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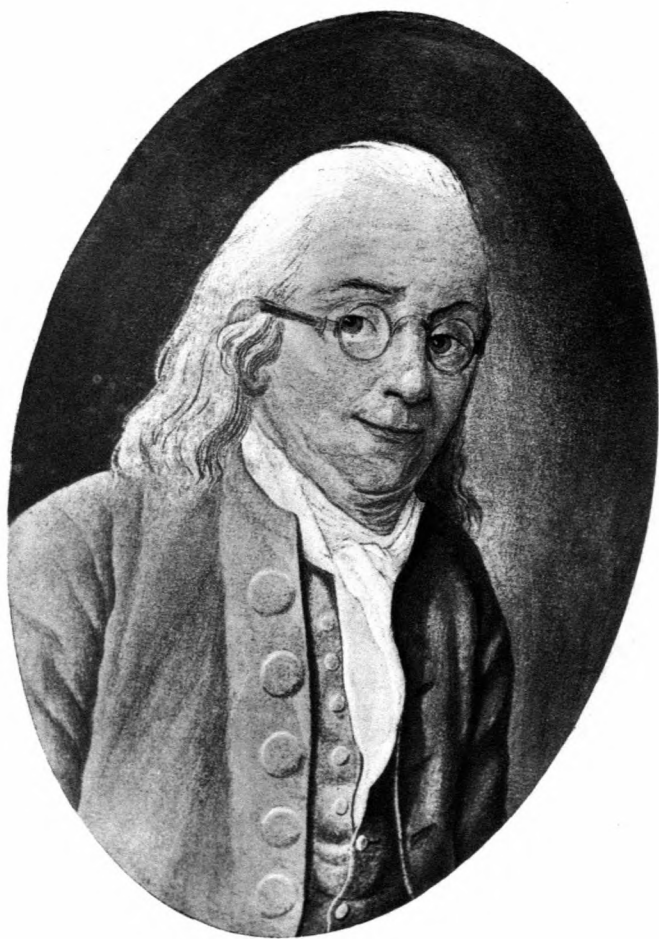
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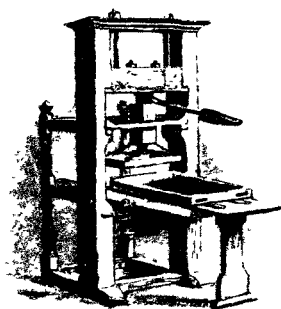
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Compiled and Edited
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“Strange that Ulysses does a thousand things so well.”—*ILIAD*, B 11, 335

Volume X

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CORRESPONDENCE
AND
MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS

CORRESPONDENCE
AND
MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS

MCXV

AN ACCOUNT OF TOADS FOUND ENCLOSED IN SOLID
STONE

At Passy, near Paris, April 6, 1782, being with M. de Chaumont, viewing his quarry, he mentioned to me that the workmen had found a living toad shut up in the stone. On questioning one of them, he told us they had found four in different cells which had no communication; that there was in each cell some loose, soft, yellowish earth, which appeared to be very moist. We asked if he could show us the parts of the stone that formed the cells. He said, No; for they were thrown among the rest of what was dug out, and he knew not where to find them. We asked if there appeared any opening by which the animal could enter. He said, No. We asked if, in the course of his business as a laborer in quarries, he had often met with the like. He said, Never before. We asked if he could show us the toads. He said, he had thrown two of them up on

a higher part of the quarry, but knew not what became of the others.

He then came up to the place where he had thrown the two, and, finding them, he took them by the foot and threw them up to us, upon the ground where we stood. One of them was quite dead, and appeared very lean; the other was plump and still living. The part of the rock where they were found is at least fifteen feet below its surface, and is a kind of limestone. A part of it is filled with ancient sea-shells, and other marine substances. If these animals have remained in this confinement since the formation of the rock, they are probably some thousands of years old. We have put them in spirits of wine, to preserve their bodies a little longer. The workmen have promised to call us if they meet with any more, that we may examine their situation. Before a suitable bottle could be found to receive them, that which was living when we first had them appeared to be quite dead and motionless; but being in the bottle, and the spirits poured over them, he flounced about in it very vigorously for two or three minutes, and then expired.

It is observed that animals who perspire but little can live long without food: such as tortoises, whose flesh is covered with a thick shell; and snakes, who are covered with scales, which are of so close a substance as scarcely to admit the passage of perspirable matter through them. Animals that have open pores all over the surface of their bodies, and live in air which takes off continually the perspirable part of their substance, naturally require a continual sup-

ply of food to maintain their bulk. Toads shut up in solid stone, which prevents their losing any thing of their substance, may perhaps for that reason need no supply; and being guarded against all accidents, and all the inclemencies of the air and changes of the seasons, are, it seems, subject to no diseases, and become as it were immortal. B. FRANKLIN.¹

MCXVI

TO L' ABBÉ SOULAVIE ²

PASSY, 22 September, 1782.

SIR:—I return the papers with some corrections. I did not find coal mines under the calcareous rock

¹ The following copy of a letter from Sir John Pringle to Mr. A. Small, was annexed to the above account, in Dr. Franklin's papers — W. T. F.

"MINORCA, 25 April, 1780.

"SIR.—Last year I had the honor to inform you that two of those large moths called Muskitoe Hawks, which appear about September, and disappear about the beginning of December, lived seventy-one days after I had cut their heads off with a pair of scissors.

"The last autumn I made the same experiment upon several, keeping them under separate glasses, in a closet, where there was no fire. The most of them lived different periods, from three to sixty and seventy days. Those which exceeded that number of days were four, viz, one from the 30th of October to the 21st of January, eighty-three days, one from the 12th of December to the 21st of April, one hundred and thirty-one days; and one from the 24th of October to the 15th of April, one hundred and seventy-four days. As they are very active, and covered with a sort of plumage, which makes it difficult to cut their heads off, without bruising or otherwise injuring the body, I imagine that may partly be the reason of their living different periods; and if, after the operation, any glutinous liquor proceeded from the body, that moth would die soon.

"I put several under glasses, without cutting off their heads, none of which lived many days.

"I am, sir, with great esteem, your most obedient and most humble servant,

JOHN PRINGLE "

² Read at a meeting of the American Philosophical Society, November 21, 1788.

in Derbyshire.¹ I only remarked, that, at the lowest part of that rocky mountain which was in sight, there were oyster shells mixed in the stone; and part of the high county of Derby being probably as much above the level of the sea, as the coal mines of Whitehaven were below it, seemed a proof that there had been a great *bouleversement* in the surface of that island, some part of it having been depressed under the sea, and other parts, which had been under it, being raised above it. Such changes in the superficial parts of the globe seemed to me unlikely to happen, if the earth were solid to the centre. I therefore imagined, that the internal parts might be a fluid more dense, and of greater specific gravity than any of the solids we are acquainted with, which therefore might swim in or upon that fluid. Thus the surface of the globe would be a shell, capable of being broken and disordered by the violent movements of the fluid on which it rested. And as air has been compressed by art, so as to be twice as dense as water, in which case, if such air and water could be contained in a strong glass vessel, the air would be seen to take the lowest place, and the water to float above and upon it; and as we know not yet the degree of density to which air may be compressed, and M. Amontons calculated that, its density increasing as it approached the centre in the same proportion as above the surface, it would, at the depth of—leagues, be heavier than gold, pos-

¹ Occasioned by his sending me some notes he had taken, of what I had said to him in conversation on the Theory of the Earth. I wrote it to set him right in some points wherein he had mistaken my meaning.
—Note by B. F.

sibly the dense fluid occupying the internal parts of the globe might be air compressed. And as the force of expansion in dense air when heated is in proportion to its density, this central air might afford another agent to move the surface, as well as be of use in keeping alive the subterraneous fires; though, as you observe, the sudden rarefaction of water coming into contact with those fires, may also be an agent sufficiently strong for that purpose, when acting between the incumbent earth and the fluid on which it rests.

If one might indulge imagination, in supposing how such a globe was formed, I should conceive, that, all the elements in separate particles being originally mixed in confusion, and occupying a great space, they would (as soon as the almighty fiat ordained gravity, or the mutual attraction of certain parts, and the mutual repulsion of others, to exist) all move to their common centre; and the air being a fluid whose parts repel each other, though drawn to the common centre by their gravity, would be densest towards the centre, and rarer as more remote; consequently all matters lighter than the central parts of that air, and immersed in it, would recede from the centre, and rise till they arrived at that region of the air which was of the same specific gravity with themselves, where they would rest; while other matter, mixed with the lighter air, would descend, and the two meeting would form the shell of the first earth, leaving the upper atmosphere nearly clear. The original movement of the parts towards their common centre would naturally form

a whirl there, which would continue upon the turning of the new-formed globe upon its axis, and the greatest diameter of the shell would be in its equator. If by any accident afterwards the axis should be changed, the dense internal fluid, by altering its form, must burst the shell, and throw all its substance into the confusion in which we find it.

I will not trouble you at present with my fancies concerning the manner of forming the rest of our system. Superior beings smile at our theories, and at our presumption in making them. I will just mention that your observation of the ferruginous nature of the lava which is thrown out from the depths of our volcanoes, gave me great pleasure. It has long been a supposition of mine that the iron contained in the surface of the globe has made it capable of becoming, as it is, a great magnet; that the fluid of magnetism perhaps exists in all space; so that there is a magnetical north and south of the universe as well as of this globe, and that, if it were possible for a man to fly from star to star, he might govern his course by the compass; that it was by the power of this general magnetism this globe became a particular magnet. In soft or hot iron, the fluid of magnetism is naturally diffused equally, when within the influence of the magnet it is drawn to one end of the iron, made denser there and rarer at the other. While the iron continues soft and hot, it is only a temporary magnet; if it cools or grows hard in that situation, it becomes a permanent one, the magnetic fluid not easily resuming its equilibrium. Perhaps it may be owing to the permanent magnet-

ism of this globe, which it had not at first, that its axis is at present kept parallel to itself, and not liable to the changes it formerly suffered, which occasioned the rupture of its shell, the submersions and emersions of its lands, and the confusion of its seasons. The present polar and equatorial diameters differing from each other near ten leagues, it is easy to conceive, in case some power should shift the axis gradually, and place it in the present equator, and make the new equator pass through the present poles, what a sinking of the waters would happen in the present equatorial regions, and what a rising in the present polar regions; so that vast tracts would be discovered that now are under water, and others covered that are now dry, the water rising and sinking in the different extremes near five leagues. Such an operation as this possibly occasioned much of Europe, and, among the rest, this mountain of Passy on which I live, and which is composed of limestone, rock, and sea-shells, to be abandoned by the sea, and to change its ancient climate, which seems to have been a hot one.

The globe being now become a perfect magnet, we are, perhaps, safe from any change of its axis. But we are still subject to the accidents on the surface, which are occasioned by a wave in the internal ponderous fluid; and such a wave is producible by the sudden violent explosion you mention, happening from the junction of water and fire under the earth, which not only lifts the incumbent earth that is over the explosion, but, impressing with the same force the fluid under it, creates a wave, that may

run a thousand leagues lifting, and thereby shaking successively all the countries under which it passes. I know not whether I have expressed myself so clearly as not to get out of your sight in these reveries. If they occasion any new inquiries, and produce a better hypothesis, they will not be quite useless. You see I have given a loose to imagination; but I approve much more your method of philosophizing, which proceeds upon actual observation, makes a collection of facts, and concludes no further than those facts will warrant. In my present circumstances, that mode of studying the nature of the globe is out of my power, and therefore I have permitted myself to wander a little in the wilds of fancy. With great esteem, I have the honor to be, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S.—I have heard that chemists can by their art decompose stone and wood, extracting a considerable quantity of water from the one and air from the other. It seems natural to conclude, from this, that water and air were ingredients in their original composition; for men cannot make new matter of any kind. In the same manner may we not suppose that, when we consume combustibles of all kinds, and produce heat or light, we do not create that heat or light, but only decompose a substance which received it originally as a part of its composition? Heat may be thus considered as originally in a fluid state; but, attracted by organized bodies in their growth, becomes a part of the solid. Besides this, I can conceive that in the first assemblage of the particles of which this earth is composed, each

brought its portion of the loose heat that had been connected with it, and the whole, when pressed together, produced the internal fire that still subsists.

MCXVII

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON

PASSY, 26 September, 1782.

SIR:—I have just received yours dated the 9th of August, which mentions your not having heard from me since March. I have, however, written sundry letters, viz., of April the 8th, and June the 12th, June the 25th and 29th, August the 12th, and September the 3d, and sent copies of the same, which I hope cannot all have miscarried.

The negotiations for peace have hitherto amounted to little more than mutual professions of sincere desires, etc., being obstructed by the want of due form in the English commissions appointing their plenipotentiaries. The objections made to those for treating with France, Spain, and Holland were first removed; and by the enclosed,¹ it seems that our objections to that for treating with us will now be removed also, so that we expect to begin in a few days our negotiations. But there are so many interests to be considered and settled, in a peace between five different nations that it will be well not to flatter ourselves with a very speedy conclusion.

I mentioned in a former letter my having communicated to Count de Vergennes the state of Ameri-

¹This refers to Mr Oswald's commission, which may be found in the *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. X, p. 80.

can commerce, which you sent me, and my having urged its consideration, etc. Enclosed is a copy of a letter received from that minister on the subject.

The copy of General Carleton's letter, and the bills of exchange which you mentioned as enclosed, do not appear. I hope soon to have a better opportunity of writing, when I shall be fuller. With great esteem, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCXVIII

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES

VERSAILLES, 3 October, 1782.

SIR:—I have the honor to return you the commission appointing Thomas Barclay, Consul of the United States, to reside in France, and I endorse the *exequatur*, which is requisite for the exercise of his functions. I must inform you that the latter of these will require the Admiral's signature previously to its being registered, either by the secretary of the Admiralty at L'Orient, where Mr. Barclay intends to fix his residence, or by those of other parts of the kingdom, where commercial considerations may require his presence. I have the honor to be, etc.,

DE VERGENNES.

MCXIX

FROM DAVID HARTLEY

BATH, 4 October, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—I only write one line to you to let you know that I am not forgetful of you or

of our common concerns. I have not heard any thing from the ministry yet. I believe it is a kind of vacation with them before the meeting of Parliament. I have told you of a proposition which I have had some thoughts to make as a kind of copartnership in commerce. I send you a purposed temporary convention, which I have drawn up. You are to consider it only as one I recommend. The words underlined are grafted upon the proposition of my memorial, dated May 19, 1778. You will see the principle which I have in my thoughts to extend for the purpose of restoring our ancient copartnership generally.

I cannot tell you what event things may take; but my thoughts are always employed in endeavoring to arrange that system upon which the *China Vase*, lately shattered, may be cemented together upon principles of compact and connection instead of dependence.

I have met with a sentiment in this country which gives some alarm, viz., lest the unity of government in America should be uncertain, and the States reject the authority of Congress. Some passages in General Washington's letter have given weight to these doubts. I do not hear of any tendency to this opinion—that *the American States will break to pieces, and then we may still conquer them*. I believe all that folly is extinguished. But many serious and well disposed persons are alarmed lest *this should be the ill-fated moment for relaxing the powers of the Union and annihilating the cement of confederation* (*vide* Washington's letter), and that Great Britain should

thereby lose her best and wisest hope of being reconnected with the American States *unitedly*. I should, for one, think it the greatest misfortune. Pray give me some opinion upon this.

You see there is likewise another turn which may be given to this sentiment by intemperate and disappointed people, who may indulge a passionate revenge for their own disappointments by endeavoring to excite general distrust, discord, and disunion. I wish to be prepared and guarded at all points.

I beg my best compliments to your colleagues. Be so good as to show this letter to them. I beg particularly my condolence (and I hope congratulation) to Mr. Adams. I hear that he has been very dangerously ill, but that he is again recovered. I hope the latter part is true, and that we shall all survive to set our hands to some future compacts of common interest and common affection between our two countries. Your ever affectionate

D. HARTLEY.

MCXX

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON

PARIS, 14 October, 1782.

SIR:—I have but just received information of this opportunity, and have only time allowed to write a few lines.

In my last of the 26th past, I mentioned that the negotiation for peace had been obstructed by the want of due form in the English commissions ap-

pointing their plenipotentiaries. In that for treating with us, the mentioning our States by their public name had been avoided, which we objected to; another is come, of which I send a copy enclosed. We have now made several preliminary propositions, which the English minister, Mr. Oswald, has approved and sent to his court. He thinks they will be approved there, but I have some doubts. In a few days, however, the answer expected will determine. By the first of these articles, the king of Great Britain renounces, for himself and successors, all claim and pretension to dominion or territory within the Thirteen United States; and the boundaries are described as in our instructions, except that the line between Nova Scotia and New England is to be settled by commissioners after the peace. By another article, the fishery in the American seas is to be freely exercised by the Americans, wherever they might formerly exercise it while united with Great Britain. By another, the citizens and subjects of each nation are to enjoy the same protection and privileges in each other's ports and countries, respecting commerce, duties, etc., that are enjoyed by native subjects. The articles are drawn up very fully by Mr. Jay, who I suppose sends you a copy; if not, it will go by the next opportunity. If these articles are agreed to, I apprehend little difficulty in the rest. Something has been mentioned about the refugees and English debts, but not insisted on; as we declared at once that, whatever confiscations had been made in America, being in virtue of the laws of particular States, the Congress had no authority to

repeal those laws, and therefore could give us none to stipulate for such repeal.

I have been honored with the receipt of your letters, Nos. 14 and 15. I have also received two letters from Mr. Lewis R. Morris, both dated the 6th of July, and one dated the 10th of August, enclosing bills for

68,290 livres,

71,380

9,756

In all 149,426 livres, being intended for the payment of ministers' salaries for the two first quarters of this year. But as these bills came so late, that all those salaries were already paid, I shall make no use of the bills, but lay them by till further orders, and the salaries of different ministers not having all the same times of falling due, as they had different commencements, I purpose to get all their accounts settled and reduced to the same period, and send you the state of them, that you may be clear in future orders. I see in one of the estimates sent me that a quarter's salary of a minister is reckoned at 14,513 livres; in the other it is reckoned 16,667 livres, and the bill for 9,756¹ livres is mentioned as intended to pay a balance due on the remittance of the 68,290 livres. Being unacquainted with the state of your exchange, I do not well comprehend this, and therefore leave the whole for the present, as I have said above. Permit me only to hint for your consideration whether it may

¹ This was not merely to pay a balance, but an excess on account of contingencies.—*Note by Mr. Livingston.*

not be well hereafter to omit mention of sterling in our appointments, since we have severed from the country to which that denomination of money is peculiar, and also to order the payment of your ministers in such a manner that they may know exactly what they are to receive, and not be subject to the fluctuations of exchange. If it is that which occasions the difference between 14,513 for the first quarter, and 16,667 for the second, it is considerable. I think we have no right to any advantage by the exchange, nor should we be liable to any loss from it. Hitherto we have taken 15,000 for a quarter (subject, however, to the allowance or disallowance of Congress), which is lower than the medium between those two extremes.

The different accounts given of Lord Shelburne's character, with respect to sincerity, induced the ministry here to send over M. de Rayneval, Secretary to the Council, to converse with him, and endeavor to form by that means a more perfect judgment of what was to be expected from the negotiations. He was five or six days in England, saw all the ministers, and returned quite satisfied that they are sincerely desirous of peace, so that the negotiations now go on with some prospect of success. But the court and people of England are very changeable. A little turn of fortune in their favor sometimes turns their heads, and I shall not think a speedy peace to be depended on till I see the treaties signed. I am obliged to finish. With great esteem, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCXXI

TO JOHN ADAMS

PASSY, 15 October, 1782.

SIR:—A long and painful illness has prevented my corresponding with your Excellency regularly.

Mr. Jay has, I believe, acquainted you with the obstructions our peace negotiations have met with, and that they are at length removed. By the next courier expected from London we may be able perhaps to form some judgment of the probability of success, so far as relates to our part of the peace. How likely the other powers are to settle their pretensions I cannot yet learn. In the meantime America is gradually growing more easy by the enemy's evacuation of their posts, as you will see by some intelligence I enclose. With great respect I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCXXII

FROM GEORGE WASHINGTON

HEAD-QUARTERS, 18 October, 1782.

SIR:—I have been honored with two favors of your Excellency, one presented by the Count de Ségur, of the 2d of April, the other delivered by the Prince de Broglie, of the 8th, both of which were rendered doubly agreeable by the pleasure I had in receiving them from the hands of two such amiable and accomplished young gentlemen. Independently

of my esteem for your Excellency, be assured, sir, that my respect and regard for the French nation at large, to whom this country is under so great obligations, as well as the very favorable impressions I have conceived for their particular characters, will secure my warmest attention to the persons of these distinguished young noblemen.

I am much obliged by the political information which you have taken the trouble to convey to me, but feel myself much embarrassed in my wish to make you a return in kind. Early in the season, the expectations of America were much raised in consequence of the change of the British ministry, and the measures of Parliament; but events have shown that our hopes have risen too high. The death of the Marquis of Rockingham, the advancement of the Earl of Shelburne, and the delays of negotiation, have given us very different impressions from those we at first received. We now begin again to reflect upon the persevering obstinacy of the king, the wickedness of his ministry, and the haughty pride of the nation, which recall to our minds very disagreeable recollections, and a probable continuance of our present troubles. The military operations of the campaign are drawing to a close without any very important events on this side of the water, unless the evacuation of Charleston, which is generally expected, but not yet known to me, should take place, and form a paragraph in the page of this year's history.

The British fleet from the West Indies still continues in New York. I have not been able yet to

decide on the enemy's intentions there. It is generally thought that a detachment of their troops will sail when the fleet returns to the West Indies, where it is conjectured their efforts for the winter will be prosecuted with vigor. I have the honor to be, etc.,

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

MCXXIII

TO THOMAS TOWNSHEND

PASSY, 4 November, 1782

SIR:—I received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me by Mr. Strachey,¹ and was much pleased with the opportunity it gave me of renewing and increasing my acquaintance with a gentleman of so amiable and deserving a character.

I am sensible you have ever been averse to the measures that brought on this unhappy war. I have therefore no doubt of the sincerity of your wishes for a return of peace. Mine are equally earnest. Nothing, therefore, except the beginning of the war, has given me more concern than to learn at the conclusion of our conferences that it is not likely to be soon ended. Be assured no endeavors on my part would be wanting to remove any difficulties that may have arisen, or, even if a peace were made, to procure afterwards any changes in the treaty that might tend to render it more perfect and the peace more durable. But we, who are here at so great a distance

¹ Under Secretary of State in the department of which Mr. Townshend was chief.

from our constituents, have not the possibility of obtaining in a few days fresh instructions, as is the case with your negotiators, and are therefore obliged to insist on what is conformable to those we have, and at the same time appears to us just and reasonable. With great esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, sir,

B. FRANKLIN.¹

¹ *From Richard Oswald to Thomas Townshend* — "Mr. Jay, after repeating his wishes that Great Britain might determine in a manner suitable to the present situation of things, said that in case we meant to close with them on this occasion, he would take the liberty to request that his Majesty would order his ambassadors at the neutral courts to give so much countenance to the peace with America as formally to intimate its being in the train of negotiation, and, when signed, that the same also should be notified. The advice of this, he said, would soon reach America, and would produce the happiest effects there, as well to our benefit as theirs, even although the final conclusion must wait a settlement with France, that even that conclusion would also feel the benefit of those negotiations

"Soon after Mr. Adams, the other commissioner, called upon me, and expressed himself equally anxious that there might be an end to all our differences. In the meantime he delivered to me the enclosed packet from their Congress to Mr. Laurens, with a request that I would send it by the first courier, and recommend it so as to get safe to his hands, which I promised to do, and hope it will be taken care of. Mr. Adams also signified, in like manner as Mr. Jay had done, a wish that the above-mentioned intimation might be made at the neutral courts. He seemed so earnest about it that I could not avoid asking him as to the object of such intimation. He answered that, among other things, it would make them more independent or indifferent about this court, which they wished exceedingly might be brought about, that neither he nor Mr. Jay had any particular instructions relative to this court, nor had any correspondence with it, further than as they were bound by the letter of their treaty with them. Further than that, he said, they gave themselves no concern about them; that in case of a particular commission, long residence, and habits of correspondence, it was natural to suppose a correspondent complaisance would be created even under the guidance of the most upright intentions and conduct upon the whole; and but as to them, this gentleman said, they were

MCXXIV

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON

PASSY, 7 November, 1782.

