigours.

It gives me pleasure to inform your ladyship, that according to the preliminaries agreed to between Great Britain and America, Congress will recommend in a very benevolent manner to the reconsideration of the different States, the measures they have taken against certain individuals. The nature of our government rendered every other mode of revising those cases improper; and as some persons might have much, others little, and many no reason to complain, it was the most eligible and obvious mode of ascertaining the merits of each; there is also reason to expect that whatever undue degrees of severity may have been infused into our laws by a merciless war, and a strong sense of injuries, will yield to the influence of those gentler emotions, which the mild and cheerful season of peace and tranquillity must naturally excite.

Your ladyship will, therefore, see the necessity as well as propriety of applying after the war, to the Legislature of Pennsylvania, for a reconsideration of the act respecting your family. For my part, I believe that justice will be done to all; and I hope that clemency and reconciliation will be refused only to the faithless and the cruel. The same magnanimity which has distinguished the conduct of America in times of danger and distress, will doubtless enable her to receive prosperity with dignity and gratitude, and to use it with moderation and philanthropy.

I have the honour to be, with perfect respect,

Your ladyship's

Most obedient and most humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 14th December, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

From our preliminaries and the king's speech, the present disposition and system of the British court may, in my opinion, be collected. Although particular circumstances constrained them to yield us more than perhaps they wished, I still think they meant to make (what they thought would really be) a satisfactory peace with us. In the continuance of this disposition and system too much confidence ought not to be placed, for disappointed violence and mortified ambition are certainly dangerous foundations to build implicit confidence upon; but I cannot forbear thinking that we ought not, in the common phrase, to throw cold water upon it by improper exultation, extravagant demands, or illiberal publications; should such a temper appear, it would be wise to discountenance it. It is our policy to be independent in the most extensive sense, and to observe a proper distance towards all nations, minding our own business, and not interfering with, or being influenced by, the views of any, further than they may respect us.

Some of my colleagues flatter themselves with the probability of obtaining compensation for damages. I have no objections to a further trial, but I confess I doubt its success, for Britain has no money to spare, and will think the confiscations should settle that account, for they do not expect that retribution will be made to all.

Our affairs have a very promising aspect, and a little prudence will secure us all that we can reasonably expect. The boundaries between the States should be immediately settled, and all causes of discord between them removed. It would be imprudent to disband the army while a foreign one remains in the country; and it would be equally unwise to permit Americans to spill the blood of our friends in the islands, for in all of them there are many who wish

us well. The sale of the continental lands would, if properly regulated and appropriated to that purpose, form a fund on which we might borrow money, especially if foreigners could see good reason to rely on our good faith, which, by being in certain instances violated, has lost much of its credit. I allude particularly to the interest on loan-office certificates, and the publications in our papers on that subject, which do us harm in Europe. Adieu.

I am, dear Robert,

Your friend,

JOHN JAY.

FROM ROBERT MORRIS.

Philadelphia, January 3d, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

You have not heard from me so often as you had a right to expect. I lament, but cannot help it. Constant employment puts it out of my power to do many things I wish to do, and *that* of writing to my friends is among the number. My private letters, however, cannot be of much consequence, and you must accept the *will* for the *deed*.

I cannot take time at present to enter on any political discussions. But you must allow me to declare my perfect satisfaction in, and approbation of, your conduct in Europe. All who have had the opportunity of knowing what it has been, are struck with admiration at your patience under difficulties, and your firmness in rising superior to them. Go on, my friend; you deserve and will receive the gratitude of your country. History will hand down your plaudits to posterity. The men of the present day, who are generally least grateful to their contemporaries, esteem it an honour to be of your acquaintance.

I am sorry to hear that Mrs. Jay and yourself have been indisposed, but I hope you are recovered, and partaking the enjoyments of this season with the gay, sprightly

inhabitants of Versailles and Paris. My best wishes ever attend you.

Your friend Gouverneur writes you political letters, but as he tells you nothing of himself, it is just that I tell you, how industrious, how useful he is ; his talents and abilities you know ; they are all faithfully and disinterestedly applied to the service of his country. I could do nothing without him, and our joint labours do but just keep the wheels in motion.

With sincere attachment,

I am, my dear sir,

Your friend and humble servant,

ROBERT MORRIS.

TO MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE.

Rouen, 19th Jan., 1783. ?

DEAR SIR,

Accept my thanks for your obliging letter of the 26th December last, which the marchioness was so kind as to send me yesterday. I congratulate you on your safe arrival at Cadiz, and you have my best wishes, that the same good fortune you have hitherto experienced, may continue to attend you.

The state of my health making a change of air and exercise advisable, I left Paris ten days ago on an excursion into Normandy. Hence, I suppose, it has happened that I have neither heard of nor seen your letters to Dr. Franklin.

If I am not mistaken, a copy of the American preliminaries has been sent to Spain ; and I flatter myself that Count de Montmorin will think them perfectly consistent with our engagements to our allies. It appears to me singular that any doubts should be entertained of American good faith ; for as it has been tried and remains inviolate, they cannot easily be explained on principles honourable to those who entertain them. America has so often repeated and reite-

rated her professions and assurances of regard to the treaty alluded to, that I hope she will not impair her dignity by making any more of them; but leave the continued uprightness of her conduct to inspire that confidence which it seems she does not yet possess, although she has always merited.

Our warmest acknowledgments are due to you for the zeal you manifest to serve America, at all times and in all places; but, sir, I have little expectation that your plan of a Spanish loan will succeed. I confess that I am far from being anxious about it. In my opinion, America can, with no propriety, accept favours from Spain.

My absence from Paris has deprived me of the means of information, and therefore I cannot at present gratify either your wishes or my own on that head. God knows whether or not we shall have peace. A variety of contradictory reports daily reach me, but they deserve little credit. It is again said, that Charleston is evacuated—that may be. It is also said, the enemy have left New-York; but I adhere to my former opinion, and do not believe a word of it. Mrs. Jay writes me that Mr. Oswald is gone to London, but for what purpose I am ignorant. Thus, my dear sir, are we held in a state of suspense, which nothing but time can remove. I purpose to return next week to Paris, and shall then write to you again. Adieu.

I am, with perfect respect and esteem,

Dear sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO SILAS DEANE.

Paris, 22d Feb., 1783.

SIR,

Your letter of the 10th inst. was delivered to me a few days ago.

The reason to which you ascribe my not having answered

the other you wrote me was the true one, viz. that it was unnecessary.

The time has been, when my writing to you would not have depended on such a circumstance, for you are not mistaken in supposing that I was once your friend. I really was, and should still have been so, had you not advised Americans to desert that independence, which they had pledged to each other their lives, their fortunes, and their *sacred honour* to support.

The charges against you of peculation undoubtedly called for strict and speedy inquiry; but I expected that you would make a satisfactory defence against them. I hope so still.

I will write to Congress about your accounts as you desire. Justice certainly demands that they should be liquidated and settled.

Dr. Bancroft, some time ago, asked my opinion as to your going to England. I told him it would be imprudent, but not that "it would be taken ill." To my knowledge, you was and are suspected of being in the British interest. Such a step would have strengthened that suspicion, and at that interesting period would have countenanced harsh conjectures as to the motives and objects of your journey, which for my part I could not divine. Perhaps the suspicion I mention is new to you; if so, the information is important.

Before this will come to your hands, and you could afterward get to London, the above mentioned objections will be weakened; and as circumstances press your going, it is probable you will venture. Let me advise you to be prudent, and to be cautious what company you keep, and what conversation you hold in that country.

I write thus plainly and fully, because I still indulge an idea, that your head may have been more to blame than your heart; and that in some melancholy desponding hour, the disorder of your nerves infected your opinions and your

pen. God grant that this may prove to have been the case, and that I may yet have reason to resume my former opinion, that you was a valuable, a virtuous, and a patriotic man. Whenever this may happen, I will, with great and sincere satisfaction, again become

Your friend,

JOHN JAY.

TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN, ESQ.

Paris, 28th March, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

Whence came the idea, that the moment a minister loses a question in parliament, he must be displaced? That kings should adopt such a maxim is not very unnatural, but that a free parliament should think an influential dictator over *them* necessary to the government of the kingdom, seems rather a new opinion. Perhaps it arose gradually from the practices of the court and the decay of public virtue during the last hundred years.

So far as the peace respects France and America, I am persuaded it was wise in Britain to conclude it. The cessions to France are not, in my opinion, extravagant; and the terms settled with America, by removing all causes of future variance, certainly lead to conciliation and friendship.

It appears to me that the discussion of this subject might have been more ample and satisfactory. Why was not parliament told of our offers as to commerce, and the mutual navigation of the American waters? The word *reciprocity* would not then have been deemed so nugatory.

We have received particular instructions on the business of commerce, and Mr. Fitzherbert has been informed of our readiness to add to the provisional treaty, an article for opening and regulating the trade between us on principles as liberal and reciprocal as you please. What more can be said or done? Mr. Pitt's bill was a good one, a wise

one, and one that will for ever do honour to the extent and policy of his views, and to those of the administration under whose auspices it was formed. For my own part, however, I think that America need not be exceedingly anxious about the matter; for it will be in our power to derive from a navigation act of our own, full as many advantages as we should lose by the restrictions of your laws.

The objections drawn from your treaties with Russia, &c. appear to me weak, and have been answered; but why not give them similar terms on similar conditions? They furnish you with raw materials chiefly, and you them with manufactures only. The gain, therefore, must be yours. With respect to carriage and navigation, they stand in a very different predicament from us.

As to the tories who have received damage from us, why so much noise about *them*, and so little said or thought of whigs who have suffered ten times as much from these same tories, not to mention the desolations of an unjust and licentious war.

We forget our sufferings, and even agree to recommend to favour a set of men, of whom very few would consider the having their deserts in the light of a blessing. How does reciprocity stand in this account?

Some, it seems, think that New-York should be retained as a rod to drive us on in this business of the tories. Strange that the idea of driving us should still be entertained. I pledge myself to you that, should such a design be adopted and become apparent, the refugees will get nothing, and the progress of reconciliation will be as slow as the warmest Gallican could wish.

I hear there is to be a Congress here; that is, that Britain and France have requested the two imperial courts to send mediatorial ambassadors here for the purpose of being witnesses to the execution of the definitive treaties;—a very important errand, no doubt, and very complimentary to

those sovereigns. Is it probable that a Congress should be called for that poor, single, simple purpose? Why your court agreed to it is hard to conceive.

I have written to my countrymen, that Lord Shelburne's system respecting them appeared to me to be liberal and conciliatory, but that his hesitations about *avowing* the acknowledgment of our independence discouraged extensive confidence without further facts. I always think it best to be candid and explicit. I hope we shall soon be in the full possession of our country and of peace, and as we expect to have no further cause of quarrel with Great Britain, we can have no inducement to wish or to do her injury; on the contrary, we may become as sensible to her future good offices as we have been to her former evil ones. A little good-natured wisdom often does more in politics than much slippery craft. By the former, the French acquired the esteem and gratitude of America, and by the latter, their minister is impairing it.

Thus I have written you a hasty letter. Since the receipt of yours, until this moment, I have been promising myself the pleasure of paying you a visit. I now find it probable that I shall be detained here some time longer.

Mrs. Jay charges me to say civil things to you. You are a favourite of hers, and deserve to be so of everybody. Our little girl is well, and when able to speak, shall be taught to send you her compliments. I shall reply to certain parts of your letter in my next; at present, I am pressed for time. I must not, however, forget my worthy friend, Mr. Oswald. He deserves well of his country, and posterity will not only approve, but commend his conduct. Assure him of my esteem and attachment, and believe me to be, with the best wishes for the health and happiness of Mrs. Vaughan and your little daughter,

Dear sir,

Your sincere and affectionate friend,

JOHN JAY.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Paris, 8th April, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

Permit me to introduce to you a gentleman who is going to help you to pay taxes, and to participate in the liberties which render them necessary, viz. Mr. Joshua Grigley. Mr. B. Vaughan writes me that this gentleman has considerable property, which you know will qualify him for the first, and that he has also much virtue and merit, which will enable him to sustain, as well as to enjoy, the latter. Thus, you see, he will be an addition to our collective property and respectability, and, consequently, comes naturally within your two departments of financier and patriot.

But you have also another department to which I must take the liberty of recommending this gentleman. He is a friend of Mr. Vaughan—he is a gentleman—he is a stranger—he is young. I know you too well to enlarge, or to add any thing except an assurance, with which I could, with as little hesitation, conclude my days as my letter, viz. that I am, with great esteem and affectionate regard,

Dear sir, your friend and servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO FRANCIS CHILD.\*

Paris, 11th May, 1783.

DEAR FRANK,

Your letter of the 1st of January last was delivered to me yesterday, and gives me pleasure. You do well to look forward to the means of exercising your profession to advantage. You shall continue to have my aid and protection, in such measure and season, as circumstances may render proper and expedient.

\* Mr. Francis Child was an indigent boy, who had been educated at Mr. Jay's expense. The press mentioned in this letter was obtained, and on it Mr. Child printed the first daily newspaper published in the city of New-York after the revolution.

You belong to a large and helpless family, and I wish to see you as able, as I hope you would be willing, to provide for them.

I think with you, that on the evacuation of New-York, you may set up a press there with a good prospect of success. On speaking to Dr. Franklin yesterday about it, he told me that when the enemy left Philadelphia, they carried from thence to New-York, a printing-press of his, and that it is now in the possession of one Robinson, a printer, at New-York. As by the provisional treaty the British forces are not to carry away any effects of the inhabitants, this press may perhaps be recovered. The Dr. has desired me to prepare a letter of attorney for the purpose, to some person in New-York, and in case it should be restored, will lend it to you. I shall immediately think of furnishing you with some types, and Dr. Franklin has promised his assistance, so that you may soon expect to hear from me again about these matters. In the mean time, write a letter of thanks to the Dr. for his kind attention.

I must remind you that you should extend your application beyond the mere mechanical part of your business. You will have to compose as well as to print, and you should take pains not only to store your mind with useful knowledge, but also to acquire the talent of writing in a clear, concise, and accurate style. Remember too, that an acquaintance with accounts, and the method of keeping them, is not to be neglected. It is important to all men, and particularly to those who cannot afford to be careless. If you are industrious, prudent, and punctual in the conduct of your business, you will most certainly succeed; and my desire of helping you, instead of abating, will be increased by your endeavours to help yourself.

I am, with sincere regard, dear Frank,

Your friend and servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Passy, 13th June, 1783.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have, within these few days past, read and admired your address to the army, and their proceedings in consequence of it. Such instances of patriotism are rare, and America must find it difficult to express, in adequate terms, the gratitude she owes to both. Such a degree of glory, so virtuously acquired, and so decently sustained, is as new as our political constellation, and will for ever give lustre to it. May every blessing be yours.

Mr. Hartley has just informed me that orders have been sent to the British commander-in-chief to evacuate the United States. Our attention will then, I hope, be turned to the preservation and improvement of what we have gained; and a sense of the importance of that task leads me to wish that the execution of it may be facilitated by your counsels and application.

With perfect esteem and affection,

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO MRS. M. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, 12th July, 1783.

DEAR MADAM,

I have long been accustomed to hear, and I might add read, so much in which the heart has no concern, that the few letters like yours which reach me, are particularly welcome.

The peace appears to me, as it does to you, to be seasonable as well as advantageous; and I sincerely join with you in ascribing that and every other of our blessings to the Supreme Author of all the good that ever was and ever will be in the world.

As your letter is of the 12th April, and as I have received others dated late in May, which mention nothing of my sister, I indulge some little hope that she is still alive; if so, I shall be very thankful; if not, God's will be done. To her, this world has not been a paradise. Her leaving it will be a misfortune to the few who knew her worth, and to whom she was attached. She will have reason to rejoice in the change. I feel most sensibly for the effect it would have on my brother; it would double the pressure of all his afflictions. God grant him resignation, and permit me to return soon to comfort him. He has every right to expect it from me, and if my life be spared, he shall not be disappointed. I cannot proceed.

God bless you, my dear madam;

I am, your affectionate and humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

Passy, 17th July, 1783.

DEAR MORRIS,

By this time, I suppose there is much canvassing for foreign appointments. I thank you for thinking of me, but as I mean to return in the spring, your arrangements, so far as respects me, must be altered. Upon this point I am decided, and beg of you to tell my friends so.

Orders are gone to evacuate New-York. The present British ministry are duped, I believe, by an opinion of our not having decision and energy sufficient to regulate our trade, so as to retaliate their restrictions. Our ports were opened too soon. Let us, however, be temperate as well as firm.

Our friend Morris, I suspect, is not a favourite of this court. They say, he treats them as his cashier. They refuse absolutely to supply more money. Marbois writes tittle-tattle, and I believe does mischief. Congress certainly should remove to some interior town, and they

should send a minister forthwith to England. The French ambassador at Petersburg has thrown cold water on Dana's being received before a peace.

The ministers of this court are qualified to act the part of Proteus. The nation, I think, is with us, and the king seems to be well disposed. Adieu.

Yours, sincerely,

JOHN JAY.

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

Passy, 19th July, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

On the 1st instant, I had the pleasure of receiving your favour of the 21st May last.

I am happy to hear that the provisional articles meet with general approbation. The tories will doubtless cause some difficulty, but that they have always done, and as this will probably be the last time, we must make the best of it. A universal indiscriminate condemnation and expulsion of those people, would not redound to our honour, because so harsh a measure would partake more of vengeance than of justice. For my part, I wish that all except the *faithless and the cruel* may be forgiven. That exception would indeed extend to very few; but even if it applied to the case of one only, that one ought, in my opinion, to be saved.

The reluctance with which the States in general pay the necessary taxes, is much to be regretted; it injures both their reputation and interest abroad, as well as at home, and tends to cherish the hopes and speculations of those who wish we may become and remain an unimportant, divided people. The rising power of America is a serious object of apprehension to more than one nation, and every event that may retard it will be agreeable to them. A continental, national spirit should therefore pervade our country, and Congress should be enabled, by a grant of the

necessary powers, to regulate the commerce and general concerns of the confederacy; and we should remember that to be constantly prepared for war, is the only way to have peace. The Swiss on the one hand, and the Dutch on the other, bear testimony to the truth of this remark.

The general and the army have, by their late moderation, done themselves infinite honour; and it is to be hoped that the States will not only be just, but generous to those brave and virtuous citizens. America is at present held in a very respectable point of view, but as the eyes of the world are upon her, the continuance of that consideration will depend on the dignity and wisdom of her conduct.

I mean to return next spring. My health is somewhat better.

I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate and humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM COLONEL ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

Philadelphia, 25th July, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

Though I have not performed my promise of writing to you, which I made you when you left this country, yet I have not the less interested myself in your welfare and success. I have been witness with pleasure to every event which has had a tendency to advance you in the esteem of your country; and I may assure you with sincerity that it is as high as you could possibly wish. All have united in the warmest approbation of your conduct. I cannot forbear telling you this, because my situation has given me access to the truth, and I gratify my friendship for you in communicating what cannot fail to gratify your sensibility.

The peace, which exceeds in the goodness of its terms the expectations of the most sanguine, does the highest honour to those who made it. It is the more agreeable as

the time was come when thinking men began to be seriously alarmed at the internal embarrassments and exhausted state of this country. The New-England people talk of making you an annual *fish-offering*, as an acknowledgment of your exertions for the participation of the fisheries.

We have now happily concluded the great work of independence, but much remains to be done to reap the fruits of it. Our prospects are not flattering. Every day proves *the inefficacy of the present confederation*, yet the common danger being removed, we are receding instead of advancing in a disposition to amend its defects. The road to popularity in each State is to inspire jealousies of the power of Congress, though nothing can be more apparent than that they have no power; and that for the want of it, the resources of the country during the war could not be drawn out, and we at this moment experience all the mischiefs of a bankrupt and ruined credit. It is to be hoped that when prejudice and folly have run themselves out of breath, we may return to reason and correct our errors.

After having served in the field during the war, I have been making a short apprenticeship in Congress; but the evacuation of New-York approaching, I am preparing to take leave of public life, to enter into the practice of the law. Your country will continue to demand your services abroad. I beg you to present me most respectfully to Mrs. Jay, and to be assured of the affection and esteem of,

Dear sir,

Your obedient servant,

ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Passy, 20th July, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

By Capt. Barney I was favoured with yours of the 31st May. By this time I hope you will have received several letters from me, which were then on the way. Want of health has long made much writing painful to me, so that my letters in general are short.

My jaunt to Normandy did me some service, but less than I expected. The pure air of this place has been useful to me. The pain in my breast has abated, and I have had no fever since I came here, which was about six weeks ago.

Gouverneur is happy in your esteem; it adds to mine for him. I have long been attached to him, and sincerely wish that our friendship, instead of being diminished, may continue to gain strength with time.

Your intended resignation alarmed me, and would have been followed with ill consequences to our affairs. I rejoice that you continue in office, and by no means regret that it will be less in your power than inclination to retire soon. I am well aware of the difficulties you will continue to experience. Every man so circumstanced must expect them. Your office is neither an easy nor a pleasant one to execute, but it is elevated and important, and therefore envy, with her inseparable companion injustice, will not cease to plague you. Remember, however, that triumphs do not precede victory, and that victory is seldom found in the smooth paths of peace and tranquillity. Your enemies would be happy to drive you to resign, and in my opinion both your interest and that of your country oppose your gratifying them. You have health, fortune, talents, and fortitude, and you have children too. Each of these circumstances recommend perseverance,

As to money this court will afford you no further sup-

plies. The minister has said, it was easy to be a financier and draw bills, when others provided the funds to pay them. At another time, he intimated that his court was not treated with a proper degree of delicacy on that subject, and said, "that you treated them as your cashiers." A French officer from America, who is a friend of yours, told me that La Luzerne and Marbois were not pleased with the manner of your applications to them about money matters. I mention these facts, because it may be useful for you to know them.

The loan in Holland goes on, and from that quarter your bills must be saved, if at all. Mr. Adams set out for Amsterdam the day before yesterday, and will push on that business. If the Dutch began to draw benefit from our trade, they would lend more cheerfully.

The British ministry have not yet authorized Mr. Hartley to consent to any thing as to commerce. They amuse him and us, and deceive themselves. I told him yesterday that they would find us like a globe; not to be overset. They wish to be the only carriers between their islands and other countries; and though they are apprized of our right to regulate our trade as we please, yet I suspect they flatter themselves that the different States possess too little of a national or continental spirit, ever to agree in any one national system. I think they will find themselves mistaken.

Believe me to be, dear sir,

Your affectionate friend,

JOHN JAY,

FROM BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Passy, Sept. 10th, 1783.

SIR,

I have received a letter from a very respectable person in America, containing the following words, viz :—

“It is confidently reported, propagated, and believed by some among us, that the Court of France was at bottom against our obtaining the fishery and territory, in that great extent in which both are secured to us by the treaty; that our minister at that court favoured, or did not oppose, this design against us; and that it was entirely owing to the firmness, sagacity, and disinterestedness of Mr. Adams, with whom Mr. Jay united, that we have obtained those important advantages.”

It is not my purpose to dispute any share of the honour of that treaty, which the friends of my colleagues may be disposed to give them; but having now spent fifty years of my life in public offices and trusts, and having still one ambition left, that of carrying the character of fidelity, at least, to the grave with me, I cannot allow that I was behind any of them in zeal and faithfulness. I therefore think that I ought not to suffer an accusation, which falls little short of treason to my country, to pass without notice, when the means of effectual vindication are at hand. You, sir, was a witness of my conduct in that affair. To you and my other colleagues I appeal, by sending to each a similar letter with this; and I have no doubt of your readiness to do a brother-commissioner justice, by certificates that will entirely destroy the effect of that accusation. I have the honour to be, with much esteem,

Sir, your most obedient,

And most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Passy, 11th Sept., 1783.

SIR,

I have been favoured with your letter of yesterday, and will answer it explicitly.

I have no reason whatever to believe that you was averse to our obtaining the full extent of boundary and fishery secured to us by the treaty. Your conduct respecting them throughout the negotiation indicated a strong and a steady attachment to both these objects, and in my opinion, promoted the attainment of them.

I remember that in a conversation which Mr. de Rayneval, the first secretary of Count de Vergennes, had with you and me, in the summer of 1782, you contended for our full right to the fishery, and argued it on various principles.

Your letters to me, when in Spain, considered our territory as extending to the Mississippi, and expressed your opinion against ceding the navigation of that river in very strong and pointed terms.

In short, sir, I do not recollect the least difference in sentiment between us respecting the boundaries or fisheries; on the contrary, we were unanimous and united in adhering to and insisting on them, nor did I ever perceive the least disposition in either of us to recede from our claims, or be satisfied with less than we obtained.

I have the honour to be, with great respect and esteem,  
Sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, 12th Sept., 1783.

DEAR ROBERT,

At your farm with your family, in peace, and in plenty, how happy is your situation! I wish you may not have retired too soon. It is certain you may do much good where you are, and perhaps in few things more than in impressing by precept, influence, and example, the indispensable necessity of rendering the continental and State governments vigorous and orderly.

Europe hears much, and wishes to hear more of divisions, seditions, violences, and confusions among us. The tories are generally and greatly pitied, more indeed than they deserve. The indiscriminate expulsion and ruin of that whole class and description of men, would not do honour to our magnanimity or humanity, especially in the opinion of those nations who consider with more astonishment than pleasure the terms of peace which America has obtained. General Washington's letter does him credit as a soldier, patriot, and *Christian*. I wish his advice may meet with the attention it merits.

Mr. Hardley is gone to London, and expects soon to return and resume the discussion of commercial regulations, &c. He has assured us officially, that Britain is not resolved to adhere to the line marked out in their proclamation respecting the West India trade. I doubt their knowing themselves what they mean to do. In my opinion, we should adhere to exact reciprocity with all nations, and were we well united, they would yield to it. He assured us, also, that orders were gone for the evacuation of New-York.

We have had much cool weather lately, and I find myself the better for it. All the people are running after air-globes. The invention of them may have many consequences, and who knows but travellers may hereafter literally pass from country to country on the wings of the wind.

Assure your good family of our sincere regard, and believe me to be, dear Robert,

Your affectionate friend,

JOHN JAY.

TO GENERAL SCHUYLER.

Passy, 16th Sept., 1783.

DEAR SIR,

The day before yesterday I was favoured with your friendly letter of 1st July.

To whatever cause the suspension of our correspondence may have been owing, I am persuaded that it did not originate either with you or with me. How far my conjectures on that subject may be well founded, will be ascertained when we meet.

Had your reason for retiring been less urgent than that of ill health, I should have thought it premature. While government remains relaxed, and the laws have yet to acquire a due degree of respect and obedience, men of talents, weight, and influence should exert themselves to establish and maintain constitutional authority and subordination.

No less wisdom and perseverance is necessary to preserve and secure what we have gained, than were requisite in the acquisition; and experience informs us that internal commotions and confusion are as injurious to the peace and happiness of society, as war and enemies from abroad. Well-ordered government is essential to the duration and enjoyment of the tranquillity and leisure you promise yourself at Saratoga, and therefore domestic as well as public considerations call upon you for such a degree of attention to these subjects as your health will admit of.

I hope and expect next summer to return. Not only my family and my private concerns require it, but also the principles which led me into public life. But if, on my return, I find it my duty to devote more of my time to the public, they shall have it, though retirement is what I ardently desire.

I am not surprised that men of certain characters should censure the terms of peace. There are men who view

subjects only on the dark side ; there are others who find fault to show their discernment ; and we meet with some whose opinions are wholly decided by ideas of convenience and personal politics. I am happy, however, to hear that the great majority are content. In the opinion of Europe, they have great reason to be so.

Your affectionate and very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

Passy, 24th September, 1783.

DEAR MORRIS,

The sight of your friendly letter of the 25th of July last, and of those it recommends, gave me much pleasure. Marks of remembrance from old acquaintances, and the society of fellow-citizens in a foreign country, excite agreeable sensations. I have, as yet, met with neither men nor things on this side of the water which abate my predilection, or, if you please, my prejudices in favour of those on the other. I have but few attachments in Europe much stronger than those we sometimes feel for an accidental fellow-traveller, or for a good inn and a civil landlord. We leave our approbation, and good wishes, and a certain degree of regard with them, by way of paying that part of the reckoning and travelling expenses which money cannot always defray. My affections are deeply rooted in America, and are of too long standing to admit of transplantation. In short, my friend, I can never become so far a citizen of the world as to view every part of it with equal regard ; and perhaps nature is wiser in tying our hearts to our native soil, than they are who think they divest themselves of foibles in proportion as they wear away those bonds. It is not difficult to regard men of every nation as members of the same family ; but when placed in that point of view, my fellow-citizens appear to me as my brethren, and the

others as related to me only in the more distant and adventurous degrees.

I am glad my letter by Mr. Grigby gave you reason to infer an alteration for the better in the state of my health, because I flatter myself it afforded pleasure to my friends. The fact is, that my disorder has been gradually declining ever since I left the city; but although the pain in my breast has diminished, it still continues, and daily tells me *memento mori*. As to the fever which the influenza left me, it has at last, thank God, taken its leave. During all my sickness, I have been happy in preserving a constant flow of spirits; and cheerfulness, that agreeable companion, has never forsaken me. I hope a trip to Bath will so patch up my "house of clay" as to render it tenantable a good while longer; a thorough repair I do not promise myself.

Your account of my son pleases me. I expect and wish to see him next summer; for it is time to lay the foundation of those habits and principles by which I am desirous that his conduct through life should be influenced. Nature has not given to children any instinctive affections for their parents; and youth, that fair season of virtue and ingenuousness, presents the only opportunity for our perfectly gaining their hearts. This conspires with a great variety of other considerations to call me home; and I should not be satisfied with myself if I prolonged my excursion from private life beyond the term which, for public reasons, I at first prescribed it. When a man's conduct ceases to be uniform and consistent, it ceases to be proper. My little girls are well, and their mother is not much otherwise. So much for domestic matters; now for a few lines on politics.

While there are knaves and fools in the world, there will be wars in it; and that nations should make war against nations is less surprising than their living in uninterrupted peace and harmony.

You have heard that the Ottoman and Russian empires are

on the point of unsheathing the sword. The objects of the contest are more easy to discern than the issue ; but if Russia should extend her navigation to Constantinople, we may be the better for it. That circumstance is an additional motive to our forming a treaty of commerce with her. Your commercial and geographical knowledge render it unnecessary for me to enlarge on this subject. But whatever we may have to do abroad, it is of little consequence when compared to what we have to do at home.

I am perfectly convinced, that no time is to be lost in raising and maintaining a national spirit in America. *Power to govern the confederacy, as to all general purposes, should be granted and exercised.* The governments of the different States should be wound up, and become vigorous. America is beheld with jealousy, and jealousy is seldom idle. Settle your boundaries without delay. It is better that some improper limits should be fixed, than any left in dispute. In a word, every thing conducive to union and constitutional energy of government should be cultivated, cherished, and protected, and all counsels and measures of a contrary complexion should at least be suspected of impolitic views and objects.

The rapid progress of luxury at Philadelphia is a frequent topic of conversation here ; and what is a little remarkable, I have not heard a single person speak of it in terms of approbation.

Believe me to be

Your friend and servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO COL. ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

Passy, 28th September, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Carter lately delivered to me your friendly letter of the 25th of July last. You was always of the number of those whom I esteemed, and your correspondence would

have been both interesting and agreeable. I had heard of your marriage, and it gave me pleasure, as well because it added to your happiness, as because it tended to fix your residence in a State, of which I long wished you to be, and remain a citizen.

The character and talents of delegates to Congress daily become more and more important, and I regret your declining that appointment at this interesting period. Respect, however, is due to the considerations which influence you; but as they do not oppose your accepting a place in the Legislature, I hope the public will still continue to derive advantage from your services. Much remains to be done, and labourers do not abound.

I am happy to hear that the terms of peace, and the conduct of your negotiators, give general satisfaction; but there are some of our countrymen, it seems, who are not content, and that too with an article which I thought to be very unexceptionable, viz. the one ascertaining our boundaries. Perhaps those gentlemen are latitudinarians.

The American newspapers, for some months past, contain advices that do us harm. Violences, and associations against the tories, pay an ill compliment to government, and impeach our good faith in the opinions of some, and our magnanimity in the opinions of many. Our reputation also suffers from the apparent reluctance to taxes, and the ease with which we incur debts without providing for their payment. The complaints of the army—the jealousies respecting Congress—the circumstances which induced their leaving Philadelphia—and the too little appearance of a national spirit, pervading, uniting, and invigorating the confederacy, are considered as omens which portend the diminution of our respectability, power, and felicity. I hope that, as the wheel turns round, other and better indications will soon appear. I am persuaded that America possesses too much wisdom and virtue to permit her brilliant prospects to fade away for the want of either. But, what-

ever time may produce, certain it is, that our reputation and our affairs suffer from present appearances.

The tories are as much pitied in these countries as they are execrated in ours. An undue degree of severity towards them would, therefore, be impolitic as well as unjustifiable. They who incline to involve that whole class of men in indiscriminate punishment and ruin, certainly carry the matter too far. It would be an instance of unnecessary rigour, and unmanly revenge, without a parallel, except in the annals of religious rage, in times of bigotry and blindness. What does it signify where nine-tenths of these people are buried? I would rather see the sweat of their brows fertilizing our fields than those of our neighbours, in which it would certainly water those seeds of hatred, which, if so cultivated, may produce a hedge of thorns against us. Shall all be pardoned then? By no means. Banish and confiscate the estates of such of them as have been either faithless or cruel, and forgive the rest.

Victory and peace should, in my opinion, be followed by clemency, moderation, and benevolence, and we should be careful not to sully the glory of the revolution by licentiousness and cruelty. These are my sentiments, and however unpopular they may be, I have not the least desire to conceal or disguise them.

Be pleased to present my best compliments to Mrs. Hamilton, and believe me to be,

With great esteem and regard, dear sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM ROBERT MORRIS.

Philadelphia, Nov. 4th, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I hear your health is mended since the date of your last letter of the 20th July, and rejoice at it. Your distant

friends suffer irreparable injury if you are indisposed to write; those who write so well should write often, and even your short letters say so much in so few words, that it is impossible not to wish for them, if longer ones cannot be had. I acknowledge the force of all your observations on my intended resignation, and know the necessity of perseverance so long as there is a prospect of being useful; but you must also acknowledge that it is folly in the extreme to continue in the drudgery of office after you see clearly that the public cannot be benefited; your own affairs suffering, your feelings daily wounded, and your reputation endangered by the malice and misrepresentation of envious and designing men. During the war, I was determined to go through with the work I had undertaken, and although my resignation was made before the signing of the provisional treaty was known, yet I made no hesitation to declare to a committee of Congress, that if the war lasted I would continue. The war, however, ceased—Congress feared to dismiss their army without some pay; they had not money, and could only make payment by paper anticipation, and even this could not be effected without my assistance. I was urged to continue, and forced into that anticipation. The army was dispersed, and since their departure, the men who urged these measures most, and who are eternally at war with honour and integrity, have been continually employed in devising measures to prevent my being able to fulfil my engagements, in hopes of effecting my ruin in case of failure. I must, however, in justice to the majority of Congress, which has ever been composed of honest men, declare that the faction I allude to is but inconsiderable in numbers, although they make themselves of some consequence by this assiduity. You know the \*\*\*\*, &c.: I should disregard these men totally, if I found a disposition in the several Legislatures to support national faith, credit, and character; but, unhappily, there is at present a total inat-

tention on their parts. I am, however, persuaded, that sooner or later, the good sense of America will prevail, and that our governments will be intrusted in the hands of men whose principles will lead them to do justice, and whose understandings will teach the value of national credit. This may be too long in coming to pass, at least for me, and therefore you may rest assured, that I quit all public employ the moment my engagements are fulfilled.

The court of France having refused the last sum asked, I do not wish to trouble them further. I am not sensible of having at any time made an improper application, either as to *substance* or *manner*. Those who are solicited in such cases, are in the situation to make whatever objections they find convenient. I wish, however, that the ministers in France were sensible of one truth, which is, that my administration either saved them a good deal of money, or a great deal of disgrace; for if I had not undertaken it when I did, they must either have advanced ten times the amount I received, or have deserted America, after having undertaken her cause, and perhaps have been obliged to subscribe to very indifferent terms of peace for themselves.

It is happy for me that the loan in Holland stepped in to our relief, after the refusal of the court to grant the moderate sum of 3,000,000 livres as the concluding point. This refusal was ill-timed and impolitic. I could show resentment with some effect, if I were so disposed; but so far from it, I retain a grateful remembrance of past favours, and make a point to promote the commercial intercourse between France and this country. I must also show my sense of the obligations conferred on us by the Hollanders. We hear that the definitive treaty is signed. I long to see it; for you may depend that unless some new articles are added respecting our intercourse with the British West Indies, it will be both a work of difficulty and time to carry measures that will justify your opinion of us. I thank you for the kind sentiments which you express of me in several

parts of your letters. I will endeavour to deserve them. I do not know whether Gouverneur writes to you by this opportunity; you must cherish his friendship, it is worth possessing. He has more virtue than he shows, and more consistency than anybody believes. He values you exceedingly, and hereafter you will be very useful to each other. Mrs. Morris will write to Mrs. Jay, and say for herself what she has to say; though I don't believe she will tell her, as she does to everybody else, the high estimation in which she holds Mrs. Jay and yourself. Permit me also, my worthy friend, to assure you both of the sincerity of that affection with which I profess myself

Your most obedient and humble servant,

ROBERT MORRIS.

TO CHARLES THOMPSON, ESQ.

London, 14th November, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I have been here a month, and well only two days. I came in quest of *health*, but "*seek and you shall find*," does not, it seems, always extend to that of the body.

The parliament is sitting. The king's speech and its echoes you will see in the papers. I have not had any conversation on politics with either of the ministers. In my opinion, no plan or system of conduct respecting America is yet decided upon by the cabinet, in which the jarring principles of whig and tory still strive and ferment. The latter persuade themselves that we shall not be able to act as a nation, that our governments are too feeble to command respect, and our credit too much abased to recover its reputation, or merit confidence. I hope better things. We are not without friends in this country, but they have more inclination than power to be friendly. We have also enemies, and bitter ones. If we act wisely and unitedly, we have nothing to fear. It is in our power finally to make a navigation act, and prevent British vessels carrying our

productions; provided we should execute it, we would find it of as much value as many treaties of commerce. Let us act, however, with temper; it is more easy to make sores than to heal them. But if Britain should adopt and persist in a monopolizing system, let us retaliate fully and firmly. This nation, like many others, is influenced more by its feelings than reasonings. I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate friend and servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM ROBERT MORRIS.

Philadelphia, November 27th, 1783.

MY DEAR SIR,

I congratulate you on the signing of the definitive treaty, and on the evacuation of New-York, which took place on Tuesday. Our friend Gouverneur Morris is there. He has been gone about eighteen days, and I expect him back very soon; he will then give you the detail, and inform you of such things as you may wish to know respecting any of your particular friends.

If Great Britain persists in refusing admittance to our ships in their islands, they will probably have great cause to repent, for I shall not be surprised to see a general prohibition to the admittance of theirs into our ports; and if such a measure is once adopted, they may find it very difficult to obtain any alteration, and in that case the advantages of carrying will be much against them. Should the court of France pursue the same policy, we shall fall in with the Dutch, and probably have more connexions in commerce with them than with any other people. I have received the prints of the rise and fall of the *balloon*. Pray cannot they contrive to send passengers with a man to steer the course, so as to make them the means of conveyance for despatches from one country to another, or must they only be sent for intelligence to the moon and clouds?

We are dismissing the remains of our army, and getting rid of expense, so that I hope to see the end of my engagements before next May, but I doubt whether it will be in my power to observe that punctuality in performing them, which I wish and have constantly aimed at.

I am sending some ships to China, in order to encourage others in the adventurous pursuits of commerce, and I wish to see a foundation laid for an American navy.

I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate friend and humble servant,

ROBERT MORRIS.

FROM ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

New-York, 29th Nov., 1783.

DEAR JOHN,

I am two letters in your debt, and am conscious that I shall make an ill return for them in offering you this product of a midnight hour, after a day spent in the fatigue of business and ceremony that our present situation exacts. But having just been informed by Mr. Platt that he sails to-morrow morning, I cannot permit him to go, without offering you my congratulations on an event which you have so greatly contributed to bring about, the evacuation of this city by the British on Tuesday last.

Our enemies are hardly more astonished than we are ourselves, and than you will be when you hear that we have been five days in town without the smallest disturbance; that the most obnoxious royalists that had sufficient confidence in our clemency to stay had not met with the least insult. Their shops were opened the day after we came in, and Rivington himself goes on as usual. The State of New York Gazette is as well received as if he had never been printer to the king's most excellent majesty. So that your friends in Europe will find their apprehensions ill-founded, and that the race of tories will not, after all, be totally extinct in America. Perhaps, by good training and

by crossing the breed frequently (as they are very tame), they may be rendered useful animals in a few generations.

I thank you for your prints of the air-balls; but wish to have some fuller account of their composition, and the use proposed to be made of them. As an architect, I cannot but be curious about the first castles in the air that promise to have some stable use.

Receive my congratulations on the birth of your daughter, and make my compliments to Mrs. Jay on the occasion.

I had hardly finished the last line, when I was alarmed by a very loud rumbling noise, accompanied by a quick tremulous motion of the earth. The family are too much alarmed to permit me to add more. Adieu.

R. R. LIVINGSTON.

TO MISS KITTY LIVINGSTON.

Bath, 24th Dec., 1783.

DEAR KITTY,

Why so long silent, my good friend? Many months have elapsed since we have been favoured with a line from you. I hope want of health has not obliged you to deny us that satisfaction. Want of inclination, I am sure, has not. Of that we have received too many unequivocal proofs to entertain the most distant doubt. You have long been my faithful, steady friend. I know the value of your esteem and regard, and be assured that you possess mine in a very high degree. Much do I wish for the happy moment when we shall all meet, and when we shall communicate to each other many things, which, however interesting, must be very sparingly trusted to paper. The necessity of this caution has imposed upon us a long and painful reserve, for between friends, few things are more agreeable, as well as useful, than free and undisguised communications. This is a pleasure to which I have been greatly a stranger since I left America, and it is in that country only that I expect again to enjoy it. Experience has taught me reserve, but

it has also taught me that with you it will be unnecessary. This is a pleasant idea, and my mind dwells upon it with great satisfaction. How few are there in this world, my dear Kate, capable of a firm, uniform attachment; much fewer, I assure you, than I once thought: but youth is credulous, and consequently must be often disappointed. I hope my disappointments are nearly at an end; for I expect very little, except from you and a few others.

I have letters from Sally almost every week. Thank God, she continues well. She tells me our little girls grow charmingly. My absence from her has been much longer than I expected. On coming to London, I was taken ill of a dysentery, and afterward, with a sore throat. Some remains of the latter still trouble me. Upon the whole, however, I am better, and the waters of this place have done me good. I propose next week to return to London, and from thence make the best of my way to France. I am impatient to be with my little family, and to have my sweet little girls upon my knee, while their mother tells me the domestic occurrences which have happened in my absence. Believe me to be, with great and sincere regard,

Your friend and servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

Philadelphia, 10th January, 1784.

DEAR JAY,

I write to acknowledge your letter of the 24th September. Being uncertain where you are, and consequently what course this letter may take, and through what hands it will pass, I shall not say so much as I otherwise might. I will direct to the care of Dr. Franklin.

Your attachment to America, when removed from it, is the old story of travellers; but when it comes from one in whose feelings we feel an interest, *decies repetita placebit*. Of your health you speak despondingly, yet you say your

spirits are good. Believe me, my friend, good spirits will both make and preserve good health. I mean to extend the observation generally, but not universally. Whatever lot betides us, I wish you at least one happy year, and I hope that Heaven will do you the justice to grant a long succession of them. Make my good wishes acceptable to Mrs. Jay, and present me tenderly to your children.

I was lately in New-York, and have the pleasure to tell you that all your friends were well. Things there are now in that kind of ferment which was rationally to have been expected; and I think the superior advantages of our constitution will now appear in the repressing of those turbulent spirits who wish for confusion, because that in the regular order of things they can only fill a subordinate sphere.

This country has never yet been known to Europe, and God knows whether it ever will be so. To England it is less known than to any other part of Europe; because they constantly view it through a medium either of prejudice or of faction. True it is, that the general government wants energy; and equally true it is that this want will eventually be supplied. A national spirit is the natural result of national existence; and although some of the present generation may feel colonial oppositions of opinion, that generation will die away, and give place to a race of Americans. On this occasion, as on others, Great Britain is our best friend; and by seizing the critical moment when we were about to divide, she has shown clearly the dreadful consequences of division. You will find that the States are coming into resolutions on the subject of commerce; which, if they had been proposed by Congress on the plain reason of the thing, would have been rejected with resentment, and perhaps contempt.

With respect to our taste for luxury, do not grieve about it. Luxury is not so bad a thing as it is often supposed to be; and if it were, still we must follow the course of things,

and turn to advantage what exists, since we have not the power to annihilate or create. The very definition of luxury is as difficult as the suppression of it.

Do not condemn us till you see us. Do not ask the British to take off their foolish restrictions. Let them alone, and they will be obliged to do it themselves. While the present regulation exists, it does us more of political good than it can possibly do of commercial evil.

Adieu. Believe me always, yours,  
GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

FROM SILAS DEANE.

London, Jan. 21st. 1784.

SIR,

I called at your lodgings in November last, but your servant told me you was not within, and that you intended to set out for Bath in a day or two; on which, being exceedingly desirous of an interview with you, I sent you a letter requesting that favour; but going out of town myself a few days after, and having received no answer, I am at a loss what to conclude on, whether my letter might have failed, or that you do not incline to favour me with an interview; and hence I am induced to trouble you with this, and to request that you will simply inform me by a line, if you received my letter of November, and if an interview will be agreeable or not. I wish to obviate and remove any late prejudices which you may have entertained against me, from the most gross misrepresentations of my conduct since my arrival in England; and I submit to you the propriety of giving me an opportunity for doing this; and am, with great respect, sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,  
SILAS DEANE.

TO SILAS DEANE.

Chaillot, near Paris, 23d February, 1784.

SIR,

Your letter of the 21st of January was delivered to me this morning. It is painful to say disagreeable things to any person, and especially to those with whom one has lived in habits of friendship; but candour on this subject forbids reserve. You was of the number of those who possessed my esteem, and to whom I was attached. To me, personally, you have never given offence; but, on the contrary, I am persuaded you sincerely wished me well, and was disposed to do me good offices.

The card you left for me at Mr. Bingham's, and also the letter you mention, were both delivered to me; and I cannot express the regret I experienced from the cruel necessity. I thought myself under, of passing them over in silence; but I love my country and my honour better than my friends, and even my family, and am ready to part with them all whenever it would be improper to retain them. You are either exceedingly injured, or you are no friend to America; and while doubts remain on that point, all connexion between us must be suspended. I wished to hear what you might have to say on that head, and should have named a time and place for an interview, had not an insurmountable obstacle intervened to prevent it. I was told by more than one, on whose information I thought I could rely, that you received visits from, and was on terms of familiarity with General Arnold. Every American who gives his hand to that man, in my opinion, pollutes it.

I think it my duty to deal thus candidly with you, and I assure you, with equal sincerity, that it would give me cordial satisfaction to find you able to acquit yourself in the judgment of the dispassionate and impartial. If it is in your power to do it, I think you do yourself injustice by not undertaking that necessary task. That you may per-

form it successfully, whenever you undertake it, is the sincere wish and desire of, sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

New-York, 25th January, 1784.

DEAR JOHN,

The quiet, which in my last I mentioned to have prevailed here, still continues with very few interruptions. Though the imprudence of the tories has, in some instances, given disgust to the warm whigs, particularly in a contest for the government of the church corporation, to the exclusion of those out of the lines, and in appointing Mr. Moore rector, in order to fill the church, a few days before we came in. The Legislature have interposed, and the government of the church is transferred to the whigs.

Our parties are, first, the tories, who still hope for power, under the idea that the remembrance of the past should be lost, though they daily keep it up by their avowed attachment to Great Britain. Secondly, the violent whigs, who are for expelling all tories from the State, in hopes, by that means, to preserve the power in their own hands. The third are those who wish to suppress all violences, to soften the rigour of the laws against the royalists, and not to banish them from that social intercourse which may, by degrees, obliterate the remembrance of past misdeeds; but who, at the same time, are not willing to shock the feelings of the virtuous citizens, that have at every expense and hazard fulfilled their duty, by at once destroying all distinction between them and the royalists, and giving the reins into the hands of the latter; but who, at the same time, wish that this distinction should rather be found in the sentiments of the people, than marked out by the laws. You will judge to which of these parties the disqualifications contained in our election bill has given the representation, when I tell you

that the members for this city and county are Lamb, Harper, Sears, Van Zandt, Mallone, Rutgers, Hughes, Stag, and Willet. I must, however, do all parties the justice to say, that they profess the highest respect for the laws, and that, if we except one or two persons, they have, as yet, by no act contradicted that profession.

We are very angry here with Great Britain, on account of her West India restrictions (from which, by-the-bye, they suffer greatly), and are fulminating resolutions to prohibit all intercourse with her, which I think will probably be the case ere long.

Thus have I given you a sketch of our politics, which will only be interesting to you if, as I sincerely hope, you mean to return soon to us.

Politics has extended this letter to such an unreasonable length, that I dare not hazard a subject nearer my heart than either, but must, at this time, confine all its dictates to simple assurances of the firm and tender affection with which I am, and ever shall be,

Dear John, your friend,

ROBT. R. LIVINGSTON.

TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

Paris, 10th February, 1784.

DEAR MORRIS,

Your letter of the 25th September came to my hands in England on the 8th December last; and since my return, I have received that of the 7th November, which, though containing only three lines, I prefer to most of the others. Perhaps you have forgot it.

“It is now within three minutes of the time when the mail is made up and sent off. I cannot, therefore, do more than just to assure you of the continuance of my love. Adieu. Yours,

“G. M.”

That this letter was so short, I ascribe to procrastination; that it was written at all, I ascribe to your heart: your head evidently had no concern in it; for, if consulted, it would have intimated that they who live near a post-office, find no good excuse for singular brevity in the mail's being to be sent off in a few minutes after they sit down to write, unless, indeed, some circumstance just occurred should make the subject of the letter. But, be that as it may, I would rather receive one little effusion from your heart than twenty from your head, though I hope to derive much pleasure from both. We shall have much to say to each other, and I think both of us will be gainers by it. Why I think so, must not be discussed in letters, whose seals will not be respected.

You suppose that ill health induces me to resign. You are mistaken. It seldom happens that any measure is prompted by one single motive, though one among others may sometimes have decisive weight and influence. Many motives induce me to resign; but of those many there is one which predominates, and that is this:—When I embarked in the public service, I said very sincerely that I quitted private life with regret, and should be happy to return to it when the objects which called me from it should be attained. You know what those objects were, and that, on the peace, they ceased to operate. To be consistent, therefore, I must retire. The motive is irresistible. Superadded to this are the education of my son, the attention I owe to the unfortunate part of my family, and the happiness I expect from rejoining my friends. Pecuniary considerations ever held a secondary place in my estimation. I know how to live within the limits of any income, however narrow; and my pride is not of a nature to be hurt by returning to the business which I formerly followed: but professions of this sort are common, and facts only can give unequivocal evidence of their sincerity.

I have passed between three and four sad months in

England. Bad weather and bad health almost the whole time. On my arrival, a dysentery and fever brought me low, and a sore-throat, which still plagues me, succeeded. Bath has done me good, for it removed the pain in my breast, which has been almost constant for eighteen months.

I had many excellent opportunities of writing to my friends from London and Bristol, but I was enjoined to abstain as much as possible from pen and ink.

It is natural that you should expect to find some news in this letter. I will tell you a little, though it is probable that your sagacity has prevented its being unexpected. The institution of the Order of Cincinnatus does not, in the opinion of the wisest men whom I have heard speak on the subject, either do credit to those who formed and patronised, or to those who suffered it.

I am indebted to our excellent friend, Robert Morris, for a very obliging letter. He shall soon hear from me. In the mean time, let him share with you in this adieu.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN JAY.

FROM GENERAL SCHUYLER.

New-York, Feb. 18th, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

By Colonel Hamilton, who made me a visit at Albany on the 26th instant, I had the pleasure of your favour of the 16th September last. Persuaded you never convey sentiments to your friends, which flow merely from the head, and in which the heart does not participate, I have not words to express how pleasingly mine was affected in the perusal.

I think I hear you wish to be advised of what is passing in your native country, at a juncture when the decisions of government must determine the philosophers and politicians of Europe to form their opinion of our wisdom or our folly. Having been exceedingly indisposed, I have not attended

until a few days ago, and am consequently, as yet, not in a situation to speak decidedly ; but I have reason to apprehend, however, from the complexion of the members, that our conduct will be such as to afford occasion to the friend of mankind to drop a tear on the intemperance of mankind ; and to reflect, with pain, that a people who have hardly been emancipated from a threatened tyranny, forgetting how odious oppression appeared to them, begin to play the tyrant, and give a melancholy evidence, that however capable we were of bearing adversity with magnanimity, we are too weak to support, with propriety, the prosperity we have so happily experienced.

I am led to this conclusion from observing that too many, not contented with a peace, glorious and advantageous beyond the expectations of the most sanguine real patriot, and that, too, obtained at a period when the complexion of our national affairs was alarming in the extreme, wish to evade the positive stipulations, few and inconsiderable as they are, in favour of those who adhered to Britain ; and carry their view even so far beyond that, as totally to deprive all those who remained within the power of the British troops from the rights of citizens, upon the false conclusion that all who remained in were zealous adherents to the then enemy, and all who were not, disinterested and real patriots. I think you and I could point out some who looked at both sides of the question whilst the contest was doubtful, and who probably did not wish it to terminate as it has done ; and yet these are the very characters who are now most vociferous against that set of people, to whom, but a few months before the annunciation of the provisional articles, they still paid court. I hope, however, when the present scramblers for the honours and the emoluments of the States are satisfied, that our affairs will take another turn, and that we shall not irretrievably lose our national character. Among those claimants and scramblers you will not include some whose zeal for the common cause,

from the first stage of the contest to the close, are justly entitled to the attention of government—such as Mr. Duane, who has the mayoralty of this city, and some others.

When I assure you that I am anxious for your speedy return to your native country, and that it is more than a selfish wish, I am very sincere; for I believe your influence would tend much to promote its true interest.

Permit me to entreat your lady to participate with you in wishes which come from the heart, for your health and happiness, and for your speedy and safe arrival on these shores where you will find friends who love and esteem you, and where all ought to revere you who are capable of being penetrated with gratitude for the most eminent services. For my part, I never think of you without emotions too delicate for communication. God bless you.

I am, affectionately and sincerely,

Your obedient servant,

PHILIP SCHUYLER.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Paris, 25th February, 1784.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

Your favour of the 4th November last found me in England, where, though I suffered much sickness, I left the pain in my breast; but a sore throat I caught there still remains obstinate and troublesome.

The resolution of Congress of 1st October last, did not reach me until in December. On my return here last month, I wrote in pursuance of it to Mr. Carmichael to come here without delay with the books and vouchers. I daily expect to hear from him, and shall be happy to see that business settled before I embark, which I hope will be in April, but from or to what port, and in what vessel, is as yet uncertain.

There is no doubt but that you have had much to struggle with, and will have more. Difficulties must continue in-

separable from your office for some time yet, and they will be the means either of increasing or diminishing your reputation. In my opinion you must go on. Success generally attends talents and perseverance, and these thorns will in due season probably bear flowers, if not fruit.

There are parts of your letter, on which, though I concur with you in sentiment, I forbear to make remarks, because this may not pass to you uninspected. I hope we shall meet in the course of a few months more, and then reserve will cease to be necessary.

What you say of Gouverneur accords with my opinion of him. I have never broken the bands of friendship in my life, nor when once broken, have I ever been anxious to mend them. Mine with him will, I hope, last as long as we do, for though my sentiments of mankind in general are less favourable than formerly, my affection for certain individuals is as warm and cordial as ever.

Mrs. Jay presents her affectionate compliments to you and Mrs. Morris, to whom we join in sincerely wishing all the happiness with which amiable merit should be ever blessed. Tell Gouverneur I long to take him by the hand, and believe me to be, my dear sir,

With constant attachment,  
Your affectionate friend and servant,  
JOHN JAY.

TO B. VAUGHAN, LONDON.

Chaillot, near Paris, 21st March, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

The violence of your political storm seems to have abated, but I should not be surprised if you should frequently have March weather.

Accounts from America lead me to suspect that your commercial negotiations with us will not be facilitated by delay; and I should not be surprised if a system should then be adopted, which would render European proclama-

tions of very little importance to that country. It appears more probable that England will outwit herself. There is a tide in human affairs which, like other tides, turns only to run in an opposite direction.

I am preparing to go to New-York by the first good vessel that may sail for that port. I more than wish to see you there. They who know the nature of man expect perfection nowhere. There are certain degrees in refinement and arts, which are more favourable than others to those principles and manners which wise men prefer. In this, as well as in some other circumstances, we have the advantage of other countries. Various causes conspire to give every man his weight, and I believe the old maxim of "*quisque suæ faber est fortunæ*," has fewer exceptions in America than elsewhere. They who bring with them ideas borrowed from the regions of fancy and romance will be disappointed. The golden age will not cease to be a fable until the millennium; until that period for separating life from death, pleasure from pain, virtue from vice, and wisdom from folly, every society and country will continue to partake more or less of the heterogeneous and discordant principles, which seem to be the seeds both of moral and natural evil.

Were I in your situation, I would see for myself, and then determine. To avoid mistakes, it is necessary to see things as being what they really are. Minutiæ are often omitted, or imperfectly drawn in representations. Great part of the good within our reach depend on minutiæ; they merit more attention than many apprehend.

Be pleased to present my respectful compliments to Lord and Lady Shelburne. I hope his gout has left him. Remember me also to our patriot friend, Doctor Price.

Adieu my dear sir,

Yours, sincerely,

JOHN JAY.

FROM JOHN ADAMS.

The Hague, April 2d, 1784.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I blush to acknowledge that I received your favour of the 6th February, in its season, and in good condition, and that I have not answered it.

By leading a quiet life, and by great care and regular exercise, I have happily recovered a little health, and if you think it necessary, I might now venture on a journey to Paris. But I should be glad to wait here six weeks longer, that I may increase my stock of strength a little more, if possible, provided you will give me leave. I should be glad to know what you have upon the carpet, and how advanced, in brief, if you please.

The money for the payment of Mr. Morris's bills is happily secured, but we were a long time in bringing the loan to bear.

I have received several letters from Boston and Philadelphia, from very good hands, which make very honourable and affectionate mention of you. You have erected a monument to your memory in every New-England heart. My regards to your good family, and believe me,

Your sincere friend,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE REV. DR. WITHERSPOON, LONDON.

Chaillot, near Paris, 6th April, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I had last evening the pleasure of receiving your favour of the 27th ult. I congratulate you on your safe arrival, and sincerely wish that the same good fortune may attend your return.

While our country remained part of the British empire, there was no impropriety in soliciting the aid of our distant brethren and fellow-subjects for any liberal and public pur-

poses. It was natural that the younger branches of the political family should request and accept the assistance of the elder. But as the United States neither have, nor can have, such relations with any nations in the world; as the rank they hold and ought to assert, implies ability to provide for all the ordinary objects of their government; and as the diffusion of knowledge among a republican people, is and ought to be one of the constant and most important of those objects, I cannot think it consistent with the dignity of a free and independent people, to solicit donations for that or any other purpose, from the subjects of any prince or state whatever.

The public, with us, are, in my opinion, so deeply interested in the education of our citizens, that universities, &c., ought no longer to be regarded in the light of mere private corporations. The government should extend to them their constant care; and the State treasuries afford them necessary supplies.

The success which might attend such applications in this country, can only be matter of conjecture. The raising money by subscription has not been so customary in France as in Britain, and my opinion is, that you would collect very little. If indeed the court should set the example, and really wish to promote it, the thing would then become fashionable; and I am inclined to think that even the fashion of giving would have a great run for a few weeks. As to books, the consideration that every American student, who in a long lapse of years might open those books, would read the name of the donor, added to the vanity of authors, and others who may be zealous to extend the reputation of French literature, would probably procure you some. As to apparatus, the best instruments and machines are made in England; and the greater, as well as better part of those used here, are, I am told, brought from thence. I am much mistaken if Europe, in general, does not wish that we were less knowing than we are already. But if it was probable

that such applications would be attended with ever so great success, yet as I think they can be properly made only in the United States, I could not prevail upon myself to advise the experiment.

If, however, you should visit Paris, I assure you it will give me great pleasure to see you, and to be instrumental in rendering it agreeable to you. We have been fellow-labourers in the same field, and if you come, we will rejoice together in celebrating "harvest home."

With respect to the disagreeable voyage in which your son shared with us, I won't say *jubes renovare dolorem*, because I am habituated to reflect on events of that sort with tranquillity. It was one of those, however, which tried all who were concerned in it; and I must do your son the justice to say, that none of us preserved more equanimity and good-humour throughout the whole than he did, and he had a full share of unpleasant circumstances, as well as some others of us.

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO MISS KITTY LIVINGSTON.

Chaillot, near Paris, 7th April, 1784.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

It gave me pleasure to receive your obliging letter of the 30th December, and the more so, as the one to Sally which accompanies it contains agreeable accounts of your health. Accept my thanks for the kind wishes which the season gave you occasion to offer. In your sincerity I have full confidence; and in your happiness, I feel that interest which long-confirmed esteem and attachment never fails to create.

If the ensuing summer should bring us all together in health and spirits, I shall think the day of my arrival one of the most fortunate of my life. After having passed so

many years in scenes of trouble and difficulty of various kinds, I look forward with emotion not to be described to that peaceful circle of my friends and family, where I again expect to meet the enjoyments which have so long deserted me. God only knows what futurity may have in store for us, or what adverse events may still continue to teach us lessons of resignation. It is happy for us, however, that hope is our constant companion, and that new expectations constantly succeed the disappointment of preceding ones.

Having expected that Mr. Carmichael would have arrived with the public accounts in time to have them settled before the April packet engaged her passengers, I had taken steps for going in her; but he did not reach Paris till the 27th ult., and Mr. Barclay, who is to settle them, being then and still absent, I must necessarily be detained here till in May. I hope, but am not sure, that I shall then embark. In matters which do not depend upon myself, or people like you, I dare not be sanguine. Such of our baggage as is not in immediate use, is already packed up.

Your accounts of my dear boy please me. Tell him his endeavours to gain knowledge, and practise virtue, will increase and secure my affection for him.

Remember me to all the family; and believe me to be,

Dear Kate,

Your affectionate friend and brother,

JOHN JAY.

TO CHARLES THOMPSON, ESQ.

Chaillot, near Paris, 7th April, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

On the 5th inst. Mr. Norris gave me your obliging letter of the 26th September last. I regret that he did not come here sooner, for it will always give me pleasure to have opportunities of evincing my esteem and regard for you, by attention to those who possess yours. Mr. Carmichael, whom I had long expected with the public accounts, did

not arrive until the 27th ult.; when Mr. Ridley had just gone to England, and Mr. Barclay, who had been long there, was and still is absent. Nothing but the settlement of those accounts now detains me here, and a mortifying detention it is, considering that the best season for being at sea is passing away. While I stay, Mr. Norris shall perceive that he could have brought few recommendations to me so acceptable as yours, and those amiable qualities for which you commend him. I wish he may return as uncorrupted as he came. Paris is a place better calculated for the improvement of riper years; and in my opinion, very young men should not visit it. Our country has already sent some here, who will return the worse for their travels. I hope your young friend may escape. If he should, you may congratulate him on having made the choice of Hercules, for he will be tempted. On the 1st instant, I received your favour of January last, by Colonel Harmar. I flatter myself that the delays attending the ratification of the treaty will not occasion difficulties; especially as one of the ministers who made the peace is now at the head of the British administration. If European commercial restrictions produce unanimity, and tend to raise a *national* spirit in our country, which probably will be the case, I shall think them blessings. It is time for us to think and act like a sovereign, as well as a free people, and by temperate and steady self-respect to command that of other nations. It is but too much the fashion to depreciate Congress, and I fear that, as well as many other of our new fashions, will cost us dear.

Be pleased to present our compliments to Mrs. Thompson. With great and sincere regard and esteem,

I am, dear sir, your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN.

New-York, 2d Sept., 1784.

DEAR SIR,

The far greater part of my time since my arrival has been passed in the country, so that several vessels have lately gone to Europe, without letters from me to our friends there.

The health of my family and myself is better than usual, and I begin to flatter myself that if you and Mrs. Vaughan could enjoy this country in only half the degree that I do, you would not greatly regret leaving Old England. I am more contented than I expected. Some things, it is true, are wrong, but more are right. Justice is well administered, offences are rare, and I have never known more public tranquillity or private security. Resentments subside very sensibly, though gradually. I have met with whigs and tories at the same table. The spirit of industry throughout the country was never greater. The productions of the earth abound. Prices have fallen since my arrival, though still much higher than formerly, especially the wages of mechanics and labourers, which are very extravagant. House-rent is more than double what it was before the war.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN JAY.

FROM THE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE.

Albany, October 7th, 1784.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am very unfortunate in my attempts to meet you, but hope at last to have better success, and sincerely wish it to happen about the middle of next month, when I hope to wait upon Congress at their next meeting.

Until a few days ago, I had no doubt but to hear you

had accepted the appointment conferred upon you.\* My fears, however, have been raised, and with my usual frankness I assure you that your refusal could not but be attended with very bad circumstances. Setting compliments apart, I am sensible of the great injury such a denial would cause to the public, not only on account of the loss made by the United States in your person, but also for other motives. I hope you will accept; I know you must: but in case you are not determined, I had rather change my plans than not to see you before you write to Congress. I wish much to hear from you at New-York, where I expect to be about the 22d.

My most affectionate respects wait upon Mrs. Jay. With every sentiment of regard and attachment, I have the honour to be

Your sincere friend,

LA FAYETTE.

TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN.

Philadelphia, 30th Nov., 1784.

DEAR SIR,

A sufficient number of members to form a Congress not having arrived at Trenton, I passed on to this place ten days ago, to visit my friends. I found your family well, and am happy in this opportunity of cultivating their acquaintance.

Your obliging letter of the 5th August lately came to hand. Accept my thanks for it, and for the pamphlets enclosed with it.

The policy of Britain respecting this country is so repugnant to common sense, that I am sometimes tempted to think *it must be so*; and the old adage of *quos Deus, &c.*, always occurs to me when I reflect on the subject.

The India business never appeared to me a difficult one.

\* Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

Do justice, and all is easy. Cease to treat those unhappy nations as slaves, and be content to trade with them as with other independent kingdoms. On such an event, advantageous though fair treaties might be made with them, and you might leave, with their consent, force sufficient in circumscribed limits, to secure the benefit and observance of them. Your tribute, indeed, would be at an end, but it ought not to have had a beginning; and I wish it may ever prove a curse to those who impose and exact it in any country.

Our affairs are in such a state as, all circumstances considered, might naturally have been expected; far better than many represent them, though not so well as they ought to be.

Congress is convened at Trenton, and I join them to-morrow. In the course of six or eight weeks a judgment may be formed of their prevailing sentiments and views.

It is certain that we are trading at a wild rate; and it is no less true that your people are giving most absurd credits to many, who neither have or ought to have any at home. This delirium cannot last. Adieu, my dear sir.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN JAY.

TO MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE, PARIS.

New-York, 19th January, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

It was not before this morning that I was informed that the bearer of this letter was going to France, and to sail to-morrow; and business and company have not till now (late in the evening), permitted me to sit down to write to you. I cannot, however, omit this opportunity of sending you a few lines, which, though not very interesting, will nevertheless evince my attention to a correspondence, from which I promise myself much pleasure as well as much information.

The removal of Congress to this place necessarily occasioned a suspension of business, and delayed their maturing several matters which they had under consideration. They have, within a few days past, made a house, and as they possess both talents and temper, there is reason to presume that the Union will derive advantage from their measures.

Advices from Kentucky inform us that they are threatened with an Indian war; and there is some room to conjecture that such an event would not be disagreeable to our western neighbours, who, if they do interfere, will certainly be more cunning than wise. That settlement increases with a degree of rapidity heretofore unknown in this country, and increase it will, notwithstanding any attempt of anybody to prevent it.

Federal ideas begin to thrive in this city, and I suspect in a few days to communicate to you a circumstance which will strongly manifest it.

Although we cannot be immediately interested in the war, which it is thought will take place between the emperor and the Dutch, yet we may be affected by its consequences, and, therefore, must wish to know who will, and who will not, probably take sides with this or that party, in case of a rupture.

Have we any reason to flatter ourselves that you will encourage us to drink your wines, by permitting your islands to eat our bread? or will Bordeaux (as is said) constrain Versailles to patronise a provincial monopoly at the expense of a more liberal policy? Commercial privileges, granted to us by France, at this season of British ill-humour, would be particularly grateful; and afford conclusive evidence against its being the plan of the two kingdoms to restrain our trade to the islands. You know how uneasy we are under these restraints, and we confide fully in your exertions to remove them. I write very freely, but you are my

fellow-citizen, and therefore it does not appear to me necessary to attempt to dress my ideas à la mode de Paris.

Believe me to be, dear sir,

With great regard and esteem,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO DR. RUSH.

New-York, 24th March, 1785.

SIR,

Such has been the state of my official business, and of that which arose from my long neglected private affairs, that, ever since the removal of Congress to this place, I have been obliged to trespass on my usual punctuality in private correspondences. Hence it happened that I have so long denied myself the pleasure of replying to your friendly letter of the 16th of January. Accept my warmest acknowledgments for the kind and very obliging manner in which you mention my services abroad, and permit me to congratulate you on the success of the application to Congress on behalf of Dickinson College, which you appear zealously to patronise. I consider knowledge to be the soul of a republic; and as the weak and the wicked are generally in alliance, as much care should be taken to diminish the number of the former, as of the latter. Education is the way to do this, and nothing should be left undone to afford all ranks of people the means of obtaining a proper degree of it, at a cheap and easy rate.

I thank you for the pamphlet you sent me. There is good sense and just reasoning in it. I wish to see all unjust and unnecessary discriminations everywhere abolished; and that the time may soon come when all our inhabitants, of every *colour* and denomination, shall be free and equal partakers of our political liberty.

I am, sir, with great respect and esteem,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO JOHN ADAMS,

Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States, at the court of London.

Office for Foreign Affairs, }  
31st March, 1785. }

DEAR SIR,

I have the honour of transmitting to you herewith enclosed a certified copy of an act of Congress of the 21st instant, instructing you to communicate to Mr. St. Saphorin the high sense the United States, in Congress assembled, entertain of the liberal decision made by his Danish majesty, on the question proposed to his minister by you, respecting the ordination of American candidates for holy orders in the Episcopal church, commonly called the Church of England.

Congress has been pleased to order me to transmit copies of your letter, and the other papers on this subject, to the executives of the different States; and I am persuaded they will receive with pleasure this mark of your attention, and of his Danish majesty's friendly disposition.

I have the honour to be, with great respect and esteem,

Dear sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO MR. GRAND, PARIS.

New-York, 28th April, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I received last evening the two letters you did me the honour to write on the 8th February last, and congratulate you sincerely on the birth of your grandson.

I have accepted the office which Congress was pleased to offer me, and shall be much obliged to you for such intelligence from time to time as you may think useful for me to receive, and prudent for you to communicate. As a public man, I shall always remember your attachment and

services to the United States; and as a private one, it will always give me pleasure to acknowledge the friendly attention which has so long marked your conduct towards me and my family. In both capacities, therefore, I shall be happy to give you better evidence of my esteem and regard, than compliments or professions can possibly afford.

Mr. Morris's resignation is a great loss to this country, and yet I am not without hopes that the department of finance will become properly arranged. The *nature* of our governments, as well as the circumstance of their being *new*, exposes our operations to delay, and renders the best systems slow in forming, as well as slow in executing. In my opinion, one superintendent or commissioner of the treasury is preferable to any greater number of them; indeed, I would rather have each department under the direction of one able man, than of twenty able ones. All things, however, in this world, have their bright as well as their dark sides; and there are few systems so imperfect as not to have some conveniences. Many reasons induce me to disapprove of committing the treasury to the management of *three* persons; and yet one very great convenience results from it, viz., that our jealous republicans will have more confidence in *three* gentlemen coming from different parts of the continent, than they would place in any one single man. Confidence, you know, is always followed by credit, and credit is the forerunner of money.

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM WILLIAM BINGHAM.

Paris, Oct. 16th, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I have just heard that a French packet is on the point of departure for New-York.

I cannot permit it to sail without forwarding you a few lines expressive of the pleasure I received on hearing of your safe arrival.

The services you have rendered your country will naturally secure you a very welcome reception.

The only circumstance that can be productive of disagreeable sensations is the situation of your State, exposed to such political convulsions. However, I hope it will soon be restored to harmony and good-temper.

I hope your public appointment will prove an agreeable surprise to you on your arrival, and that you will be able to reconcile the acceptance of it to every consideration of private interest and convenience, as well as public duty.

The British seem to recede every day more and more from the paths to conciliation. A certain nation, to whom we are indebted for political favours, will endeavour to cherish this disposition, as she is sure to benefit by such growing feuds and divisions.

From the observations I have made since my arrival here, I can discover the necessity of very complying conduct on the part of those Americans who have public business to transact with this court.

Such conformity to the opinions of others is not easily reconcilable to the feelings and manly deportment of republicans.

No one is better acquainted than you are with the system of *this court*, and no one is more jealous of their country's honour, in essential points.

You may well imagine, then, that your appointment was *not regarded with satisfaction*, nor will the congratulations that you will receive on it from certain persons be *sincere*.

With great esteem and regard, believe me to be,

Dear sir,

Your sincere friend and obedient humble servant,

WILLIAM BINGHAM.

TO WILLIAM BINGHAM.

New-York, 31st May, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I have been favoured with yours of the 12th February, containing a copy of one of 16th October last, for which accept my cordial thanks.

Your observations in France, respecting a certain event, coincide exactly with what I expected on that subject. Indeed, the many interesting remarks spread through your letter appear to me to have weight.

Our last accounts give us reason to suppose there will be no war between the emperor and the Dutch, so that the continuance of a general peace begins again to appear probable.

Our frontier posts still have British garrisons, and we are impatient to hear *why* they are not evacuated. Mr. Adams, I suppose, is by this time in London; his letters will remove our suspense on that head.

The African states have alarmed us, but we hope peace with them may be obtained. Your attention to that subject is commendable, and you may do good by communicating the result of your inquiries to Mr. Adams.

Our affairs are settling by degrees into order. If power be given by Congress to regulate trade, and provide for the payment of their debts, all will be well. Difficulties on those points still exist, but federal ideas daily gain ground. The people of Boston resent British restrictions; and if the same spirit should become general, it will probably influence the States to enable Congress to retaliate, and extend their powers accordingly.

The Empress of China has made a fortunate voyage; and it is said many are preparing to embark in that commerce. The spirit of enterprise and adventure runs high in our young country, and if properly directed by a vigorous and wise federal government, would produce great effects.

A rage for emigrating to the western country prevails, and thousands have already fixed their habitations in that wilderness. The Continental Land Office is opened, and the seeds of a great people are daily planting beyond the mountains.

Make my best compliments to Mrs. Bingham ; and believe me to be, dear sir, with great esteem and regard,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE.

Office for Foreign Affairs, }  
15th July, 1785. }

DEAR SIR,

Accept my thanks for your interesting letter of the 19th March, which was immediately communicated to Congress. I consider it as a new proof of that constant and useful attention to our affairs, from which the United States have so often derived both pleasure and advantage. Let me request the continuance of your correspondence, and be assured that it will always give me pleasure to communicate to you such intelligence respecting American occurrences as may appear interesting.

Don Diego Gardoqui is arrived, and has been received so much in the spirit of friendship, that I hope his master and himself will be well pleased. Our negotiations with him will soon commence, and I sincerely wish that the issue of them may be satisfactory to both countries. To prepare for war, and yet be tenacious of peace with all the world, is, I think, our true interest. I wish Mr. Gardoqui's instructions may be sufficiently extensive to admit of a settlement of our boundaries, &c., on principles which alone can create and perpetuate cordiality.

The British show no disposition to evacuate our frontier posts. What their real designs are, can at present be only inferred and conjectured from appearances ; and present

appearances induce a suspicion that they mean to hold them. The letters we expect from Mr. Adams will probably remove all doubts on that head. It is certain that they pay great attention to the Indians, and give great encouragement to emigrants from us. Their expectations from the latter circumstance will fail them. I wish that every acre of ground they hold in America was settled by natives of the United States. They would transplant their love of liberty, their spirit of enterprise, and their attachment to republicanism into countries in which it is our interest that such plants should be propagated and flourish; in time they will bear fruit.

The commercial class of our people sensibly feel the restraints on our trade, and look up to Congress for a remedy. Good will come out of evil; these discontents nourish federal ideas. As trade diminishes, agriculture must suffer; and hence it will happen that our yeomen will be as desirous of increasing the powers of Congress, as our merchants now are. All foreign restrictions, exclusions, and unneighbourly ordinances will tend to press us together, and strengthen our bands of union.

I send you herewith a number of gazettes, from which you will discern something of the spirit which prevails.

Congress go on doing business with great concord, temper, and harmony. I enclose a copy of the ordinance for regulating the Land Office. They are now on the subject of requisitions; and I flatter myself, that as the highest respect for good faith prevails in the House, that exertions will be made by the States to preserve the public credit.

Governor Livingston was appointed for the Hague, but declining that place, Gov. Rutledge has been elected for it. His answer has not yet reached.

When, my dear sir, will your court send us a minister? Our having one at Versailles, affords reason to expect one from thence. The report of Mons. De Montiers coming over in that capacity dies away. From the little I saw of

him in Paris, I am inclined to think he would be an agreeable, as well as an able minister.

I am, dear sir, your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO MARCHIONESS DE LA FAYETTE.

New-York, 13th Aug., 1785.

MADAM,

I have received the letter which you did me the honour to write on the 15th April last. Few circumstances could have given me more pleasure than such evidence of my having a place in the remembrance and good opinion of a lady, whose esteem derives no less value from her discernment, than from the delicacy of her sentiments.

Accept therefore, madam, of my sincere and cordial acknowledgments for honouring me with a place among your correspondents; which was the more obliging, as you was to afford more pleasure *by*, than you could expect to receive *from* it. You know it is an old observation, that ladies write better letters than gentlemen, and therefore, independent of other considerations, a correspondence between them is always so far on unequal terms.

I can easily conceive that you, whose predilection for your husband was always conspicuous, should experience so much satisfaction on seeing him return from this, his field of glory, with additional honours; and I can, with equal ease, form an idea of his emotions, when on that, as on former occasions, those honours promoted him to higher rank in your estimation.

Your remarks on the marquis's affection for his children, and the value you set on domestic enjoyments, must be pleasing to those who are capable of feeling their force.

I assure you I rejoice in the prospect you have of extending, through your branch, the reputation of both your families; and you have my best wishes, that the latest his-

torian may say of your descendants, that all the men were as valiant and worthy as their ancestor, who will probably be distinguished by the appellation of *Americanus*, and all the women as virtuous and amiable as *his* lady.

If you was not what you are, I would not encourage the desire you express of accompanying the marquis on his next visit to this country, for I am sure you would be disappointed.

We have few amusements to relieve travellers of that weight of time and leisure which oppresses many of them. Our men, for the most part, mind their business, and our women their families; and if our wives succeed (as most of them do) in "making home man's best delight," gallantry seldom draws their husbands from them.

Our customs, in many respects, differ from yours, and you know that, whether with or without reason, we usually prefer those which education and habit recommend. The pleasures of Paris and the pomp of Versailles are unknown in this country, and their votaries must unavoidably experience a certain vacuity or blank here, which nothing but good sense, moderate desires, and a relish for less splendid, less various, but not less innocent or satisfactory enjoyments can supply. Though not a Frenchman, I should, nevertheless, be too polite to tell these things to those whom they might restrain from visiting us. On you they will have a contrary effect. It would gratify the friends of the marquis, viz., the citizens of the United States, to have the honour of a visit from you. I flatter myself that consideration will afford a strong additional inducement.

My little family is well. Mrs. Jay desires me to assure you of her remembrance and regard; and permit me to add, that I am, with sincere esteem and respectful attachment,

Madam, your most obedient, and  
Very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO JOHN ADAMS, LONDON.

Office for Foreign Affairs, }  
6th Sept., 1785. }

DEAR SIR,

The frequent solecisms, observable for some years past in the politics of the court of London, render it exceedingly difficult to divine how they will think and act under almost any given circumstances.

It is manifestly as much their interest to be well with us, as it is ours to be well with them; and yet the gratification of resentments, occasioned by disappointment, seems to take the lead of more elevated and useful principles of action.

They expect much from the trade of America, and yet they take pains to cut off every source within their reach by which we may make remittances. It is strange that they should wish us to buy, and yet be so industrious to put it out of our power to pay. Such a system must cause loss of money to their merchants, and loss of reputation to ours. I wish most sincerely that credit was at an end, and that we could purchase nothing abroad but for ready money. Our exportations would then be equally profitable, and as our importations would be diminished, we should have less to pay. Domestic manufactures would then be more encouraged, and frugality and economy become more prevalent.

What impression the conduct of Captain Stanhope may make on the minister, to me appears uncertain. Certain however it is, that mutual civility and respect must, in the nature of things, precede mutual benevolence and kindness. The manner of your reception and treatment indicates their attention to this consideration, and yet the detention of the posts, the strengthening their garrisons in our neighbourhood, the encouragement said to be given to settlers in those parts, and various other circumstances speak a language very different from that of kindness and good-will.

They may hold the posts, but they will hold them as pledges of enmity; and the time must and will come, when the seeds of discontent, resentment, and hatred, which such measures always sow, will produce very bitter fruit.

I am well informed that some of the loyalists advise and warmly press the detention of the posts. It is strange that men, who for ten years have done nothing but deceive, should still retain any credit. I speak of them collectively, among them there are men of merit: but to my knowledge some of the most violent, the most bitter and implacable, and yet most in credit, are men who endeavoured to play between both parties, and vibrated from side to side as the appearance of success attracted them. Nay, the very accounts of losses which many of them have presented, afford conclusive evidence of their inattention to truth and common decency. Such, however, has been the infatuation of British counsels, that what was manifest to others, was problematical, if not entirely dark to them.

As to their present minister, he has neither been long enough in administration, nor perhaps in the world, for a decided judgment to be formed either of his private or public character. He seems to possess firmness as well as abilities; and if to these be added information, and comprehensive as well as patriotic views, he may be worthy of his father. England will probably be either much the better, or much the worse for him.

We are anxious to receive letters from you on the subject of the posts, that in either event we may be prepared. In the one case, I should think it very justifiable in Congress to take a certain step, that would be longer and more sensibly felt by Britain than the independence of these States.

Mr. Arthur Lee has been elected to the vacant place at the board of treasury.

Governor Rutledge declines going to Holland. The affair of Longchamps is adjusted; he stays where he is.

With great respect and esteem, I am

Your very obedient and very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM GENERAL WASHINGTON.

Mount Vernon, 27th Sept., 1785.

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Taylor presented me the honour of your favour of the 25th ult., and gave me the pleasure of hearing that Mrs. Jay and yourself were well when he left New-York.

Upon your safe return to your native country, after a long absence, and the important services you have rendered it in many interesting negotiations, I very sincerely congratulate you and your lady.

It gave me great pleasure to hear of your appointment as secretary of the United States for the department of foreign affairs; a happier choice in my opinion could not have been made, and I shall always rejoice at any circumstance that will contribute either to your honour, interest, or convenience.

It will always give me pleasure to hear from you. Mrs. Washington joins me in respectful compliments to, and best wishes for Mrs. Jay and yourself.

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

TO THE REV. DOCTOR PRICE.

New-York, 27th September, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I hope my letter, in answer to the one which enclosed a number of your political pamphlets, has reached you by this time. I do not recollect the date, but it went in one of the last vessels.

The cause of liberty, like most other good causes, will have its difficulties, and sometimes its persecutions, to struggle with. It has advanced more rapidly in this than other countries, but all its objects are not yet attained; and I much doubt whether they ever will be, in this or any other terrestrial state. That men should pray and fight for their own freedom, and yet keep others in slavery, is certainly acting a very inconsistent, as well as unjust and, perhaps, impious part; but the history of mankind is filled with instances of human improprieties. The wise and the good never form the majority of any large society, and it seldom happens that their measures are uniformly adopted; or that they can always prevent being overborne themselves by the strong and almost never-ceasing union of the wicked and the weak.

These circumstances tell us to be patient, and to moderate those sanguine expectations, which warm and good hearts often mislead even wise heads to entertain on those subjects. All that the best men can do is, to persevere in doing their duty to their country, and leave the consequences to Him who made it their duty; being neither elated by success, however great, nor discouraged by disappointments however frequent and mortifying.

With sincere esteem and regard,

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, PHILADELPHIA.

New-York, 4th October, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

Your grandson, whom it gave me great pleasure to see, delivered to me a few days ago your kind letter of the 21st of last month. Your being again with your family, the manner in which the French court parted with you, the attention you experienced from your English friends, and

the reception you met with from your fellow-citizens, are circumstances that must give you great satisfaction.

It strikes me that you will find it somewhat difficult to manage the two parties in Pennsylvania. It is much to be wished that union and harmony may be established there, and if you accomplish it, much honour and many blessings will result from it. Unless you do it, I do not know who can; for, independent of experience and talents, you possess their confidence, and your advice and measures must derive very great weight from the reputation and consideration you enjoy.

We are happy to find that you think of visiting New-York. By the road from Burlington and Amboy, which is smooth and but short, you might doubtless come with very little inconvenience; especially as you may travel at your leisure, and take as many days for it as your ease and the weather may require. Mrs. Jay is exceedingly pleased with this idea, and sincerely joins with me in wishing to see it realized. Her attachments are strong, and that to you, being founded in esteem and the recollection of kind offices, is particularly so. I suspect your little friend has forgotten your person. Your name is familiar to her, as, indeed, it will be to every generation.

With the best wishes, I am, dear sir,

Your obliged and affectionate servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO JOHN ADAMS, LONDON.

Office for Foreign Affairs, }  
14th October, 1785. }

DEAR SIR,

Since the date of my last to you, which was the 6th September last, I have been honoured with yours of the 10th and 26th June, and 19th and 29th July, with the papers mentioned to be enclosed. They are now before Congress, and I am persuaded that the strong marks they bear of industry and attention will give them pleasure.

I perfectly concur with you in sentiment respecting what ought to be the conduct and policy of the United States, and I am not without hopes that they will gradually perceive and pursue their true interests. There certainly is much temper as well as talents in Congress ; and although it is not in their power to do all that should be done, yet they are willing and industrious to do whatever depends upon them.

Your letters, I am sure, are useful. They disseminate and enforce those federal ideas which cannot be too forcibly inculcated, or too strongly impressed. Our federal government is incompetent to its objects ; and as it is the interest of our country, so it is the duty of her leading characters to co-operate in measures for enlarging and invigorating it. The rage for separations and new States is mischievous ; it will, unless checked, scatter our resources, and in every view enfeeble the Union. Your testimony against such licentious, anarchical proceedings would, I am persuaded, have great weight.

Your letters, as yet, are silent respecting the evacuation of our frontier posts. I do not mean to press you either to do or say any thing *unseasonably* about it ; for there are times and tides in human affairs to be watched and observed. I know your attention, and therefore rest satisfied that we shall hear from you on this interesting subject as soon as you ought to write about it. During the ensuing sessions of the Legislatures, I shall watch their acts, and endeavour to send you such as may respect the interests of the Union. I find it extremely difficult to collect them. When I first came into this office, I wrote a circular letter to the governors, requesting them, among other things, to send me, from time to time, printed copies of their acts ; but, whatever may have been the cause, it has so happened that, except in two or three instances, this request has been entirely neglected.

With the newspapers herewith sent, you will find the

requisition of Congress. What its success will be cannot yet be determined.

The Algerines, it seems, have declared war against us. If we act properly, I shall not be very sorry for it. In my opinion, it may lay the foundation for a navy, and tend to draw us more closely into a federal system. On that ground only we want strength; and could our people be brought to see it in that light, and act accordingly, we should have little reason to apprehend danger from any quarter.

Dr. Franklin is happy at Philadelphia. Both parties are assiduous in their attentions to him, and it is thought more than probable that he will succeed Mr. Dickinson. I fear, in the language of our farmers, that a day so remarkably fine for the season may prove a *weather-breeder*; that is, that he will find it difficult to manage both parties; for if he gives himself up to one, he must expect hostility from the other. I wish he may be able to reconcile them, and thereby restore that State to the degree of strength and respectability which, from its population, fertility, and commerce, it ought to possess.

With great and sincere esteem and regard,

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO JOHN ADAMS, LONDON.

New-York, 1st November, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

My last to you was of the 14th ult., by the ship *Betsey*, Captain Thomas Watson. Since that time, I have had the pleasure of receiving and laying before Congress your despatches of the 6th, 8th, and 10th August last.

We concur so perfectly in sentiment respecting public affairs, and what ought to be done, that I find no occasion to enlarge on those heads.

In a late report, I have called the attention of Congress to this serious question, viz. whether the United States should withdraw their attention from the ocean, and leave foreigners to fetch and carry for them, or whether it is more their interest to look forward to naval strength and maritime importance, and to take and persevere in the measures proper to attain it.

The diversity of opinions on this point renders it necessary that it should be well considered, and finally decided. The eastern and middle States are generally for the latter system; and though the others do not openly avow their preferring the former, yet they are evidently inclined to it. Hence it is that the most leading men in Congress from that quarter do not only not promote measures for vesting Congress with power to regulate trade, but, as the common phrase is, throw cold water on all such ideas.

Having few or no ships of their own, they are averse to such duties on foreign ones as will greatly advance the price of freight; nor do they seem much disposed to sacrifice any present profits for the sake of their neighbours who have ships and wish to have more.

We have heard much of the Algerines having declared war against the United States. None of our advices are official; but as the intelligence comes directly from Nantes, Bordeaux, and L'Orient, there seems to be much reason to fear it is true.

The public papers herewith sent will inform you of our common occurrences; and I wish it was in my power to tell you what Congress mean to do respecting many matters on which they are to decide. The representation is at present slender, and will, I suspect, continue so till the new members come on.

I have the honour to be

Your very obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Office for Foreign Affairs, }  
24th Nov., 1785. }

SIR,

Mr. Temple presented to me this morning the commission which I have now the honour of transmitting to your excellency herewith enclosed. It appoints him consul-general of his Britannic majesty, throughout the United States of America.

Two questions arise on this occasion :

1. Whether he is to be received *de jure*.
2. Whether it will be expedient to receive him *de gratia*.

The first question is settled by Vattel in the following paragraph, viz.,

“ Among the modern institutions,” &c., page 131.

The second question appears to me to be an important one, for however determined, interesting consequences will result from its decision. In considering it, a secondary question presents itself, viz. whether the rejection or reception of this consul will most dispose his nation to the terms of commercial intercourse which we wish. To this point, the fable of the north wind and the sun seems applicable.

It appears to me that the admission of a consul here is not a matter of so much importance to Britain, as to induce that nation to purchase or obtain it by any compliances which they would not *otherwise* make. Severity, or *summum jus* on small points, may irritate, but they very seldom coerce. Retaliatory restrictions on trade and navigation are great objects, and very consistent with the pride and dignity, as well as interest of a nation ; but under such ideas to refuse to receive a consul, would, whatever might be the true motives, be generally ascribed to a degree of pique and irritation, which, though nations may feel, they ought not expressly or impliedly to declare.

In my opinion, therefore, this consul ought to be received,

but in such a manner as to be and to *appear* as a matter of favour, and not as a matter of course.

I have the honour to be,

Your excellency's most obedient

And very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON,

Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States at the court of France.

Office for Foreign Affairs, }  
N. Y., 19th Jan., 1786. }

DEAR SIR,

Since my last of 7th December last, and indeed for some time before that, Congress has been composed of so few States actually represented, as not to have it in their power to pay that attention to their foreign affairs which they would doubtless have otherwise done. Hence it has happened that no resolutions have been entered into on any of the important subjects submitted to their consideration. This obliges me to observe a degree of reserve in my letters respecting those subjects, which I wish to be free from, but which is nevertheless necessary, lest my sentiments and opinions should be opposed to those which they may adopt and wish to impress.

There is reason to hope that the requisition will be generally complied with; I say generally, because it is not quite clear that every State without exception will make punctual payments. Although a disposition prevails to enable Congress to regulate trade, yet I am apprehensive, that however the propriety of the measure may be admitted, the manner of doing it will not be with equal ease agreed to.

It is much to be regretted, that the confederation had not been so formed as to exclude the necessity of all such kind of questions. It certainly is very imperfect, and I fear it will be difficult to remedy its defects, until experience

shall render the necessity of doing it more obvious and pressing.

With great respect I have the honour to be,

Dear sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO JOHN ADAMS, LONDON.

New-York, 22d Feb., 1786.

DEAR SIR,

Nine States are not yet represented in Congress, and therefore the affairs of this department continue in the same state that they were in at the date of my last.

The public papers will enable you to see the complexion of the times. Federal opinions grow, but it will be some time before they will bear fruit; and, what is not the case with most other fruits, they will, to judge from present appearances, ripen slower in the *south* than in the *north*.

The packet will sail next week. I shall then write to you again.

With great and sincere esteem and regard, I have the honour to be, dear sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO MR. LUSHINGTON.

New-York, 15th March, 1776.

SIR,

I have been favoured with your letter of the 22d ult., and immediately communicated it to the committee of our society for promoting the liberation of slaves, and protecting such as may be manumitted. They are taking proper measures on the occasion, and I flatter myself that our Legislature will interpose to prevent such enormities in future.

It is much to be wished that slavery may be abolished.

The honour of the States, as well as justice and humanity, in my opinion, loudly call upon them to emancipate these unhappy people. To contend for our own liberty, and to deny that blessing to others, involves an inconsistency not to be excused.

Whatever may be the issue of the endeavours of you and others to promote this desirable end, the reflection that they are prompted by the best motives affords good reasons for persevering in them.

I am, sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO LORD LANSDOWN, LONDON.

New-York, 16th April, 1786.

MY LORD,

Accept my thanks for the letter you did me the honour to write on the 4th September last, and for your obliging interposition in behalf of the person alluded to in it.

Your lordship's conjectures respecting the new principles of trade and finance will probably be realized. We hear of several circumstances which look and promise well. The extent of those principles, and the system of commerce to be reared on them, are subjects, however, on which no decided judgment can here be formed, for want of information more minute and unquestionable than we at present have.

Various, my lord, are the conjectures of this country respecting the real disposition and intentions of yours on these and some other interesting points. While such doubts and apprehensions exist, a degree of jealousy will naturally continue to operate against mutual confidence. For my part, I sincerely wish to see good-humour prepare the way for friendly intercourse, and by degrees incline both countries rather to promote than retard each other's welfare. It gives me pleasure to reflect that our wishes on this head

correspond, and that the time may yet come when your abilities and liberality will produce all the public benefits which may justly be expected from them. Mr. Pitt's views, as to America, are yet to be ascertained: I wish they may be such as to increase the reputation and affection which his father's memory enjoys among us. It strikes me that a minister of any nation, much connected with this, will always find advantage in possessing the esteem and confidence of America.

To what events this country may in future be instrumental, is indeed uncertain; but I cannot persuade myself that Providence has created such a nation, in such a country, to remain like dust in the balance of others. We are happy, my lord, in the enjoyment of much more interior tranquillity than the English newspapers allow, or their writers seem to wish us. In free states, there must and ought to be a little ferment. When the public mind grows languid, and a dead calm, unmarked by the least breeze of party takes place, the vigour of a republic soon becomes lost in general relaxation. We perhaps are yet too distant from that point; for although our laws and manners now give us as much personal security as can elsewhere be found, and although the same may in a great, though less degree be said of our property, yet our federal government has imperfections, which time and more experience will, I hope, effectually remedy.

I have the honour to be, my lord, with great respect and esteem, your lordship's

Most obedient and very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO LORD LANSDOWN.

New-York, 20th April, 1786.

MY LORD,

Mr. Ansley this morning delivered the letter you did me the honour to write on the 26th of February last. Every opportunity of manifesting my attention to your lordship's

recommendations will give me pleasure, and that inducement will conspire, with others of a public nature, to ensure to Mr. Ansley my friendly endeavours to facilitate the execution of his commission, and render his residence here agreeable to him.

I perfectly agree in sentiment with your lordship, that it much concerns the honour and future intercourse of both countries to have the treaty of peace duly and faithfully executed. It is to be lamented that wars like the last usually leave behind them a degree of heat which requires some time and prudence to allay. Minds like yours will not be susceptible of it, but the mass of the people commonly act and reason as they feel, and have seldom sufficient temper and liberality to perceive that peace should draw a veil over the injuries of war, and that when hostilities cease, no other contest should remain, but that of who shall take the lead in magnanimity and manly policy. Although these remarks apply to both countries, yet, whatever may be said or written to the contrary, there is certainly, my lord, more temper in this country than it has credit for; and I am persuaded it would become more manifest, if less discouraged by irritating proceedings here and abroad. In the Legislature of this State there are this day members sitting, who, it is well known, are disqualified by law for their conduct during the late contest; and an act has lately passed for restoring all such of the gentlemen of the law as, for the same reason, had been suspended from the exercise of their profession. The execution of all laws of this sort becomes more and more relaxed, and of the many persons returned to this State from exile, and living in their former neighbourhoods, I have not heard of one that has met with any molestation. There are, indeed, certain characters who can never return with safety; but the greater part of them are such as merit no other attention from any country than what national policy may exact. With respect to the generality of these people, the public mind daily becomes more and more composed. It is true that

our affairs are not yet perfectly arranged; some former acts are to be done away, and more proper regulations to be introduced. There is reason, however, to hope that things will gradually come right, and I am persuaded that a little more good-nature on the part of Britain, would produce solid and mutual advantages to both countries.

My lord, I write thus freely from a persuasion that your ideas of policy are drawn from those large and liberal views and principles, which apply to the future as well as the present, and which embrace the interests of the nation and of mankind, rather than the local and transitory advantages of partial systems and individual ambition; for your lordship's plans on the peace were certainly calculated to make the revolution produce only an exchange of dependence for friendship, and of sound and feathers for substance and permanent benefits. How greatly would it redound to the happiness as well as honour of all civilized people, were they to consider and treat each other like fellow-citizens; each nation governing itself as it pleases, but each admitting others to a perfect freedom of commerce. The blessings resulting from the climate and local advantages of one country would then become common to all, and the bounties of nature and conveniences of art pass from nation to nation, without being impeded by the selfish monopolies and restrictions, with which narrow policy opposes the extension of Divine benevolence. It is pleasant, my lord, to dream of these things, and I often enjoy that pleasure; but though, like some of our other dreams, we may wish to see them realized, yet the passions and prejudices of mankind forbid us to expect it.

I have the honour to be, with great respect and sincere regard, my lord,

Your lordship's most obedient  
And very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE, PARIS.

New-York, 16th June, 1786.

DEAR SIR,

During your absence from France, I omitted being so regular in my correspondence as I should otherwise have been. I have been honoured with your letters of the 18th April, and 6th September in the last year, and with one of 11th February last. They were all communicated to Congress.

The account of your German excursion is concise and interesting. The sentiments and opinions respecting the United States and American affairs, which you found there prevailing, appear to me very natural. Successful revolutions and victorious arms have always a degree of splendour about them, which shines at a great distance, and excites admiration, whether well or ill founded. Few have been at the pains of examining and understanding the merits of the case between Great Britain and us, and nine-tenths of that few have taken their sides less from conviction and opinion of right, than from some of the many other more common and more stimulating motives, which usually govern the declarations and conduct of the mass of mankind. It is equally natural that reports to our disadvantage, composed of such proportions of truth and falsehood as might render them probable and palatable, should be generally diffused and believed. There are very few States, and very few ministers in them, who think it convenient to magnify America either by word or deed. Politicians, like critics, are often more disposed to censure than to commend the works of others, and patriotic manœuvres *pro bono publico*, like pious frauds, *pro salute animarum*, were never uncommon. As there is, and always was, and will be, an actual though involuntary coalition between the men of too much art, and the men of too little; so they who either officially or from choice fabricate opinions for other

people's use, will always find many to receive and be influenced by them. Thus, errors proceeding from the invention of designing men, are very frequently adopted and cherished by others who mistake them for truths. It must be easy for the maritime nations to make the rest of Europe believe almost what they please of this country for some years yet to come, and I shall be much mistaken if fame should soon do us justice, especially as her trumpet is, in many places, employed and hired for other purposes.

Whence it happens, I know not, but so the fact is, that I have scarcely met with six foreigners in the course of my life, who really understood American affairs. The cause of truth will probably be little indebted to their memoirs and representations; and when I consider what mistakes are committed by writers on American subjects, I suspect the histories of other countries contain but very imperfect accounts of them.

I can easily conceive that, at the German courts you visited, you have done us service; because I know how able, as well as how willing, you are to do it. I wish all who speak and write of us were equally well-informed and well-disposed. It is a common remark in this country, that wherever you go, you do us good. For my part, I give you credit, not merely for doing us good, but also for doing it uniformly, constantly, and upon system.

Do you recollect your letter of the 2d March, 1783, containing what passed between you and Count de Florida Blanca, respecting our western limits? I communicated that part of it some months ago to Mr. Gardoqui, in opposition to his pretensions and claims. He lately told me you had mistaken the count, for that he never meant to convey to you any thing like a dereliction of those claims; which, by-the-bye, are too extensive to be admitted. In a word, they do not mean to be restricted to the limits established between Britain and us. Why should people, who

have so much more territory than they know what to do with, be so solicitous to acquire more?

The moneys due by the United States to subjects of France have given occasion to applications by Mr. Marbois, and to reports on them by the board of treasury, which are now under the consideration of Congress. You, my dear sir, are not unacquainted with the state of our finances, nor with the difficulties resulting from the inefficiency of our federal government. Time and more experience must and will cure these evils; when or how is less certain, and can only be conjectured.

I had the honour, last summer, of writing a letter to the marchioness, in answer to one she was so obliging as to favour me with; did it ever come to hand? Mrs. Jay writes to her by this conveyance. We and many others are pleased with the expectation of seeing you both here, and with the opportunity we shall then have of personally assuring you of our esteem and attachment.

I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON, PARIS.

New-York, 14th July, 1786.

DEAR SIR,

Since my last to you of the 16th ultimo, I have been honoured with your letter of 23d, and a joint one from you and Mr. Adams, of 25th April.

Considering the importance of our commerce with Portugal, it gives me pleasure to learn that a treaty with that kingdom was so nearly concluded. Until our affairs shall be more perfectly arranged, we shall treat under disadvantages; and therefore I am not surprised that our negotiations with Britain and Barbary are unpromising. To be respectable abroad, it is necessary to be so at home; and

that will not be the case until our public faith acquires more confidence, and our government more strength.

When or how these great objects will be attained, can scarcely be conjectured. An uneasiness prevails through the country, and may produce eventually the desired reformations, and it may also produce untoward events. Time alone can decide this and many other doubts; for nations, like individuals, are more frequently guided by circumstances, than circumstances by them.

There are some little circumstances that look as if the Dutch regret our having found the way to China; and that will doubtless be more or less the case with every nation with whose commercial views we may interfere. I am happy in reflecting, that there can be but little clashing of interests between us and France, and therefore that she will probably continue disposed to wish us well and do us good; especially, if we honestly fulfil our pecuniary engagements with her. These engagements, however, give me much concern. Every principle and consideration of honour, justice, and interest calls upon us for good faith and punctuality; and yet we are unhappily so circumstanced, that the moneys necessary for the purpose are not provided, nor in such a way of being provided as they ought to be. This is owing, not to any thing wrong in Congress, but to their not possessing that power of coercion without which no government can possibly attain the most salutary and constitutional objects. Excuses and palliations, and applications for more time, make bad remittances, and will afford no inducements to our allies or others to afford us similar aids on future occasions.

With great respect, I have the honour to be,

Dear sir,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON, PARIS.

New-York, 27th Oct., 1786.

DEAR SIR,

The inefficacy of our government becomes daily more and more apparent. Our treasury and our credit are in a sad situation; and it is probable that either the wisdom or the passions of the people will produce changes. A spirit of licentiousness has infected Massachusetts, which appears more formidable than some at first apprehended. Whether similar symptoms will not soon mark a like disease in several other States is very problematical.

The public papers herewith sent contain every thing generally known about these matters. A reluctance to taxes, an impatience of government, a rage for property and little regard to the means of acquiring it, together with a desire of equality in all things, seem to actuate the mass of those who are uneasy in their circumstances. To these may be added the influence of ambitious adventurers, and the speculations of the many characters who prefer private to public good, and of others who expect to gain more from wrecks made by tempests than from the produce of patient and honest industry. As the knaves and fools of this world are for ever in alliance, it is easy to perceive how much vigour and wisdom a government, from its construction and administration, should possess, in order to repress the evils which naturally flow from such copious sources of injustice and evil.

Much, I think, is to be feared from the sentiments which such a state of things is calculated to infuse into the minds of the rational and well-intentioned. In their eyes, the charms of liberty will daily fade; and in seeking for peace and security, they will too naturally turn towards systems in direct opposition to those which oppress and disquiet them.

If faction should long bear down law and government,

tyranny may raise its head, or the more sober part of the people may even think of a king.

In short, my dear sir, we are in a very unpleasant situation. Changes are necessary; but what they ought to be, what they will be, and how and when to be produced, are arduous questions. I feel for the cause of liberty, and for the honour of my countrymen who have so nobly asserted it, and who, at present, so abuse its blessings. If it should not take root in this soil, little pains will be taken to cultivate it in any other.

I have the honour to be, with great respect,

Dear sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

Office for Foreign Affairs, }  
New-York, 1st November, 1786. }

DEAR SIR,

My report on the answer of the British minister to your memorial respecting our frontier posts, is under the consideration of Congress. Your ideas and mine on those subjects very nearly correspond, and I sincerely wish that you may be enabled to accommodate every difference between us and Britain, on the most liberal principles of justice and candour. The result of my inquiries into the conduct of the States relative to the treaty, is, that there has not been a single day since it took effect, on which it has not been violated in America, by one or other of the States; and this observation is just, whether the treaty be supposed to have taken effect either at the date or exchange of the provisional articles, or on the day of the date of the definitive treaty, or of the ratifications of it.

Our affairs are in a very unpleasant situation, and changes become necessary, and in some little degree probable. When government, either from defects in its con-

struction or administration, ceases to assert its rights, or is too feeble to afford security, inspire confidence, and overawe the ambitious and licentious, the best citizens naturally grow uneasy and look to other systems.

How far the disorders of Massachusetts may extend, or how they will terminate, is problematical; nor is it possible to decide whether the people of Rhode Island will remain much longer obedient to the very extraordinary and exceptionable laws passed, for compelling them to embrace the doctrine of the political transubstantiation of paper into gold and silver.

I suspect that our posterity will read the history of our last four years with much regret.

I enclose for your information a pamphlet, containing the acts of the different States granting an impost to Congress.

You will also find enclosed a copy of an act of Congress, of 20th and 21st ult., for raising an additional number of troops. This measure was doubtless necessary, although the difficulty of providing for the expense of it is a serious one. I flatter myself you will be able to obviate any improper suspicions which the minister may be led to entertain respecting the object of this force. I have pressed the policy of deciding on my report on the infractions of the treaty without delay, that you may thence be furnished with conclusive arguments against the insinuations of those who may wish to infuse and support opinions unfavourable to us on these points.

The newspapers herewith sent will give you information in detail of Indian affairs, but they will not tell you what, however is the fact, that our people have committed several unprovoked acts of violence against them. These acts ought to have excited the notice of government, and been punished in an exemplary manner.

With great and sincere esteem and regard, I have the honour to be, dear sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO JACOB REED.

New-York, 12th Dec., 1786.

DEAR SIR,

Your friendly letter has long remained unanswered ; but a variety of private, as well as public affairs, constrained me to postpone indulging myself in the pleasure I always derive from writing to my friends. The recess (if I may so call it) of Congress gives their officers too much leisure at present ; and there is reason to fear, that the members will be as long in convening this year as they were last. Business is at a stand for want of an adequate representation. The languor of the States is to be lamented ; many inconveniences have already arisen from it, and if continued, serious evils will awaken our people. Our affairs, my dear sir, are in a delicate situation, and it is much to be wished, that the real patriots, throughout the States, would exert themselves to render it more safe and respectable. The feuds in Massachusetts are rather suspended than extinguished. What events they may ultimately produce, is uncertain ; but I should not be surprised if much trouble was to result from them. The public creditors will soon become importunate, and Congress cannot create the means of satisfying them. It is true that order usually succeeds confusion ; but it is a high price to pay for order, especially when a little virtue and good sense would procure it for us on very reasonable terms. If the best men would be prevailed upon to come forward, and take the lead in our legislatures as well as in Congress, and would unite their endeavours to rescue their country from its present condition, our affairs, both at home and abroad, would soon wear a more pleasing aspect. It is time for our people to distinguish more accurately than they seem to do, between liberty and licentiousness. The late revolution would lose much of its glory, as well as utility, if our conduct should

confirm the tory maxim, "That men are incapable of governing themselves."

With real esteem and regard,  
I am, dear sir,  
Your most obedient and very humble servant,  
JOHN JAY.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

New-York, 25th July, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

Permit me to hint whether it would not be wise and seasonable to provide a strong check to the admission of foreigners into the administration of our national government; and to declare expressly that the command in chief of the American army shall not be given to, nor devolve on any but a natural born citizen.

I remain, dear sir,  
Your faithful friend and servant,  
JOHN JAY.

FROM GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Mount Vernon, August 3d, 1788.

DEAR SIR,

The letters which you did me the favour of writing to me on the 17th and 23d of last month from Poughkeepsie, came duly to hand, and claim my particular acknowledgments.

With peculiar pleasure I now congratulate you on the success of your labours to obtain an unconditional ratification of the proposed constitution in the Convention of your State, the account of which was brought to us by the mail of yesterday.

Although I could hardly conceive it possible, after ten States had adopted the constitution, that New-York, separated as it is from the remaining three, and so peculiarly

divided in sentiments as it is, would withdraw herself from the union, yet considering the great majority which appeared to cling together in the Convention, and the decided temper of the leaders in the opposition, I did not, I confess, see the means by which it was to be avoided.

The exertion of those who were able to effect this great work, must have been equally arduous and meritorious. It is to be hoped that the State of North Carolina will not spend much time in deciding on this question, and as to Rhode Island, its conduct hitherto has so far baffled all calculation, that few are disposed to hazard a conjecture thereon.

With sentiments of the sincerest esteem and regard,

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate servant,

GEO. WASHINGTON.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

New-York, 21st September, 1788.

DEAR SIR,

I am not sure that the new government will be found to rest on principles sufficiently stable to produce a uniform adherence to what justice, dignity, and liberal policy may require; for however proper such conduct may be, none but great minds will always deem it expedient. Men in general are guided more by conveniences than by principles; this idea accompanies all my reflections on the new constitution, and induced me to remark to our late Convention at Poughkeepsie, that some of the most unpopular and strong parts of it appeared to me to be the most unexceptionable. Government without liberty is a curse; but on the other hand, liberty without government is far from being a blessing.

The opponents in this State to the constitution decrease and grow temperate. Many of them seem to look forward

to another Convention, rather as a measure that will justify their opposition, than produce all the effects they pretended to expect from it. I wish that measure may be adopted with a good grace, and without delay or hesitation. So many good reasons can be assigned for postponing the *session* of such a Convention for three or four years, that I really believe the great majority of its advocates would be satisfied with that delay; after which I think we should not have much danger to apprehend from it, especially if the new government should in the mean time recommend itself to the people by the wisdom of their proceedings, which I flatter myself will be the case. The division of the powers of government into three departments, is a great and valuable point gained, and will give the people the best opportunity of bringing the question whether they can govern themselves to a decision in their favour.

I remain, dear sir,

Your faithful friend and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO MAJOR PIERCE.

New-York, 3d Jan., 1789.

DEAR SIR,

It is as yet exceedingly uncertain who will be senators for this State, and consequently it cannot be even conjectured by what leading motives they will probably be influenced in their appointments. Whoever they may be, I shall not omit to apprize them of your services and character. This I take to be the precise extent of your request, and thus far my desire of serving you may, I think, be gratified. You are aware, my dear sir, that my official station prescribes a degree of delicacy and reserve relative to other departments, which, though sometimes unpleasant, is always proper. It gives me pleasure to be persuaded, that on this head our sentiments correspond, and that you

prefer a uniform adherence to propriety, to any friendly efforts beyond its limits.

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

Paris, 1st July, 1789.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am too much occupied to find time for the use of a cipher, and in effect, the government here is so much occupied with their own affairs, that in transmitting to you a letter under an envelope, there is no risk. This, however, I am pretty certain will go safe. The States-general have now been a long time in session, and have done nothing hitherto. They have been engaged in a dispute, whether they shall form one body or three. The commons, who are represented by a number equal to both the others, and who besides have at least one-half the representatives of the clergy, insist on forming a single house. They have succeeded. But the nobles deeply feel their situation. The king, after siding with them, was frightened into an abandonment of them. He acts now from terror only. The soldiery in this city, particularly the French guards, declare they will not act against the people. They are now treated by the mobility, and parade about the streets drunk, huzzaing for the *Tiers*. Some of them have, in consequence, been confined, not by the force, but by the adroitness of authority. Last night this circumstance became known, and immediately a mob repaired to the prison. The soldiers on guard unfixd their bayonets, and joined the assailants. A party of dragoons, ordered on duty to disperse the riot, thought it better to drink with the rioters, and return back to their quarters. The soldiers, with others confined in the same prison, were then paraded in triumph to the Palais Royal, which is now the liberty pole of this city, and there they celebrated, as usual, their joy. Prob-

bly this evening some other prisons will be opened, for "Liberté" is now the general cry, and "autorité" is a name, not a real existence.

The court are about to form a camp in the neighbourhood of Paris, of 25,000 men, under the command of the Marechal de Broglio. I do not know him personally, therefore cannot judge what may be expected from his talents; but all my information goes to the point, that he will never bring his army to act against the people. The Guard du Corps are as warm adherents (in general) to the Tiers as anybody else, strange as that may seem; so that in effect the sword has slipped out of the monarch's hands, without his perceiving a tittle of the matter. All these things in a nation not yet fitted by education and habit for the enjoyment of freedom, gives one frequent suspicions that they will indeed greatly overshoot their mark, if indeed they have not already done it. Already some people talk of limiting the king's negative upon the laws. And as they have hitherto felt severely the authority exercised in the name of their princes, every limitation of that authority seems to them desirable. Never having felt the evils of too weak an executive, the disorders to be apprehended from anarchy make, as yet, no impression.

The provincial assemblies or administrations, in other words, the *popular executive* of the provinces, which Turgot had imagined as a means of moderating the *regal legislative* of the court, is now insisted on as a counter security against the monarch, when they shall have established a *democratical legislative*, for you will observe that the noble and clerical orders are henceforth to be vox et præterea nihil. The king is to be limited to the exact sum needful for his personal expenses. The management of the public debt, and revenues to provide for it, will be taken entirely out of his hands, and the subsistence of the army is to depend on temporary grants. Hence it must follow, that his negative, in whatever form reserved, will be of little avail. These are the outlines of the proposed constitution, by which at the

same time lettres de cachet are to be abrogated, and the liberty of the press established.

My private opinion is, that the king, to get fairly out of the scrape in which he finds himself, would subscribe to any thing; and truly from him little is to be expected in any way. The queen, hated, humbled, mortified, feels, and feigns, and intrigues to save some shattered remnants of the royal authority; but to know that she favours a measure is the certain means to frustrate its success. The Count D'Artois, alike hated, is equally busy, but has neither sense to counsel himself, nor choose counsellors for himself, much less to counsel others. The nobles look up to him for support, and lean on what they know to be a broken reed, for want of some more solid dependence. In their anguish, they curse Neckar, who is, in fact, less the cause than the instrument of their sufferings. His popularity depends now more on the opposition he meets with from one party, than any serious regard of the other. It is the attempt to throw him down which saves him from falling. He has no longer the preponderating weight in council, which a fortnight ago decided every thing. If they were not afraid of consequences, he would be dismissed; and, on the same principle, the king has refused to accept his resignation. If his abilities were equal to his genius, and he were as much supported by firmness as he is swayed by ambition, he would have had the exalted honour of giving a free constitution to above twenty millions of his fellow-creatures, and would have reigned long in their hearts, and received the unanimous applause of posterity. But as it is, he must soon fall. Whether his exit will be physical or moral, must depend on events which I cannot foresee. The best chance that royalty has is, that popular excesses may alarm. At the rate in which things are now going, the king of France must soon be one of the most limited monarchs in Europe. Adieu.

I am yours,

GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

TO CHARLES PETTIT.

New-York, 14th July, 1789.

DEAR SIR,

Your obliging letter of the 5th instant was delivered to me last week.

You know it is important that confidence and cordiality subsist between the heads of the departments, that they may, when necessary, unite their efforts to promote their respective operations for the public good. To this end much delicacy and candour should be observed towards each other, and all unnecessary interference avoided. It is likewise important that harmony and confidence subsist between the principal and other officers of each department, that no personal jealousies or discontents may embarrass the business of it. These and all other prudential considerations will doubtless have their due degree of weight with the president, in all his nominations; and I mention them, merely because they lead me to think it would be improper for me to *recommend* to the president any person for a place in any other department than the one in which I may hold the first. All that I could do, therefore, in the present case was, to inform the president that it would give you pleasure to serve the public in the place you mention. This I have done, nor could details be necessary. You are far from being a stranger to the public; you have enjoyed strong marks of their confidence, and have long been personally known to the president.

I have the honour to be, dear sir,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO FISHER AMES.

New-York, 27th November, 1789.

DEAR SIR,

I have this moment been favoured with your letter of the 10th of this month. Mr. Sedgwick has given me the same character of Mr. Tucker that you do. There are at present several candidates for the place in question,\* and probably the number will be increased before the appointment takes place. As it should be the result of mutual information and joint consultation between the judges, it appears to me proper that I should in the mean time remain free from engagements, express or implied, to or for any gentleman, however well recommended. The reserve which this consideration imposes will not permit me to enlarge upon this subject; but I know of no consideration which should restrain me from assuring you very explicitly of the esteem with which I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO JOHN DUMONT.

New-York, 27th Feb., 1790.

DEAR SIR,

I was favoured with yours of the 28th ultimo as I was preparing to go out of town. It was not until last evening that I returned, or I should have taken an earlier opportunity of answering your letter.

Accept my thanks for your friendly congratulations. I believe them sincere, and value them accordingly. It would give me great pleasure to see your situation more comfortable. On these occasions it is best to be very explicit; it would neither be friendly nor candid to excite delusory

\* Clerk of the Supreme Court.

expectations, or to make promises without a good prospect of performing them. There is not a single office in my gift; nor do I recollect that there is more than one in the appointment of the court, I mean their clerk. As to offices in the gift of other departments, I think it my duty not to interfere, nor to ask favours, it being improper for a judge to put himself under such obligations.

I am sincerely disposed to serve my friends, and you among others; but it can only be in a way perfectly consistent with the duties and proprieties of my public station. These considerations will, I am persuaded, have their due weight with you, and rather increase than diminish the esteem and attachment you have always expressed and manifested for me. I regret that on this occasion I cannot say things more consonant with your wishes; but sincerity, though not always pleasing, is preferable to mere civility.

Be assured of my constant regard, and that I remain

Your friend,

JOHN JAY.

FROM ALEXANDER HAMILTON,

Secretary of the Treasury.

Philadelphia, 13th Nov., 1790.

MY DEAR SIR,

I enclose you copies of two resolutions which have passed the House of Representatives of Virginia. Others had been proposed and disagreed to. But the war was still going on. A spirited remonstrance to Congress is talked of.

This is the first symptom of a spirit which must either be killed, or will kill the constitution of the United States. I send the resolutions to you, that it may be considered what ought to be done.

Ought not the collective weight of the different parts of the government to be employed in exploding the principles

they contain? This question arises out of sudden and undigested thought.

I remain, dear sir,  
Your affectionate and obedient humble servant,

ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

“*Resolved*, That it is the opinion of this committee, that so much of the act of Congress entitled ‘An act making provision for the debt of the United States’ as assumes the payment of the State debts, is repugnant to the constitution of the United States, as it goes to the exercise of a power not expressly granted to the general government.

“*Resolved*, That so much of the act entitled ‘An act making provision for the debt of the United States’ as limits the right of the United States in their redemption of the public debt is dangerous to the rights and subversive of the interests of the people, and demands the marked disapprobation of the General Assembly.”

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

Boston, 28th Nov., 1790.

DEAR SIR,

On returning from Exeter the evening before the last, I had the pleasure of receiving your letter of the 13th inst. with the two copies mentioned in it. Having no apprehension of such measures, what was to be done appeared to me a question of some difficulty as well as importance. To treat them as very important might render them more so than I think they are. The author of *McFingal* could do justice to the subject. The assumption will do its own work. It will justify itself, and not want advocates. Every indecent interference of State assemblies will diminish their influence. The national government has only to do what is right, and if possible, be silent. If compelled to speak, it should be in few words, strongly evincive of tem-

per, dignity, and self-respect. Conversation and desultory paragraphs will do the rest.

The national government gains ground in these countries, and I hope care will be taken to cherish the national spirit which is prevailing in them. The deviation from contract touching interest does not please very universally. An individual remarked, that while Congress thought themselves authorized to take such liberties, private property could not be secure in a national bank.

Yours affectionately,

JOHN JAY.

FROM GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Philadelphia, Sept. 4th, 1791.

MY DEAR SIR,

The indisposition, and consequent absence from Mount Vernon, of my nephew, Major Washington, to whom the care of my private business is intrusted, makes it indispensably necessary for me to go home before the meeting of Congress.

My stay there will be longer or shorter, according to circumstances; but it cannot exceed the middle of October, as I must be back before the meeting of that body.

Will you permit me, my dear sir, to make a similar request to the one I did last year, and to pray that your ideas may not be confined to matters merely judicial, but extended to all other topics which have, or may occur to you, as fit subjects for general or private communications.

With sincere esteem and affectionate regard,

I am, my dear sir,

Your obedient and very humble servant,

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

New-York, 23d Sept., 1791.

DEAR SIR,

My first idea was to have made a sketch of what, in my opinion, would be proper on the occasion; but finding in the progress of it that my information relative to the actual state of affairs was not sufficiently particular, and in several respects defective, it became necessary to confine myself to general remarks.

How far the present *fiscal* arrangements require amendments or additions, can best be ascertained of the secretary. I recollect one case which should be provided for, viz. where bribes are offered to revenue officers. It will rarely happen that the offer of a bribe can be proved, except by the man to whom it is offered, and if he be disqualified (by being interested in the penalty) from giving testimony, the offender must be acquitted. Auxiliary provisions may, in the execution of other parts of these statutes, have been found wanting; this merits inquiry. If amendments are contemplated, it may be proper to observe, that as all new institutions are liable to defects which experience only can discover, it may be useful to consider whether the revenue laws require any amendments to render them more competent to their objects.

Whether it is intended to bring forward any and what plans for additional supplies, I know not; if it is, some general ideas leading the attention that way might be expedient. If *not*, perhaps it would be well to observe, that the existing revenues being equal to the ordinary exigences of the nation, it will not be necessary to increase them for any other purpose than that of reducing the public debt. This idea, I think, should be constantly held up.

If there should this year be a surplus of revenue, the whole or part of which could be spared for domestic objects, might it not be best to apply it towards discharging

the French debt, and to introduce the recommendation by some observations like these, viz. that the friendly disposition and aids of the king and people of France had been highly conducive to the establishment of our liberty and independence; and therefore that they might, with great propriety, expect from the United States every mark of attention which *their* and *our* circumstances might render eligible. That the cause of *liberty* and good *government* was the cause of all mankind; and that the exertions of the citizens of France to introduce and establish those blessings, not only merited general approbation, but were particularly entitled to our best wishes for their success. That the United States could not better evince this friendly disposition than by applying part of their revenues towards paying the debt due to France, at a season when, from the derangements incident to revolutions, it could not fail of being both acceptable and useful.

Indian affairs afford another topic, but on this subject my information is too limited to enable me to see things as they probably are. But be they as they may, it might answer a good purpose occasionally to hint at the justice and policy of treating those nations with benevolence, and with constant regard to good faith.

If circumstances of importance should make it proper to say any thing of the territories, and the immediate government of the United States, it would afford an opportunity of recommending the encouragement of schools, and the policy of assisting the settlers in making such highways as might open and facilitate communications with the adjacent States.

As to foreign affairs, I am inclined to think that at present little, if any thing, should be said about them; unless some matters very interesting to the United States should have occurred. It is said, that a minister from England may soon be expected. He may, or he may not come. The disposition of that court towards us cannot yet, I believe,

be unequivocally ascertained. To be silent, and thereby to avoid either courting or irritating them, appears to me advisable in the present moment.

The judicial system undoubtedly calls for revision ; but I rather think it will be better to include it generally among those other subjects heretofore recommended, which it may be necessary again to mention, than to make any pointed remarks respecting it.

To convey necessary *information*, and to suggest useful *hints* on the one hand, and on the other *so* to do both as to cause as few questions or divisions as possible in framing the addresses in answer, seems to be all that can be requisite.

All things have their order. All that ought to be done, cannot be done at once. Those, therefore, of the greatest present importance should take the lead, and the rest be reserved for future sessions.

As to public and private communications, it strikes me that the former should contain only important and public information, and in generals ; and that details, as well as intelligence of a more secret nature, or of lesser importance, should be conveyed by message.

The census is a subject about which much might, but little need be said, the observations pertinent to it being obvious. I think that something should be said, generally and cautiously (by way of information), of the proceedings in the business of the federal district ; and if necessary, the details may be communicated by message. Of the bank, I doubt the expediency of saying any thing ; especially as its affairs are under the management of its directors.

Thus, my dear sir, I have committed to paper what passed in my mind relative to these subjects with that freedom which your friendship invites, and without that caution and reserve which a sense of your judgment, experience, and discretion tends naturally to create.

I regret the circumstance which called you to Mount Vernon, and hope the recovery of your nephew has relieved you from all anxieties on that account. I can perceive no reasons which ought to restrain you from frequent visits to it during the recess of Congress. It would conduce to your health, and so far to the public good. Besides, the distance is not so great, but that in the ordinary course of things, your presence at Philadelphia might, at convenient intervals, be spared; for should any thing extraordinary occur, you might very soon be advised of it, and if necessary, return. Be pleased to present my respectful compliments to your lady; and believe me to be, with perfect respect, esteem, and attachment,

Dear sir,

Your obliged and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO FREDERICK JAY.