SIR:—The Baron de Kermelin, a Swedish gentleman of distinction, recommended strongly to me by his Excellency, the ambassador of that nation to this court, as a person highly esteemed in his own, purposes a journey through North America, to view its natural productions, acquaint himself with its commerce, and acquire such information as may be useful to his country, in the communication and

not even under those kinds of biases."—*Paris, November 7th. MS. Letter.*

From Mr. Strachey to Thomas Townshend.—"Since Mr. Adams came here the commissioners have taken more notice of the refusal of admitting their having the privilege of drying in Newfoundland than I expected from what they told me at settling the plan of treaty, which was sent to England. But at last, after a great deal of conversation at different times on the subject, it was agreed to be left out, upon condition of their being allowed to dry upon any of the unsettled parts of the coast of Nova Scotia, when they happened to be so far from home as that their fish might run some risk of being spoiled before they reached their own shores. Dr. Franklin said he believed it would be only on such occasions that they would use the privilege, and even then it would be only for a partial drying salting, so as to prevent the fish from spoiling before they went home and delivered them to their wives and children to complete and finish the drying.

"He also said 'I observe, as to *catching fish*, you mention only the Banks of Newfoundland. Why not all other places, and amongst others the Gulf of St. Lawrence? Are you afraid there are not fish enough, or that we should catch too many? At the same time you know that we shall bring the greatest part of the money we get for that fish to Great Britain to pay for your manufactures.' He agreed it might not be proper to have a mixture of their people with ours for drying in Newfoundland. But he supposed there would be no inconvenience in throwing on the shore the fish for a few days, on an unsettled beach, bay, or harbor on the coast of Nova Scotia."—*Paris, November. MS. Letter.*

connexion of interests that seem to be growing, and probably may soon become considerable, between the two nations. I therefore beg leave to introduce him to you, and request that you would present him to the President of Congress, and to such other persons as you shall think may be useful to him in his views; and I recommend him earnestly to those civilities which you have a pleasure in showing to strangers of merit. I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCXXV

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 15 November, 1782.

SIR:—I received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me the 13th inst., and I lose no time in forwarding to your Excellency the orders you desire for the four English vessels destined to pass between Dover and Calais; though I am persuaded the passports they are furnished with from his most Christian Majesty would have been sufficient protection to them against all vessels belonging to the United States. With great respect, I am, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCXXVI

TO RICHARD OSWALD

PASSY, 26 November, 1782.

SIR:—You may well remember that in the beginning of our conferences before the other commissioners

arrived, on your mentioning to me a retribution for the Royalists, whose estates had been confiscated, I acquainted you that nothing of that kind could be stipulated by us, the confiscation being made by virtue of laws of particular States, which the Congress had no power to contravene or dispense with, and therefore could give us no such authority in our commission. And I gave it as my opinion and advice, honestly and cordially, that, if a reconciliation was intended, no mention should be made in our negotiations of those people; for, they having done infinite mischief to our properties by wantonly burning and destroying farm-houses, villages, towns, if compensation for their losses were insisted on, we should certainly exhibit again such an account of all the ravages they had committed, which would necessarily recall to view scenes of barbarity that must inflame, instead of conciliating, and tend to perpetuate an enmity that we all profess a desire of extinguishing. Understanding, however, from you that this was a point your ministry had at heart, I wrote concerning it to Congress, and I have lately received the following resolution, viz.:

“By the United States, in Congress assembled

10 September, 1782.

“Resolved, That the Secretary for Foreign Affairs be, and he is hereby, directed to obtain, as speedily as possible, authentic returns of the slaves and other property which have been carried off or destroyed in the course of the war by the enemy, and to transmit the same to the ministers plenipotentiary for negotiating peace.

“Resolved, That, in the meantime, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs inform said ministers, that many thousands of slaves, and other property, to a very great amount, have been carried off or destroyed by the enemy; and that, in the opinion of Congress, the great loss of property which the citizens of the United States have sustained by the enemy, will be considered by the several States as an insuperable bar to their making restitution or indemnification to the former owners of property, which has been or may be forfeited to, or confiscated by, any of the States.”

In consequence of these resolutions and circular-letters of the Secretary, the Assembly of Pennsylvania, then sitting, passed the following act, viz.:

“State of Pennsylvania in Congress Assembled

“ Wednesday, 18 September, 1782.

“The bill, entitled, ‘An act for procuring an estimate of the damages sustained by the inhabitants of Pennsylvania, from the troops and adherents of the king of Great Britain during the present war,’ was read a second time.

“Ordered to be transcribed, and printed for public consideration.

“Extract from the minutes.

“PETER Z. LLOYD,

“Clerk of the General Assembly.

“Whereas, great damages of the most wanton nature have been committed by the armies of the king

of Great Britain, or their adherents, within the territory of the United States of North America, unwarranted by the practice of civilized nations, and only to be accounted for from the vindictive spirit of the said king and his officers; and, whereas, an accurate account and estimate of such damages, more especially the waste and destruction of property, may be very useful to the people of the United States of America, in forming a future treaty of peace, and in the meantime may serve to exhibit in a true light to the nations of Europe the conduct of the said king, his ministers, officers, and adherents; to the end, therefore, that proper measures be taken to ascertain the damages aforesaid, which have been done to the citizens and inhabitants of Pennsylvania, in the course of the present war within this State; Be it enacted by the House of Representatives of the freemen of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in General Assembly met, and by the authority of the same, that in every county of this State, which has been invaded by the armies, soldiers, or adherents of the king of Great Britain, the commissioners of every such county shall immediately meet together, each within their county, and issue directions to the assessors of the respective townships, districts, and places within such county, to call upon the inhabitants of every township and place to furnish accounts and estimates of the damages, waste, spoil, and destruction which have been done and committed as aforesaid, upon the property, real or personal, within the same township or place, since the first day of ———, which was in the

year of our Lord 177—, and the same accounts and estimates to be transmitted to the commissioners without delay. And, if any person or persons shall refuse or neglect to make out such accounts and estimates, the said assessors of the township or place shall, from their own knowledge and by any other reasonable and lawful method, take and render such an account and estimate of all damage done or committed, as aforesaid; Provided, always, that all such accounts and estimates, to be made out and transmitted as aforesaid, shall contain a narrative of the time and circumstances; and, if in the power of the person aggrieved, the names of the general or other officers or adherents of the enemy by whom the damage in any case was done, or under whose orders the army, detachment, party, or persons committing the same, acted at that time; and also the name and condition of the person or persons whose property was so damaged or destroyed; and that all such accounts and estimates be made in current money, upon oath or affirmation of the sufferer, or of others having knowledge concerning the same; and that in every case it be set forth whether the party injured hath received any satisfaction for his loss, and by whom the same was given.

“And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the said commissioners, having obtained the said accounts and estimates from the assessor of the several townships and places, shall proceed to inspect and register the same in a book, to be provided for that purpose, distinguishing the districts and townships, and entering those of each place

together; and if any account and estimate be imperfect, or not sufficiently verified and established, the said commissioners shall have power, and they, or any two of them, are hereby authorized to summon and compel persons, whose evidence they shall think necessary, to appear before them at a day and place appointed, to be summoned upon oath or affirmation concerning any damage or injury as aforesaid; and the said commissioners shall, upon the call and demand of the President or Vice-President of the Supreme Executive Council, deliver or send to the Secretary of the said Council all or any of the original accounts and estimates aforesaid, and shall also deliver or send to the said secretary, copies of the book aforesaid, or any part or parts thereof, upon reasonable notice. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that all losses of negro or mulatto slaves and servants, who have been deluded and carried away by the enemies of the United States, and have not been recovered or recompensed, shall be comprehended within the accounts and estimates aforesaid; and that the commissioners and assessors of any county which had not been invaded as aforesaid, shall nevertheless inquire after and procure accounts and estimates of any damages suffered by the loss of such servants and slaves as is hereinbefore directed as to other property.

“And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the charges and expenses of executing this act as to the pay of the said commissioners and assessors, shall be as in other cases; and that witnesses shall be rewarded for their loss of time and

trouble as witnesses, summoned to appear in the courts of quarter sessions of the peace; and the said charges and expenses shall be defrayed by the commonwealth, but paid in the first instance out of the hands of the treasurer of the county, for county rates, and levies upon orders drawn by the commissioners of the proper county."

We have not yet had time to hear what has been done by the other Assemblies; but I have no doubt that similar acts will be made use of by all of them, and that the mass of evidence produced by the execution of those acts, not only of the enormities committed by those people, under the direction of the British generals, but of those committed by the British troops themselves, will form a record that must render the British name odious in America to the latest generations. In that authentic record will be found the burning of the fine towns of Charlestown, near Boston; of Falmouth, just before winter, when the sick, the aged, the women, and children, were driven to seek shelter where they could hardly find it; of Norfolk, in the midst of winter; of New London, of Fairfield, of Esopus, etc., besides near a hundred and fifty miles of well settled country laid waste; every house and barn burnt, and many hundreds of farmers, with their wives and children, butchered and scalped.

The present British ministers, when they reflect a little, will certainly be too equitable to suppose that their nation has a right to make an unjust war (which they have always allowed this against us to

be), and do all sorts of unnecessary mischief, unjustifiable by the practice of any individual people, which those they make war with are to suffer without claiming any satisfaction; but that if Britons or their adherents are in return deprived of any property, it is to be restored to them, or they are to be indemnified. The British troops can never excuse their barbarities. They were unprovoked. The loyalists may say in excuse of theirs that they were exasperated by the loss of their estates, and it was revenge. They have then had their revenge. *Is it right they should have both?*

Some of those people may have merit in their regard for Britain, and who espoused her cause from affection; these it may become you to reward. But there are many of them who were waverers, and were only determined to engage in it by some occasional circumstance or appearances; these have not much of either merit or demerit; and there are others who have abundance of demerit respecting your country, having by their falsehoods and misrepresentations brought on and encouraged the continuance of the war—these, instead of being recompensed, should be punished.

It is usual among Christian people at war to profess always a desire of peace; but if the ministers of one of the parties choose to insist particularly on a certain article, which they have known the others are not and cannot be empowered to agree to, what credit can they expect should be given to such professions?

Your ministers require that we should receive

again into our bosom those who have been our bitterest enemies, and restore their properties who have destroyed ours, and this while the wounds they have given us are still bleeding! It is many years since your nation expelled the Stuarts and their adherents, and confiscated their estates. Much of your resentment against them may by this time be abated; yet if we should propose it, and insist on it as an article of our treaty with you, that that family should be recalled and the forfeited estates of its friends restored, would you think us serious in our professions of earnestly desiring peace?

I must repeat my opinion, that it is best for you to drop all mention of the refugees. We have proposed, indeed, nothing but what we think best for you as well as ourselves. But if you will have them mentioned, let it be in an article in which you may provide that they shall exhibit accounts of their losses to the commissioners, hereafter to be appointed, who should examine the same, together with the accounts now preparing in America of the damages done by them, and state the account; and that if a balance appears in their favor, it shall be paid by us to you, and by you divided among them as you shall think proper; and if the balance is found due to us, it shall be paid by you.

Give me leave, however, to advise you to prevent the necessity of so dreadful a discussion by dropping the article, that we may write to America and stop the inquiry. I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCXXVII

FROM BENJAMIN VAUGHAN

PASSY, 27 November, 1782.

MY DEAREST SIR:—I am so agitated with the present crisis that I cannot help writing to you, to beseech you again and again to meditate upon some mild expedient about the refugees, or to give a favorable ear and helping hand to such as may turn up.

Both sides agree that the matter of expense is nothing, and the matter of honor in my opinion is least to *that* side which has most sense and most justice on its side. It seems to me that the matter of present *peace* and that of *future happiness* are the only points of true concern to either.

If I can judge of favorable moments, the present is of all others most favorable to our views of *reconciliation*. We have liberal American commissioners at Paris, a liberal English commissioner, and a liberal first minister for England. All these circumstances may vanish to-morrow, if this treaty blows over.

If you wanted to break off your treaty, I am perfectly sensible that you could not do it on grounds in which America would more join with you than this of the refugees. On the other hand, if England wanted to break, she could not wish for better ground on *her* side. You do not break; and therefore I conclude you *both* sincere. But in this way I see the treaty is likely of *itself* to break. I pray then, my dearest, dearest sir, that you would a little take this matter to heart.

If the refugees are not silenced, you must be sensible what constant prompters to evil measures you leave us; what perpetual sources of bad information. If the minister is able, on the other hand, to hold up his head on this one point, you must see how much easier it will be for you both to carry on the great work of reunion, as far as relates to prince and people. We are not well informed about the deeds of the refugees in England; and we can only now be well informed by publications that would do irreparable mischief.

Besides you are the most magnanimous nation, and can excuse things to your people which *we* can less excuse to *ours*. Not to mention that when Congress sent you their last resolutions they were not aware that you would be so near a settlement as you are at present. To judge which is the hardest task, yours or England's, put yourself in Lord Shelburne's place. The only marks of confidence shown him at Paris are such as he *dares not name*; and the only marks promised him are *future* national ones. England has given much ground of confidence to America. In my opinion England will do *her* business in the way of RECONCILIATION, very much in proportion as you do *your* business generously at the present peace. England is to be won, as well as America is to be won; and I beg you would think with yourself and your colleagues about the means. Excuse this freedom, my dearest sir; it is the result of a very warm heart, that thinks a little property *nothing* to much happiness. I do not, however, ask you to do a dishonorable thing, but simply to save England,

and to give our English ministry the means of saying, on the 5th of December, we have done *more* than the last ministry have done. I hope you will not think this zeal persecution; for I shall not mention this subject to you again of my own accord.

I know you have justice on your side; I know you may talk of precedents; but there is such a thing as forgiveness, as generosity, and as a manly policy, that can share a small *loss*, rather than miss a greater *good*. I am, etc.,

B. VAUGHAN.

MCXXVIII

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 29 November, 1782.

SIR:—I have the honor to acquaint your Excellency that the commissioners of the United States have agreed with Mr. Oswald on the preliminary articles of the peace between those States and Great Britain. To-morrow I hope we shall be able to communicate to your Excellency a copy of them. With great respect, I have the honor to be, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCXXIX

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON

PASSY, 4 December, 1782.

SIR:—We detain the *Washington* a little longer, expecting an English passport for her in a few days,

and as possibly some vessel bound for North America may sail before her, I write this line to inform you that the French preliminaries with England are not yet signed, though we hope they may be very soon. Of ours I enclose a copy. The Dutch and Spain have yet made but little progress; and, as no definite treaty will be signed till all are agreed, there may be time for Congress to give us further instructions, if they think proper. We hope the terms we have obtained will be satisfactory, though, to secure our main points, we may have yielded too much in favor of the loyalists. The quantity of aid to be afforded us remains undecided. I suppose something depends on the event of the treaty. By the *Washington* you will be fully informed of every thing. With great regard, I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCXXX

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON

PASSY, 5 December, 1782.

SIR:—I am honored by your several letters, dated September 5th, 13th, 15th, and 18th.¹ I believe that the complaints you make in them, of my not writing, may ere now have appeared less necessary, as many of my letters written before those complaints must have since come to hand. I will nevertheless mention some of the difficulties your ministers meet with, in keeping up a regular and punctual correspondence. We are far from the seaports, and

¹See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. , IV. pp 10, 18, 19

not well informed, and often misinformed, about the sailing of vessels. Frequently we are told they are to sail in a week or two, and often they lie in the ports for months after, with our letters on board, either waiting for convoy or for other reasons. The post-office here is an unsafe conveyance; many of the letters we receive by it have evidently been opened, and doubtless the same happens to those we send; and at this time particularly there is so violent a curiosity in all kinds of people to know something relating to the negotiations, and whether peace may be expected, or a continuance of the war, that there are few private hands or travellers that we can trust with carrying our despatches to the sea-coast; and I imagine that they may sometimes be opened and destroyed, because they cannot be well sealed.

Again, the observation you make, that the Congress ministers in Europe seem to form themselves into a privy council, transacting affairs without the privity or concurrence of the sovereign, may be in some respects just; but it should be considered that, if they do not write as frequently as other ministers here do to their respective courts, or if, when they write, their letters are not regularly received, the greater distance of the seat of war and the extreme irregularity of conveyances may be the causes, and not a desire of acting without the knowledge or orders of their constituents. There is no European court to which an express cannot be sent from Paris in ten or fifteen days, and from most of them answers may be obtained in that time. There is, I imagine, no minister, who would not think it safer to act by

orders than from his own discretion; and yet, unless you leave more to the discretion of your ministers in Europe than courts usually do, your affairs may sometimes suffer extremely from the distance, which, in the time of war especially, may make it five or six months before the answer to a letter shall be received. I suppose the minister from this court will acquaint Congress with the king's sentiments respecting their very handsome present of a ship of the line. People in general here are much pleased with it.

I communicated, together with my memoir demanding a supply of money, copies of every paragraph in your late letters, which express so strongly the necessity of it. I have been constant in my solicitations both directly and through the Marquis de Lafayette, who has employed himself diligently and warmly in the business. The negotiations for peace are, I imagine, one cause of the great delay and indecision on this occasion beyond what has been usual, as the quantum may be different if those negotiations do or do not succeed. We have not yet learned what we may expect. We have been told that we shall be aided, but it cannot be to the extent demanded; six millions have been mentioned, but not as a sum fixed. The minister tells me still that he is working upon the subject, but cannot yet give a determinative answer. I know his good-will to do the best for us that is possible.

It is in vain for me to repeat again what I have so often written, and what I find taken so little notice of, that there are bounds to every thing, and that

the faculties of this nation are limited like those of all other nations. Some of you seem to have established as maxims the suppositions that France has money enough for all her occasions and all ours besides, and that if she does not supply us it is owing to her want of will, or to my negligence. As to the first, I am sure it is not true; and to the second, I can only say I should rejoice as much as any man in being able to obtain more; and I shall also rejoice in the greater success of those who may take my place. You desire to be very particularly acquainted with "every step which tends to negotiation." I am, therefore, encouraged to send you the first part of the *Journal*, which accidents, and a long, severe illness interrupted, but which, from notes I have by me, may be continued if thought proper. In its present state it is hardly fit for the inspection of Congress, certainly not for public view. I confide it therefore to your prudence.

The arrival of Mr. Jay, Mr. Adams, and Mr. Laurens has relieved me from much anxiety, which must have continued, if I had been left to finish the treaty alone; and it has given me the more satisfaction, as I am sure the business has profited by their assistance.

Much of the summer has been taken up in objecting against the powers given by Great Britain, and in removing those objections. The not using any expressions that might imply an acknowledgment of our independence, seemed at first industriously to be avowed. But our refusing otherwise to treat, at length induced them to get over that difficulty, and then we came to the point of making propositions.

Those made by Mr. Jay and me before the arrival of the other gentlemen, you will find in the paper A, which was sent by the British plenipotentiary to London for the king's consideration. After some weeks, an under-secretary, Mr. Strachey, arrived, with whom we had much contestation about the boundaries and other articles, which he proposed and we settled; some of which he carried to London, and returned with the propositions, some adopted, others omitted or altered, and new ones added, which you will see in paper B. We spent many days in disputing, and at length agreed on and signed the preliminaries, which you will see by this conveyance. The British minister struggled hard for two points—that the favors granted to the loyalists should be extended, and all our fishery contracted. We silenced them on the first by threatening to produce an account of the mischief done by those people; and as to the second, when they told us they could not possibly agree to it as we requested it, and must refer it to the ministry in London, we produced a new article to be referred at the same time, with a note of facts in support of it, which you have, C.¹ Apparently, it

¹ The papers alluded to in this letter may be found in the *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. X., pp 88, 94, 106. The paper marked "C" was drawn up by Dr. Franklin, and is as follows:

"Article Proposed and Read to the Commissioners Before Signing the Preliminary Articles"

"It is agreed that his Britannic Majesty will earnestly recommend it to his Parliament to provide for and make a compensation to the merchants and shopkeepers of Boston, whose goods and merchandise were seized and taken out of their stores, warehouses, and shops, by order of General Gage and others of his commanders and officers there, and also to the inhabitants of Philadelphia, for the goods taken away by his

seemed that to avoid the discussion of this they suddenly changed their minds, dropped the design of recurring to London, and agreed to allow the fishery as demanded.

army there; and to make compensation also for the tobacco, rice, indigo, and negroes, etc., seized and carried off by his armies under Generals Arnold, Cornwallis, and others, from the States of Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia, and also for all vessels and cargoes belonging to the inhabitants of the said United States, which were stopped, seized, or taken, either in the ports or on the seas, by his governors or by his ships of war, before the declaration of war against the said States.

"And it is further agreed that his Britannic Majesty will also earnestly recommend it to his Parliament to make compensation for all the towns, villages, and farms burnt and destroyed by his troops or adherents in the said United States

"Facts

"There existed a free commerce, upon mutual faith, between Great Britain and America. The merchants of the former credited the merchants and planters of the latter with great quantities of goods, on the common expectation that the merchants, having sold the goods, would make the accustomed remittances, that the planters would do the same by the labor of their negroes and the produce of that labor—tobacco, rice, indigo, etc.

"England, before the goods were sold in America, sends an armed force, seizes those goods in the stores, some even in the ships that brought them, and carries them off, seizes also and carries off the tobacco, rice, and indigo provided by the planters to make returns, and even the negroes, from whose labor they might hope to raise other produce for that purpose.

"Britain now demands that the debts shall nevertheless be paid.

"Will she, can she, justly refuse making compensation for such seizures?

"If a draper, who had sold a piece of linen to a neighbor on credit should follow him and take the linen by force, and then send a bailiff to arrest him for the debt, would any court of law or equity award the payment of the debt, without ordering a restitution of the cloth?

"Will not the debtors in America cry out, that if this compensation be not made, they were betrayed by the pretended credit, and are now doubly ruined, first by the enemy, and then by the negotiators at Paris, the goods and negroes sold them being taken from them, with all they had besides, and they are now to be obliged to pay for what they have been robbed of?"

You will find in the preliminaries some inaccurate and ambiguous expressions that want explanation and which may be explained in the definitive treaty; and as the British ministry excluded our proposition relating to commerce, and the American prohibition of that with England may not be understood to cease merely by our concluding a treaty of peace, perhaps we may then, if the Congress shall think fit to direct it, obtain some compensation for the injuries done us as a condition of our opening again the trade. Every one of the present British ministry has, while in the ministry, declared the war against us as unjust, and nothing is clearer in reason than that those who injure others by an unjust war should make full reparation. They have stipulated too, in these preliminaries, that in evacuating our towns they shall carry off no plunder, which is a kind of acknowledgment that they ought not to have done it before.

The reason given us for dropping the articles relating to commerce was, that some statutes were in the way, which must be repealed before a treaty of that kind could be well formed, and that this was a matter to be considered in Parliament.

They wanted to bring their boundary down to the Ohio, and to settle their loyalists in the Illinois country. We did not choose such neighbors.

We communicated all the articles as soon as they were signed to Count de Vergennes (except the separate one), who thinks we have managed well, and told me that we had settled what was most apprehended as a difficulty in the work of a general

peace, by obtaining the declaration of our independency.

December 14th.—I have this day learned that the principal preliminaries between France and England are agreed on, to wit:

1. France is to enjoy the right of fishing and drying on all the west coast of Newfoundland, down to Cape Ray. Miquelon and St. Pierre to be restored, and may be fortified.

2. Senegal remains to France, and Goree to be restored. The Gambia entirely to England.

3. All the places taken from France in the East Indies to be restored, with a certain quantity of territory round them.

4. In the West Indies, Grenada and the Grenadines, St. Christopher's, Nevis, and Montserrat, to be restored to England; St. Lucia to France. Dominique to remain with France, and St. Vincent's to be neutralized.

5. No commissioner at Dunkirk.

The points not yet quite settled are the territory round the places in the Indies, and neutralization of St. Vincent's. Apparently these will not create much difficulty.

Holland has yet hardly done any thing in her negotiation.

Spain offers for Gibraltar to restore West Florida and the Bahamas. An addition is talked of the island of Guadaloupe, which France will cede to Spain in exchange for the other half of Hispaniola, and Spain to England, but England, it is said, chose rather Porto Rico. Nothing yet concluded.

As soon as I received the commission and instructions for treating with Sweden, I waited on the ambassador here, who told me he daily expected a courier on that subject. Yesterday he wrote a note to acquaint me that he would call on me to-day, having something to communicate to me. Being obliged to go to Paris, I waited on him, when he showed me the full powers he had just received and I showed him mine. We agreed to meet on Wednesday next, exchange copies, and proceed to business. His commission has some polite expressions in it, to wit: "that his Majesty thought it for the good of his subjects to enter into a treaty of amity and commerce with the United States of America, who had established their independence, so justly merited by their courage and constancy"; or to that effect. I imagine this treaty will be soon completed; if any difficulty should arise, I shall take the advice of my colleagues.