Hartford, 2d November, 1791.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

A person who says he left New-York last Friday, reports that a putrid disorder prevailed there, and that among many others, it had rendered your house a house of mourning. This unexpected event affects me greatly. I can easily conceive what your feelings on the occasion must be, and sympathize with you very sincerely. I much regret my absence from you, for although friendly attentions cannot *heal* the wounds of affliction, they in some degree assuage their anguish. I know, and that by experience, that more consolation is to be derived from a firm confidence in the wisdom of Him who governs the world, and from resignation to His will who never errs, than from all other circumstances and considerations united. Our departed friends are but gone home before us. We must all follow, and, if prepared to follow, shall after a little while rejoin them, where death or pain can never intrude.

It is true, that in the mean time we neither can nor ought to obliterate the impressions which such events naturally make on the human heart and mind. But there certainly is a difference between sustaining the burden of affliction as Christians, and sinking under it as men without fortitude or hope.

May God grant you those consolations which the world cannot give nor take away.

Believe me to be,

Your very affectionate brother,

JOHN JAY.

TO EGBERT BENSON.

Member of Congress.

New-York, 31st March, 1792.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

I have had the pleasure of seeing Senor Ceracchi, and his model of a monument in honour of the revolution. The design appears to me to be a noble one, worthy the attention of the United States, and honourable to the taste and talents of the artist. It cannot fail of being interesting to all who contributed to the revolution, and to that glorious triumph of liberty which it exhibited, and which well deserves a magnificent monument. The ancient republics, to whose very imperfections we are sometimes partial, afford precedents. Why should not the Congress adopt and carry this design into execution? The expense? for my part I think the expense proper, and therefore confide in the sense and sentiment of the public. If the money was *now* to be provided, the measure would be *unseasonable*, on account of the Indian war. That obstacle will be of short duration. We need not begin the monument this year. To adopt the plan will cost nothing. The work must necessarily be long on hand, and as the expense will be gradually incurred, so also it will be gradually defrayed. The sum annually requisite can be but small compared

with the object, and with our resources. Although it would better become the nation, than individuals, to undertake it, yet provided the nation assume the task, the aid of subscriptions, and even State donations, might, if necessary, be resorted to. If you would say, it shall be begun as soon as a certain sum is subscribed, there is reason to believe it would be subscribed. If the ways and means be referred to Colonel Hamilton, he will indicate the most eligible. His official station, information, and talents, would render it proper.

The gentleman who formed the design, will be the most proper person to execute it. Another artist would not feel the same degree of interest in it, nor is it certain that another of equal talents could easily be had.

As to his reward,—it is a matter which I think should not *at present* be contemplated. Let the work be finished, and *then* make him such an acknowledgment as would become the nation on the one hand, and him on the other. I can conceive of no other rule on such occasions, and in relation to such objects.

I confess to you that the effect which this measure would naturally have on the president's feelings, is with me an additional inducement. We shall not be reproached for letting him die by an executioner, or in chains, or in exile, or in neglect and disgrace, as many Greek and Roman patriots died. On the contrary, we shall be commended throughout all generations for the part we have hitherto acted respecting him. It is only while he lives that we can have the satisfaction of offering the fruits of gratitude and affection to his enjoyment. Posterity can have only the pensive pleasure of strewing flowers on his grave.

Yours affectionately,

JOHN JAY.

FROM ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

[Private.]

Philadelphia, Sept. 3d, 1792.

MY DEAR SIR,

The proceedings at Pittsburgh, which you will find stated in the enclosed paper, and other incidents in the western parts of this State, announce so determined and persevering a spirit of opposition to the laws, as, in my opinion, to render a vigorous exertion of the powers of government indispensable. I have communicated this opinion to the president, and I doubt not his impressions will accord with it. In this case, one point for consideration will be the expediency of the next circuit court's noticing the state of things in that quarter, particularly the meeting at Pittsburgh, and its proceedings. You will observe an avowed object is to "*obstruct the operation of the law.*" This is attempted to be qualified by a pretence of doing it by "every legal measure." But "legal measures" "to obstruct the operation of a law," is a contradiction in terms. I therefore entertain no doubt, that a high misdemeanor has been committed. The point, however, is under submission to the attorney-general for his opinion.

There is really, my dear sir, a crisis in the affairs of the country, which demands the most mature consideration of its best and wisest friends.

I beg you to apply your most serious thoughts to it, and favour me, as soon as possible, with the result of your reflections. Perhaps it will not be amiss for you to converse with Mr. King. His judgment is sound. He has caution and energy.

Would a proclamation from the president be advisable, stating the criminality of such proceedings, and warning all persons to abstain from them, as the laws will be strictly enforced against all offenders?

If the plot should thicken, and the application of force

should appear to be unavoidable, will it be expedient for the president to repair in person to the scene of commotion?

These are some of the questions which present themselves. The subject will doubtless open itself in all its aspects to you. With real respect, and affectionate attachment, I remain, dear sir,

Your obedient servant,

ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

New-York, 8th Sept., 1792.

DEAR SIR,

I have conferred with Mr. King on the subject of your letter of the 3d inst. We concur in opinion that neither a proclamation, nor a *particular* charge by the court to the grand jury would be advisable at present. To us it appears more prudent, that this business be opened by the president's speech, at the ensuing session of Congress. Their address will manifest the sense of the House, and both together operate more effectually than a proclamation.

No strong declarations should be made, unless there be ability and disposition to follow them with strong measures. Admitting both these requisites, it is questionable whether such operations at this moment would not furnish the Anties with materials for deceiving the uninformed part of the community, and in some measure render the operations of government odious. Let all the branches of government move together, and let the chiefs be committed publicly on one or the other side of the question. I perceive symptoms of the crisis you mention; if managed with discretion and firmness, it will weaken its authors. If matters can pass on, sub silentio, until the meeting of Congress, I think all will be well. The public will become informed, and the sense of the nation become manifest. Opposition to that sense will be clogged with apprehensions, and strong measures, if necessary, will be approved, and be supported.

If, in the mean time, such outrages should be committed as to force the attention of government to its dignity, nothing will remain but to obey that necessity in a way that will leave nothing to hazard. Success, on such occasions, should be certain. Whether this should be done under the president's personal direction, must, I think, depend on circumstances at the time; or in other words, on the degree of importance which those circumstances combined may evince.

Yours affectionately,

JOHN JAY.

FROM ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

Philadelphia, December 18th, 1792.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your favours of the 26th November and 16th inst. have duly come to hand. I am ashamed that the former has remained so long unacknowledged; though I am persuaded my friends would readily excuse my delinquencies, could they appreciate my situation. 'Tis not the load of proper official business that alone engrosses me, though this would be enough to occupy any man. 'Tis not the extra attentions I am obliged to pay to the course of legislative manœuvres, that alone adds to my burthen and perplexity. 'Tis the malicious intrigues to stab me in the dark, against which I am too often obliged to guard myself, that distract and harass me to a point, which, rendering my situation scarcely tolerable, interferes with objects to which friendship and inclination would prompt me.

I have not, however, been unmindful of the subject of your letters. Mr. King will tell you the state the business was in. Nothing material has happened since. The representation will probably produce some effect, though not as great as ought to be expected. Some changes for the better, I trust, will take place.

The success of the vice-president is as great a source of

satisfaction, as that of Mr. Clinton would have been of mortification and pain to me. Willingly, however, would I relinquish my share of the command to the anti-federalists, if I thought they were to be trusted. But I have so many proofs of the contrary, as to make me dread the experiment of their preponderance.

Very respectfully and affectionately, dear sir,

Your obedient servant,

A. HAMILTON.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

New-York, 19th December, 1792.

DEAR SIR,

On my return this evening from Rye, I found your letter of the 18th instant at my house. It is not difficult to perceive that your situation is unpleasant, and it is easy to predict that your enemies will endeavour to render it still more so. The thorns they strew in your way will (if you please) hereafter blossom, and furnish garlands to decorate your administration. Resolve not to be driven from your station, and as your situation must, it seems, be militant, act accordingly. Envy will tell posterity that your difficulties, from the state of *things*, were inconsiderable, compared with the great, growing, and untouched resources of the nation. Your difficulties from *persons* and *party* will, by time, be carried out of sight, unless you prevent it. No other person will possess sufficient facts and details to do full justice to the subject, and I think your reputation points to the expediency of memoirs. You want time, it is true, but few of us know how much time we can find when we set about it.

Had not your letter come from the post-office, I should suspect it had been opened. The wafer looked very much like it. Such letters should be sealed with wax, impressed with your seal.

I rejoice with you in the re-election of Mr. Adams. It

has relieved my mind from much inquietude. It is a great point gained; but the unceasing industry and arts of the Anties render perseverance, union, and constant efforts necessary.

Adieu, my dear sir.

Yours, sincerely,

JOHN JAY.

TO DUGALD STEWART,

Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh.

New-York, 20th March, 1794.

SIR,

Accept my thanks for the ingenious work which you was so obliging as to send me by Mr. Childs. I have read it with pleasure and improvement: it casts new light on several interesting questions, and I observe in it a degree of perspicuity not always to be found in dissertations on such subjects.

The connexion between mind and body, and the operations of the former on and through the latter, continue involved in great obscurity. Persevering attention and inquiry will, probably, produce further information. The spiritual and material worlds, if I may use the expression, appear to me to be so widely different and opposite, that I am often inclined to suspect the existence of others, intermediate, but of a nature distinct from either.

It is much to be wished that nothing may occur to prevent your finishing the analysis of the intellectual powers, and extending your speculations to man considered as an active and moral being, and as the member of a political society. There is reason to doubt whether this field of science has, as yet, received the highest cultivation of which it is capable. The republic of letters is under many obligations to your country. May those obligations be increased.

I have the honour to be, with sentiments of respect and esteem, sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

New-York, 30th April, 1794.

DEAR SIR,

I was this day honoured with your letter of yesterday. I expect to sail in the course of a fortnight, and, if my prayers and endeavours avail, my absence will not be of long duration.

From the confidence you repose in me, I derive the most pleasing emotions, and I thank you for them. Life is uncertain—whether I take your letter with me, or leave it here, it would, in case of my death, be inspected by others, who, however virtuous, might be indiscreet. After much reflection, I conclude it will be most prudent to commit it to you, without retaining any copy or memorandum, except in my memory, where the numerous proofs of your kind attention to me are carefully preserved.

With perfect respect, esteem, and attachment,

I am, dear sir,

Your obliged and affectionate servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

London, 23d June, 1794.

DEAR SIR,

My letter of this date to Mr. Randolph contains an exact account of the present state of the affairs of my mission here. I shall be disappointed if no good should result. As yet, the minister stands entirely uncommitted. From some light circumstances, I incline to believe that our mercantile injuries will be redressed; but how or how far, I cannot conjecture. My next conference will doubtless

place things in more particular and in clearer points of view.

Dr. Gordon has information, which he *relies* upon, that the posts will not be surrendered, and he authorizes me to tell you so in confidence. His information does not make so strong an impression upon my mind as it does on his; it merits attention, but, in my opinion, is not *conclusive*.

The observations I have hitherto made induce me to believe that the war with France is popular, and that a war with us would be unpopular. The word *Jacobin* is here a term of reproach, and used as such among the common people. They who wish the reform of this government, do, I apprehend, wish a certain degree of success to the present French cause, not because they like it, but because they think such success would promote their favourite objects. I often hear gentlemen converse on these subjects, but I think it prudent to be reserved; as to their internal parties and divisions, I make it a rule to remain silent.

Your administration is greatly commended. The idea entertained by some, of applying private debts to compensate public injuries, alarms and disgusts, and impairs credit. I am anxious to have it in my power to communicate something decisive. As yet, I am entirely satisfied with the minister.

I ought to add, that Mr. Pinckney's conduct relative to me corresponds with my ideas of delicacy and propriety.

With perfect respect, esteem, and attachment,

I am, dear sir,

Your obliged and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

P. S. The enclosed copies of a note of the 19th inst. from Lord Grenville, and my answer, afford indications of his present temper, that will not escape you. It is always useful to communicate such papers, but seldom useful to publish them. Publications, unnecessarily and frequently

made, must naturally increase reserve and circumspection to such a degree as, in a great measure, to exclude the advantages of confidence and conversation, and to confine negotiation to the slow and wary mode of written communications, written too under the impression and expectation of publication.

Your affectionate servant,  
JOHN JAY.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

London, 21st July, 1794.

DEAR SIR,

Among my letters to Mr. Randolph, is one stating an agreement between Lord Grenville and myself for preserving things in a pacific and unaltered state, between us and the British on the side of Canada and the frontiers; and Mr. Simcoe will soon receive orders to retire from Miami to his former positions.

Some cabinet councils have lately been held, and it is probable the manner of settling their differences with us has been among the subjects of their deliberations. From the silence and circumspection of Lord Grenville, I apprehend that the cabinet has not as yet ultimately concluded on their plan. This delay is unpleasant, but I do not think it unnatural. The opposition members lately come in have so often held a language friendly to America, that it is probable they will find it necessary, in order to be consistent, to adhere to sentiments not agreeable to *some* of the others.

I am led by several little circumstances, not easily detailed or explained, to believe that the late administration looked upon a war with us as inevitable; and I am of opinion that the instructions of the 6th November were influenced by that idea. I do also believe that Lord Dorchester was instructed to act conformably to that idea, and that Simcoe was governed by it.

I am *certain* that intelligence (which made some impres-

sion) was conveyed to the ministry, that our army, if successful against the Indians, had orders to attack and take the posts. There is also room to believe, that the indiscreet reception given to the late French minister—the unnecessary rejoicings about French successes, and a variety of similar circumstances, did impress the government with strong apprehensions of an unavoidable war with us, and did induce them to entertain a disposition hostile to us.

I have given Lord Grenville positive assurances, that no attack pending the negotiations will be made on the posts held by them at the conclusion of the war ; but I also told him that I thought it highly probable that every new advanced post, and particularly the one said to be taken by Mr. Simcoe on the Miami, would be attacked. I must do him the justice to say, that hitherto I have found him fair and candid, and apparently free from asperity or irritation.

So far as personal attentions to the envoy may be regarded as symptoms of good-will to his country, my prospect is favourable. These symptoms, however, are never decisive : they justify expectation, but not reliance.

I most heartily wish the business over, and myself at home again. But it would not be prudent to urge and press unceasingly, lest ill-humour should result, and ill-humour will mar any negotiation ; on the other hand, much forbearance and seeming inactivity invite procrastination and neglect. The line between these extremes is delicate : I will endeavour to find and observe it.

I am, dear sir,

Your obliged and affectionate servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO JOHN ANSTEY.

Royal Hotel, Pall-mall, 23d July, 1794.

SIR,

Accept my thanks for the friendly congratulations and sentiments expressed in your letter of the 14th of this month.

I regret my not knowing that you resided at Bath. We passed from Falmouth through that city in our way to this. It would have given me pleasure to have called upon you, and (to use an Indian expression) have *brightened the chain*.

Many great and unexpected events have taken place since we parted. We live in times that teem with them. A great and wonderful drama is exhibiting on the stage of Europe, perhaps of the world. We are spectators of the first act. What may succeed, or what the catastrophe will be, human prevision cannot discern.

Peace and domestic comforts rise in value as they become precarious; and individual misery, by abounding, produces national distress; and yet, even in this age of *reason* and *philosophy*, the passions do not cease to fan the flames of war, and cause them to rage, to spread, and to desolate.

If, during my stay here, you should visit London, I shall be happy to see you, and to assure you of the esteem and regard with which I am

Your obedient and very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

London, 5th Aug., 1794.

DEAR SIR,

I am this moment returned from a long conference with Lord Grenville. Our prospects become more and more promising as we advance in the business. The compensation cases are described in the answer, and the amount of damages will, I have reason to hope, be referred to the decision of commissioners mutually to be appointed by the two governments, and the money paid without delay on their certificates, and the business finished as speedily as may be possible. The question of admitting our vessels into the islands, under certain limitations, is under consideration, and will soon be decided. A treaty of commerce is on the carpet. All other things being agreed, the posts will be

included. They contend that the article about the negroes does not extend to those who came in on their proclamation, to whom (being vested with the property in them by the rights of war) they gave freedom; but only to those who were, *bona fide*, the property of Americans when the war ceased. They will, I think, *insist* that British debts, so far as injured by lawful impediments, should be *repaired* by the United States, by decision of mutual commissioners. These things have passed in conversation, but no commitments on either side—and not to be of any official weight or use whatever.

The king observed to me the other day, “Well, sir, I imagine you begin to see that your mission will probably be successful.”—“I am happy, may it please your majesty, to find that you entertain that idea.”—“Well, but don’t you perceive that it is like to be so?”—“There are some recent circumstances (the answer to my representation, &c.) which induce me to flatter myself that it will be so.” He nodded with a smile, signifying that it was to those circumstances that he alluded. The conversation then turned to indifferent topics: this was at the drawing-room.

I have never been more unceasingly employed than I have been for some time past, and still am. I hope for good, but God only knows. The Wm. Penn sails in the morning. I write these few lines in haste, to let you see that the business is going on as fast as can reasonably be expected; and that it is very important that peace and quiet should be preserved for the present. On hearing, last night, that one of our Indiamen had been carried into Halifax, I mentioned it to Lord Grenville. He will write immediately by the packet on the subject. Indeed, I believe that they are endeavouring to restore a proper conduct towards us *everywhere*, but it will take some time before the effect can be visible. I write all this to you in *confidence*, and for your *private* satisfaction. I have not time to explain my reasons,

but they are cogent. I could fill some sheets with interesting communications, if I had leisure; but other matters press, and must not be postponed, for "there is a *tide* in human affairs," of which every moment is precious. Whatever may be the issue, nothing in my power to ensure success shall be neglected or delayed.

With sincere respect, esteem, and attachment,

I am, dear sir,

Your obliged and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO JUDGE HOBART.

London, 12th Aug., 1794.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

I passed this morning in a visit to Sir John Sinclair, President of the Board of Agriculture, and to Col. Bentham, who is preparing for the establishment of a panopticon, agreeable to the plan delineated in a publication which I once communicated to you.

The Agricultural Society is incorporated, with a yearly allowance, by government, of three thousand pounds. Their plans are extensive; they have been singularly industrious, and much has been done. I enclose you the proposed plan of their general report; if executed in the extent and in the manner intended, it will be the most interesting work of the kind, respecting husbandry, which has appeared in any country.

Sir John showed us sheep of different breeds, stuffed and prepared in the highest degree of perfection. Of these, drawings are making; models are collecting of the most useful machines, among them is one for cleaning grain from the straw, which, by the help of two horses and a man and a boy, will do 70 or 80 bushels per day. They begin to be in use among the farmers, which I consider as a proof of their answering the purpose.

Among the sheep, the Teesewater is the largest. Sir

John showed me a fleece presented to the Board, which weighed twenty odd pounds. He tells me they frequently weigh sixty pounds a quarter.

From Saxony, he is informed that the Spanish breed had been imported there; that they succeeded well, and did not degenerate. They sent him a sample of the wool. I enclose a lock of it. This fact shows that the fineness of wool depends not less on breed than on management.

Sir John has a farm in Scotland which rented for £300 a-year. It was employed in raising store-cattle, which were usually sold into England, and fattened for the London market. He dismissed the cattle, and introduced sheep; it proved profitable, and he is now offered £1200 a-year for it: his flock is 3000.

The progress of husbandry in this country is astonishing; the king patronizes it, and is himself a great farmer. He has been doing much in that way at Windsor.

Colonel Bentham has invented a number of curious and very useful machines, intended to be introduced into the panopticon. He showed us a model of the building; it seems admirably calculated for its purposes.

He has a machine for sawing at once from a plank the felloe of a wheel to its form—another contrivance for cutting it to its proper length and angle—another for finishing the spoke—another for boring and morticing the hub—another for driving the spokes. He has one for turning a circular saw for small work—another for making the mouldings, if they may be so called, on the pieces which form sashes—one for sawing stone—others for working different kinds of saws into many slabs at once—another for polishing them—another for planing boards, and taking a shaving of its full width from one end to the other, &c. &c. &c. He has patents for these machines, but as yet they cannot be purchased: he has one for cutting corks with incredible expedition.

Governor Hunter, from Norfolk Island, with whom I

was last week in company, speaking of its productions, mentioned that among the birds there were swans that were black, having only a few white feathers in the wings. They are plenty. One stuffed and well preserved, I am told, is here: as yet I have not seen it. He also mentioned a wild flax growing on upland to about three feet high, and good. I do not yet learn that any of the seed of it is here.

They who have leisure and a turn for these things might here acquire much entertaining and some useful information. Want of time represses my curiosity, and will not allow me to pay much attention to objects unconnected with those of my mission.

I am, dear sir,  
Your affectionate friend and servant,  
JOHN JAY.

TO COLONEL READ, CHARLESTON.

London, 14th August, 1794.

DEAR SIR,

We have both heard it asserted that a man's character may be discerned from his handwriting; if that be true, you and our friend, Edward Rutledge, must be as enigmatical and unintelligible as Oliver Cromwell, and yet neither of you resemble him more than he did an honest man.

The kindness diffused through your letter of the 19th of June paid me for the trouble of deciphering it. Two or three words, however, proved too hard for me. To judge from the context, I presume they mean something good and friendly, and therefore that I have reason to be pleased with the ideas *intended* to be conveyed by them, although I do not know precisely what they are.

Peace, my dear sir, was formerly thought a good sort of thing; but within these few years past it seems to have been going fast out of fashion. But, to be serious, there seems to be something more than common at work in, or on the

human mind, and urging it to enterprise, tending to introduce a new state of things. Symptoms of it appear more or less, and in different degrees, in all parts of Europe—even in Spain, where quiescency in every sense has long been cherished. Geneva is at this moment undergoing another revolution; where next, no one can tell. Our country may catch the flame. We live in an eventful season. We have nothing to do but our duty, and one part of it is to prepare for every event. Let us preserve peace while it can be done with propriety, and if in that we fail, let us wage war, not in newspapers and impotent sarcasms, but with manly firmness, and unanimous and vigorous efforts.

I have had the pleasure of seeing your brother frequently, and am pleased with him. He is gone to Scotland. He has communicated to me a circumstance that I rejoice in.

Assure Mrs. Read of my best wishes. With real esteem and regard, I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Philadelphia, August 30th, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 23d of June, from London, and duplicate, have both been received; and your safe arrival, after so short a passage, gave sincere pleasure, as well on private as on public account, to all your friends in this country, and to none in a greater degree, I can venture to assure you, than it did to myself.

As you will receive letters from the secretary of state's office, giving an official account of public occurrences as they have arisen and progressed, it is unnecessary for me to retouch any of them; and yet I cannot restrain myself from making some observations on the most recent of them,

the communication of which was received this morning *only*. I mean the protest of the governor of Upper Canada (delivered by Lieut. Sheaffe), against our occupying lands far from any of the posts, which, long ago, they ought to have surrendered, and far within the known, and *until now*, the acknowledged limits of the United States.

On this irregular and high-handed proceeding of Mr. Simcoe, which is no longer *masked*, I would rather hear what the ministry of Great Britain will say, than pronounce my own sentiments thereon. But can that government, or will it attempt, after this *official* act of one of their governors, to hold out ideas of friendly intentions towards the United States, and suffer such conduct to pass with impunity?

This may be considered as the most open and daring act of the British agents in America, though it is not the most hostile or cruel; for there does not remain a doubt, in the mind of any well-informed person in this country (not shut against conviction), that all the difficulties we encounter with the Indians, their hostilities, the murders of helpless women and innocent children along our frontiers, result from the conduct of the agents of Great Britain in this country. In vain is it, then, for its administration, *in Britain*, to disavow having given orders which will warrant such conduct, while their agents go unpunished, while we have a thousand corroborating circumstances, and indeed almost as many evidences (some of which cannot be brought forward), to prove that they are seducing from our alliances (endeavouring to remove them over the line) tribes that have hitherto been kept in peace and friendship with us, at a heavy expense, and who have no cause of complaint, except pretended ones of their own creating; while they keep in a state of irritation the tribes who are hostile to us, and instigating those who know little of us, or we of them, to unite in the war against us; and while it is an undeniable fact that they are furnishing the whole with arms, ammunition, clothing, and even provisions to carry on the war, I might

go further and, if they are not much belied, add men also, in disguise.

Can it be expected, I ask, so long as these things are known in the United States, or at least firmly believed, and suffered with impunity by Great Britain, that there ever will, or can be any cordiality between the two countries? I answer no: and I will undertake, without the gift of prophecy, to predict, that it will be impossible to keep this country in a state of amity with Great Britain long, if the posts are not surrendered. A knowledge of these being my sentiments would have little weight, I am persuaded, with the British administration, nor, perhaps, with the nation, in effecting the measure; but both may rest satisfied that, if they want to be in peace with this country, and want to enjoy the benefits of its trade, &c., this is the road to it— withholding them, and the consequences we feel at present continuing, war inevitably.

This letter is written to you in extreme haste, while the papers respecting this subject are copying at the secretary of state's office, to go by express to New-York, for a vessel which we have just heard sails to-morrow; you will readily perceive, therefore, I had no time for digesting, and as little for correcting it. I shall only add that you may be assured always of the sincere friendship and affection of

Your obedient humble servant,

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

London, 11th July, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am still unable to say any thing decisive relative to the objects of my mission. Appearances continue to be singularly favourable, but appearances merit only a certain degree of circumspect reliance. The delays occasioned by the new arrangement of the ministry cannot be of long continuance. Circumstances must soon constrain them to

form some ultimate system relative to the United States; and although I have much reason to hope it will be favourable to our wishes, yet I confess I am not without apprehensions, that certain points not by us to be yielded, will occasion difficulties hard to surmount. Personally, I have every reason to be satisfied, and officially, I have as yet no reason to complain.

Shortly after my arrival, I dined with Lord Grenville. The cabinet ministers were present, but not a single foreigner. On Monday next I am to dine with the lord-chancellor, and on next Friday with Mr. Pitt. I mention these facts to explain what I mean by favourable appearances. I think it best that they should remain unmentioned for the present, and they make no part of my communications to Mr. Randolph or others. This is not the season for such communications; they may be misinterpreted, though not by you.

I fear the posts may labour, but they must not be left. We must not make a delusive settlement; that would disunite our people, and leave seeds of discord to germinate. I will do every thing that prudence and integrity may dictate or permit.

I will endeavour to accommodate rather than dispute; and if this plan should fail, decent and firm representations must conclude the business of my mission. As yet, I do not regret any step I have taken. I wish I may be able to say the same at the conclusion.

Yours, affectionately,

JOHN JAY.

*5th August.*—This letter was inadvertently omitted to be sent when written. Appearances mend—give us a fair chance.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

London, 17th September, 1794.

DEAR SIR,

I had last week the pleasure of receiving from you a few lines by Mr. Blaney. You will receive this letter by the hands of Mr. Morris. He will also be the bearer of my despatches to Mr. Randolph. They will be voluminous, particular, and, in many respects, interesting. It should not be forgotten that there is irritation here as well as in America, and that our party processions, toasts, rejoicings, &c. &c., have not been well calculated to produce goodwill and good-humour. The government, nevertheless, distinguish between national acts and party effusions, and have entertained hitherto an opinion and belief that the president and our government and nation in general, were really desirous of an amicable settlement of differences, and of laying a foundation for friendship as well as peace between the two countries.

The secretary's letters by Mr. Monroe, and his speech on his introduction to the Convention, have appeared in the English papers. Their impression in this country may easily be conjectured. I wish they had both been more guarded. The language of the United States at Paris and London should correspond with their neutrality. These things are not favourable to my mission. A speedy conclusion to the negotiation is problematical, though not highly improbable. If I should be able to conclude the business on admissible terms, I shall do it and risk consequences, rather than by the delay of waiting for and governing myself by opinions and instructions, hazard a change in the disposition of this court; for it seems our country, or rather some part of it, will not forbear asperities. I hear that Virginia is taking British property by escheat; and other things which in the present moment are *unseasonable*, are here reported.

As the proposed articles are under consideration—as they have already undergone some alterations, and as I am not without hopes of other and further amendments, I really think they ought not to be published in their present crude state, especially as in the course of a few weeks I expect to be able to communicate their ultimate form. If they should not appear to me to be such as I ought to sign, I will transmit them, and wait for further instructions.

Adieu, my dear sir,

Yours, sincerely,

JOHN JAY.

TO N. CRUGER, ESQ.

London, 11th September, 1794.

DEAR SIR,

A gentleman in Holland has been so obliging as to send me a plan to make my fortune, even to the extent of many millions of pounds sterling. It unfortunately happens that more mercantile knowledge is necessary to the execution of this plan than I possess; so that, like many others, I must go without a fortune for want of knowing how to get one. That, my good friend, is not your case; having already made one fortune, you certainly know better how to make another than a person who has never made any.

You will find this golden plan enclosed. If the extensive concerns in which you are already engaged should render its magnitude inconvenient, might it not be well to let our friends Le Roy and Bayard share in it? I mention them, because I esteem and like them, and because their acquaintance with the commerce of Holland, and their connexions in that country, would afford facilities to all parties.

At any rate, give me credit for good-will. If this plan does not make you more rich, it will not make you less merry; and mirth sometimes does a man as much good as money.

Present my best compliments to Mrs. Cruger. With sincere wishes for your and her health and happiness,

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

P.S. The address of my correspondent is (in his own words) Mynheer de Heer Dirk Van Beest, op de Voor Straat de Dordrecht.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

London, 17th September, 1794.

DEAR SIR,

There is something very pleasant in the reflection, that while war, discord, and oppression triumph in so many parts of Europe, their domination does not extend to our country. I sometimes flatter myself that Providence, in compassion to the afflicted in these countries, will continue to leave America in a proper state to be an asylum to them.

Among those who have suffered severely from these evils, is Monsieur De Rochefoucauld Liancourt, formerly president of the National Assembly of France. His rank and character are known to you. He will be the bearer of this letter, and I am persuaded that his expectations from it will be realized.

Yours, sincerely,

JOHN JAY.

FROM GEORGE WASHINGTON.

[Private.]

Philadelphia, November 1st, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,

On Tuesday last, I returned from my tour to the westward. On Monday, Congress by adjournment are to meet; and on the day following, Mr. Bayard, according to his present expectation, is to leave this city for London.

Thus circumstanced (having so little time between my return and the opening of the session, to examine papers, and to prepare my communications for the Legislature), you will readily perceive that my present address to you must be hurried; at the same time, my friendship and regard for you would not let an opportunity so good as the one afforded by Mr. Bayard, pass without some testimony of my remembrance, and an acknowledgment of the receipt of your private letters to me, dated the 23d of June, 21st of July, and 5th and 11th of August. These comprehend *all* the letters I have received from you since your arrival in England to the present date.

That of the 5th of August dawns more favourably upon the success of your mission than any that had preceded it, and for the honour, dignity, and interest of this country; for your own reputation and glory; and for the peculiar satisfaction I should derive from it, as well on private as on public considerations, no man more ardently wishes you complete success than I do. But, as you have observed in some of your letters, that it is hardly possible in the early stages of a negotiation to foresee all the results, so much depending upon fortuitous circumstances, and incidents which are not within our control,—so to deserve success, by employing the means with which we are possessed to the best advantage, and trusting the event to the all-wise Disposer, is all that an enlightened public, and the virtuous and well-disposed part of the community can reasonably expect; nor in this, will they, I am sure, be disappointed. Against the malignancy of the discontented, the turbulent, and the vicious, no abilities, no exertions, nor the most unshaken integrity are any safeguard.

As far as depends upon the executive, measures preparatory for the worst, while it hopes for the best, will be pursued; and I shall endeavour to keep things in statu quo, until your negotiation assumes a more decisive form, which I hope will soon be the case, as there are many hot heads

and impetuous spirits among us, who with difficulty can be kept within bounds. This, however, ought not to precipitate your conduct; for, as it has been observed, "there is a tide in human affairs," which ought to be watched; and because I believe all who are acquainted with you will readily concede, that considerations both public and private combine to urge you to bring your mission to a close, with as much celerity as the nature of it will admit.

As you have been, and will continue to be fully informed by the secretary of state of all transactions of a public nature, which relate to or may have an influence on the points of your mission, it would be unnecessary for me to touch upon any of them in this letter, was it not for the presumption that the insurrection in the western counties of this State has excited much speculation, and a variety of opinions abroad; and will be represented differently according to the wishes of some, and the prejudices of others, who may exhibit it as an evidence of what has been predicted, "that we are unable to govern ourselves." Under this view of the subject, I am happy in giving it to you as the general opinion, that this event having happened at the time it did was fortunate, although it will be attended with considerable expense.

That the *self-created societies* which have spread themselves over this country, have been labouring incessantly to sow the seeds of distrust, jealousy, and of course discontent, thereby hoping to effect some revolution in the government, is not unknown to you. *That they have been the fomenters of the western disturbances*, admits of no doubt in the mind of any one who will examine their conduct; but, fortunately, they precipitated a crisis for which they were not prepared; and thereby have unfolded views which will, I trust, effectuate their annihilation sooner than it might otherwise have happened; at the same time, that it has afforded an occasion for the people of this country to show their abhorrence of the result, and their attachment to the

constitution and the laws: for I believe that five times the number of militia that was required would have come forward, if it had been necessary, in support of them.

The spirit which blazed out on this occasion, as soon as the object was fully understood, and the lenient measures of the government were made known to the people, deserve to be communicated; for there are instances of general officers going at the head of a single troop and light companies; of field officers, when they came to the places of rendezvous and found no command for them in that grade, turning into the ranks and proceeding as private soldiers under their own captains; and of numbers, possessing the first fortunes in the country, standing in the ranks as private men, and marching day by day, with their knapsacks and haversacks at their backs; sleeping on straw with a single blanket in a soldier's tent, during the frosty nights we have had, by way of example to others. Nay, more, of many young Quakers (not discouraged by the elders) of the first characters, families, and properties, having turned into the ranks, and marching with the troops.

These things have terrified the insurgents, who had no conception that such a spirit prevailed; but while the thunder only rumbled at a distance, were boasting of their strength, and wishing for and threatening the militia by turns; intimating, that the arms they should take from them would soon become a magazine in their hands. Their language is much changed indeed, but their principles want correction.

I shall be more prolix, in my speech to Congress, on the commencement and progress of this insurrection, than is usual in such an instrument, or than I should have been on any other occasion; but as numbers (at home and abroad) will hear of the insurrection, and will read the speech, that may know nothing of the documents to which it might refer, I conceived it would be better to encounter the charge of prolixity, by giving a cursory detail of facts (that would

show the prominent features of the thing), than to let it go naked into the world, to be dressed up according to the fancy or inclination of the readers, or the policy of our enemies.

I write nothing in answer to the letter of Mr. Wangenheim (enclosed by you to me). Were I to enter into correspondences of that sort (admitting there was no impropriety in the measure), I should be unable to attend to my ordinary duties. I have established it as a maxim, neither to invite nor to discourage emigrants. My opinion is, that they will come hither as fast as the true interest and policy of the United States will be benefited by foreign population. I believe many of these, as Mr. Wangenheim relates, have been, and I fear will continue to be, imposed upon by speculators in land and other things. But I know of no prevention but caution, nor any remedy except the laws. Nor is military, or other employment, so easy to obtain as foreigners conceive, in a country where offices and the seekers of them bear no proportion to each other.

With sincere esteem and great regard,

I am, dear sir, your affectionate servant,

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

TO OLIVER ELLSWORTH.

London, 19th November, 1794.

DEAR SIR,

The negotiation is terminated by a treaty. It will, with this letter, go by the packet, which, in expectation of this event, has been detained above a week.

In my opinion we have reason to be satisfied. It is expedient that the ratification should not be unnecessarily delayed. The best disposition towards us prevails in the cabinet, and I hope they will have reason to be content with the delicacy and propriety of our conduct towards them and the nation. Further concessions on the part of Great Britain cannot, in my opinion, be attained. The

minister flatters himself that this treaty will be very acceptable to our country, and that some of the articles in it will be received as unequivocal proofs of good-will. We have industriously united our efforts to remove difficulties, and few men would have persevered in such a dry, perplexing business, with so much patience and temper as he has done.

I could write you a long letter on these topics, but I have not time: Believe me to be, with great esteem and regard, dear sir,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

London, 19th November, 1794.

DEAR SIR,

A letter which I wrote to you on the 29th October last, contained the following paragraph, viz.:

“I am authorized by Lord Grenville to assure you, in the most explicit terms, that no instructions to stimulate or promote hostilities by the Indians against the United States, have been sent to the king’s officers in Canada. I am preparing an official representation to him on this subject, and he will give me an official answer to it; but as this cannot be done in season to forward by this vessel (for letters after this day will be too late to go by her), his lordship has permitted me to make this informal communication to you for your satisfaction. I am to lay before him a statement of the evidences relative to the interferences complained of, to the end that it may be sent to Canada, and strict inquiry made into the truth of the allegations and facts in question.”

My time and thoughts have ever since continued to be so entirely engrossed by the treaty which is now concluded, and was this day signed, as that it really has not been in my power to finish and present this representation.

As to the treaty, it must speak for itself. A hasty letter which I have written to Mr. Randolph, contains some remarks on a few of the articles in it. That letter is far from being so particular as I could wish, but I cannot help it. My whole time has been employed. To do more was not possible. I wish that I could accompany the treaty, but I feel that I ought not to expose myself to the severities of a winter's voyage.

I am exceedingly anxious to return; for although I have every other reason to be satisfied with my situation, yet I am not at home. I ought not to conceal from you, that the confidence reposed in your personal character was visible and useful throughout the negotiation.

If there is not a good disposition in the far greater part of the cabinet and nation towards us, I am exceedingly deceived. I do not mean an ostensible and temporizing, but a real good disposition. I wish it may have a fair trial. With perfect respect, esteem, and attachment,

I am, dear sir,

Your obliged and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

London, 19th November, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,

My task is done; whether *finis coronat opus*, the president, senate, and public will decide.

This letter goes by the packet, and the treaty with it; some parts of it require elucidation to common readers. I have not time for comments; Lord Grenville is anxious to dismiss the packet; I therefore write in haste. If this treaty fails, I despair of another. If satisfactory, care should be taken that the public opinion be not misled respecting it, for this reason the sooner it is ratified and published the better. I really think the good disposition of this country should be cherished. I came here in the moment of exultation and

triumph on account of Lord Howe's victory. From that day to this I have experienced no change in sentiments or conduct relative to the negotiation. I must, though not without reluctance, conclude; not being fit for a winter voyage, I shall stay here till spring. Indeed, I shall want repairs before I am quite fit for any voyage. God bless you.

Yours,

JOHN JAY.

TO RUFUS KING.

London, 19th November, 1794.

DEAR SIR,

I send by the packet the fruit of my negotiation—a treaty. I wish that I could go with it, as well that I might again be in my own country, as that I might answer questions on the subject. The draught has undergone several editions, with successive alterations, additions, &c. This shows that time and trouble have not been spared. I have just finished a hasty letter to Mr. Randolph. It will be thought slovenly, but I cannot help it. The packet must go. If I entirely escape censure, I shall be agreeably disappointed. Should the treaty prove, as I believe it will, beneficial to our country, justice will *finally* be done. If not, be it so—my mind is at ease: I wish I could say as much for my body, but the rheumatism will not permit me. Health and happiness to you, my good friend.

Yours, sincerely,

JOHN JAY.

FROM GEORGE WASHINGTON.

[Private.]

Philadelphia, Dec. 18th, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,

Since writing to you, by Mr. Bayard, about the first of November, I have been favoured with your letters of the 13th September and 2d of October.

As the sentiments contained in the first of these, respecting the communications of Mr. Monroe to the National Convention of France, were also transmitted in a *private* letter from you to the secretary of state, and replied to by him (both of which I have seen), I shall dwell no longer on that subject, than just to observe, 1st, that considering the place in which they were delivered, and the neutral policy this country had resolved to pursue, it was a measure that does not appear to have been well devised by our minister: 2dly, aware of this himself, and that his conduct would be criticised, he has assigned reasons for its adoption; a summary of which is, that the navy officers and privateersmen of France, who had resorted to our ports and had been laid under such restrictions as neutral policy required from us, although disagreeable to them, had represented this country (and not without effect) as unfriendly to the French revolution; to do away which he found himself necessitated to counteract them, by strong assurances of the good dispositions of the people of these United States towards that nation: and 3dly, although I think with you that in order to accomplish this he has stepped beyond the true line, yet, under the then existing circumstances, the expression of such reciprocal good will was susceptible of two views, one of which, even in the pending state of the negotiation (by alarming as well as offending the British ministry), might have no unfavourable operation in bringing matters to a happy and speedy result, than which nothing is more desirable, or can be more ardently wished for by the friends of peace and good order in this country.

As the secretary of state has written to you several times since the receipt of your statement of the negotiation on the 13th of September, I shall add nothing to the observations which are contained in his letters on the subject thereof.

The business of the session, hitherto, has been tranquil; and I perceive nothing *at this time* to make it otherwise,

unless the result of the negotiation (which is anxiously expected by all) should produce divisions. As yet, no details have been handed to Congress on this subject; indeed, no communication of that business has been made to anybody, except those immediately about me in the executive departments.

The Virginia escheats of British property do not, as I am informed, stand upon the ground as related to you; but as I am not accurately enough read in the law respecting these escheats to be precise in my recital of it, I will request the secretary of state to give you the principles thereof.

As I expected, and as you have been informed the result would probably be, so it has happened, that the western insurrection has terminated highly honourable for this country; which, by the energy of its laws, and the good dispositions of its citizens, has brought the rioters to a perfect sense of their duty, without shedding a drop of blood. In the eyes of foreigners among us, this affair stands in a high point of respectability. With great truth, I remain,

Dear sir,

Your affectionate,

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

TO TENCH COXE.

London, 18th December, 1794.

DEAR SIR,

Accept my thanks for your obliging letter of the 8th of last month, and for the book which accompanied it. As yet, I have not had time to give it that regular and attentive perusal which it appears to merit. It certainly contains much interesting information, and from your accuracy, I presume that the facts and statements in it are correct. It will naturally lead both our own people and foreigners to form a favourable and just estimate of the United States, and show in a strong light the policy of maintaining that

respect for our government and laws, without which our local and other advantages can neither be enjoyed nor improved.

The manner in which the insurrection has been dissipated gives me pleasure; and there is reason to hope that the arts and counsels which produced it, will not be able to operate such another.

Our affairs relative to this country have a promising aspect. The best disposition towards us prevails here, and the indications and proofs of it daily increase. I do really believe, that this government means to give conciliatory measures with the United States a full and fair trial. I wish it may be reciprocated on our part. It never can be wise to cast ourselves into the arms and influence of any nation; but certainly it is wise and proper to cherish the good-will of those who wish to be on terms of friendship and cordiality with us. It may seem strange, and yet I am convinced, that next to the king, our president is more popular in this country than any man in it.

With the best wishes, and with sentiments of esteem and regard, I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

London, 8th Jan., 1795.

DEAR SIR,

Accept my thanks for the pamphlet you was so obliging as to send me. It does not appear probable to me that Europe is very speedily to be blessed with a general and lasting peace, or that the period has already arrived when reason and virtue will govern the conduct of the mass of mankind. There is much reason to believe that the majority of men are neither reasonable nor virtuous; and hence it has happened, that so many systems which were calcu-

lated on the supposed prevalence of reason and virtue, have proved delusive.

The time, doubtless, will come, and is approaching, when a new order of things will be introduced, and when, as the human passions and vices cease to predominate, the checks necessary to control them will become proportionably less necessary. To see things as being what they are, to estimate them accurately, and to act accordingly, are requisites no less essential to sound politics than to sound philosophy or religion.

These are general remarks, and not made with reference to the political questions agitating in this kingdom, and with which (being a citizen of another country) it would not become me to interfere. With the best wishes for your health and happiness, I am, dear sir,

Your friend and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM JOHN Q. ADAMS.

Hague, January 9th, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

Nothing could be more grateful to my feelings, than the intelligence from America which you are pleased to communicate. The suppression of the insurrection, the return of conciliatory dispositions, the growing prosperity of commerce, and the prevalence of national principles, demonstrated by the re-election of good men for the ensuing legislature, are all promising indications that our country will yet be flourishing, united, and happy.

The friendly dispositions, of which the result of your late negotiation, and your observations since that period have tended to confirm your opinion, give us an additional ground of satisfaction. It may be expected that the treaty has by this time arrived in America. It is my cordial wish and hope, that it will be received with a temper similar to

that which formed and acceded to its arrangements; with that combination of firmness and of generosity, which is so well calculated to terminate with honour our foreign differences, and which has so happily succeeded in suppressing internal dissension.

The value of peace and neutrality is nowhere more forcibly felt, than at this moment in the country where I am. Its situation becomes more and more critical from day to day. In the terrible agitation between the dismal alternative of conquest or civil war, it feels at the same moment, all the terrors of a torrent rushing from without, and a volcano bursting from within.

The alarm at this place is great. The emigrants who have the means are hurrying away. The British ambassador has gone to meet the future Princess of Wales. The Spanish, Portuguese, and Prussian ministers are gone. But the stadtholder and his family still remain, determined, it is said, to stay at all events and partake of the common destiny. There is yet no intelligence from the commissioners gone to Paris. Some hopes are still entertained of their success, which are strengthened by the moderate and rainy weather, which will impede, for the moment, the farther progress of the French armies.

Requesting you to present my cordial remembrance to Col. Trumbull, and to your son, I remain, with every sentiment of respect and attachment, dear sir,

Your very humble and obedient servant,

JOHN Q. ADAMS.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

[Private.]

London, 25th February, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

Your very friendly letter of the 1st November last, gratified me not a little. The insurrections had caused disagreeable sensations in this country. The objects and efforts

of the Jacobin societies in America were well known here ; and the fate of our government was considered as being involved in that of the insurrection. The manner in which it has terminated has given sincere satisfaction to this government, to whom all disorganizing innovations give alarm. Their confidence in your wisdom, decision, and energy has been confirmed by the event.

The institution and influence of such societies among us had given me much concern, and I was happy in perceiving that the suppression of the insurrection, together with the character and fall of similar ones in France, would probably operate the extinction of these mischievous associations in America.

Your remarks relative to my negotiations are just and kind, and I assure you nothing on my part has been wanting to render the conclusion of them as consonant as was possible to your expectations and wishes.

Perfectly apprized both of my duty and responsibility, I determined not to permit my judgment to be influenced by any considerations but those of public good, under the direction of my instructions. *I knew and know that no attainable settlement or treaty would give universal satisfaction ;* and I am far from expecting that the one I have signed will not administer occasion for calumny and detraction.

These are evils, which they who serve the people will always meet with. Demagogues will constantly flatter the passions and prejudices of the multitude, and will never cease to employ improper arts against those who will not be their instruments. I have known many demagogues, but I have never known one honest man among them.

These are among the other evils which are incident to human life, and none of them shall induce me to decline or abandon any pursuits, in which I may conceive it to be my duty to embark or persevere. All creatures will act according to their nature, and it is absurd to expect that a man who is not upright, will act like one who is. The

time will come when all books, and histories, and errors will be consumed, and when from their ashes truth only will rise, and prevail, and be immortal.

Among my despatches to Mr. Randolph by this ship, is a copy of a letter I have received from Mr. Monroe at Paris, and of *two* which I have written to him. The expediency of correcting the mistakes which the French Convention seem to have imbibed, will doubtless strike you.

Be pleased to present my best compliments to Mrs. Washington, and be assured of the perfect respect, esteem, and attachment, with which I am, dear sir,

Your obliged and affectionate servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

[Private.]

London, 6th March, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

After considering all that I have heard and seen on the subject, it is my opinion that the common and popular (not official) language of America, relative to Great Britain, manifested such a disposition as to create serious apprehensions in this country that we should join with the French in the war; that these apprehensions gave occasion to secret designs, calculated on such an event; that in proportion as your views and counsels became developed, these apprehensions gradually subsided; that my mission was regarded as a strong proof of your desire to preserve peace, and that the perfect and universal confidence reposed in your personal character, excluded every doubt of your being sincere; and that this government is not yet entirely convinced that a pacific and conciliatory system will be supported by the inclination and correspondent conduct of the great body of the people. Various circumstances, however, induce me to believe, that the cabinet ultimately determined to give conciliation a fair experiment, by doing

us substantial justice, and by consenting to such arrangements favourable to us, as the national interests and habitual prejudices would admit. To relax the navigation act was to alarm these prejudices, and therefore was a measure which required caution and circumspection, especially in the first instance. To break the ice was the difficulty. To enlarge the aperture afterward would be more easy; and it will probably be done, if we should be reasonably temperate and prudent. To admit us into their East and West India dominions, and into all their continental American territories, under any modifications, were decided deviations from their former policy, and tended to shock ancient prejudices. Yet these things have been done. None but a strong administration would have ventured it. These are offerings to conciliation, and include, though not confessedly, satisfaction to our claims of justice.

What passed at Paris on Mr. Monroe's arrival, I am persuaded made a strong and disagreeable impression; and had not your private character prevented those transactions from being imputable in any degree to your orders, I do believe that the system of conciliation would have been instantly abandoned.

What would have succeeded it cannot be easily conjectured; certainly no treaty so favourable to us as the present would then have been attainable. Whatever the American opinion of it may prove to be, the administration here think it very friendly to us; and that it could not in the present moment have been made more so, without exciting great discontents and uneasiness in this country.

The present situation of Great Britain may to us and others appear to be perilous, but the ministry seem to have no such fears. They have been uniformly bent on prosecuting the war with vigour, and since my arrival I have observed no change in that resolution. Even a distinguished leader in the opposition lately told me, that the French could not possibly injure the vitals of this country.

Let it be infatuation or what it will, the government and the great majority of this nation meant and mean to continue the war. I will mention a striking anecdote.

You have doubtless heard that the merchants concerned in the American trade gave me a dinner. The principal cabinet ministers were present, and about two hundred merchants. Many toasts were given. When the "President of the United States" was given, it was proposed to be with three cheers, but they were prolonged (as if by preconcert, but evidently not so) to six. Several other toasts passed with great acclamation, particularly "The wooden walls of Old England;" almost every toast referable to America, and manifesting a desire of conciliation and cordiality, met with general and strong marks of approbation. Towards the conclusion of the feast, I was asked for a toast; I gave a neutral one, viz., "A safe and honourable peace to all the belligerent powers;" you cannot conceive how coldly it was received, and though civility induced them to give it three cheers, yet they were so faint and single, as most decidedly to show that peace was not the thing they wished,—these were *merchants*. Mr. Pinckney was struck as forcibly by it as I was; and we both drew the same conclusions from it.

Except an inconsiderable number, the men of rank and property, and all whom they can influence throughout the kingdom, think the war is indispensable to their safety. The dread of Jacobin politics and Jacobin scenes, and the expectation that the pecuniary resources of this country will ultimately render them superior in the contest, appear to be their prevailing motives.

It was expected by some, that the loss of Holland would have damped this spirit. It has had only a partial effect. We find the ministry and parliament have been stimulated by it to greater efforts.

All the members who voted for what are called the pacific resolutions, were not moved, as many of them certainly

were, by a mere desire of peace, but by the policy of professing a readiness to make peace, in order that, if spurned by the French, the nation might continue in the war with more constancy and unanimity. They did not suppose that an acceptable peace could, in the present moment, be obtained.

This people appear to think their constitution, and property, and national character and importance as being all at stake, and on that stake to be inflexibly determined to risk every thing.

Of the great number who advocated a reform in parliament, there is a portion (but how great cannot easily be ascertained) who are so sore, and mortified, and vexed, that in my opinion the French successes give them as much pleasure as pain. There are men among them whose designs as well as whose fortunes are desperate, as well as men who have honest designs and good fortunes. These people are at present kept from action by the energy of the government, and the unanimity of the great majority of the nation as to the necessity of the war.

The French Jacobins have greatly injured the cause of rational liberty. The detestable massacres, impieties, and abominations imputable to them, excited in the people here the most decided hatred and abhorrence; and the government by that circumstance rendered the war popular. But the system of moderation and justice lately adopted in France, the suppression of the Jacobins, and the strict discipline observed in their armies, will doubtless have an influence on the sentiments of this nation. I think I see traces of this influence already, on minds not suspected of it.

The present war system, however, strikes me as being less firm, consolidated, and formidable than it appears to be. The administration has been composed more with a view to the conciliation of parties than the efficiency of measures. I think the system is liable to fluctuation and derangement;

from a variety of events and circumstances. Opposition to reform, as leading to innovations, is doubtless carried too far, and may produce serious consequences. Ideas of the rights of man, and the inferences deducible from them, are spreading among the people. Veneration for royalty, abstractedly considered, has abated; and although the king is popular, yet it is said that the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York are not. The prosperity of Britain results from, and depends on many causes: complicated machines are most liable to derangement. Should there be a scarcity of corn, want of employment to the manufacturers, or signal convulsions or disasters in the East or West Indies, or in Ireland, or on the sea, the government would find their task very arduous. Alarm and distress will abate pride and obstinacy; and when the multitude begin to feel severely, their passions frequently take a new and dangerous direction.

The minister would, I think, have stood on stronger ground, if he had taken the first good opportunity of saying explicitly in the House of Commons, that it was France who declared war against Great Britain, and not Great Britain against France; and that the government was disposed and ready to make peace whenever France would do it on terms compatible with honour and the essential interests of Great Britain. To put an enemy in the wrong is to obtain great advantages. The placing and so long continuing Lord Chatham at the head of the admiralty—the putting the Duke of York at the head of the army—the improper liberties taken with neutral nations, for which the Danes and Swedes on their part are not yet satisfied—the strange measures relative to Ireland, and many other things which strike me as blunders, indicate a defect either in the cabinet or in the minister. Although united as to the war, yet as to the mode of conducting it, the wisest counsels may not always prevail. Upon the whole, I shall be surprised if in the course of this war, Britain does not reap more thorns than laurels.

I have great reason to believe that the king, the cabinet, and nation were never more unanimous in any system than in that of conciliation with us; even Lord Hawkesbury does not oppose it. If it should not succeed, they will naturally pass, like a pendulum, to the other extreme.

This system rests principally on their confidence in the uprightness, independence, and wisdom of your conduct. No other man enjoys so completely the esteem and confidence of this nation as you do; nor, except the king, is any one so popular. The idea which everywhere prevails is, that the quarrel between Britain and America was a family quarrel, and that it is time it should be made up. For my part, I am for making it up, and for cherishing this disposition on their part by justice, benevolence, and good manners on ours. To cast ourselves into the arms of this or any other nation would be degrading, injurious, and puerile: nor, in my opinion, ought we to have any political connexion with any foreign power.

Before I came here, I had no idea that the king was so popular as he is; his reign having been marked by national calamities produced by reprehensible measures. But his popularity is owing to his private, rather than his official character. As a man, there is much in him to commend; and I have not heard any vice imputed to him. As a domestic man, affectionate and attentive to his queen and children, and affable to all about him, he is universally esteemed. Few men are so punctual in all things. He patronizes the arts and sciences. He pays uncommon attention to agriculture, and delights in his farms. He lays out about ten thousand pounds a-year in improving and embellishing the royal estates. He is industrious, sober, and temperate, and has acquired much various knowledge and information. He converses with ease, and often with adroitness, and has an uncommon memory; they who ought to know him concur in these accounts. That he is a great and a wise king, I have not heard asserted. That he

does (to use a vulgar expression) as well as he knows how, seems not to be doubted; but yet some say, that he occasionally is cunning instead of being wise. I have heard him described as being a great man in little things; and as being generally well-intentioned, pertinacious, and persevering.

I congratulate you and our country on the bloodless issue of the insurrection; it is very reputable to the government, and to the people; and exalts both in the estimation of this and other nations.

The tranquillity of the present session of Congress is a pleasing circumstance; but I suspect it has proceeded more from their having nothing to differ about, than from a spirit of forbearance, or a desire of unanimity. The result of my negotiations will doubtless produce fresh disputes, and give occasion to much declamation; for *I have no idea that the treaty will meet with anti-federal approbation*. Besides, men are more apt to think of what they wish to have, than of what is in their power to obtain. How far the rejection of such a treaty would put the United States in the wrong; whether it is consistent with our honour, engagements, and important interests; whether it is preferable upon the whole to a war; are questions which require much cool and deliberate consideration, as well as more information than many who will decide upon them possess. I regret not having had time to make my letter, which accompanied the treaty, more full, so as to have particularized and explained the reasons which relate to the several articles in it. Then I had not leisure; to have done it since would have been too late, as the fate of the treaty would probably be decided before subsequent letters could arrive. I still have thoughts of reducing them to writing; and yet there are some among them which should not be published, lest the future measures, which they also respect, should be thereby marred. I allude, for instance, to the free navigation of the St. Lawrence.

Mr. Randolph does not see the West India article in the same light that I do: it breaks the ice, that is, it breaks in upon the navigation act. The least stream from a mass of water passing through a bank will enlarge its passage. The very article stipulates that the arrangements to succeed it shall have in view the *further extension* of commerce. This should not be too nicely discussed in American or English newspapers; for though liberal and enlightened people will admit such extensions of commerce to be beneficial to both countries, yet all ancient prejudices must be delicately managed. There are many men who have less wisdom than power, and more integrity than political information. The restriction not to carry certain articles to Europe, &c., is confined to the United States and the British islands. From *other* places, we may freely carry them. Deposits of French and Spanish sugars, &c., may be made in the Dutch, Danish, or other islands; and thence carried where we please. English sugars, cotton, cocoa, and coffee will probably not be more than our consumption requires; and all *cotton* brought into our country should be there manufactured.

Thus, my dear sir, I have passed part of this day very agreeably in writing to you this long letter; and the pleasure is increased by the opportunity it affords me, of assuring you how cordially and sincerely I am

Your obliged and affectionate friend and servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO DOCTOR JAMES ANDERSON, EDINBURGH.

London, 18th March, 1795.

SIR,

I have been favoured with yours of the 14th instant. It gives me pleasure to observe, that good-will towards America seems to prevail generally in this kingdom, and I hope the further progress of conciliation will not be retarded by indiscretions in either country.

Your sentiments, relative to the imperfections of human nature and human governments, are but too well founded. Governments calculated on an idea that the great majority of any people are reasonable and virtuous will, in many respects, prove defective. Governments calculated on the opposite extreme will be severe and oppressive. When it is considered that not only all who form plans of government, and all who govern, and all who are governed, are imperfect, but also that too many of them are neither wise nor virtuous, we cannot be surprised that political as well as moral evil should abound more or less in every part of the world. Perfection is beyond our reach; all that can be hoped for in this world is a state of the least imperfection.

With the best wishes for your welfare,

I have the honour to be, sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM LORD GRENVILLE.

London, May 11th, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

I cannot resist the desire I feel of availing myself of the opportunity of the first packet since your departure, to express to you how happy you would make me by allowing me occasionally to recall to your recollection, in this manner, one who will always entertain for you the most sincere esteem and friendship. I am particularly anxious to hear of your safe arrival, and that you have found your family and friends well. These are points paramount to all other considerations; but I know your return to your country will not be fully satisfactory to you, unless you have also found the state of public affairs such as to promise the continuance of good order and tranquillity. That it may be so no one more sincerely wishes than myself, and it would be a great satisfaction for me to hear it from you.

Since you left us, the news of the arrival of the treaty in

America has reached us. We were singularly unfortunate in the loss of the Tankenville packet. By a strange negligence, the November and December mails from hence were both put on board that ship, without our having any notice of it from the post-office; so that while I thought we were sending duplicates by two different conveyances, we were in fact sending them by the same vessel. My letters to Governor Simcoe, which I have frequently mentioned to you, and my despatches to Mr. Hammond on the subject of the treaty, were on board the same ship; so that this accident has thrown us far back in the arrangement of many material points. I hope, however, that with attention, and a continuance on the part of the two governments of the same disposition which actuated all our communications and negotiations here, the great work which we have begun will be carried to its full extent.

I have not been inattentive to the points which remain to be settled here. One of the most material is, I flatter myself, in a train of being well arranged. I mean that which relates to the admiralty courts in the West Indies, which it is in contemplation immediately to diminish in point of number, so as to have them only at Jamaica, Barbadoes, Grenada, Antigua, and Martinique. Knowing, as I do, how much evil has been produced by the multiplication of these courts, I look to this reduction with very sanguine hopes. But I hope the regulation will not stop here, but that the effect of it may lead to render the practice of those which will remain more correct and cautious than I fear it has hitherto been.

The impossibility of our receiving the ratification of the treaty till quite the end of July, leaves us no chance of being able to propose to parliament, during the present session, those matters connected with the treaty in which the interference of the legislature is necessary. I know that this delay will be misconstrued on your side of the water; but it is unavoidable. I requested Mr. Pinckney,

before he went to Spain, to write to America on this point, in order that the explanation of it might not rest merely on the communications of our minister there. You will be able to speak with still more knowledge and effect to the same point. Whatever does not depend on the repeal or alteration of existing laws, will be immediately executed on the receipt of the ratification.

The public papers and other communications will inform you fully of the state of affairs in Europe. The dispositions of the people in France are evidently turning very fast to the establishment of some settled order, which may relieve them from the miseries of their present anarchy. In a similar situation in this country, we experienced the advantage of a known and moderate form of government under which the nation had before been happy, and to which, therefore, it returned with enthusiasm and almost with unanimity. The want of such a standard to resort to is now, as far as I can judge, the great obstacle to the restoration of order in France, and, consequently, of peace in Europe. Mild as their old government was in its practice, it was attended with many circumstances the renewal of which creates great apprehension and uneasiness; and there is no authority of sufficient weight to prescribe the form and limits of any change. Some of the belligerent powers are, as you will have seen, too impatient to wait the result of this doubtful issue. To others, all idea of peace which shall not give better security than the signature of the committee of safety, or the ratification of the convention, seems delusive and dangerous; and to this sentiment I profess myself strongly inclined. You are happy in America if you can avoid, as I trust you will, the dangers both of the war and of the peace.

With the sincerest wishes for your prosperity,

Believe me, sir,

Your most attached and faithful humble servant,

GRENVILLE.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

[Private.]

New-York, 29th June, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

The enclosed contains my resignation of the office of chief-justice. I cannot quit it without again expressing to you my acknowledgments for the honour you conferred upon me by that appointment, and for the repeated marks of confidence and attention for which I am indebted to you. It gives me pleasure to recollect and reflect on these circumstances, to indulge the most sincere wishes for your health and happiness, and to assure you of the perfect respect, esteem, and attachment, with which

I am, dear sir,

Your obliged and affectionate friend and servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM GEORGE WASHINGTON.

[Private.]

Philadelphia, 31st August, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

You will have learned from the public gazettes, and through other more authentic channels, that all that rested with me to do, to give ratification to the treaty between this country and Great Britain, is already accomplished.

Mr. Pinckney's absence from the court of London, the information and aids it was expected he would derive from Mr. Short's presence at that of Madrid, the pecuniary situation of our affairs in Holland requiring the attention of Mr. Adams in that country, and the little knowledge we had of the character and qualifications of Mr. Deas, have occasioned no little embarrassment in this business. However, a mode is adopted which, I hope, will be effectual.

It has not been among the smallest of these embarrassments that the domineering spirit of Great Britain should

revive just at this crisis, and the outrageous and insulting conduct of some of her officers should combine therewith, to play into the hands of the discontented, and sour the minds of those who are friends to peace, order, and friendship with all the world. But this by-the-bye.

The object of this letter is to pray you to aid me with hints relative to those points which you conceive to be fit subjects for the further friendly negotiations on the West India trade with Great Britain, agreeably to the recommendation of the Senate; and which appear to have been in contemplation by the concluding part of the treaty signed by yourself and Lord Grenville.

I intended to have asked this favour of you at an earlier day; but a coincidence of unexpected circumstances has involved me in so much business and perplexity, that it has been delayed from time to time (since my arrival in this city) until the present moment. But as nothing is now asked that you have not, I am sure, revolved over and over again during your negotiation, and since the decision of the Senate thereon, I persuade myself it will require but little time for the digest I ask; and which I beg to receive as soon as you can make it convenient to give me, circumstances rendering it necessary for me to leave this place, if possible, on Monday next, for Virginia, in order to bring back my family; but instructions for the new negotiator *must* be prepared before I go.

With great esteem and regard,

I remain, my dear sir,

Your affectionate and obedient servant,

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

New-York, 3d Sept., 1795.

DEAR SIR,

I have been honoured with yours of the 31st of last month. The article in the treaty, to which you allude, viz. the *last*,

was proposed by me to Lord Grenville, because it seemed probable that when the treaty should for some time have been in operation, defects might become manifest, and further arrangements become desirable, which had not occurred to either of us; because no plan of an article relative to impressments, which we could devise, was so free from objections as to meet with mutual approbation; and because the lord-chancellor's proposed article, relative to alienism and other interesting objects, was of such magnitude, that I did not think any stipulations respecting them should be ventured, until after that article had received the most mature consideration of our government.

I think that in endeavouring to obtain a new modification of the 12th article, an extension of tonnage, from 70 to 100 tons, should be attempted: for although this was strenuously pressed before, yet I can see no inconvenience in repeating it, by way of experiment—not insisting on it as an ultimatum. In my opinion, it would also be expedient that the new article should *specify* the particular commodities which our vessels shall be permitted to carry from the United States to the British islands, and import from the latter into the former.

As to the *impressment* of seamen, the forming of any very satisfactory arrangement on that head will, I fear, continue to prove an arduous task. In my opinion, Great Britain should at present agree not to take any seamen from our vessels on the ocean, or in her colonial ports, on account of the injuries thence resulting to our navigation. It would be difficult to support the position, that she ought to agree not to seek for and take her own seamen, on board of any merchant vessel in the ports of Great Britain or Ireland.

In the India, or 13th article, “It is expressly agreed, that the vessels of the United States shall not carry any of the articles, exported by them from the said British territories, to any port or place, except to some port or place in *America*, where the same shall be unladen.” I would propose,

that after the word *America*, be added, *or to some foreign port or place in Asia*. There is, indeed, nothing in the article as it now stands, which restrains the India Company's government from continuing to permit our vessels to carry cargoes from India to China; but it would be better, if possible, to establish this as *a right* by express agreement.

For my own part, I regard the present moment as unfavourable for negotiations with Great Britain. Although she has reason not only to approve, but to admire the conduct of our government, yet while it appears doubtful to her, whether the sentiments and dispositions of the great body of our people are pacific and friendly, or otherwise, it seems natural to suppose that it will be her policy to be reserved. To multiply engagements with, and facilities to us under such circumstances, might be ascribed to her apprehensions; and as her government will doubtless perceive this risk, I suspect they will be strongly inclined to avoid it.

Besides, I should doubt the policy of introducing into the negotiation *at present*, either so many or such propositions as may defer the ultimate ratification so late, as to prevent orders to evacuate the posts by the 1st of June next, from being sent in due season.

The commercial part of the treaty may be terminated at the expiration of two years after the war; and in the mean time, a state of things more auspicious to negotiation will probably arrive, especially if the next session of Congress should not interpose new obstacles.

I am, dear sir,

Your faithful friend and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

New-York, 14th Dec., 1795.

DEAR SIR,

\* \* \* \* \*

I have lately received much intelligence from several quarters. Some allowances are to be made for zeal; but all my accounts agree in representing the public mind as becoming more and more composed, and that certain virulent publications have caused great and general indignation, even among many who had been misled into intemperate proceedings, and had given too much countenance to factious leaders. The latter, however, persevere with great activity, though with less noise and clamour. These are political evils, which, in all ages, have grown out of such a state of things, as naturally as certain physical combinations produce whirlwinds and meteors.

With perfect respect, esteem, and attachment,

I am, my dear sir,

Your obliged and affectionate servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM GEORGE WASHINGTON.

[Private.]

Philadelphia, 21st Dec., 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your two letters of the 14th instant came duly to hand. With respect to Mr. \*\*\*\*\* , I beg you to be persuaded, that if all things in his favour are equal, your mentioning of him will have its weight. But in appointments of the sort he solicits, many matters must be attended to; and as I am sure we have the same wishes respecting them, namely, to fix on characters who, under all circumstances, are most likely to answer the objects of their appointment, and to meet general approbation, I must endeavour to be circum-

spect in the selection; and that I may have the greater variety to choose from, I would thank you and my other friends for giving me the names of such gentlemen as may occur, and are most prominent and fit to discharge the duties of commissioners.

My information with respect to the general disposition of the people, accords with yours; and I have little doubt of a perfect amelioration of sentiment, after the present fermentation (which is not only subsiding, but changing) has evaporated a little more. The dregs, however, will always remain, and the slightest motion will stir them up. With sincere esteem, and affectionate attachment,

I am always yours,

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

TO ROBERT GOODLOE HARPER,

Member of Congress.\*

New-York, 19th January, 1796.

SIR,

A friend of mine lately sent me your address to your constituents relative to the treaty. I have read it with pleasure. Had all the publications on that subject been written with equal knowledge and attention, or with equal candour and decorum, more truth would have been disseminated, and less irritation excited.

I observe in it the following paragraph, viz. "Objections both personal and constitutional have been made to Mr. Jay. He has been said to be prepossessed in favour of Britain, and an avowed enemy to France. If this had been true, it would have been a sufficient reason for rejecting him—but it is not true. I can contradict it, and do, on my own knowledge. I heard Mr. Jay express, in public and private, and those who have been much more and much longer acquainted with him, assure me that he always has

\* This letter was published by Mr. Harper, at Mr. Jay's request.

expressed the utmost pleasure in the French revolution, and the warmest wishes for its success ; the greatest dislike for the former government, and sentiments of the highest esteem and respect for the nation.”

I am much obliged to you, sir, for this vindication ; but it being summary and in general terms, and comprehending only one of the points, I think it best, in order to obviate all further questions, to state particularly my sentiments relative to them both.

It has, for obvious reasons, been judged convenient to represent me as being strongly-attached to the interests of Britain, and as being equally hostile to those of France. Before I take notice of either, I will premise, that as it is my duty, so it is my inclination and resolution, never to be a partisan of any foreign court or nation, but to be and remain with those independent and genuine Americans, who think it unwise and improper to meddle in foreign politics, and who regard all foreign interference in our counsels as derogatory to the honour, and dangerous to the best interests of the United States.

Not being of British descent, I cannot be influenced by that delicacy towards their national character, nor that partiality for it, which might otherwise be supposed not to be unnatural. I nevertheless continue to concur in, and to express those sentiments of esteem for that nation, which are expressed, and I believe with great sincerity, in the early journals of Congress.

It is not from the characters of this or that administration, or prevailing party in the government, that the character of a nation is to be inferred. A true judgment of it can no otherwise be formed, than by observing the general tenor of their dispositions and conduct, viewed under all their circumstances and in all their relations, during a long course of time. It certainly is chiefly owing to institutions, laws, and principles of policy and government, originally derived to us as British colonists, that, with the

favour of Heaven, the people of this country are what they are.

Notwithstanding the tendency which all arbitrary governments, and particularly the long reign of such a monarch as Lewis the Fifteenth, have to debase and corrupt their subjects, the people of France continued to be highly distinguished by their talents, and by their progress in the arts both of peace and of war.

It is true that I returned from that country to this, with opinions unfavourable to their court; but not only without a wish unfriendly to them, but, on the contrary, with sentiments of good-will and regard. That I have from early life expressed a strong dislike to the former arbitrary government of France, is well known. The more I became acquainted with it, the more it appeared to me to be a government always dreadful in theory, and always more or less so in practice, according to the characters of those by whom its powers were exercised.

In the revolution which put a period to it, I did cordially rejoice: I mean the one which limited the power of the king, and restored liberty to the people. The patriotic Assembly which concerted and accomplished that revolution, and the people and army who concurred in and supported it, did themselves immortal honour; and impressed me (although my judgment did not accord with all their acts) with great respect and esteem for them, and with the warmest wishes for the ultimate success and perfection of the constitution and government which they established.

The successors of that memorable Assembly produced another revolution. They abolished the constitution and government which had been just established, and brought the king to the scaffold.

This revolution did not give me pleasure. I derived no satisfaction from the disastrous fate of a prince, who (from whatever motives) had done us essential services, and to whom we had frequently presented the strongest assur-

ances of our attachment and affection. This revolution had, in my eye, more the appearance of a wo than a blessing. It has caused torrents of blood and of tears, and been marked in its progress by atrocities very injurious to the cause of liberty, and offensive to morality and humanity.

But this revolution having abolished the monarchy, declared France a republic, and received the general concurrence of the nation, a new constitution became indispensable: and as, in case this revolution should be overthrown by the combined powers, they would doubtless dictate what that new constitution should be (an interference not to be submitted to), I wished success to the revolution, so far as it had for its object not the disorganizing and managing of other states, which ought neither to be attempted nor permitted, but the exclusive ordering of all internal affairs, and the establishment of any constitution which the nation should prefer. It gives me pleasure to find that one has lately been so established; and I sincerely wish it may be the means of giving permanent peace, liberty, and good government to France.

As to the issue of the war, I am far from desiring that either France, Britain, or Germany, or any other power, should acquire a decided preponderance in Europe. In my opinion, it would conduce more to the welfare and peace of those nations, and also of the United States, that they should remain in capacity to limit and repress the ambition of each other.

I will conclude this letter with an extract from one which I wrote to the late secretary of state, dated at London, on 21st November, 1794, viz:—

“ I daily become more and more convinced of the general friendly disposition of this country towards ours; let us cherish it. . . . . Let us cultivate friendship with all nations. By treating them all with justice and kindness, and by preserving that self-respect which forbids our yielding

to the influence or policy of any of them, we shall, with the Divine blessing, secure peace, union, and respectability."

With sentiments of esteem and regard,

I have the honour to be, sir,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO JUDGE LOWELL, BOSTON.

New-York, 29th Feb., 1796.

DEAR SIR,

I have been favoured with yours of the 15th inst. by Mr. Parkman; am much pleased with him and his fellow-traveller, Mr. Cooledge. Their representation of the state of things in Massachusetts corresponds with the hints on that head suggested in your letter. There is too much intelligence in the northern states, to admit of their being greatly and long deceived and misled; and I hope the same remark will in time become equally applicable to all the others. Considering the nature of our governments, a succession of demagogues must be expected: and the strenuous efforts of the wise and virtuous will not cease to be necessary to frustrate their artifices and designs. They will always be hostile to merit, because merit will always stand in their way; and being actuated by envy, ambition, or avarice, and not unfrequently by them all, will be diligently at work, while better men will take their rest.

It seems strange, but so it is in all republics, that many excellent men who are happy in their families and fortunes, and in the esteem of society and of their friends; who enjoy their villas and their gardens, and neglect not to guard their trees and vines from caterpillars, and their favourite plants and flowers from nipping frosts; yet omit attending to the political grubs, who are constantly and insidiously labouring to wound and prey upon the roots of all their

temporal enjoyments. Several gentlemen of this description with us becoming alarmed, have been very useful; and I presume this has been, more or less, the case in other States.

Be assured of the esteem and regard with which I am,

Yours, &c.

JOHN JAY.

TO REV. UZAL OGDEN.

New-York, 14th Feb., 1796.

DEAR SIR,

I am much obliged to you for the books you have been so kind as to send me, and which, with your friendly letter of the 11th inst., were delivered to me yesterday. Except while at church, I have employed this day in reading the first, and part of the second volume; and expect to finish the perusal of the remainder next Sunday. I have long been of opinion, that the evidence of the truth of Christianity, requires only to be carefully examined to produce conviction in candid minds; and I think they who undertake that task, will derive advantages from your enumeration of many interesting facts; your remarks on various heads and topics; and from your references to the numerous authors proper to be consulted, and some of whom are but little known.

As to "The Age of Reason," it never appeared to me to have been written from a disinterested love of truth, or of mankind: nor am I persuaded, that either of those motives induced certain characters to take such singular pains to distribute and give it reputation and currency in this country. Religion, morality, and a virtuous and enlightened clergy, will always be impediments to the progress and success of certain systems and designs; and therefore will not cease to experience both direct and indirect hostilities from those who meditate or embark in them.

With the best wishes for your health and happiness, I am,  
 dear sir,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Philadelphia, 31st March, 1796.

Accept, my dear sir, my thanks for your note of the 25th inst., enclosing a copy of Mr. Bayard's letter to you. The purport of it is pleasing; but the conduct of the British armed vessels in the West Indies is intolerable beyond all forbearance.

My answer, given yesterday to the House of Representatives' request for papers, will, I expect, set a host of scribblers to work: but I shall proceed steadily on in all the measures which depend on the executive, to carry the British treaty into effect.

This reminds me of the name of \*\*\*\*\* , who some time ago you mentioned as a commissioner; but upon inquiring of his countrymen, it was found he was unfit.

Be assured of the affectionate regard of

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

FROM LORD GRENVILLE.

Cleveland-row, March 17th, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

I cannot let Mr. Liston go, without taking the occasion of his departure to recommend him to you, and to express my hope that his character and conduct will be found well calculated to continue and promote that harmony, which it was the object of our labours to establish. I have, since you left us, taken one occasion to renew to you my assurances of the sincere esteem and friendship with which your whole conduct has impressed me, and of the high sense which I entertain of your virtues and talents. It is a great satisfaction to one, when, in the course of so many unpleasant

discussions as a public man must necessarily be engaged in, he is able to look back upon any of them with as much pleasure, as I derived from that which procured me the advantage of friendship and intercourse with a man valuable on every account. You, I trust, saw enough of me to know that these expressions are not, on my part, compliments of course, but that they proceed from sentiments of real esteem and regard.

I need not tell you with how much pleasure, on every account, I have learned that the public in the United States are recovering from the delusion into which they had been led, and that justice is now done by the country at large, as it was before by well informed and well principled men, to the uprightness and ability of your conduct. I, on my part, should have thought, that I very ill consulted the interests of my own country, if I had been desirous of terminating the points in discussion between us, on any other footing than that of mutual justice and reciprocal advantage; nor do I conceive that any just objection can be stated to the great work which we jointly accomplished, except on the part of those who believe the interest of Great Britain and the United States to be in contradiction with each other, or who wish to make them so.

It would be a great gratification to me to learn occasionally that you are well, and that you retain a friendly recollection of one who is, with the greatest sincerity,

Most truly and faithfully,

Your obedient humble servant,

GRENVILLE.

TO LORD GRENVILLE.

New-York, 1st May, 1796.

MY LORD,

The great questions which have agitated this country since my arrival, may now, I think, be considered as determined. I will therefore no longer postpone thanking your

lordship for the letter which you did me the honour to write on the 11th May last, respecting which I shall omit saying any thing further by this opportunity.

The treaty will go into operation, and be supported by a great majority of the people; a majority comprising the greater part of the men most distinguished by talents, worth, and weight. Strenuous endeavours were made and persisted in, to mislead the people by all the various means which art, unrestrained by principle, very readily devises. The English and Irish emigrants joined the opposition; and what seems more singular is, that the French republicans and French refugees, so far forgot their animosities as to concur in resisting the restoration of good-will between Great Britain and the United States.

Anxious that the present current of public opinion in favour of a pacific and conciliatory system, may not be checked by fresh obstacles, permit me, my lord, to submit to your consideration the prudence, as well as justice of strong measures, to prevent, as far as possible, those very exceptionable impressments, and other severities, which too often occur. They may give occasion, and I am persuaded will continue to give occasion to more clamour than facts will justify; but it is certainly true that much just cause for complaint does exist, and that there are persons here who would rejoice if there was much more. There is reason to believe, that certain individuals in the British service have been irritated, by the improper things said and published in this country, to indiscreet acts of resentment; not considering, and probably not suspecting, that they were said and published for the purpose of provocation. It is to be wished, that they had recollected that these things were not said and published by our government, nor by those who desire to promote, and who do promote peace and harmony with Great Britain; nor by those who are actuated by zeal for the honour and interest of their *own* country.

We have aimed at, and laboured for the restoration of

mutual justice and mutual good-will between our countries. The greatest difficulties are surmounted, and perseverance, with prudence and temper on both sides, will ensure success. Would not orders to discharge all impressed Americans, and enjoining a just and friendly conduct towards the people of this country, cherish their confidence, and manifest that disposition to conciliation, which repeated instances of violence and severity enable designing men (and with great appearance of reason) to draw into question? Would not friendly assurances on these points to our government, tend greatly to impress the public with still more favourable opinions of the propriety and policy of their measures; and consequently diminish the credit and influence of those who seize every occasion of impeaching their wisdom and your sincerity? These men have, indeed, for the present missed their object, but they have not abandoned their designs. I mean the leaders, not the rank and file of the party. Among the latter are many misled, honest men, who, as they become undeceived, will act with propriety.

Pardon, my lord, the liberty I take in these observations. I write freely because I confide fully in your candour, and because I flatter myself that you confide in mine. I have not leisure, at this moment, to be more particular. This letter will soon be followed by others.

With great and sincere esteem and regard, I have the honour to be, my lord,

Your lordship's most obedient

And humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO THE REV. DR. THATCHER, BOSTON.

New-York, 26th May, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Thomas Hancock delivered to me yesterday your obliging letter of the 23d of last month. I shall always be happy in opportunities of manifesting to the family of the

late Governor Hancock, my respect for his memory. We were fellow-labourers in the American revolution, and I reflect with pleasure on the good understanding which subsisted between us, and the friendly attentions with which he uniformly honoured me. Permit me to add, that my esteem and regard for you would not only ensure a welcome reception to this amiable young gentleman, but to any others you may recommend.

The approbation of one judicious and virtuous man, relative to the conduct of the negotiations in which I was lately engaged, affords me more satisfaction, than all the clamours raised on that subject by intrigue and passion have given me concern. It was foreseen that a strenuous opposition would be excited; and I was disappointed only in this, that the management of it has been less circumspect and politic than I had supposed. There was little reason to expect that any treaty of amity with Great Britain, which our constituted government could form, would be acceptable to those anti-federalists, whose prejudices, instead of being removed, but gathered strength and malignity from the failure of their predictions; to debtors, anxious by any means to elude payment, or to partisans of a *foreign power*, which had systematically and industriously laboured to keep us in the condition of a satellite, and prevent our ever diverging from the sphere of her attraction and governing influence.

Believing the people of this country too intelligent to be long deceived, and not sufficiently vicious to require great national calamities, I hope and trust that Providence will continue to bless us with as much prosperity as will be good for us; I say as will be good for us, for in my opinion Agur's prayer is not less suitable for nations than for individuals. With the best wishes for your health and happiness, I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO WILLIAM VAUGHAN.

New-York, 26th May, 1796. 4

DEAR SIR,

The letters of the 24th and 28th November last, with which you favoured me, have remained long unanswered, though not forgotten; my time having, since my arrival, been so occupied by public concerns, that I have had no leisure to attend to my private affairs or correspondence.

As to political reformations in Europe or elsewhere, I confess that, considering men as being what they are, I do not amuse myself with dreams about an age of reason, prior to the millennium, which I believe will come, though I cannot tell the precise time when. Until that period arrives, I expect there will be wars, and commotions, and tyrants, and factions, and demagogues, and that they will do mischief as they may have opportunity. Human knowledge and experience will doubtless continue to do good, in proportion to their extent and influence; but that they will ever be able to reduce the passions and prejudices of mankind to such a state of subordination to right reason as modern philosophers would persuade us, I do not believe one word of.

I should not think that man wise, who should employ his time in endeavouring to contrive a shoe that would fit every foot; and they do not appear to me much more wise, who expect to devise a government that would suit every nation. I have no objections to men's mending or changing their own shoes, but I object to their insisting on my mending or changing mine. I am content that little men should be as free as big ones, and have and enjoy the same rights; but nothing strikes me as more absurd than projects to stretch little men into big ones, or shrink big men into little ones. Liberty and reformation may run mad, and madness of any kind is no blessing. I nevertheless think, that there may be a time for reformation, and a time for change, as well as

for other things; all that I contend for is, that they be done soberly, by sober and discreet men, and in due manner, measure, and proportion. It may be said, that this cannot always be the case. It is true, and we can only regret it. We must take men and things as they are, and act accordingly; that is, circumspectly.

With the best wishes for your health and happiness,

I am, dear sir, your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO GEORGE HAMMOND,\* ENGLAND.

New-York, 15th June, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

Accept my thanks for your friendly letter of the 14th March last. I am happy in resuming my correspondence with my friends in England, and regret that it has been so long suspended. As Mr. King will be the bearer of this letter, I refer you to him for information respecting the state of affairs here. You have heard of the appointment of this gentleman to succeed Mr. Pinckney. You are well acquainted with his qualifications for that place, and with his character, public and private.

I thank you for making to Lord Grenville the intimation I requested relative to the intended present. I shall deem myself sufficiently honoured and gratified, if my endeavours should prove conducive to permanent peace and conciliation between our countries. This can, and I hope will, be accomplished. Nature has made few difficulties within the sphere of honest and rational policy, that are insuperable to prudence and perseverance. Mutual justice, mutual kindness, and a little mutual forbearance will ensure success. But it is to be remembered, that political, like other fields, require constant attention; when neglected, they soon become unproductive, and fresh weeds, briars, and thorns will gradually spring up.

\* Late British minister in the United States.

The tide in human affairs, of which the poet speaks, now runs favourably, and will present a proper occasion for arranging our West India commerce. The war has, in a great degree, suspended the importance of it to us. When that suspension ceases, a strong sense of it will return, and will excite uneasiness which should be obviated or allayed by regulations as satisfactory as can well be made. Although a system more liberal than that in the twelfth article, if it had been immediately made, might have been ascribed to the pressure of circumstances, rather than to motives more pleasing and friendly: yet that objection has nearly lost its force, and passed its time; for the treaty is now in operation, with the approbation of a decided and great majority of the people, and success attends your arms.

While America has no just cause of complaint against Britain, nor Britain against America, their commercial and friendly relations will operate freely and effectually, and the designs of those who aim at discord between them will prove abortive.

I am, dear sir,

Yours very sincerely,

JOHN JAY.

FROM LORD GRENVILLE.

Dropmore, July 9th, 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,

It is a great satisfaction to me to have to acknowledge two of your letters, and to be allowed the hope of hearing from you more frequently. I should have been very sorry to think that I was wholly out of your recollection, as I frequently reflect with pleasure on the opportunity I had of becoming acquainted with a character which I saw so much reason to esteem.

Mr. Gore delivered to me, a few days ago, your letter of introduction. He seems to be a sensible and moderate man, and I shall have great pleasure both in facilitating, as

far as may depend on me, the public objects of his mission, and in showing him any private attention and civility that may be in my power. I think he and his colleague will be well satisfied with the choice which has been made here for that commission. Both Dr. Nicoll and Mr. Ansty are known (in some degree) in America, the former by character, the latter personally; and I trust the appointment has proved the spirit in which it was made. If I do not deceive myself, the choice of the commissioners who are going to America will not be less satisfactory. Their names are not yet announced, but I look upon the appointment as very nearly, if not quite, fixed.

Your letter of the 1st of May was delivered to me two days ago, and I take the opportunity of this mail to answer it. I have the greatest pleasure in hearing from you, that you consider the questions which have agitated America since your arrival as determined. I think we always felt that even after the great points were adjusted, and a foundation of solid friendship laid, something must be still left for the operation of time and temper. Where so much heat has prevailed, irritation will remain among individuals, and will occasionally produce inconvenience and embarrassment to both governments. Mutual good disposition and confidence, a uniform and steady conduct in great points, and moderation respecting those of less importance, must ultimately surmount these difficulties, as they have already surmounted others which were much greater.

With respect to the impressments, I am confident that such orders as you speak of have been more than once repeated. I speak from general impression, not having had opportunity to ascertain the fact since I received your letter. But I think I can answer for it that they shall be renewed. In this country, much of the detail of that business has fallen within my own knowledge; and I can say positively, that I do not think one instance can be brought where a seaman has not been discharged, who could pro-

duce, I do not say proof, but any probable, or even plausible ground for supposing him a native citizen of the United States, or a resident there at the time of the separation from this country. In some instances, the conduct observed has been so favourable, that within the last week, before I received your letter, two men were discharged, one on producing a certificate of an American consul here, which did not recite on what grounds or from what proof it was given, but merely asserted the fact that the bearer was an American citizen; and the other, on producing a paper neither certified nor attested, but purporting to be a discharge from an American regiment of militia,—a paper which, even if genuine, may, as you will easily see, have passed into twenty hands before it was produced here.

I saw in the proceedings of the last session of the Congress, some steps taken towards a regular establishment for the granting certificates. If such an establishment were formed, with proper and sufficient checks to prevent its being abused, the effect would be to do away the greatest part of our difficulties on the subject. But I much fear that the ideas prevalent in America on the subject of emigration, will prevent this ever being well or satisfactorily done.

I have been led into this discussion by what you say of the advantage which might arise from giving orders, which I am confident have been repeatedly given. The assurances of Mr. Liston on the subject will also, I trust, be such as you seem to desire.

I beg you to believe that you cannot do a thing more agreeable to me, or, perhaps, more useful to the interest of both our countries, than in expressing to me at all times, freely and without reserve, your opinion as to the means of maintaining that spirit which we jointly laboured to establish. This may be a means of rendering our correspondence greatly and permanently beneficial. Agreeable to me it can never fail to be, while it conveys to me information of your welfare, and gives me the opportunity of

assuring you of the very sincere esteem and regard with which

I have the honour to be, my dear sir,

Your most faithful and obedient humble servant,

GRENVILLE.

TO COL. TRUMBULL,\* LONDON.

New-York, 20th Oct., 1796.

DEAR SIR,

It gave me pleasure to receive from Dr. Edwards your letter of the 7th ult., and to converse with him on the subjects alluded to in it. My letters to you and others on your side of the water have, since my return, been few, and not very interesting. The risks to which letters are exposed in times like these, rendered me more reserved than I should otherwise have been.

You have doubtless by this time heard that Mr. Benson has been chosen the *third* commissioner for ascertaining the river St. Croix, intended by the treaty of peace. He is now on that business; a better appointment could not have been made. Whatever the decision may be, both parties will, I am persuaded, have reason to be satisfied with it.

You are now placed, as you well observe, in a situation delicate and important. Your reflections on it are just and proper. The interest I take in what concerns you induces me to enlarge a little upon them.

To settle and agree on the principles which ought to govern in the capture cases, as well as the application of them to those cases, will require great care, consideration, and impartiality. The majority of the commissioners being Americans, the honour of our country will be increased or diminished by their decisions. I flatter myself

\* One of the American commissioners under the British treaty.

they will be such as to merit the approbation of distant and disinterested generations in both countries.

It is natural that the claimants should, and they doubtless will be, sanguine in their expectations. Some of them may be difficult to satisfy, and perhaps become clamorous. Firmness, therefore, as well as integrity and caution, will be requisite to explore and persevere in the path of justice. They who, in following her footsteps, tread upon popular prejudices, or crush the schemes of individuals, must expect clamours and resentment. The best way to prevent being perplexed by considerations of that kind is to dismiss them all, and never to permit the mind to dwell upon them for a moment. I suspect it is with men in these cases, as it is said to be with women in certain others, they who *hesitate* are in danger of being lost.

Although a judge may possess the best talents, and the purest intentions, yet let him keep a jealous eye over his sensibilities and attachments, lest they imperceptibly give to error too near a resemblance to truth. Nay, let him even watch over that jealousy, for the apprehension of being thought partial to one side, has a tendency to incline a delicate mind towards the other.

I am, dear sir,

Very sincerely your friend,

JOHN JAY.

TO THE REV. DR. MORSE.

Albany, 28th Feb., 1797.

DEAR SIR,

I have been favoured with yours of the 14th ult. and also with the one which accompanied the set of your Geography, for which be pleased to accept my thanks.

It gives me pleasure to learn, that you will endeavour at least to prepare for a history of the American revolution. To obtain competent and exact information on the subject

is not the least arduous part of the task; it will require much time, patient perseverance, and research. As the revolution was accomplished by the councils and efforts of the *Union*, and by the auxiliary councils and efforts of each individual *State or colony*, it appears to me that your inquiries will necessarily be divided into those *two departments*; the first of them will of course include foreign affairs, and both of them will naturally divide into two others; viz. the *civil* and the *military*. Each of these, you know, comprehends several distinct heads, which are obvious.

So much of our colonial history as casts light on the revolution, viewed under its different aspects, and considered in all its anterior relations, will be essential. I think our colonial history is strongly marked by discriminating circumstances relative to our political situation and feelings, at three different periods: 1st, down to the revolution under King William; 2d, from thence to the year 1763; and 3d, from that year to the union of the colonies in 1774. Want of leisure will not permit me to go into details.

As to documents—*public* and *private* journals of Congress—the papers mentioned or alluded to in them, such as certain reports of committees; letters to and from civil and military officers, ministers, agents, state-governors, &c.; the proceedings of the standing committees for marine, commercial, fiscal, political, and foreign affairs—all merit attention.

The journals and papers of State conventions, and councils of safety, and of some of the standing and other committees, during the revolutionary government, contain much interesting information.

There are also diaries and memoirs, and private letters, which would give some aid and light to a sagacious and cautious inquirer; for experience has convinced me, that they are entitled to no other respect or attention than what

they derive from the well-established characters of the writers for judgment, accuracy, and candour. As to characters, I have, throughout the revolution, known some who passed for more than they were worth, and others who passed for less. On this head, great circumspection is particularly requisite. It is to be regretted, but so I believe the fact to be, that except the Bible, there is not a true history in the world. Whatever may be the virtue, discernment, and industry of the writers, I am persuaded, that truth and error (though in different degrees) will imperceptibly become and remain mixed and blended, until they shall be separated for ever by the great and last refining fire.

I remain, my dear sir,  
Your very obedient servant,  
JOHN JAY.

TO DOCTOR RUSH.

Albany, 22d March, 1797.

DEAR SIR,

I have received and read with pleasure your elegant eulogium on the late Mr. Rittenhouse. Such attentions to worthy characters, cherish and encourage modest merit. As a man and a philosopher, his title to esteem and praise is, I believe, universally acknowledged.

The "Illustrations of the Prophecies" which you mention, I have not seen. On my return to New-York I will inquire for it. The author's applying certain of the prophecies to certain recent events, renders his work the more interesting. I have frequently known this to be done with more imagination than judgment, but from your account of the book, I presume it is not liable to that remark. The subject naturally excites attention, and the present extraordinary state of things permits an idea to slide into the mind, that even additional events, admitting of a like application, may precede a general peace.

We live, my dear sir, in times that furnish abundant matter for serious and profound reflections. It is a consolatory one, that every scourge of every kind by which nations are punished or corrected, is under the control of a wise and benevolent Sovereign.

With sincere esteem and regard, I am, dear sir,

Your faithful and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO LORD GRENVILLE.

New-York, 4th June, 1797.

MY LORD,

A long interval has passed between the date of my last letter and that of this. They would have been more frequent, had they been exposed to less risk of interception.

My respect and esteem for your lordship remain unabated, and I yet flatter myself with the pleasure of becoming a better correspondent. It will give you satisfaction to know that the letters I have received from Mr. King and Mr. Gore, make honourable mention of the candour and good faith of your government. They both appear to be well pleased, and I am glad of it. The proceedings of the Congress now in session will doubtless be sent to you. There appears to be a general disposition to pacific measures throughout our country. If it procures peace, so much the better; if not, we shall be the more united. To put our adversaries in the wrong is always a valuable point gained, especially as the forbearance necessary for the purpose will not in the present instance be prompted by fear, nor produce dejection.

In every event, some malcontents are to be expected; and it is remarkable that *patriots* born in British dominions, are very distinguishable among those who the most invariably oppose our government and its measures. They appear to be as little disposed to promote good-will between

our two countries, as the French ; indeed, they seem to like our government as little as they did their own.

I have the honour to be, with very great respect, esteem, and regard,

My lord,  
Your lordship's most obedient servant,  
JOHN JAY.

TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN.

New-York, 31st Aug., 1797.

DEAR SIR,

I had this afternoon the pleasure of receiving your favour of the 18th inst. Mrs. Jay joins me in sincerely congratulating you and your amiable family on your arrival in this country ; may your expectations of happiness in it be fully realized.

The reasons which have determined you to settle on the Kennebeck, I can easily conceive are cogent, but I flatter myself you will sometimes find leisure for excursions this way.

I presume that our political sentiments do not differ essentially. To me it appears important that the American government be preserved as it is, until mature experience shall very plainly point out very useful amendments to our constitution ; that we steadily repel all foreign influence and interference, and with good faith and liberality treat all nations as friends in peace, and as enemies in war ; neither meddling with their affairs, nor permitting them to meddle with ours. These are the primary objects of my policy. The secondary ones are more numerous, such as, to be always prepared for war, to cultivate peace, to promote religion, industry, tranquillity, and useful knowledge, and to secure to all the quiet enjoyment of their rights, by wise and equal laws irresistibly executed. I do not expect that mankind will, before the millennium, be what they ought to be ; and therefore, in my opinion, every political theory

which does not regard them as being what *they are*, will probably prove delusive.

It will give me pleasure to receive the publication you mention; being from your pen, it will, I am persuaded, be interesting. Be pleased to present our best compliments to Mrs. Vaughan and your sister.

I am, dear sir,  
Your affectionate and humble servant,  
JOHN JAY.

TO COL. JOHN TRUMBULL, LONDON.

Albany, 27th October, 1797.

DEAR SIR,

I received, three days ago, by the post, your letter of the 7th of August, in which was a copy of the one you had written on the 20th of July, and the original of which I had received and read with pleasure.

The difficulty and delicacy of your task, my good friend, are obvious; but I flatter myself the reputation to be derived from it will soften the trouble and anxiety it gives you. It was not to be expected that the judgments of the commissioners would not frequently differ, for the best judges sometimes vary in opinion from each other; but it is to be expected, as well as wished, that their decisions may bear the test of the severe examination which they will certainly at one time or other undergo.

The delays of the court of admiralty do not surprise me. I have no faith in any British court of admiralty, though I have the greatest respect for, and the highest confidence in their courts of *justice*, in the number of which, those courts do not deserve to be ranked. I do not extend this stricture to the lords of appeal.

The question you hint at is interesting. Perhaps a mode might be devised for making and receiving claims *de bene esse*; but if any thing of that kind should be done, it should be on more mature consideration than that on which I

suggest it; it is a thought which just occurred to me, and which I have not examined.

I am settled here with my family, at least for the winter. The Legislature have determined that this city shall be the seat of government, and that the principal public offices shall be here.

As to politics, we are in a better state than we were: but we are not yet in a sound state. I think that nation is not in a sound state whose parties are excited by objects interesting only to a foreign power. I wish to see our people more Americanized, if I may use that expression; until we feel and act as an independent nation, we shall always suffer from foreign intrigue.

Whether peace in Europe would ensure peace to America, is a question on which doubts are entertained. In my opinion, it will depend on circumstances, and not on any right or wrong about the matter.

Remember me to our friends, Mr. King, and Mr. Gore. I owe letters to them, and to others, but the fate of letters has been so precarious, that I have written much fewer than I should otherwise have done.

I am, dear sir, yours sincerely,

JOHN JAY.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Secretary of State.

Albany, 13th November, 1797.

DEAR SIR,

I consider myself much obliged by your friendly and interesting letter of the 28th ult. From Talleyrand's expressions and conduct it seems, and I infer, that he will act as favourably towards us as may consist with his personal views, for I have very little confidence in his being *governed* by any moral principles, further than they may be *conveniently* adopted. As to Otto and La Forest, I entertain of them in that respect very similar sentiments; they

will probably be inclined towards us as far as may *suit* them.

The recent explosion at Paris has cast most of our calculations and conjectures, relative to the issue of our negotiations with the Directory, very much into the air. A complete state of defence at home, appears to me to be the only solid foundation on which to rest our hopes of security, and I regret that more has not been done towards it. But until our people become more united, and feel more sensibly the pride and the duties of independence, our Jacobins will not cease to perplex the measures of our government, however wise and salutary. It is pleasing to observe, that notwithstanding their efforts to mislead, the public mind is gradually recovering from its errors, and to this end your public reports and letters have essentially contributed. Your answer to the Spanish minister's factious and indecent letter, has made stronger impressions than he and his counsellors probably suspect.

Yours, very sincerely,

JOHN JAY.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

Albany, 30th August, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

I was this morning favoured with yours of the 27th inst. I regret the circumstances which prevented our seeing each other when you were here. There are several topics on which I wish to converse with you, and particularly respecting military arrangements at New-York. The rifle corps, and a few of the new light-infantry companies are established. There were reasons which I shall mention when we meet, which induced me to suspend a decision relative to the others for the *present*. The objections stated in the petition are not, in my judgment, conclusive. So soon as the commissions advised by the council are despatched, I propose to set out for New-York. The defence

of the port, &c., in my opinion, should be under your direction. The measures will be concerted between us. The council will meet again *before* the session, and all such new corps as ought to be established, will then without difficulty be organized ultimately. I think with you on the subject of resignations.

It is with me a question whether any person convicted of *forgery* ought to be pardoned at *present*, when offences of that kind abound. As yet I have not pardoned any convicts of that description, except in cases where the convictions turned on a balance of evidence, and where guilt was probable, but not certain. Mr. Murray has just been with me on this subject. I shall take it into further consideration, but fear the objections will prove insuperable. The young man's father and family are to be pitied, but the power to pardon is a *trust* to be exercised on principles of sound discretion, combining policy, justice, and humanity; —we will talk this matter over. I have an idea of putting the light corps into a regiment, and making our friend Troup colonel of it.

I am, dear sir,

Yours, sincerely,

JOHN JAY.

TO THE REV. DR. MORSE.

Albany, 30th January, 1799.

DEAR SIR,

You will herewith receive copies of the acts of our two last sessions. A variety of official and other affairs, which, although in numerous instances of little importance, yet required to be despatched with punctuality, induced me, from time to time, to postpone replying to your obliging letter of the 19th November, and to thank you for the interesting pamphlets you was so kind as to send with it.

We see many things, my dear sir, which might be altered for the better, and that, I believe, has been the case at all

times. But at this period, there certainly are an uncommon number and series of events and circumstances, which assume an aspect unusually portentous. The seeds of trouble are sowing and germinating in our country, as well as in many others; they are cultivated with a zeal so singularly blind, as not, in many instances, to be easily accounted for. Infidelity has become a political engine, alarming both by the force and the extent of its operations. It is doubtless permitted to be used for wise ends, though we do not clearly discern them; when those ends shall be accomplished, it will be laid aside.

Much ill use has been, and will yet be made of secret societies. I think with you that they should not be encouraged, and that the most virtuous and innocent of them would do well to concur in suspending them for the present.

What precisely is to be understood of the death and resurrection of the witnesses, will probably be explained only by the *event*. I have an idea, that either the Old and New Testaments, or the moral and revealed law are the two witnesses: witnesses to the existence, attributes, promises, and denunciations of the Supreme Being. Atheism is now killing these witnesses. That all true and pious apostles or believers are everywhere or generally to be slain, seems hardly credible. Whatever or whoever the witnesses may be, it is certain that the slaughter is not yet perfected. I much doubt whether, in any view of the subject, the clergy of the church of Rome are of the number.

The pope has lost his triple crown, and his spiritual dominion is rapidly declining. The Turk is now a party to the war; whether any or what consequences will result from it to Mahomet, is yet to be seen. Wide is the field open for *conjectures*.

That our country is to drink very deep of the cup of tribulation, I am not apprehensive; but that we shall entirely escape, does not appear to me very probable. I suspect that the jacobins are still more numerous, more

desperate, and more active in this country, than is generally supposed. It is true, they are less indecorous and less clamorous than they have been. How few of their *leaders* have abandoned their errors, their associations, their opposition to their own government, and their devotion to a foreign one! Why, and by whom, were the Kentucky and Virginia resolutions contrived, and for what purposes? I often think of Pandora's box: although it contained every kind of evil, yet it is said that *hope* was placed at the bottom. This is a singular fable, and it admits of many, and some of them very extensive applications.

With very sincere esteem and regard,

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO BENJAMIN GOODHUE.\*

Albany, 29th March, 1799.

DEAR SIR,

The letters which you were so obliging as to write to me from Philadelphia have been received, and disposed of in the manner you requested.

The information communicated in those letters has given me much concern. The expediency of the president's declaration, that he would not send another minister to France, until he should receive assurances, &c., was not, in my judgment, unquestionable. There are political considerations against it, and there are others in its favour. Such a declaration, however, was made, and the propriety of it seems to have been acquiesced in.

It is to be wished that Mr. Murray had been more reserved in his conversations with the French secretary, on the subject of our national differences. These matters were foreign to his department, and I presume they were

\* Member of Congress.

not within his instructions. Those conversations have facilitated overtures, which are calculated, and I believe designed, to perplex and divide our councils, and to mislead public opinion.

The manner in which Mr. Murray transmitted these overtures to the president, is such a deviation from the official and customary course, as (unless adopted for extraordinary and substantial reasons) is certainly exceptionable. Nor does any reason occur to me, why the president thought it proper to omit communicating the overtures to the secretary of state. Such is my confidence in the patriotism of the president, and also of the secretary, that every indication of want of confidence between them appears to me singular, and to be regretted.

Whether these overtures (considered in connexion with the before-mentioned declaration of the president, and other existing circumstances) should have been accepted, or encouraged, or rejected, or neglected, are questions not free from doubts. I am inclined to think that *immediate* attention to them was neither necessary nor advisable, and that they had not as yet acquired such a degree of maturity, as to call for any formal, national act. But viewing this subject in all its various relations, I suspect it is one of those on which statesmen might naturally be led to opposite opinions, by the difficulty of estimating the precise weight and balance of the many and diverse considerations comprehended in it.

Much might be said, but not to much purpose; for whatever remarks may be applicable to the origin, progress, and present state of this perplexing affair, *it is as it is*. Nothing therefore remains, but to make the best of the situation into which we are carried, and to avail ourselves of all the advantages to be derived from the united talents and efforts of the best friends to our country and government. The apprehensions entertained from the projected negotiation may not be extensively realized, and events may yet arise

to press the Directory into proper measures relative to this country—measures not to be expected from their sincerity, or sense of decorum or justice.

I am for aiding and adhering to the president, and for promoting the best understanding between him and the heads of the departments. Notwithstanding what has happened, I hope his real friends will not keep at a distance from him, nor withhold from him that information, which none but his friends will give him. Union, sedate firmness, and vigorous preparations for war, generally afford the best means of counteracting the tendencies of insidious professions, and of too great public confidence in them.

With great esteem and regard,

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM RUFUS KING.

London, March 18th, 1799.

DEAR SIR,

The opposition of Virginia, and of her offspring, Kentucky, appears bolder and more considerable than I had apprehended. The reform that seems to have taken place in the Carolinas is, however, a consoling and important circumstance. I have been inclined to believe that the Congressional election was the principal object of these inflammatory proceedings, which discredit and injure us so much abroad, and when passed, that these States would display less turbulence.

According to present appearances, the war must recommence between France and Austria, if it has not already begun; but that an honest and solid confederacy against France is likely to take place between the great powers, is more than I dare even to expect. Russia is uncommonly zealous. Passawan Ouglou has accepted pardon and promotion; and it is just now said, how accurately is another

point, that Prussia and Austria are to lay aside their mutual jealousy, and to consult and act together for their common safety.

The commercial condition of England is extremely prosperous, and notwithstanding the hazardous and really dreadful situation of Ireland, this country is united in an uncommon degree, and appears resolved to persevere in the war. The minister, at the opening of his budget, estimates the total income of all the people of Great Britain at a hundred million per annum; and it is confidently expected, that the taxes of this year will considerably exceed one-third of this sum.

The Directory lately hold a language respecting America more moderate, but not less artful and dangerous. Whether any change in their privateering laws will be made, I think uncertain; if my conjectures respecting the views of the Directory are correct, these laws will be new modified, or at least for a time suspended. After the experience we have had, it will be humiliating if we are deceived by the artifices that will be practised among our people.

I am always and sincerely, dear sir,

Your obedient and faithful servant,

RUFUS KING.

TO WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, LONDON.

Albany, 3d September, 1799.

DEAR SIR,

It was not until the last week, that I had the pleasure of receiving from Mr. Naylor your obliging and very friendly letter of the 24th Feb., 1798. Accept my thanks for it.

Permit me to congratulate you on the promising aspect of affairs in Europe. England stands high, and while just, no one ought to repine at her prosperity. In my opinion, she does not pass for more than she is worth. Your tax on income does honour to the minister who devised it, to the parliament who adopted it, and to the people who bear

it. If hereafter accommodated to a state of peace, it would be a powerful auxiliary to your sinking fund.

Our conversation here turns so much on Great Britain and (as some phrase it) her doings, that I find myself insensibly led to these interesting topics. Not only Great Britain, but every other civilized country, will have reason to rejoice when the present atrocious war, and the pestiferous principles which generated and have protracted it, shall cease to distress and to corrupt mankind. May that happy period not be distant.

With great esteem and regard, and the best wishes for your health and happiness, I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and faithful servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO THE REV. SAMUEL MILLER.

Albany, 28th February, 1800.

SIR,

Accept my thanks for the sermon on the death of General Washington, which you was so obliging as to send me. In my opinion, it abounds in excellent sentiments, well arranged and expressed. Writing thus freely, I think it candid to observe, that in some instances ideas are conveyed which do not appear to me to be correct; such, for instance, as "our glorious emancipation from Britain." The Congresses of 1774 and 1775 regarded the people of this country as being free; and such was their opinion of the liberty we enjoyed so late as the year 1763, that they declared the colonies would be satisfied on being replaced in the political situation in which they then were. It was not until after the year 1763, that Britain attempted to subject us to arbitrary domination. We resisted the stamp act with energy and success; and when afterward she claimed to bind us in all cases whatever, the same spirit of resistance animated our councils and our conduct: when she recurred to arms to put a yoke upon us, we recurred to arms to keep

it off. A struggle ensued which produced the revolution, and ended in an entire dissolution of all the political ties which had before subsisted between the two countries. Thus we became a distinct nation; and I think truth will justify our indulging the pride of saying, that we and our ancestors have kept our necks free from yokes, and that the term *emancipation* is not applicable to us.

Speaking of the measures of General Washington's civil administration, you observe, and so is the fact, "that there is less unanimity among his countrymen with respect to these, than with respect to his military services." But, do facts warrant our ascribing this diminution of unanimity entirely to doubts respecting the wisdom of those measures? The revolution found and left only two primary parties, viz. the whigs who succeeded, and the tories who were suppressed. The former were unanimous in approving the leading measures, both civil and military, which gave them victory. When the adoption of the new constitution afterward came into question, the whigs divided into two parties, the one for and the other against it. The party for the constitution prevailed; and they have with as great unanimity approved of General Washington's civil as of his military measures and services. The party opposed to the constitution disapproved of the government established by it; and there are very few of the important measures of that government which have escaped their censure.

I take the liberty of making these remarks from the respect I have for your talents; and an opinion, that with due circumspection they will promote the great interests of truth, virtue, and national liberty. Receive them, therefore, as marks of the esteem with which I am, sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO THE REV. DR. MORSE.

Albany, 24th April, 1800.

DEAR SIR,

Several affairs, more interesting to others than to me, have for some months past so pressed upon me, as, together with official business, to leave me little leisure to attend even to my own concerns. Hence I have been constrained into delays respecting my correspondents, which could not have been less agreeable to their feelings than to my own.

Accept my thanks for the several communications with which you have favoured me. The facts which you have given to the public relative to the conduct of France in our revolution, as well as your strictures on the designs and intrigues of the illuminés, have, to a certain extent, been useful. They have made proper impressions on many sedate and candid men, but I suspect they have detached very few of the disciplined adherents of the party. As yet, there appears but little reason to believe that philosophy is losing ground in our country. There is indeed less said about it, but indications of immorality are neither less frequent, nor more odious and disgraceful in common estimation than heretofore. A moral epidemic seems to prevail in the world. What may be its duration, or the limits of its ravages, time only can ascertain.

The approaching general election in this State will be unusually animated. No arts or pains will be spared to obtain an anti-federal representation, in order to obtain an anti-federal president, &c. and through him divers other objects.

The late revolution in France does not appear to have dissipated the clouds which veiled from our view the fate of that and other countries. As yet, I see little reason to expect the restoration of the Bourbon family; nor is it certain that great good would result from it. Of the issue of the present interesting campaign, no satisfactory con-  
jec-

tures can yet be formed; and nothing at present appears which presents a fair prospect of a speedy termination of the miseries of Europe. Our envoys in France will probably succeed; but whether that success would ultimately promote our tranquillity and happiness, is a point on which many judicious men differ in opinion.

We have lost much in General Washington, whose death you and others have made the subject of eloquent discourses. From the state of our parties and affairs, some are persuaded that he has been taken from *evil to come*. It may be so; but I fear that such apprehensions are sometimes indulged too far, and that they often disqualify men from meeting either good or evil in a becoming manner.

With great esteem and regard,

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient servant.

JOHN JAY.

TO THEOPHILUS PARSONS.

Albany, 1st July, 1800.

SIR,

On my return from New-York on Friday last, your obliging letter of the 5th of May, which arrived here during my absence, was delivered to me. I am much gratified by the information it contains, and thank you for it.

Serious apprehensions were entertained that anti-federalism had gained considerable ground in Massachusetts, but I am happy to find from the facts you state, that appearances do not warrant the conclusions which have been drawn from them.

The present aspect of our affairs is far from being agreeable. Although peculiarly blessed, and having abundant reason for content and gratitude, our nation is permitting their happiness to be put in jeopardy by the worst passions, inflamed and directed by the most reprehensible means. Whether the good sense of the people will avert the dan-

gers which threaten them, is yet to be seen. If the sound and leading friends of their country could concur in opinion as to men and measures, their efforts would probably be successful; but unfortunately, there is too little unanimity in many points, and the want of it exposes us to the hazard of many evils.

It really appears to me that the mission of our envoys to France has been treated with too much asperity. The president declared to the Congress that he would never send another legation to Paris, until he received assurances that it would be properly respected. As that declaration seemed to imply that when he should receive such assurances he would again send envoys, it was not unnatural that he should conceive himself bound in honour to do so. This attachment to the dictates of honour and good faith, even supposing it to have been too scrupulous, is amiable and praiseworthy. Whether that declaration was advisable, and whether the nomination of the envoys was made exactly in season, are questions which, like others of the same kind, may receive different answers from different men; but having nominated the envoys and received the requisite assurances, I, for my part, consider the sending them as a matter of course, and I do not concur in opinion with those gentlemen who think they should nevertheless have been detained.

I regret that my absence deprived me of the pleasure of seeing the Rev. Mr. Andrews, and the more so, as he would have answered my inquiries respecting many of my friends at Boston, and informed me of your health.

With the best wishes that you may now and long enjoy that valuable blessing, I am, sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO SIR JOHN SINCLAIR, LONDON.

Albany, 16th December, 1800.

SIR,

I had yesterday the pleasure of receiving from the secretary of state, the letter which you did me the honour to write on the 22d May last.

They who feel an interest in the honour of this country, cannot fail of being gratified by every mark of respect to the memory of our late president. The tribute of commendation paid to his merits by so many respectable persons in Great Britain, is no less honourable to them than to him; and I very sincerely concur with you in wishing that the best understanding may always subsist between our two nations.

The *fac simile* copies of the letters appear to me to be well executed, but I am not certain that the taste of this country is such as to produce a considerable demand for them. I shall immediately put the cards and subscription papers into the hands of such persons here, and at New-York, as I think most likely to promote the object of them. For my own part, I am preparing and expect to retire in the spring to my estate at Bedford, in the county of Westchester, about fifty miles from the city of New-York. I shall request the persons to whom the subscription papers will be delivered, to transmit them to Mr. Hugh Gainé, a bookseller of reputation at New-York; and shall request him to communicate the result to Messrs. Nicoll, &c., in London.

Having, since my return from England, been constantly engaged in official affairs, I have had little leisure for other pursuits; so much so that I have not, from that time to this, visited my estate more than twice in any one year.

A member of your board (of whose address I took a memorandum, which I have since often looked for without success) was so obliging as to send me a cask of *English*

gypsum. I promised to try it, and inform him whether it succeeded. It was ground, and sent to my farm, where a part of it was used in like manner with French and Newfoundland gypsum, but not with the like success; it produced no visible effect. On being acquainted with this, I directed the remainder to be saved, in order that on my removal there, it might be tried under my own direction: if I live, this shall be done.

I last evening read with attention your proposal for an experimental farm. The objects in view are certainly very interesting, and to a considerable degree attainable under the direction of such a manager as I suspect it would be more easy to describe than to find. It would probably be advisable to make him a handsome allowance per cent. on the profits, besides a liberal stated salary.

This country will derive advantages from all your improvements relative to the breed and management of live-stock. But I apprehend that, from the difference between your climate and ours, it will in some respects be less easy for us to apply and put into practice your improvements respecting the growth and cultivation of plants.

In the year 1784, I had an interesting conversation with one of your intelligent farmers in Essex. He was surprised that we in this country seldom sowed more than one bushel of wheat on an acre. On being told that in our good land one seed would produce many shoots or straws, he observed that we had better sow an additional bushel, for that these shoots were generally less productive than single straws from single grains. On my return that year to this country, I mentioned the remark to some of our best farmers. One of them in particular gave it a fair trial for several years. He increased his seed in various experiments, from one bushel to above two bushels per acre; but he finally found and was convinced that not more than one bushel and a half per acre could be sowed on his farm with advantage; any quantity above that filled the field with too

much straw. Hence I conclude that (all other things being equal) the same number of grains of seed wheat will throw out more shoots in this climate than in yours.

But to return to the experimental farm: it appears to me that such an establishment comes naturally within the department of the agricultural society; and if instituted by *them*, would enjoy greater advantages, than such an establishment if entirely independent and distinct from them would possess.

The more food Great Britain produces, the better; and it is plain that by cultivating all your waste lands, and by still greater improvements in husbandry, the quantity annually produced may and will be exceedingly augmented; yet, sir, it is not quite clear to me, that Great Britain can always continue to produce more food than she will consume. You now manufacture for about five millions of people in this country, and for many millions in other countries. Consider the rapidity of population in this country, and in some parts of your extensive empire. Your manufacturers must increase, and they must have food. On this topic much might be said, which will readily occur to you.

With great respect and esteem, I am, sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO THE REV. JOHN LATHROP.

Albany, 3d March, 1801.

REV. SIR,

Accept my thanks for your obliging letter of the 9th ult., and the interesting discourse which accompanied it. The eighteenth century has been distinguished, as you observe, by great events. There are some among them so singular and apparently so *ominous*, that the present century will probably not be less signal than the last; especially as whole nations are suffering themselves to be seduced from their great sovereign by promises of *liberty* made to them

by the *servants* of corruption, and are desiring and exalting rulers who contemptuously refuse to "kiss the Son."

I perfectly agree with you in the sentiment, that our business is to do our duty, and leave events to Him, without whose appointment and permission nothing comes to pass. That duty, however, appears to me to call particularly on all the ministers of the gospel, to look more to the Author and Finisher of our faith than to the expositors of it; and, disregarding the doubtful and mysterious doctrines by which the latter have divided Christians from Christians, to *unite* in defending the plain and intelligible faith delivered to us by our Redeemer and his apostles.

With great respect, and the best wishes for your health and happiness,

I am, reverend sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO GENERAL SCHUYLER.

Bedford, 25th July, 1804.

MY DEAR SIR,

The friendship and attachment which I have so long and so uniformly experienced from you, will not permit me to delay expressing how deeply and sincerely I participate with you in the afflicting event\* which the public are now lamenting, and which you have so many domestic and particular reasons to bewail.

The philosophic topics of consolation are familiar to you, and we all know from experience how little relief is to be derived from them. May the Author and only Giver of consolation be and remain with you.

With great esteem and affectionate regard,

I am, my dear sir,

Your obliged and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY,

\* Death of General Hamilton.

TO MRS. BANYER.

Bedford, 2d November, 1804.

MY DEAR DAUGHTER,

I passed a part of yesterday morning very agreeably in writing a letter to you. Happy to learn from your brother and sister that your health was fast improving, and well knowing the innocent gratifications you were deriving, probably "in long perspective" from your dear little boy, my letter insensibly grew long, nor could I easily quit these pleasing topics.

Last night, I received Mr. Banyer's letter of the 27th. You can judge of my feelings on the occasion. It has cast a gloom on both families. I have to lament the departure of my only grandson, as well as the affliction of my dear and affectionate daughter. It is natural that such events should excite grief in a high degree; I know this by experience, and I know by experience also, that no consolation is to be derived from any other source than acquiescence in and resignation to the will of God, without whose appointment or permission nothing comes to pass.

Our Heavenly Father has called this child *home*, and the very best wish that you or I could have formed for him, was, that after a long and virtuous abode here, he might be where he now is. We have indeed reason to grieve for the comforts we lose by his absence, but not that he is where he is. His happiness is now certain, complete, eternal. Happy shall we all be to arrive finally at the same blest abodes; and there to be received by him, and many others of our best and dearest friends and kindred.

Let us all endeavour to become the wiser and better for these chastisements; and remember the expressions of Job when all his children were taken away from him. I wish, my dear Maria, to comfort both you and myself. Let us both

consider these things, and hold fast our confidence in Him who alone can console and bless us.

I am, my dear Maria,

Your very affectionate father,

JOHN JAY.

TO JOHN MURRAY, JUN.

Bedford, 18th October, 1805.

SIR,

I have been favoured with your letter of the 2d ultimo, respecting the African Free-school in the city of New-York. It is, in my opinion, a charitable and useful institution, and well entitled to encouragement and support. From your account of its present embarrassments, I am induced to think that, in order to its being and remaining on a respectable and permanent footing, some vigorous and well devised measures should be taken to obtain adequate and durable funds. The uncertain donations occasionally solicited and expected from charitable, but scattered and unconnected individuals, will, probably, be always incompetent, and must obviously be too precarious to afford ground for seasonably calculating the prudence and extent of expenditures.

The existing debts should doubtless be paid: indeed they cannot be paid too soon, and it is desirable that new ones be not contracted. For my part, I am persuaded that it can very seldom be discreet, for institutions depending on charity to contract debts, and then apply to charity to pay them.

What should be done? is the question. Two things occur to me, which I will take the liberty to suggest.

First, The society of Friends in general, and particularly those in New-York, have given more patronage to the objects connected with this school, than any other society or denomination in the State; and, from circumstances peculiar to their association and discipline, they are enabled

to pursue and accomplish their objects with more than ordinary union and effect. Hence, I am led to believe, that if those of your society in New-York would recommend this school to the notice and liberality of their brethren in the country, and desire them also to request the aid of all well-disposed persons, of other denominations, in their respective neighbourhoods, a considerable sum might be collected; especially considering the prudence, as well as zeal, with which your affairs are usually managed. On this, or any other plan which would in some degree be general through the country, I would readily be one of the contributors.

Secondly, I submit to your consideration the expediency of regularly putting at interest one-tenth of the annual income of the school, whatever it may be, and whencesoever it may arise, and invariably to bring the yearly expenses of the school to a level with the remaining nine-tenths. On this plan both the principal of the stable funds, and the income of the school (so far as it comprehended the interest of those funds) would increase from year to year. In time, the interest alone would form an income so considerable, as to be productive of more good, than if the institution had continued to depend and subsist on scanty and precarious supplies.

It may also be well to consider, whether the benevolent objects of this institution might not be promoted by an act of incorporation, with such provisions in it as would conduce to its stability, and extend its usefulness.

Be pleased to inform me whether any particular attention is paid by the superintendents to the children after they have left it, and whether it is part of the plan to endeavour to have them bound out to trades, or to service in decent families. To me it appears important that they be not left entirely either to their parents or to themselves; it being difficult to give them good morals, manners, or habits, in any other way than by placing them under the care and

direction of persons better qualified for those purposes than their parents generally are.

With esteem and regard, I am, sir,  
Your obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO MRS. BANYER.

Bedford, 29th December, 1805.

MY DEAR MARIA,

The account of your health contained in your affectionate letter of the 12th inst., gave me great pleasure.

I thank you for the manner in which you mention my birth-day, and I believe every word you say on that topic. And now, my dear daughter, I will congratulate you on the anniversary of a birth-day, without which all *our* birth-days would have been but sad. I mean the nativity of our Redeemer. May you see many returns of that anniversary, and with still increasing prospects of comfort here, and happiness hereafter.

Last evening your sister received a letter from you, with a postscript by \*\*\*\*. Let me hint to you, that neither the letters which we write, nor those which we receive, should be so frequently communicated as to become a matter of *course*; for, in *that* case, every omission which prudence may require, will naturally lead to conjectures and apprehensions, and sometimes to inquiries and piques, which are always unpleasant. Although I am persuaded that these reflections are not new to you, yet my solicitude about whatever may affect your comfort, prompts me to remind you of them. Place full confidence in your husband; with respect to others, be habitually circumspect. These are mere general remarks, and not dictated by any fear of their being necessary.

I am, my dear Maria,  
Your very affectionate father,

JOHN JAY.

FROM WILLIAM WILBERFORCE.

Elmdon-House, near Birmingham, }  
November 7th, 1805. }

MY DEAR SIR,

I am willing to flatter myself you have not quite forgotten the person who is now beginning to address you. He certainly has not forgotten you; on the contrary, he retains a lively recollection of the pleasure he derived from your society during your residence in this country, and still more of the benefit he received, especially on one important occasion, from your judicious and friendly counsel. He has never since ceased to embrace every opportunity of inquiring after you, and to take an interest in your well-being.

After this preamble, I proceed to state, that my object in now taking up the pen is, to recommend earnestly to your serious perusal and impartial consideration, a pamphlet which I will take the liberty of transmitting to you, lately published, entitled "War in Disguise, or the Frauds of the Neutral Flags." It is spoken of in high terms by the most intelligent and respectable men I know, and is written, as I think you will agree with me, with considerable knowledge of its subject, as well as with great spirit and eloquence. Its general tenor is so clearly indicated by its title, at least to you who are experimentally acquainted with the topics of which it treats, that I need say nothing on that head; I will only beg leave to assure you, that I took it up with very strong prejudices against the conclusions which I understood the author endeavoured to establish, on account of the strong disposition I invariably feel to cultivate and promote a friendly connexion between our two countries. I cannot but be anxious to hear what reception it meets with on your side of the Atlantic. That those whose interest is at stake will endeavour to raise a cry, is no more than what we must expect. Happy shall I be, if this is countervailed by the opposite opinion of men of sense, knowledge, and

impartiality. Nothing could have brought me over to the doctrines the pamphlet lays down, but a deliberate and firm persuasion, that on our practical adoption of them (I would not hastily affirm to what extent) depends, according to all human appearances, not merely the maritime superiority, but the very existence of this empire. The author appears to me to have left very short that part of his work in which he speaks of the effects, on our marine and our maritime interests, of the continuance of the present abuses. The work, I happen to know, was written in haste, and in a bad state of health; and though the production of a man who was actuated by a sense of duty, and had taken great pains to inform himself, it is in some parts faulty, in the composition and language especially; but knowing to whom I am writing, it would be mere impertinence to do more than introduce it to your notice. I leave it, not without solicitude, but yet with good hope, to your intelligence, experience, equity, and temper.