I thank you for the copies of Mr. Paine's letter to the Abbé Raynal, which I have distributed into good hands. The errors we see in histories of our times and affairs weaken our faith in ancient history. M. Hilliard d'Auberteuil has here written another history of our revolution, which, however, he modestly calls an *Essay*, and fearing that there may be errors, and wishing to have them corrected that his second edition may be more perfect, he has brought me six sets, which he desires me to put into such hands in America, as may be good enough to render him and the public that service. I send them to you for that purpose by Captain Barney, desiring that one set

may be given to Mr. Paine, and the rest where you please. There is a quarto set in the parcel, which please to accept from me.

I have never learned whether the box of books I sent to you, and the press to Mr. Thomson, were put on board the *Eagle* or one of the transports. If the former, perhaps you might easily purchase them at New York; if the latter, you may still receive them among the goods for Congress now shipping by Mr. Barclay. If they are quite lost, let me know it, that I may replace them.

I have received several letters from your office with bills to pay ministers' salaries. Nothing has yet been done with those bills, but I have paid Mr. Laurens twenty thousand livres.

I have this day signed a common letter to you, drawn up by my colleagues, which you will receive herewith. We have kept this vessel longer for two things: a passport promised us from England, and a sum to send in her; but she is likely to depart without both, being all of us impatient that Congress should receive early intelligence of our proceedings, and for the money, we may probably borrow a frigate.

I am now entering on my seventy-eighth year; public business has engrossed fifty of them; I wish now to be, for the little time I have left, my own master. If I live to see this peace concluded, I shall beg leave to remind Congress, of their promise then to dismiss me. I shall be happy to sing with old Simeon: "Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." With great esteem, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCXXXI

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 6 December, 1782.

SIR:—I have the honor of returning herewith the map your Excellency sent me yesterday. I have marked with a strong red line, according to your desire, the limits of the thirteen United States, as settled in the preliminaries between the British and American plenipotentiaries. With great respect, I am, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCXXXII

TO ROBERT MORRIS

PASSY, 14 December, 1782.

SIR:—I received duly your several letters by Captain Barney, and the one of October 27th, since. I immediately made the application, so strongly pressed by the Congress, for a loan of four millions of dollars. I annexed to my memoir the resolves of Congress, with copies and extracts of your several letters and those of Mr. Livingston upon the subject, all of which appeared to me extremely well written for enforcing the request. I was at last told that it would be a difficult thing to furnish such a sum at present, but it would be considered. It was much wondered at that no letters were brought by the *Washington* for Count de Vergennes, as several were come to the Secretary of War, M. de Ségur, and to the Marquis de Castries, Secretary of the Marine;

and the next time I waited on the minister I was told that nothing could be done till the despatches from M. de la Luzerne were received.

I inquired of Captain Barney, who told me he believed M. de Forest had them, who left him to go to Paris by way of Nantz. M. de Forest was a week or ten days before he arrived at Paris, and he had not the despatches. After a fortnight had thus passed, I sent Captain Barney down to search for them in his ship. He there found them, and in about eight days more they arrived and were delivered. I have since continually pressed for a favorable answer. The Marquis de Lafayette has likewise been importunate; but we could only learn that there was yet no decision. The negotiations for peace were going on, and I ascribed the delay partly to the uncertainty of the event, which might make a less sum sufficient, if it succeeded, or a greater necessary, if the war was still to be continued. I believe, too, that the new loan meditated for this government, but not ascertained, might cause some suspension. But, whatever are the causes, the fact is, that though I understand we are to be aided, I am still ignorant what the quantum will be, or when it can be obtained. I have detained Captain Barney, hoping he might carry a part of it; but seeing that so very uncertain, the commissioners for the treaty here urge me to send him away with the preliminary articles, and take some other opportunity of sending money when we get it. Perhaps we can make use of the *Alliance*, which is now out upon a cruise.

Of the amount of Mr. Adams' loan in Holland I

have no certain account. He thinks it may be between fifteen and seventeen hundred thousand florins. Mr. Grand obtained a part of it to pay the interest of the Dutch loan, which is done. But he will acquaint you better with the state of his funds than I can do. He tells me he will restate his accounts as you desire.

The shipping of the stores from Brest is wholly in the hands of Mr. Barclay. He will likewise take care of those which are unloaded out of the three transports at Rochefort, that were to have gone with convoy in May last, and have ever since been detained there unaccountably, which I did not know till lately. The four Jamaica ships, brought in by the *Alliance*, will furnish him with money for paying charges. The accounts of goods brought to replace the *Fayette's* cargo having been sent you by several opportunities, I hope you have them before this time.

I am extremely glad to be freed from your money accounts and the payment of bills; and I hope this will be the last application I shall be charged with to borrow. In a former letter I requested you to be attorney to receive and remit my salary, which I now repeat. The friends of the Duke de Lauzun, who is an officer in the French army, having occasion to send him some money, requested me to furnish bills. To oblige them I gave a draft on you for six thousand livres, which I request you would honor and deduct the same out of my salary. Methinks Mr. Grand should have some general order to defray the contingent expenses of your ministers. I am concerned that the resolution of appointing a person to settle all our accounts in Europe has not yet been

carried into execution. They certainly cannot be so well settled in America, and I shall think it hard, after I am out of place, to be detained here on their account for years, like poor unhappy Deane, who, by the way, is, I think, in that respect, hardly dealt with. Settlement of accounts and payment of just balances are due even between enemies.

I know not where the Virginia stores lie. I will inquire and acquaint Mr. Barclay with your resolution concerning them, which I think very prudent.

Penet, who was employed by that State as an agent to borrow money here, is broke and absconded. His creditors are all worrying me with their complaints, who have nothing to do with his affairs. I have long since mentioned the inconvenience of the attempts of separate States to borrow money in Europe. They have hurt our credit, and produced nothing. We have put faith in every adventurer who pretended to have influence here, and who, when he arrived, had none but what our appointment gave him.

I congratulate you on the tokens of approaching peace. I wish nothing may happen to prevent it. With sincere and great esteem, I am, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCXXXIII

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 15 December, 1782.

SIR:—I have the honor to acquaint your Excellency that our courier is to set out to-morrow at ten

o'clock, with the despatches we send to Congress, by the *Washington*, Captain Barney, for which ship we have got a passport from the king of England. If you would make any use of this conveyance, the courier shall wait upon you to-morrow at Versailles, and receive your orders.

I hoped I might have been able to send part of the aids we have asked by this safe vessel. I beg that your Excellency would at least inform me what expectations I may give in my letters. I fear the Congress will be reduced to despair when they find that nothing is yet obtained. With the greatest and most sincere respect, I am, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCXXXIV

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES

VERSAILLES, 15 December, 1782.

SIR:—I cannot but be surprised that, after the explanation I have had with you, and the promise you gave that you would not press the application for an English passport for the sailing of the packet *Washington*, you now inform me that you have received the passport, and that at ten o'clock to-morrow morning your courier will set out to carry your despatches. I am at a loss, sir, to explain your conduct, and that of your colleagues on this occasion. You have concluded your preliminary articles without any communication between us, although the instructions from Congress prescribe

that nothing shall be done without the participation of the king. You are about to hold out a certain hope of peace to America, without even informing yourself on the state of the negotiation on our part.

You are wise and discreet, sir; you perfectly understand what is due to propriety; you have all your life performed your duties. I pray you to consider how you fulfil those which are due to the king. I am not desirous of enlarging these reflections; I commit them to your own integrity. When you shall be pleased to relieve my uncertainty, I will entreat the king to enable me to answer your demands. I have the honor to be, sir, with sincere regard, etc.,

DE VERGENNES.

MCXXXV

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 17 December, 1782.

SIR:—I received the letter your Excellency did me the honor of writing to me on the 15th instant. The proposal of having a passport from England was agreed to by me the more willingly as I at that time had hopes of obtaining some money to send in the *Washington*, and the passport would have made its transportation safer, with that of our despatches, and of yours also, if you had thought fit to make use of the occasion. Your Excellency objected, as I understood it, that the English ministers, by their letters sent in the same ship, might convey inconvenient expectations into America. It was therefore I

proposed not to press for the passport, till your preliminaries were also agreed to. They have sent the passport without being pressed to do it, and they have sent no letters to go under it, and ours will prevent the inconvenience apprehended. In a subsequent conversation, your Excellency mentioned your intention of sending some of the king's cutters, whence I imagined that detaining the *Washington* was no longer necessary; and it was certainly incumbent on us to give Congress as early an account as possible of our proceedings, who will think it extremely strange to hear of them by other means, without a line from us. I acquainted your Excellency, however, with our intention of despatching that ship, supposing you might possibly have something to send by her.

Nothing has been agreed in the preliminaries contrary to the interests of France; and no peace is to take place between us and England till you have concluded yours. Your observation is, however, apparently just, that, in not consulting you before they were signed, we have been guilty of neglecting a point of *bienséance*. But, as this was not from want of respect for the king, whom we all love and honor, we hope it will be excused, and that the great work, which has hitherto been so happily conducted, is so nearly brought to perfection, and is so glorious to his reign, will not be ruined by a single indiscretion of ours. And certainly the whole edifice sinks to the ground immediately if you refuse on that account to give us any further assistance.

We have not yet despatched the ship, and I beg

leave to wait upon you on Friday for your answer.

It is not possible for any one to be more sensible than I am, of what I and every American owe to the king, for the many and great benefits and favors he has bestowed upon us. All my letters to America are proofs of this; all tending to make the same impressions on the minds of my countrymen that I felt in my own. And I believe that no prince was ever more beloved and respected by his own subjects than the king is by the people of the United States. *The English, I just now learn, flatter themselves they have already divided us.* I hope this little misunderstanding will therefore be kept a secret, and that they will find themselves totally mistaken. With great and sincere respect, I am, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCXXXVI

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES TO M. DE LA LUZERNE ¹

VERSAILLES, 19 December, 1782.

SIR:—With this letter I have the honor to send you a translation of the preliminary articles, which

¹M de la Luzerne was at this time the French Minister in the United States. Circumstances excited suspicions in the minds of the American commissioners unfavorable to the French ministers. These suspicions were fostered in various ways by the English commissioners. Under these influences the American commissioners were induced to sign the treaty without the knowledge of the French government. This implied distrust of the fidelity and honorable motives of the French government, as may well be supposed, could not be viewed with indifference by that government. The above letter, communicating the first intelligence of the event by Count de Vergennes to the French Minister in the United States, and being in the nature of a confidential despatch, must be considered as expressing the undis-

the American plenipotentiaries have agreed to and signed with those of Great Britain, to be made into a treaty when the terms of peace between France and England shall be settled.

You will surely be gratified, as well as myself, with the very extensive advantages which our allies, the Americans, are to receive from the peace; but you certainly will not be less surprised than I have been at the conduct of the commissioners. According to the instructions of Congress, they ought to have done nothing without our participation. I have informed you that the king did not seek to influence the negotiation any further than his offices might be necessary to his friends. The American commissioners will not say that I have interfered, and much less that I have wearied them with my curiosity. They have cautiously kept themselves at a distance from me. Mr. Adams, one of them, coming from Holland, where he had been received and served by our ambassador, had been in Paris nearly three weeks, without imagining that he owed me any mark of attention, and probably I should not have seen him till this time if I had not caused him to be reminded of it.¹ Whenever I have had occasion to see any

guised sentiments of the writer, and consequently of the French cabinet. The suspicions of the commissioners were sustained by no other evidence than that of circumstances, inferences, conjectures, and deceptive appearances.

¹ When Mr. Adams mentioned this subject in a letter to Mr. Livingston, dated November 11, 1782, he said the commissioners had been so constantly engaged with the treaty that he "had not been out to Versailles nor anywhere else." He added "On Saturday last, the Marquis de Lafayette called upon me, and told me he had been to Versailles, and that the Count de Vergennes had said to him that he had been informed by the returns of the police that I was in Paris, but

one of them, and inquire of them briefly respecting the progress of the negotiation, they have constantly clothed their speech in generalities, giving me to understand that it did not go forward, and that they had no confidence in the sincerity of the British ministry.

Judge of my surprise when, on the 30th of November, Dr. Franklin informed me that the articles were signed. The reservation retained on our account does not save the infraction of the promise, which we have mutually made, not to sign except conjointly. I owe Dr. Franklin the justice to state, however, that on the next day he sent me a copy of the articles. He will hardly complain that I received them without demonstrations of sensibility. It was not till some days after that, when this minister had come to see me, I allowed myself to make him perceive that his proceeding in this abrupt signature of the articles had little in it which could be agreeable to the king. He appeared sensible of it, and excused, in the best manner he could, himself and his colleagues. Our conversation was amicable.

Dr. Franklin spoke to me of his desire to send these articles to the Congress, and said that for this purpose he and his colleagues had agreed to an exchange of passports with the English minister for the safety of the vessels which should be sent. I

not officially, and he should take it well if I would come and see him. I went out to dine with Dr. Franklin the same day, who had just returned from delivering his memorial, and repeated to me the same message. I said to both I would go the next morning, and accordingly on Sunday, the 9th, I went to make my court to his Excellency."—See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. VI., p. 451.

observed to him that this form appeared to me dangerous; that, the articles being only provisional and dependent on the fate of our negotiation, which was then very uncertain, I feared this appearance of an intelligence with England, in connection with the signature of the articles, might make the people of America think a peace was consummated, and embarrass Congress, of whose fidelity I had no suspicion. I added many other reasons, the force of which Dr. Franklin, and Mr. Laurens who accompanied him, seemed to acknowledge. They spared nothing to convince me of the confidence which we ought to have in the fidelity of the United States, and they left me with the assurance that they should conform to my wishes.

You may imagine my astonishment, therefore, when, on the evening of the 15th, I received from Dr. Franklin the letter, a copy of which is herewith enclosed. The tone of this letter seemed to me so singular, that I thought it my duty to write the answer, which I likewise send to you. I am ignorant of the effect which this answer may have produced. I have not since heard from the American commissioners. The courier has not come for my despatches, and I know not whether he has in reality been sent off. It would be singular, after the intimation which I have given them, if they should not have the curiosity to acquaint themselves with the state of our negotiation, that they may communicate the intelligence to Congress. This negotiation is not yet so far advanced in regard to ourselves as that of the United States; not that the king, if he had

shown as little delicacy in his proceedings as the American commissioners, might not have signed articles with England long before them. There is no essential difficulty at present between France and England; but the king has been resolved that all his allies should be satisfied, being determined to continue the war, whatever advantage may be offered to him, if England is disposed to wrong any one of them.

We have now only to attend to the interests of Spain and Holland. I have reason to hope that the former will be soon arranged. The fundamental points are established, and little remains but to settle the forms. I think the United States will do well to make an arrangement with Spain. They will be neighbors. As to Holland, I fear her affairs will cause embarrassments and delays. The disposition of the British ministry towards that republic appears to be any thing but favorable.

Such is the present state of things. I trust it will soon be better; but, whatever may be the result, I think it proper that the most influential members of Congress should be informed of the very irregular conduct of their commissioners in regard to us. You may speak of it not in the tone of complaint. I accuse no person; I blame no one, not even Dr. Franklin. He has yielded too easy to the bias of his colleagues, who do not pretend to recognize the rules of courtesy in regard to us. All their attentions have been taken up by the English whom they have met in Paris. If we may judge of the future from what has passed here under our eyes, we shall be

but poorly paid for all that we have done for the United States, and for securing to them a national existence.

I will add nothing in respect to the demand for money, which has been made upon us. You may well judge if conduct like this encourages us to make demonstrations of our liberality.¹ I am, etc.,

DE VERGENNES.

MCXXXVII

TO ROBERT MORRIS

PASSY, 23 December, 1782

SIR:—When I wrote to you on the 14th, I expected to have despatched the *Washington* immediately, though without any money. A little misunderstanding prevented it. That was, after some time, got over, and on Friday last an order was given to furnish me with six hundred thousand livres immediately to send in that ship; and I was answered by the Count de Vergennes that the rest of the six millions should be paid us quarterly in the course of the year 1783. If your drafts make it necessary, I believe we can have it advanced, at least on paying discount. Mr. Grand has been ever since busy collecting the proper species to send it in, and it will go, I suppose, to-morrow or next day. I am glad to make use of this opportunity, and wish the sum could have been larger, as we have got a passport

¹Notwithstanding this intimation, and the cause of it, the king of France had already resolved to grant to the United States a new loan, and his purpose was not changed by the conduct of the commissioners

from England for the ship *Washington*, Captain Barney, signed by the king's own hand, the more curious, as it acknowledges us by our title of the *United States of America*.

We should not, however, imagine ourselves already in peace. The other powers are not yet agreed, and war may still continue longer than we expect. Our preliminaries have not yet been communicated to Parliament, and I apprehend there will be great clamors against them when they appear. Hints are already thrown out that the king has gone beyond his powers; and, if the new ministry do not stand their ground, perhaps the ratification may be prevented. A little more success in the West Indies this winter may totally turn the heads of that giddy nation.

I pressed hard, therefore, for the whole sum demanded, but was told it was impossible, the great efforts to be made this campaign in the East and West Indies (the armies for which are now afloat), and the enormous expense engaged in, having much embarrassed the finances.

Our people certainly ought to do more for themselves. It is absurd, the pretending to be lovers of liberty while they grudge paying for the defence of it. It is said here that an impost of five per cent. on all goods imported, though a most reasonable proposition, had not been agreed to by all the States, and was therefore frustrated; and that your newspapers acquaint the world with this, with the non-payment of taxes by the people, and with the non-payment of interest to the creditors of the public. The

knowledge of these things has hurt our credit, and the loan in Holland, and would prevent our getting any thing here but from the government. The foundation of credit abroad should be laid at home, and certain funds should be prepared and established beforehand, for the regular payment at least of the interest. With sincere esteem and respect, I am, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCXXXVIII

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON

PASSY, 24 December, 1782.

SIR:—Sundry circumstances, occurring since mine of the 5th and 14th, have hitherto retarded the departure of my despatches. They will now go under the security of a British passport, be accompanied by a sum of money, and by some further intelligence from England, which shows the still unsettled state of minds there, and, together with the difficulties and small progress in the Dutch and Spanish negotiations, makes the speedy conclusion of peace still uncertain.

The Swedish ambassador has exchanged full powers with me. I send a copy of his herewith. We have had some conferences on the proposed plan of our treaty, and he has despatched a courier for further instructions respecting some of the articles.

The commissioners have joined in a letter to you, recommending the consideration of a proposal from Mr. Bridgen, relating to copper coin. With this you have a copy of that proposal, and a sample of the

copper. If it should be accepted, I conceive the weight and value of the pieces (charge of coinage deducted) should be such that they should be aliquot parts of a Spanish dollar. By the copy enclosed, of an old letter of mine to Mr. Bridgen, you will see the ideas I had of the additional utility such a coinage might be of in communicating instruction.¹

December 25th.—Enclosed is a copy of a letter just received from Count de Vergennes, upon the present state of the negotiation with England. With great regard, I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCXXXIX

TO FRANCIS HOPKINSON

PASSY, 24 December, 1782.

DEAR SIR:—I thank you for your ingenious paper in favor of the trees. I own I now wish we had two rows of them in every one of our streets. The comfortable shelter they would afford us, when walking, from our burning summer suns, and the greater coolness of our walls and pavements, would, I conceive in the improved health of the inhabitants, amply compensate the loss of a house now and then by fire, if such should be the consequence. But a tree is soon felled; and, as axes are at hand in every neighborhood, may be down before the engines arrive.

You do well to avoid being concerned in the pieces of personal abuse, so scandalously common in our

¹ See this letter in Vol. VIII., p. 127.

newspapers that I am afraid to lend any of them here until I have examined and laid aside such as would disgrace us, and subject us among strangers to a reflection like that used by a gentleman in a coffee-house to two quarrellers, who, after a mutually free use of the words, *rogue*, *villain*, *rascal*, *scoundrel*, etc., seemed as if they would refer their dispute to him: "I know nothing of you, or your affairs," said he; "I only perceive *that you know one another*."

The conductor of a newspaper should, methinks, consider himself as in some degree the guardian of his country's reputation, and refuse to insert such writings as may hurt it. If people will print their abuses of one another, let them do it in little pamphlets, and distribute them where they think proper. It is absurd to trouble all the world with them; and unjust to subscribers in distant places, to stuff their paper with matters so unprofitable and so disagreeable. With sincere esteem and affection, I am, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCXL

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES

VERSAILLES, 25 December, 1782.

SIR:—I have the honor to send you my despatches for the Chevalier de la Luzerne. The packet is voluminous, but it contains many duplicates.

I should be glad if it were in my power to inform him that our treaty is in as good progress as yours, but this is far from being the case. I cannot even

foresee what will be the issue, for difficulties multiply. It will be well for you to forewarn the Congress to be prepared for whatever event may arise. I do not despair; I rather hope; but as yet all is uncertainty. I have the honor to be, sir, etc.,

DE VERGENNES.

MCXLI

EXTRACT OF A LETTER TO DR. COOPER

PASSY, 26 December, 1782.

DEAR SIR:—We have taken some good steps here towards a peace. Our independence is acknowledged; our boundaries as good and extensive as we demanded; and our fishery more so than the Congress expected. I hope the whole preliminaries will be approved, and with the definitive treaty, when made, give entire satisfaction to our country. But there are so many interests to be considered between five nations, and so many claims to adjust, that I can hardly flatter myself to see the peace soon concluded, though I wish and pray for it, and use my best endeavors to promote it.

I am extremely sorry to hear language from Americans on this side the water, and to hear of such language from your side, as tends to hurt the good understanding that has hitherto so happily subsisted between this court and ours. There seems to be a party with you that wish to destroy it. If they could succeed they would do us irreparable injury. It is our firm connection with France that gives us weight with England and respect throughout Europe.

If we were to break our faith with this nation, *on whatever pretence*, England would again trample on us, and every other nation despise us. We cannot, therefore, be too much on our guard how we permit the *private resentments* of particular persons to enter into our public counsels. You will hear much of an intercepted letter communicated to us by the British ministry.¹ The channel ought to be suspected. It may have received additions and alterations; but, supposing it all genuine, the forward, mistaken zeal of a secretary of legation should not be imputed to the king, who has in so many ways proved himself our faithful and firm friend and ally.

In my opinion, the true political interest of America consists in observing and fulfilling, with the greatest exactitude, the engagements of our alliance with France, and behaving at the same towards England so as not entirely to extinguish her hopes of a reconciliation.

I long to see you and my country once more before I die, being ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ Alluding to a letter written in Philadelphia by M. de Marbois to the French ministry. It was intercepted on its passage and sent to England, where it was deciphered and forwarded to the American commissioners, during the negotiation of the treaty. See this letter, as deciphered and translated, in Pitkin's *History of the United States*, Vol. II., p. 528.

Count de Vergennes, in writing some time afterwards to M. de la Luzerne, the French Minister in America, said: "An intercepted letter from M. de Marbois was communicated to the American commissioners by the British ministry, which, by a forced interpretation, was designed to render us suspected in regard to the fisheries. In the first place, the opinion of M. de Marbois is not necessarily that of the king; and, in the next place, the views indicated in that despatch have not been followed."—*Versailles, September 7, 1783 MS. Letter.*

MCXLII

FROM ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON

PHILADELPHIA, 2 January, 1783.

SIR:—I was honored with your letters by the *Danae*. I congratulate you upon the promising state of our negotiations, since peace begins to be no less desirable here than elsewhere.

But I will not enter into that subject at present, as I mean to write very fully both to Mr. Jay and you by Mr. Jefferson, who will sail in company with this frigate in the *Romulus*, a ship of forty-four guns. Lest, however, any accident should happen to prevent his arriving so soon as the *Emerald*, I enclose a resolution of Congress, which was suggested by the proposition you mention to have been made to Mr. Oswald, on the subject of commerce. For my own part, I presume that it is already included in your propositions; but, as we have yet been favored only with that short note of them, which has been transmitted by you, we can form no accurate judgment on the subject. You can hardly conceive the embarrassments that the want of more minute details subjects us to.

You will learn from the Count de Rochambeau that the French army sailed the 24th ultimo. Perhaps it were to be wished that they had remained here, at least till New York and Charleston were evacuated, or rather till the peace. Congress have, however, given them a good word at parting, as you will see by the enclosed resolves. Not being consulted, they could interpose no objections to their

departure, though they were not without many reasons for wishing to detain them.

Our finances are still in great distress. If the war continues, a foreign loan in addition to those already received will be essential. A plan for ascertaining what shall be called contingent expenses is under the consideration of Congress, as well as the objections you have stated with respect to the mode of paying your salaries, which will, I believe, be altered. The allowance to Mr. Franklin has been confirmed, and your moderation and his upon this point have done you both honor in the opinion of Congress. I have the honor to be, sir, etc.,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

MCXLIII

TO GÆTANO FILANGIERI ¹

PASSY, 11 January, 1783.