I heartily wish this may find you in the enjoyment of good health and personal comfort. You will not, I trust, think it improper egotism if, relying on your friendly remembrance, I add, that I thank God I am favoured with great domestic felicity,—having a wife and five children, the youngest born only about two months ago. I should scarcely know where to leave off, if I allowed myself to touch on any of those numerous and interesting topics which press themselves on my attention while writing to you. I will, however, abstain from them all, and take my leave; assuring you that I am ever, with cordial esteem and regard, my dear sir,

Yours very sincerely,  
W. WILBERFORCE.

P.S. If you do me the favour to answer this letter, my address is always London.

TO WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, LONDON.

Bedford, Westchester County, State of New-York, }  
 14th April, 1806. }

DEAR SIR,

It was not until within a week that I received your friendly letter of the 7th November last. It expresses sentiments of esteem and regard which, being mutual, excite agreeable recollections and emotions.

“War in Disguise,” of which you was so good as to enclose a copy, has given occasion to uneasiness relative to the matter and design of it. It contains marks of ability, but the author has not been entirely circumspect. I enclose an answer to it, written, as is supposed, and as I believe, by a gentleman of excellent talents and good dispositions.\*

It appears to me, that every *independent* state has, as such, a perfect right at all times, whether at war or at peace, to make grants to and treaties with any other independent state; but then those acts, in order to be valid, must consist with justice, and be in no respect fraudulent. To the validity of such grants and treaties, no third power, whether belligerent or neutral, can, in my opinion, have reasonable cause to object.

When such acts are fraudulent, and injurious to others, those others are justifiable in regarding them as being what they are (that is, fraudulent), and in acting accordingly. When such acts are just and fair, but abused to the injury of others, those others have a right to complain of and to attack the *abuse*, but not the thing abused.

Whether this or that particular act (of the description alluded to) be fair or fraudulent, is a question to be decided by evidence internal and external, according to the rules and maxims of the laws of nations relative to such cases.

\* Gouverneur Morris.

Believing these principles to be well founded, they do not permit me to adopt some of the opinions of this ingenious writer, nor to approve of all the latitude contended for by some of his opponents. To view in their various lights and relations, and to examine properly all the doctrines and positions in question, cannot be done within the compass of a letter.

Your disposition and desire to promote good-will between our two countries exactly accord with my own. It is to be wished that each of them may ever be mindful, that the preservation of friendship between nations, as between individuals, requires justice and prudence always, and even forbearance sometimes; for states, as well as persons, commit errors. It is our lot to live in perplexing and eventful times. The passions of men are not good counsellors, and never less so than when agitated and inflamed.

We have seen concluded, with the treaty of Amiens, the *first* act of the astonishing tragedy which the French revolution has introduced on the theatre of the world. The present and succeeding acts will probably be highly interesting and impressive. In this prodigious drama, Great Britain still sustains a conspicuous and important part: perhaps she may be employed to restrain the "remainder of wrath." Whether this distant nation is to appear among the *dramatis personæ*, cannot now be known. We certainly do not desire it.

The inconveniences apprehended from the death of Mr. Pitt will doubtless be diminished, if not obviated, by the general confidence reposed in your new administration. I am glad to find that Lord Grenville holds a distinguished place in it. My respect and esteem for him continue undiminished.

Very sincerely do I congratulate you on your domestic felicity. May it continue and increase. I thank you for what you have briefly remarked on that topic; for you

have given me pleasure, by letting me see how much reason you have to be pleased.

With true esteem and regard, I am, dear sir,

Your faithful and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

P.S. As your letter was so long on the way, this answer will arrive, if it arrives at all, much later than you expected. Being anxious to remove appearances of inattention, I shall send a duplicate by another vessel. There will then be a double chance of its coming to your hands.

TO WILLIAM P. BEERS.

Bedford, 18th April, 1807.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter gave me great pleasure, and the more, as it leads me to expect that of seeing you here when a favourable opportunity shall offer.

I apprehend that several of your remarks relative to public affairs are too well founded; and it is natural that they should be so. The operations of certain principles and passions are nearly alike in all ages and countries.

Every modification of sovereignty has its inconveniences—there is a better and a worse in them all, and no other than a relative perfection in any of them. That ours might be rendered less imperfect is more easy to prove than to accomplish. It is true, that when the measure of confusion runs over, order usually follows; but it is not always such order as would please either you or me.

The vices and violences of parties, and the corruptions which they generate and cherish, are serious evils; but they are evils which, during the full tide of democracy, mere reason will find it difficult to correct, because the majority of every people are deficient both in virtue and in knowledge. *All* parties have their demagogues, and demagogues never were nor will be patriots. Self-interest ex-

cites and directs all their talents and industry, and by that principle they regulate their conduct towards men and measures: nor is this all; they not only act improperly themselves, but they diligently strive to mislead the weak, the ignorant, and the unwary; as to the *corrupt*, they like to have it so; it makes a good market for them.

Reforms in government are more frequently imposed by overbearing circumstances, than produced by the influence of wisdom on the opinion and choice of the multitude. The administration of every government will always be able, virtuous, and salutary, or otherwise, according to the characters of those to whom it may be committed. The rulers in democratic republics are generally men of more talents than morals; there can be but little connexion between cunning and virtue, and therefore (except now and then in particular instances) our affairs will commonly be managed by political intrigues, calculated upon that "auri fames" which, from obvious causes, rages in this country.

New men, new objects, and new designs, will successively arise and have their day; but whether for good or for evil, we know not. At present, democracy prevails too much; the time may come when it will prevail too little. The human passions naturally vibrate between extremes, passing and repassing, but seldom stopping at the middle point.

Things are as they are, and we must make the best of them; as travellers do or ought to do, well knowing that in the course of a long journey, they cannot expect to have every day fine weather, good inns, good roads, and good company. Nothing remains for us but to do our duty to our country with prudent and unabated zeal; to enjoy with gratitude and cheerfulness the good we have; and to bear with decency and dignity the ills which we cannot avert or remove. What may be our duty will depend on the circumstances of the day. Those of the present day appear to me a little singular in some respects.

As to the ensuing election for governor, a federal candidate should, in my opinion, have been named. If that had been deemed inexpedient, the federal party should, I think, have adopted an unequivocal plain line of conduct relative to the present candidates, explicitly deciding to vote for neither of them; or openly resolving to support the one whom they considered as the least objectionable. In what state the election will place our party, is difficult to conjecture, for although *advantages* will result from it, yet "*Timeo dona ferentes.*"

With great esteem and regard,

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

Bedford, 15th Sept., 1807.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your letter of the 2d inst., and expected to have answered it this week in person. My health had so much mended, that on Friday last, I rode to Bedford for the first time since my return. That night, rheumatic pains in my head, neck, and shoulders came on. They have somewhat abated, but still confine me to the house. In our journey through life, as in other journeys, our wishes cannot always be gratified. Travellers must expect to live and fare like travellers.

You have the gout, and you extract consolation from it; this is good moral chymistry. My rheumatism and your gout may perhaps carry us home the farthest way round, but not in an easy chair. When we "ruminate past enjoyments," we taste that tincture of melancholy which their departure and other associated circumstances infuse: it nevertheless affords a kind of pleasure which, like some medical wine, is not only better than no wine, but perhaps in some respects more salutary than pure wine.

The half a century you speak of, has given us some knowledge and experience, both of men and things. That experience leads me to concur cordially in your idea of cultivating sentiments of friendship; and particularly to cherish those with which I am,

Yours, very sincerely,

JOHN JAY.

TO MORRIS S. MILLER, ESQ.

Bedford, 22d May, 1809.

DEAR SIR,

I received by the last mail, and have read with great pleasure, your obliging letter of the 11th inst. The information it conveys cannot fail of being grateful to all who prefer the wise and upright policy which distinguished the administration of Washington, to that which of late has distressed and disgraced our country. How far the favourable changes which have taken place are imputable to patriotic and correct principles, time and experience only can decide. Sincerely do I wish that all our elections may manifest the prevalence of such principles; but I am not sanguine in my expectations of it. Personal and pecuniary considerations appear to have acquired a more than ordinary degree of influence. Many sacrifices of public good have, and will yet be made to them. On the exertions of the virtuous and intelligent much will always depend; should they become relaxed, by a sense either of security or of fatigue, we shall probably lose the ground we have gained. I brought with me into retirement the same affection for our country by which I have always been actuated, and you rightly judge that nothing which is of importance to the public can be a matter of indifference to me.

I am, dear sir,

With sincere esteem and regard,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

## TO JUDGE PETERS.

Bedford, 24th July, 1809.

DEAR SIR,

Soon after receiving your letter of the 18th of September last, I was called to Albany by the death of the only remaining child of my daughter, whose grief for the loss of her son and of her husband was still fresh and severe.

I returned on the 3d of November with a pain on my side, which the doctor ascribed to an obstruction in the liver. The complaint increased, and kept me in close confinement during the winter and spring. It reduced me to such a state of debility, that I have as yet regained only sufficient strength to ride two or three miles at a time. I am better, but not well, and it is uncertain whether I ever shall be; such mementoes are useful, though unpleasant, and therefore I ought to make the best of them.

Your remarks relative to plaster will induce me, if I live, to extend the application of it to the various objects you mention. I directed it to be freely used in the garden this spring, and am pleased with the results. The effect of plaster on vegetation is to me a mystery; if it acts only by attracting water, why does the ground (as some say) grow *tired* of it, and require a supply of common manure to renew the efficacy of it. Often-repeated experiments, and long continued observation, naturally lead to important discoveries; but the very limited duration of human life rarely allows sufficient time for the talents and perseverance of any individual to arrive at their "ne plus." Here the antediluvians had the advantage of us, and many of them doubtless made the most of it. Hence it may be presumed that they carried many of the useful arts, as well as those which belong to the departments of vice, to a higher degree of perfection than they are at present. To me it does not appear improbable, that the celebrated works of remote

antiquity, were not a little indebted to information which passed through the flood.

National interest unites, with other considerations, in drawing our attention to agriculture. I think it has greatly improved in our country since the revolution, and there is reason to believe that the "resuscitation" you are attempting would be generally useful. I wish it may be effected, but unless a number of gentlemen, well qualified for the purpose, will heartily and diligently unite with you, I fear your endeavours will not be so successful as they are commendable.

You are right in supposing that we are much of an age. In December next, I shall have lived sixty-four years—a long course of years when to come—a dream when past. But whether life is, or is not composed of "such stuff as dreams are made of," it is a valuable gift, and is capable of many enjoyments, to be found by all who rationally seek and use them. Among the enjoyments which men derive from each other, those which arise from *such* social intercourse as you allude to, certainly are to be placed in the first class. This class, however, like the first class of almost every species of good, has more items in theory than in actual experience.

I think with you that the Spaniards deserve credit for the spirit they have exhibited. There are fine points in their character. In a conversation respecting them, with the late Abbé Mably, he said, "Monsieur, ils sont plus hommes que nous." This was a great deal for a Frenchman to say. I sincerely wish them success, but my expectations of it have not been sanguine. Their hatred of France, and their attachment to their religion, &c., may continue to stimulate their indignation and their valour; but it does not appear to me that their opposition has been, or probably will be, so managed as to prove effectual. *As yet, there has been no display of civil or military talents*

*equal to the occasion*; we may guess, but we cannot prophecy.

Perilous times have descended upon all Europe, and Bonaparte seems to be the Nebuchadnezzar of the day. Divines say, that in prophetic language nations are called seas. According to that language, Europe is a tempestuous and a raging ocean; and who can tell which of the governments afloat upon it will escape destruction or disaster? Some dark clouds from that tempest have reached, and lately obscured, our political sky; nor has it again become quite serene and clear. This country, as well as others, will experience deep distress; but I do not believe that you or I will live to see it. From transitory and ordinary evils we cannot expect to be exempt. We may suffer from rash experiments, from the pressure of fraternal embraces or resentments, from the machinations of demagogues, and gradually from the corruption incident to the love of money, &c.; but, for my own part, I do not apprehend any thing like the speedy approach of an "overturn." You have had a democratic tornado at Philadelphia. It did but little harm; perhaps it did some good. I found it gave you something to do; and I found also, as I expected, that you did it. Too many in your State, as in this, love pure democracy dearly. They seem not to consider that *pure* democracy, like *pure* rum, easily produces intoxication, and with it a thousand mad pranks and fooleries. Ebriety, whether moral or physical, is difficult to cure; and the more so, as such patients cannot easily be convinced of the value and the necessity of temperance and regimen.

I observe that I have written a long letter. Feeling a little fatigued, I must forego the pleasure of adding much to it. It is pleasant to think loud in safe company, and I sometimes allow myself that indulgence in writing.

I am, dear sir,

Yours affectionately,

JOHN JAY.

P.S. A frost in this month has injured the leaves of this spring's shoots of my peach trees. Beans, cucumbers, &c. have also suffered by it.

FROM WILLIAM WILBERFORCE.

East Bourne, Sussex, 1st Aug., 1809.

MY DEAR SIR,

Though so many years have passed since we saw or heard from each other, I hope I do not deceive myself when I presume that we continue to retain each other in friendly remembrance, not without taking a real interest in each other's well being. Such, at least, I can truly declare, are my own sentiments and feelings in relation to you; and embracing every opportunity of inquiring after you, I heard with sincere pleasure, the other day, from an American acquaintance, that you were living in health and comfort, though retired from public life. But why do I say, *though* retired, when I can most sincerely aver, that with a view to health and comfort, and those of mind as well as of body, no situation in life has ever presented itself to my imagination under so hopeful a form as that which my favourite poet describes as "*domestic life in rural leisure passed.*" I forget whether you are a lover of poetry; if you were so when you were young, I think that even in advanced life the author of the above line, Cowper, will still be dear to you. His piety gives unfading charms to his compositions. But I am in danger of expending all the time for which I must venture to detain you, without proceeding to the business which gives me occasion, an occasion which, I own, I am glad to seize, to address you after so long a silence. I am aware, indeed, that your retirement may prevent your taking any part in public, even in the case I am about to mention; still your opinion, your good wishes may be useful to us. Since the abolition of the slave-trade, an institution has been formed consisting of a considerable number of the most respectable members of

both houses of parliament, as well as of other men of consideration and worth, with the Duke of Gloucester at our head, for the purpose of promoting civilization and improvement in Africa. Of course, all our hopes are grounded and bottomed in the cessation of the slave-trade. Now, from the operation of the war, and of other causes, this traffic is stopped, with a very trifling exception, which though trifling, we are trying, and that successfully, to do away throughout all that immense part of the continent of Africa which is north of the line, and indeed much further; unless as it may be carried on by your countrymen and our own, in direct violation of the laws of both countries. We trust we shall be able, by sending ships of war to scour the coast of Africa, to suppress the British slave-trade; but this will be of little avail, if the traffic may still be carried on in fact, though prohibited by law, by the American slave-trader; nor do I see any prospect of preventing this abuse, unless a convention could be made between the two countries, by which the ships of war of each should be authorized and even encouraged (by the hopes of gaining by the forfeitures) to seize and bring in for adjudication the vessels of the other, when prosecuting this unlawful commerce. I rather believe there is another particular in which it still remains for your country to render its law similar to ours, by subjecting to forfeiture any ship of any country, and under any flag, which is fitted out in and cleared out from an American port. Now, my dear sir, may I hope for your assistance towards the production of the effects I have specified? Knowing to whom I am writing, I will say no more on this head.

I cannot address you without tracing my way to the period when we were last together, through the long and interesting interval which lies between that and the present moment. What events have since happened! What events may take place in the same number of years yet to come! How many whom we loved have gone in the last

thirteen years! How many will go in the next! How strongly, my dear sir, are we admonished to place our happiness on a firmer and more secure basis, than it can enjoy in this world, which never more than of late verified the character given of it by one of our greatest and best churchmen, Hooker, that it is full (made up, I think he says) of perturbations. How astonishing is it to see men of penetrating understandings, and of deep and large views, confining their regards to this limited scene, apparently insensible to the existence of any thing beyond it! But I beg pardon for thus running on, and I stop before my pen has got the mastery of me. I will detain you no longer than while I express my hopes that you are well and happy, and assure you that I shall never cease to take an interest in your welfare.

I remain, with respect and regard,

My dear sir,

Your obliged and faithful servant,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. If you favour me with a reply, may I take the liberty of asking after your family? I married about two years after you left England, and am surrounded, I thank God, by an excellent wife and children. I trust I do not deceive myself in the persuasion that you will not be uninterested in this statement, for which therefore I will not use the affectation of apologizing. I will take the liberty of sending you a copy of the African Institution's reports. You will also see in it a list of the members.

TO WILLIAM WILBERFORCE.

Bedford, 8th November, 1809.

DEAR SIR,

On the 28th ult. I received your letter of the 1st of August last, and I thank you for it, and for the pamphlets enclosed with it.

I am well persuaded that your sentiments relative to me are such as you describe ; and I assure you that mine relative to you correspond with them.

The patrons of the abolition act, and of the African Institution, certainly do honour, and will probably do more than ordinary good to Great Britain ; against whom complaints have ascended both from Asia and Africa. It is pleasing to behold a nation assiduously cultivating the arts of peace and humanity in the midst of war, and while strenuously fighting for their all, kindly extending the blessings of Christianity and civilization to distant countries.

That your and our governments should co-operate in rendering their respective laws against the slave trade effectual, is to me very desirable, and I believe that a convention for the purpose would be approved by all, who think and feel as you and I do respecting that base and cruel traffic. Whether the times are propitious to such a convention, is another question. Negotiations are said to be pending between our government and Mr. Jackson. I can discern no objection to his being instructed to propose such a measure. They who offer to do what is fit and right to be done, cannot be losers by it. I can do but little—that little shall be done.

The information you give me respecting your family, and your friendly inquiries concerning mine, gratify me not a little. I rejoice that while perturbation reigns abroad, you enjoy in tranquillity at home the comforts mentioned in the 128th Psalm.

In my family there have been, since the date of my last letter, some painful and some pleasing events. Death has deprived my eldest daughter of an excellent husband, and of the only two children which she had. On the other hand, my son has gradually recovered his health, and has married an amiable young lady, who, about a year ago, brought him a son. My other children are well, and doing well.

As to myself, sickness confined me to the house last winter, and I am still more of an invalid than a convalescent. However difficult the task, such visitations should be received and borne with grateful, as well as patient resignation.

The observation you cite from Hooker is very just, and so are your remarks on this turbulent and transitory scene. To see things as they are, to estimate them aright, and to act accordingly, is to be wise. But you know, my dear sir, that most men, in order to become wise, have much to unlearn as well as to learn, much to undo as well as to do. The Israelites had little comfort in Egypt, and yet they were not very anxious to go to the promised land. Figuratively speaking, we are all at this day in Egypt, and a prince worse than Pharaoh reigneth in it. Although the prophet "like unto Moses" offers to deliver from bondage, and invites us to prepare and be ready to go with him, under Divine guidance and protection, to the promised land; yet great is the number who prefer remaining in slavery and *dying* in Egypt.

If this letter should reach you, be so good as to let me know it, and name some person in London to whose care I may transmit future ones for you.

With the best wishes for your health and happiness, and with real esteem and regard, I am, dear sir,

Your faithful and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO THE REV. DR. MORSE.

Bedford, 16th August, 1809.

DEAR SIR,

I this morning received your letter of the 9th inst., with the interesting sermon which it enclosed, and I thank you for them both.

A proper history of the United States would have much to recommend it: in some respects it would be singular, or

unlike all others ; it would develop the great plan of Providence, for causing this extensive part of our world to be discovered, and these " uttermost parts of the earth " to be gradually filled with civilized and *Christian* people and nations. The means or second causes by which this great plan has long been and still is accomplishing, are materials for history, of which the writer ought well to know the use and bearings, and proper places. In my opinion, the historian, in the course of the work, is never to lose sight of that great plan.

Remarkable interpositions of Divine Providence are fine subjects, but the exhibition cannot have a full effect, unless accompanied with a distinct view of the objects and state of things to which they relate ; it is by discerning how admirably they are accommodated and fitted to answer their intended purposes, that the reader is made to reflect and feel properly.

Few among us have *time* and *talent* for such a work. I am pleased with the prospect of your undertaking it ; and I do believe, that with a *due allowance of time*, that is, of several years, you would execute it well.

As to aid from me, I am far more willing than able to assist you. I became sick last autumn, and have not had a well day since. Although better, I am still feeble ; and can neither bear much exercise, nor much employment of any kind : even in reading and in writing, I find it necessary to be abstemious.

I regret the circumstances which deprived me of the pleasure of receiving a visit from you ; for no conversations are more agreeable to me, than those with persons whom I esteem, and in which the *utile* and the *dulce* are blended. With the best wishes for your health and happiness,

I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO JUDGE PETERS.

Bedford, 26th February, 1810.

DEAR SIR,

After lingering through the summer, I found my disorder gradually returning in the autumn. Since the middle of November I have been confined to the house; but have as yet suffered less this winter than I did the last. At times, however, I seemed to be approaching that state, in which "a grasshopper is a burden." When I took up my pen, it was not because it was pleasant, but because it was necessary. The late fine weather has done me good. I have walked on the piazza, and breathed mild fresh air. I feel less relaxed, and think it probable that the spring will again relieve me. The "carpe diem" reminds me that I should take this opportunity of writing to you, and to a few others whom I have *apparently* neglected.

From your letter I can perceive what your feelings have been and are. When afflictions make us wiser and better, they answer their purpose; and they do so when they produce the acquiescence and resignation you mention. A traveller has great reason for regret, when a faithful and affectionate friend and companion leaves him on the road; but that regret is softened by the expectation of meeting again at the end of the journey. To you it will readily occur that we are all travellers; some in coaches, others on foot; some lodge in good inns, and others where the night finds them. Some press forward with an eye to "the promised land," while many others loiter and revel on the way, with as little concern about where they are going, as the horses by which they are drawn or carried, &c. &c. He did not speak much at random, who said, "The greatest miracle to man is man."

Our political sky still continues to grow more and more dark and threatening. Whether the clouds will quietly

disperse and disappear, or whether they portend a storm, is uncertain. The present tempestuous state of the world does not encourage us to expect a long season of uninterrupted fair weather. If peace has been and is in our power, it would be mortifying to be involved in war unnecessarily. There came forth with the French revolution a spirit of delusion, which, like an influenza, passed over and infected all Europe. Even our distant country has not entirely escaped. Great is the number among us, of whom it may be said, that, "Seeing they have not perceived, and hearing they have not understood." Delusions have their errands, and are sent for some purpose different from that of promoting unanimity and peace. But be these things as they may, it is a consoling reflection that He who rules all, rules wisely.

I will now turn to a more pleasing topic. On conversing with a gentleman who visited me last summer, about the damage said to be often done to pear-trees by lightning, he observed that the damage in question proceeded, in his opinion, more frequently from disease than from lightning. That on seeing the upper branches of one of his pear-trees to be withering, he examined them often, and found them to be dying from the extremities downwards. After some time he took off all those branches below the mortification, cutting through sound healthy wood. The tree soon began to flourish. It put forth new and strong shoots, and has since been as thrifty as the others.

Something a little like this happened last year in my garden. A frost took my watermelons when they were about as large as a marble. They turned black, and dropped off. The ends of the vines began to die, and continued to do so for some days. I then had the vines cut below the mortified part, and the whole well sprinkled with plaster. They recovered, and brought some, though not much fruit to perfection..

I believe that you and I derive more real satisfaction

from attending to our vines and fruit-trees, than most conquerors do from cultivating their favourite laurels.

At present I indulge the expectation of being able to bid a cheerful welcome to the spring, and to participate a little in the enjoyments of it, notwithstanding the wickedness or folly which may abound in high places. That you may share largely and for many years in these and other enjoyments, is sincerely the wish of,

Dear sir,

Your affectionate and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM WILLIAM WILBERFORCE.

Kensington-gore, near London, }  
July 18th, 1810. }

MY DEAR SIR,

Calling to mind the friendly spirit which animates your letters to me, I am not ashamed of being deemed impertinently selfish, when I commence my reply to your last very obliging communication of November, 1809, by telling you that about a year and three-quarters ago, I changed my residence, and find myself in the habitation which my family now occupies, and which we find more salubrious than Clapham Common. We are just one mile from the turnpike gate at Hyde Park corner, which I think you will not have forgotten yet, having about three acres of pleasure-ground around my house, or rather behind it, and several old trees, walnut and mulberry, of thick foliage. I can sit and read under their shade, which I delight in doing, with as much admiration of the beauties of nature (remembering at the same time the words of my favourite poet: *nature is but an effect, whose cause is God*), as if I were two hundred miles from the great city.

My parliamentary duties force me to be within easy reach of London all the winter, and even spring, and sometimes for a part of the summer. I have a very affectionate

wife, who is always unwilling to be at a distance from me ; and Providence has blest us with six children, the eldest of whom is not quite twelve, the youngest under two years of age. My family are breathing pure air, and taking exercise quietly and without restraint, while I am in the harness at St. Stephens, or, to continue the metaphor, in a very good stable just opposite Westminster Hall, where I commonly, or rather chiefly take both my food and rest during the whole session, often being unable to come over to Kensington-gore from Monday morning to Saturday night ; always, however, within call, should domestic matters require my presence.

I was not aware that my egotism would be so tedious, yet again let me confess that I am not afraid of subjecting myself, with you, to any severity of censure. When I have a regard for any one, I like to know his habits of life, times, places, &c., and I recollect with pleasure, that you kindly gave me an account of your family matters, and of your present situation and pursuits. Let me beg you to be so obliging as to continue so to do, in any letter which you may do me the favour to write ; next, let me not forget to inform you, that your friendly packet of the 8th November last, of which I received duplicates first, brought me two copies of your favour of 14th April, 1806, for which, however late, accept my best thanks. In conformity with the kind wish you express, that I should name to you some person in London to whom your letters may be addressed, let me name Robert Barclay, Esq. (the great brewer), or Samuel Hoare, Esq., the banker, both of whom I think you knew.

I wish I could recollect with certainty, how many of the reports of the African Institution I sent you. I will, however, transmit to you either to New-York or Philadelphia, accordingly as on inquiry I shall judge best, all the reports but the first. Indeed on consideration, I will send them all, as you may promote our common object, by giving away any copies you do not wish to retain.

I am grieved to tell you, that both your countrymen and my own are still carrying on the abominable traffic in human flesh, in spite of the abolition laws of their respective countries. I trust that a continuance of the vigorous methods we are using to carry our law into effect, will by degrees force our commercial men to employ their substance in some more innocent commerce. It has given me no little pleasure, to find all your several ministers (both Mr. King, Mr. Monroe, and Mr. Pinckney) warmly disposed to co-operate, so far as they properly could in their peculiar situation; and I am not without hopes of a practical, though not a formal adoption of the only effectual expedient for suppressing the slave trade, that of the armed vessels of both our countries taking the slave ships of the other as well as those of its own. There might be objections, though I own I can see none of sufficient importance to outweigh the countervailing benefits to a regular compact between our two countries for the above purpose; but it will answer the same end, provided we respectively abstain from claiming any of our vessels which may have been captured when engaged in the slave trade. I have received, within a few weeks, the opinion of your attorney-general in its practical tendency in favour of the system I am wishing to see established.

My dear sir, I know not how I have been able, with the pen in my hand, to abstain so long from expressing the sincere and great pleasure it has given me to find affairs taking a more favourable turn between our two countries. I can only account for my not breaking out on this topic, on my first sitting down to write to you, by the consideration that when once there is a favourable issue in any case, in which we have been receiving or communicating from time to time the tidings of the day, with extreme anxiety and earnestness (the French word *empressement* better expresses what I mean), as for instance in the case of the illness of a friend, we become so cool that we perhaps forget to inquire

about, or to name at all, the very topic on which, during the state of suspense, we were continually asking for or giving intelligence with such feverish solicitude. Really, the idea of a war between our two countries is perfectly horrible; and I am really happy to say, that I think in this country this most just sentiment gains ground. Like all propositions which are founded in truth and reason, it gradually sinks into the minds of men, and though perhaps slowly and insensibly, by degrees it leavens nearly the whole mass. It will tend to produce this friendly disposition on your side of the water, if more of your countrymen would come over and live awhile among us. We are an idle people; we are a busy people, and may not have leisure or disposition to pay all the personal attentions which politeness might prescribe; but I am persuaded that any gentleman of character and moderation who should visit this country, would meet with such a friendly reception as would show him that the circumstance of our being the descendants of common progenitors is not forgotten, or rather, that it is reviving and diffusing itself with increasing force.

Before I conclude, let me express the satisfaction it gave me to find that you were safely laid up, if I may so express it, in a comfortable and tranquil harbour, after having figuratively as well as literally been so long, or at least so often, tossed on the stormy sea of public life. May I confess to you, at very near 51 only in years, but with only a weakly constitution and after having been in parliament very near thirty years, that I begin to look forward to the same secession from public life; meaning, however, to form no positive determination for the future, but to follow the leadings of Providence, and do on the day the duties of the day.

In three or four years, my four boys, the eldest especially, will be attaining that period of life when a father's eye and tongue may be most useful and necessary to their future well-doing; and really the business of parliament has increased so much of late years, as to render it next

to impossible for any man who cannot live for six or seven months in every year with a very small proportion of food or sleep, especially the latter, to attend at all, as he would otherwise be glad to do, to domestic or social claims. Then let me add,—and if you will take it as intended in the way of a hint to yourself, excuse only my freedom in giving it, and you will not greatly mistake my meaning: any man who has acted his part at all creditably on the stage of public life, may render very great service to mankind, especially to his own countrymen, with whose opinions, prejudices, and errors he is well acquainted, by his *pen*; for instance, by bearing testimony to the truth of the position which, however trite, it is still useful now and then to repeat and enforce, that honesty is the best policy, &c.

I happen to have just now many claims of an epistolary nature, which have been too long neglected, owing to my having left them, as in your case, to be attended to when the recess of parliament should afford me a little more leisure. Much writing also affects my breathing. I must therefore conclude. But before I lay down my pen, let me, recollecting your kindly opening your mind to me on one important occasion, in, I think, 1795 (or 1796), beg that when you next write to me, you would favour me by telling me how you would vote, &c., if you were in our House of Commons, on the question of parliamentary reform. I do not ask you to take the trouble of entering into a detailed statement of the premises which may lead you to form your judgment on that point, whatever it may be; I wish only (unless you have a little leisure) for your conclusion. I will own to you, that one main motive with me for having supported, on a late occasion, the motion for parliamentary reform, was the persuasion that by taking away what must be confessed to be a blemish or blot, in an assembly which is professedly formed on the principle of representation, we are lessening the power of bad men to misrepresent and defame our constitution, and to mislead the well-intentioned

but perhaps less acute and long-sighted, into a concurrence in their measures. 2dly, if the measure should be adopted at all, it is desirable that it should be so at a time when, as is really the case now, notwithstanding the confident assurances of such men as Cobbett and his adherents, the country feels coolly on the subject, and is therefore not likely to push its representatives to go dangerous lengths; for I think you will agree with me, that it is a species of reform, all things considered, concerning which, in this country and at this time, it is better of the two not to go quite far enough, than to go too far.

Farewell, my dear sir, and believe me, with cordial esteem and regard,

Your faithful servant,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P.S. As I shall be sending you a parcel, and I do not recollect that I ever begged your acceptance of a religious publication, which I first sent into the world the year I married (and what I say of wedded life, I thank heaven I should not now alter), let me now transmit it as a testimony of my esteem and regard. It was, in truth, principally intended for the use of my friends, and therefore I may send it to you with great propriety. I will also accompany it with another on the slave trade. May these books preserve in your family the memorial of our friendly connexion, and if you will not call me impertinent, I will request from you some similar memorial.

TO WILLIAM WILBERFORCE.

Bedford, 25th October, 1810.

DEAR SIR,

On the 13th instant I received and read with great pleasure your interesting and friendly letter of the 18th July last. There are several topics in it on which I should like to converse with you: they shall be noticed in some future

letters. As I cannot write or read much at a time without fatigue, I shall confine myself at present to the one on which you express a wish to know my sentiments.

A satisfactory answer to the question of "REFORM," can only result from a judicious selection and combination of the reasons and circumstances which bear relation to it. Of many of these my information is so imperfect, as that it would be rash to form a decided judgment. I have not sufficient *data* whereon to calculate, whether so much good may reasonably be expected from such a measure, as would justify the risk of inconveniences, to which every important innovation is more or less liable.

The principles of the English constitution appear to require that the whole number of representatives should be fairly apportioned among the whole number of electors. But I have observed nothing in it which even implies what is called "universal suffrage." It is not a new remark, that they who own the country are the most fit persons to participate in the government of it. This remark, with certain restrictions and exceptions, has force in it; and applies both to the *elected* and the *electors*, though with most force to the *former*.

I do not know what the proposed plan of reform *precisely* is. If it be only to apportion the representatives among the counties, or other convenient election districts, whether now existing, or to be instituted, according to the number of their respective electors; I should consider it as being a just and constitutional measure, and should adopt it, unless some existing or impending circumstances should render it unseasonable. I am the more inclined to this opinion by the present state of your aristocracy, which is such, as not unnaturally to excite a jealousy that it will obtain, if it has not already obtained, an undue ascendancy. The French revolution has so discredited democracy, and it has so few influential advocates in Europe, that I doubt its giving you much more trouble. On the contrary, there seems to be a

danger of its depreciating too much. Without a portion of it there can be no free government. What that portion should be in England, is a question to which your constitution affords, in my opinion, the best answer. To preserve balances in times like these, is difficult; mere palliative *pro hac vice* expedients seldom produce durable good. They so frequently violate sound established principles, as rarely to prevent more trouble than they cause. The fluctuation of human affairs occasionally imposes changes on nations as well as on individuals, to which they find it necessary and prudent to accommodate, by corresponding or by countervailing changes. These, if made considerately and in season, generally conduce to security and order. Whether, during the rage and range of democracy, your aristocracy received greater accessions of strength than the public safety and sound policy required, I do not know. There seems, however, to be reason to apprehend, that when things return to a calm and settled course, the commons will feel the influence of the lords out of doors, and consequently within doors, in a greater degree than the constitution allows. If so, that consideration becomes an argument in favour of the proposed "reform."

I will add an observation which strikes me as having weight. Some of the boroughs appear to have degenerated into a mere mean, by which opulent political leaders supply themselves with able and active partisans and advocates. These, although received in parliament as members, are in fact and truth the representatives of their employers, and not of the nation. It must be admitted that these employers have often taken into their service men of great talents, and in many instances, of great worth. Wise and good borough-holders, like wise and good kings, doubtless wish and endeavour to make the best appointments; but ought either borough-holders or kings to appoint representatives for the nation?

With great esteem and regard, and the best wishes for  
the prosperity of yourself and family,

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and faithful servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM JUDGE PETERS.

Belmont, Nov. 25th, 1810.

DEAR SIR,

When I sent you, as a token of my constant remembrance, my *mélange* about the Tunis sheep, I intended to have written a letter to accompany it. But it seems that nothing must go with a pamphlet but the mere direction, under the pains and penalties of sousing the correspondent or *addressee* in all costs of enormous postage. It is really true, that now, for nearly six years, I have abandoned wine and all stimulants, segars and rich food included. Every thing increasing and accelerating the blood is hostile to my health, and produces my constitutional malady, an accumulation of blood on the brain. This will, at the appointed time, produce my French-leave of all sublunary things. Finding that health and rich living were incompatible, I took the resolution to abandon old habits, and have sacredly kept it. I find myself, without abstemiousness in plain food, healthy generally, and, what I think contributes much to preserve health, innocently cheerful. I have now and then (in winter the worst) attacks of vertigo, which cupping or the lancet, timely applied, remove. This, you may say, is a history of my *secrets*. You and I are on a par in age and other circumstances, and may trust one another.

Speltz is an excellent and useful grain. You can see an account of it in our first volume, p. 260. I have often sowed it; but, unless you are near a shelling-mill, you must give it to your horses. I abandoned the culture of it only because I had to send it a great distance for this operation. There is a great variety. Some produces whiter flour than

wheat ; some as black as rye. *Apropos* : General Armstrong sent from Paris to me about two quarts of the most extraordinary rye I ever beheld. Under my rage for diffusion, I gave away, in all quarters of our State, spoonfuls, till I left myself only half a pint, which is now vigorously growing. I wrote to him to procure a tierce or hogshead for me ; but I suppose my letter miscarried. I shall renew my request now he has got back to us. If he can spread this rye plentifully through our country, he will do more good than all our intercourse with the French Belial has done harm. The flour of this rye is like that of wheat, and it weighs sixty-four or sixty-five pounds per bushel. All our rye has depreciated here. You must make to me some *grains of allowance* for my antithesis about French intercourse ; for this has done more harm than all their rye is worth. I find myself with a *wry* face whenever I think of our Gallic prostrations.

Our second volume is nearly finished. I have been obliged to write too much, to fill up the chasms. It is too Herculean a task to keep alive agricultural publications, and I shall give up a labour which rolls back on me like the stone of Sisyphus. I have just sent the preface to the press. You will see that for lack of a more tangible monument to our departed Confucius, I have erected one out of my ink-pot, with a goose's feather. You may say, when you see it, that any one could tell the feather belonged to a goose ; but it will prove the scarcity of agricultural matter even for a preface. With all this, I think it will be a good publication, and much better than I expected. The great desideratum is, to get people to read such books. I have published with the memoirs—as the players say, by particular desire—my plaster book, newly vamped. Being tormented by excuses to dozens of requests to obtain new facts on plaster—the thorough-bass being dread of criticism—I have told a story for the petty critics in the preface (pushed for matter) which will probably bring the wasps

on me, and not procure a single correspondent to satisfy my agricultural curiosity. When it is finished I will send it to you. I sincerely wish you may pass a better winter than you seem to express a hope of experiencing, and am,

Most affectionately, yours,

RICHARD PETERS.

P.S. Turn Pandora's box bottom upwards, and get hope out first. Dr. Logan called on me with a new-invented micrometer, to measure the filaments of wool, whereof he was the bearer for our society. The filament sent with the instrument was  $\frac{1}{100000}$  parts of an inch in fineness, and no doubt selected. My Tunis wool is considerably finer. He says they find in England that they have over-manufactured, and the rage is turning to agriculture. There is no bullion, and paper has depreciated. He saw store cattle that would not sell here for more than \$15, sell at fairs for £15 sterling in paper. A milch cow and calf, worth here \$25, sold for £20 sterling. A universal wish to be in friendship with us was expressed by all people of all grades in society. Lord Wellesley told him that he had in his office proofs of an offer from Bonaparte, to *divide* this country with England. He gives me many entertaining pieces of information which my paper obliges me to omit.

TO JUDGE PETERS.

Bedford, January, 1811.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your letter of the 25th November. Although the privations you voluntarily submit to, exceed the "ne quid nimis" of the wise man, they evince a sound mind, and will, I hope, tend to preserve it long in a sound body.

My inquiries respecting speltz were in terms too general. To sow wheat here is like taking a ticket in a lottery; more blanks than prizes. The fly destroys more than we

reap. A substitute, therefore, is desirable ; and if speltz, like rye, escapes the ravages of that insect, it might be a good one. I did not recollect that it required a particular process for cleaning. As we have no mill here adapted to that purpose, it would be useless to introduce it.

From your description of the rye sent to you from France, it appears far to exceed the kind we have. I wish that instead of dividing it, you had sowed the whole in your own ground, and distributed parcels of the increase. It is said that the quality of rye depends greatly on that of the soil. The prevailing opinion here is, that the rye of this country is all of one and the same species, and yet in some parts the rye bread is excellent, and in others black and strong. The weight and quality of the rye you mention lead me to suspect that it is of another species, or a distinct variety. I doubt there being danger of its depreciating, unless sown too near our own, or in particular cases of neglect. I know but of one kind of grain which, notwithstanding good management, depreciates here ; and that is oats.

I am glad your second volume will soon be published. I expect to read it with pleasure, especially as there has been a hand in it which can make a "goose-quill" diffuse the "utile" and the "dulce" through many a page. I suppose a number will be printed for sale ; if so, be so good as to desire the bookseller to send for me six sets. I mean to place a set in our town library, and to distribute others among certain persons in the neighbourhood, who, in my opinion, would make a proper use of them.

Among the accounts you received from Doctor Logan, there are some which I did not expect, particularly those which respect the relative state of the manufactures and agriculture of England. In the present violent fluctuation of European affairs, it does not appear to me extraordinary that bullion should occasionally be scarce, and paper depreciate even in England. I suspect it to be merely occasional

and transient, for I have heard of no adequate cause which could produce and continue to produce such effects. That nation, I am persuaded, wish to be and remain on friendly terms with us. I have some reason to believe that the idea of "*dividing*" is not a new one. If the *micrometer* is *practically* accurate, the inventor has done more than I should have expected.

Civil discord, it seems, is assigning to Spanish America a part in the prodigious tragedy now exhibiting on the theatre of the world. We have seen and heard of strange things, and unless you should take your "French leave" before the curtain drops, you will doubtless see and hear of many more. I expect to take my leave more deliberately, but probably more early. Be that as it may, it is a comfortable reflection, that when we do, hope will be the only article in Pandora's box that we shall take with us. Although a little more indisposed than I lately was, I am still much less unwell than I was at this time last year; so that at present there is some prospect of my living to see further proofs of the perfectibility of human nature by modern philosophers, and of the increased illumination of this age of reason.

Adieu, my dear sir.

Yours, sincerely,

JOHN JAY.

TO JUDGE PETERS.

Bedford, 29th March, 1811.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your letter of the 14th ult., and also the book on Plaster of Paris, which you was so obliging as to send me, and for which accept my thanks.

Your letter conveyed to me the first and only information I have received, that a copy of President Washington's valedictory address had been found among the papers of General Hamilton, and in *his* handwriting; and that a cer-

tain gentleman had also a copy of it in the *same* handwriting.

This intelligence is unpleasant and unexpected. Had the address been one of those *official* papers which, in the course of affairs, the secretary of the proper department might have prepared, and the president have signed, these facts would have been unimportant; but it was a *personal* act—of choice, not of official duty—and it was so connected with other obvious considerations, as that he only could with propriety write it. In my opinion, President Washington must have been sensible of this propriety, and therefore strong evidence would be necessary to make me believe that he violated it. Whether he did or did not, is a question which naturally directs our attention to whatever affords presumptive evidence respecting it; and leads the mind into a long train of correspondent reflections. I will give you a summary of those which have occurred to me; not because I think them necessary to settle the point in question, for the sequel will show that they are not, but because the occasion invites me to take the pleasure of reviewing and bearing testimony to the merits of our departed friend.

Is it to be presumed from these facts, that General Hamilton was the *real*, and the president only the *reputed* author of that address? Although they countenance such a presumption, yet I think its foundation will be found too slight and shallow to resist that strong and full stream of counter evidence, which flows from the conduct and character of that great man. A character not blown up into transient splendour by the breath of adulation, but, being composed of his great and memorable deeds, stands, and will for ever stand, a glorious monument of human excellence.

So prone, however, is “poor human nature” to dislike and depreciate the superiority of contemporaries, that when these facts come to be generally known (and generally known they will be) many, with affected regret and

hesitation, will infer and hint, that Washington had less greatness of talent, and less greatness of mind, than his friends and admirers ascribed to him. Nor will the number of those be few, who, from personal or party inducements, will artfully encourage and diligently endeavour to give currency to such imputations.

On the other hand, there are men of candour and judgment (and time will increase their number) who, aiming only at truth, will cheerfully trace and follow its footsteps, and on finding, gladly embrace it. Urged by this laudable motive, they will attentively examine the history of his life; and in it they will meet with such numerous proofs of his knowledge and experience of men and things in general, and of our national affairs in particular, as to silence all doubts of his ability to conceive and express every idea in that address. A careful perusal of that history will convince them, that the principles of policy which it recommends as rules for the conduct of others, are precisely those by which he regulated his own.

There have been in the world but two systems or schools of policy; the one founded on the great principles of wisdom and rectitude, the other on cunning and its various artifices. To the first of these belonged Washington and all the other worthies of every country, who ascended to the temple of honour through the temple of virtue. The doctrines, maxims, and precepts of this school, have been explained and inculcated by the ablest writers, ancient and modern. In all civilized countries they are known, though often neglected; and in free states have always been publicly commended and taught. They crossed the Atlantic with our forefathers; and in our days particularly, have not only engaged the time and attention of students, but have been constantly and eloquently displayed by able men in our senates and assemblies. What reason can there be to suppose that Washington did not understand these subjects? If it be asked, what these subjects comprehend or

relate to? the answer is this, They relate to the nature and duties of man—to his propensities and passions—his virtues and vices—his habits and prejudices—his real and relative wants and enjoyments—his capacities for social and national happiness—and the means by which, according to time, place, and other existing circumstances, it is, in a greater or less degree, to be procured, preserved, or increased. From a profound investigation of these subjects, enlightened by experience, result all that knowledge and those maxims and precepts of sound policy, which enable legislators and rulers to manage and govern public affairs wisely and justly.

By what other means than the practical use of this knowledge, could Washington have been able to lead and govern an army, hastily collected from various parts, and who brought with them to the field all the license and all the habits which they had indulged at home? Could he, by the force of orders and proclamations, have constrained them to render him that obedience, confidence, and warm attachment which he soon acquired, and which, throughout all vicissitudes and distresses, continued constant and undiminished to the last? By what other means could he have been able to frustrate the designs of dark cabals, and the unceasing intrigues of envious competitors, and the arts of the opposing enemy? By what other means could he have been able, in so masterly a manner, to meet and manage all those perplexing embarrassments which the revolutionary substitution of a new government—which the want of that power in Congress which they had not, and of that promptitude which no deliberative body can have—which the frequent destitution, and constant uncertainty of essential supplies—which the incompetency of individuals, on whom much depended, the perfidy of others, and the mismanagement of many, could not fail to engender. We know, and history will inform posterity, that from the first of his military career, he had to meet and encounter, and

surmount a rapid succession of formidable difficulties, even down to the time when his country was enabled, by the success of their arms, to obtain the honourable peace which terminated the war. His high and appointed course being then finished, he disdained the intimations of lawless ambition to prolong it. He disbanded the army under circumstances which required no common degree of policy or virtue; and with universal admiration and plaudits, descended joyfully and serenely into the shades of retirement. They who ascribe all this to the guidance and protection of Providence, do well; but let them recollect, that Providence seldom interposes in human affairs, but through the agency of human means.

When, at a subsequent and alarming period, the nation found that their affairs had gone into confusion, and that clouds, portending danger and distress, were rising over them from every quarter, they instituted under his auspices a more efficient government; and unanimously committed the administration of it to him. Would they have done this, without the highest confidence in his political talents and wisdom? Certainly not. No novice in navigation was ever unanimously called upon to take the helm or command of a ship on the point of running aground among the breakers. This universal confidence would have proved a universal mistake, had it not been justified by the event. The unanimous opinion entertained and declared by a whole people in favour of any fellow-citizen, is rarely erroneous; especially in times of alarm and calamity.

To delineate the course, and enumerate the measures which he took to arrive at success, would be to write a volume. The firmness and policy with which he overcame the obstacles placed in his way by the derangement of national affairs; by the devices of domestic demagogues, and of foreign agents; as well as by the deleterious influences of the French revolution, need not be particularized.

Our records, and histories, and memoirs render it unnecessary. It is sufficient to say, and it can be said with truth, that his administration raised the nation out of confusion into order; out of degradation and distress into reputation and prosperity. It found us withering—it left us flourishing.

Is it to be believed, that after having thus led the nation out of a bewildered state, and guided them for many years from one degree of prosperity to another, he was not qualified, on retiring, to advise them how to proceed and go on? And what but this is the object and the burden of his valedictory address? He was persuaded that, as the national welfare had been recovered and established, so it could only be preserved and prolonged by a continued and steady adherence to those principles of sound policy, and impartial justice, which had invariably directed his administration. Although the knowledge of them had been spread and scattered among the people, here a little, and there a little, yet, being desirous to mark even the last day of his public life by some act of public utility, he addressed and presented them to his fellow-citizens, in points of light so clear and strong, as to make deep impression on the public mind. These last parental admonitions of this father of his country were gratefully received, and universally admired. But the experience of ages informs us, that it is less difficult to give good advice, than to prevail on men to follow it.

Such and so obvious is the force of the preceding considerations, as to render doubts of the president's ability to give the advice contained in the address too absurd to have many serious advocates. But it would not surprise me, if certain classical gentlemen, associating the facts you mention with the style and fashion of the address, should intimate, that his ability to compose it substantially in his mind, does not prove that he was also capable of communicating his advice in a paper so well written.

Let those gentlemen recollect the classical maxim which they learned at school :

“ *Scribendi recte, sapere est et principium et fons.*”

They may also be referred to another classical maxim, which teaches us, that they who well understand their subject, will be at no loss for words :

“ *Verbaque provisam rem non invita sequentur.*”

But his ability to write well need not be proved by the application of maxims ; it is established by facts. We are told to judge of a tree by its fruit ; let us, in like manner, judge of his pen by its performances.

Few men, who had so little leisure, have written so much. His public letters alone are voluminous ; and public opinion has done justice to their merits ; many of them have been published, and they who read them will be convinced, that at the period of the address, he had not to learn how to write well. But it may be remarked, that the address is higher finished than the letters ; and so it ought to be. That address was to be presented to the whole nation, and on no common occasion : it was intended for the present and future generations ; it was to be read in this country, and in foreign countries ; and to be criticised, not only by affectionate friends and impartial judges, but also by envious and malignant enemies. It was an address which, according as it should or should not correspond with his exalted character and fame, would either justify or impeach the prevailing opinion of his talents and wisdom. Who, therefore, can wonder that he should bestow more thought, and time, and pains on that address than on a letter ?

Although in the habit of depending ultimately on his

own judgment, yet no man was more solicitous to obtain and collect light on every question and measure on which he had to decide. He knew that authors, like parents, are not among the first to discover imperfections in their offspring; and that consideration would naturally induce him to imitate the example of those ancient and modern writers (among whom were statesmen, generals, and even men of consular and royal dignity) who submitted their compositions to the judgment of their friends, before they put the last hand to them. Those friends would make notes of whatever defects they observed in the draught, and of the correspondent amendments which they deemed proper. If they found that the arrangement could be improved, they would advise certain transpositions; if the connexion between any of the relative parts was obscure, they would make it more apparent; if a conclusion had better be left to implication than expressed, they would strike it out, and so vice versa; if an additional remark or allusion would give force or light to a sentiment or proposition, they would propose it; where a sentence was too long, they would divide it; they would correct redundances; change words less apt, for words more apt, &c., &c., &c. To correct a composition in this way, is to do a friendly office; but to prepare a new one, and offer it to the author as a substitute for his own, would deserve a different appellation.

Among those to whose judgment and candour President Washington would commit such an interesting and delicate task, where is the man to be found, who would have had the hardihood to say to him in substance, though in terms ever so nice and courtly—Sir, I have examined and considered your draught of an address: it will not do; it is really good for nothing. But, sir, I have taken the trouble to write a proper one for you; and I now make you a present of it: I advise you to adopt it, and to pass it on the world as your own; the cheat will never be discovered,

for you may depend on my secrecy. Sir, I have inserted in it a paragraph that will give the public a good opinion of your modesty: I will read it to you; it is in these words:

“In the discharge of this trust, I will only say, that I have, with good intentions, contributed towards the organization and administration of the government, the best exertions of which a *very fallible judgment* was capable. Not unconscious, in the outset, of the *inferiority* of my qualifications, experience in my own eyes, perhaps *still more* in the eyes of *others*, has strengthened the motives to diffidence of myself.”

If it be possible to find a man among those whom he esteemed, capable of offering to him such a present, it is impossible to believe that President Washington was the man to whom such a present would have been acceptable. They who knew President Washington, and his various endowments, qualifications, and virtues, know that, aggregately considered, they found a “*tout ensemble*” which has rarely been equalled, and perhaps never excelled.

Thus much for presumptive evidence. I will now turn your attention to some that is direct.

The history (if it may be so called) of the address is not unknown to me; but as I came to the knowledge of it under implied confidence, I doubted, when I first received your letter, whether I ought to disclose it. On more mature reflection, I became convinced, that if President Washington was now alive, and informed of the facts in question, he would not only authorize, but also desire me to reduce it to writing; that when necessary, it might be used to invalidate the imputations to which those facts give colour. This consideration terminated my doubts. I do not think that a disclosure is *necessary* at this moment, but I fear such a moment will arrive. Whether I shall

then be alive, or in capacity to give testimony, is so uncertain, that in order to avoid the risk of either, I shall now reduce it to writing, and commit it to your care and discretion, "de bene esse," as the lawyers say.

Some time before the address appeared, Colonel (afterward General) Hamilton informed me, that he had received a letter from President Washington, and with it the draught of a farewell address, which the president had prepared, and on which he requested our opinion. He then proposed that we should fix on a day for an interview at my house on the subject. A day was accordingly appointed. On that day Colonel Hamilton attended. He observed to me, in words to this effect—that, after having read and examined the draught, it appeared to him to be susceptible of improvement—that he thought the easiest and best way was to leave the draught untouched and in its fair state; and to write the whole over with such amendments, alterations, and corrections as he thought were advisable; and that he had done so. He then proposed to read it, and to make it the subject of our consideration. This being agreed to, he read it; and we proceeded deliberately to discuss and consider it, paragraph by paragraph, until the whole met with our mutual approbation: some amendments were made during the interview, but none of much importance. Although this business had not been hastily despatched, yet, aware of the consequence of such a paper, I suggested the giving it a further critical examination; but he declined it, saying that he was pressed for time, and was anxious to return the draught to the president without delay. It afterward occurred to me, that a certain proposition was expressed in terms too general and unqualified, and I hinted it in a letter to the president.

As the business took the course above mentioned, a recurrence to the draught was unnecessary, and it was not read. There was this advantage in the course pursued—the president's draught remained (as delicacy required)

fair, and not obscured by interlineations, &c. By comparing it with the paper sent with it, he would immediately observe the particular emendations and corrections that were proposed; and would find them standing in their intended places. Hence he was enabled to review and to decide on the whole matter, with much greater clearness and facility than if he had received them in separate and detached notes, and with detailed references to the pages and lines, where they were advised to be introduced.

With great esteem and regard,

I am, dear sir,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO JOHN BRISTED.

Bedford, 23d April, 1811.

SIR,

Accept my thanks for the book on the Resources of Great Britain, which you was so obliging as to send me. It abounds in interesting matter, and if the facts and calculations stated in it are correct, there appears to be reason to conclude that Britain has less danger to apprehend from a long-continued war, than from a premature peace.

In the twelfth page there is an anecdote which seems to refer to me; if it does, it is proper for me to observe that your information on that head is not entirely accurate. While in France I was neither present at the death, nor at the funeral of any French philosopher. During my residence there, I do not recollect to have had more than two conversations with atheists about their tenets. The first was this: I was at a large party, of which were several of that description. They spoke freely and contemptuously of religion. I took no part in the conversation. In the course of it, one of them asked me if I believed in Christ? I answered that I did, and that I thanked God that I did.

Nothing further passed between me and them or any of them on that subject.

Some time afterward, one of my family being dangerously ill, I was advised to send for an English physician, who had resided many years at Paris. He was said to be very skilful, but, it was added, he is an atheist. I sent for him, and had reason to think highly of his skill. For several weeks the patient required numerous visits, so that I saw the doctor often. He was a sedate, decent man. I frequently observed him drawing the conversation towards religion, and I constantly gave it another direction. He nevertheless, during one of his visits, very abruptly remarked, that there was no God, and he hoped the time would come when there would be no religion in the world. I very concisely remarked, that if there was no God, there could be no moral obligations, and I did not see how society could subsist without them. He did not hesitate to admit, that if there was no God, there could be no moral obligations, but insisted that they were not necessary, for that society would find a substitute for them in enlightened self-interest. I soon turned the conversation to another topic, and he probably perceiving that his sentiments met with a cold reception, did not afterward resume the subject.

I am, sir,

Your obliged and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO WILLIAM MILLER.

Bedford, 7th Nov., 1811.

DEAR SIR,

On the 4th inst. your letter of the 23d of last month was delivered to me. It gave us all pleasure to find from it that you and your family were then well. If all the productions of your farm are as fine as the sample of one kind of them, which you sent me, you have much reason to praise it.

You have certainly had no inconsiderable share of difficulties, dangers, and troubles, and as you justly observe, Providence has carried you through them all, and has also given you consolations and enjoyments. Such is more or less the lot of all men. If, my good friend, there were no trials in this world, it would not be what it certainly is, a state of probation; some are tried by adversity, some by prosperity, and many by both. If in our journey through life, we were to meet with nothing but what was pleasant, we should probably be too little mindful of home, and too little disposed to take a rough road to it, even though it should be the most direct one. We have neither of us much further to travel. If, on our arrival, we find it a paradise, our enjoyments will not be diminished by the recollection that we had suffered much on the way.

I still flatter myself with the expectation of again seeing you here, especially as your health is good, and your business would be attended to during your absence. We should have new affairs as well as old affairs to talk over. Those among the new ones, which concern the welfare of yourself and family, will be particularly interesting to

Your friend,

JOHN JAY.

TO PETER JAY MUNRO.

Bedford, 2d March, 1812.

DEAR PETER,

It is said that the manufacturing company at Mamaroneck have applied to the Legislature for an act to empower them (on paying damages) to overflow and drown as much of the adjacent farms, and without the consent of the owners, as may be necessary to make a pond that will afford a more ample supply of water than they can otherwise obtain *there*. The country abounds in plentiful streams. Why did they not fix on one that would answer their purpose?

When a piece of ground is wanted for a use important

to the *State*, I know that the State has a right to take it from the owner, on paying the full value of it; but certainly the Legislature has no right to *compel* a freeholder to part with his land to any of his *fellow-citizens*, nor to deprive him of the use of it, in order to accommodate one or more of his neighbours in the prosecution of their particular trade or business. Such an act, by violating the rights of property, would be a most dangerous precedent.

The injury which the pond would doubtless cause to the health of the neighbourhood deserves attention; but interesting as it is, I think it of less importance than that of exposing, by such an act, the rights of property to invasion and disturbance. It may be said that the pond, by facilitating manufactures, will be productive of good to the public; but will it not produce more loss than gain, if any of the essential rights of freemen are to be sunk in it.

If the company want any thing belonging to their neighbours, let them, like all other individuals, obtain it by *voluntary*, and not by *compelled* purchase. It would be strange if the Legislature appointed to guard our equal rights, should be prevailed upon to furnish means for such compulsion.

These remarks are made on the supposition that what I have heard may possibly be true; but to me it appears so extraordinary, that I am inclined to suspect that it has not been fully and fairly represented. Be so good as to inform me, what the application made by the company to the Legislature really is.

I am, dear Peter,

Your affectionate uncle,

JOHN JAY.

TO RICHARD BLAND LEE, ALEXANDRIA.

Bedford, 7th September, 1812.

SIR,

In your obliging answer to my letter of February last, mention is made of a work of your brother, then in the press, viz. "Memoirs of the War in the Southern Department." The subject and the author naturally excited my attention, and my desire to procure a copy.

I have not learned that it has yet been published, nor seen any thing relative to it in our public papers. I presume, therefore, that the work is still in the press. If it is printing by subscription. I wish that my name may be on the list of subscribers, and that I may use my endeavours to increase the number of them. Be pleased, therefore, to inform me on this head.

The outrages committed at Baltimore excited the greater indignation, on account of the characters of some of the sufferers, and particularly your brother, whose claims to public gratitude have so long and so justly been acknowledged throughout the United States. Let me request the favour of you to assure him that I rejoice in the prospect of his recovery; and in the hope that on the occurrence of proper occasions, our country will again derive advantage and honour from his talents and patriotism.

With sentiments of esteem and regard, I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO THE REV. CALVIN CHAPIN.

Bedford, 2d Dec., 1812.

REV. SIR,

I received by the last mail your letter of the 19th September, containing a copy of "An act to incorporate the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions," and an abstract from their minutes, purporting, that at a

meeting of the board in September last, I had been elected a member of it.

Such institutions become the religion we profess, and the blessings we enjoy. Be pleased to assure the board that I am very sensible of the honour they have done me; and that I wish it was as much in my power, as it is in my inclination, to attend their meetings and take an active part in the business committed to them. For several years my health has been declining, and my age, as well as the nature of my complaints, do not permit me to expect the restoration of it.

Reflecting that they who consent to accept a place or office do impliedly engage to perform the duties of it, I think it right to declare my inability to perform those in question. If, therefore, any active services should be expected from me, I hope and request that the board will consider themselves at liberty to give to this declaration the effect of a resignation, and proceed to elect another in my stead.

I am, reverend sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO THE REV. DR. MORSE.

Bedford, 1st January, 1813.

DEAR SIR,

Accept my thanks for your friendly letter of the 17th ult., and for the sermon and report which accompanied it.

Whether our religion permits *Christians* to vote for *infidel* rulers, is a question which merits more consideration than it seems yet to have generally received, either from the clergy or the laity. It appears to me, that what the prophet said to Jehoshaphat about his attachment to Ahab,\* affords a salutary lesson on another interesting topic.

\* "Shouldst thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord?"  
—2 Chron. xix. 2.

Although the mere *expediency* of public measures may not be a proper subject for the pulpit, yet, in my opinion, it is the right and the duty of our pastors to press the observance of all moral and religious duties, and to animadvert on every course of conduct which may be repugnant to them.

The Rev. Mr. Chapin informed me, that the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions had done me the honour to elect me one of the members of it, and has also been so obliging as to send me copies of their last report. Institutions like this are not only to be approved and commended, but also to be sustained and assisted. As the declining state of my health will not permit me to render any active service, I feared that by retaining a place at the board, I should exclude some other person who would be more useful. My answer, therefore, to Mr. Chapin referred it to the board to do therein as they may judge proper.

The amount of the subscriptions exceed what I had supposed, and manifests a spirit which I hope will become more universal.

Permit me to request the favour of you to procure for me two complete sets of the Panoplist,\* and to put my name on the list of subscribers for *two* of each of the future numbers. I purpose to place one set of them in our town library : some good may result from it.

Such is your knowledge and information relative to the United States and their affairs, that I regret your finding it inconvenient to undertake the history you allude to. That it will be written at some future day is probable ; but when, or how well performed, is uncertain. Time will not wait, but will proceed in its usual way to impair memory, to diminish and obscure evidence, to introduce doubt, and enable error to impose on credulity, and acquire credit from

\* A religious Magazine.

currency. I presume, therefore, that a history (except as to great outlines) is the less to be depended upon, as its date is remote from the period of the transactions which it undertakes to narrate. How few have the talents, the patient diligence, and the love of truth which history requires.

The aspect of the times certainly continues portentous. To hope for the best and prepare for the worst, is a trite but a good maxim; especially when associated with the reflection that He who governs the world can restrain the wrath of man as well as the rage of the ocean. It is a favourable circumstance, that the delusion which, like an epidemic, has prevailed throughout our country, is abating in many of the States. Calamities sometimes afford good remedies for national distempers.

My retirement has not disappointed me. As to my health, a complaint in the liver has for several years been impairing it. Medical prescriptions failing to remove it, relief could only be sought from palliatives; and among these I find temperance, patience, and resignation to be the best.

I am glad, for her sake and for yours, that Mrs. Morse enjoys good health. I hope you do also. That you may both live to see many happy returns of this day, is very sincerely the wish of

Dear sir,

Your faithful friend,

JOHN JAY.

TO JEREMIAH EVARTS.

Bedford, 12th January, 1813.

SIR,

I have received your obliging letter of the 30th ult. The oration which came with it abounds in just sentiments, handsomely expressed.

The copies of the report, which you had the goodness to send, have come to hand.

Many considerations would make it agreeable to me to attend the meeting of the board at Boston. I have heretofore found and enjoyed excellent society in that city, and although I should feel the absence of several worthy persons, who have removed to the "city not made with hands," yet others remain whom it would give me pleasure to meet.

Notwithstanding the inducements I have to make frequent visits to New-York, I have not been there for four years past. The state of my health, and the regimen it requires, not permitting me to be far or long from home.

It is certainly desirable that those of our fellow-citizens who are friendly to foreign missions, should contribute to repair the loss of the mission printing-office at Serampore. It appears from a late paper that measures for that purpose were taking at New-York, and there is reason to hope and expect, that the aggregate amount of the collections will be considerable.

The mode of remitting it to India is of some importance. To me it appears advisable that all American missionary measures should, as far as circumstances may admit, be connected with the American Board for Foreign Missions. I therefore think, that the money in question should be remitted to India accordingly. If we were at peace with England, I should prefer having it remitted, by the board, to the missionary society there, and through them to India. Mutual confidence and good-will between societies instituted for the same purpose, and actuated by similar motives of benevolence, should be cultivated.

Having for some days past been less well than usual, I find myself constrained to be more concise than I intended when I began this letter.

With sentiments of esteem and regard,

I am, dear sir,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

Morrisania, 15th February, 1813.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Last Tuesday evening my wife was delivered of a boy. I communicate that event because I believe it will give you pleasure. Moreover, I wish you to be one of his godfathers. True it is, that according to the usual course, you may not be able to perform the duties of that office ; but, my friend, should you be mingled with the dust, he shall learn from the history of your life, that a man must be truly pious to be truly great. I do not fix the day, because I wish you to come on in a fortnight or three weeks, when it best suits your convenience. I will then summon the priest and the other sponsors.

Yours truly,

GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

Bedford, 22d February, 1813.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

I thank you for informing me by your letter of the 15th inst. that you had received "an heritage and gift," which doubtless filled your heart with joy and gratitude.

It would give me pleasure to present in person to you and Mrs. Morris my congratulations on the occasion ; but since the winter began, I have not been abroad, and this confinement will, as usual, continue until warm weather. I hope Mrs. Morris and the "spes altera" are doing well, and that the emotions they excite are not interrupted by gout or anxiety.

You request me to be one of the godfathers. Baptism is too generally regarded as being little more than a customary ceremony ; and yet the purpose of it, and the *names* used on the occasion, show it to be a solemn procedure. It confers privileges, and imposes obligations of the highest

class. Whoever consents to be employed as a shepherd, should recollect, that if a lamb be lost by his negligence, he must answer for it to the owner of the flock. Sponsors, however, not unfrequently become such, with as little sense of personal responsibility, as actors on the stage make the engagements, &c., allotted to their parts.

Had I the prospect of residing here many years, I should feel no reluctance, for I should find in my heart and mind sufficient inducements to fulfil the duties in question, in case they should eventually be incumbent on me. But as I expect to remove, at a more early period, to a distant country, where I shall not be in a capacity to attend to persons or things here, it appears to me advisable that some proper person not so circumstanced should be selected.

It is an agreeable circumstance that you will probably continue at Morrisania for many years, and have time and health to prepare the young gentleman to make a figure there, as well as at the more valuable habitation and estate, which will, in his baptism, be offered to him by his Sovereign.

That you and he may, here and ever, be happy in and with each other, is the fervent wish of

Your friend,

JOHN JAY.

TO THE REV. JOSEPH M'KEAN.

Bedford, 14th April, 1813.

REV. SIR,

I received on Saturday last the interesting letter which you did me the favour to write on the 31st ult., together with the two pamphlets which you was so obliging as to send with it.

Marks of respect to the characters of such men as Dr. Elliot, not only tend to console their afflicted relatives, but also to cherish the virtues by which they were distinguished. Unhappily, there is too much reason for the common

remark, that obituary commendations by anonymous writers are so frequently misapplied as to be worth very little. The sermon (as was proper) describes the Dr.'s character in general terms, but the testimony which it bears to his merit is ample, clear, and decided; and considering from whom it comes, leaves no room for doubt or scruple.

As the intended memoir, to contain a more detailed account of Dr. Elliot, is to be published in the next volume of Historical Collections, and consequently under the auspices of the society, it will be appreciated by that circumstance, and doubtless have also the advantage of being written in a manner worthy of the subject, and of such respectable patrons. This will be bestowing merited praise in a handsome manner. Not a few of the name, and I presume of the same family, of Elliot, have in this country laboured faithfully in promoting the best interests of man. Their services will be remembered in heaven, and ought not to be forgotten on earth. I feel for the Dr.'s family. Death daily severs many tender ties . . . but not for ever.

I thank you very sincerely for your kind offers of service, and with pleasure reciprocate them. They prompt me to request the favour of you to send me the 1st volume of the new series, as well as the 10th volume, mentioned in my letter to Dr. Elliot.

I am, Rev. sir,  
Your much obliged and obedient servant,  
JOHN JAY.

TO NOAH WEBSTER.

Bedford, 31st May, 1813.

SIR,

I received by the last mail your letter of the 19th inst. The circumstances mentioned in it cannot be regarded with indifference by those who wish you well; and I feel as well as think so.

It is not improbable, that doubts prevail respecting the design and tendency of the work you have in hand. The literary productions of Britain and America being interesting to each other, many are of opinion, and I concur in it, that the English language and its orthography should be the same in both countries. Apprehensions have been entertained that your dictionary would tend to impair that sameness; and those apprehensions may, to a certain degree, have had an unfavourable influence.

The progress of the subscription having been so long suspended, I think it better to enclose what I intended to subscribe, than trouble your agents at New-York with it.

If any plan to render your prospects more promising, and in my power to promote, should be adopted, be pleased to communicate it to me.

I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM NOAH WEBSTER.

Amherst, June 9th, 1813

SIR,

For your favour of the 31st ult. with the enclosed bill, be pleased to accept my most grateful acknowledgments. The interest you have manifested in my labours, and the liberality accompanying it, are the more acceptable, as they have been unsolicited.

It is not improbable that some ill-founded apprehensions that I might attempt changes of orthography, have had their effect in preventing subscriptions; but there are several other causes.

On the subject of orthography, gentlemen might have been easy, as any considerable changes must prevent the sale and use of a work of this sort, and they might rationally conclude that I would not put myself to an immense

trouble and expense, to write a book which would not find purchasers.

My plan is different from any thing before attempted. I have examined and collated the radical words in twenty languages, including the seven Asiatic languages, or rather dialects of the Assyrian stock. This will enable me to explain many things in the English language which have hitherto been obscure. Indeed, this research has opened a field entirely new, and it is probable will lead to many important discoveries, not only in the origin and affinity of languages, but in history sacred and profane.

The price of the work cannot be known at present; but if I live to complete it, I shall not only present you a copy, but hold myself answerable to refund the principal of the sum advanced.

With gratitude and respect, I am sir,

Your obedient servant,

N. WEBSTER.

TO THE REV. DR. MORSE.

Bedford, 25th October, 1813.

DEAR SIR,

I have chosen for this letter a subject that is more within your province than in mine. "Quisque sua arte peritus."

The 29th verse of the 15th chapter of the 1st Corinthians is deemed to be an obscure one. I understand it in a sense which satisfies me, but I find that the few commentators whom I have consulted, understand it in other senses. I will subjoin the verse, and explain what I conceive to be the meaning of it, in a short paraphrase. Tell me what you think of it. When you see Mr. Evarts, be pleased to present my best compliments to him.

I am, dear sir,

Your faithful and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

1 COR. XV. 29.—“Else what shall they do who have been baptized for the *dead*, if the dead rise *not* at all? why are they *then* baptized for the dead?” /

The apostle doubtless intended to include in this verse, an argument to support the doctrine he was endeavouring to establish. That sense of it, therefore, is probably the true one, which gives the most strength and fitness to the argument.

His meaning will perhaps be more perceptible, if certain parts of the verse be transposed, as follows:

Else what shall they do, who, if the dead rise *not* at all, have been baptized for the *dead*. Why are they *then* baptized for the dead?

As thus read, the converse of the proposition is plainly this, viz. That they are not baptized for the dead, *if* the dead are to rise: but that they are baptized for the dead, *if* the dead are not to rise.

So that the question, whether they are baptized for the dead or not, depends on the answer to the question, whether the dead are to rise or not.

#### PARAPHRASE.

But Christ is risen, and he will certainly raise our dead bodies from the grave. If it were not so, what are believers, who, in a confident hope and expectation, and as an *assurance* of a resurrection, have been baptized, and thereby become professed disciples and followers of Christ, to do?

Baptism initiated them into his covenant and promise to *revive* and reunite their bodies with their souls after death, and bless them with *everlasting* life and happiness in a *future* state. If there is to be no such revival, no such reunion, no such *future* state, their baptism, and faith, and hopes in the gospel are vain and nugatory. What are they to do? What can they do?

They who were baptized into Christ were baptized into his death; they were buried with him by baptism into death;

they were planted together into the likeness of his death. And why? Certainly for assurance that they should also be planted into the likeness of his resurrection. Divest baptism of its reference to a resurrection, and it will have no other remaining reference but the one to death and the dead.

*If the dead rise not at all (as some among you say), then, and in that case, and on that supposition, all without exception who have been baptized, are in fact baptized for the dead, that is, for their own dead bodies, for their dust and ashes; for that is the only future state in which they will be and remain for ever. Why, or for what reason, or for what purpose then, or in that case, are they baptized for their dead bodies—dead and never to rise again? What effect can baptism, or promises, or covenants operate on, or for them, after they have passed into a state of utter and never-ending insensibility? Is it for such a future state, that our bodies are baptized with water, and our souls with the Holy Ghost?*

You know that I preach and declare to the Jews, and to the gentiles, that Christ is risen, and that he will raise the dead. Unless I was sincere in this, would I persist in preaching it at the risk of my life every hour?

If the dead are never to rise, what advantage or reward can I expect or receive, for the persecutions and sufferings which I willingly incur and endure, on account of my avowed and zealous adherence to Christ? Did I believe that *this* was the *only* world in which I am to exist, would I not endeavour to find and enjoy all the good and all the gratifications which this world affords? It is natural for those who neither expect good nor evil beyond the grave, to say, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Nothing can be more manifest than that, if in this world only we have hope in Christ, we, his persecuted apostles and followers, are of all men most miserable.

Be not deceived into doubts of a resurrection. You were not baptized for eternal sleep, but for endless life after death, and your baptism is a pledge to assure you of it. If you reject one of the assurances, or declarations, or promises of Christ as fallacious, how are you to rely on the rest? Listen not to such teachers, lest their evil examples and communications seduce you into opinions and practices repugnant to the principles, institutions, and manners which are established and enjoined by the gospel.

TO WILLIAM MILLER.

Bedford, September 20th, 1814.

DEAR SIR,

Since my last letter to you, I have received yours of the 10th of last month.

The information that you and your family were then in good health, gives us pleasure. I continue feeble, but do not suffer much pain, except now and then from rheumatism. The rest of us are as well as usual.

The cold weather you mention has also prevailed here. I do not recollect so cool a summer. Our corn does not look well. The crops of rye were slender; those of wheat were good.

As to public affairs, I do not wonder that you look forward to the consequences of the war with anxiety. We are told that "wherewithal a man sinneth, by the same also shall he be punished," and this doubtless is applicable to nations as well as to individuals. He who governs all nations, sometimes corrects national misrule by making it instrumental to national chastisement; we have been ungrateful.

You and I are far advanced in our journey through life. We have in the course of it sometimes found the weather, the roads, and the accommodations agreeable; at other times we have found them unpleasant, and occasionally

distressing; and so, my good friend, it will be to the end. Let us comfort ourselves with the reflection, that although we must expect to meet with troubles of one kind or other on the way, yet that they cannot prevent our getting home. On the contrary, they tend to excite our diligence and to quicken our pace. That we may both be enabled to keep in the right road to our home, is the wish and prayer of,

Dear sir,

Your friend,

JOHN JAY.

FROM TIMOTHY PICKERING.\*

City of Washington, Oct. 22d, 1814.

DEAR SIR,

I have done myself the honour to make up three packets addressed to you, this day, containing the despatches from our ministers from Ghent, their instructions, and the statement of the new secretary of the treasury of his plan of taxes, and his project of a national bank.

While the proposition respecting an Indian boundary was declared to be a *sine qua non*, the boundary itself admitted of modification; and as within it, we are called upon to relinquish only our *right of pre-emption* to the *Indians*, who are *proprietors of the soil*, I see no objection to it. Without such demand, *good policy* would require such relinquishment, to prevent encroachments on the *Indians*, and thereby the renewal of hostilities; and the dispersion of our citizens over immense regions, defensible only at an insupportable expense, while we have so many millions of acres of good lands remaining without inhabitants.

I am disposed to believe that with less pride in rulers and ministers, and with less hatred to Great Britain in both, the British propositions might have been made the basis of a negotiation which, governed by wisdom and prudence,

\* Member of Congress.

might have terminated in peace. With very great respect and esteem,

I am, dear sir, your obedient servant,

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Bedford, 1st Nov., 1814.

DEAR SIR,

Accept my thanks for your letter of the 22d ult., and for the papers which you was so good as to send; they arrived by the last mail.

It is to be regretted, that passions unfavourable to mutual good-will have for years been industriously and unwisely excited both in Great Britain and America. An inveterate delusion has long prevailed in our country; Providence has made it a scourge for our chastisement, and we well deserve it.

Every independent nation has, as such, a rightful and exclusive jurisdiction over the country within its acknowledged boundary lines. For either nation to propose to the other a system of measures for the security and comfort of the Indians, dwelling within their contiguous and respective territories, or for other mutual good purposes, can neither be offensive nor improper; but to dictate such propositions, and to tell us that we *must* accede to them as the price of peace, is to assume language rarely used, unless by the victorious to the vanquished.

It is not clear to me, that Britain did *then* expect or desire to conclude the war quite so soon. As to her present or future disposition to peace, or how far it has been or may be affected by a settled or by a still fluctuating state of things in Europe, or by calculations of our becoming more united or more divided, cannot now be known. If we should change our rulers, and fill their places with men free from blame, the restoration of peace might doubtless be more easily accomplished. Such a change will come,

but not while the prevailing popular delusion continues to deceive and mislead so great a portion of our citizens.

Things being as they are, I think we cannot be too perfectly united in a determination to defend our country; nor be too vigilant in watching and resolutely examining the conduct of the administration in all its departments, candidly and openly giving decided approbation or decided censure, according as it may deserve the one or the other. Report says, that in the public expenditures there has been great culpability. It is desirable, therefore, that they be thoroughly investigated, and that the results be authenticated in such a manner as to obviate doubt and disbelief.

I have just read Mr. King's speech. They who complain that it exhibits too little of the "suaviter in modo" cannot also complain that it exhibits too little of the "fortiter in re."

With constant esteem and regard,

I am, dear sir,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO JUDGE PETERS, ESQ.

Bedford, 9th January, 1815.

DEAR SIR,

It is a great while since any letters have passed between us; perhaps some of them have miscarried. The season reminds me that I have survived the last year, and that I have left with it a great number who enjoyed more health and strength. Many friendly wishes have, as usual, been reciprocated on this occasion, but it seems to be questionable whether an average proportion of them will be realized. Public adversity, you know, is at variance with individual happiness; and it has not yet become very probable that this will be a happy year to our country. I should rejoice to find myself mistaken, but I cannot be persuaded that general prosperity will be restored while our

nation continues to be misled by the delusions which caused, and which prolong our calamities. We have not only declared war unwisely, but have also unwisely (though not unwittingly) excited disgust and resentment. How far angry passions will retard the return of peace may be conjectured, rather than calculated. We are yet to learn whether the result of the negotiations at Vienna will impede or promote those at Ghent. While the former are pending, I suspect that Britain will not be anxious to obviate delays. To me, personally, these things cannot long be very interesting, but I feel for those whom I shall leave behind me. You are in the way of knowing more about our national affairs than I am, and I sincerely wish that your views of them may be more consoling than mine are.

My health continues to wear away, but I seldom suffer severe pain. Conversation, books, and recollections still enable me, with the blessing of Providence, to amuse confinement, and to glide on placidly towards that ocean to which the stream of time is bearing us all.

Tell me how you do. With constant esteem and regard,  
I am, dear sir,

Your very humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM JUDGE PETERS.

Belmont, Jan. 19th, 1815.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your very welcome letter of the 9th inst. I received at the moment I was contemplating sending to you our third volume of Agricultural Memoirs, as a small token of remembrance. I shall, by the first opportunity, have it forwarded to you. A few of us endeavour to keep this subject alive amid the din of arms, which are ever hostile to the arts of peace and their attendant blessings. Too much of this effort falls on me; but yet some relief from surround-

ing glooms is found in attention to topics which abstract the mind from the vices and follies plentifully scattered throughout our devoted country. Mortification under what *we are*, is at least for the moment suspended, while we contemplate on what we *have been*. It may return with double force, when we consider *what we might have been*.

But it seems that history affords ample proofs, and ours as much as any other, that "this world was made for Cæsar." The enjoyment of liberty is fugacious; but despotism, under a variety of shapes, is permanent. There is a tendency to it in all human political institutions; and the people of every country have, from time immemorial, forged their own chains. Our "free and enlightened" citizens are now very busy at the anvil; but whether their work will now be completed, is not for us to decide. Heaven may send us chastisement without ruin, and possibly the former may save us for a time. Delusion is the order of the day. Gordon, in one of his discourses on Tacitus, endeavours to prove that the people, when deceived by *deluders*, are blind and cruel, yet mean well. Too many of our people are blind, yet few cruel; as to their *meaning well*, they take a lamentable mode of showing it.

Your letter contains an epitome of my thoughts on our political situation. Had I *written a book* (and I have no adversary who would think it worth his while to wish that I had), I could not express myself more clearly on the subject. At *our* age we are lookers-on, and see the game better than those who play it. The insight which calm observation and experience afford is, however, of no use to those who deem themselves too wise to need instruction. We must wait events, like passengers in a bark buffeted by storms, and mismanaged by unskilful pilots and mariners. I hope our vessel is yet stanch, and that she will get into port, whatever untoward appearances may predict. It is indeed distressing when *hope* alone is our comforter. But,

alas! all I know is far from furnishing light or brilliancy to the threatening and dusky cloud which overhangs our hemisphere.

Our president is not the man we once supposed him. Party antipathies may possibly paint in too sombre colours; but the stories I hear are distressing, particularly to me, who in early times had a sincere personal friendship for him. He would *then* take some strange flights: *one* of them was his joining in the philippic against you, for not consulting the French minister (Vergennes), when the interest of your country forbade the step. But, in general, I thought and acted with him. In this matter, far otherwise; nor have I, in his modern conduct, been in union with his political sentiments on any important subject, although I entertain no personal enmity.

I have a strong impression that we shall, ere long, have peace; but the why and the wherefore I cannot tell, save that there seems nothing really substantial enough in the litigated affairs of the two nations, to continue the business of throat-cutting; and I fancy our enemy is tired of the employment, after following the trade so long.

I am gratified with the account of your travelling on towards the goal we all must arrive at, with a mind tranquil, and a body without pain. Your companions—books and recollections—are consolatory and essential, when all others have lost their relish.

I thank you for your kind inquiries about my health. I have but lately recovered from a most unfortunate accident, having been thrown on the stones of our turnpike from my horse, who took fright and ran away with me. He was a *Kentucky* racer (a quality I did not know), and no doubt took his revenge for his countrymen, by chastising me for my bad politics. I had three trenched gashes in my pericranium; yet I escaped becoming *crack-brained*, which may be reckoned uncivil, as it is fashionable nowa-

days, at least among politicians ; and it is the ton to be in the fashion. Believe me always

Most affectionately yours,

RICHARD PETERS.

TO JUDGE PETERS.

Bedford, Westchester County, }  
14th March, 1815. }

DEAR SIR,

On reading your interesting letter of the 19th January, I observed, with particular pleasure, from the manner and matter of it, that, notwithstanding the winter of life, and snow falling on your head, you endure like an evergreen.

Your impression that “ we should, ere long, have peace” has been verified. If I remember right, you had heretofore an impression that Spain, although her case was apparently desperate, would get safe through her danger ; and so it came to pass. Events having justified both these impressions or opinions, I wish you may have another, viz. that the peace will terminate the delusion which caused the war. Several considerations incline me to expect that the peace will *diminish* it, and particularly these :

Unless discontents should arise between France and Britain, French influence will not soon be *very* active in America ; and, consequently, will not administer much fuel to renew and feed a flame against England. The peace will deprive the delusion of the sustenance it derived from the patronage which the war created.

The abandonment of the *professed* objects of the war, and that without compensation either in fact or expectation—the manifest incapacity and profusion with which the war has been conducted—the attempts to force supplies of men and money by conscription, &c.—and the immense debt incurred and to be paid, without any *value received*—all tend to withdraw confidence and good-will from our political projectors ; nor can the continuance and operation

of war-taxes be congenial with the feelings of a people who, if pagans, would dedicate more temples to Plutus than to Minerva.

These, and the like facts and considerations, will doubtless have the most weight with that portion of the community who have been misled, but who really mean well. They will probably have some effect also on the more considerate of the others. As to the position, that "the people always mean well," or, in other words, that they always mean to say and to do what they believe to be right and just,—it may be popular, but it cannot be true. The word *people*, you know, applies to all the individual inhabitants of a country, collectively considered. That portion of them who individually mean well, never was, nor until the millennium will be, considerable. We have not heard of any country, in which the great mass of the inhabitants individually and habitually adhere to the dictates of their consciences. We know how well demagogues and pharisaical patriots mean. Having much of the wisdom of this world, and little of that of the other, they will, like their great predecessor Absalom, always mean and act accordingly.

Besides, Providence sometimes chastises nations with physical epidemics, and sometimes (by "choosing their delusions") with moral epidemics, and after a while removes them. This encourages hope; for if we have arrived at or near the *pessimum* of this evil, the *melius* cannot be far distant.

Accept my thanks for the book you was so kind as to send me. I have found some good things in it, and shall doubtless find more. Many of our citizens, who are more than mere farmers, have of late years improved our agriculture. Would not a good American edition of Columella be acceptable to them? It gratifies curiosity, by showing the state of agriculture at a remote period; and, on several topics, affords information which will be useful at any period.

I am glad you escaped and recovered so well from the accident you mention. Kentucky racers, both literal and figurative, will, it seems, have their capers. It would be no loss to the public, if some of them were at the plough. Seek for "some honest, sober beast, that full softly treads," and will not mar your meditations.

Adieu, my dear sir.

Yours, affectionately,

JOHN JAY.

TO THE REV. DR. MORSE.

Bedford, 14th Feb., 1818.

DEAR SIR,

On the 4th inst. I received by the mail from New-York your interesting letter of the 17th ult. I have read the pamphlets communicated to me by Mr. Grant, and derived from them the only knowledge I have of the transactions noticed in them. It would not be easy to introduce into my mind doubts of your rectitude. My opinion of it has undergone no alterations. You are drawing consolation from a source which always affords it.

As to the work you mention, I am glad you have undertaken it, because it is desirable, and because I expect it will be well performed. It would give me pleasure to afford the aids you request, but the state of my health admits of very little exertion of mind or body. I can neither read nor write much at a time, without bringing on a feverish weariness.

My public life did not commence so early as you supposed. In 1766, I was a clerk in a lawyer's office, and on leaving it was occupied in professional affairs until the year 1774, when I was sent to the first Congress. In 1775, I was also in Congress; in 1776, the Convention of this State detained me with them. In 1778 I was again sent to Congress, and remained there until September, 1779, when I was sent to Europe. In 1784 I returned home.

From this statement, you will perceive that my knowledge of the important events which occurred before the year 1774 cannot be particular.

The difficulty of collecting materials, and of ascertaining their real value, will increase with time. There are very few of the well-informed official men of those days now alive, and the few who remain will in a few years more be gone. To you I need not remark that many things have been written and said which are not correct. The collection of materials (if nothing to perfect it be left undone), will cost much time, trouble and expense. Some information may be acquired by letters, but much more and much better may be obtained by personal inspections, applications, and interviews.

Valuable materials exist in the office of the secretary of state, in the public and *private* journals of Congress, and among the papers of the several States, &c.

You know my sentiments respecting history,—*festina lente*. No good history has been, nor can be produced in haste.

I regret the impediments which deprived me of the pleasure of the visit you intended. I hope some favourable opportunity of making it will yet occur, and that Mrs. Morse may come with you. We will then converse on these topics, and I will readily communicate to you such materials among those I possess, as you may deem interesting.

Be so obliging as to assure Mr. and Mrs. Evarts of my best wishes for the health and prosperity of themselves and their family. I am glad their little boy is doing well. May he long continue to do so in *every respect*.

I am, dear sir,

Yours, very sincerely,

JOHN JAY.

TO THE REV. JOHN M. MASON, D.D.

Bedford, 22d May, 1816.

DEAR SIR,

Accept my thanks for the friendly letter, and for the book\* which you was so obliging as to send me by my son. I have made some progress in reading it. The *principle* I approve, and am glad it has employed a pen very able to do it justice.

Had all uninspired expositors been content with the simplicity of the gospel, and not been wise above what is written, the Church would probably have suffered less than it has from worldly wisdom and scholastic subtleties.

With the best wishes for the health and prosperity of yourself and family, I am, dear sir,

Your friend,

JOHN JAY.

TO THE REV. DR. ROMEYN,

Secretary of the American Bible Society.

Bedford, 12th June, 1816.

REV. SIR,

Your letter of the 1st inst. informing me that I had been elected one of the vice-presidents of the American Bible Society, arrived by the last mail.

I rejoice in the institution of that national society, and assure the Board of Managers, that I am very sensible of the honour they have done me, in thus connecting me with it.

The events and circumstances under which such societies have been established and multiplied, in my opinion, indicate an origin, which makes it the duty of all Christians to unite in giving them decided patronage and zealous support.

I have the honour to be, with respect and esteem,  
Rev. sir,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

\* A Plea for Catholic Communion.

TO SIR JOHN SINCLAIR, LONDON.

Bedford, Westchester County, N. Y., }  
8th August, 1816. }

DEAR SIR,

I have received the papers which you were so obliging as to send me. Accept my thanks for them. Gratitude is due to those who employ their time and talents in promoting the common welfare. Your exertions to improve agriculture, and render it more productive, are known and acknowledged. The paper on "mildew in wheat," I have sent to New-York to be published. The multitude of interesting facts which have been collected during the last twenty years, doubtless furnish materials for a comprehensive system of husbandry; such a work, ably executed, would be useful.

Credit is also due to your endeavours to make known and excite attention to the means which conduce to health and longevity. The proposed edition of the code on these subjects, in one octavo volume, will be better calculated for general use and extensive circulation, than the larger work from which it is to be extracted. I hope it will soon be finished and find its way to this country. It must be an agreeable reflection to you, that you have been "diligent in well-doing."

My health has for years been declining, and my age reminds me that the re-establishment of it is not to be expected. What you have written of the flesh-brush will induce me to use it more frequently. It can do no harm and may do good, and that is no inconsiderable recommendation.

With the best wishes that your health and longevity may be such as to give additional weight to your remarks respecting them,

I am, dear sir,

Your faithful and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO JOHN MURRAY, JUN.

Bedford, 12th October, 1816.

Accept, my good friend, my thanks for your kind letter of the 22d ult., and for the pamphlets enclosed with it. They came to my hands on the 2d inst. The state of my health is such, that I can read or write but little at a time without fatigue; and, therefore, I cannot prudently venture on the task you recommend.

Whether war of *every* description is prohibited by the gospel, is one of those questions on which the excitement of any of the passions can produce no light. An answer to it can result only from careful investigation and fair reasoning.

It appears to me that the gospel not only recognises the whole moral law, and extends and perfects our knowledge of it, but also enjoins on *all* mankind the observance of it. Being ordained by a legislator of *infinite* wisdom and rectitude, and in whom there is "no variableness," it must be free from imperfection, and therefore never has, nor ever will require amendment or alteration. Hence I conclude, that the moral law is exactly the same now that it was before the flood.

That all those wars and fightings are unlawful, which proceed from culpable desires and designs (or in Scripture language from lusts), on the one side or on the other, is too clear to require proof. As to wars of an opposite description, and many such there have been, I believe they are as lawful to the unoffending party in our days, as they were in the days of Abraham. He waged war against and defeated the five kings. He piously dedicated a tenth of the spoils; and, instead of being blamed, was blessed.

What should we think of a human legislator who should authorize or encourage infractions of his own laws? If wars of every kind and description are prohibited by the moral law, I see no way of reconciling such a prohibition with those parts of Scripture which record institu-

tions, declarations, and interpositions of the Almighty which manifestly evince the contrary? If *every* war is sinful, how did it happen that the *sin* of waging *any* war is not specified among the numerous sins and offences which are mentioned and reprov'd in both the Testaments?

To collect and arrange the many facts and arguments which relate to this subject, would require more time and application than I am able to bestow. The foregoing are hinted merely to exhibit some of the reasons on which my opinion rests.

It certainly is very desirable that a pacific disposition should prevail among all nations. The most effectual way of producing it, is by extending the prevalence and influence of the gospel. *Real* Christians will abstain from violating the rights of others, and therefore will not provoke war.

Almost all nations have peace or war at the will and pleasure of rulers whom they do not elect, and who are not always wise or virtuous. Providence has given to our people the choice of their rulers, and it is the duty, as well as the privilege and interest, of our Christian nation to select and prefer Christians for their rulers.

The sentiment expressed in the extract from your brother's letter, corresponds with his benevolent disposition. He has been "diligent in well-doing," and his works will not cease to receive, as well as deserve commendation. When you write to him, assure him of my esteem and regard.

I thank you for the kind wishes expressed in the conclusion of your letter. They refer to topics on which I have been accustomed to meditate, and are far more important than any which belong to this transient scene.

With the best wishes for your welfare, in the most enlarged sense,

I remain, your obliged friend,

JOHN JAY.

## TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

Bedford, 28th Oct., 1816.

DEAR MORRIS,

Having heard much of your discourse before the New-York Historical Society, it gave me pleasure to receive a copy of it, and to find from the direction that I owed it to your friendly attention. It abounds in interesting remarks; the diction is elevated throughout, perhaps in some instances beyond the proportion which the topics bear to each other. In landscape, we prefer hill and dale to a plain, however ornamented; and in a field of eloquence it is agreeable to behold sublimities sloping down into Attic simplicity. I doubt the correctness of saying that Franklin averted thunderbolts from *protected* dwellings. In my opinion, the invention of steamboats is a subject on which it is less difficult to say handsome, than sublime things. To me it does not appear probable, that the sight of them on Asiatic waters can so powerfully affect the feelings of the Genius of Asia, as to impel him to bow with grateful reverence (not gratulation) to the inventive spirit of America; and that, too, at the very moment when his eye, glancing over the ruins of cities, which for ages had concurred in proclaiming his superiority in the arts, must remind him of his dignity. I make no apology for these hints; you know what prompts them.

Your strictures on the defects of history, and the causes of them, are well founded. Whether future historians, with all their advantages, will excel their predecessors in accuracy, and caution, and candour, is a point on which my expectations are not sanguine. For my part, I believe there neither is, nor will be, more than *one* history free from error.

Of that history the discourse has availed itself very ingeniously, deducing from it lessons instructive to all, and new to many. I have often wished that the accounts given in it of the primitive ages had been more particular. We

know but little about them, and our curiosity must remain ungratified while we remain here. I say *here*, because when we join our ancestors, we shall doubtless learn from them all that we may wish to know respecting the affairs and events of their days. In this and other respects I promise myself much satisfaction from their society; and that at a period which cannot be very distant. The term of my lease has expired, and I have no reason to expect that my continuing to hold over will be of more than ordinary duration. It is consoling to reflect that we *tenants* are informed *where* and *how* we may go and settle in perpetuity, and are assured that our possessions and enjoyments there, instead of being precarious and transitory, will be certain and permanent.

That you and I, and those who are near and dear to us, may be enabled to say with the poet, but in a higher and better sense, "omnes metus, strepitumque Acherontis avari subjecit pedibus," is the fervent wish of your affectionate friend,

JOHN JAY.

I hope our little boy advances in strength, and growth of body and mind.

FROM JOHN ADAMS.

Quincy, Jan. 9th, 1819.

DEAR SIR,

Sketches of the Life and Character of Patrick Henry, by William Wirt, of Richmond, Virginia, has been sent to me by Mr. Shaw, of the Athenæum. My family are reading it to me every evening, and though we have not finished it, we have proceeded far enough to excite an earnest desire to know your opinion of it.

There is in section fourth, page 108, a passage which no man now living but yourself can explain. I hope you have read the volume; but as it is possible you may not have seen it, the paragraph is this:

“A petition to the king, an address to the people of Great Britain, and a memorial to the people of British America, were agreed to be drawn. Mr. Lee, Mr. Henry, and others were appointed for the first; Mr. Lee, Mr. Livingston, and Mr. Jay for the two last. The splendour of their *debut* occasioned Mr. Henry to be designated by his committee to draw the petition to the king, with which they were charged, and Mr. Lee was charged with the address to the people of England. The last was first reported. On reading it, great disappointment was expressed in every countenance, and a dead silence ensued for some minutes. At length it was laid on the table for perusal and consideration till the next day; when first one member and then another arose, and paying some faint compliment to the composition, observed that there were still certain considerations not expressed, which should properly find a place in it. The address was therefore committed for amendment; and one prepared by Mr. Jay, and offered by Governor Livingston, was reported and adopted with scarcely an alteration. These facts were stated by a gentleman, to whom they were communicated by Mr. Pendleton and Mr. Harrison, of the Virginia delegation (except that Mr. Harrison erroneously ascribed the draught to Governor Livingston), and to whom they were afterward confirmed by Governor Livingston himself. Mr. Henry's draught of a petition to the king was equally unsuccessful, and was recommitted for amendment. Mr. John Dickinson (the author of the Farmer's Letters) was added to the committee, and a new draught prepared by him was adopted.”

This passage is not so luminous as many parts of the book; but as I understand it, I think it is not correct. There is no man now living who is able perfectly to correct it but yourself; and in my opinion, it is your conscientious duty to do it.

The question, "Who was the draughtsman of the address to the people of England?" however unimportant to the public it may appear at this day, certainly excited a sensation, a fermentation, and a schism in Congress at the time, and serious consequences afterward, which have lasted to this hour, and are not yet spended. I fear, but I do not know, that this animosity was occasioned by indiscretions of R. H. Lee, Mr. Samuel Adams, and some others of the Virginia delegates, by whom Adams was led into error. I never had a doubt that you were the author of that manly and noble address. But as the subject is now brought before the public by Mr. Wirt, and will excite speculation, you, who alone are capable of it, ought to explain it, and, as I know you will, if at all, without favour or affection.

I am, sir, with friendship as of old,

Your most respectful humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

Bedford, 31st January, 1818.

DEAR SIR,

I received your letter of the 9th by the mail which arrived here on the 24th inst.

I have not seen Mr. Wirt's book, nor heard of the "passage" in it, of which your letter contains a copy. You think that passage, as you understand it, is not correct, and observe, that as I am the only man remaining alive who can perfectly correct it, "in your opinion it is my conscientious duty to do it."

For your satisfaction, and pursuant to your opinion, I will proceed to give you a plain statement of facts. There are entries in the printed journals of Congress of 1774 which merit attention; and I think the extracts from that journal, which I shall introduce, afford inferences which militate against some of the incidents mentioned in the passage. That you may compare and examine both with the greater

ease to yourself, I will first insert the passage, and then the extracts.

“A petition to the king, an address to the people of Great Britain, and a memorial to the people of British America were agreed to be drawn. Mr. Lee, Mr. Henry, and others were appointed for the first; Mr. Lee, Mr. Livingston, and Mr. Jay for the *two* last. The splendour of their *debut* occasioned Mr. Henry to be designated by his committee to draw the petition to the king with which they were charged, and Mr. Lee was charged with the address to the people of England. The last was first reported. On reading it, great disappointment was expressed on every countenance, and a dead silence ensued for some minutes. At length it was laid on the table for perusal and consideration till the next day; when first one member, and then another arose, and, paying some faint compliment to the composition, observed that there were still certain considerations not expressed which should properly find a place in it. His address was therefore committed for amendment; and one prepared by Mr. Jay, and offered by Governor Livingston, was reported and adopted with scarcely an alteration. These facts are stated by a gentleman, to whom they were communicated by Mr. Pendleton and Mr. Harrison of the Virginia delegation (except that Mr. Harrison erroneously ascribed the draught to Governor Livingston), and to whom they were afterward confirmed by Governor Livingston himself. Mr. Henry’s draft of a petition to the king was equally unsuccessful, and was recommitted for amendment. Mr. John Dickinson (the author of the Farmer’s Letters) was added to the committee, and a new draught prepared by him was adopted.”

“Tuesday, October 11th, 1774.—Resolved unanimously, That a *memorial* be prepared to the people of *British America*, stating to them the necessity of a firm, united, and

invariable observation of the measures recommended by the Congress, as they tender the invaluable rights and liberties derived to them from the laws and constitution of their country.

“Also, that an *address* be prepared to the people of Great Britain.

“Ordered, That Mr. Lee, Mr. Livingston, and Mr. Jay be a committee to prepare a draught of the memorial and address.”

The committee assigned the *memorial*, which was first in order, and also deemed first in importance, to Mr. Lee. Mr. Livingston, who was my superior both in age and reputation, was desired to prepare the *address*. He declined it, and urged me to take it. I finally consented, and did write it.

“*Tuesday, October 18th, 1774.*—The committee appointed to prepare the *address* to the people of Great Britain brought in a draught, which was read and ordered to lie on the table for the perusal of the members, and to be taken into consideration to-morrow.

“*Wednesday, October 19th, 1774.*—The Congress resumed the consideration of the address to the people of Great Britain; and the same being debated by paragraphs, and sundry amendments made, the same was recommitted, *in order that the amendments may be taken in.*”

I was present in Congress, and attended to the proposed amendments. Mr. Lee (one of the committee) moved that the draught should be recommitted for the purpose mentioned in the journal; and for *that purpose* it was recommitted. The amendments were made the next day, and the draught was returned to Congress the ensuing morning.

“*Friday, October 21st, 1774.*—The address to the people

of *Great Britain* being brought in, and the amendments directed being made, the same was approved, and is as follows."

Is it probable that the committee found it *necessary* to assign both the *memorial* and the *address* to Mr. Lee, or that he would readily undertake that double task, or that notwithstanding his other avocations in and out of Congress, he could finish them *both* between the 11th October, when they were ordered, and the 19th, when the draught of the memorial was reported?

According to the journal, the draught of the address was recommitted, expressly for the purpose, and "*in order that the amendments might be taken in.*" Is it probable that the committee did, nevertheless, lay aside that draught and substitute a *new one*? How could they have rendered such a procedure reconcilable to the feelings of the writer of that draught, or compatible with their recent approbation of it, or consistent with the design and object of the recommitment? Could any of the members have been so negligent of delicacy and propriety, as to propose or concur in such a measure? Could the embarrassments and difficulties attending it have been surmounted between the *Wednesday*, when the address was recommitted, and the ensuing *Friday*, when (*with the amendments taken in*) it was read and approved?

The subsequent occurrences you mention have not escaped my recollection. I was informed, and I believe correctly, that one person in particular of those you specify, had endeavoured, by oblique intimations, to insinuate a suspicion that the address to the people of *Great Britain* was not written by me, but by Gov. Livingston. That gentleman repelled the insinuation. He knew and felt what was due to truth, and explicitly declared it.

Those persons are dead and gone. Their design did not succeed, and I have no desire that the memory of it should

survive them. As to the address or petition to the king—who wrote the draught that was reported and recommitted—how far it corresponded with the one that was adopted—whether Mr. Dickinson, after he was added to the committee, prepared an entire new draught, or only co-operated in amending the one then before the committee—are questions which you only, who have survived all the other members of that committee, can answer with certainty.

Considering who were the members of that committee, viz. yourself, Mr. Lee, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Henry, and Mr. Rutledge, I think the idea of a new draught cannot be correct. That Mr. Dickinson did write the subsequent or *second* address or petition to the king, I have no reason to doubt.

To prepare an acceptable draught of the *first* petition was no easy task. Instructions as to matters to be inserted in it were given to the committee; and some were proposed which occasioned much debate. You may remember that many of the members of that Congress were anxious that *too much* might not be done or said; and on the other hand, that there were many members who were anxious that *too little* might not be done or said. Hence there arose and prevailed a more than ordinary degree of solicitude and watchfulness, both as to the purport of subject-matter, and to the force and latitude of expressions. And hence also it may have happened, that (except the draught of a letter to the agents in England) every report made to that Congress received amendments of one kind or other, before they approved and adopted it.

Be pleased to present my best respects to Mrs. Adams. It gives me pleasure to reflect, that your friendship for me has from of “old” continued steadfast, and that my estimation of it has constantly animated the attachment with which I have so long been, and am, dear sir,

Your affectionate friend,

JOHN JAY.

TO JOHN MURRAY, JUN.

Bedford, 15th April, 1818.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

In my letter to you of the 16th October last, I hinted that I might perhaps write and send you a few more lines on the question, Whether war of every description is forbidden by the gospel?

I will now add some remarks to those which were inserted in my answer to your first letter. In that answer, the lawfulness of war, in certain cases, was inferred from those divine *positive* institutions which authorized and regulated it. For although those institutions were not dictated by the moral law, yet they cannot be understood to authorize what the moral law forbids.

The moral or natural law was given by the Sovereign of the universe to all mankind; with them it was coeval, and with them it will be coexistent. Being founded by infinite wisdom and goodness on essential right, which never varies, it can require no amendment nor alteration.

Divine positive ordinances and institutions, on the other hand, being founded on expediency, which is not always perpetual or immutable, admit of, and have received, alteration and limitation in sundry instances.

There were several divine *positive* ordinances and institutions at very early periods. Some of them were of limited obligation, as circumcision; others of them were of universal obligation, as the Sabbath, marriage, sacrifices, the particular punishment for murder.

The Lord of the *Sabbath* caused the day to be changed. The ordinances of Moses suffered the Israelites to exercise more than the original liberty allowed to marriage, but our Saviour repealed that indulgence. When sacrifices had answered their purpose as types of the great Sacrifice, &c., they ceased. The punishment for murder has undergone no alteration, either by Moses or by Christ.

I advert to this distinction between the moral law and positive institutions, because it enables us to distinguish the reasonings which apply to the one, from those which apply *only* to the other—ordinances being mutable, but the moral law always the same.

To this you observe, by way of objection, that the law was given by Moses, but that grace and truth came by Jesus Christ; and hence that even as it relates to the *moral law*, a more *perfect* system is enjoined by the gospel than was required under the law; which admitted of an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, tolerating a spirit of retaliation. And further, that if the moral law was the same now that it was before the flood, we must call in question those precepts of the gospel which prohibit some things *allowed of*, and practised by the patriarchs.

It is true that the law was given by Moses, not however in his individual or private capacity, but as the agent or instrument, and by the authority of the Almighty. The law demanded exact obedience, and proclaimed, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." The law was inexorable, and by requiring *perfect* obedience, under a penalty so inevitable and dreadful, operated as a school-master to bring us to Christ for *mercy*.

Mercy, and grace, and favour did come by Jesus Christ; and also that truth which verified the promises and predictions concerning him, and which exposed and corrected the various errors which had been imbibed respecting the Supreme Being, his attributes, laws, and dispensations. Uninspired commentators have dishonoured the law, by ascribing to it, in certain cases, a sense and meaning which it did not authorize, and which our Saviour rejected and reproved.

The inspired prophets, on the contrary, express the most exalted ideas of the law. They declare that the law of the Lord is *perfect*; that the statutes of the Lord are *right*;

and that the commandment of the Lord is *pure*; that God would *magnify* the law, and make it *honourable*, &c.

Our Saviour himself assures us, that he came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil. That whoever shall do and teach the commandments, shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven: that it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail. This certainly amounts to a full approbation of it. Even after the resurrection of our Lord, and after the descent of the Holy Spirit, and after the miraculous conversion of Paul, and after the direct revelation of the Christian dispensation to him, he pronounced this memorable encomium on the law, viz: "The law is *holy*, and the commandments *holy, just, and good.*"

It is true that one of the *positive* ordinances of Moses, to which you allude, did ordain retaliation, or in other words, a tooth for a tooth. But we are to recollect that it was ordained, not as a rule to regulate the conduct of private individuals towards each other, but as a legal penalty or punishment for certain offences. Retaliation is also manifest in the punishment prescribed for murder—life for life. Legal punishments are adjudged and inflicted by the law and magistrate, and not by unauthorized individuals. These and all other positive laws or ordinances established by Divine direction, must of necessity be consistent with the moral law. It certainly was not the design of the law or ordinance in question, to encourage a spirit of personal or private revenge. On the contrary, there are express injunctions in the law of Moses, which inculcate a very different spirit; such as these: "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people; but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." "Love the stranger, for ye were strangers in Egypt." "If thou meet thy enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him," &c. &c.

There is reason to believe that Solomon understood the

law in its true sense, and we have his opinion as to retaliation of injuries, viz: "Say not, I will recompense evil; but wait upon the Lord, and he will save thee." Again, "Say not, I will do to him as he hath done to me. I will render to the man according to his work." And again, "If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink; for thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee."

But a greater than Solomon has removed all doubts on this point. On being asked by a Jewish lawyer, which was the great commandment in the law, our Saviour answered, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the *first* and the great commandment, and the *second* is like unto it; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On *these two* commandments hang all the law and the prophets." It is manifest, therefore, that the love of God and the love of man are enjoined by the law; and as the genuine love of the one comprehends that of the other, the apostle assures us that "Love is the fulfilling of the *law*."

It is, nevertheless, certain, that erroneous opinions respecting retaliation, and who were to be regarded as *neighbours*, had long prevailed, and that our Saviour blamed and corrected those and many other unfounded doctrines.

That the patriarchs sometimes violated the moral law, is a position not to be disputed. They were men, and subject to the frailties of our fallen nature. But I do not know nor believe, that any of them violated the moral law by the authority or with the approbation of the Almighty. I can find no instance of it in the Bible. Nor do I know of any action done according to the moral law, that is censured or forbidden by the gospel. On the contrary, it appears to me that the gospel strongly enforces the whole moral law, and clears it from the vain traditions and absurd comments which had obscured and misapplied certain parts of it.

As, therefore, Divine ordinances did authorize just war—

as those ordinances were necessarily consistent with the moral law, and as the moral law is incorporated in the Christian dispensation, I think it follows, that the right to wage *just* and *necessary* war is admitted, and not abolished by the gospel.

You seem to doubt whether there ever was a *just* war, and that it would puzzle even Solomon to find one.

Had such a doubt been proposed to Solomon, an answer to it would probably have been suggested to him by a very memorable and interesting war which occurred in his day. I allude to the war in which his brother Absalom on the one side, and his father David on the other, were the belligerent parties. That war was caused by, and proceeded from "the lusts" of Absalom, and was horribly wicked. But the war waged against him by David, was not caused by, nor did proceed from "the lusts" of David, but was right, just, and necessary. Had David submitted to be dethroned by his detestable son, he would, in my opinion, have violated his moral duty and betrayed his official trust.

Although just war is not forbidden by the gospel in express terms, yet you think an implied prohibition of all war, without exception, is deducible from the answer of our Lord to Pilate, viz: "If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight," &c.

At the conclusion of the last supper, our Lord said to his disciples, "He that hath no sword, let him now sell his garment and buy one." They answered, "Lord, here are two swords." He replied, "It is enough."

It is not to be presumed that our Lord would have ordered swords to be provided, but for some purpose for which a sword was requisite, nor that he would have been satisfied with *two*, if more had been necessary.

Whatever may have been the purposes for which swords were ordered, it is certain that the use of one of those swords soon caused an event, which confirmed the subsequent defence of our Lord before Pilate, and also produced

other important results. When the officers and their band arrived, with swords and with staves, to take Jesus, they who were about him saw what would follow. "They said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?" It does not appear that any of the eleven disciples who were with him, except one, made the least attempt to defend him. But Peter, probably inferring from the order for swords, that they were now to be used, proceeded to "smite a servant of the high-priest, and cut off his right ear." Jesus (perhaps, among other reasons, to abate inducements to prosecute Peter for that violent attack) healed the ear.

He ordered Peter to put his sword into its sheath, and gave him two reasons for it. The *first* related to himself, and amounted to this, that he would make no opposition, saying, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink?" The *second* related to Peter, viz. they who take the sword, shall perish by the sword; doubtless meaning that they who take and use a sword, as Peter had just done, without lawful authority, and against lawful authority, incur the penalty and risk of perishing by the sword. This meaning seems to be attached to those words by the occasion and circumstances which prompted them. If understood in their unlimited latitude, they would contradict the experience and testimony of all ages, it being manifest that many military men die peaceably in their beds.

The disciples did believe and expect that Jesus had come to establish a *temporal* kingdom. "They trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." "They knew not the Scripture, that he must rise again from the dead; questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean." Even after his resurrection, they appear to have entertained the same belief and expectation; for on the very day he ascended, they asked him, "Lord, wilt thou at *this* time restore the kingdom to Israel?"

The order for swords, and the declaration that *two* were *enough*, tended to confirm that belief and expectation, and to inspire a confidence that he who had commanded the winds and the waves, and had raised the dead to life, was able, as well as willing, to render the *two* swords sufficient to vanquish his enemies. Could any thing less than such a firm belief and confidence have prompted eleven *such* men, and with only two swords among them, to offer to "smite with the sword" the armed band, which under officers appointed by the Jewish rulers, had come to apprehend their master?

Great must have been the disappointment and astonishment of the disciples, when Jesus unexpectedly and peaceably submitted to the power and malice of his enemies, directing Peter to sheath his sword, and hinting to him the danger he had incurred by drawing it: amazed and terrified, they forsook him and fled. This catastrophe so surprised, and subdued the intrepidity of Peter, as that he was no longer "ready to go with his master to prison and to death."

It seems that perplexity, consternation, and tumultuous feelings overwhelmed his faith and reflection, and that his agitations receiving fresh excitement from the danger and dread of discovery, which soon after ensued, impelled him with heedless precipitation to deny his Master. This denial proved bitter to Peter, and it taught him and others that spiritual strength can be sustained only by the spiritual bread which cometh down from heaven.

The Jews accused Jesus before Pilate of aspiring to the *temporal* sovereignty of their nation, in violation of the regal rights of Cæsar. Jesus, in his defence, admitted that he was King, but declared that his kingdom was not of *this* world. For the truth of this assertion, he appealed to the peaceable behaviour of his adherents, saying, "*If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I*

*should not be delivered to the Jews, but now is my kingdom not from hence."*

Pilate, who doubtless well knew what had been the conduct of Jesus, both before and at the time of his apprehension, was satisfied, but the Jews were not. They exclaimed, "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend; whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar." "We have no king but Cæsar."

You and I understand the words in question very differently. Is there the least reason to infer from the belief and conduct of the disciples, that they were restrained from fighting by the consideration that their Master's kingdom was *not of this world*? On the contrary, did they not believe and expect that he had come to restore one of the kingdoms of *this world* to Israel? The fact is, that they were ready and willing to fight. Did they not ask him, "Lord, shall we smite with the sword?" It was *his* will, therefore, and not *their* will, which restrained them from fighting; and for that restraint he assigned a very conclusive reason, viz. because his kingdom was not of this world.

To the advancement and support of his *spiritual* sovereignty over his *spiritual* kingdom, soldiers and swords, and corporeal exertions were inapplicable and useless. But, on the other hand, soldiers and swords, and corporeal exertions are necessary to enable the several temporal rulers of the states and kingdoms of this world, to maintain their authority and protect themselves and their people; and our Saviour expressly declared, that *if* his kingdom had been of *this world*, *then* would his servants fight to protect him; or in other words, that *then* and in *that* case, he would not have restrained them from fighting. The lawfulness of *such* fighting, therefore, instead of being denied, is admitted and confirmed by that declaration.

This exposition coincides with the answer given by John

the Baptist (who was "filled with the Holy Ghost") to the *soldiers* who asked him what they should do, viz. "Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and be *content* with your *wages*." Can these words be rationally understood as meaning that they should receive wages for *nothing*? Or, that when ordered to march against the enemy, they should refuse to proceed; or that, on meeting the enemy, they should either run away, or passively submit to be captured or slaughtered? This would be attaching a meaning to his answer very foreign to the sense of the words in which he expressed it.

Had the gospel regarded war as being in every case sinful, it seems strange that the apostle Paul should have been so unguarded, as in teaching the importance of *faith*, to use an argument which clearly proves the lawfulness of war, viz. "That it was through faith that Gideon, David, and others waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of aliens;" thereby confirming the declaration of David, that it was God who had "girded him with strength to battle; and had taught his hands to war, and his fingers to fight."

The gospel appears to me to consider the servants of Christ as having two capacities or characters, with correspondent duties to sustain and fulfil.

Being subjects of his *spiritual* kingdom, they are bound in that capacity to fight pursuant to his orders, with *spiritual* weapons, against his and their spiritual enemies.

Being also subjects, and partakers in the rights and interests of a temporal or worldly state or kingdom, they are in that capacity bound, whenever lawfully required, to fight with weapons in just and necessary war, against the *worldly* enemies of that state or kingdom.

Another view may be taken of the subject. The depravity which mankind inherited from their first parents, introduced wickedness into the world. That wickedness rendered human government necessary to restrain the vio-

lence and injustice resulting from it. To facilitate the establishment and administration of government, the human race became, in the course of Providence, divided into separate and distinct nations. Every nation instituted a government, with authority and power to protect it against domestic and foreign aggressions. Each government provided for the *internal* peace and security of the nation, by laws for punishing their offending subjects. The law of all the nations prescribed the conduct which they were to observe towards each other, and allowed war to be waged by an innocent against an offending nation, when rendered just and necessary by unprovoked, atrocious, and undressed injuries.

Thus two kinds of justifiable warfare arose—one against domestic malefactors; the other against foreign aggressors. The first being regulated by the law of the land; the second by the law of nations; and both consistently with the moral law.

As to the *first* species of warfare, in every state or kingdom, the government or executive ruler has, throughout all ages, pursued, and often at the expense of blood, attacked, captured, and subdued murderers, robbers, and other offenders. By force confining them in chains and in prisons; and by force inflicting on them punishment, never rendering to them good for evil; for that duty attaches to individuals in their personal or private capacities; but not to rulers or magistrates in their official capacities. This species of war has constantly and universally been deemed just and indispensable. On this topic the gospel is explicit. It commands us to obey the higher powers or ruler. It reminds us “that he beareth not the sword in vain;” that “he is the minister of God, and a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.” Now, if he is not to bear the *sword* in *vain*, it follows that he is to *use* it to execute wrath on evil doers, and consequently to draw blood and to kill on proper occasions.

As to the *second* species of warfare, it certainly is as reasonable and as right that a nation be secure against injustice, disorder, and rapine from without, as from within: and therefore that it is the right and the duty of the government or ruler, to use force and the sword to protect and maintain the rights of his people against evil doers of another nation. The reason and necessity of using force and the sword being the same in both cases, the right or the law must be the same also.

We are commanded to render to our government, or to our "Cæsar, the things that are Cæsar's;" that is, the things which belong to him, and not the things which do not belong to him. And surely this command cannot be construed to intend or imply, that we ought to render to the Cæsar of another nation more than belongs to him.

In case some powerful Cæsar should demand of us to receive and obey a king of his nomination, and unite with him in all his wars, or that he would commence hostilities against us; what answer would it be proper for us to give to such a demand? In my opinion we ought to refuse, and vigorously defend our independence by arms. To what other expedient could we have recourse? I cannot think that the gospel authorizes or encourages us, on such an occasion, to abstain from resistance, and to expect miracles to deliver us.

A very feeble unprepared nation, on receiving such a demand, might hesitate and find it expedient to adopt the policy intimated in the gospel; viz. "What king, going to war against another king, sitteth not down first and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand; or else he sendeth an embassy, and desireth conditions of peace," that is, makes the best bargain he can.

If the United States should unanimously **RESOLVE** never more to use the sword, would a certified copy of it prove to be an effectual Mediterranean passport? Would it

reform the predatory rulers of Africa, or persuade the successive potentates of Europe to observe towards us the conduct of *real* Christians? On the contrary, would it not present new facilities, and consequently produce new excitements to the gratification of avarice and ambition?

It is true, that even just war is attended with evils, and so likewise is the administration of government and of justice; but is that a good reason for abolishing either of them? They are means by which greater evils are averted. Among the various means necessary to obviate or remove, or repress, or to mitigate the various calamities, dangers, and exigences, to which in this life we are exposed, how few are to be found which do not subject us to troubles, privations, and inconveniences of one kind or other. To prevent the incursion or continuance of evils, we must submit to the use of those means, whether agreeable or otherwise, which reason and experience prescribe.

It is also true, and to be lamented, that war, however just and necessary, sends many persons out of this world who are ill prepared for a better. And so also does the law in all countries. So also does navigation and other occupations. Are they *therefore* all sinful and forbidden?

However desirable the abolition of all wars may be, yet until the morals and manners of mankind are greatly changed, it will be found impracticable. We are taught that national sins will be punished, and that war is one of the punishments. The prophets predict wars at so late a period as the restoration of the Israelites. Who or what can hinder the occurrence of those wars?

I nevertheless believe, and have perfect faith in the prophecy, that the time will come when "the nations will beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; when nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." But, does not this prophecy clearly imply, and give us plainly to un-

derstand, that in the *meanwhile*, and *until* the arrival of that blessed period, the nations will not beat their swords into ploughshares, nor their spears into pruning-hooks; that nation will not forbear to lift up sword against nation, nor cease to learn war?

It may be asked, are we to do nothing to hasten the arrival of that happy period? Literally, no created being can either accelerate or retard its arrival. It will not arrive sooner nor later than the appointed time.

There certainly is reason to expect, that as great providential events have usually been preceded and introduced by the intervention of providential means to prepare the way for them, so the great event in question will be preceded and introduced in like manner. It is, I think, more than probable, that the unexpected and singular co-operation, and the extraordinary zeal and efforts of almost all Christian nations to extend the light and knowledge of the gospel, and to inculcate its doctrines, are among those preparatory means. It is the duty of Christians to promote the prevalence and success of such means, and to look forward with faith and hope to the result of them.

But, whatever may be the time, or the means adopted by Providence for the abolition of war, I think we may, without presumption, conclude, that mankind must be prepared and fitted for the reception, enjoyment, and preservation of universal permanent peace, before they will be blessed with it. Are they as yet fitted for it? Certainly not. Even if it was practicable, would it be wise to disarm the good before "the wicked cease from troubling?" By what other means than arms and military force, can unoffending rulers and nations protect their rights against unprovoked aggressions from within and from without? Are there any other means to which they could recur, and on the efficacy of which they could rely? To this question I have not as yet heard, nor seen, a direct and precise answer.

These remarks would have been written and sent sooner, had my health been better. Expedition not being requisite, I attended to them only at intervals which allowed and invited me to do so.

We differ in opinion, and I am persuaded with equal sincerity.

With real esteem and regard, I remain,

Your friend,

JOHN JAY.

FROM JUDGE PETERS.

Belmont, Dec. 12th, 1815.

MY DEAR SIR,

Although our correspondence is rare, my most sincere regards for you are uninterrupted. I have outlived, and so have you, so many old friends and contemporaries, that the very few left are the more valuable for their scarcity; new acquaintances I make the most of, but old and valued friends delight me with solid enjoyments, more easily felt than described; and yet in what is called *society*, a bystander would suppose that I never had any other than the companions of the day. I seldom mix with what is now called *convivial society*; but though an inveterate water-drinker, I can keep pace with such society by *sympathy*. I live with my old friends (not seldom with you) as the Swedenborgians do with departed spirits. Strong attachment, and zealous recollections work up the predisposed fancy into a belief of *real presence*. It is a pleasing delusion, which gray-bearded scrutiny, and what is called rational investigation should never extinguish. It is a most agreeable and fascinating cullibility, whereof it is more wise than foolish to become the willing and unresisting dupe.

I have continued in my judicial employment more from habit than inclination, and it is at times burdensome, and always ill requited. I see Congress are about new-modelling the department, and what they will make of it, I do not

know (possibly they do not themselves know), nor do I feel much anxiety on the subject. The whole state of things is so different from what we in our day contemplated, that it is more surprising our judicial arrangements, formed in the early stage of our national existence, should have continued so long and so effectively, than that they should now be changed.

My attention to my judicial duty has abstracted me from my private affairs ; which are, however, free from the embarrassments which have overwhelmed many adventurers, who had better have been idle. My *thorough-bass* amusement consists in rural enjoyments, which have been more profitable to others than myself. I have given you a specimen of this kind of enjoyment by directing our fourth volume of *Memoirs* to be sent to you, and I hope it will arrive safely to your hands. There may not be much instruction, but we have assisted in raising our fellow-citizens to proper views of the real and substantial interests of our country. There is a most gratifying spirit every where on this subject, by which the rising generation may profit ; but it is too late in the day for either you or I to enjoy much of its advantages. So we thought, however, in our revolutionary exertions, and yet what a mass of prosperity and happiness have we lived to see accumulated in every quarter of our country ! When I carry my recollections back to my early knowledge of its husbandry, the contrast exhibited by its present improvement (yet but imperfect) fills me with most pleasing sensations.

There is a jealousy in our mother country still apparent of most of the rapid improvements we have arrived at ; and I have strong expectations that those in agriculture will ere long equal, if not exceed all others. I keep up a good understanding with the British agricultural people with whom I come in contact ; but it amuses me to perceive that, although many are liberal, many are otherwise. Some years ago we sent a volume of our *Memoirs* to Scotland.

It was very civilly received; but several of their leading agricultors took occasion to observe that we were an hundred years behind *them*, and even very unequal to *English* farming. So I left Sawney and John Bull to settle that point. I sent lately an American scythe and cradle, which they had not before seen; nor was it used in England. They received it graciously; and I had *civil* thanks from a vice-president of the Board of Agriculture; but he at the same time let me know that it was a '*Flemish*, and not an *American* implement. I desired my friend who transmitted the cold civility, to have it labelled "a *Flemish* implement, sent to England by the way of the *United States of America*!" There is an awkward instrument in Flanders containing the rudiments of our scythe and cradle, but as unequal to ours as their *ships* to those of our country; yet ours are *American* ships, and not a little envied and *squinted* at.

I have been lately reading, with great pleasure, the Life of our late distinguished friend Dr. Franklin. Have you read it? I see he glosses over in a letter to the then secretary for foreign affairs (Livingston) the affair of Vergennes sending his secretary to England, pending our negotiations in the treaty of peace. I think you told me *all about it*; and I have ever had different impressions from those the Dr. portrays. He says it was merely to ascertain whether or not the British ministry had serious intentions to make an equal, solid, and lasting peace with *us* and our *allies*. I have always believed there was an underplot in the business. I think something of this appears in your journal, which I assisted to read in Congress in 1782 and 3. Much bruit was made then by the French diplomacy, about your signing the preliminaries without previous notice to them; but I always thought you entirely in the right, not only as a security in so important a measure, but to guard against embarrassments, with reason apprehended from the French *mæuvres*. I voted against an unwarrantable philippic of cen-

sure, brought forward in Congress against your conduct, to please the French. I thought then, and do now, that it was a mean compliance. Our friend Madison, who was generally *then* with us, left his friends on that subject, and I never liked him *the better* for it.