The letter you did me the honor of writing to me in August last came to my hands when I lay ill of

¹The author of the *Scienza della Legislazione*, four volumes of which appeared 1780-1784. He died in 1788, in the thirty-sixth year of his age, leaving the fifth volume unfinished. I am indebted for this letter in the text to his grandson, the Prince de Filangieri Satriano, whom I met at Naples in February, 1873, and who informed me that he was preparing a life of his distinguished ancestor, which he expected to publish in Paris in 1874. He also informed me that Dr Franklin had sent his grandfather the volume of American Constitutions: that his grandfather returned it with commentaries, and that Franklin again returned it to his grandfather with commentaries on his commentaries. The prince did not know what had become of this book, the loss of which he deplored. All he remembered of it was the curious fact developed in it by one of the commentators, that all the leading statesmen in America seemed chiefly to be concerned in placing restrictions

two painful disorders, which confined me near three months, and with the multiplicity of business that followed obliged me to postpone much of my correspondence. I have yesterday received a second letter from you, and I now, without further delay, sit down to answer them both.

The two first volumes of your excellent work, which were put into my hands by M. Pio, I perused with great pleasure. They are also much esteemed by some very judicious persons to whom I have lent them. I should have been glad of another copy for one of those friends, who is very desirous of procuring it; but I suppose those you mention to have sent to M. Pio did not arrive. I was glad to learn that you were proceeding to consider the criminal laws. None have more need of reformation. They are everywhere in so great disorder, and so much injustice is committed in the execution of them, that I have been sometimes inclined to imagine less would exist in the world if there were no such laws, and the punishment of injuries were left to private resentment. I am glad, therefore, that you have not suffered yourself to be discouraged by any objections or apprehensions, and that we may soon expect the satisfaction of seeing the two volumes on that subject which you have now under the press.

With regard to your project of removing to America, though I am sure that a person of your knowledge, just sentiments, and useful talents would

upon the popular will, while the European philosophers or democrats—in those days nearly synonymous terms—were equally zealous in abolishing all restrictions.—EDITOR.

be a valuable acquisition for our country, I cannot encourage you to undertake hastily such a voyage; because for a man to expatriate himself is a serious business, and should be well considered, especially where the distance is so great and the expense of removing thither with a family, of returning if the country should not suit you, will be so heavy. I have no orders or authority of any kind to encourage strangers with expectations of employment by our government, nor am I empowered to be at any expense in transporting them; though our country is open, and strangers may establish themselves there, where they soon become citizens and are respected according to their conduct. Men know, because they feel, the inconveniences of their *present* situation; but they do not know those that may, if they change, attend the new one. I wish, therefore, you could see that country by yourself before you carry thither the lady with whom you propose to be united in marriage. You will then be able to form a good judgment how far the removal is likely to be advantageous, and may proceed on surer grounds. England has now acknowledged our independence, and the sovereignty of our government; and several states of Europe who think a commerce with us may be beneficial to them are preparing to send ministers to reside near the Congress. It is possible to establish a profitable trade between the kingdom of Naples and America. Should your court be of that opinion, and think fit to employ some one to visit our several States and take information of our productions and wants, the nature of our

commerce, etc., etc., perhaps it could not find a fitter person than yourself for such a mission. I would afford you all the assistance in my power towards its due execution, and by this means your voyage would not only be without expense to you, but might afford you some profit.

MCXLIV

TO RICHARD OSWALD

PASSY, 14 January, 1783.

SIR:—I am much obliged by your information of your intended trip to England. I heartily wish you a good journey and a speedy return, and request your kind care of a packet for Mr. Hodgson.

I enclose two papers, that were read at different times by me to the commissioners; they may serve to show, if you should have occasion, what was urged on the part of America on certain points; or may help to refresh your memory. I send you also another paper, which I once read to you separately. It contains a proposition for improving the law of nations, by prohibiting the plundering of unarmed and usefully employed people. I rather wish than expect that it will be adopted. But I think it may be offered with a better grace by a country that is likely to suffer least and gain most by continuing the ancient practice; which is our case, as the American ships, laden only with the gross productions of the earth, cannot be so valuable as yours, filled with sugars or with manufactures. It has not yet been

considered by my colleagues, but if you should think or find that it might be acceptable on your side, I would try to get it inserted in the general treaty. I think it will do honor to the nations that establish it.

With great and sincere esteem, I am, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

Propositions Relative to Privateering Communicated to Mr. Oswald ¹

It is for the interest of humanity in general that the occasions of war and the inducements to it should be diminished.

If rapine is abolished, one of the encouragements to war is taken away, and peace therefore more likely to continue and be lasting.

The practice of robbing merchants on the high seas, a remnant of the ancient piracy, though it may be accidentally beneficial to particular persons, is far from being profitable to all engaged in it, or to the nation that authorizes it. In the beginning of a war, some rich ships, not upon their guard, are surprised and taken. This encourages the first adventurers to fit out more armed vessels, and many others to do the same. But the enemy at the same time become more careful, arm their merchant ships better, and render them not so easy to be taken; they go also more under protection of convoys; thus, while the

¹ These propositions are the same in substance as the author's two papers entitled, *A Thought concerning the Sugar Islands*, and *Observations on War*.

privateers to take them are multiplied, the vessels subject to be taken, and the chances of profit, are diminished, so that many cruises are made wherein the expenses overgo the gains; and, as is the case in other lotteries, though particulars have got prizes, the mass of adventurers are losers, the whole expense of fitting out all the privateers, during a war, being much greater than the whole amount of goods taken. Then there is the national loss of all the labor of so many men during the time they have been employed in robbing; who, besides, spend what they get in riot, drunkenness, and debauchery, lose their habits of industry, are rarely fit for any sober business after a peace, and serve only to increase the number of highwaymen and housebreakers. Even the undertakers, who have been fortunate, are by sudden wealth led into expensive living, the habit of which continues when the means of supporting it ceases, and finally ruins them; a just punishment for their having wantonly and unfeelingly ruined many honest, innocent traders and their families, whose subsistence was employed in serving the common interests of mankind.

Should it be agreed and become a part of the law of nations, that the cultivators of the earth are not to be molested or interrupted in their peaceable and useful employment, the inhabitants of the sugar islands would perhaps come under the protection of such a regulation, which would be a great advantage to the nations who at present hold those islands, since the cost of sugar to the consumer in those nations consists not merely in the price he pays for

it by the pound, but in the accumulated charge of all the taxes he pays in every war, to fit out fleets and maintain troops for the defence of the islands that raise the sugar, and the ships that bring it home. But the expense of treasure is not all. A celebrated philosophical writer remarks that, when he considered the wars made in Africa, for prisoners to raise sugars in America, the numbers slain in those wars, the numbers that, being crowded in ships, perish in the transportation, and the numbers that die under the severities of slavery, he could scarce look on a morsel of sugar without conceiving it spotted with human blood. If he had considered also the blood of one another, which the white nations shed in fighting for those islands, he would have imagined his sugar not as spotted only, but as thoroughly dyed red. On these accounts I am persuaded that the subjects of the Emperor of Germany, and the Empress of Russia, who have no sugar islands, consume sugar cheaper at Vienna and Moscow, with all the charge of transporting it after its arrival in Europe than the citizens of London or of Paris. And I sincerely believe that if France and England were to decide, by throwing dice, which should have the whole of their sugar islands, the loser in the throw would be the gainer. The future expense of defending them would be saved: the sugars would be bought cheaper by all Europe, if the inhabitants might make it without interruption, and, whoever imported the sugar, the same revenue might be raised by duties at the custom-houses of the nation that consumed it. And, on the whole, I conceive

it would be better for the nations now possessing sugar colonies to give up their claim to them; let them govern themselves, and put them under the protection of all the powers of Europe as neutral countries, open to the commerce of all, the profits of the present monopolies being by no means equivalent to the expense of maintaining them.

Article

If war should hereafter arise between Great Britain and the United States, which God forbid, the merchants of either country then residing in the other shall be allowed to remain nine months to collect their debts and settle their affairs, and may depart freely, carrying off all their effects without molestation or hindrance. And all fishermen, all cultivators of the earth, and all artisans or manufacturers unarmed, and inhabiting unfortified towns, villages, or places, who labor for the common subsistence and benefit of mankind, and peaceably follow their respective employments, shall be allowed to continue the same, and shall not be molested by the armed force of the enemy in whose power by the events of the war they may happen to fall; but, if any thing is necessary to be taken from them, for the use of such armed force, the same shall be paid for at a reasonable price. And all merchants or traders with their unarmed vessels, employed in commerce, exchanging the products of different places, and thereby rendering the necessities, conveniences, and comforts of human life more easy to obtain and more general, shall be allowed to pass freely, unmolested.

And neither of the powers, parties to this treaty, shall grant or issue any commission to any private armed vessels, empowering them to take or destroy such trading ships, or interrupt such commerce.

MCXLV

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES

VERSAILLES, 18 January, 1783.

SIR:—It is essential that I should have the honor of conferring with you, Mr. Adams, and your other colleagues, who are in Paris. I therefore pray you to invite these gentlemen to come out to Versailles with you on Monday, before ten o'clock in the morning. It will be well, also, if you will bring your grandson. It will be necessary for much writing and translating from English into French to be done. The object for which I ask this interview is very interesting to the United States. I have the honor to be, sir,

DE VERGENNES.

MCXLVI

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 18 January, 1783.

SIR:—Agreeably to the notice just received from your Excellency, I shall acquaint Mr. Adams with your desire to see us on Monday before ten o'clock, at Versailles; and we shall endeavor to be punctual. My other colleagues are absent, Mr. Laurens being

gone to Bath, in England, to recover his health, and Mr. Jay into Normandy. I shall bring my grandson, as you direct. With great respect, I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCXLVII

FROM BENJAMIN VAUGHAN

PARIS, 18 January, 1783.

MY DEAREST SIR:—I cannot but in the most earnest manner, and from recent circumstances, press your going early to Versailles to-morrow; and I have considerable reason to think that your appearance there will not displease the person whom you address. I am of opinion that it is very likely that you will have the glory of having concluded the peace by this visit; at least I am sure, if the deliberations of to-morrow evening end unfavorably, that there is the strongest appearance of war; if they end favorably, perhaps little difficulty may attend the rest.

After all, the peace will have as much that is conceded in it as England can in any shape be made just now to relish, owing to the stubborn demands, principally of Spain, who would not, I believe, upon any motive recede from her conquests. What I wrote about Gibraltar arrived after the subject, as I understand, was canvassed, and when it of course must have appeared impolitic eagerly and immediately to revive it.

You reproved me, or rather reproved a political scheme, yesterday, of which I have heard more said

favorably by your friends at Paris than by any persons whatever in London. But do you, my dear sir, make this peace, and trust our common sense respecting another war. England, said a man of sense to me the other day, will come out of the war like a convalescent out of disease, and must be re-established by some physic and much regimen. I cannot easily tell in what shape a bankruptcy would come upon England, and still less easily in what mode and degree it would affect us; but, if your confederacy mean to bankrupt us now, I am sure we shall lose the great fear that would deter us from another war. Your allies, therefore, for policy and for humanity's sake, will, I hope, stop short of this extremity, especially as we should do some mischief to others as well as to ourselves. I am, my dearest sir, your devoted, ever affectionate, and ever obliged,

B. VAUGHAN.

MCXLVIII

TO JOHN ADAMS

PASSY, 19 January, 1783

SIR:—Late last night I received a note from Count de Vergennes, acquainting me that it is very essential he should have a conference with us, and requesting that I would inform my colleagues. He desires that we may be with him before ten on Monday morning. If it will suit you to call here, we may go together in my carriage. We should be on the road by eight o'clock. With great regard, I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCXLIX

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON

PASSY, 21 January, 1783

SIR:—I have just received your letters of November 9th and December 3d.¹ This is to inform you, and to request you to inform the Congress, that the preliminaries of peace between France, Spain, and England were yesterday signed, and a cessation of arms agreed to by the ministers of those powers and by us in behalf of the United States, of which act, so far as relates to us, I enclose a copy. I have not yet obtained a copy of the preliminaries agreed to by the three crowns, but hear, in general, that they are very advantageous to France and Spain. I shall be able, in a day or two, to write more fully and perfectly. Holland was not ready to sign preliminaries, but their principal points are settled. Mr. Laurens is absent at Bath, and Mr. Jay in Normandy, for their healths, but will both be here to assist in forming the definitive treaty. I congratulate you and our country on the happy prospects afforded us by the finishing so speedily this glorious revolution, and am, with great esteem, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCL

FROM JOHN JAY

PARIS, 26 January, 1783

SIR:—It having been suspected that I concurred in the appointment of your grandson to the place

¹See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. IV., pp. 31, 45.

of secretary to the American commission for peace *at your instance*, I think it right, thus unsolicited, to put it in your power to correct the mistake.

Your general character, the opinion I had long entertained of your services to our country, and the friendly attention and aid with which you had constantly favored me after my arrival in Spain, impressed me with a desire of manifesting both my esteem and attachment by stronger evidence than professions. That desire extended my regard for you to your grandson. He was then indeed a stranger to me, but the terms in which you expressed to Congress your opinion of his being qualified for another place of equal importance were so full and satisfactory, as to leave me no room to doubt of his being qualified for the one above mentioned. I was therefore happy to assure you, in one of the first letters I afterwards wrote you from Spain, that, in case a secretary to our commission for peace should become necessary, and the appointment be left to us, I should take that opportunity of evincing my regard for you by nominating him, or words to that effect. What I then wrote was the spontaneous suggestion of my own mind, unsolicited, and, I believe, unexpected by you.

When I came here on the business of that commission I brought with me the same intentions, and should always have considered myself engaged by honor, as well as inclination, to fulfil them unless I had found myself mistaken in the opinion I had imbibed of that young gentleman's character and qualifications; but, that not being the case, I found

myself at liberty to indulge my wishes and be as good as my word. For I expressly declare that your grandson is, in my opinion, qualified for the place in question, and that if he had not been, no consideration would have prevailed upon me to propose or join in his appointment.

This explicit and unreserved statement of fact is due to you, to him, and to justice, and you have my consent to make any use of it that you may think proper. I have the honor to be, sir, with great respect,

JOHN JAY.

MCLI

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON

PASSY, 27 January, 1783.

. . . The departure of my dearest friend,¹ which I learn from your last letter, greatly affects me. To meet with her once more in this life was one of the principal motives of my proposing to visit England again, before my return to America. The last year carried off my friends, Dr. Pringle, Dr. Fothergill, Lord Kames, and Lord le Despencer. This has begun to take away the rest, and strikes the hardest. Thus the ties I had to that country, and indeed to the world in general, are loosened one by one, and I shall soon have no attachment left to make me unwilling to follow.

I intended writing when I sent the eleven books, but I lost the time in looking for the twelfth. I wrote with that, and hope it came to hand. I therein

¹Mrs. Stevenson, the mother of Mrs. Hewson.

asked your counsel about my coming to England. On reflection, I think I can, from my knowledge of your prudence, foresee what it will be, viz., not to come too soon, lest it should seem braving and insulting some who ought to be respected. I shall therefore omit that journey till I am near going to America, and then just step over to take leave of my friends, and spend a few days with you. I purpose bringing Ben with me, and perhaps may leave him under your care.

At length we are in peace, God be praised, and long, very long, may it continue! All wars are follies, very expensive, and very mischievous ones. When will mankind be convinced of this, and agree to settle their differences by arbitration? Were they to do it, even by the cast of a die, it would be better than by fighting and destroying each other.

Spring is coming on, when travelling will be delightful. Can you not, when you see your children all at school, make a little party and take a trip hither? I have now a large house, delightfully situated, in which I could accommodate you and two or three friends, and I am but half an hour's drive from Paris.

In looking forward, twenty-five years seem a long period, but, in looking back, how short! Could you imagine that it is now full a quarter of a century since we were first acquainted? It was in 1757. During the greatest part of the time, I lived in the same house with my dear deceased friend, your mother; of course you and I conversed with each other much and often. It is to all our honors that in

all that time we never had among us the smallest misunderstanding. Our friendship has been all clear sunshine, without the least cloud in its hemisphere. Let me conclude by saying to you, what I have had too frequent occasions to say to my other remaining old friends: "The fewer we become, the more let us love one another." Adieu, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLII

TO JOHN SARGENT

PASSY, 27 January, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—I received and read the letter you were so kind as to write to me the 3d instant, with a great deal of pleasure, as it informed me of the welfare of a family whom I have so long esteemed and loved, and to whom I am under so many obligations, which I shall ever remember. Our correspondence has been interrupted by the abominable war. I neither expected letters from you, nor would I hazard putting you in danger by writing any to you. We can now communicate freely; and next to the happiness of seeing and embracing you all at Halstead, will be that of hearing frequently of your health and prosperity.

Mrs. Sargent and the good lady, her mother, are very kind in wishing me more happy years. I ought to be satisfied with those Providence has already been pleased to afford me, being now in my seventy-eighth; a long life to pass without any uncommon

misfortune, the greater part of it in health and vigor of mind and body, near fifty years of it in continued possession of the confidence of my country, in public employments, and enjoying the esteem and affectionate, friendly regard of many wise and good men and women, in every country where I have resided. For these mercies and blessings I desire to be thankful to God, whose protection I have hitherto had, and I hope for its continuance to the end, which now cannot be far distant.

The account you give me of your family is pleasing, except that your eldest son continues so long unmarried. I hope he does not intend to live and die in celibacy. The wheel of life, that has rolled down to him from Adam without interruption, should not stop with him. I would not have one dead, unbearing branch in the genealogical tree of the Sargents. The married state is, after all our jokes, the happiest, being conformable to our natures. Man and woman have each of them qualities and tempers, in which the other is deficient, and which in union contribute to the common felicity. Single and separate, they are not the complete human being; they are like the odd halves of scissors: they cannot answer the end of their formation.

I am concerned at the losses you have suffered by the war. You are still young and active enough to retrieve them, and peace, I hope, will afford the opportunity.

You mention nothing of my good friend Mrs. Deane, or her amiable sisters, whom I sometimes saw with you, nor of Mr. Chambers. I hope they

are all well and happy. Present my respects to Mrs. Sargent, whom I love very much, and believe me ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLIII

TO M. DUMAS

PASSY, 17 February, 1783.

DEAR SIR:—It is a long time since I have had the pleasure of hearing from you. I hope, however, that you and yours continue well.

The bearers, Mr. President Wheelock¹ and his brother, go to Holland on a public-spirited design, which you will find recommended by many eminent persons in America.

I beg leave to request for these gentlemen your civilities and best counsels, as they will be entire strangers in your country.

With great esteem, I am ever, dear sir, your faithful, humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLIV

FROM THE EARL OF BUCHAN

EDINBURGH, 18 February, 1783.

SIR:—You were entitled to a civic crown on my account a great many years ago, when, at the

¹ John Wheelock was the second president of Dartmouth College, served in the Continental army until the death of his father, Eleazer Wheelock, in 1779, when he was chosen president of the college. In 1783, the trustees sent him abroad to obtain aid for the institution. John Adams speaks of his having remained in Paris a few days and setting out for the Hague. (*Works*, VIII, 44.)

University of St. Andrews, you gave a turn to the career of a disorder which then threatened my life. You have since that time done so much, and Heaven has at last been pleased to bless and crown your endeavors with so much success, that civic crowns of a more important nature are due to you, and certainly await you, if there is any such thing as public gratitude on the face of the earth.

Many of my acquaintances in this part of the world seem disposed to seek for an asylum on the other side of the Atlantic, and knowing my steady attachment and affection to a people who received my great-grandfather when an exile, or rather a fugitive from his country, during the administration of Lauderdale in Scotland, have applied to me for information on the subject of settling in the United States.

Before the troubles commenced, I had meditated a settlement on the estates of the Lord Fairfax in Virginia; but Lord Fairfax being since dead, and my connections altered in that family, I have not thought of renewing my inquiries in that quarter.¹

What I wish to promote is the happy settlement of my countrymen in North America, in the territory of the United States; such countrymen being friends to the principles which gave independence to that country; persons also of good characters and virtuous conduct, who find themselves cramped and unhappy in a country now very unfit for the residence of such individuals as have not a very

¹ For an account of Lord Fairfax and his estates in Virginia, see Sparks's edition of *Washington's Writings*, Vol. I., p 12, Vol. II., p 182.

considerable fortune to attach them to home. I foresee a spirit of emigration, and I wish as much as possible to give it a direction which may tend to the happiness of those in whom, from a similarity of sentiment, I must necessarily find myself very much interested. I have the honor and pleasure to be, sir, with great respect and attachment, etc.,

BUCHAN.

MCLV

FROM M. ROSENCRONE, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
IN DENMARK, TO M. DE WALTERSTORF

COPENHAGEN, 22 February, 1783.

SIR:—As I know you are on the point of making a tour to France, I cannot omit warmly recommending to you to endeavor, during your stay at Paris, to gain as much as possible the confidence and esteem of Mr. Franklin.

You will recollect, sir, what I said to you in our conversations, of the high respect which all the king's ministry have for that minister. You have witnessed the satisfaction with which we have learned the glorious issue of this war for the United States of America, and how fully we are persuaded that it will be for the general interest of the two states to form, as soon as possible, reciprocal connections of friendship and commerce. Nothing, certainly, would be more agreeable to us than to learn by your letters that you find the same dispositions in Mr. Franklin; and in that case, it seems to me, the shortest way of

accelerating these new connections would be to take the treaty between the Congress and the States-General for the basis, and that Mr. Franklin should communicate to us his ideas on the changes or additions which he might think reciprocally useful in the treaty of commerce which Congress might conclude with us.

We should eagerly and frankly reply to such overtures; and, as soon as the changes thus agreed on shall have met the approbation of Congress, one of the persons commissioned by that body, then in Europe, might, in order to gain time, come here with full powers to conclude, leaving on both sides the more particular stipulations for the negotiations of the ministers whom those states shall, in the sequel, send to reside with each other.

I shall finish, sir, with hoping that you may happily terminate the visits you have proposed to make to the different parts of France; and it is with sentiments of the most distinguished respect that I have the honor to be, etc.

ROSENCRONE.

MCLVI

FROM BENJAMIN VAUGHAN

LONDON, 25 February, 1783.

MY DEAR SIR:—You now see verified all that I said about binding down England to so hard a peace. It has put many good people into ill humor, and it has given a thousand pretexts to bad people among us. But the overthrow of parties is nothing to the

overthrow of systems relative to English commerce, which was intended to be placed on a footing that would have been an example to all mankind, and probably have restored England to her pinnacle again. America, I am sure, we should have had as much of as could be expected upon the proposed system of liberality.

But, however the ministry shall finally arrange itself, I cannot but hope on all hands that we shall be more or less cured of our fighting and monopolizing notions, and look to an American *friendship*. The boldness of my friend's conduct,¹ therefore, has done infinite service to men's minds, as his conversation has done to the royal mind. You will take pleasure in hearing, that he talked of making England a free port, for which he said we were fitted by nature, capital, love of enterprise, maritime connections, and position between the old and new world, the north and south of Europe, and that those who were best circumstanced for trade could not but be gainers by having trade open. Indeed, I may now say to you with courage, that I have scarcely seen or heard any thing of what has passed already, or was meant to take place hereafter, that I do not approve and applaud, as conducted upon grand principles. In short, I think that at last England will mend, not her parties indeed, but the proceedings of those who remain in office, whoever they may be.

The public are not yet instructed in the system of

¹ Alluding probably to Lord Shelburne, the minister under whom the peace was made.

their peace; but pains are taking for this purpose by a respectable friend of yours, and more too will be said in the House. But the ministry were confounded, all but one or two men, at the junction of parties against them; for, had the crisis of the peace been missed for an attack, the opposition, as politicians, knew that no other would offer, and the ministry would become fixed, and even popular. I do not, however, find that the man of the people¹ has gained much in public estimation by his union with Lord North, or his conduct about the peace.

To you I need not point out any of the absurdities of the public proceedings; but you will now see who has been your friend, and upon what principles; for he *might* have made closer terms with you, had he thought either the measure or *manner* wise. I am much satisfied at having heard him say that he repented of nothing of all that he had done, that he would do it all over again, and that he sees that he alone had the resolution to go through it. God be praised that it is done, and that no one asks to have it undone! I am, my dear sir, yours ever most devotedly and affectionately,

BENJAMIN VAUGHAN.

MCLVII

TO JOHN COAKLEY LETTSOM

PASSY, 6 March, 1783.

DEAR SIR:—I received your favor of September last. It found me laboring under a painful disorder,

¹ Mr Fox.

which continued long, and put me much behindhand in my correspondence. I thank you for the valuable publications that accompanied it, particularly those of your own composition, which I read with pleasure.

Our late excellent friend ¹ was always proposing something for the good of mankind. You will find instances of this in one of his letters which I enclose, the only one I can at present lay my hand on. I have some very valuable ones in America, if they are not lost in the late confusions. You will be so kind as to return it to me, after having extracted from it what you may think proper. Just before I left England, he, in conjunction with Mr. Barclay and myself, labored hard to prevent the coming war, but our endeavors were fruitless. This transaction is alluded to in the paragraph that begins at the bottom of the first page. If we may estimate the goodness of a man by his disposition to do good, and his constant endeavors and success in doing it, I can hardly conceive that a better man has ever existed.

I desire to be considered as a subscriber, if there is a subscription, for two sets of his works, which I will pay for on demand. With great esteem, I am, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLVIII

TO ROBERT MORRIS

PASSY, 7 March, 1783.

DEAR SIR:—With this I send you a copy of the last contract I made with this court, respecting the

¹ Dr. Fothergill.

late loan of six millions, the terms of the loan, and the times of repayment. It was impossible for me to obtain more, and, indeed, considering the state of finances and expenses here, I wonder I have obtained so much. You will see by the enclosed Gazette, that the government is obliged to stop payment, for a year, of its own bills of exchange, drawn in America and the East Indies; yet it has advanced six millions to save the credit of ours. You will, I am sure, do all in your power to avoid drawing beyond your funds here; for I am absolutely assured that no further aid for this year is to be expected; and it will not be strange that they should suffer your bills to take the same fate with their own.

You will also see in the contract fresh marks of the king's goodness towards us, in giving so long a term for payment, and forgiving the first year's interest. I hope the ravings of a certain mischievous madman here against France and its ministers, which I hear of every day, will not be regarded in America, so as to diminish in the least the happy union that has hitherto subsisted between the two nations, and which is indeed the solid foundation of our present importance in Europe. With great esteem, I am ever, dear sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLIX

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON

PARIS, 7 March, 1783.

SIR:—I but this moment hear of this opportunity, by which I can only send you a line to acquaint you

that I have concluded the treaty with Sweden, which was signed on Wednesday last. You will have a copy by the first good opportunity. It differs very little from the plan sent me; in nothing material.¹ The English court is in confusion by another change of ministry, Lord Shelburne and his friends having resigned; but it is not yet certainly known who will succeed, though Lord North and Mr. Fox are talked of as two, they being reconciled! I cannot add, but that I am, with great esteem, sir, etc.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S.—The change in the ministry is not supposed of any importance respecting our definitive treaty, which must conform to the preliminaries; but we shall see.

MCLX

TO THE COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 9 March, 1783.

SIR:—Mr. Barclay, our consul-general, waits upon your Excellency with a complaint of a gross affront and injury offered to the Congress of the United States, at L'Orient, by some English merchants residing at Bourdeaux, to which I beg your Excellency's attention, and that you would order such measures to be taken for redress as the nature of the case will appear to require. I am, with great respect, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

¹This treaty is printed in the public *Journals of Congress*, Vol. IV., p. 241, under the date of July 29, 1783.

MCLXI

TO THE COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 16 March, 1783.

SIR:—I received the letter your Excellency did me the honor of writing to me respecting the means of promoting the commerce between France and America. Not being myself well acquainted with the state of that commerce, I have endeavored by conversation with some of our merchants to obtain information. They complain in general of the embarrassments it suffers by the numerous internal demands of duties, searches, etc., that it is subjected to in this country. Whether these can be well removed, and the system changed, I will not presume to say. The enclosed letters may, however, inform your Excellency of some of the circumstances, and probably Mr. Barclay, our consul, may furnish others. In general I would only observe that commerce, consisting in a mutual exchange of the necessities and conveniences of life, the more free and unrestrained it is, the more it flourishes; and the happier are all the nations concerned in it. Most of the restraints put upon it in different countries seem to have been the projects of particulars for their private interest, under pretence of public good. Your Excellency has no doubt seen the bill now under consideration in the British Parliament respecting their trade with America, and will consider how far it may be practicable to give facilities to the future trade between America and your sugar islands, as well as with France, similar to those which seem now to be projected by

England. I myself wish most earnestly that France may reap speedily those great advantages from the American commerce, which she has so well merited by her generous aids in freeing it from its former monopoly; and every thing in my power to promote that desirable end may be depended on. With great respect, I am, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLXII

TO THE EARL OF BUCHAN

PASSY, 17 March, 1783.

MY LORD:—I received the letter your lordship did me the honor of writing to me, and am obliged by your kind congratulations on the return of peace, which I hope will be lasting.

With regard to the terms on which lands may be acquired in America, and the manner of beginning new settlements on them, I cannot give better information than may be found in a book lately printed in London, under some such title as *Letters from a Pennsylvania Farmer*, by Hector St. John. The only encouragements we hold out to strangers are a good climate, fertile soil, wholesome air and water, plenty of provisions and fuel, good pay for labor, kind neighbors, good laws, liberty, and a hearty welcome; the rest depends on a man's own industry and virtue. Lands are cheap, but they must be bought. All settlements are undertaken at private

expense; the public contributes nothing but defence and justice. I should not, however, expect much emigration from a country so much drained of men as yours must have been by the late war, since the more that have left it, the more room and the more encouragement remain for those who stayed at home. But this you can best judge of; and I have long observed of your people that their sobriety, frugality, industry, and honesty seldom fail of success in America, and of procuring them a good establishment among us.

I do not recollect the circumstance you are so pleased to mention,—of my having saved a citizen of St. Andrews, by giving a turn to his disorder; and I am curious to know what the disorder was, and what the advice I gave which proved so salutary.¹

With great regard, I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLXIII

TO THE LORD BISHOP OF ST. ASAPH, DR. SHIPLEY

PASSY, 17 March, 1783

I received with great pleasure my dear respected friend's letter of the 5th instant, as it informed me of the welfare of a family I so much esteem and love.

The clamor against the peace in your Parliament

¹ It was a fever in which the Earl of Buchan, then Lord Cadross, lay sick at St. Andrews; and the advice was not to blister, according to the old practice and the opinion of the learned Dr. Simpson, brother of the celebrated geometrician at Glasgow.—W. T. F.

would alarm me for its duration, if I were not of opinion with you, that the attack is rather against the minister. I am confident none of the opposition would have made a better peace for England, if they had been in his place; at least I am sure that Lord Stormont, who seems loudest in railing at it, is not the man that could have mended it. My reasons I will give you, when I have, what I hope to have, the great happiness of seeing you once more and conversing with you.

They talk much of there being no reciprocity in our treaty. They think nothing, then, of our passing over in silence the atrocities committed by their troops, and demanding no satisfaction for their wanton burnings and devastations of our fair towns and countries. They have heretofore confessed the war to be unjust, and nothing is plainer in reasoning than that the mischief done in an unjust war should be repaired. Can Englishmen be so partial to themselves, as to imagine they have a right to plunder and destroy as much as they please, and then, without satisfying for the injuries they have done, to have peace on equal terms? We were favorable, and did not demand what justice entitled us to. We shall probably be blamed for it by our constituents; and I still think it would be the interest of England voluntarily to offer reparation of those injuries, and effect it as much as may be in her power. But this is an interest she will never see.

Let us now forgive and forget. Let each country seek its advancement in its own internal advantages of arts and agriculture, not in retarding or preventing

the prosperity of the other. America will, with God's blessing, become a great and happy country; and England, if she has at length gained wisdom, will have gained something more valuable, and more essential to her prosperity, than all she has lost; and will still be a great and respectable nation. Her great disease at present is the number and enormous salaries and emoluments of office. Avarice and ambition are strong passions, and, separately, act with great force on the human mind; but, when both are united, and may be gratified in the same object, their violence is almost irresistible, and they hurry men headlong into factions and contentions, destructive of all good government. As long, therefore, as these great emoluments subsist, your Parliament will be a stormy sea, and your public councils confounded by private interests. But it requires much public spirit and virtue to abolish them; more perhaps than can now be found in a nation so long corrupted. I am, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLXIV

TO SIR WILLIAM JONES

PASSY, 17 March, 1783.

DEAR FRIEND:—I duly received your obliging letter of November 15th. You will have since learned how much I was then, and have been continually, engaged in public affairs, and your goodness will excuse my not having answered it sooner. You

announced your intended marriage with my much respected friend, Miss Anna Maria, which I assure you gave me great pleasure, as I cannot conceive a match more likely to be happy, from the amiable qualities each of you possess so plentifully. You mention its taking place, as soon as a prudent attention to worldly interests would permit. I just now learn from Mr. Hodgson, that you are appointed to an honorable and profitable place in the Indies; so I expect now soon to hear of the wedding, and to receive the profile. With the good Bishop's permission, I will join my blessing with his; adding my wishes, that you may return from that corrupting country, with a great deal of money honestly acquired, and with full as much virtue as you carry out with you.¹

The engraving of my medal, which you know was projected before the peace, is but just finished. None are yet struck in hard metal, but will be in a few days. In the meantime, having this good opportunity by Mr. Penn, I send you one of the *épreuves*. You will see that I have profited by some of your ideas, and adopted the mottoes you were so kind as to furnish.

I am at present quite recovered from my late illness, and flatter myself that I may in the ensuing summer be able to undertake a trip to England for the pleasure of seeing once more my dear friends there, among whom the Bishop and his family stand

¹ In March, 1783, Sir William Jones was appointed a judge of the supreme court of judicature in Bengal, on which occasion the honor of knighthood was conferred upon him. He was married to Anna Maria Shipley the following month.

foremost in my estimation and affection. I thank you for your good wishes respecting me. Mine for your welfare and prosperity are not less earnest and sincere; being with great truth, dear sir, your affectionate friend, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLXV

TO DAVID HARTLEY

PASSY, 23 March, 1783.

DEAR SIR:—I received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me, requesting a recommendation to America of Mr. Joshua Grigby. I have accordingly written one, and, having an opportunity the other day, I sent it under cover to Mr. Benjamin Vaughan. The general proclamations you wished for suspending, or rather putting an end to hostilities, are now published; so that your “heart is at rest,” and mine with it. You may depend on my joining my hearty endeavors with yours in “cultivating conciliatory principles between our two countries”; and I may venture to assure you that if your bill for a provisional establishment of the commerce had passed as at first proposed, a stipulation on our part in the definitive treaty, to allow reciprocal and equal advantages and privileges to your subjects, would have been readily agreed to. With great and sincere esteem, I am ever, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLXVI

TO JOHN DICKINSON, ESQ., PRESIDENT OF THE STATE
OF PENNSYLVANIA

PASSY, 23 March, 1783.

SIR:—Permit me to congratulate your Excellency on your advancement to the Presidency of Pennsylvania, wherein I hope you may find opportunities of doing much good to your country, the only consideration that can make an elevated situation agreeable to a reasonable mind.

Mr. Penn, son of our late proprietary, purposes going over shortly, and will do me the honor of delivering this line to you. He appears to me, in the short acquaintance I have had with him, to be an amiable young gentleman of a promising valuable character, and if any recommendations of mine to your civilities and friendship could be thought necessary, he should have them fully. But I confine myself here to what regards the family in general. They think the late act of Assembly respecting their lands has done them great injustice. Not being in the country when it was made, and being unacquainted with the reasonings upon which it was founded, I have been only able to say that I did not believe any injustice was intended, and that the offered compensation had been supposed an equitable one. I have not heard that the family was considered as delinquent in the affair of the Revolution. But as I find it is imagined that some suspicions of their being unfavorable to it have perhaps prejudiced the Assembly against them, and that the warmth of the

times has produced a harder treatment of their interests than would otherwise have been thought of, I would beg leave to mention it to your Excellency's consideration, whether it would not be reputable for the province, in the cooler season of peace, to reconsider that act, and if the allowance made to the family should be found inadequate, to regulate it according to equity, since it becomes a virgin state to be particularly careful of its reputation, and to guard itself not only against committing injustice, but against even the suspicion of it.

With great esteem and respect I have the honor to be, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLXVII

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES ¹

PASSY, 24 March, 1783

SIR:—I am desirous of printing a translation of the Constitutions of the United States of America,

¹This letter is translated from a French copy. On the 5th April, the Count de Vergennes notified Franklin that M. Pierres, the printer, had been authorized "to commence an impression of his work, on condition of his sending the sheets, as fast as they shall be printed, to M. de Neville, the Director-General of the Press, in order that he may intrust them to a censor for examination. The rules relative to the press make this last formality indispensable."

The following is a copy of the application, to which this note of de Vergennes refers.

"MONSEIGNEUR — J'ai l'honneur de vous adresser un exemplaire des Constitutions des Treize Etats-Unis de l'Amérique que j'ai imprimé pour M. Franklin. J'y joins une copie de la lettre que M. le Garde des Sceaux lui a adressée le 16 de ce mois, ainsi que celle de

published at Philadelphia, in 1781, by order of Congress. Several of these Constitutions have already appeared in the English and American newspapers; others have appeared elsewhere; but there has never yet been a complete translation of them. That, of which I have the honor to speak to your Excellency, being an octavo volume, contains the different Constitutions of the United States, their treaty with France, and no foreign matter. I have made arrangements for this purpose with M. Pierres, who is ready to commence the impression, and I hope that your Excellency will give your approbation.

M. Pierres will need a permit from the Keeper of the Seals for printing and selling this work, after having furnished me with the number of copies agreed upon. As I strongly desire that this translation may appear at an early day, I shall feel under great obligations to your Excellency, if you will have the goodness to request the Keeper of the Seals to send the order without delay; and, should the formalities required for the purpose demand any con-

M de Neville à le Ministre en date du 15 precedent. Vous pouvez voir, Monseigneur, par le contenu de la lettre de Msgr le Garde des Sceaux, que le Ministre ne s'oppose point à la publication de cet ouvrage puisqu'il la permis sur la feuille de 11 Mai dernier, mais à coté de cette permission il y a adjouté ces mots à condition que l'ouvrage passera sous les yeux de Monseigneur le Cte. de Vergennes avant d'etre distribué Ces mots se trouvent relatés dans la copie de la lettre de M de Neville

"D' apres cela, Monseigneur, je vous supplie de vouloir bien vous faire rendre compte de cet ouvrage le plutôt possible et d'avoir la bonté de me faire expedier votre agrément pour la publication. M. Franklin desire avec la plus grand ardeur de pouvoir le mettre au jour.

"Je suis avec le plus profond respect, Monseigneur, de votre grandeur, etc"—Franklin Collection in Philadelphia Philosophical Society. Cor. 1782 to 1791—"Letters to Various Persons, No. 13."

siderable time, to request him to authorize by letter M. Pierres to proceed with the work. I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLXVIII

TO THE GRAND MASTER OF MALTA

PASSY, 6 April, 1783.

MY LORD:—I have the honor to address to your Eminent Highness the medal which I have lately had struck. It is a homage of gratitude, my Lord, which is due to the interest you have taken in our cause; and we no less owe it to your virtues, and to your Eminent Highness' wise administration of government.¹

Permit me, my Lord, to demand your protection for such of our citizens as circumstances may lead to your ports. I hope that your Eminent Highness

¹A description of this medal will be found in Vol IX, p 148, in the letter of Franklin to Robert R Livingston, dated March 4, 1782. Its receipt and Dr Franklin's note were acknowledged by the Grand Master of Malta in the following terms

"MALTA, 21 June, 1783

"SIR —I received with the most lively sensibility the medal which your Excellency sent me, and the value I set upon this acquisition leaves my gratitude unbounded. This monument of American liberty has a distinguished place in my cabinet.

"Whenever chance or commerce shall lead any of your fellow-citizens or their vessels into the ports of my island, I shall receive them with the greatest welcome. They shall experience from me every assistance they may claim, and I shall observe with infinite pleasure any growing connection between that interesting nation and my subjects, especially if it will tend to convince your Excellency of the distinguished sentiments with which I am, sir, etc.,

"The Grand Master,

"ROHAN "

will be pleased to grant it to them, and kindly receive the assurances of the profound respect with which I am, my Lord, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLXIX

TO M. ROSENCRONE

PASSY, 13 April, 1783.

SIR:—M. de Walterstorf has communicated to me a letter from your Excellency, which affords me great pleasure, as it expresses in clear and strong terms the good disposition of your court to form connections of friendship and commerce with the United States of America. I am confident that the same good disposition will be found in the Congress; and, having acquainted that respectable body with the purport of your letter, I expect a commission will soon be sent, appointing some person in Europe to enter into a treaty with his Majesty the king of Denmark, for the purpose desired.

In the meantime, to prepare and forward the business as much as may be, I send, for your Excellency's consideration, such a sketch as you mention, formed on the basis of our treaty with Holland, on which I shall be glad to receive your Excellency's sentiments. And I hope that this transaction, when completed, may be the means of producing and securing a long and happy friendship between our two nations.

To smooth the way for obtaining this desirable

end, as well as to comply with my duty, it becomes necessary for me on this occasion to mention to your Excellency the affair of our three prizes, which, having during the war entered Bergen as a neutral and friendly port, where they might repair the damages they had suffered, and procure provisions, were, by an order of your predecessor in the office you so honorably fill, violently seized and delivered to our enemies. I am inclined to think it was a hasty act, procured by the importunities and misrepresentations of the British minister, and that your government could not, on reflection, approve of it. But the injury was done, and I flatter myself your Excellency will think with me that it ought to be repaired. The means and manner I beg leave to recommend to your consideration, and am, with great respect, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLXX

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON

PASSY, 15 April, 1783.

SIR:—You complain sometimes of not hearing from us. It is now near three months since any of us have heard from America. I think our last letters came with General de Rochambeau. There is now a project under consideration for establishing monthly packet boats between France and New York, which I hope will be carried into execution; our correspondence then may be more regular and frequent.

I send herewith another copy of the treaty concluded with Sweden. I hope, however, that you will have received the former, and that the ratification is forwarded. The king, as the ambassador informs me, is now employed in examining the duties payable in his ports, with a view of lowering them in favor of America, and thereby encouraging and facilitating our mutual commerce.

M. de Walterstorf, chamberlain of the king of Denmark, formerly chief justice of the Danish West India Islands, was last year at Paris, where I had some acquaintance with him, and he is now returned hither. The newspapers have mentioned him as intended to be sent minister from his court to Congress; but he tells me no such appointment has yet been made. He assures me, however, that the king has a strong desire to have a treaty of friendship and commerce with the United States; and he has communicated to me a letter, which he received from M. Rosencrone, the minister for foreign affairs, expressing that disposition. I enclose a copy of the letter; and, if Congress shall approve of entering into such a treaty with the king of Denmark, of which I told M. de Walterstorf I made no doubt, they will send to me, or whom else they shall think proper, the necessary instructions and powers for that purpose. In the meantime, to keep the business in train, I have sent to that minister, for his consideration, a translation of the plan, *mutatis mutandis*, which I received from Congress for a treaty with Sweden, accompanied by a letter, of which likewise I enclose a copy. I think it would be well to make it one of the instruc-

tions to whoever is commissioned for the treaty, that he previously procure satisfaction for the prizes mentioned in my letter.

The definitive treaties have met with great delays, partly by the tardiness of the Dutch, but principally from the distractions in the court of England, where for six or seven weeks there was properly no ministry, nor any business effected. They have at last settled a ministry, but of such a composition as does not promise to be lasting. The papers will inform you who they are. It is now said that Mr. Oswald, who signed the preliminaries, is not to return here, but that Mr. David Hartley comes in his stead to settle the definitive. A congress is also talked of, and that some use is to be made therein of the mediation formerly proposed of the imperial courts. Mr. Hartley is an old friend of mine, and a strong lover of peace, so that I hope we shall not have much difficult discussion with him; but I could have been content to have finished with Mr. Oswald, whom we always found very reasonable.

Mr. Laurens, having left Bath mended in his health, is daily expected at Paris, where Messieurs Jay and Adams still continue. Mr. Jefferson has not yet arrived, nor the *Romulus*, in which ship I am told he was to have taken his passage. I have been the more impatient of this delay, from the expectation given me of full letters by him. It is extraordinary that we should be so long without any arrivals from America in any part of Europe. We have as yet heard nothing of the reception of the preliminary articles in America, though it is now nearly five

months since they were signed. Barney, indeed, did not get away from hence before the middle of January, but copies went by other ships long before him; he waited some time for the money he carried, and afterwards was detained by violent contrary winds. He had a passport from England, and I hope arrived safe, though we have been in some pain for him on account of a storm soon after he sailed.

The English merchants have shown great eagerness to resume their commerce with America, but apprehending that our laws prohibiting that commerce would not be repealed till England had set the example by repealing theirs, a number of vessels they had loaded with goods have been detained in port, while the Parliament have been debating on the repealing bill, which has been altered two or three times, and is not agreed upon yet. It was at first proposed to give us equal privileges in trade with their own subjects, repealing thereby, with respect to us, so much of their navigation act as regards foreign nations. But that plan seems to be laid aside, and what will finally be done in the affair is uncertain.

There is not a port in France, and few in Europe, from which I have not received several applications of persons desiring to be appointed consuls for America. They generally offer to execute the office for the honor of it, without salary. I suppose the Congress will wait to see what course commerce will take, and in what places it will fix itself, in order to find where consuls will be necessary, before any appointments are made, and perhaps it will then be thought best to send some of our own people. If

they are not allowed to trade, there must be a great expense for salaries. If they trade, and are Americans, the fortunes they make will mostly settle in our own country at last. The agreement I was to make here respecting consuls has not yet been concluded. The article of trading is important. I think it would be well to reconsider it.

I have caused to be struck here the medal which I formerly mentioned to you, the design of which you seemed to approve. I enclose one of them, in silver, for the president of Congress, and one, in copper, for yourself; the impression on copper is thought to appear best, and you will soon receive a number for the members. I have presented one to the king and another to the queen, both in gold, and one, in silver, to each of the ministers, as a monumental acknowledgment, which may go down to future ages, of the obligations we are under to this nation. It is mighty well received, and gives general pleasure. If the Congress approve of it, as I hope they will, I may add something on the die (for those to be struck hereafter) to show that it was done by their order, which I could not venture to do till I had authority for it.¹

A multitude of people are continually applying to me personally, and by letters, for information respecting the means of transporting themselves, families, and fortunes to America. I give no encouragement to any of the king's subjects, as I think it would not be right in me to do it without their sovereign's approbation; and, indeed, few offer from

¹See a description of this medal in Vol IX, p. 148.

France but persons of irregular conduct and desperate circumstances, whom we had better be without; but I think there will be great emigrations from England, Ireland, and Germany. There is a great contest among the ports, which of them shall be of those to be declared *free* for the *American trade*. Many applications are made to me to interest myself in behalf of all of them; but, having no instructions on that head, and thinking it a matter more properly belonging to the consul, I have done nothing in it.

I have continued to send you the English papers. You will often see falsehoods in them respecting what I say and do, etc. You know those papers too well to make any contradiction of such stuff necessary from me.

Mr. Barclay is often ill, and I am afraid the settlement of our accounts will be, in his hands, a long operation. I shall be impatient at being detained here on that score after the arrival of my successor. Would it not be well to join Mr. Ridley with Mr. Barclay for that service? He resides in Paris, and seems active in business. I know not, indeed, whether he would undertake it, but wish he may.

The finances here are embarrassed, and a new loan is proposed by way of lottery, in which, it is said by some calculators, the king will pay at the rate of seven per cent. I mention this to furnish you with a fresh convincing proof against cavillers of the king's generosity towards us, in lending us six millions this year at five per cent., and of his concern for our credit, in saving by that sum the honor

of Mr. Morris' bills, while those drawn by his own officers abroad have their payment suspended for a year after they become due. You have been told that France might help us more liberally if she would. This last transaction is a demonstration of the contrary.

Please to show these last paragraphs to Mr. Morris, to whom I cannot now write, the notice of this ship being short; but it is less necessary, as Mr. Grand writes to him fully. With great esteem, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S.—Mr. Laurens is just arrived.

MCLXXI

FROM CHAS. J. FOX

ST JAMES'S, 19 April, 1783

SIR:—Although it is unnecessary for me to introduce to your acquaintance a gentleman so well known to you as Mr. Hartley, who will have the honor of delivering to you this letter, yet it may be proper for me to inform you that he has the full and entire confidence of his Majesty's ministers upon the subject of his mission.