I see Congress have rejected the claim of Beaumachi's representatives. All my recollections put them in the right in so doing. True, Silas Deane made an ostensible private contract with B. ; but I always was taught to believe him a mere *showman*, and that the supplies were a gift from France, which she could not openly then avow. The unaccounted *money*, about which much noise has been made, I always believed to have been devoted to secret service and *douceurs* to French agents, whose remunerations could not publicly appear. All or most of the articles went through my hands, or under my observation, when in the war office, and a more complete piece of *fripponerie* never was seen. Very many of the articles were worthless, and among them the brass cannon were old rampart pieces, only valuable for the metal, which was recast in our foundries. All these things, however, appear now as dreams. What is real, and lives longer than these transactions in my memory, is, that I am always, and have been, truly and affectionately yours,

RICHARD PETERS.

TO JUDGE PETERS.

Bedford, Jan. 25th, 1819.

DEAR SIR,

I have read your letter of the 12th ult. more than once. Mutuality of friendly feelings always affords gratification; and the kindness which pervades your letter has made its proper impressions.

As you are in the seventy-fifth year of your age, and I in the seventy-fourth of mine, our leases have expired. We are holding over, and others will soon occupy our places.

What to do, and where to go, would be perplexing questions, had not our beneficent Lessor offered us better and permanent habitations.

The death of an excellent daughter last spring was an afflicting event, and I feel it. Convinced that her happiness was augmented by it, I had no reason to grieve on *her* account. I derived consolation, as well as resignation, from reflecting that unerring wisdom had directed that dispensation, and that I was still blessed with the surviving children, who (like their sister) had never given me any other uneasiness than what had arisen from their sickness or afflictions.

Considering the times which have passed over us, I am glad you continued in office. Might not reports of some select cases decided in your court be useful? And would they not be more correctly prepared for the press by yourself than by others?

In my opinion, you did well to abstain from speculations. I thought so, and did so. It is, I believe, a just and not a new remark, that a proper education and proper habits, with a moderate share of property, form a better provision for a child, than that greater degree of wealth, which not unfrequently leads the unexperienced to idleness and its results.

I have looked into the book which you had the goodness to send me, and for which I thank you. I have read the address, and the notices for a young farmer. They will do good. Although unable to attend much to my own agricultural affairs, yet books and conversation on such subjects entertain me. I wish I could give you a good account of my Tunisian sheep, but the dogs have put it out of my power. I regret the loss they caused; but I regret it less than another loss, which more nearly affects my convenience. I allude to the death of a favourite mare, which I had rode for twenty-three years with great satisfaction. She lately died suddenly and unexpectedly, in the twenty-ninth year of her age. She was the third in succession,

which died in *my* service. The grandam was given to me by my father in 1765. That circumstance associated with various others in attaching me to them.

Agricultural societies are multiplying in this State. One has been formed in this county, and I am the *nominal* president; having only the will and not the ability to render active services. They have prepared a representation to the Legislature respecting agriculture, and the expediency of establishing an agricultural society for the whole State.

The traits of parsimonious and reluctant commendation observable in some of your British letters, give more intelligence than the writers meant to convey. As almost every vagrant leaf we pick up will inform us of the kind of tree which produced it, so these traits discover the feelings which originated them. It is a pity that such feelings should exist; but they are the offspring of human nature, which is not what it should be, nor what it once was. That Britons should reflect on our *former* and *present* state and condition, without regret, without mortification, and without apprehensions of rivalry and perhaps of danger, can hardly be expected. A doubt whether Britannia will always "rule the waves," cannot have a welcome reception in her mind. Our rapid progress in trade, navigation, and the arts, cannot correspond with her views and wishes. The strength resulting from our increasing resources and population, recommends a kind of policy and a degree of accommodation not congenial with the temper and propensities of such a nation. Superiors seldom see with complacency inferiors rising towards equality, and by *means* which may not improbably carry them beyond it. There is, nevertheless, great worth in Britain.

I have not seen Dr. Franklin's Life. As he concurred in the opinion of Count de Vergennes, that we should proceed to treat for peace with Great Britain without a previous admission of our independence, he may, in his own mind,

have acquitted the count of the motives to which I ascribed his giving us that opinion; and also have considered his subsequent explanations on that and certain other topics as satisfactory. After my return in 1784, I was informed of the debate in Congress on the proposed resolution which you mention. In my opinion, Mr. Madison voted consistently. I omit explaining this at present, for it cannot be done in a few words. My letter to Congress respecting the negotiation contained a full and correct statement of facts. Many years have since elapsed, but my sentiments relative to the policy adopted by France on that occasion continue unaltered.

But it is time to conclude, and I will do it by thanking you for affording me so agreeable an occasion to assure you of the esteem and regard, with which I continue

Your friend,

JOHN JAY.

TO JOHN MURRAY, JUN.

Bedford, 27th Feb., 1819.

I thank you, my good friend, for the kind letter (without date) which my son lately delivered to me, and for the pamphlets which were enclosed with it.

The observations of your friend (inserted in your letter) are well written. I am pleased with the writer. He reasons with ability, and abstains from declamation. The lawfulness of the invasion and conquest of Canaan, being made by express Divine command, is indubitable. It does not decide the question, whether *any* wars, unless *so commanded*, are permitted by the moral law, and consequently by the gospel. Such wars occurred both before and after the time of Moses, and are recorded in Scripture without reproof. It does not appear that the war of Abraham against the kings was made by *Divine* command, nor that Jacob was *commanded* to take "out of the hand of the

Amorite, with his sword and his bow," the portion which he gave to Joseph; nor does it appear that the war of David against Hanun, and divers other wars, were so commanded.

That the theocracy admitted of no other wars by the Israelites but such as were expressly commanded by the Almighty, is not clear to me. Had Solomon been of that opinion, I think he could not with propriety have taught that "by *counsel* thou shalt make war; and in a multitude of *counsellors* there is safety. Every purpose is established by *counsel*; and with *good advice* make war."

This, and other topics with which it is connected, open a wide field for investigation; but as the state of my health does not permit me to be more particular, I will only add, that when the arguments in favour of just and necessary war shall be shown to be fallacious, I shall not only think, but also act accordingly.

The extract from William Penn forms a useful tract; and among other reasons, because it declares that "the Scriptures were given forth by holy men of God in divers ages, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." I observe that this great truth is also inculcated by the trustees of the African Free School in their address.

I did hope to have found in your letter some tidings respecting your brother. When you write to him, assure him of my esteem and regard; and be pleased to accept the like assurance from

Your friend,

JOHN JAY.

TO DANIEL RAYMOND.

Bedford, 21st December, 1819.

SIR,

I received by the last mail the pamphlet on "the Missouri Question," which you did me the favour to send.

The remarks and statements contained in it place the

pernicious influence of slavery on the welfare of our country in conspicuous and impressive-points of view.

The obvious dictates both of morality and policy teach us, that our free nation cannot encourage the extension of slavery, nor the multiplication of slaves, without doing violence to their principles, and without depressing their power and prosperity.

It appears to me desirable, that your remarks and statements, as well as the excellent arguments of Mr. King, should be widely diffused; they will have a strong tendency to render public opinion on this very important subject correct and settled.

Accept my acknowledgments for this mark of attention, and for the inducements which prompted it.

I am, sir,

Your obliged and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM JUDGE PETERS.

Belmont, 25th November, 1820.

DEAR SIR,

Every occurrence in which you have shared, or originated, seems, by some strange perversion, to be misunderstood or misstated by the present generation, when some favourite individual or topic induces the obliquity. Although I give Mr. Adams his full share of merit in the affair of the Count de Vergennes' manœuvring with the British administration on the subject of our treaty of 1783, yet I have felt indignant that your name should have been omitted in the Massachusetts' Conventional account of the matter; and Mr. Adams held out as the principal figure, when you should have been the prominent and leading portrait in the group. I am sure Mr. Vaughan will not justify this statement of the transaction, though he is alluded to as confirming it by one of the speakers in the Massachusetts' Convention. His account of it to me was exactly

as you stated it in your letter to Congress, which I saw and read at the time of its being the subject of our consideration; when, as I wrote to you, the unjustifiable vote was taken as to the unmerited censure of proceeding without the concurrence of the French ministry, in our adjustment with Great Britain.

In your letter to me, in answer to my relation of what passed at this place in a conversation with Mr. B. Vaughan, a year or more ago, in relation to the affair, and when I told you he confirmed my recollections on the subject, you only refer to your letter to Congress. I think some additional statement of facts should be left, lest the archives of the office of state may suffer the catastrophe which destroyed all the records of transactions in the war office. The truth of history depends on fair and correct relations of the conduct of individuals to whom public transactions were committed. The biography of those individuals is one thing, the national character is another; but both are united in the inquiry on this subject.

Among the pleasures of memory (which has many pains) the recollection of old friendships is one of the most delightful. Among these, my remembrances of your personal regard is one of the most prominent gratifications. Whenever any thing turns up in which you were concerned, all my sensibilities recur.

I begin to feel some of the infirmities of age; but, in general, am highly favoured with good health. The most extraordinary depression of property is no cordial to landed proprietors; but those who will soon occupy a small portion, and leave their extensive possessions behind them, need not much deplore the "hard times" which have fallen on us. The friends of *peace* have nothing to encourage them, when universal peace brings along with it universal privation, and much distress to individuals. But we have wantoned in prosperity: and cannot bear the check

which circumstances have given to our career—*festina lente* must hereafter be our motto. I trust you enjoy as much health as you have heretofore experienced, though I cannot flatter myself that it is perfect. My best wishes constantly attend you; and I beg you to be assured of the sincere regard with which I am always

Affectionately yours,  
RICHARD PETERS.

P.S. I have just got home from the drudgery of a long circuit court, and am not the better for the campaign. Washington has begun his return to Mount Vernon, much broken down. He came convalescent; having had a severe attack of an illness which pervaded all the country in his vicinity. He must renew his stamina, or he will not reach the period of life to which you and I have arrived.

TO JUDGE PETERS.

Bedford, 26th December, 1820.

I thank you cordially, my good and constant friend, for your letter of the 25th ult. It affords me no little gratification. We grow old, but our hearts retain their warmth.

The perversion and obliquity you notice has not been recent nor unexpected. Men who are ardent in the pursuit of influence and its fruits, and more attentive to the prosecution than to the propriety of their schemes, usually become and remain hostile to those who steadfastly disapprove of their manœuvres. Instead of regulating their hostility by truth and candour, they generally find it convenient to recur to perversion and obliquity.

The conventional statement to which you allude, was doubtless devised and formed, in the manner which its projectors deemed to be best accommodated to the objects they had in view. So many years have elapsed since the negotiations at Paris, that only a few individuals among the

present members of any of our popular assemblies, probably possess ample and accurate knowledge of those negotiations.

On considering your hint of my making some statement of facts relative to them, in addition to my letter to Congress, which, you observe, may (like the papers of the war office) be accidentally destroyed, I think that precaution will not be necessary. I have a book in which are entered that and all my other official letters to Congress.

An accurate and well-written history of the United States, down to the conclusion of the late war, is desirable. But my expectations on that head are not sanguine. Time is daily obscuring and diminishing the materials, and the task becoming more and more difficult. The marks of talent and rectitude which appear in the *Life of Washington*, by Judge Marshall, have induced me to regret that he had not commenced such a history, and incorporated that life in it. The mass of information he has collected continues to afford facilities for such a work, and it would more than answer the purpose of a new edition of the other. Whoever may undertake it, would, in my opinion, do well to give it the advantage of frequent revision, and postpone the publication until a period when the events and circumstances related in it, had ceased to produce personal and political excitement.

I rejoice in your continuing to enjoy good health. I will not say with the Spaniards, "may you live a thousand years;" for that would postpone greater blessings. The *name* and character of Judge *Washington* interest me in his welfare. I hope he will be restored to health. The prevailing disease which attacked him, I suspect, was the same which visited us—influenza. Few families here escaped. I have had it, but not severely; it has left a cough, which still gives me some trouble. Although too feeble to go often beyond the piazza, yet I experience no depression of spirits, nor frequent returns of acute pain.

Here also the distress of the *times* is felt very sensibly. Habits of expense, unproductive speculations, and debts injudiciously contracted, press hard both upon debtors and creditors. How long this state of things will continue, or how much good or evil will eventually result from it, cannot now be calculated. They who hope for the best and prepare for the worst, will doubtless mitigate some of their troubles, and probably obviate the occurrence of some others.

God bless you, my dear sir.

Yours, affectionately,

JOHN JAY.

TO GEORGE A. OTIS.

Bedford, Westchester County, N. Y., }  
13th Jan., 1821. }

SIR,

I have received your letter of the 23d ult. expressing a desire that Botta's History and your Translation of it may have my approbation; and also that I would mention to you the most authentic of the documents which are before the public, relative to the negotiations at Paris in 1782.

Having, as yet, received and read *only* the *first* volume of the History, I cannot form, and consequently cannot express, an opinion of the *whole* work.

As to the *first* volume, there are in it certain assertions, representations, and suggestions, of which there are some which I believe to be *erroneous*, and others which I suspect to be *inaccurate*. Being too feeble either to write or to read much at a time without fatigue, I forbear to enumerate them. I will nevertheless, for your satisfaction, select and notice one of the most important, viz. That anterior to the revolution, there existed in the colonies a desire of independence.

The following extracts respect this topic: viz.

Page 10.—“The love of the sovereign and their ancient country, which the first colonists might have retained in their new establishments, gradually diminished in the hearts of their descendants.”

Page 11.—“The *greater part* of the colonists had heard nothing of Great Britain, excepting that it was a distant kingdom, from which their ancestors had been barbarously expelled.”

Page 12.—“As the means of restraint became almost illusory in the hands of the government, there must have arisen and gradually increased in the minds of the Americans, the hope, and with it the desire, to shake off the yoke of English superiority.” “The colonists supported impatiently the superiority of the British government.”

Page 15.—“Such was the state of the English colonies in America; such the *opinions* and *dispositions* of those who inhabited them, *about the middle of the eighteenth century.*” “It was impossible that they should have remained ignorant of what they were capable; and that the progressive development of national pride should not have rendered the British yoke *intolerable.*”

Page 33.—“Already those who were the most zealous for liberty, or the most ambitious, had formed, in the secret of their hearts, the resolution to shake off the yoke of England, whenever a favourable occasion should present. This design was encouraged by the *recent* cession of Canada.”

Page 199.—“The colonists looked upon it (the Congress of 1774) as a convention of men who, in some mode or other, were to deliver their country from the perils that menaced it. The greater part believed that their ability, &c. would enable them to obtain from the government a removal of the evils that oppressed them, and the re-establishment of the ancient order of things. Some others cherished the belief that they would find means to conduct the American nation to that independence which was the first and most ardent of their aspirations; or rather the

sole object of that intense passion which stung and tormented them night and day.”

Page 314.—“Both (Putnam and Ward) had declared themselves too openly in favour of independence. The *Congress desired* indeed to procure it, but withal in a propitious time.”

Page 388.—“Thus ceased, as we have related, the royal authority in the different provinces. It was replaced progressively by that of the people; that is, by Congresses or Conventions extraordinary, that were formed in each colony. But this was deemed insufficient by those who *directed* the affairs of America; their real object being *independence,*” &c.

Explicit professions and assurances of allegiance and loyalty to the sovereign (especially since the accession of King William), and of affection for the mother country, abound in the journals of the colonial Legislatures, and of the Congresses and Conventions, from early periods to the second petition of Congress in 1775.

If these professions and assurances were sincere, they afford evidence more than sufficient to invalidate the charge of our desiring and aiming at independence.

If, on the other hand, these professions and assurances were factitious and deceptive, they present to the world an unprecedented instance of long continued, concurrent, and detestable duplicity in the colonies. Our country does not deserve this odious and disgusting imputation. During the course of my life, and until after the second petition of Congress in 1775, I never did hear any American of any class, or of any description, express a wish for the independence of the colonies.

Few Americans had more, or better means and opportunities of becoming acquainted with the sentiments and dispositions of the colonists, relative to public affairs, than Dr. Franklin. In a letter to his son, dated the 22d March,

1775, he relates a conversation which he had with Lord Chatham in the preceding month of August. His lordship having mentioned an *opinion* prevailing in England, that America aimed at setting up for herself as an *independent* state, the Dr. thus expressed himself: "I assured him, that having more than once travelled almost from one end of the continent to the other, and kept a great variety of company, eating, drinking, and conversing with them freely, I never had heard in any conversation from any person, drunk or sober, the least expression of a wish for a separation, or a hint that such a thing would be advantageous to America."

It does not appear to me necessary to enlarge further on this subject. It has always been and still is my opinion and belief, that our country was prompted and impelled to independence by *necessity*, and not by *choice*. They who know how we were then circumstanced, know from whence that necessity resulted.

It would, indeed, be extraordinary, if a foreigner, remote (like Mr. Botta) from the best sources of authentic information, should, in writing such a history, commit no mistakes. That gentleman doubtless believed his narrations to be true, but it is not improbable that he sometimes selected his materials with too little apprehension of error, and that some of his informers were too little scrupulous. This remark derives a degree of weight from the following passage in the History, viz. General Montgomery "left a wife, the object of all his tenderness, with *several children*, still *infants*, a spectacle for their country, at once of pity and admiration. The state, from gratitude towards their *father*, distinguished them with every mark of kindness and protection." I have been acquainted with General Montgomery's widow from my youth. The fact is, that she never had a child.

In making the translation, attention has doubtless been paid to the rule, that a translator should convey into his

translation, with perspicuity and precision, the ideas of his author, and no others, and express them, not literally, but in well-adapted classical language. How far your translation is exactly correct, I am an incompetent judge; for not understanding the language of the original, I cannot examine and compare the translation with it. Of the style and manner of the translation, I think well.

Which are the most *authentic* documents before the public, relative to the negotiations at Paris in 1782, is a question which I am not in capacity to answer. Many years have elapsed since I have read any of them, and others have since been published which I have not seen. Without a previous and careful examination of each of them, it would be rash and unfair to give a preference to either.

On receiving your *first* letter, I conjectured that you was of the respectable family of your name in Massachusetts; and that conjecture appears from your *last* to have been well founded. If, in going from Philadelphia to Boston, you should not find it inconvenient to take the road through this town, you will meet with a welcome reception from

Your obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM GEORGE ALEXANDER OTIS.

Quincy, 19th February, 1822.

SIR,

I did not receive your very kind and very gratifying communication of the 13th January, 1821, until after I had rejoined my family in this place; and consequently, not till after it was too late to profit, in passing homeward, of your very obliging permission to pay you my respects personally; a satisfaction which I regret in proportion to the just sense I have of its value.

Your remarks on the first volume of Botta, confirmed as they were by Presidents Adams and Jefferson, were com-

municated to the reviewers of my translation of that author, and were by them introduced into their account of the work published in the North American Review for July, 1821.

An apprehension of appearing to press with too little consideration on your indulgent courtesy, has hitherto deterred me from soliciting your judgment of the remaining volumes. The prospect, however, of an approaching call for another edition, induces me to hazard the prayer that if your health and leisure admit, you would have the complaisance to favour me with any remarks which may have occurred to you for the interest of truth, relative to the second and third volumes of this history.

With respect to the animadversions which you did me the honour to address to me upon the first volume, and which I took the liberty to communicate to the late Presidents Adams and Jefferson, the former of these gentlemen wrote me as follows :

“I cannot refrain from expressing the pleasure I have received from the reasoning of Mr. Jay upon the passage in Botta, ‘that anterior to the revolution there existed in the colonies a desire of independence.’ There is great ambiguity in this expression, ‘there existed in the colonies a desire of *independence*.’ It is true, there always existed in the colonies a desire of independence of parliament in the articles of internal taxation and internal policy, and a very general, if not an universal opinion, that they were constitutionally entitled to it, and as general a determination, if possible, to maintain and defend it ; but there never existed a desire of independence of the crown, or of general regulations of commerce, for the equal and impartial benefit of all parts of the empire. It is true, there might be times and circumstances in which an individual or a few individuals might entertain and express a wish, that America was independent in all respects ; but these were “*rari nantes in gurgite vasto*.” For example, in one thousand seven hundred and fifty-six, seven, and eight, the conduct of the

British Generals Shirley, Braddock, Loudon, Webb, and Abercrombie, was so absurd, disastrous, and destructive, that a very general opinion prevailed that the war was conducted by a mixture of ignorance, treachery, and cowardice; and *some persons* wished we had nothing to do with Great Britain for ever. Of this number, I distinctly remember, I was myself one; fully believing that we were able to defend ourselves against the French and Indians, without any assistance or *embarrassments* from Great Britain. In fifty-eight and fifty-nine, when Amherst and Wolfe had changed the fortune of the war, by a more able and faithful conduct of it, I again rejoiced in the name of Briton, and should have rejoiced in it to this day, had not the king and parliament committed high treason and rebellion against America, as soon as they had conquered Canada and made peace with France. That there existed a general desire of independence of the crown, in any part of America, before the revolution, is as far from truth as the zenith is from the nadir. The encroaching disposition of Great Britain, it was early foreseen by many wise men in all the States, would one day attempt to enslave them by an unlimited submission to parliament, and rule them with a rod of iron; that this attempt would produce resistance on the part of America, and an awful struggle, was also foreseen, but dreaded and deprecated as the greatest calamity that could befall them. For my own part, there was not a moment during the revolution when I would not have given every thing I possessed for a restoration to the state of things before the contest began, provided we could have had a sufficient security for its continuance," &c. &c.

Mr. Jefferson says, in fewer words, "I confirm, by my belief, Mr. Jay's criticisms on the passages quoted from Botta. I can answer for its truth from this State southwardly, and northwardly I believe to New York, for which State Mr. Jay himself is a competent witness. What, eastward of that, might have been the dispositions towards

England before the commencement of hostilities, I know not; before that I never had heard a whisper of a disposition to separate from Great Britain; and after that, its possibility was contemplated with affliction by all," &c.

With many acknowledgments for the attentions with which you have deigned to honour my undertaking, and the encouraging tone with which you were pleased to cheer me on to its accomplishment, I pray you to be assured of the profound veneration and perfect esteem of, sir,

Your much obliged, and most humble servant,

GEORGE ALEXANDER OTIS.

TO JUDGE PETERS.

Bedford, 12th March, 1821.

DEAR SIR,

My letter to you of the 26th December last, contained some remarks relative to the perversions and obliquities which you had noticed, and which I observed were neither *recent* nor *unexpected*. In that letter, there was not room for explanatory details. Those remarks were therefore concise and general. To supply that deficiency is the design of this letter.

These perversions and obliquities began on the receipt of a letter which I wrote to Congress, and of which the following is a copy.

[*Here was inserted the letter of 20th Sept., 1781, relative to the instruction to the American commissioners appointed to negotiate the treaty of peace. See vol. i. p. 121.*]

This letter was written under the influence of indignant feelings, and in some respects with too little of deliberate consideration. The impressions it made on those who had originated and urged the *instruction* mentioned in it, may easily be conceived.

That this instruction was more complimentary than wise, was afterward evinced by the circumstances which constrained the American commissioners at Paris to disobey

it. That disobedience gave additional excitement to the displeasure and to the complaints of the French and their consociates. Nor were they pleased with the implied approbation of that disobedience, which resulted from my appointment to the office of secretary for foreign affairs, before my arrival in 1784. From time to time after my return, I was informed of various incidents which showed that their malevolence was far from being dormant.

The presumptuous attempts of the *republican* minister Genet, to facilitate the designs of France at the hazard of our peace and neutrality, gave occasion to the measures of President Washington on that subject. Disappointed and irritated by these impediments, Genet and his partisans indulged themselves in animadversions on the administration and its advocates, which were neither candid nor decorous.

The treaty with England in 1794, did not accord with the views and wishes of France, nor with the views and wishes of sundry individuals among us. Although the strenuous efforts made to defeat it did not succeed, yet the feelings and motives which prompted those efforts continued to operate.

Certain politicians, desirous to give a new direction to public opinion, finally succeeded in forming a party for the purpose, and in introducing a policy varying from that which President Washington and his *friends* had preferred. Those friends were not regarded with a friendly eye.

They who censured the precipitate commencement, and the unsuccessful conduct of the late war with England, incurred the resentment of those by whom these errors were committed.

Among those who had been active federalists, there were individuals who, at subsequent periods, were induced to think it *expedient* for them to join the opposing party. They who *thus* pass from one side to the other, are apt to mistake cunning for wisdom, and to act accordingly.

These details will suffice to explain the concise remarks in my letter. *Many* more might be added, and I could fill

much paper with apposite anecdotes; but I forbear to enlarge on topics which (*mutatis mutandis*) the history of Greece and other countries, as well as observation and experience, have rendered familiar to us both.

In the course of my public life, I have endeavoured to be uniform and independent; having, from the beginning of it in 1774, never asked for an office or a vote, nor declined expressing my sentiments respecting such important public measures as, in my opinion, tended to promote or retard the welfare of our country.

You will, I am persuaded, pardon this egotism, and believe me to be, dear sir,

Your constant and affectionate friend,

JOHN JAY.

TO LINDLEY MURRAY, YORK, ENGLAND.

Bedford, 24th April, 1821.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

It gives me pleasure to learn from my son, that, in a letter lately received by your nephew, you made inquiries respecting me.

We have both experienced afflicting dispensations. Your portion of health has for a long time been diminished; and I have not had a well day for the last twelve years. You have been deprived of an excellent brother, who was an excellent man; and I of several relations, and particularly of an amiable and affectionate daughter. It is a comfort to hope and believe, that such dispensations answer merciful purposes, and that the time will come when we shall rejoice in having been reminded by adversity, that temporal enjoyments are transient.

The winter having been more cold than common, has confined me to the house during the course of it; and the weather this spring has not yet been so mild as to admit of my going abroad without risk. Although my old complaint has gradually reduced me to a state of incurable debility, yet

I seldom suffer from acute pain, except occasionally from rheumatism. In various respects, I have abundant reason to be thankful.

We have both passed the usual term of human life, or (as the lawyers say) our leases have expired, and we are now holding over. To be thus circumstanced, is not very important to those who expect to remove from their present abodes to better habitations, and to enjoy them in perpetuity. That we may both be, and continue to be, numbered with these, is the sincere desire of

Your affectionate friend,

JOHN JAY.

TO E. A. BROWN, GOVERNOR OF OHIO.

Bedford, 30th April, 1821.

SIR,

I have received, and thank you for, the interesting report of the joint committee of both houses of your Legislature, relative to certain proceedings of the Bank of the United States, which you were so obliging as to send me.

Controversies between the national and a state government, or any of their respective departments, are to be regretted. It is desirable that the one which occasioned this report, should be brought to an amicable and satisfactory termination; and that the limits which bound the authorities of the national and state governments be well ascertained and observed.

However extensive the constitutional power of a government to impose taxes may be, I think it should not be so exercised as to impede or discourage the lawful and *useful* industry and exertions of individuals. Hence, the prudence of taxing the products of beneficial labour, either mental or manual, appears to be at least questionable.

Whether taxation should extend only to property, or only to income, or to both, are points on which opinions have not been uniform. I am inclined to think, that both

should not be taxed. If the first is preferred, then tax the land and stock of a farmer, but not his crops; tax his milch-cows, but not their milk, nor the butter and cheese made of it, whether the same be sent to market or consumed in his family. Tax the real and personal estate of a physician and a lawyer, but not the conjectural and varying profits they derive from the skilful and industrious exercise of their professions, &c. &c.

On this and similar subjects, there will be different opinions. Our minds are probably as little alike as our features; and it is not uncommon for men of unquestionable talents and candour to take opposite sides of the same question: neither of them being culpable, both are entitled to allowances for the risk of committing mistakes, to which we are all more or less exposed.

It is an agreeable circumstance that prosperity attends you; and permit me to add, that for its continuance and increase, you have the best wishes of

Sir, your obliged and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM NOAH WEBSTER.

Amherst, Mass., Nov., 1821.

SIR,

When I began the compilation of a large Dictionary of the English language, I limited my views chiefly to a correction of such errors as had escaped former compilers, and the supply of such new terms as have sprung from modern improvements in science. But in searching for the originals of English words, I soon found the field of etymology had been imperfectly explored; and one discovery succeeding another, my curiosity was excited to persevere in the pursuit. At length, finding no safe clew to conduct me through the labyrinth, I adopted a new plan of investigation—that of examining and comparing the primary elements, articu-

lations, or consonants of words in twenty different languages or dialects; the vowels having been found so mutable as to be of no use.

The result of this examination, has been the formation of a synopsis of radical words in more than twenty languages, which is complete, or nearly so. This will probably form a quarto, and be an appendix to the dictionary. This has occupied about ten years; but I do not, and I think the world will not regret the delay which this has occasioned; for if I am not deceived, the discoveries proceeding from this investigation will be quite important, and as new in Europe as in America. This synopsis exhibits a vast number of affinities between the languages examined, which have never before been detected. But what I think of more value, this investigation has developed, in a multitude of words, the primary sense of the root, which has not hitherto been known. There is a primary or radical sense of every verb, from which all its significations in customary use, are naturally and easily deducible; and from an ignorance of this sense, and the manner in which men have proceeded from the literal to the metaphorical significations, the most learned critics have often been perplexed in determining the particular sense of words. For instance, a Hebrew word signifies to *bless* and to *curse*. With the knowledge of the primary sense, these difficulties vanish.

The languages of which I have made a synopsis, are the Chaldaic, Syriac, Arabic, Samaritan, Hebrew, Ethiopic, Persian, Irish (Hiberno Celtic), Armoric, Anglo Saxon, German, Dutch, Swedish, Danish, Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, French, Russian, with the English.

I am now proceeding with the dictionary, and I am engaged in the letter H. Making my past progress the basis of calculation, it must require the constant labour of *four years* to complete the work, even if my health should be continued. For this blessing I rely tranquilly on the good-

ness and forbearance of that Being, whose favour I desire to seek in the way which he has prescribed, and which I trust I value above any temporal good.

But I did not begin my studies early enough. I am now sixty-three years of age, and after this age, a small portion only of active life remains. If, however, I should not be permitted to finish the work begun, the synopsis will enable some other person to pursue the plan with advantage, so that my labour will not be lost to my country.

I have thought, that after submitting my MSS. to able judges, if they should think the work to have merit enough to command a sale in England, I may visit that country, and attempt to sell the copy there first; and indeed revise the work at Oxford. But on this I am not determined. What course I shall pursue is not certain. I am contented to leave the event to that good Providence which has hitherto supported me.

The evening before your letter arrived, I was conversing respecting you, sir; and I said to my family, that there are few men whom I wish so much to see as Gov. Jay. If our lives should be spared till next summer, I will make an effort to visit you. However this may be, I shall never forget your public services, nor your private friendship for,

Sir, your most obliged and obedient servant,

NOAH WEBSTER.

TO NOAH WEBSTER.

Bedford, 3d December, 1821.

SIR,

I have received your letter of the 8th ultimo, and a subsequent one not dated. Your Dictionary will doubtless derive utility and reputation from the extensive investigations you mention. The assiduity with which you have for many years persevered, and still persevere, in accomplishing that arduous task, will, I hope, be followed by results, not only beneficial to the public, but also to yourself.

There are gentlemen in this country by whom, I presume, judicious criticisms and friendly offices would be readily afforded. In case a further revision should be undertaken with zeal and good-will, at Oxford or Cambridge, and terminate with explicit commendation, it would excite attention both in Britain and America, and produce useful consequences.

To whatever persons the perusal of the manuscripts may be committed, permit me to hint that they should be *very legible*. This remark is suggested by the recollection of an incident which occurred many years since. The author of a large manuscript, written in an indistinct hand, requested a certain gentleman to favour him with his opinion of it. The gentleman, after a while, returned it, with some polite general observations of little importance. It seems he "had neither time nor patience to decipher much of it."

Should circumstances occur to render it highly probable that your attending a revision in England would eventually promote sales in both countries, or ensure a good price for the copy, the expense incurred by it might be more than compensated. As several years are still necessary to *finish* the work, and as occurrences may in the mean time create objections or afford facilities which cannot now be foreseen, the question, what posterior measures would be advisable, may probably be more easily answered at a future day than at present.

Your intention to favour me with a visit next summer gives me pleasure. Whether our lives will be prolonged to that period, depends on that good Providence on which you happily and wisely rely, and whose beneficence I hope you will continue to experience.

I am, sir,  
Your friend and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

TO EDWARD LIVINGSTON.

Bedford, 28th July, 1822.

SIR,

On the 20th inst. I received a copy of your report to the General Assembly of Louisiana, under a cover directed to me. To whom I am indebted for it, does not appear; the impression of the seal, which is that of your family, leads me to conjecture that you have had the goodness to send it. There are various important remarks and reflections in it which I believe to be just; and there are others whose weight I cannot venture to estimate, without more thought and investigation than the state of my health admits of. I will, however, take the liberty of suggesting a few hints on two of the topics.

That the government of a State should have authority to appoint "particular days for rendering thanks to God" for any signal blessing, or imploring his assistance "in any public calamity," is certainly proper. But, can any of our governments be rightfully restrained from providing for the observance of the *Sabbath*, which the Sovereign of the universe has instituted, and which our Saviour has assured us "was made for man?"

Again—Can any government be justifiable in exempting murderers from the punishment of death, in opposition to the positive declaration of the Almighty to Noah, and through him to all his posterity, that "whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed;" not, I presume, at the discretion of private individuals, but under the cognizance and by the authority of government?

Accept my thanks for this mark of friendly attention.

I am, sir,

Your obliged and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

## FROM GENERAL LAFAYETTE.

Monticello, Nov. 10th, 1824.

MY DEAR SIR,

As soon as I found myself once more on the happy shore of America, one of my first inquiries was after you, and the means to get to my old friend. The pleasure to see your son was great indeed; but I regretted the distance, engagements, and duties which obliged me to postpone the high gratification to meet you after so long an absence. Since that time, I have been paying visits and receiving welcomes, where every sort of enjoyments and sights exceeding my own sanguine expectations, have mingled with the feelings of a lively and profound gratitude.

From you, my dear sir, and in the name of Congress, I was last honoured with a benevolent farewell. Now, I am going to Washington city, the constitutional forms having changed, to await the arrival of the members of the Houses, and be introduced to each of them, with my thanks for their kind invitation to this our American land.

Your letter reached me on my way through a part of the States; I wish I could myself bear the answer, or tell you when I can anticipate a visit to you; but waiting longer would not enable me to know it, at least, for some time. I therefore beg you to receive the grateful respects of my son, and the expression of most affectionate sentiments from your old revolutionary companion and constant friend,

LAFAYETTE.

## TO PETER VAN SCHAACK.

Bedford, 23d Jan., 1827.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your friendly letter of the 27th ult. It gives me pleasure to reflect that our mutual esteem and

regard have, from an early period, been constantly productive of cordiality and gratification.

A kind Providence has extended our lives to the commencement of another year. Very few of our early associates remain with us. Our abode here is merely "pro hac vice," and our departure is then to place us in a state of eternal *good or evil*. That *good* can only be obtained by means of our merciful Redeemer, who was pleased to declare "without me, ye can do nothing."

Although I have long been in a state of debility, yet it was lately so increased by an additional complaint, as caused me to delay preparing a few lines to you more seasonably.

That you and your family may always be blessed with beneficial prosperity, be assured, is the wish of my children, and also

Of your affectionate friend,

JOHN JAY.

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## EXTRACTS

### FROM LETTERS OF JOHN JAY TO HIS CHILDREN.

"I have had the pleasure of receiving your letter of the 15th of last month. It is natural that you should have more to say than would be prudent to write: I am glad you think so, and I hope it will occur to you whenever you begin to write a letter. It is better not to write, than to write what ought not to be written. Letters sometimes miscarry; and sometimes are inspected by persons whom we have no reason to trust; and sometimes our correspondents are less discreet and much more communicative than they should be; for all these reasons we should be cautious what we write, and reserve confidential matters for confidential conversation. Even in this, circumspection is

necessary; for there are many persons who, although friendly and honourable, are in the habit of imprudently talking about any thing and every thing, to everybody and before anybody."

"It was not quite prudent in you to mention a certain circumstance in your letter, in such explicit and strong terms. There is a wide difference between confiding sentiments to me, and confiding sentiments to a letter to me. Letters not unfrequently miscarry, and are sometimes read by those for whose inspection they were not intended. Prudence is one of the cardinal virtues, and well deserves our constant attention. The longer we live, and observe what passes in the world, the more we become sensible of the value, and of the necessity of prudence. It is generally acquired by experience, rather than by precept. Youth and experience cannot be old and intimate acquaintances. You have an advantage which few enjoy, and which many would not sufficiently estimate. I mean that of obtaining, upon every occasion, the advice and opinion of an affectionate, sincere, and judicious sister. They who think themselves superior to the necessity of advice and admonition, manifest more pride than judgment. This, I am happy to believe, will not be your case."

"You do well to read Anacharsis; it is proper you should have a general acquaintance with ancient and modern history. I am not anxious that you should be what is called a 'learned lady;' but it would mortify me to have any of my children classed with the ignorant and illiterate. I am particularly solicitous that they should be well versed in the science of living agreeably and comfortably *here*, and happily *hereafter*. The first includes whatever is taught by prudence, or common sense, and by the maxim 'never to buy any thing at too great a price,' whether it be pleasure, or riches, or ornaments. Hence it becomes necessary

that we should endeavour to see persons and things as being what they *really* are, to estimate them at their *true* value, and to act *accordingly*. To do this effectually, self-command is absolutely indispensable. To look at objects through our passions, is like seeing through *coloured* glass, which always paints what we view in its own, and not in the *true* colour.

“ These hints being very important, I recommend them to your consideration.”

“ It was natural that the instance of ingratitude you mention should excite disagreeable emotions and reflections. There are, however, grateful persons in the world, but the number is, comparatively, inconsiderable. On this head, I have not been without experience. To many, the sense of obligation is painful; and they gradually bring themselves to act *accordingly*: there are others who do not ascribe the good offices they receive to real generosity, but to their own importance. From frequently receiving what they conceive to be tribute to it, they, by little and little, increase their pretensions and their arrogance to an insufferable degree.

“ We should, nevertheless, proceed in doing good, because it is our duty; and not from the hope or expectation of grateful returns. Except in certain particular cases, it is better to ‘cast our bread on the waters,’ that is, on many; here a little, and there a little, according to our abilities and opportunities, and leave the result to Providence.”

“ You have your troubles, my dear daughter, and I *feel* as well as observe them. But I comfort myself with the reflection, that they are permitted for wise and *benevolent* purposes; and that these purposes include a rich reward to the sound mind, and the sound principles, on which those troubles operate as trials. Perfect wisdom and per-

fect goodness, united with infinite power, form a perfect title to perfect trust and confidence. In such confidence, it is absolutely *impossible* for us to be mistaken or deceived. This is no visionary theory; it is practical prudence and real common sense.

“We cannot too frequently recollect, that if the Scriptures are *true* (and neither of us doubts it), it *must* also be true, that ‘whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.’ Afflicting dispensations, therefore, are proofs of his *love*, and not of his displeasure. He sends them ‘for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness;’ and although ‘no chastening for the *present* seemeth to be joyous, but grievous, nevertheless, *afterward*, it yieldeth the *peaceable* fruit of righteousness unto them who are exercised thereby.’ The Divine veracity can never be questionable.”

“Cheerfulness promotes health, and health promotes cheerfulness. We are so formed, that when one part suffers, the rest, whether corporeal or mental, are in a degree affected by it. Hence it is the more proper, that we should attend to every indisposition, and to whatever may aggravate or prolong it. By indulgence, both cheerfulness and dejection will become habits, but of very different characters. They who neglect to cultivate the one and resist the other, are not wise.

“Our religion, however serious from its objects and their importance, gives no countenance to *habitual* melancholy. The faith, trust, gratitude, love, and joy which it inculcates, cannot be associated with such an inmate. Our religion not only permits, but directs us to rejoice; and although it does not forbid occasional sorrow or grief, yet it marks the limits beyond which they are not to be indulged. Beyond those limits, they are temptations, and are to be treated accordingly. While prudential truths and principles remain inactive in speculation, they are as unproductive as gold locked up in a miser’s chest. Until used and em-

ployed, neither of them do any good. I rejoice that you not only have sound principles, but that you bring them into practice. Virtuous exertions are never neglected by Providence; and I am persuaded that yours will be blessed if you persevere.

“It is not pleasant to be in affliction, nor in the rain; and yet both are dispensed by the same benevolent hand; the one to produce medicine for spiritual maladies; the other to produce supplies for animal life. Many have said, and many will say with David, who was no stranger to distress, ‘in very *faithfulness* hast thou afflicted me.’”

“The lady you mention is much to be pitied; especially if her melancholy be that which is called religious.

“To me, nothing appears more strange and unaccountable, than that a Christian should consider afflictions as evidence of Divine displeasure and dereliction. It is an error, against which our Redeemer seems to have taken particular care to guard us; not only by the parable of Lazarus and the rich man, but still more explicitly by assuring us that God *loves* those whom he chastises, and that he chastises them because he *loves* them. On this point, various parts of Scripture, and particularly the Epistle to the Hebrews, are conclusive. To the truth of this doctrine, the lives and sufferings of the patriarchs, the prophets, the apostles, the martyrs, and of other good men in all times, bear positive and ample testimony.

“If there be any temporal state or condition which more than others, affords reason for alarm and apprehension, I think it is that of a *long and uninterrupted course of worldly prosperity*: for it is said, ‘If ye be *without chastisement*, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.’

“Some are more ready to believe the denunciations against sin, than the declarations of mercy to sinners. Such persons should recollect, that if God was more in-

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The official papers left by Mr. Jay are voluminous. They consist of letters relating to his negotiations in Spain, France, and England; of reports to Congress, and letters while he was secretary for foreign affairs; and of letters while he acted as secretary of state. The limits assigned for the present work permit the insertion of the following extracts only.

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**EXTRACTS**  
FROM  
**OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE**  
RELATING TO  
**NEGOTIATIONS IN SPAIN AND FRANCE.**

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**TO THE COUNT DE FLORIDA BLANCA.**

Madrid, April 25th, 1780.

SIR,

Mr. Carmichael has delivered to me a paper he had the honour of receiving from your excellency before my arrival here, containing heads of many important inquiries, respecting which it was thought necessary that his Catholic Majesty should be exactly informed, before entering into a discussion with me and Mr. Carmichael, jointly or separately, on the subject of the affairs of the United States of North America, and their mutual interest with respect to Spain; but that the court, though desirous of information on these several articles, with all possible frankness and precision, did not mean to dive into matters which Mr. Carmichael and myself might regard as reserved to ourselves only.

Being persuaded, that direct and accurate information respecting the nature and extent of the commissions given to that gentleman and myself, would be very agreeable to your excellency, I take the liberty of transmitting the following copies of each.

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Madrid, April 25th, 1780.

**SIR,**

Mr. Carmichael has delivered to me a paper he had the honour of receiving from your excellency before my arrival here, containing heads of many important inquiries, respecting which it was thought necessary that his Catholic Majesty should be exactly informed, before entering into a discussion with me and Mr. Carmichael, jointly or separately, on the subject of the affairs of the United States of North America, and their mutual interest with respect to Spain; but that the court, though desirous of information on these several articles, with all possible frankness and precision, did not mean to dive into matters which Mr. Carmichael and myself might regard as reserved to ourselves only.

Being persuaded, that direct and accurate information respecting the nature and extent of the commissions given to that gentleman and myself, would be very agreeable to your excellency, I take the liberty of transmitting the following copies of each.

“ The delegates of the United States of New-Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, in Congress assembled, to all who shall see these presents, Greeting.

“ Whereas, an intercourse between the subjects of his Catholic Majesty and the citizens of these United States, founded on the principles of equality, reciprocity, and friendship, may be of mutual advantage to both nations; and it being the sincere desire of the United States to enter into a treaty of alliance, and of amity and commerce with his Catholic Majesty: Know Ye, therefore, that we, confiding in the integrity, prudence, and ability of the Honourable John Jay, late president of Congress, and Chief Justice of the State of New-York, have nominated and constituted, and by these presents do nominate and constitute him, the said John Jay, our minister plenipotentiary; giving him full power, general and special, to act in that quality, to confer, treat, agree, and conclude with the ambassador or plenipotentiary of his Catholic Majesty vested with equal powers, of and concerning a treaty of amity and commerce, and of alliance; and whatever shall be so agreed and concluded for us and in our names, to sign, and thereupon make such treaty or treaties, conventions and agreements, as he shall judge conformable to the ends we have in view, in as ample form, and with the same effect, as if we were personally present and acted therein; hereby promising in good faith, that we will accept, ratify, fulfil, and execute whatever shall be agreed, concluded, and signed by our said minister plenipotentiary; and that we will never act, nor suffer any person to act, contrary to the same in the whole, or in any part.

“ In witness whereof, we have caused these presents to be given in Congress, at Philadelphia, the 29th day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hun-

dred and seventy-nine, and the fourth year of the independence of the United States of America.

“Signed by the president, and sealed with his seal.

“SAMUEL HUNTINGTON, *President.*

“Attest, CHARLES THOMPSON, *Secretary.*”

“The United States of America, in Congress assembled. To the Honourable William Carmichael, a delegate in Congress from the State of Maryland. Greeting.

“We, reposing especial trust and confidence in your patriotism, ability, conduct, and fidelity, do, by these presents, constitute and appoint you, during our pleasure, secretary to our minister plenipotentiary, appointed to negotiate a treaty of amity and commerce, and of alliance with his Catholic Majesty. You are, therefore, carefully and diligently to discharge the duty of secretary, by doing and performing all things thereunto belonging; and, in case of the death of our said minister, you are to signify it to us by the earliest opportunity, and on such event, we authorize and direct you to take into your charge all our public affairs, which were in the hands of said minister at the time of his death, or which may be addressed to him before notice thereof, and proceed therein, according to the instructions to our said minister given, until our further orders.

“Witness, his excellency, Samuel Huntington, president of the Congress of the United States of America, at Philadelphia, the 29th day of September, in the year of our Lord 1779, and in the fourth year of our independence.

“SAMUEL HUNTINGTON, *President.*

“Attest, CHARLES THOMPSON, *Secretary.*”

The inquiries in question are numerous and important. They do honour to the sagacity which suggested them, and, if fully answered, would produce a very interesting history of the present condition of the American States.

On some of the subjects proposed, I can give your excellency full and positive intelligence ; on others, only general and by no means precise information. On all, however, I shall write with candour.

Such is the nature of the American governments and confederacy, that the Congress, and all other rulers of the people, are responsible to them for their conduct; and cannot withhold from their constituents a knowledge of their true situation, without subjecting themselves to all the evils which they experience who substitute cunning in the place of wisdom. Hence it is, that a knowledge of their affairs is easily attainable by all who will be at the trouble of collecting it; and as it is neither the policy nor inclination of America to draw a veil over any part of their affairs, your excellency may be persuaded, that every consideration forbids their servants, by a suppression or misrepresentation of facts, to deceive or mislead those whose amity they so sincerely endeavour to cultivate, as they do that of Spain.

#### I.—THE CIVIL STATE OF NORTH AMERICA.

Your excellency has, with great propriety, arranged the subjects of your inquiry under two heads; the *civil* and *military* states of North America. The first of these is again branched into several subdivisions, at the head of which, is the

##### *Population of each State.*

The exact number of inhabitants in the United States has not, I believe, been ascertained by an actual census in more than two or three of them. The only computation made by Congress was on the 29th of July, 1775; the manner and occasion of which exclude every suspicion of its exceeding the true number. Congress had emitted bills of credit to a very considerable amount, and were apprized of the necessity of emitting more. Justice demanded that

this debt should be apportioned among the States according to their respective abilities; an equitable rule whereby to determine that ability became indispensable. After much consideration, Congress resolved, "that the proportion, or quota of each colony, should be determined according to the number of the inhabitants of all ages (including negroes and mulattoes) in each colony;" but as that could not *then* be ascertained *exactly*, they were obliged to judge of, and compute the number from circumstantial evidence. The delegates gave to Congress an account of the population of their respective colonies, made from the best materials then in their power; and so great was their confidence in each other, that from those accounts that computation was principally formed. Your excellency will readily perceive, that the delegates were far from being under any temptations to exaggerate the number of their constituents; they were not ignorant, that by such exaggerations they would increase their portion of aids, both of men and money, and that whatever errors they might commit, could not be rectified by an actual numeration during the war. The computation then formed was as follows:—

New-Hampshire . . . .	124,069 and a half
Massachusetts Bay . . .	434,244
Rhode Island . . . . .	71,959 and a half
Connecticut . . . . .	248,139
New-York . . . . .	248,139
New-Jersey . . . . .	161,290 and a half
Pennsylvania . . . . .	372,208 and a half
Delaware . . . . .	37,219 and a half
Maryland . . . . .	310,174 and a half
Virginia . . . . .	496,278
North Carolina . . . . .	248,139
South Carolina . . . . .	248,139
	<hr/>
	3,000,000

Exclusive of the inhabitants of Georgia, who were not at that time represented in Congress, and of whose numbers I have no information that I can confide in.

*The Form of Government of each State.*

In the pamphlets I have now the honour of transmitting to your excellency, viz. No. 1, No. 2, No. 3, No. 4, and No. 5, you will find the constitutions of New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and South Carolina. The others I have not with me. The great outlines of them all are very similar. By the last accounts from America, it appears that Massachusetts Bay had not as yet agreed upon their constitution, but had it then under consideration.

It cannot be necessary to observe to your excellency, that these new modes of government were formed by persons named and authorized by the people for that express purpose; that they were, in general, instituted with great temper and deliberation, upon such just and liberal principles, as, on the one hand, to give effectual security to civil and religious liberty; and, on the other, make ample provision for the rights of justice, and the due exercise of the necessary powers of government.

The articles of confederation agreed upon by Congress, and approved by every State in the Union except Maryland, provide for the general government of the confederacy, and the ordering of all matters essential to the prosperity and preservation of the Union in peace and war. I ought also to inform your excellency, that the reasons why Maryland has as yet withheld her assent to those articles, do not arise from any disaffection to the common cause, but merely from their not having adopted certain principles respecting the disposition of certain lands.

*The union and resolution of the inhabitants to continue the war with vigour as long as may be necessary.*

On this subject, I can give your excellency certain and

positive information ; the storm of tyranny and oppression, which had for some years been constantly growing more black and more terrible, began to burst with violence on the people of North America in the year 1774. It was seen and felt and deprecated by all, except those who expected to gather spoils in the ruins it was designed to occasion. These were those who enjoyed, or expected emoluments from Great Britain, together with their immediate dependants and connexions ; such as the officers of government throughout the colonies, but with some very distinguished exceptions ; those of the clergy of the church of England almost without exception, who received annual salaries from the society established in England for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts ; foreign adventurers, buyers and sellers, who, being no further attached to the country than as it afforded the means of gain, soon prepared to speculate in confiscations, and courted the notice of their sovereign by intemperate zeal for the ruin of his subjects. With these exceptions, the great body of the people moved together, and united in such firm and considerate measures for the common safety, and conducted their affairs with such regularity, order, and system, as to leave no room to suppose them to be the work of only a prevailing party, as our enemies have always represented and affected to consider them.

There was, it is true, another class of persons not much less dangerous, though far more contemptible than those I first mentioned ; persons who, in every revolution, like floating weeds in every storm, obey the strongest wind, and pass from side to side as that happens to change. I mean the *neutrals*, a pusillanimous race, who, having balanced in their minds the advantages and disadvantages, the gains and dangers of joining either side, are seduced by their fears to form a thousand pretexts for joining neither ; who, to manifest their loyalty to their king, when his armies were successful, gave them every aid in their power, ex-

cept drawing their swords against their country ; and who, when their countrymen prevailed, were ready to render them all possible service, except taking arms against their prince.

The auxiliaries, whom the British measures and forces found in the country, consisted of persons from these classes. And although when these first appeared in, and wounded the bosom of America, she was obliged to extend her arms to repel the assaults of a foreign enemy, yet such was the union and spirit of her inhabitants, that she was soon enabled not only to put them under her feet, but on the ruins of her former governments to erect new ones in the midst of invasions from without, and treacherous combinations from within. Being able to obtain no other terms of peace than unconditional obedience, she had sufficient courage to declare herself independent in the face of one of the best appointed armies Britain could ever boast of ; as well as sufficient strength to limit its operations, and reduce its numbers.

It may perhaps be observed, that the first object of the war was a redress of grievances ; that the present object is *independence* ; and it may be asked whether the people are as much united with respect to the last as they were with respect to the first.

I am certain that the people of America never were so well united as they are at present, in that of their independence. Exclusive of actual observation on the spot, I think so because,

1st. The Declaration of Independence was made by Congress at a time when the great body of their constituents called for it.

2dly. Because that declaration was immediately recognised by the general assemblies and legislatures of the several States, without exception.

3dly. Because the successful army under General Burgoyne was defeated and captured by a great collection of

the neighbouring militia, to whom he had offered peace and tranquillity on their remaining at home; terms which it was natural to suppose a great many of them would have accepted, had the Declaration of Independence been disagreeable to them.

4thly. Because the Congress, consisting of members annually elected, have repeatedly, expressly, and unanimously declared their determination to support it at every hazard.

5thly. Because their internal enemies have been either expelled or reduced, and their estates, to a very great amount in some of the States, confiscated and actually sold.

6thly. Because constitutions and forms of government have since been instituted and completely organized, in which the people participate, from which they have experienced essential advantages, and to which they have of consequence become greatly attached.

7thly. Because Congress unanimously refused to enter into treaty with the British commissioners on any terms short of independence; and because every State, though afterward separately solicited, refused to treat otherwise than collectively by their delegates in Congress.

8thly. Because the inhuman and very barbarous manner in which the war has been conducted by the enemy, has so alienated the affections of the people from the king and government of Britain, and filled their hearts with such deep-rooted and just resentments, as render a cordial reconciliation, much less a dependence on them, utterly impossible.

9thly. Because the doctrine propagated in America by the servants of the King of Great Britain, that no faith was to be kept with Americans in arms against him, and the uniformity with which they have adhered to it, in their practice as well as professions, have destroyed all confidence, and leave the Americans no room to doubt but that, should they again become subjects of the King of Britain

on certain terms, those terms would as little impede the progress of future oppression, as the capitulation of Limerick, in 1691, did with respect to Ireland.

10thly. Because the treaty with France, and consequently virtue, honour, and every obligation due to the reputation of a rising nation, whose fame is unsullied by violated compacts, forbid it.

11thly. Because it is the evident and well-known interest of North America to remain independent.

12thly. Because the history of mankind, from the earliest ages, with a loud voice calls upon those who draw their swords against a prince, deaf to the supplication of his people, to throw away the scabbard.

13thly. Because they do not consider the support of their independence as difficult. The country is very defensible and fertile; the people are all soldiers, who with reason consider their liberty and lives as the most valuable of the possessions left them, and which they are determined shall neither be wrested nor purchased from them but with blood.

14thly. Because, for the support of their independence, they have expressly, by a most solemn act, pledged to each other their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honour; so that their bond of union, for this very purpose, thus formed of all the ties of common interest, common safety, mutual affection, general resentments, and the great obligations of virtue, honour, patriotism, and religion, may with reason be deemed equal to the importance of that great object.

*Whether there is any powerful party in favour of England, and what consequences are to be apprehended from it?*

*Whether the heads of this party suffer themselves to be seduced by the promises of the British Government?*

What has been already said on the subject of the union of the people in North America will, I imagine, in a great measure, answer these questions.

If by a party in favour of England is meant a party for relinquishing the independence of the United States, and returning to the dominion of Britain, on any terms whatever, I answer, there is no such party in North America; all the open adherents of the crown of Great Britain having either voluntarily quitted or been expelled from the country.

That Britain has emissaries and masked adherents in America, industrious in their little spheres to perplex the public measures, and disturb the public tranquillity, is a fact of which I have not the most distant doubt; and it is equally true, that some of these wicked men are by a few weak ones thought to be patriots, but they cannot with any propriety be called a party, or even a faction. The chief mischief they do, is collecting and transmitting intelligence, raising false reports, and spreading calumnies of public men and measures; such characters will be found in every country so circumstanced, and America has not been negligent in providing laws for their punishment.

The obvious policy of the court of London has induced them to boast perpetually of their party in America; but where is it? of whom composed? what has it done, or is doing? are questions to which they constantly give evasive answers. Much also have they said of the numbers that have joined their arms in America. The truth is, that at Boston, Rhode Island, New-York, and Philadelphia, they gleaned some of that refuse of mankind to be found and purchased by anybody in all commercial cities. It is also true, that some men of weight and influence in the country, who joined the enemy on their first successes, did draw away with them several of their immediate dependants, whom they persuaded or otherwise influenced to enlist in their service. To these may also be added the prisoners, who at different times they forced into their service by famine, and other severities too numerous as well as barbarous to be here particularized. But I have no reason to

believe, that all these aids put together ever exceeded three thousand men. This business, however (except with respect to prisoners), has long been over, and before I left America, many of those deluded people had returned and implored the pardon of their country.

In America, as in all other popular governments, your excellency knows there must and ever will be parties for and against particular measures and particular men. The enemy, adverting to this circumstance, have had address enough to ascribe differences and temporary heats arising from this source, in which they were not interested, to causes much higher, and more flattering to their importance; and this they have done with so much art, as to have imposed in some instances on the credulity of men high in reputation for sagacity and discernment.

If your excellency will be pleased to peruse a pamphlet marked No. 6, which you will find enclosed with the other papers I herewith transmit, and entitled "Observations on the American Revolution," you will perceive that nothing is to be apprehended from this supposed party in North America.

*A statement of the revenues of the States, and of their ability to contribute to the general expense; whether they will be able long to support this burden, and increase it if necessary.*

The confederated States have no fixed revenues, nor are such revenues necessary, because all the private property in the country is at the public service. The only restriction imposed by the people is, that it be taken from them with wisdom and justice: or, to be more explicit, that the sums required be proportionate to the public exigences, and assessed on the individuals in proportion to their respective abilities.

A nation can seldom be destitute of the means of continuing a war, while they remain unsubdued in the field,

and cheerfully devote their all to that service. They may indeed experience great distress, but no distress being equal to that of subjection to exasperated oppressors, whose most tender mercies are cruel, the Americans had little difficulty in making their election.

*A statement of the public debts.*

This subject your excellency will find fully discussed in an address of Congress to their constituents, in which they compute their debts, and mention the means they had taken to preserve the public credit. It is also herewith enclosed, and marked No. 7.

*A statement of the debts of each particular State.*

Although exact accounts of these debts are contained in the public printed acts of each State, yet as I neither have any of those acts or extracts from them with me, and my general knowledge on this head is very imperfect, I am deterred from giving your excellency any information respecting it, by the very great risk I should run of misleading you on this point.

*The resources to lessen these debts.*

Taxes ; foreign and domestic loans ; sales of confiscated estates, and ungranted lands.

*The possibility of their supporting their credit in all the operations of government, in the commerce of their inhabitants, and, above all, in the protection of national industry.*

As to the possibility of supporting their credit in the cases mentioned, there is no doubt it is very *possible*. How far it is *probable*, is a question less easy to answer. If the taxes called for by Congress last fall be duly paid, all will be safe. But whether they have been paid or not I am wholly uninformed, except that I find in a public paper that

Virginia had made good her first payment. As I daily expect to receive advices from America on this subject, I shall postpone saying any thing further on it at present ; but your excellency may rely on my communicating to you a full state of what intelligence I may have respecting it.

As to supporting their credit in *commerce*, it is attended with considerable, though not insurmountable difficulties. They are of two kinds, the want of sufficient commodities for remittances, and the risk of transporting them. North America abounds in valuable commodities, such as fish, oil, lumber, provisions of flesh and corn, iron, tobacco, and naval stores, peltry, indigo, potash, and other articles, all of which have greatly diminished since the war ; the labourers formerly employed in producing them having been often called to the field, and by other effects of the war been prevented from regularly following their usual occupations. Of some of these articles, America still produces more than is necessary for her own consumption, but the risk of transporting them to Europe renders her remittances very uncertain. The asylum, which all British armed vessels find in the ports of Portugal, enables them to cruise very conveniently and with great advantage off the western islands, and other situations proper for annoying vessels from thence to France, Spain, or the Mediterranean. Hence it is that the trade from America to St. Eustatia has of late so greatly increased, it being carried on principally in small, fast sailing vessels, that draw but little water, and that the chief remittances to Europe have been in bills of exchange instead of produce.

With respect to the protection of *national industry*, I take it for granted that it will always flourish where it is lucrative and not discouraged, which was the case in North America when I left it : every man being then at liberty, by the law, to cultivate the earth as he pleased, to raise what he pleased, to manufacture as he pleased, and to sell the produce of his labour to whom he pleased, and for

the best prices, without any duties or impositions whatsoever. I have indeed no apprehensions whatever on this subject. I believe there are no people more industrious than those of America, and whoever recurs to their population, their former exports, and their present productions amid the horrors of fire and sword, will be convinced of it.

*By what means, or what branches of commerce, will the States of America have it in their power to indemnify Spain, whenever this power may second the views and operations of the Americans?*

America will indemnify Spain in two ways, by fighting the enemy of Spain, and by commerce. Your excellency will be pleased to remark, that Spain as well as America is now at war with Britain, and therefore that it is the interest of both to support and assist each other against the common enemy. It cannot be a question whether Britain will be more or less formidable if defeated or victorious in America; and there can be no doubt but that every nation, interested in the reduction of her power, will be compensated for any aids they may afford America, by the immediate application of those aids to that express purpose at the expense of American blood.

Your excellency's well known talents save me the necessity of observing, that it is the interest of all Europe to join in breaking down the exorbitant power of a nation which arrogantly claims the ocean as her birthright, and considers every advantage in commerce, however acquired by violence, or used with cruelty, as a tribute justly due to her boasted superiority in arts and in arms.

By establishing the independence of America, the empire of Britain will be divided, and the sinews of her power cut. Americans, situated in another hemisphere, intent only on the cultivation of a country more than sufficient to satisfy their desires, will remain unconnected with European politics, and not being interested in their objects, will not

partake in their dissensions. Happy in having for their neighbours a people distinguished for love of justice and of peace, they will have nothing to fear, but may flatter themselves that they and their posterity will long enjoy all the blessings of that peace, liberty, and safety, for which alone they patiently endure the calamities incident to the cruel contest they sustain.

While the war continues, the commerce of America will be inconsiderable; but on the restoration of peace it will soon become very valuable and extensive. So great is the extent of country in North America yet to be cultivated, and so inviting to settlers, that labour will very long remain too dear to admit of considerable manufactures. Reason and experience tell us, that when the poor have it in their power to gain affluence by tilling the earth, they will refuse the scanty earnings which manufacturers may offer them. From this circumstance it is evident, that the exports from America will consist of raw materials, which other nations will be able to manufacture for them at a cheaper rate than they can themselves. To those who consider the future and progressive population of that country, the demands it will have for the manufactures and productions of Europe, as well to satisfy their wants as to gratify their luxury, will appear immense, and far more than any one kingdom in it can supply. Instead of paying money for fish and many other articles as heretofore, Spain will then have an opportunity of obtaining them in exchange for her cloths, silks, wines, and fruits; notwithstanding which, it is proper to observe, that the commerce of the American States will for ever procure them such *actual wealth* as to enable them punctually to repay whatever sums they may borrow.

*How far it may be convenient for these States to furnish ships of war, timber, and other articles for the king's arsenals, without delay; and, if in their power, on what terms?*

I am much at a loss to determine at present, and therefore will by no means give your excellency my conjectures for intelligence.

It is certain, that in ordinary times, America can build ships as good, and cheaper than any other people, because the materials cost them less. The ships of war now in her service, as to strength and construction, are not exceeded by any on the ocean. On this subject I will write to America for information, and give your excellency the earliest notice of it. Naval stores, and particularly masts and spars, may certainly be had there, and of the best quality; and I doubt not but that the Americans would carry them to the Havannah or New-Orleans, though I suspect, their being in a manner destitute of proper convoys for the European trade, would render them backward in bringing them to Spain, on terms equal to the risk of capture on the one hand, and the expectations of purchasers on the other.