Permit me, sir, to take this opportunity of assuring you how happy I should esteem myself if it were to prove my lot to be the instrument of completing a real and substantial reconciliation between two countries, formed by nature to be in a state of friendship one with the other, and thereby to put the finishing hand to a building in laying the first stone of which I may fairly boast that I had some share.

I have the honor to be, with every sentiment of regard and esteem, sir, etc.,

C. J. Fox.

MCLXXII

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON

PASSY, 26 April, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—I received in its time your kind letter of February 22d. I am sensible of the prudence of your advice respecting my coming to England, and shall follow it. Accept my thanks for your kind invitation to Cheam when I do come; but the little left of life at my age will, perhaps, hurry me home as soon as I can be quit of my employment here. I should, indeed, have great pleasure in seeing you, and in being some time with you and your little family. I cannot have all I wish.

Mr. Williams is now here with his family. I shall mention to him his not answering your letter. We talked yesterday of you and of his friend Dolly, whom I have not forgotten, as she supposes. He expressed the highest esteem and regard for you both. My love to her when you see her. I send you some more of the little books, and am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLXXIII

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON

PASSY, 27 April, 1783

SIR:—The Count del Veome, an Italian nobleman of great distinction, does me the honor to be the

bearer of this. I have not the satisfaction to be personally acquainted with this gentleman, but am much solicited by some of my particular friends, to whom his merits and character are known, to afford him this introduction to you. He is, I understand, a great traveller, and his view in going to America is merely to see the country and its great men. I pray you will show him every civility, and afford him that counsel which, as a stranger, he may stand in need of. With great respect, I am, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLXXIV

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 4 May, 1783

SIR:—I have considered the proposal of M. le Marq. de Segur to cede to the Congress the military stores left by M. de Rochambeau at Baltimore, and I am of opinion that it is probable a part of them may be acceptable, if not the whole, and that possibly some of the different States may be inclined to purchase what the Congress should not want. But as I am ignorant of what may or may not be wanted by the Congress, and have no orders to purchase or procure more stores than have already been provided here, I can enter into no agreement respecting them. If a power be sent to the ambassador or consul to treat with the Congress or the separate States concerning them, it may be the most probable means of disposing of them to advantage.

I am with respect, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLXXV

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 5 May, 1783.

SIR:—I have the honor to communicate to your Excellency herewith three articles proposed between Mr. Hartley and the American Commissioners respecting commerce. He has sent them to his court for their approbation. I doubt their obtaining it. But we shall see.

I am, with respect, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLXXVI

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 5 May, 1783.

SIR:—It was my intention to pay my devoirs at Versailles to-morrow. I thank your Excellency, nevertheless, for your kind admonition. I omitted two of the last three days from a mistaken apprehension that, being holidays, there would be no court. Mr. Laurens and Mr. Jay are both invalids; and, since my last severe fit of the gout, my legs have continued so weak that I am hardly able to

keep pace with the ministers, who walk fast, especially in going up and down stairs. I beg you to be assured that whatever deficiency there may be of strength, there is none of respect in, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.¹

MCLXXVII

TO DAVID HARTLEY

PASSY, 8 May, 1783.

DEAR FRIEND:—I send you enclosed the copies you desired of the papers I read to you yesterday.² I should be happy if I could see before I die the proposed improvement of the law of nations established. The miseries of mankind would be diminished by it, and the happiness of millions secured and promoted. If the practice of privateering could be profitable to any civilized nation, it might be so to

¹ FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES.

VERSAILLES, 5 May, 1783

SIR —I have received the two letters of yesterday and to-day, which you have done me the honor to write to me, and a copy of the three articles discussed between the Commissioners of the United States and Mr Hartley. You are aware that I shall want a sufficient time to examine them before submitting to you the observations which may relate to our reciprocal interests. Receive, in the meantime, my sincere thanks for this communication.

I hope to have the honor of seeing you to-morrow at Versailles. I trust you will be able to be present with the foreign ministers. It is observed that the Commissioners from the United States rarely show themselves here, and inferences are drawn from it, which I am sure their constituents would disavow, if they had a knowledge of them. I have the honor to be, etc.,

DE VERGENNES.

² *Supra*, p 69.

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us Americans; since we are so situated on the globe as that the rich commerce of Europe with the West Indies, consisting of manufactures, sugars, etc., is obliged to pass before our doors, which enables us to make short and cheap cruises, while our own commerce is in such bulky, low-priced articles, as that ten of our ships taken by you are not equal in value to one of yours; and you must come far from home, at a great expense, to look for them. I hope, therefore, that this proposition, if made by us, will appear in its true light, as having humanity only for its motive. I do not wish to see a new Barbary rising in America, and our long extended coast occupied by piratical states. I fear, lest our privateering success in the two last wars should already have given our people too strong a relish for that most mischievous kind of gaming—mixed blood; and if a stop is not now put to the practice, mankind may hereafter be more plagued with American corsairs than they have been and are with the Turkish. Try, my friend, what you can do in procuring for your nation the glory of being, though the greatest naval power, the first who voluntarily relinquished the advantage that power seems to give them of plundering others, and thereby impeding the mutual communications among men of the gifts of God, and rendering miserable multitudes of merchants and their families, artisans, and cultivators of the earth, the most peaceable and innocent part of the human species. With great esteem and affection, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most sincerely,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLXXVIII

TO DR. INGENHOUSZ

PASSY, 16 May, 1783

DEAR FRIEND:—I have before me your three favors of February 26th, April 8th and 29th; the last delivered to me yesterday by Mr. Robertson, to whom I shall show the respect due to your recommendation. I am ashamed of being so long in arrears in my correspondence with you, but I have too much business. I will now endeavor to answer your letters, and hope I may be able to do it without interruption.

I never received the letter you mention, wherein you asked my leave to dedicate your book to me. I should immediately have given my consent, esteeming it a great honor to be so remembered by you, and handed down to posterity as having your friendship. The cast of your profile came safe to hand, and gives me pleasure, as I think it very like. Pray what is the composition?

My journey to Italy, and thence to Vienna, is yet an uncertainty. I thank you, however, for your kind advice respecting the conduct of it.

I have long since been tired of the acquaintance and correspondence of Mr. V.; having but a small remnant left of life, I cannot afford to attend to his endless discourse and numerous long letters and visionary projects. He wants to be employed in our affairs, but he manages his own so badly that one can have but little confidence in his prudence. I pity him, however, though I see no possible means of serving him.

I thank you for your friendly congratulations on the peace, and cautions respecting our future conduct; they are good and wise.

Mr. Wharton's treatment of you gives me pain. He never writes to me. I forget whether I have already sent you the extract of his letter to Dr. Bancroft, so I enclose a copy. I enclose also part of a Philadelphia newspaper, by which you will see that your name and writings are already known in our country. With regard to your property in the public funds, I have no doubt of its being secure according to the value it had when it was placed there, but I can say nothing as to the particulars of its situation or amount; Mr. Williams can better inform you. I have requested him to do it.

It is long since I have seen M. Le Begue. He is much in the country. I have heard nothing of the printing of your book.

Your experiment of burning the wire has been made here with the greatest success. My grandson had it tried at Mr. Charles' lecture, where it gave great satisfaction and was much admired.

I have not yet found leisure to explain the fire-place, but hope for it when I am quit of my present station.

I have been, as you know, so little in America for these last twenty-five years, that I am unqualified to answer the request of Mr. Veinbrenner concerning the names and solidity of houses there.

A new set of merchants have grown up into business, of whom I know nothing; and the circumstances of the old ones whom I formerly knew may have

been much altered by time or by the war. It is, besides, an invidious and dangerous thing for me to give such a distinguishing list, if I were able to do it. My best advice to your commercial people is, to send over a discreet, intelligent person, with instructions to travel through the country, observe the nature of the commerce, find out what of your commodities are wanted there, and in what quantities and proportions, and what of the produce of the country can be purchased to make advantageous returns. Such a man on the spot may obtain better information of characters than I can possibly give, and may make the connections desired with those that he finds to merit confidence. If your people should think fit to take this step, I will give letters of recommendation introductory of the person, and which may be useful to their design. Please to acquaint Mr. Veinbrenner of this, presenting my respects. I have already given such letters at [*mutilated*] have received no intimation, except from you, that a proposition for such a treaty would be acceptable to His Imperial Majesty. I shall, however, venture to propose it to the ambassador when I request his forwarding to you this letter. The commodities you mention as productions of the emperor's dominions are all wanted in America, and will sell there to advantage.

I will send you another piece of the soap you mention when I can have a good opportunity. I now send you one of the medals I have caused to be struck here, which has the good luck to be much approved. [*Mutilated part of draft cut off.*]

With regard to the statuary you mention, I hardly think it can be worth his while at present to go to America in expectation of being employed there. Private persons are not rich enough to encourage sufficiently the fine arts; and therefore our geniuses all go to Europe. In England, at present, the best history painter, West; the best portrait painter, Copley; and the best landscape painter, Taylor, at Bath, are all Americans. And the public being burthened by its war debts, will certainly think of paying them before it goes into the expense of marble monuments. He might, indeed, as you hint, be easily paid in land, but land will produce him nothing without labor; and he and his workmen must [*incomplete*].

after a few years such an artist may find employment, and possibly we may discover a white marble. [*Incomplete.*]

MCLXXIX

TO JOHN INGENHOUSZ

PASSY, 16 May, 1783.

I am glad you have made the experiments you mention, and with success. You will find that the holes are not made by the impulse of the fluid moving in certain directions, but by circumstances of explosion of parts of the matter; and I still think my explanation of the holes in the vane probable, viz, that it was the explosion of tin against parts

of the copper plate that were almost in a state of fusion, and therefore easily burst through either on one side or the other, as it happened. The bursting of the twelve bottles all at once I take to be owing to small bubbles in the substance of the glass, or grains of sand, into which a quantity of the electric fluid had been forced and compressed while the bottles were charging, and when the pressure was suddenly taken off by discharging the bottles, that confined portion by its elastic force expanding caused the breach. My reason for thinking that the charge did not pass by those holes you will find in a former letter; and I think you will always find that the coating within and without is forced both ways by the explosion of these bubbles.

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLXXX

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 23 May, 1783.

SIR:—I beg leave to recommend earnestly to your Excellency's attention the enclosed petition and papers from Mr. Price, an honest, worthy American, who was to my knowledge very serviceable to our army in Canada, and much esteemed by the Congress. I shall be very thankful if you can procure for him the order he desires. With great respect, I am, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLXXXI

W. T. FRANKLIN TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 28 May, 1783.

SIR:—By direction of my grandfather, I have the honor to send your Excellency a copy of the proposition Mr. Hartley lately made to the American ministers, and which he has wrote to his court for permission to sign, provided the same is agreed to on our part. With great respect, I am sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

W. T. FRANKLIN.

MCLXXXII

FROM ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON

PHILADELPHIA, 31 May, 1783

SIR:—I informed you some time since that I had written to the Court of Appeals on the subject of the *Nossa Senhora da Soledade, San Miguele, Almas*, and laid before them the papers you sent me. The cause has since been determined in such a way as will, I hope, be satisfactory to her Portuguese Majesty. I enclose the copy of a letter from the first judge of the Court of Appeals on that subject.

Nothing has yet been done as to the acceptance of your resignation, nor will, as I believe, any thing be done very hastily. Many think your task will not be very burdensome now, and that you may enjoy in peace the fruit of your past labors.

As this will probably be the last letter which I

shall have the pleasure of writing to you in my public character,¹ I beg leave to remind you of the affairs of the *Alliance* and the *Bon Homme Richard*, which are still unsettled. I must also pray you not to lose sight of the vessels detained by his Danish Majesty. This will be a favorable opportunity to press for their restitution. I do not see how they can decently refuse to pay for them. Great Britain is bound in honor to make them whole again.

Preparations for the evacuation of New York still go on very slowly, while the distress of our finances has compelled us to grant furloughs to the greater part of our army. If it were possible to procure any addition to the last six millions, it would be extremely useful to us at present. An entire new arrangement with respect to our foreign department is under consideration. What its fate will be, I know not. I am, etc.,

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

MCLXXXIII

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 3 June, 1783

SIR:—Having long known Mr. Williams to be a very just man in all his transactions, I hope the favor he requests of a surséance may be granted to him, being confident that it will be employed to the complete satisfaction of his creditors. I therefore

¹ Mr Livingston resigned the office of Secretary of Foreign Affairs on the 4th of June.

earnestly pray your Excellency to obtain it for him. With great respect, I am, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLXXXIV

TO M. PIERRES ¹

PASSY, 10 June, 1783.

SIR:—I received the *exemplaire* of the Constitutions. I intended to wait on the Keeper of the Seals yesterday at Versailles, but was prevented. I shall write to him to-day. The ratification of the Swedish treaty is arrived, so that there is no further obstruction to the publication. I desire to have fifty of the octavo copies bound in calf and lettered, and fifty half bound, that is, between pasteboards with a sheepskin back, and lettered, but not cut. I desire also six of the quarto copies bound in morocco. I am, with great esteem, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLXXXV

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON

PASSY, 12 June, 1783.

SIR:—I wrote to you fully by a vessel from Nantes, which I hope will reach you before this. If not, this may inform you that the ratification of the

¹ The printer of the American Constitutions, translated by La Rochefoucauld

treaty with Sweden is come, and ready to be exchanged when I shall receive that from Congress; that the treaty with Denmark is going on, and will probably be ready before the commission for signing it arrives from Congress. It is on the plan of that proposed by Congress for Sweden.

Portugal has likewise proposed to treat with us, and the ambassador has earnestly urged me to give him a plan for the consideration of his court, which I have accordingly done, and he has forwarded it. The Congress will send commissions and instructions for concluding these treaties to whom they may think proper; it is only upon the old authority, given, by a resolution, to myself with Messrs. Deane and Lee, to treat with any European powers, that I have ventured to begin these treaties in consequence of overtures from those crowns.

The definitive treaty with England is not yet concluded, their ministry being unsettled in their minds as to the terms of the commercial part; nor is any other definitive treaty yet completed here, nor even the preliminaries signed of one between England and Holland. It is now five months since we have had a line from you, the last being dated the 13th of January; of course we know nothing of the reception of the preliminary articles, or the opinion of Congress respecting them. We hoped to receive before this time such instructions as might have been thought proper to be sent to us for rendering more perfect the definitive treaty. We know nothing of what has been approved or disapproved. We are totally in the dark, and therefore less pressing to

conclude, being still (as we have long been) in daily expectation of hearing from you. By chance only, we learn that Barney is arrived, by whom went the despatches of the Commissioners, and a considerable sum of money. No acknowledgment of the receipt of that money is yet come to hand, either to me or M. Gérard. I make no doubt that both you and Mr. Morris have written, and I cannot imagine what has become of your letters. With great esteem, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S.—I beg leave to recommend to your civilities the bearer of this, Dr. Bancroft, whom you will find a very intelligent, sensible man, well acquainted with the state of affairs here, and who has heretofore been employed in the service of Congress. I have long known him, and esteem him highly.

MCLXXXVI

FROM BARON DE STAËL, AMBASSADOR FROM SWEDEN

PARIS, 13 June, 1783

SIR:—I have just received his Majesty's ratification of the treaty of commerce concluded with the United States, which I shall have the honor to send you as soon as it can be exchanged for the one from Congress.

Permit me, sir, on this occasion to repeat the request, which the ambassador has made you, respecting Mr. Franklin, your grandson. He had the honor to tell you that it would afford the king a

pleasure to have a person residing with him, in the capacity of the minister of Congress, who bears your name in conjunction with such estimable qualifications as young Mr. Franklin possesses. He charged me, before he departed, to repeat to you the same assurances, and you will allow me to add, on my part, my best wishes for the success of this matter. I have the honor to be, etc.,

LE BARON DE STAEL.

MCLXXXVII

ON THE SHOCK BY THE ELECTRIC BOTTLE, AND THE
DENSITY OF GLASS ¹

PASSY, 14 June, 1782

SIR:—I received some time since the letter you honored me with, containing your hypothesis for explaining the shock given by the electric bottle, on which you seem to desire my opinion. It is many years since I was engaged in those pleasing studies, and my mind is at present too much occupied with other and more important affairs to permit my returning to them. I cannot therefore examine your ingenious hypothesis with the attention it appears to merit. You will find in a letter of mine to Dr. Lining, dated March 18, 1755, that I abandoned my hypothesis of the greater density of glass in the middle than near its surfaces, as contributing to produce the effect, because I found the effect to be the same after I had ground that part away.

¹ It is not known to whom this letter was written —EDITOR.

And I think you might likewise try yours by an easy experiment. Take a plate of lead twelve inches square; cover one of its sides with a coat of beeswax about one line thick; upon that apply closely a thin plate of lead eight inches square, so as to leave a margin of two inches all round. Electrify this composition of lead and wax, and try if you can receive a shock from it; if not, you may draw thence a further argument to support your hypothesis, because the wax, though a non-conductor, is not elastic, any more than pure lead. I see you are endowed with a genius for the study of nature, and I would recommend it to you to employ your time rather in making experiments than in making hypotheses and forming imaginary systems, which we are all too apt to please ourselves with till some experiment comes and unluckily destroys them. Wishing you success in your inquiries, I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCLXXXVIII

TO HENRY LAURENS

PASSY, 6 July, 1783.

DEAR SIR:—We have been honored with several of your letters, and we have talked of writing to you, but it has been delayed. I will therefore write a few lines in my private capacity.

Our negotiations go on slowly, every proposition being sent to England, and answers not returning very speedily. Captain Barney arrived here last Wednesday, and brought despatches for us as late as

the 1st of June. The preliminary articles are ratified. But General Carleton, in violation of those articles, has sent away a great number of negroes, alleging that, freedom having been promised them by a proclamation, the honor of the nation was concerned, etc. Probably another reason may be that, if they had been restored to their masters, Britain could not have hoped any thing from such another proclamation hereafter.

Mr. Hartley called yesterday to tell us that he had received a letter from Mr. Fox, assuring him that our suspicions of affected delays or change of system on their side were groundless, and that they were sincerely desirous to finish as soon as possible. If this be so, and your health will permit the journey, I could wish your return as soon as possible. I want you here on many accounts, and should be glad of your assistance in considering and answering our public letters. There are matters in them of which I cannot conveniently give you an account at present. Nothing could be more seasonable than success in the project you proposed, but we have now very little expectation. Please give my love to your valuable and amiable son and daughter, and believe me, with sincere esteem, etc., B. FRANKLIN.

MCLXXXIX

FROM M. ROSENCRONE

COPENHAGEN, 8 July, 1783

SIR:—It was with the greatest alacrity, that I laid before his Majesty the letter you did me the honor

to write to me, as also the project of a treaty of amity and commerce that accompanied it. The king observed, with the greatest satisfaction, the assurances, contained in that letter, of the good disposition of Congress to form connections of amity and commerce with his kingdoms, such connections being equally conformable to the interests of the two States, and of his Majesty's sincere desire to cement, by every possible means, that harmony, union, and confidence, which he wishes to establish forever between his crown and the United States.

The enclosed *Counter Project*¹ differs in nothing essential from the project sent by you, being drawn up in all respects conformably to the same principles, which you will be certainly convinced of, sir, by the note explaining the reasons for adding some articles, and only giving a different turn to others; so that I flatter myself that I shall soon hear that you are perfectly satisfied with them, having observed the most perfect reciprocity carefully established throughout.

As to the object mentioned in the letter with which you have honored me, you already know, sir, his Majesty's generous intentions towards the individuals in question; and his Majesty is the more induced to avail himself of the first opportunity to manifest these intentions, as he thinks he may reasonably hope that Congress will also consider them as a distinguished proof of his friendship and esteem for that respectable body.

There remains nothing further for me to add, but that the king will adopt, with great pleasure, the

¹See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. IV., p. 115.

most proper means to accelerate the conclusion of the treaty, which we have begun. For myself, it will be the most agreeable part of my office, sir, to assist in perfecting such happy connections with a minister of such universal reputation as yourself; and it is with sentiments of the most distinguished regard, that I have the honor to be, etc.,

ROSENCRONE.

MCXC

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 14 July, 1783

SIR:—I have the honor to communicate to your Excellency, by order of Congress, their resolution of the 2d May. It will explain itself; and I can add no arguments to enforce the request it contains, which I have not already urged with an importunity that nothing but a sense of duty could oblige me to use, when I see so clearly that it is painful to you as well as to me. I confide also much more in the representation M. de la Luzerne has probably made to you of the affair. I will only say that from a perfect knowledge I have of their present situation, no favor of the kind from his Majesty could ever be more essentially serviceable to the United States, or make a more lasting impression.

I send withal an address the Congress has just made to the several States, wherein you will see the steps they are taking to procure the necessary funds for answering all engagements, in which I have no

doubt they will succeed. Your Excellency will also see there the manner in which I have written on the subject; and you will find that the contract of July last was ratified, and with expressions of gratitude, in January last, though the original ratification is not yet come to hand. With great respect, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCXCI

FROM GIACOMO F. CROCCO

CADIZ, 15 July, 1783.

SIR:—His Imperial Majesty, the Emperor of Morocco, did me the honor to appoint me to be the bearer of his answer to the United Provinces of North America, with which he is willing to sign a treaty of peace and commerce, and in consequence has already given orders to his captains of men-of-war not to molest on the open seas the American vessels, which agreeable news I have already given to Mr. Richard Harrison. According to my instructions, I am to accompany to the court of Morocco the ambassador that will be appointed to conclude the treaty of peace. I presume that your Excellency is already acquainted, that the travelling expenses and other charges of ambassadors, or envoys, sent to Europe by the Emperor of Morocco, are to be paid by the court, or republic, that demands his friendship. In a few days I intend to set out for Madrid, where I will remain till I receive your Excellency's answer to this letter, directed to William Carmichael,

the United States *Chargé d'Affaires* at the Court of Spain, who, I make no doubt, will receive orders to supply me with the money I may want on the occasion.

As soon as I arrive at Paris, I shall have the satisfaction to entertain at large your Excellency on the present negotiation, not doubting it will soon be concluded to the advantage of both courts. In the meantime I remain, most truly, sir, etc.,

GIACOMO FRANCESCO CROCCO.

P. S.—I was obliged to call on a friend to write you this letter in English, otherwise I could only do it in the Italian language.

MCXCII

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON

PASSY, 22 July, 1783

SIR:—You have complained, sometimes with reason, of not hearing from your foreign ministers; we have had cause to make the same complaint, six full months having intervened between the latest date of your preceding letters and the receipt of those by Captain Barney. During all this time we were ignorant of the reception of the provisional treaty and the sentiments of Congress upon it, which, if we had received sooner, might have forwarded the proceedings on the definitive treaty, and, perhaps, brought them to a conclusion at a time more favorable than the present. But these occasional interruptions of correspondence are the inevitable

consequences of a state of war and of such remote situations. Barney had a short passage, and arrived some days before Colonel Ogden, who also brought despatches from you, all of which are come safe to hand. We, the Commissioners, have in our joint capacity written a letter to you, which you will receive with this.

I shall now answer yours of March the 26th, May the 9th, and May the 31st.¹ It gave me great pleasure to learn by the first that the news of peace diffused general satisfaction. I will not now take it upon me to justify the apparent reserve, respecting this court, at the signature, which you disapprove. We have touched upon it in our general letter.² I do not see, however, that they have much reason to complain of that transaction. Nothing was stipulated to their prejudice, and none of the stipulations were to have force but by a subsequent act of their own. I suppose, indeed, that they have not complained of it, or you would have sent us a copy of the complaint, that we might have answered it. I long since satisfied Count de Vergennes about it here. We did what appeared to all of us best at the time, and if we have done wrong, the Congress will do right, after hearing us, to censure us. Their nomination of five persons to the service seems to mark that they had some dependence on our joint judgment, since one alone could have made a treaty by direction of the French ministry as well as twenty.

I will only add that, with respect to myself,

¹ See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol IV, pp 84, 107, 109.

² See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. X., p. 187.

neither the letter from M. de Marbois, handed us through the British negotiators (a suspicious channel), nor the conversations respecting the fishery, the boundaries, the royalists, etc., recommending moderation in our demands, are of weight sufficient in my mind to fix an opinion that this court wished to restrain us in obtaining any degree of advantage we could prevail on our enemies to accord; since those discourses are fairly resolvable, by supposing a very natural apprehension that we, relying too much on the ability of France to continue the war in our favor, and supply us constantly with money, might insist on more advantages than the English would be willing to grant, and thereby lose the opportunity of making peace, so necessary to all our friends.

I ought not, however, to conceal from you that one of my colleagues is of a very different opinion from me in these matters. He thinks the French minister one of the greatest enemies of our country, that he would have straightened our boundaries to prevent the growth of our people: contracted our fishery, to obstruct the increase of our seamen, and retained the royalists among us, to keep us divided; that he privately opposes all our negotiations with foreign courts, and afforded us during the war the assistance we received only to keep it alive, that we might be so much the more weakened by it; that to think of gratitude to France is the greatest of follies, and that to be influenced by it would ruin us. He makes no secret of his having these opinions, expresses them publicly, sometimes in presence of

the English ministers, and speaks of hundreds of instances which he could produce in proof of them. None, however, have yet appeared to me, unless the conversations and letter above mentioned are reckoned such.

If I were not convinced of the real inability of this court to furnish the further supplies we asked, I should suspect these discourses of a person in his station might have influenced the refusal, but I think they have gone no further than to occasion a suspicion that we have a considerable party of Anti-gallicans in America who are not Tories, and consequently to produce some doubts of the continuance of our friendship. As such doubts may hereafter have a bad effect, I think we cannot take too much care to remove them, and it is therefore I write this, to put you on your guard (believing it my duty, though I know that I hazard by it a mortal enmity), and to caution you respecting the insinuations of this gentleman against this court, and the instances he supposes of their ill-will to us, which I take to be as imaginary as I know his fancies to be, that Count de Vergennes and myself are continually plotting against him, and employing the news-writers of Europe to depreciate his character, etc. But as Shakespeare says: "Trifles light as air," etc. I am persuaded, however, that he means well for his country, is always an honest man, often a wise one, but sometimes, and in some things, absolutely out of his senses.

When the commercial article, mentioned in yours of the 26th, was struck out of our proposed prelimin-

aries by the British ministry, the reason given was that sundry acts of Parliament still in force were against it, and must be first repealed, which I believe was really their intention, and sundry bills were accordingly brought in for that purpose; but new ministers with different principles succeeding, a commercial proclamation totally different from those bills has lately appeared. I send enclosed a copy of it. We shall try what can be done in the definitive treaty towards setting aside that proclamation; but if it should be persisted in, it will then be a matter worthy the attentive discussion of Congress, whether it will be most prudent to retort with a similar regulation in order to force its appeal (which may possibly tend to bring on another quarrel), or to let it pass without notice, and leave it to its own inconvenience, or rather impracticability, in the execution, and to the complaints of the West India planters, who must all pay much dearer for our produce under those restrictions.

I am not enough master of the course of our commerce to give an opinion on this particular question, and it does not behove me to do it; yet I have seen so much embarrassment and so little advantage in all the restraining and compulsive systems, that I feel myself strongly inclined to believe that a state which leaves all her ports open to all the world upon equal terms will by that means have foreign commodities cheaper, sell its own productions dearer, and be, on the whole, the most prosperous. I have heard some merchants say that there is ten per cent. difference between *Will you buy?* and *Will you sell?* When

foreigners bring us their goods, they want to part with them speedily that they may purchase their cargoes and despatch their ships, which are at constant charges in our ports. We have then the advantage of their *Will you buy?* And when they demand our produce we have the advantage of their *Will you sell?* And the concurring demands of a number also contribute to raise our prices. Thus both those questions are in our favor at home, against us abroad.

The employing, however, of our own ships, and raising a breed of seamen among us, though it should not be a matter of so much private profit as some imagine, is nevertheless of political importance, and must have weight in considering this subject.

The judgment you make of the conduct of France in the peace, and the greater glory acquired by her moderation than even by her arms, appears to me perfectly just. The character of this court and nation seems of late years to be considerably changed. The ideas of aggrandizement by conquest are out of fashion, and those of commerce are more enlightened and more generous than heretofore. We shall soon, I believe, feel something of this in our being admitted to a greater freedom of trade with their islands. The wise here think France great enough, and its ambition at present seems to be only that of justice and magnanimity towards other nations, fidelity and utility to its allies.

The ambassador at Portugal was much pleased with the proceedings relating to their vessel, which you sent me, and assures me they will have a good

effect at his court. He appears extremely desirous of a treaty with our States. I have accordingly proposed to him the plan of one (nearly the same with that sent me for Sweden), and after my agreeing to some alterations, he has sent it to his court for approbation. He told me at Versailles last Tuesday that he expected its return to him on Saturday next, and anxiously desired that I would not despatch our packet without it, that Congress might consider it, and, if approved, send a commission to me or some other minister to sign it.

I venture to go thus far in treating, on the authority only of a kind of general power, given formerly by a resolution of Congress to Messrs. Franklin, Deane, and Lee; but a special commission seems more proper to complete a treaty, and more agreeable to the usual form of such business.

I am in just the same situation with Denmark; that court, by its minister here, has desired a treaty with us. I have proposed a plan formed on that sent me for Sweden; it had been under consideration some time at Copenhagen, and is expected here this week, so that I may possibly send that also by this conveyance. You will have seen by my letter to the Danish Prime Minister that I did not forget the affair of the prizes. What I then wrote produced a verbal offer made me here of ten thousand pounds sterling, proposed to be given by his Majesty to the captors, if I would accept it as a full discharge of our demand. I could not do this, I said, because it was not more than a fifth part of the estimated value. In answer I was told that the estimation was probably

extravagant, that it would be difficult to come at the knowledge of their true value, and that whatever they might be worth in themselves, they should not be estimated as of such value to us when at Bergen, since the English probably watched them, and might have retaken them in their way to America; at least, they were at the common risk of the seas and enemies, and the insurance was a considerable drawback; that this sum might be considered as so much saved for us by the king's interference; for that, if the English claimants had been suffered to carry the cause into the common courts, they must have recovered the prizes by the laws of Denmark; it was added that the king's honor was concerned, that he sincerely desired our friendship, but he would avoid, by giving this sum in the form of a present to the captors, the appearance of its being exacted from him as the reparation of an injury, when it was really intended rather as a proof of his strong disposition to cultivate a good understanding with us.

I replied that the value might possibly be exaggerated, but that we did not desire more than should be found just on inquiry, and that it was not difficult to learn from London what sums were insured upon the ships and cargoes, which would be some guide; and that a reasonable abatement might be made for the risk, but that the Congress could not, in justice to their mariners, deprive them of any part that was truly due to those brave men, whatever abatement they might think fit to make (as a mark of their regard for the king's friendship) of the part belonging to the public; that I had, however, no instruc-

tions or authority to make any abatement of any kind, and could therefore only acquaint Congress with the offer, and the reasons that accompanied it, which I promised to state fully and candidly (as I have now done), and attend their orders; desiring only that it might be observed we had presented our complaint with decency, that we had charged no fault on the Danish government but what might arise from inattention or precipitancy, and that we had intimated no resentment, but had waited, with patience and respect, the king's determination, confiding that he would follow the equitable disposition of his own breast by doing us justice as soon as he could do it with conveniency; that the best and wisest princes sometimes erred; that it belonged to the condition of man, and was therefore inevitable, and that the true honor in such cases consisted, not in disowning or hiding the error, but in making ample reparation; that though I could not accept what was offered on the terms proposed, our treaty might go on, and its articles be prepared and considered, and in the meantime I hoped his Danish Majesty would reconsider the offer and make it more adequate to the loss we had sustained. Thus that matter rests; but I hourly expect to hear further, and perhaps may have more to say on it before the ship's departure.

I shall be glad to have the proceedings you mention respecting the brig *Providentia*. I hope the equity and justice of our admiralty courts respecting the property of strangers will always maintain their reputation; and I wish particularly to cultivate the disposition of friendship towards us, apparent in the

late proceedings of Denmark, as the Danish islands may be of use to our West India commerce, while the English impolitic restraints continue.

The Elector of Saxony, as I understand from his minister here, has thoughts of sending one to Congress, and proposing a treaty of commerce and amity with us. Prussia has likewise an inclination to share in a trade with America, and the minister of that court, though he has not directly proposed a treaty, has given me a packet of lists of the several sorts of merchandise they can furnish us with, which he requests me to send to America for the information of our merchants.

I have received no answer yet from Congress to my request of being dismissed from their service. They should, methinks, reflect that if they continue me here the faults I may henceforth commit, through the infirmities of age, will be rather theirs than mine. I am glad my Journal afforded you any pleasure. I will, as you desire, endeavor to continue it. I thank you for the pamphlet; it contains a great deal of information respecting our finances. We shall, as you advise, avoid publishing it. But I see they are publishing it in the English papers. I was glad I had a copy authenticated by the signature of Secretary Thomson, by which I could assure Count de Vergennes that the money contract I had made with him was ratified by Congress, he having just before expressed some uneasiness to me at its being so long neglected. I find it was ratified soon after it was received, but the ratification, except in that pamphlet, has not yet come to hand. I have done my best to

procure the further loan directed by the resolution of Congress. It was not possible. I have written on that matter to Mr. Morris. I wish the rest of the estimates of losses and mischiefs were come to hand; they would still be of use.

Mr. Barclay has in his hands the affair of the *Alliance* and *Bonhomme Richard*. I will afford him all the assistance in my power, but it is a very perplexed business. That expedition, though for particular reasons under American commissions and colors, was carried on at the king's expense, and under his orders, M. de Chaumont was the agent appointed by the Minister of Marine to make the outfit. He was also chosen by all the captains of the squadron, as appears by an instrument under their hands, to be their agent, receive, sell, and divide prizes, etc. The crown bought two of them at public sale, and the money, I understand, is lodged in the hands of a responsible person at L'Orient. M. de Chaumont says he has given in his accounts to the Marine, and that he has no more to do with the affair, except to receive a balance due to him. That account, however, is, I believe, unsettled, and the absence of some of the captains is said to make another difficulty, which retards the completion of the business. I never paid nor received any thing relating to that expedition, nor had any other concern in it than barely ordering the *Alliance* to join the squadron, at M. de Sartine's request. I know not whether the other captains will not claim a share in what we may obtain from Denmark, though the prizes were made by the *Alliance* when separate from the squadron. If so, that is

another difficulty in the way of making abatement in our demand without their consent.

I am sorry to find that you have thoughts of quitting the service. I do not think your place can be easily well supplied. You mention that an entire new arrangement, with respect to foreign affairs, is under consideration. I wish to know whether any notice is likely to be taken in it of my grandson. He has now gone through an apprenticeship of near seven years in the ministerial business, and is very capable of serving the States in that line, as possessing all the requisites of knowledge, zeal, activity, language, and address. He is well liked here, and Count de Vergennes has expressed to me in warm terms his very good opinion of him. The late Swedish ambassador, Count de Krutz, who has gone home to be Prime Minister, desired I would endeavor to procure his being sent to Sweden, with a public character, assuring me that he should be glad to receive him there as our minister, and that he knew it would be pleasing to the king. The present Swedish ambassador has also proposed the same thing to me, as you will see by a letter of his, which I enclose. One of the Danish ministers, M. Walterstorf, who will probably be sent in a public character to Congress, has also expressed his wish that my grandson may be sent to Denmark. But it is not my custom to solicit employments for myself or any of my family, and I shall not do it in this case. I only hope that if he is not to be employed in your new arrangement, I may be informed of it as soon as possible, that, while I have strength left for it, I

may accompany him in a tour to Italy, returning through Germany, which I think he may make to more advantage with me than alone, and which I have long promised to afford him as a reward for his faithful service and his tender filial attachment to me.

July 25th.—While I was writing the above, M. Walterstorf came in and delivered me a packet from M. Rosencrone, the Danish Prime Minister, containing the project of the treaty with some proposed alterations, and a paper of reasons in support of them. Fearing that we should not have time to copy them, I send herewith the originals, relying on his promise to furnish me with copies in a few days. He seemed to think that the interest of the merchants is concerned in the immediate conclusion of the treaty, that they may form their plans of commerce, and wished to know whether I did not think my general power, above mentioned, sufficient for that purpose. I told him I thought a particular commission more agreeable to the forms; but, if his Danish Majesty would be content for the present with the general authority, formerly given to me, I believed I might venture to act upon it, reserving, by a separate article, to Congress the power of shortening the term, in case any part of the treaty should not be to their mind, unless the alteration of such part should hereafter be agreed on.

The Prince de Deux-Ponts was lately at Paris, and applied to me for information respecting a commerce which is desired between the Electorate of Bavaria and America. I have it also from a good hand at

the court of Vienna, that the Emperor is desirous of establishing a commerce with us from Trieste as well as Flanders, and would make a treaty with us, if proposed to him. Since our trade is laid open, and no longer a monopoly to England, all Europe seem desirous of sharing in it, and for that purpose to cultivate our friendship. That it may be better known everywhere what sort of people and what kind of government they will have to treat with, I prevailed with our friend, the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, to translate our book of Constitutions into French, and I presented copies to all the foreign ministers. I send you one herewith. They are much admired by the politicians here, and it is thought will induce considerable emigrations of substantial people from different parts of Europe to America. It is particularly a matter of wonder that, in the midst of a cruel war raging in the bowels of our country, our sages should have the firmness of mind to sit down calmly and form such complete plans of government. They add considerably to the reputation of the United States.

I have mentioned above the port of Trieste, with which we may possibly have a commerce, and I am told that many useful productions and manufactures of Hungary may be had extremely cheap there. But it becomes necessary first to consider how our Mediterranean trade is to be protected from the corsairs of Barbary. You will see by the enclosed copy of a letter I received from Algiers, the danger two of our ships escaped last winter. I think it not improbable that those rovers may be privately encouraged by the

English to fall upon us, and to prevent our interference in the carrying trade; for I have in London heard it is a maxim among the merchants, that, *if there were no Algiers, it would be worth England's while to build one.* I wonder, however, that the rest of Europe do not combine to destroy those nests and secure commerce from their future piracies.

I made the Grand Master of Malta a present of one of our medals in silver, writing him a letter, of which I enclose a copy; and I believe our people will be kindly received in his ports; but that is not sufficient; and perhaps, now we have peace, it will be proper to send ministers, with suitable presents, to establish a friendship with the Emperor of Morocco, and the other Barbary States, if possible. Mr. Jay will inform you of some steps that have been taken by a person at Alicant, without authority, towards a treaty with that Emperor. I send you herewith a few more of the above-mentioned medals, which have given great satisfaction to this court and nation. I should be glad to know how they are liked with you.

Our people, who were prisoners in England, are now all discharged. During the whole war, those who were in Forton prison, near Portsmouth, were much befriended by the constant charitable care of Mr. Wren, a Presbyterian minister there, who spared no pains to assist them in their sickness and distress, by procuring and distributing among them the contributions of good Christians, and prudently dispensing the allowance I made them, which gave him a great deal of trouble, but he went through it

cheerfully. I think some public notice should be taken of this good man. I wish the Congress would enable me to make him a present, and that some of our universities would confer upon him the degree of Doctor.¹

The Duke of Manchester, who has always been our friend in the House of Lords, is now here as ambassador from England. I dine with him to-day, 26th, and, if any thing of importance occurs, I will add it in a postscript. Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to the Congress, assure them of my most faithful services, and believe me to be, with great and sincere esteem, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCXCIII

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

M. Franklin a l'honneur d'envoyer à Monsieur le Comte de Vergennes un exemplaire des Constitutions des États Unis de l'Amérique, qu'il le prie de vouloir bien accepter.

M. Franklin prend la liberté d'envoyer en même temps ceux destinés pour le Roi et la Famille Royale; et il prie Monsieur le Comte de Vergennes de vouloir

¹ This suggestion was not disregarded. Congress passed a vote of thanks for his humane and benevolent attention to the American prisoners, which was conveyed to him in a letter from the President. The degree of Doctor in Divinity was also conferred upon him by the College at Princeton, in New Jersey.

Dr Wren died at Portsmouth, on the 30th of October, 1787, at the age of sixty-three. An obituary notice of him may be found in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for November in that year.

bien les faire parvenir à leur destination, suivant la forme qui lui paroitra convenable.

À PASSY ce 24 Juillet, 1783.

MCXCIV

TO SIR JOSEPH BANKS

PASSY, 27 July, 1783

DEAR SIR:—I received your very kind letter by Dr. Blagden, and esteem myself much honored by your friendly remembrance. I have been too much and too closely engaged in public affairs since his being here, to enjoy all the benefit of his conversation you were so good as to intend me. I hope soon to have more leisure, and to spend a part of it in those studies that are much more agreeable to me than political operations.

I join with you most cordially in rejoicing at the return of peace. I hope it will be lasting, and that mankind will at length, as they call themselves reasonable creatures, have reason and sense enough to settle their differences without cutting throats; for, in my opinion, *there never was a good war or a bad peace*. What vast additions to the conveniences and comforts of living might mankind have acquired, if the money spent in wars had been employed in works of public utility! What an extension of agriculture, even to the tops of our mountains; what rivers rendered navigable or joined by canals; what bridges, aqueducts, new roads, and other public works,

edifices, and improvements, rendering England a complete paradise, might have been obtained by spending those millions in doing good, which in the last war have been spent in doing mischief; in bringing misery into thousands of families, and destroying the lives of so many thousands of working people, who might have performed the useful labor!

I am pleased with the late astronomical discoveries made by our society.¹ Furnished as all Europe now is with academies of science, with nice instruments and the spirit of experiment, the progress of human knowledge will be rapid, and discoveries made, of which we have at present no conception. I begin to be almost sorry I was born so soon, since I cannot have the happiness of knowing what will be known one hundred years hence.

I wish continued success to the labors of the Royal Society, and that you may long adorn their chair; being, with the highest esteem, dear sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S.—Dr. Blagden will acquaint you with the experiment of a vast globe sent up into the air, much talked of here, and which, if prosecuted, may furnish means of new knowledge.

MCXCV

FROM THE POPE'S NUNCIO

28 July, 1783.

The Apostolical Nuncio has the honor to send Mr. Franklin the enclosed note, which he requests he

¹ The Royal Society of London.

will be pleased to forward to the Congress of the United States of North America, and support it with his credit.

Note

Before the Revolution, which has just been completed in North America, the Catholics and missionaries of those provinces depended, as to their spiritual concerns, on the Apostolical Vicar, resident in London. It is well known that this arrangement can no longer exist; but, as it is essential that the Catholic subjects of the United States should have an ecclesiastic to govern them in their religious concerns, the congregation *de Propagandâ Fide* existing at Rome, for the establishment and conservation of missions, has come to the determination of proposing to Congress to establish in some city of the United States of North America, one of their Catholic subjects, with the powers of Apostolical Vicar, and in the character of Bishop, or simply in the quality of Apostolical Prefect.

The establishment of an Apostolical Vicar-Bishop appears the most eligible, the more so as the Catholic subjects of the United States would find themselves in a situation to receive confirmation and orders in their own country, without being obliged to go for that purpose to the country of a foreign power. And as it might sometimes happen that among the subjects of the United States there might be no person in a situation to be charged with the spiritual government, either as Bishop or Apostolical Prefect, it would be necessary in such circumstances, that

Congress should consent to choose him from among the subjects of a foreign nation the most friendly to the United States.

MCXCVI

FROM B. VAUGHAN

LONDON, 8 August, 1783.

MY DEAREST SIR:—I beg to introduce to your kind regards one of my best respected friends, Mr. Dugald Stewart, who, though as yet little known out of Scotland, is one of the best known men in it. He stands in the very first class of their mathematicians and literary men. He has twice, at a day's warning taken up Dr. Adam Ferguson's lectures in moral philosophy, and twice completely excelled him in the opinion of every one, as was proved in particular by the attendance he had while he lectured. Perhaps you may remember his father, who lectured at Edinburgh in mathematics, and wrote a treatise on the sun's distance from us, as deducible from the theory of gravity. It is very poor compliment to Mr. Stewart to say that, in science, it is the father who is really the child.

My friend travels with Lord Ancram, the son of the Marquis of Lothian, whom he represents to me as a pretty and very amiable young man. I beg you will extend your notice to him also.

I have extreme confidence in begging your attention to Mr. Stewart, because I am sure it is in his power to repay you by the information he can give you of the literary characters in his country, and the

objects they are pursuing. He is, however, very diffident, and is very fearful of betraying himself upon subjects which he is not master of, in which list for the present *he* reckons mathematics, and is therefore averse to meeting M. d'Alembert on the subject, though he wants to see him. He is not strong in natural philosophy, but he understands every thing in it. He burns to see you as its present father; and, as at least half the time I spent alone with him in Scotland was employed in conversing about you, I believe he would not think he had been out of his country unless he was allowed to see you at Paris.

I have no news which I have the courage to write you. The way things go on will have sufficiently explained some of the reasons of my past silence. At present, however, there is no news which you are not at least as well acquainted with as myself, were I inclined to go into it. I think the Nation would in time open its eyes about improvements in commerce and peace, if pains were taken with them, and the ministry were as much in earnest as the last on this point.

Please to remember me very affectionately to Mr. Franklin, and for yourself, believe me, my dearest sir, your ever respectful (devoted, grateful) and affectionate humble servant,

BENJA. VAUGHAN.

MCXCVII

WM. TEMPLE FRANKLIN TO M. DE RAYNEVAL

Mr. Franklin, junior, presents his respectful compliments to his Excellency, Count de Vergennes, and

has the honor of sending to him enclosed the petition of Mr. Williams, backed by several of his creditors; the Count desired to have it.

Mr. Franklin hopes no obstacle will now arise to prevent the immediate compliance with a request so much desired by all parties.

PASSY, 15 August, 1783.

MCXCVIII

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 16 August, 1783

SIR:—I have the honor to inform your Excellency that the English ministry do not agree to any of the propositions that have been made, either by us or by their minister here; and they have sent over a plan for the definitive treaty, which consists merely of the preliminaries formerly signed, with a short introductory paragraph, and another at the conclusion, confirming and establishing the said preliminary articles. My colleagues seem inclined to sign this with Mr. Hartley, and so to finish the affair. I am, with respect, sir, your Excellency's, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCXCIX

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 24 August, 1783

SIR:—Mr. Harrison, an American merchant, who will have the honor of presenting this to your

Excellency, is connected in the house of Grubb & Co., at Nantes, who have sent him to Paris on business similar to that of Mr. Carnes.

He is well recommended to me as a worthy young man, and I cannot but wish your Excellency to give him a favorable hearing.

With great respect, I have the honor to be, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCC

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 24 August, 1783

SIR:—Mr. Carnes, an American merchant settled at Nantes, who has already presented your Excellency with a petition requesting *un arrêt de surseance*, informs me that it cannot be complied with unless he first obtains the consentment of a third of his creditors; that in order to do this his presence is necessary at Nantes, but that his liberty will be in danger, if he has not a personal security from government. I therefore take the liberty of requesting your Excellency to afford him a *sauf conduite* till he can obtain the consentment of the majority of his creditors to his being favored with *lettres de surseance*. I have the honor to be, with great respect, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCI

WM. TEMPLE FRANKLIN TO M. DE RAYNEVAL

PASSY, 25 August, 1783.

DEAR SIR:—My grandfather received duly the letter you honored him with on the 23d instant, accompanying our first project for the definitive treaty, and a receipt for the gravel. He is infinitely sensible of your kindness and attention, and directs me to make you his warmest acknowledgments, which I do, sir, as well for him as for myself. His gravel has now turned into the gout, which prevents his appearing at court to-day as he intended, and deprives him of the satisfaction of thanking you in person for your very friendly attention. He desires you will be so good as to inform the Count de Vergennes of the cause of his absence.

Permit me, sir, at the same time, to request you would lay before his Excellency the enclosed letter from Mr. Williams, which I have just received enclosed in one to me, expressing the greatest anxiety lest he should not obtain his new *arrêt de surseance* before the expiration of the old one. It is now the 25th, and his *arrêt* expires on the 6th of next month. You are so obliging as to say that the affair will come before the council on Friday next, the 29th instant. But will the remaining eight days be sufficient to have the *arrêt* made out, pass through the several offices, and to get it in time to Nantes? I beg, sir, you will take this into consideration, and endeavor, if possible, to procure a more speedy determination. You will render a pleasing service to

a worthy but unfortunate man, and you will infinitely oblige, dear sir, your affectionate and most obedient, humble servant,

W. T. FRANKLIN.

MCCII

FROM M. DE RAYNEVAL

VERSAILLES, 29 August, 1783

SIR:—I have informed Count de Vergennes of the difficulty which Mr. Hartley has made to signing at Versailles; and this minister has directed me to say that nothing ought to prevent your signing at Paris on Wednesday next, the day proposed for the signature of the other treaties; but I request you to fix the hour with Mr. Hartley at nine o'clock in the morning, and to send here an express immediately after your signature is completed.

M. de Vergennes is desirous of being informed of the completion of your labors at the same time with his own. You receive for Wednesday a note of invitation, as well as for your colleagues and Mr. Hartley; I presume that the latter will make no difficulty. I have the honor to be, sir, with perfect consideration, etc.,

DE RAYNEVAL.