## II.—THE MILITARY STATE OF NORTH AMERICA.

*The number and strength of the American troops, their present situation, and ability to oppose the enemy, especially in Georgia and Carolina.*

Six months have elapsed since I left America, and I had not seen a return of the army for some time before that period. It did not, I am certain, amount to its full complement, and, in my opinion, did not in the whole exceed thirty or thirty-five thousand men; I mean regular troops.

The commander-in-chief, whose abilities, as well as integrity, merit the highest confidence, was authorized to conduct all the military operations in the United States at

his discretion; subject, nevertheless, to such orders as the Congress might think proper from time to time to give. It is impossible, therefore, for me (not having received a single letter from America on these subjects since my arrival) to decide in what manner or proportions these troops are employed or stationed, though I am confident it has been done in the best manner.

All the men of proper age in America are liable to do military duty in certain cases, and with a few exceptions, in all cases. The militia is for the most part divided into a certain number of classes, and whenever reinforcements to the main army, or any detachment of it, are wanting, they are supplied by these classes in rotation. These reinforcements, while in the field, are subject to the like regulations with the regular troops, and with them submit to the severest discipline and duty. Hence it is, that the people of America have become soldiers, and that the enemy have never been able to make a deep impression in the country, or long hold any considerable lodgments at a distance from their fleets. Georgia and South Carolina, indeed, enjoy these advantages in a less degree than the other States, their own militia not being very numerous, and speedy reinforcements from their neighbours of North Carolina and Virginia rendered difficult by the length of the way. They have, nevertheless, given proofs of their spirit by various and great exertions; and I have reason to believe, that all possible care has been taken to provide for their safety, by furnishing them with a proper body of troops under Major General Lincoln, a very good officer, as well as a very good man.

Arms are still wanting in America, many of those imported proving unfit for use, and the number of inhabitants who were without proper arms at the beginning of the war, calling for great supplies. The army, and a considerable part of the militia, especially in the Northern States, have in general good arms.

The article of clothing has been, and still is, a very interesting one to the American army. It is impossible to describe, and, indeed, almost impossible to believe, the hardships they have endured for want of it. There have been instances, and I speak from the most undoubted authority, of considerable detachments marching barefooted over rugged tracts of ice and snow, and marking the route they took by the blood that issued from their feet; but neither these terrible extremities, nor the alluring offers of the enemy, could prevail on them to quit their standard or relax their ardour. Their condition, however, has of late been much bettered by supplies from France and Spain, and American privateers; but adequate provision has not yet been made for the ensuing winter, and I cannot conceal from your excellency my anxiety on that head. A supply of clothing for twenty thousand men, added to what is engaged for them in France, would make that army and all America happy.

I foresee no other difficulties in providing subsistence for the American armies in every station in which they may be placed, than those which may attend the transportation of it. But when I reflect on the obstacles of this kind which they have already met with and surmounted, I have little uneasiness about future ones. The last crops in America promised to be plentiful when I left it, but whether there would be any and what considerable overplus for exportation, was then undetermined; the damages done the wheat in Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina by a fly, which infested those countries, not being to my knowledge at that time ascertained.

How many ships of war belong to Congress, is a question I cannot answer with certainty. I think there are not more than ten or twelve in the whole. Of privateers, there are a great number, but how many exactly has not been computed. In my opinion, they exceed one hundred, several of them very fine ships. The Governor of Mar-

tinique told me, that in that island alone, the American privateers had brought and sold above five thousand African slaves, which they had taken from the enemy. Nine-tenths at least of all the rum and sugar used in North America, these three years past, have been obtained in the same way, and to their successes have the public been indebted for the most seasonable and valuable supplies of military stores which they have received. I left several vessels on the stocks at Philadelphia, and heard of more in other parts.

Upon the whole, his majesty may rest perfectly assured, that the Americans are determined, though forsaken by all mankind, to maintain their independence, and to part with it only with their lives; the desolations and distresses of war being too familiar to them to excite any other passions than indignation and resentment.

That the country will supply its inhabitants with provisions, some clothing, and some articles of commerce.

That there is no party in America in favour of returning under the dominion of Britain, on any terms whatever.

That the King of France is very popular in America, being in all parts of it styled the protector of the rights of mankind, and that they will hold the treaty made with him inviolate.

That the people in America have very high ideas of the honour and integrity of the Spanish nation, and of his Catholic Majesty especially, and that this respect and esteem unite with their interest in rendering them so desirous of his friendship and alliance.

That the greatest difficulty under which America labours arises from the great depreciation of her bills of credit, owing principally to a greater sum having been emitted than was necessary for a medium of commerce, and to the impossibility of remedying it by taxes before regular governments are established.

That great attempts, seconded by the general voice of the people, have been made to retrieve the credit of those

bills by taxation, the issue of which was as yet uncertain, but if unsuccessful, a recurrence to taxes in kind was still left, and would be practised, though it is an expedient which nothing but necessity can render eligible.

That if France and Spain were to unite their endeavours to conquer Britain in America, by furnishing the latter with the necessary aids of ammunition, clothing, and some money, there is reason to believe, that the House of Bourbon would find it the most certain and least expensive method of reducing the power of their irreconcilable enemy, and not only command the gratitude and perpetual attachment of America, but the general approbation of all who wish well to the tranquillity of Europe, and the rights of mankind. Thus would that illustrious house erect glorious and lasting monuments to their virtues in the hearts of a whole people.

I fear your excellency will consider the intelligence here given less full and precise than you expected. I regret that it is not in my power to render it more so, but it is not. I hope, however, it will be thought sufficient to open a way to those further discussions which must precede the measures necessary to bind America to Spain, as well as to France, and thereby complete the division, and consequently the humiliation of the British empire; a work too glorious and laudable not to merit the notice of so magnanimous a prince as his majesty, and engage the attention of a minister of such acknowledged abilities as your excellency.

I flatter myself that the importance of the subject will apologize for my trespassing so long on your excellency's patience so soon after your return to Aranjuez.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN JAY.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

Paris, November 17th, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

Although it is uncertain when I shall have an opportunity either of finishing or transmitting the long particular letter, which I am now undertaking to write, I think the matter it will contain is too interesting to rest only in my memory, or in short notes, which nobody but myself can well unfold the meaning of. I shall, therefore, write on as my health will permit, and when finished, shall convey this letter by the first prudent *American* that may go from hence to Nantes or L'Orient.

My reception here was as friendly as an American minister might expect from this polite and politic court; for I think they deceive themselves, who suppose that these kinds of attentions are equally paid to their private as to their public characters.

Soon after the enabling act was passed, I was shown a copy of it, and I confess it abated the expectations I had formed of the intention of the British ministry to treat in a manly manner with the United States, on the footing of an unconditional acknowledgment of their independence. The act appeared to me to be cautiously framed to elude such an acknowledgment, and, therefore, it would depend on future contingencies, and on the terms and nature of the bargain they might be able to make with us.

On the 25th of July, 1782, the king of Great Britain issued a warrant,\* or order, directed to his attorney or solicitor-general.

A copy of this warrant was sent by express to Mr.

\* This warrant directed the solicitor-general to prepare a commission for Mr. Oswald, authorizing him to treat with any person or persons appointed by all, or any of the American *colonies*, &c.

Oswald, with an assurance that the commission should be completed and sent him in a few days. He communicated this paper to Dr. Franklin, who, after showing it to me, sent it to the Count de Vergennes. The count wrote to the doctor the following letter on the subject.

## TRANSLATION.

“I have received, sir, the letter of to-day, with which you have honoured me, and the copy of the powers which Mr. Oswald communicated to you. The form in which it is conceived not being that which is usual, I cannot form my opinion on the first view of it. I am going to examine it with the greatest attention, and if you will be pleased to come here on Saturday morning, I shall be able to confer about it with you and Mr. Jay, if it should be convenient for him to accompany you.

“I have the honour to be, &c.

“DE VERGENNES.

“Versailles, August 8th, 1782.”

On the 10th of August, we waited upon the Count de Vergennes, and a conference between him and us, on the subject of Mr. Oswald's commission, ensued.

The count declared his opinion, that we might proceed to treat with Mr. Oswald under it, as soon as the original should arrive. He said it was such a one as we might have expected it would be, but that we must take care to insert proper articles in the treaty, to secure our independence and our limits against all future claims.

I observed to the count, that it would be descending from the ground of independence, to treat under the description of colonies. He replied, that names signified little; that the king of Great Britain's styling himself the king of France was no obstacle to the king of France's treating with him; that an acknowledgment of our independence, instead of preceding, must, in the natural course of things, be the effect

of the treaty, and that it would not be reasonable to expect the effect before the cause. He added, that we must be mindful to exchange powers with Mr. Oswald, for that his acceptance of our powers, in which we were styled Commissioners from the United States of America, would be a tacit admittance of our independence. I made but little reply to all this singular reasoning. The count turned to Dr. Franklin, and asked him what he thought of the matter. The doctor said, he believed the commission would do. He next asked my opinion. I told him that I did not like it, and that it was best to proceed cautiously.

On returning, I could not forbear observing to Dr. Franklin, that it was evident the count did not wish to see our independence acknowledged by Britain, until they had made all their uses of us. It was easy for them to foresee difficulties in bringing Spain into a peace on moderate terms, and that if we once found ourselves standing on our own legs, our independence acknowledged, and all our other terms ready to be granted, we might not think it our duty to continue in the war for the attainment of Spanish objects. But, on the contrary, as we were bound by treaty to continue the war till our independence should be attained, it was the interest of France to postpone that event, until their own views and those of Spain could be gratified by a peace, and that I could not otherwise account for the minister's advising us to act in a manner inconsistent with our dignity, and for reasons which he himself had too much understanding not to see the fallacy of.

The doctor imputed this conduct to the moderation of the minister, and to his desire of removing every obstacle to speedy negotiations for peace. He observed, that this court had hitherto treated us very fairly, and that suspicions to their disadvantage should not be readily entertained. He also mentioned our instructions, as further reasons for our acquiescence in the advice and opinion of the minister. A day or two afterward I paid a visit to Mr. Oswald, and

had a long conversation with him respecting his commission. On the resignation of Mr. Fox, many reports to the prejudice of Lord Shelburne's sincerity, on the subject of American independence, had spread through France as well as through Great Britain. His lordship, fearful of their effect on the confidence with which he wished to inspire the American commissioners, conveyed by Mr. Benjamin Vaughan to Dr. Franklin an extract of certain instructions to Sir Guy Carleton, of which the following is a copy, viz.

“*June 25th, 1782.*—It has been said, that ‘great effects might be obtained by something being done *spontaneously* from England.’ Upon this and other considerations, his majesty has been induced to give a striking proof of his royal magnanimity and disinterested wish for the restoration of peace, by commanding his majesty's ministers to direct Mr. Grenville, *that the independence of America should be proposed by him in the first instance, instead of making it the condition of a general peace.*

“I have given a confidential information to you of these particulars, that you may take such measures as shall appear to you most advisable for making a direct communication of the substance of the same, either immediately to Congress, or through the medium of General Washington, or in any other manner which you may think most likely to impress the well-disposed parts of America with the fairness and liberality of his majesty's proceedings in such great and spontaneous concessions.

“The advantages which we may expect from such concessions are, that America, once apprized of the king's disposition to acknowledge the independence of the thirteen States, and of the disinclination in the French court to terminate the war, must see that it is from this moment to be carried on with a view of negotiating points, in which she can have no concern, whether they regard France, or Spain and Holland at the desire of France; but some of which,

on the contrary, may be in future manifestly injurious to the interests of America herself.

“That if the negotiation is broken off, it will undoubtedly be for the sake of those powers, and not America, whose object is accomplished the instant she accepts of an independence, which is not merely held out to her in the way of negotiation by the executive power, but a distinct unconditional offer, arising out of the resolutions of Parliament, and therefore warranted by the sense of the nation at large.

“These facts being made notorious, it is scarce conceivable that America, composed as she is, will continue efforts under French direction, and protract the distresses and calamities which it is well known that war has subjected her to. It is to be presumed, that from that moment she will look with jealousy on the French troops in that country, who may from allies become dangerous enemies.

“If, however, any particular States, men, or description of men, should continue, against the general inclination of the continent, devoted to France, this communication will surely detect their views, expose their motives, and deprive them of their influence in all matters of general concern and exertion. You will, however, take particular care in your manner of conducting yourselves, not only that there should not be the smallest room for suspicions of our good faith and sincerity, but that we have no view in it of causing dissensions among the colonies, or even of separating America from France upon terms inconsistent with her own honour. You must therefore convince them, that the great object of this country is, not merely peace, but reconciliation with America on the noblest terms and by the noblest means.”

In the course of the beforementioned conversation with Mr. Oswald, I reminded him, that the judgment and opinion of America respecting the disposition and views of Britain

towards her, must be determined by facts and not by professions. That the Enabling Act, and the commission granted to him in pursuance of it, by no means harmonized with the language of these instructions to Sir Guy Carleton. That unless the offers and promises contained in the latter were realized, by an immediate declaration of our independence, America would naturally consider them as specious appearances of magnanimity, calculated to deceive and disunite them, and, instead of conciliating, would tend to irritate the States. I also urged, in the strongest terms, the great impropriety, and consequently the utter impossibility of our ever treating with Great Britain on any other than an equal footing, and told him plainly, that I would have no concern in any negotiation in which we were not considered as an independent people.

Mr. Oswald upon this, as upon every other occasion, behaved in a candid and proper manner. He saw and confessed the propriety of these remarks; he wished his commission had been otherwise, but was at a loss how to reconcile it to the king's dignity, to make *such* a declaration, immediately after having issued such a commission. I pointed out the manner in which I conceived it might be done; he liked the thought, and desired me to reduce it to writing. I did so, and communicated it to Dr. Franklin, and, as we corrected it, is as follows, viz.

“George III., &c. to Richard Oswald, greeting. Whereas, by a certain act, &c. (here follows the Enabling Act).

“And whereas, in pursuance of the true intent and meaning of the said act, and to remove all doubts and jealousies which might otherwise retard the execution of the same, we did, on the            day of            instruct Sir Guy Carleton, &c. our general, &c. to make known to the people of the said colonies, in Congress assembled, our royal disposition and intention to recognise the said colonies as independent States, and as such, to enter with them into such a

treaty of peace as might be honourable and convenient to both countries.

“And whereas further, in pursuance of the said act, we did on the        day of        authorise and commission you, the said Richard Oswald (here follows the commission). Now, therefore, to the end that a period may be put to the calamities of war; and peace, commerce, and mutual intercourse the more speedily restored, we do hereby, in pursuance of our royal word, for ourselves and our successors, recognise the said thirteen colonies as free and independent States. And it is our will and pleasure, that you do forthwith proceed to treat with the commissioner or commissioners already appointed, or to be appointed for that purpose by the Congress of the said States, and, with him or them only, of and concerning the objects of your said commission, which we do hereby confirm, and that this declaration be considered by you as a preliminary article to the proposed treaty, and be in substance or in the whole inserted therein, or incorporated therewith. And it is our further will and pleasure, that, on receiving these presents, which we have caused to be made patent, and our great seal to be hereunto affixed, you do deliver the same to the said commissioner or commissioners, to be by him or them transmitted to the Congress of the United States of America, as an earnest of the friendship and good-will which we are disposed to extend to them. Witness, &c. 15th of August, 1782.”

Mr. Oswald approved of the draught, and said he would recommend the measure to the minister. The next day, however, he told me that he had an instruction, which he thought enabled him to make the declaration; but that it would be necessary to obtain the previous consent of the minister for that purpose. He then read to me the fourth article of his instructions, of which the following is a copy, viz.

“In case you find the American commissioners are not at liberty to treat on any terms short of independence, you are to declare to them, that you have our authority to make that cession; our ardent wish for peace disposing us to purchase it at the price of acceding to the complete independence of the thirteen colonies.”

He said he would immediately despatch a courier to London, and would press the ministry for permission to acknowledge our independence without further delay, which he accordingly did.

At this time the commission under the great seal had arrived, and Dr. Franklin and myself went to Versailles to communicate that circumstance to the Count de Vergennes, and (agreeably to our instructions) to inform him of what had passed between Mr. Oswald and us.

The count and myself again discussed the propriety of insisting, that our independence should be acknowledged previous to a treaty. He repeated, that it was expecting the effect before the cause, and many other similar remarks, which did not appear to me to be well founded. I told the count, that a declaration of our independence was, in my opinion, a matter of very little consequence; that I did not consider our independence as requiring any aid or validity from British acts; and provided that nation treated us as she treated other nations, viz. on a footing of equality, it was all that I desired. He differed with me also in this opinion. He thought an explicit acknowledgment of our independence in treaty very necessary, in order to prevent our being exposed to further claims. I told him we should always have arms in our hands to answer those claims; that I considered mere paper fortifications as of but little consequence; and that we should take care to insert an article in the treaty, whereby the king of Great Britain should renounce all claims, of every kind, to the countries within our limits.

The count informed us, he had delayed doing business with Mr. Fitzherbert, until we should be ready to proceed with Mr. Oswald, and that he expected to see him the next day or the day after.

Mr. Fitzherbert went the next day to Versailles, and immediately despatched a courier to London.

The answer of the British ministry to Mr. Oswald, is contained in the following extract of a letter to him from Mr. Townshend, dated Whitehall, September 1st, 1782.

“SIR,

“I have received and laid before the king your letters of the 17th, 18th, and 21st ultimo, and I am commanded to signify to you his majesty’s approbation of your conduct, in communicating to the American commissioners the fourth article of your instructions; which could not but convince them, that the negotiation for peace, and the cession of independence to the Thirteen United Colonies, were intended to be carried on and concluded with the commissioners in Europe.

“Those gentlemen, having expressed their satisfaction concerning that article, it is hoped they will not entertain a doubt of his majesty’s determination to exercise, in the fullest extent, the powers with which the act of parliament has invested him, by granting to America, full, complete, and unconditional independence, in the most explicit manner, as an article of treaty.”

When Mr. Oswald communicated this letter to me, I did not hesitate to tell him, that his court was misled by this, for that the language of Mr. Townshend corresponded so exactly with that of the Count de Vergennes, and was at the same time so contrary to that of the instructions to Sir Guy Carleton, as to be inexplicable on any other principle. I also told him, I suspected that the courier despatched by Mr. Fitzherbert, on his return from Versailles, had been the

means of infusing these ideas. He smiled ; and after a little pause, said, " Why, Count de Vergennes told Mr. Fitzherbert that my commission was come, and that he thought it would do, and therefore they might now go on, and accordingly they did go on to discuss certain points, and particularly that of Newfoundland."

Mr. Oswald did not deny or contradict the inference I drew from this, viz. that Mr. Fitzherbert, struck by this conduct of Count de Vergennes, and finding that the commission given to Mr. Oswald was deemed sufficient by him, thought it his duty directly to inform his court of it, and thereby prevent their being embarrassed by our scruples and demands on a point, on which there was so much reason to think that our allies were very moderate.

For my own part, I was not only persuaded that this was the case, but also that the ill success of Mr. Oswald's application was owing to it.

These considerations induced me to explain to him, what I supposed to be the natural policy of this court on the subject, and to show him that it was the interest of Britain to render us as independent on France, as we were resolved to be on her. He soon adopted the same opinion, but was at a loss to see in what manner Great Britain, considering what had just passed, could consistently take further steps at present. I told him that nothing was more easy, for that the issuing of another commission would do it. He asked me if he might write that to the ministry ; I told him he might : he then desired, in order to avoid mistakes, that I would give it to him in writing, which I did as follows, viz,

" A commission (in the usual form) to Richard Oswald, to treat of peace or truce with commissioners, vested with equal powers by and on the part of the United States of America, would remove the objections to which his present one is liable, and render it proper for the American commissioners to proceed to treat with him on the subject of preliminaries."

I then reminded him of the several resolutions of Congress, passed at different periods, not to treat with British commissioners on any other footing than that of absolute independence, and also intimated that I thought it would be best to give him our final and decided determination not to treat otherwise in writing, in the form of a letter. He preferred this to a verbal answer, and the next day I prepared the following draught of such a letter.

“SIR,

“It is with regret, that we find ourselves obliged, by our duty to our country, to object to entering with you into negotiations for peace on the plan proposed. One nation can treat with another nation only on terms of equality; and it cannot be expected, that we should be the first and only servants of Congress, who would admit doubts of their independence.

“The tenor of your commission affords matter for a variety of objections, which your good sense will save us the pain of enumerating. The journals of Congress present to you unequivocal and uniform evidence of the sentiments and resolutions of Congress on the subject, and their positive instructions to us to speak the same language.

“The manner of removing these obstacles is obvious, and, in our opinion, no less consistent with the dignity than the interest of Great Britain. If the parliament meant to enable the king to conclude a peace with us on terms of independence, they necessarily meant to enable him to do it in a manner compatible with his dignity; and consequently, that he should previously regard us in a point of view, that would render it proper for him to negotiate with us. What this point of view is, you need not be informed.

“We also take the liberty of submitting to your consideration, how far his majesty’s now declining to take this step would comport with the assurances lately given on that subject, and whether hesitation and delay would not tend to

lessen the confidence which those assurances were calculated to inspire.

“As to referring an acknowledgment of our independence to the first article of a treaty, permit us to remark, that this implies, that we are not to be considered in that light until after the conclusion of the treaty, and our acquiescing would be to admit the propriety of our being considered in another light during that interval. Had this circumstance been attended to, we presume that the court of Great Britain would not have pressed a measure, which certainly is not delicate, and which cannot be reconciled with the received ideas of national honour.

“You may rest assured, sir, of our disposition to peace on reasonable terms, and of our readiness to enter seriously into negotiations for it, as soon as we shall have an opportunity of doing it in the only manner in which it is possible for one nation to treat with another, viz. on an equal footing.

“Had you been commissioned in the usual manner, we might have proceeded; and as we can perceive no legal or other objection to this, or some other such like expedient, it is to be wished that his majesty will not permit an obstacle so very unimportant to Great Britain, but so essential and insuperable with respect to us, to delay the re-establishment of peace especially; and in case the business could be but once begun, the confidence we have in your candour and integrity would probably render the settling all our articles only the work of a few hours.

“We are, &c.”

I submitted this draught to Dr. Franklin's consideration. He thought it rather too positive, and therefore rather imprudent, for that in case Britain should remain firm, and future circumstances should compel us to submit to their mode of treating, we should do it with an ill grace after such a decided and peremptory refusal. Besides, the doctor seemed to be much perplexed and fettered by our instruc-

tions to be guided by the advice of this court. Neither of these considerations had weight with me ; for as to the first, I could not conceive of any event which would render it proper, and therefore possible, for America to treat in any other character than as an independent nation ; and, as to the second, I could not believe that Congress intended we should follow any advice which might be repugnant to their dignity and interest.

On returning to town, Mr. Oswald spoke to me about this letter. I told him that I had prepared a draught of one, but that on further consideration, and consulting with Dr. Franklin, we thought it best not to take the liberty of troubling his court with any arguments or reasonings, which, without our aid, must be very evident to them.

He appeared disappointed, and desired me to let him see the draught. I did. He liked it. He requested a copy of it ; but as I doubted the propriety of such a step, I told him I would consider of it, and give him an answer the next day.

It appeared to me, on further reflection, that no bad consequences would arise from giving him a copy of this paper ; that, though unsigned, it would nevertheless convey to the ministry the sentiments and opinions I wished to impress, and that if finally they should not be content to treat with us as independent, they were not yet ripe for peace or treaty with us ; besides, I could not be persuaded that Great Britain, after what the House of Commons had declared, after what Mr. Grenville had said, and Sir Guy Carleton been instructed to do, would persist in refusing to admit our independence, provided they really believed that we had firmly resolved not to treat on more humble terms.

I gave him a copy, and also copies of the various resolutions of Congress, which evince their adherence to their independence. These papers he sent by express to London, and warmly recommended the issuing a new commission to remove all further delay. This matter was not communi-

cated to the Count de Vergennes, at least to my knowledge or belief, by either of us.

I might now enumerate the various expedients proposed by the Count de Vergennes and the Marquis de Lafayette to reconcile our difficulties. Such as Mr. Oswald's writing a letter to us, signifying that he treated with us as independent, &c. &c. But as our independence was indivisible, there could not easily be contrived a half-way mode of acknowledging it, and therefore any method of doing it short of the true and proper one, could not bear examination.

Being convinced that the objections to our following the advice of the Count de Vergennes were unanswerable, I proposed to Dr. Franklin, that we should state them in a letter to him, and request his answer in writing, because, as we were instructed to ask and to follow his advice on these occasions, we ought always to be able to show what his advice was.

The doctor approved of the measure, and I undertook to prepare a draught of such a letter.

I must now remind you of what some of my former letters informed you, viz. the propositions made to me by the Count d'Aranda on the part of Spain. It is necessary that I should in this place go into that detail, because they will be found in the sequel to be strongly connected with the subject more immediately under consideration.

On my arrival at Paris, in June last, it being doubtful whether if I made a visit to Count d'Aranda he would return it, I thought it most advisable to avoid that risk, and to write him the following letter.

TO COUNT D'ARANDA.

“ Paris, June 25th, 1782.

“ SIR,

“ On leaving Madrid, his excellency the Count de Florida Blanca informed me, that the papers relative to the objects of my mission there had been transmitted to your excel-

lency, with authority and instructions to treat with me on the subject of them.

“I arrived here the day before yesterday, and have the honour to acquaint your excellency of my being ready to commence the necessary conferences, at such time and place as your excellency may think proper to name.

“Your excellency’s character gives me reason to hope, that the negotiation in question will be conducted in a manner agreeable to both our countries; and permit me to assure you, that nothing on my part shall be wanting to manifest the respect and consideration, with which I have the honour to be, &c.

“JOHN JAY.”

The following is a copy of the count’s answer.

TRANSLATION.

“Paris, June 27th, 1782.

“SIR,

“I have the honour to reply to your note of the 25th, informing me of your happy arrival at this court. I shall also have the honour to receive you, when you shall intimate that it is proper, and whenever you will inform me of your intention, so that I may expect you at whatever hour shall be most convenient to you.

“I shall be pleased to make your acquaintance, and to assure you of the respect with which I have the honour, &c.

“THE COUNT D’ARANDA.”

It having been intimated to Dr. Franklin, that if we paid a visit to Count d’Aranda, it would be returned, we waited on him on the 29th of June. He received us in a friendly manner, and expressed his wishes that closer connexion might be formed between our countries, on terms agreeable to both.

He returned our visit the next day, and gave us an invi-

tation to dine with him a few days afterward. On that day I was taken sick, and continued so for many weeks, nor, indeed, am I yet perfectly recovered from the effects of that illness, having a constant pain in my breast, and frequently a little fever.

Hence it happened, that I did not meet Count d'Aranda on business till a month afterward, when, agreeably to a previous appointment, I waited upon him.

He began the conference by various remarks on the general principles on which contracting nations should form treaties, on the magnanimity of his sovereign, and on his own disposition to disregard trifling considerations in great matters. Then opening Michell's large map of North America, he asked me what were our boundaries; I told him that the boundary between us and the Spanish dominions was a line drawn from the head of Mississippi, down the middle thereof, to the thirty-first degree of north latitude, and from thence by the line between Florida and Georgia.

He entered into a long discussion of our right to such an extent, and insisted principally on two objections to it. 1st. That the western country had never belonged to, or been claimed as belonging to, the ancient colonies. That, previous to the last war, it had belonged to France, and after its cession to Britain remained a distinct part of her dominions, until, by the conquest of West Florida and certain posts on the Mississippi and Illinois, it became vested in Spain. 2dly. That supposing the Spanish right of conquest did not extend over *all* that country, still that it was possessed by free and independent nations of Indians, whose lands we could not, with any propriety, consider as belonging to us. He therefore proposed to run a longitudinal line on the east side of the river for our western boundary; and said, that he did not mean to dispute about a few acres or miles, but wished to run it in a manner that would be convenient to us; for though he could never admit the extent we

claimed, yet he did not desire to crowd us up to our exact limits.

As it did not appear to me expedient to enter fully into the discussion of these objections until after he had marked the line he proposed, I told him I would forbear troubling him with any remarks on the subject until the points in controversy should be reduced to a certainty; and, therefore, I desired him to mark on the map the line he proposed, and to place it as far to the west as his instructions would possibly admit of. He promised to do it, and to send me the map with his proposed line marked on it in a day or two.

I then gave him a copy of my commission, and showed him the original. He returned it to me with expressions of satisfaction, and then changed the subject, by desiring me, if, after receiving his map and examining his lines, I should find it in any respect inconvenient, that I would mark such other line on it as would, in my opinion, be more agreeable to America; assuring me, that he had nothing more at heart than to fix such a boundary between us as might be satisfactory to both parties. I told him, that on receiving his map, I would take all that he had said into consideration, and take the earliest opportunity of acquainting him with my sentiments respecting it. I then observed, that I hoped his powers to treat were equal with mine. He replied, that he had ample powers to confer, but not to sign any thing, without previously communicating it to his court, and receiving their orders for the purpose; but, to my surprise, he did not offer to show me any powers of any kind.

A few days afterward he sent me the same map, with his proposed line marked on it in red ink. He ran it from a lake near the confines of Georgia, but east of the Flint River, to the confluence of the Kanawa with the Ohio, thence round the western shores of Lakes Erie and Huron, and thence round Lake Michigan to Lake Superior.

On the 10th of August, I carried this map to the Count de Vergennes and left it with him. Dr. Franklin joined with me in pointing out the extravagance of this line ; and I must do him the justice to say, that in all his letters to me, and in all his conversations with me respecting our western extent, he has invariably declared it to be his opinion, that we should insist on the Mississippi as our western boundary, and that we ought not, by any means, to part with our right to the free navigation of it.

The Count de Vergennes was very cautious and reserved ; but M. Rayneval, his principal secretary, who was present, thought we claimed more than we had a right to.

Having thus clearly discovered the views of Spain, and that they were utterly inadmissible, I had little hope of our ever agreeing ; especially as the Mississippi was, and ought to be, our *ultimatum*.

It was not long before I had another interview with M. Rayneval. He asked me whether I had made any progress in my negotiations with the Count d'Aranda. I told him, that the count had not yet shown me any powers from his court to treat. He expressed surprise that I should have any difficulties on that head ; especially considering the public as well as private character of that nobleman. I replied, that I was very sensible of the respectability, both of his public and private character ; but, that neither the one nor the other authorized him to negotiate treaties with the United States of America ; and consequently, that his court would be at liberty to disavow all his proceedings in such business. That it was my duty to adhere to the forms usual in such cases, and that those forms rendered it proper for ministers to exchange copies of their commissions, before they proceeded on the business which was the object of them.

The Count d'Aranda was very urgent that I should mark

on his map some line or other to the eastward of the Mississippi, to which we could agree; and on the 26th of August we had another conference on these subjects. I told him frankly, that we were bound by the Mississippi, and that I had no authority to cede any territories east of it to his Catholic Majesty, and that all I could do relative to it, was to transmit his proposition to Congress for their consideration.

He affected to be much surprised that I should have no discretionary authority on that subject, and observed, that he had supposed I was a minister plenipotentiary. I told him, that few ministers plenipotentiary had discretionary power to transfer and cede to others the countries of their sovereigns. He denied that the countries in question were our countries, and asked what right we had to territories, which manifestly belonged to free and independent nations of Indians. I answered, that those were points to be discussed and settled between us and them; that we claimed the right of pre-emption with respect to them, and the sovereignty with respect to all other nations. I reminded him, that Mexico and Peru had been in the same predicament, and yet that his Catholic Majesty had had no doubts of his right to the sovereignty of those countries.

He then desired me to write him a letter on the subject, in order that he might, with the greater accuracy, convey my sentiments to his court.

On the 4th of September, I received the following letter from M. de Rayneval.

#### TRANSLATION.

“Versailles, September 4th, 1782.

“SIR,

“I should be glad to have a conversation with you on the subject of the boundaries in regard to Spain, but it is impossible for me to go to Paris for this purpose. You would oblige me, if you would have the goodness to come to Ver-

sailles to-morrow morning. It will give me great pleasure to see you at dinner. Meanwhile, I have the honour, &c.

“RAYNEVAL.”

I accordingly waited upon M. de Rayneval. He entered into a long disquisition of our claims to the western country. It is unnecessary to repeat in this place what he said on those subjects, because I shall insert in this letter a copy of a paper which, at my request, he wrote to me on them. That paper will speak for itself. You will be at no loss to form a judgment of the mode in which he proposed to reconcile us, by what he called a conciliatory line. We discussed very freely the propriety of my objecting to proceed with the Count d'Aranda; and among other reasons, which induced him to think I ought to go on, was my having already conferred with him on those subjects. My answer to this was obvious, viz. that though I had heard Count d'Aranda's propositions, yet that I had offered none of any kind whatever.

On the 6th of September, M. de Rayneval wrote me the following letter.

TRANSLATION.

“Versailles, September 6th, 1782.

“I have the honour, sir, to send you, as you desired me, my personal ideas on the manner of terminating your discussions about limits with Spain. I hope they will appear to you worthy to be taken into consideration.

“I have reflected, sir, on what you said to me yesterday of the Spanish ambassador's want of powers. You cannot, in my opinion, urge that reason to dispense treating with that ambassador, without offending him, and without contradicting the first step you have taken towards him. This reflection leads me to advise you again to see the Count d'Aranda, and to make him a proposition of some sort or other on the object in question. That which results from

my memoir appears to me the most proper to effect a reasonable conciliation; but it is for you to judge whether I am mistaken, because you alone have a knowledge of the title, which the United States can have to extend their possessions at the expense of nations, whom England herself has acknowledged to be independent.

“As to the rest, sir, whatever use you may think proper to make of my memoir, I pray you to regard it, at least, as a proof of my zeal, and of my desire to be useful to the cause of your country.

“I have the honour to be, with perfect consideration, yours, &c. &c.

“RAYNEVAL.”

“P.S. As I shall be absent for some days, I pray you to address your answer to M. Stenin, secretary to the council of state, at Versailles.”

I must desire you not to let the perusal of the following memoir make you forget the postscript of the above letter, for in the sequel you will find it of some importance.

*M. de Rayneval's Memoir respecting the right of the United States to the navigation of the Mississippi.*

TRANSLATION.

“The question between Spain and the United States of North America is, how to regulate their respective limits towards the Ohio and the Mississippi. The Americans pretend that their dominion extends as far as the Mississippi, and Spain maintains the contrary.

“It is evident that the Americans can only borrow from England the right they pretend to have to extend as far as the Mississippi; therefore, to determine this right, it is proper to examine what the court of London has thought and done on this head.

“ It is known, that before the treaty of Paris, France possessed Louisiana and Canada, and that she considered the savage people, situated to the east of the Mississippi, either as independent, or as under her protection.

“ This pretension caused no dispute; England never thought of making any, except as to the lands situated towards the source of the Ohio, in that part where she had given the name of Alleghany to that river.

“ A discussion about limits at that time took place between the courts of Versailles and London, but it would be superfluous to follow the particulars; it will suffice to observe, that England proposed in 1755 the following boundary. It set out from the point where the River de Boeuf falls into the Ohio, at the place called Venango; it went up this river towards Lake Erie as far as twenty leagues, and setting off again from the same place, Venango, a right line was drawn as far as the last mountains of Virginia, which descend towards the ocean. As to the savage tribes situated between the aforesaid line and the Mississippi, the English minister considers them as independent; from whence it follows, that according to the very propositions of the court of London, almost the whole course of the Ohio belonged to France, and that the countries situated to the westward of the mountains were considered as having nothing in common with the colonies.

“ When peace was negotiated in 1761, France offered to make a cession of Canada to England. The regulation of the limits of this colony and Louisiana was in question. France pretended that almost the whole course of the Ohio made a part of Louisiana, and the court of London, to prove that this river belonged to Canada, produced several authentic papers; among others, the chart which M. Vaudreuil delivered to the English commandant when he abandoned Canada. The minister of London maintained, at the same time, that a part of the savages situated to the eastward of the Mississippi were independent, another part under its

protection, and that England had purchased a part from the five Iroquois nations. The misfortunes of France cut these discussions short; the treaty of Paris assigned the Mississippi for the boundary between the possessions of France and Great Britain.

“Let us see the dispositions which the court of London has made in consequence of the treaty of Paris.

“If they had considered the vast territories situated to the eastward of the Mississippi as forming part of their ancient colonies, they would have declared so, and have made their dispositions accordingly. So far from any such thing, the king of England, in a proclamation of the month of October, 1763, declares in a precise and positive manner that the lands in question are situated between the Mississippi and the ancient *English establishments*. It is, therefore, clearly evident, that the court of London itself, when it was as yet sovereign of the thirteen colonies, did not consider the aforementioned lands as forming part of these same colonies; and it results from this in the most demonstrative manner, that they have not at this time any right over these lands. To maintain the contrary, every principle of the laws of nature and nations must be subverted.

“The principles now established are as applicable to Spain as to the United States. This power cannot extend its claims beyond the bounds of its conquests. She cannot, therefore, pass beyond the Natchez, situated towards the thirty-first degree of latitude; her rights are, therefore, confined to this degree; what is beyond, is either independent, or belonging to England; neither Spain nor the Americans can have any pretensions thereto. The future treaty of peace can alone regulate the respective rights.

“The consequence of all that has been said is, that neither Spain nor the United States has the least right of sovereignty over the savages in question, and that the transactions they may carry on as to this country would be to no purpose.

“But the future may bring forth new circumstances, and this reflection leads one to suppose, that it would be of use that the court of Madrid and the United States should make an eventual arrangement.

“This arrangement may be made in the following manner. A right line should be drawn from the eastern angle of the Gulf of Mexico, which makes the section between the two Floridas, to Fort Toulouse, situated in the country of the Alabamas; from thence the river Loneshatchi should be ascended, from the mouth of which a right line should be drawn to the Fort or Factory Quenassee; from this last place, the course of the river Euphaseè is to be followed till it joins the Cherokee; the course of this last river is to be pursued to the place where it receives the Pelissippi; this last to be followed to its source, from whence a right line is to be drawn to Cumberland River, whose course is to be followed until it falls into the Ohio. The savages to the westward of the line described should be free, under the protection of Spain; those to the eastward should be free, and under the protection of the United States; or rather, the Americans may make such arrangements with them as is most convenient to themselves. The trade should be free to both parties.

“By looking over the chart, we shall find that Spain would lose almost the whole course of the Ohio, and that the establishments which the Americans may have on this river, would remain untouched, and that even a very extensive space remains to form new ones.

“As to the course and navigation of the Mississippi, they follow with the property, and they will belong, therefore, to the nation to which the two banks belong. If then, by the future treaty of peace, Spain preserves West Florida, she alone will be the proprietor of the course of the Mississippi from the thirty-first degree of latitude to the mouth of this river. Whatever may be the case with that part which is beyond this point to the north, the United States of America

can have no pretensions to it, not being masters of either border of this river.

“As to what respects the lands situated to the northward of the Ohio, there is reason to presume that Spain can form no pretensions thereto. Their fate must be regulated with the court of London.”

I did not return M. Rayneval any answer to his letter, nor any remarks on his memoir, but the first time I saw him afterward, I told him I had received his letter and memoir he had done me the honour to write, and that I should send a copy of it to our secretary for foreign affairs.

As both the letter and memoir were *ostensibly* written by him in a private character, it did not appear to me expedient or necessary to enter into any formal discussions with him on those subjects.

The perusal of this memoir convinced me,

1st. That this court would, at a peace, oppose our extension to the Mississippi.

2dly. That they would oppose our claim to the free navigation of that river.

3dly. That they would *probably* support the *British* claims to all the country above the 31st degree of latitude, and *certainly* to all the country north of the Ohio.

4thly. That in case we should not agree to divide with Spain in the manner proposed, that then this court would aid Spain in negotiating with Britain for the territory she wanted, and would agree that the residue should remain to Britain.

In my opinion, it was not to be believed that the first and confidential secretary of the Count de Vergennes would, without his knowledge and consent, declare such sentiments, and offer such propositions, and that, too, in writing. I therefore considered M. Rayneval as speaking the sentiments of the minister, and I confess they alarmed me, especially as they seemed naturally to make a part of that

system of policy which I believed induced him rather to postpone the acknowledgment of our independence by Britain to the conclusion of a general peace, than aid us in procuring it at present.

You will now be pleased to recollect the postscript to M. Rayneval's letter.

On the 9th of September, I received certain information that on the 7th M. Rayneval had left Versailles, and was gone to England; that it was pretended he was gone into the country, and that several precautions had been taken to keep his real destination a secret.

A former page in this letter informs you that a little before this, Mr. Oswald had despatched a courier with letters, recommending it to his court to issue a new commission, styling us *United States*, and that I had agreed to prepare a letter to the Count de Vergennes, stating our objections to treat with Mr. Oswald under his present one.

This, therefore, was a period of uncertainty and suspense, and whatever part Britain might take, must necessarily be followed by very important consequences. No time was, therefore, to be lost in counteracting what I supposed to be the object of M. Rayneval's journey. But before I enter into that detail, I must here insert a copy of the letter which I wrote to the Count d'Aranda, agreeably to his request herein beforementioned.

TO THE COUNT D'ARANDA.

Paris, September 10th, 1782.

“SIR,

“Agreeably to your excellency's request, I have now the honour of repeating in writing, that I am not authorized by Congress to make any cession of any countries belonging to the United States, and that I can do nothing more respecting the line mentioned by your excellency, than to wait for and to follow such instructions as Congress, on

receiving that information, may think proper to give me on that subject.

“Permit me, nevertheless, to remind your excellency that I have full power to confer, treat, agree, and conclude with the ambassador or plenipotentiary of his Catholic Majesty, *vested with equal powers*, of and concerning a treaty of amity and commerce, and of alliance, on principles of equality, reciprocity, and mutual advantage.

“I can only regret that my overtures to his excellency the Count de Florida Blanca, who was *ex officio* authorized to confer with me on such subjects, have been fruitless.

“It would give me pleasure to see this business begun, and I cannot omit this opportunity of assuring your excellency of my wish and desire to enter upon it as soon as your excellency shall be pleased to inform me that you are authorized and find it convenient to proceed.

“I have the honour to be, &c.

“JOHN JAY.”

To this letter the count returned the following answer.

TRANSLATION.

“SIR,

“I have the honour to reply to your note of yesterday, that I am furnished with ample instructions from my court, and am authorized by it to confer and treat with you on all points on which you may be instructed and authorized to treat by your constituents.

“As soon as you communicate your propositions, they will be examined, and I will submit to you my observations on them, in order that we may be able to agree on both sides.

“I have the honour to be, &c.

“THE COUNT D'ARANDA.”

On the same day, viz. the 10th of September, a copy of a translation of a letter from M. Marbois to the Count de Vergennes, against our sharing in the fishery, was put into my hands. Copies of it were transmitted to you, enclosed with my letter of the 18th of September, of which a duplicate was also forwarded.

I also learned, from good authority, that on the morning of M. Rayneval's departure, the Count d'Aranda had, contrary to his usual practice, gone with *post-horses* to Versailles, and was two or three hours in conference with the Count de Vergennes and M. Rayneval, before the latter set out.

All these facts taken together, led me to conjecture that M. Rayneval was sent to England for the following purposes.

1st. To let Lord Shelburne know that the demands of America, to be treated by Britain as independent previous to a treaty, were not approved or countenanced by this court, and that the offer of Britain to make that acknowledgment in an article of the proposed treaty was, in the count's opinion, sufficient.

2dly. To sound Lord Shelburne on the subject of the fishery, and to discover whether Britain would agree to divide it with France, to the exclusion of all others.

3dly. To impress Lord Shelburne with the determination of Spain to possess the exclusive navigation of the Gulf of Mexico, and of their desire to keep us from the Mississippi; and also to hint the propriety of such a line as, on the one hand, would satisfy Spain, and on the other, leave to Britain all the country north of the Ohio.

4thly. To make such other verbal overtures to Lord Shelburne as it might not be advisable to reduce to writing, and to judge from the general tenor of his lordship's answers and conversation, whether it was probable that a general peace, on terms agreeable to France, could be

effected, in order that if that was not the case, an immediate stop might be put to the negotiation.

Having, after much consideration, become persuaded that these were M. Rayneval's objects, I mentioned his journey to Mr. Oswald, and after stating to him the first three of these objects, I said every thing respecting them that appeared to me necessary; but at the same time with a greater degree of caution than I could have wished, because I well knew it would become the subject of a long letter to the ministry. On reflecting, however, how necessary it was that Lord Shelburne should know our sentiments and resolutions respecting these matters, and how much better they could be conveyed in conversation than by letter; and knowing also, that Mr. Vaughan was in confidential correspondence with him, and he was and always had been strongly attached to the American cause, I concluded it would be prudent to prevail upon him to go immediately to England.

I accordingly had an interview with Mr. Vaughan, and he immediately despatched a few lines to Lord Shelburne, desiring that he would delay taking any measures with M. Rayneval, until he should either see or hear further from him.

Mr. Vaughan agreed to go to England, and we had much previous conversation on the points in question; the substance of which was,

That Britain, by a peace with us, certainly expected other advantages than a mere suspension of hostilities, and that she doubtless looked forward to cordiality, confidence, and commerce.

That the manner as well as the matter of the proposed treaty was therefore of importance, and that if the late assurances respecting our independence were not realized by an unconditional acknowledgment, neither confidence nor peace could reasonably be expected; that this measure was con-

sidered by America as the touchstone of British sincerity, and that nothing could abate the suspicions and doubts of her good faith, which prevailed there.

That the interest of Great Britain, as well as that of the minister, would be advanced by it; for as every idea of conquest had become absurd, nothing remained for Britain to do, but to make friends of those whom she could not subdue; that the way to do this was by leaving us nothing to complain of, either in the negotiation or in the treaty of peace, and by liberally yielding every point essential to the interest and happiness of America; the first of which points was, that of treating with us on an equal footing.

That if the minister really meant to make peace with us, it was his interest to make us believe so, and thereby inspire us with a certain degree of confidence, which could no otherwise be obtained; that his enemies charged him with insincerity on this very point, and that it must be useful to him to convince all the world that such a charge was groundless.

That it would be vain to amuse themselves with expectations from the affected moderation of France on this head; for that America never would treat on any but an equal footing, and, therefore, although such expectations might cause delay, they would ultimately be fruitless.

That a little reflection must convince him that it was the interest and, consequently, the policy of France to postpone if possible the acknowledgment of our independence to the very conclusion of a general peace, and by keeping it suspended until after the war, *oblige us, by the terms of our treaty, and by regard to our safety, to continue in it to the end.*

That it hence appeared to be the obvious interest of Britain immediately to cut the cords which tied us to France, for that, though we were determined faithfully to fulfil our treaty and engagements with this court, *yet it was*

*a different thing to be guided by their or our construction of it.*

That, among other things, we were bound not to make a separate peace or truce, and that the assurance of our independence was avowed to be the object of our treaty. While, therefore, Great Britain refused to yield this object, we were bound, as well as resolved, to go on with the war, although, perhaps, the greatest obstacles to a peace arose neither from the demands of France nor America. Whereas, that object being conceded, we should be at liberty to make peace the moment that Great Britain should be ready to accede to the terms of France and America, without our being restrained by the demands of Spain, with whose views we had no concerns.

That it would not be wise in Great Britain to think of dividing the fishery with France and excluding us; because we could not make peace at such an expense, and because such an attempt would irritate America still more; would perpetuate her resentments, and induce her to use every possible means of retaliation by withholding supplies in future to the fishery, and by imposing the most rigid restraints on a commerce with Britain.

That it would not be less impolitic to oppose us on the point of boundary and the navigation of the Mississippi:

1st. Because our right to extend to the Mississippi was proved by our charters and other acts of government; and our right to its navigation was deducible from the laws of nature, and the consequences of revolution, which vested in us every British territorial right. It was easy, therefore, to foresee what opinions and sensations the mere attempt to dispossess us of these rights would diffuse throughout America.

2dly. Because the profits of an extensive and lucrative commerce, and not the possession of vast tracts of wilderness, were the true objects of a commercial European nation.

That by our extending to the Mississippi to the west, and to the proclamation bounds of Canada to the north, and by consenting to the mutual free navigation of our several lakes and rivers, there would be an inland navigation from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to that of Mexico, by means of which the inhabitants west and north of the mountains might, with more ease, be supplied with foreign commodities than from ports on the Atlantic, and that this immense and growing trade would be in a manner monopolized by Great Britain, as we should not insist that she should admit other nations to navigate the waters that belonged to her. That therefore the navigation of the Mississippi would, in future, be no less important to her than to us, it being the only convenient outlet, through which they could transport the productions of the western country, which they would receive in payment for merchandise vended there.

That as to retaining any part of that country, or insisting to extend Canada so as to comprehend the lands in question, it would be impolitic, for these further reasons. Because it would not be in their power either to settle or govern that country; that we should refuse to yield them any aid, and that the utmost exertions of Congress could not prevent our people from taking gradual possession of it, by making establishments in different parts of it. That it certainly could not be wise in Britain, whatever it might be in other nations, thus to sow the seeds of future war in the very treaty of peace, or to lay in it the foundation of such distrusts and jealousies as, on the one hand, would for ever prevent confidence and real friendship, and on the other, naturally lead us to strengthen our security by intimate and permanent alliances with other nations.

I desired Mr. Vaughan to communicate these remarks to Lord Shelburne, and to impress him with the necessity and policy of taking a decided and manly part respecting America.

Mr. Vaughan set off the evening of the 11th of September.

It would have relieved me from much anxiety and uneasiness to have concerted all these steps with Dr. Franklin, but on conversing with him about M. Rayneval's journey, he did not concur with me in sentiment respecting the objects of it; but appeared to me to have a great degree of confidence in this court, and to be much embarrassed and constrained by our instructions.

I think it was on the 24th of September, that I was informed of the intention of the British court to give Mr. Oswald such a new commission as had been recommended.

On the 26th of September, I went to pay a visit to the Count de Vergennes, at Versailles. I found the Marquis de Lafayette in the antechamber, and the ambassador of Spain shortly after entered. After some common conversation, the ambassador asked me when we should proceed to do business. I told him as soon as he should do me the honour of communicating his powers to treat. He asked me whether the Count de Florida Blanca had not informed me of his being authorized. I admitted that he had, but observed, that the usual mode of doing business rendered it proper that we should exchange certified copies of our respective commissions. He said that could not be expected in our case; for that Spain had not yet acknowledged our independence. I replied, that we had declared it, and that France, Holland, and Britain had acknowledged it. Here the Marquis de Lafayette took up the subject, and it continued between him and the ambassador, till the Count de Vergennes came in. The marquis told the ambassador, among other things, that it would not be consistent with the dignity of France, for her ally to treat otherwise than as independent. This remark appeared to me to pique the Count d'Aranda not a little.

The Count de Vergennes, on coming in, finding the conversation earnest, inquired whether we could not agree. The ambassador stated my objections. The count said I

certainly ought to treat with the *ambassador*, and that it was proper we should make a treaty with Spain in the same manner that we had done with France. I told him I desired nothing more ; and that the commission to M. Gerard, and the reason assigned by this court to the King of Great Britain for entering into alliance with us, pointed out both the manner and the principles which were observed and admitted on that occasion. The count did not seem pleased with my allusion to the communication made of our alliance to England. He observed that Spain did not deny our independence, and he could perceive no good reason for my declining to confer with the ambassador about a treaty, without saying any thing about our independence, an acknowledgment of which would naturally be the effect of the treaty proposed to be formed. I told the count, that being independent, we should always insist on being treated as such, and, therefore, it was not sufficient for Spain to forbear denying our independence while she declined to admit it ; and that notwithstanding my respect for the ambassador, and my desire of a treaty with Spain, both the terms of my commission and the dignity of America forbid my treating on any other than an *equal footing*.

The count carried the ambassador into his cabinet, and when he retired, I was admitted.

The count commenced the conversation, by explaining the reason of sending M. Rayneval to England, which he said was, that by conversing with Lord Shelburne about peace and matters connected with it, he might be able to judge whether a pacific disposition really prevailed in the British court, and, therefore, whether any dependence might be placed in his lordship's professions on that head ; that he was satisfied with M. Rayneval's report, and that he believed that Lord Shelburne was sincerely desirous of peace.

A few words then passed about Mr. Oswald's new commission ; the count observing, in general terms, that as it

removed our former objections, we might now go on to prepare our preliminaries.

The conversation next turned to our negotiation with Spain, and to her claims east of the Mississippi. Nothing new passed on the first topic; as to the latter, the count made only some very general remarks, such as that he hoped we should, on conferring further about the matter, approach nearer to each other; that those limits ought to be settled, and while they remained in contest, a treaty with Spain could not reasonably be expected; that as soon as we should agree upon those points, Count d'Aranda would have a further or more formal commission to conclude the treaty, &c.

I remarked, that these claims of Spain were of recent date, for that on my first arriving in Spain, the Count de Florida Blanca told me, that the success of my mission would probably turn upon one single point, viz. the cession of our rights to the navigation of the river Mississippi; from which, as well as from their subsequent and uniform demands on that head, it was evident, that they then considered that river as our boundary; for it would have been very strange indeed, that they should insist on our forbearing to navigate a river, whose waters washed no part of our country, and to which we could not, of consequence, have any pretence of claim.

The count smiled, but avoided making any direct reply; he hoped we should, nevertheless, agree, and that we must endeavour to approach and meet each other. I told him I could not flatter myself with such expectations, while Spain continued her claims to those countries, for that we should be content with no boundary short of the Mississippi.

I went from the count's to M. Rayneval's chamber, for I had not seen him since his return from England. He gave me the same reason for his journey which I had just received from the count. We then talked of his memoir and

the Spanish negotiation. He said much in favour of the conciliatory line he had proposed, and of the advantages of placing the Indian nations on the *west* side of it under the *protection* of Spain, and those on the *east* under that of the United States; that the rights of those nations would be thereby secured, and future disputes between us and Spain avoided. I replied, that so far as our claims might affect those Indian nations, it was a matter solely between us and them; and that, admitting them to be independent, they certainly had a right to choose their own protectors; and, therefore, that we could have no right, without their knowledge or consent, to choose for them. I also made the same remark to him respecting the recency of these Spanish claims, which I had just before done to Count de Vergennes. He said it was a subject which Count de Florida Blanca had not understood, and imputed their former ideas of our extending to the Mississippi to their ignorance respecting those matters; hence it became evident from whom they had borrowed their present ideas.

On the 27th of September, Mr. Vaughan returned here from England with the courier that brought Mr. Oswald's new commission, and very happy were we to see it. Copies of it have already been sent to you, so that I will not lengthen this letter by inserting it here; nor will I add any thing further on this head, at present, than to assure you, that Mr. Vaughan greatly merits our acknowledgments.

The next thing to be done, was to prepare and draw up the proposed articles. They were soon completed and settled between us and Mr. Oswald, by whom they were sent to his court, with letters declaring his opinion, that they ought to be accepted and agreed to; but they differed with him in opinion.

These articles, for very obvious reasons, were not communicated to the Count de Vergennes.

Mr. Oswald did not receive any opinion from his court

relating to our articles until the 23d of October, when letters from the minister informed him that the extent of our boundaries, and the situation of the tories, &c. caused some objections, and the minister's secretary was on the way here to confer with us on those subjects.

On the 24th of October, I dined at Passy, with Dr. Franklin, where I found M. Rayneval. After dinner, we were in private with him a considerable time. He desired to know the state of our negotiation with Mr. Oswald. We told him that difficulties had arisen about our boundaries, and that one of the minister's secretaries was coming here with papers and documents on that subject. He asked us what boundaries we claimed. We told him, the river St. John to the east, and ancient Canada, as described in the proclamation, to the north. He contested our right to such an extent to the north, and entered into several arguments to show our claim to be ill-founded. These arguments were chiefly drawn from the ancient French claims, and from a clause in the proclamation restraining governors from making grants in the Indian country, &c.

He inquired what we demanded as to the fisheries. We answered, that we insisted on enjoying a right in common to them with Great Britain. He intimated that our views should not extend further than a coast fishery, and insinuated that pains had lately been taken in the eastern States to excite their apprehensions and increase their demands on that head. We told him that such a right was essential to us, and that our people would not be content to make peace without it; and Dr. Franklin explained very fully, their great importance to the eastern States in particular. He then softened his manner, and observed that it was natural for France to wish better to us than to England; but as the fisheries were a great nursery for seamen, we might suppose that England would be disinclined to admit others to share in it, and that for his part he wished there might be as few obstacles to a peace as possible. He

reminded us, also, that Mr. Oswald's new commission had been issued posterior to his arrival at London.

On the 26th of October, Mr. Adams arrived here, and in him I have found a very able and agreeable coadjutor.

When I began this letter, I did not flatter myself with being able to write this much before Captain Barney would leave us; and I now find myself too much exhausted to proceed with further details, and must therefore refer you to the letters you will receive from Mr. Adams and Dr. Franklin.

The same reason also prevents my writing to you and Mr. Morris on other subjects, by Captain Barney, and I hope the length of this letter, and the disagreeable state of my health, will apologize for my not writing even to my own family by this opportunity.

I am sensible of the impression which this letter will make upon you and upon Congress, and how it will affect the confidence they have in this court. These are critical times, and great necessity there is for prudence and secrecy.

So far, and in such matters as this court may think it their interest to support us, they certainly will, but no further, in my opinion.

They are interested in separating us from Great Britain, and on that point we may, I believe, depend upon them; but it is not their interest that we should become a great and formidable people, and therefore they will not help us to become so.

It is not their interest that such a treaty should be formed between us and Britain, as would produce cordiality and mutual confidence. They will, therefore, endeavour to plant such seeds of jealousy, discontent, and discord in it as may naturally and perpetually keep our eyes fixed on France for security. This consideration must induce them to wish to render Britain formidable in

our neighbourhood, and to leave us as few resources of wealth and power as possible.

It is their interest to keep some point or other in contest between us and Britain to the end of the war, to prevent the possibility of our sooner agreeing, and thereby keep us employed in the war, and dependent on them for supplies. Hence they have favoured, and will continue to favour, the British demands as to matters of boundary and the tories.

The same views will render them desirous to continue the war in our country as long as possible, nor do I believe they will take any measures for our repossession of New-York, unless the certainty of its evacuation should render such an attempt advisable. The Count de Vergennes lately said, that there could be no great use in expeditions to take places, which must be given up to us at a peace.

Such being our situation, it appears to me advisable to keep up our army to the end of the war, even if the enemy should evacuate our country; nor does it appear to me prudent to listen to any overtures for carrying a part of it to the West Indies, in case of such an event.

I think we have no rational dependence except on God and ourselves; nor can I yet be persuaded, that Great Britain has either wisdom, virtue, or magnanimity enough to adopt a perfect and liberal system of conciliation. If they again thought they could conquer us, they would again attempt it.

We are, nevertheless, thank God, in a better situation than we have been. As our independence is acknowledged by Britain, every obstacle to our forming treaties with neutral powers, and receiving their merchant ships, is at an end, so that we may carry on the war with greater advantage than before, in case our negotiations for peace should be fruitless.

It is not my meaning, and therefore I hope I shall not be understood to mean, that we should deviate in the least from our treaty with France ; our honour and our interest are concerned in inviolably adhering to it. I mean only to say, that if we lean on her love of liberty, her affection for America, or her disinterested magnanimity, we shall lean on a broken reed, that will, sooner or later, pierce our hands, and Geneva as well as Corsica justifies this observation.

I have written many disagreeable things in this letter, but I thought it my duty. I have also deviated from my instructions, which, though not to be justified, will, I hope, be excused, on account of the singular and unforeseen circumstances which occasioned it.

Let me again recommend secrecy, and believe me to be, dear sir, &c.

JOHN JAY.



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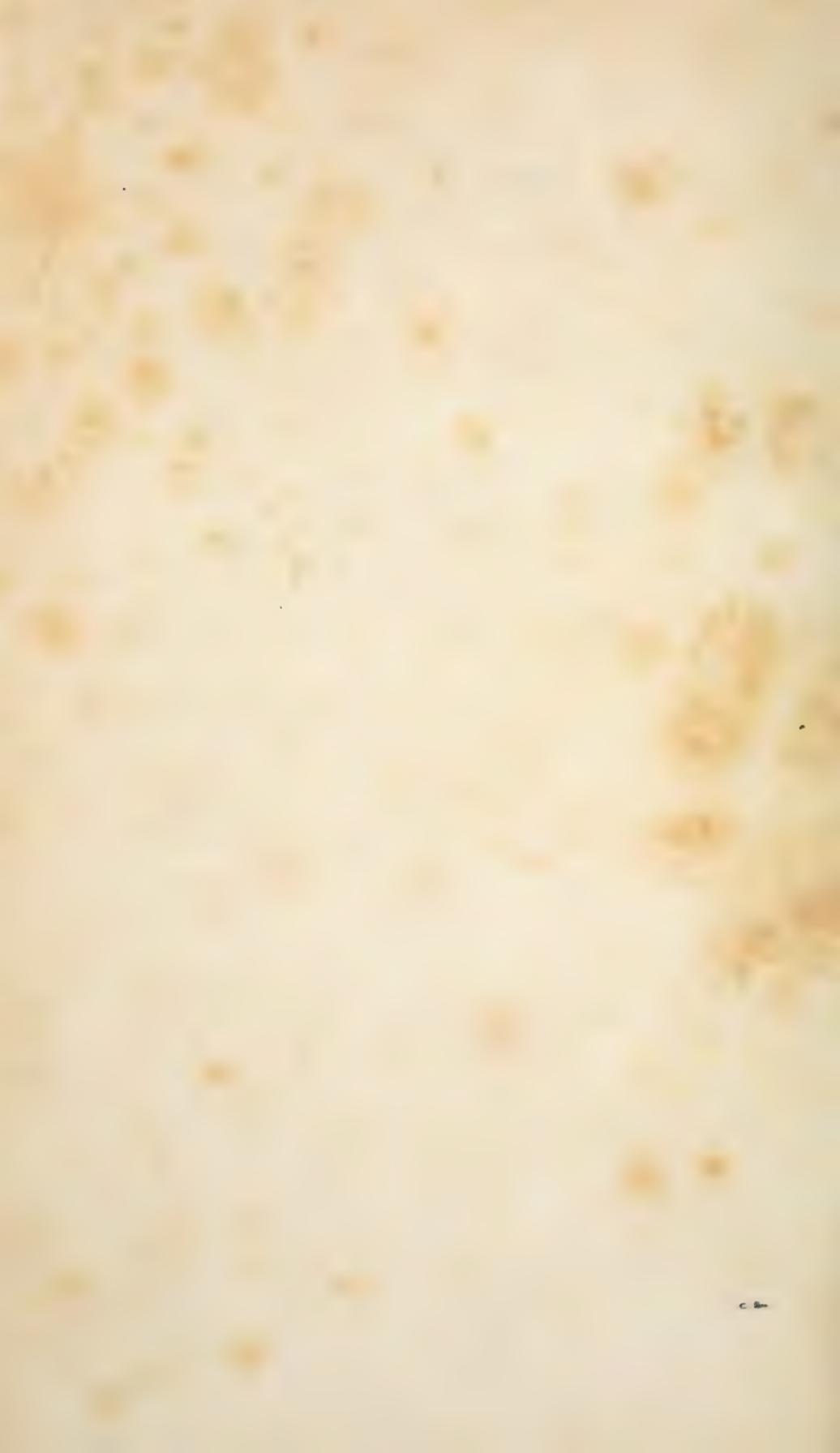
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