MCCIII

TO SIR JOSEPH BANKS ¹

PASSY, 30 August, 1783.

SIR:—On Wednesday, the 27th instant, the new aërostatic experiment, invented by Messrs. Montgol-

¹On the 5th of June, 1783, the brothers Montgolfier, sons of Peter Montgolfier, a celebrated manufacturer of paper at Annonay, a town

fier, of Annonay, was repeated by M. Charles, Professor of Experimental Philosophy at Paris.

A hollow globe, twelve feet diameter, was formed of what is called in England oiled silk, here *taffetas gommé*, the silk being impregnated with a solution of gum elastic in linseed oil, as is said. The parts were sewed together while wet with the gum, and some of it was afterwards passed over the seams, to render it as tight as possible.

It was afterwards filled with the inflammable air that is produced by pouring oil of vitriol upon filings

about forty miles from Lyons, made the experiment which resulted in the discovery of the balloon. A linen globe, of 105 feet in circumference, was inflated over a fire fed with small bundles of chopped straw, and when released rapidly rose to a great height, and descended, at the expiration of ten minutes, at a distance from the place of its departure of about a mile and a half.

The news of this experiment spread rapidly over Europe, and it attracted so much attention at Paris that M. de Faujas de Saint Fond, a naturalist, set on foot a subscription for meeting the expense of another experiment. The balloon this time was constructed by two brothers of the name of Robert, under the superintendence of a M. Charles, professor of natural philosophy in Paris and subsequently a member of the Academy of Sciences. The filling of the balloon, which was made of thin silk varnished with a solution of elastic gum, and was about thirteen feet in diameter, was commenced on the 23d of August, 1783, in the Place des Victoires. The hydrogen gas, which was used instead of the chopped straw of the Montgolfiers, was obtained by the action of dilute sulphuric acid upon iron filings, and was introduced through leaden pipes; but as the gas was not passed through cold water great difficulty was experienced in filling the balloon completely, and the crowd was so great that it became necessary on the 26th to remove the balloon to the Champs de Mars, which was done secretly in the middle of the night to avoid the crowd. On the following day, the 27th, at five o'clock in the afternoon, the balloon was liberated in the presence of an immense concourse of people, among whom was Dr. Franklin. His observations are recorded in this letter to Sir Joseph Banks, the President of the Royal Society, and was more complete than any other account of this experiment of so early a date.—EDITOR.

of iron, when it was found to have a tendency upwards so strong as to be capable of lifting a weight, of thirty-nine pounds, exclusive of its own weight, which was twenty-five pounds, and the weight of the air contained.

It was brought early in the morning to the Champ de Mars, a field in which reviews are sometimes made, lying between the military school and the river. There it was held down by a cord till five in the afternoon, when it was to be let loose. Care was taken, before the hour, to replace what portion had been lost of the inflammable air, or of its force, by injecting more.

It is supposed that not less than five thousand people were assembled to see the experiment; the Champ de Mars being surrounded by multitudes, and vast numbers on the opposite side of the river.

At five o'clock notice was given to the spectators, by the firing of two cannon, that the cord was about to be cut. And presently the globe was seen to rise, and that as fast as a body of twelve feet diameter, with a force only of thirty-nine pounds, could be supposed to move the resisting air out of its way. There was some wind, but not very strong. A little rain had wet it, so that it shone, and made an agreeable appearance. It diminished in apparent magnitude as it rose, till it entered the clouds, when it seemed to me scarce bigger than an orange, and soon after became invisible, the clouds concealing it.

The multitude separated, all well satisfied and delighted with the success of the experiment, and amusing one another with discourses of the various

uses it may possibly be applied to, among which many were very extravagant. But possibly it may pave the way to some discoveries in natural philosophy of which at present we have no conception.

A note secured from the weather had been affixed to the globe, signifying the time and place of its departure, and praying those who might happen to find it to send an account of its state to certain persons at Paris. No news was heard of it till the next day, when information was received that it fell, a little after six o'clock, at Gonesse, a place about four leagues distant, and that it was rent open, and some say had ice in it. It is supposed to have burst by the elasticity of the contained air when no longer compressed by so heavy an atmosphere.

One of thirty-eight feet diameter is preparing by M. Montgolfier himself, at the expense of the Academy, which is to go up in a few days. I am told it is constructed of linen and paper, and is to be filled with a different air, not yet made public, but cheaper than that produced by the oil of vitriol, of which 200 Paris pints were consumed in filling the other.

It is said that for some days after its being filled, the ball was found to lose an eighth part of its force of levity in twenty-four hours. Whether this was from imperfection in the tightness of the ball or a change in the nature of the air, experiments may easily discover.

I thought it my duty, sir, to send an early account of this extraordinary fact to the Society which does me the honor to reckon me among its members, and I will endeavor to make it more perfect as I receive

further information. With great respect, I am, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.¹

P. S.—Since writing the above, I am favored with your kind letter of the 25th. I am much obliged to you for the care you have taken to forward the *Transactions*, as well as to the Council for so readily ordering them on application. Please to accept and present my thanks.

I just now learn that some observers say the ball

¹ To this Sir Joseph wrote the following reply

“SOHO SQUARE, 13 Sept., 1783.

“DEAR SIR —The having it in my power to answer with precision the numerous questions which are asked me by all sorts of people concerning the aerostatic experiment, which, such as they may be, are suggested by every newspaper now printed here, and considered as a part of my duty to answer, is an obligation for which I am indebted to you and an obligation of no small extent. I lament that the vacation of the Royal Society will not permit me to lay your paper before them as a body immediately, but it shall be the first thing they see when we meet again, as the conciseness and intelligence with which it is drawn up preclude the hopes of any thing more satisfactory being received.

“Most agreeable are the hopes you give me of continuing to communicate on this most interesting subject. I consider the present day, which has opened a road into the air, as an epoch from whence a rapid increase of the stock of human knowledge must take its date; and that it will have an immediate effect upon the concerns of mankind, greater than any thing since the invention of shipping, which opened our way upon the face of the water from land to land. If the rough effort, which has been made, admits of the improvement that other sciences have received, we shall see it used as a counterpoise to absolute gravity, and a broad-wheeled wagon travelling with two only, instead of eight horses, the breed of that rival animal in course being diminished, and the human species increased in proportion.

“I have thought, as soon as I return from my present banishment, of constructing one and sending it up for the purpose of an electrical kite, a use to which it seems particularly adapted. Be pleased to direct your favors to Soho Square; they are sent to me without delay wherever I am. Believe me, your obliged, etc ,

“JOSEPH BANKS.”

was one hundred and fifty seconds in rising, from the cutting of the cords till hid in the clouds; that its height was then about five hundred toises, but being moved out of the perpendicular by the wind, it had made a slant so as to form a triangle, whose base on the earth was about two hundred toises. It is said the country people who saw it fall were frightened, conceived from its bounding a little when it touched the ground that there was some living animal in it, and attacked it with stones and knives, so that it was much mangled, but it is now brought to town and will be repaired.

The great one of M. Montgolfier, is to go up, as is said, from Versailles, in about eight or ten days. It is not a globe, but of a different form, more convenient for penetrating the air. It contains fifty thousand cubic feet, and is supposed to have force of levity equal to fifteen hundred pounds' weight. A philosopher here, M. Pilatre de Trosier has seriously applied to the Academy for leave to go up with it, in order to make some experiments. He was complimented on his zeal and courage for the promotion of science, but advised to wait till the management of those balls was made by experiment more certain and safe. They say the filling of it in M. Montgolfier's way will not cost more than half a crown. One is talked of to be 110 feet diameter. Several gentlemen have ordered small ones to be made for their amusement. One has ordered four of fifteen feet diameter each, I know not with what purpose; but such is the present enthusiasm for promoting and improving this discovery, that probably we shall soon

make considerable progress in the art of constructing and using the machines.

Among the pleasantries conversation produces on this subject, some suppose flying to be now invented, and that since men may be supported in the air, nothing is wanted but some light handy instrument to give and direct motion. Some think progressive motion on the earth may be advanced by it, and that a running footman or a horse slung and suspended under such a globe, so as to have no more of weight pressing the earth with their feet than perhaps eight or ten pounds, might with a fair wind run in a straight line across countries as fast as that wind, and over hedges, ditches, and even waters. It has been even fancied that in time people will keep such globes anchored in the air, to which by pulleys they may draw up game to be preserved in the cool, and water to be frozen when ice is wanted; and that to get money, it will be contrived to give people an extensive view of the country, by running them up in an elbow chair a mile high for a guinea, etc., etc.

A pamphlet is printing, in which we are to have a full and perfect account of the experiments hitherto made, etc. I will send it to you. M. Montgolfier's air to fill the globe has hitherto been kept secret. Some suppose it to be only common air heated by passing through the flame of burning straw, and thereby extremely rarefied. If so, its levity will soon be diminished by condensation, when it comes into the cooler regions above.

B. FRANKLIN.

Sept. 2d.—I add this paper just now given me,
VOL. X.—II.

B. F. The print contains a view of Champ de Mars, and the ball in the air with this subscription:

“Experience de la machine aérostatique de Mrs. de Montgolfier, d’anonai en Vivarais, repetée à Paris le 27 Août. 1783 au Champ de Mars, avec un ballon de taffetas enduit de gomme elastique, de 36 pieds 6 onces de circonference. Le ballon plein d’air inflammable a eté executé par Mers, Robert, en vertu d’ une souscription nationale, sous la direction de Mr. Faujas de Saint Fond (et M. Charles). ”

N. B.—M. Charles’ name is wrote with pen, not engraved.

“Calculs du Ballon do 12 pieds de diametre enlevé le Mecredy 27 Août 1783.

Circonference du grand cercle	37 pieds.
Diametre	<u>12</u>
	74
	<u>37</u>
Surface	444
Tiers du rayon	<u>2</u>
Solidité	888 pieds cubes.
Air atm. à 12 gros le pied	<u>12</u>
	1776
	<u>888</u>
Pesanteur de l’air atm.	10,656 gros.
	26 { $\frac{8}{1332}$ onces / $\frac{16}{52}$
	25, $\frac{6}{83}$ lb , 4 onces.

“L’air atmospherique dont le ballon occupait la place, pesant 83 lb. 4 onces et sa force pour s’élever etant de 40 lb. il falloit que son enveloppe et l’air

inflammable qu'elle contenoit ne pesassent que 42 lb. 4 onces. L'enveloppe en pesoit 25, reste pour l'air inflammable 18 lb. 4 onces.

“En supposant le ballon de 6 pieds de diametre, son volume etant le 8me, du 1er le poids de l'air dont il occupoit la place seroit le 8me, de 83 lb., 4 onces = 10 lb., 6 onces, 4 gros. L'air inflammable $\frac{1}{8}$ de 18 lb., 4 onces = 2 lb., 4 onces, 4 gros. L'enveloppe $\frac{1}{4}$ de 25 lb., = 6 lb., 4 onces. Les dernières valeurs reunies sont 8 lb., 8 onces, 4 gros, qui otès de 10 lb., 6 onces, 4 gros pesanteur de l'air atmospherique dont le ballon occupoit la place, laisse pour sa force d'elevation 1 lb., 14 onces.”

MCCIV

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

PASSY, 31 August, 1783.

SIR:—After a continued course of treating for nine months, the English ministry have at length come to a resolution to lay aside, for the present, all the new propositions that have been made and agreed to, their own, as well as ours; and they offer to sign again as a definitive treaty, the articles of November the 30th, 1782, the ratifications of which have already been exchanged. We have agreed to this, and on Wednesday next, the third of September, it will be signed, with all the definitive treaties, establishing a general peace, which may God long continue. I am, with great respect, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCV

TO CHARLES J. FOX

PASSY, 5 September, 1783.

SIR:—I received in its time the letter you did me the honor of writing to me by Mr. Hartley; and I cannot let him depart without expressing my satisfaction in his conduct towards us, and applauding the prudence of that choice, which sent us a man possessed of such a spirit of conciliation, and of all that frankness, sincerity, and candor which naturally produce confidence, and thereby facilitate the most difficult negotiations. Our countries are now happily at peace, on which I congratulate you most cordially; and I beg you to be assured that as long as I have any concern in public affairs I shall readily and heartily concur with you in promoting every measure that may tend to promote the common felicity. With great and sincere esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCVI

TO DAVID HARTLEY

PASSY, 6 September, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—Enclosed is my letter to Mr. Fox. I beg you would assure him that my expressions of esteem for him are not mere professions. I really think him a *great* man, and I should not think so if I did not believe he was at bottom, and would

prove himself, a *good* one. Guard him against mistaken notions of the American people. You have deceived yourselves too long with vain expectations of reaping advantage from our little discontents. We are more thoroughly an enlightened people, with respect to our political interests, than perhaps any other under heaven. Every man among us reads, and is so easy in his circumstances as to have leisure for conversations of improvement and for acquiring information. Our domestic misunderstandings, when we have them, are of small extent, though monstrously magnified by your microscopic newspapers. He who judges from them, that we are on the point of falling into anarchy, or returning to the obedience of Britain, is like one who, being shown some spots in the sun, should fancy that the whole disk would soon be overspread with them, and that there would be an end of daylight. The great body of intelligence among our people surrounds and overpowers our petty dissensions, as the sun's great mass of fire diminishes and destroys his spots. Do not, therefore, any longer delay the evacuation of New York, in the vain hope of a new revolution in your favor, if such a hope has indeed had any effect in occasioning the delay. It is now nine months since the evacuations were promised. You expect, with reason, that the people of New York should do your merchants justice in the payment of their old debts; consider the injustice you do them in keeping them so long out of their habitations, and out of their business, by which they might have been enabled to make payment.

There is no truth more clear to me than this, that the great interest of our two countries is a thorough reconciliation. Restraints on the freedom of commerce and intercourse between us can afford no advantage equivalent to the mischief they will do, by keeping up ill humor and promoting a total alienation. Let you and me, my dear friend, do our best towards advancing and securing that reconciliation. We can do nothing that will in a dying hour afford us more solid satisfaction.

I wish you a prosperous journey and a happy sight of your friends. Present my best respects to your good brother and sister, and believe me ever, with sincere and great esteem, yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCVII

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON

PASSY, 7 September, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—I received your kind letter of the ninth past. I am glad that the little books are pleasing to you and your children, and that the children improve by them.

My grandson Bache has been four years at school at Geneva, and is but lately come home to me here. I find reason to be satisfied with the improvement he has made in his learning. He translates common Latin readily into French, but his English has suffered for want of use; though I think he would readily recover it if he were awhile at your school at

Cheam, and at the same time be going on with his Latin and Greek. You were once so kind as to offer to take him under your care; would that be still convenient to you? He is docile and of gentle manners, ready to receive and follow good advice, and will set no bad example to your *other* children. He gains every day upon my affections.

I long much to see you and yours, and my other friends in England, but I have not yet determined on the journey. Our definitive treaty of peace being now signed, I have indeed less to confine me here, and might make a short excursion without much inconvenience; but short days and winter are coming on, and I think I can hardly undertake such an expedition before the spring of next year.

With regard to the future establishment of your children, which you say you want to consult me about, I am still of opinion that America will afford you more chances of doing it well than England. All the means of good education are plenty there, the general manners are simple and pure, temptations to vice and folly fewer, the profits of industry in business as great and sure as in England; and there is one advantage more, which your command of money will give you there, I mean the laying out a part of your fortune in new land, now to be had extremely cheap, but which must be increased immensely in value, before your children come of age, by the rapid population of the country. If you should arrive there while I live, you know you may depend on every assistance in my power to afford you, and I think my children will have a pleasure too

in serving their father's friend. I do not offer it as a motive that you will be much esteemed and respected there; for that you are, and must be, everywhere; but give me leave to flatter myself that my being made happier in my last years by your neighborhood and society may be some inducement to you.

I forwarded your letter to Mr. Williams. Temple is always with me, being my secretary. He presents his respects to you. I have been lately ill with a fit of the gout, if that may indeed be called a disease. I rather suspect it to be a remedy, since I always find my health and vigor of mind improved after the fit is over. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S.—You say you are a little afraid that our country is spoiled. Parts of it have indeed suffered by the war, those situated near the sea; but the body of the country has not been much hurt, and the fertility of our soil, with the industry of our people, now that the commerce of all the world is open to us, will soon repair the damages received, and introduce that prosperity which we hope Providence intends for us, since it has so remarkably favored our Revolution.

MCCVIII

TO DAVID HARTLEY

PASSY, 7 September, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—Enclosed I send you an extract of a letter to me from the President of Con-

gress, in which you will observe the moderate disposition of that body towards the loyalists, with the causes of aggravation in the people's resentments against them. I am always invariably yours most sincerely,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCIX

TO JOHN JAY

PASSY, 10 September, 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 the 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 favored, 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 these important advantages.”¹

¹ This extract is from a letter written by Dr Cooper of Boston, and dated May 5, 1783. In a preceding paragraph, Dr. Cooper says: “There is a party among us disposed to avail themselves of every incident, and of all personal resentments, to weaken and divide our public counsels, and injure the alliance. Regard to the general good, as well as private and the most constant friendship, oblige me to state things as they are.” Then comes the extract in the text. Dr. Cooper adds “It has also been said, from the same quarter, that the court of France secretly traversed Mr. Adams’ views in Holland for obtaining from the United Provinces an acknowledgment of our independence;

It is not my purpose to dispute any share of the honor 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

and that the same part has been acted in Spain and Russia. All these things are incredible to me; and, though they make some impression at present, truth is great and will prevail. Care, I hope, will be taken both at Congress and in Europe, as far as public prudence will permit, to state, as soon as may be, these matters in a just light, and to prevent the public mischiefs, as well as private injuries, that may arise from misapprehensions in matters of this moment."

A copy of the whole of this letter was sent by Dr. Franklin to Count de Vergennes, and it is now contained among the American papers in the *Archives des Affaires Etrangères* at Paris. Dr. Franklin likewise sent to Congress a copy of his correspondence with Messrs Jay and Adams on this subject. M. de la Luzerne, in writing to Count de Vergennes some months afterwards, said. "Dr. Franklin has at last aroused himself from the apathy with which till now he seems to have regarded the attacks of his colleagues. He has sent to Congress the copy of the letter, which he had written to Mr. Jay and Mr. Adams, requesting these two ministers to explain themselves respecting a report, which had gone abroad, that he did not unite in procuring for the United States admission to the fisheries, and that he was disposed to conclude a treaty of peace without securing this advantage to the Eastern States. Mr. Jay, in his letter to Dr. Franklin, renders full justice to him on this point, and affirms, in a positive manner, that he concurred with a zeal equal to his intelligence and experience in all the articles of the peace."—*Philadelphia, December 1st, 1783. MS. Letter.*

A copy of the correspondence was likewise transmitted to Dr. Cooper, but it is doubtful whether it reached him in such season as to enable him to use it for the purpose of correcting the erroneous impression that had been made in Massachusetts. Dr. Cooper died on the 29th of December, 1783.

notice, when the means of effectual vindication are at hand. You, sir, were 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 honor to be, with much esteem, etc.,¹

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCX

TO HIS EXCELLENCY, ELIAS BOUDINOT, ESQ., PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

PASSY, 10 September, 1783.

SIR:—On the 3d instant definitive treaties of peace were concluded between all the late belligerent powers, except the Dutch, who, the day before, settled and signed preliminary articles of peace with Britain.

We most sincerely and cordially congratulate Congress and our country in general on this happy event, and we hope that the same kind Providence which has led us through a rigorous war to an honorable peace will enable us to make a wise and moderate use of that inestimable blessing.

We have committed a duplicate original of the treaty to the care of Mr. Thaxter, who will go immediately to L'Orient, whence he will sail in the French packet to New York. That gentleman left

¹ A copy of the same letter was sent to Mr. Adams.

America with Mr. Adams as his private secretary, and his conduct having been perfectly satisfactory to that minister, we join in recommending him to the attention of Congress. We have ordered Mr. Grand to pay him one hundred and thirty louis d'ors, on account of the reasonable expenses to be incurred by his mission to Congress, and his journey from thence to his family at Hingham, in the Massachusetts Bay; for the disposition of this money he is to account.

The definitive treaty being in the terms of the provisional articles, and not comprehending any of the objects of our subsequent negotiations, it is proper that we give a summary account of them.

When Mr. Hartley arrived here, he brought with him only a set of instructions signed by the king. We objected to proceeding with him until he should have a commission in form. This occasioned some delay; a proper commission was, however, transmitted to him, a copy of which was shortly after sent to Mr. Livingston.

We having been instructed to obtain, if possible, an article for a direct trade to the West Indies, made to Mr. Hartley the proposition No. 1.

He approved of it greatly, and recommended it to his court, but they declined assenting to it.

Mr. Hartley then made us the proposition No. 2, but on being asked whether he was authorized to sign it in case we agreed to it, he answered in the negative. We therefore thought it improper to proceed to the consideration of it until after he should have obtained the consent of his court to it. We also desired to be informed whether his court would

or would not comprehend Ireland in their stipulations with us.

The British cabinet would not adopt Mr. Hartley's propositions, but their letters to him were calculated to inspire us with expectations that, as nothing but particular local circumstances, which would probably not be of long duration, restrained them from preferring the most liberal system of commerce with us, the ministry would take the earliest opportunity of gratifying their own wishes as well as ours on that subject.

Mr. Hartley then made us the proposition No. 3. At this time we were informed that letters for us had arrived in France from Philadelphia. We expected to receive instructions in them, and told Mr. Hartley that this expectation induced us to postpone giving him an answer for a few days.

The vessel by which we expected to receive those letters, it seems, had not brought any for us; but, at that time, information arrived from America that our ports were all opened to the British vessels. Mr. Hartley, therefore, did not think himself at liberty to proceed until after he should communicate that intelligence to his court and receive their further instructions.

Those further instructions never came, and thus our endeavors as to commercial regulations proved fruitless. We had many conferences, and received long memorials from Mr. Hartley on the subject, but his zeal for systems friendly to us constantly exceeded his authority to concert and agree to them.

During this long interval of his expecting instruc-

tions, for his expectations were permitted to exist almost to the last, we proceeded to make and receive propositions for perfecting the definitive treaty. Details of all the amendments, alterations, objections, exceptions, etc., which occurred in the course of these discussions, would be voluminous. We finally agreed that he should send to his court the project or draft of a treaty No. 4. He did so, but after much time, and when pressed by France, who insisted that we should all conclude together, he was instructed to sign a definitive treaty in the terms of the provisional articles.

Whether the British court meant to avoid a definitive treaty with us through a vain hope from the exaggerated accounts of divisions among our own people and want of authority in Congress that some resolution might soon happen in their favor, or whether their dilatory conduct was caused by the strife of the two opposite and nearly equal parties in the cabinet, is hard to decide. -

Your Excellency will observe that the treaty was signed at Paris, and not at Versailles. Mr. Hartley's letter No. 5 and our answer No. 6 will explain this. His objections, and indeed our proceedings in general, were communicated to the French minister, who was content that we should acquiesce, but desired that we would appoint the signing early in the morning, and give him an account of it at Versailles by express, for that he would not proceed to sign on the part of France till he was sure that our business was done.

The day after the signature of the treaty Mr.

Hartley wrote us a congratulatory letter No. 7, to which we returned the answer No. 8.

He is gone to England, and expects soon to return, which for our part we think uncertain. We have taken care to speak to him in strong terms on the subject of the evacuation of New York and the other important subjects proper to be mentioned to him. We think we may rely on his doing every thing in his power to influence his court to do what they ought to do; but it does not appear that they have as yet formed any settled system for their conduct relative to the United States. We cannot but think that the late and present aspect of affairs in America has had, and continues to have, an unfavorable influence, not only in Britain, but throughout Europe.

In whatever light the article respecting the Tories may be viewed in America, it is considered in Europe as very humiliating to Britain, and therefore as being one which we ought in honor to perform and fulfil with the most scrupulous regard to good faith and in a manner least offensive to the feelings of the king and court of Great Britain, who upon that point are extremely tender.

The unseasonable and unnecessary resolves of various towns on this subject, the actual expulsion of Tories from some places, and the avowed implacability of almost all who have published their sentiments about the matter, are circumstances which are construed, not only to the prejudice of our national magnanimity and good faith, but also to the prejudice of our governments.

Popular committees are considered here, as with us, in the light of substitutes to constitutional government, and as being only necessary in the interval between the removal of the former and the establishment of the present.

The Constitutions of the different States have been translated and published, and pains have been taken to lead Europe to believe that the American States not only made their own laws, but obeyed them; but the continuance of popular assemblies, convened expressly to deliberate on matters proper only for the cognizance of the different legislatures and officers of government, and their proceeding not only to ordain, but to enforce their resolutions, has exceedingly lessened the dignity of the States in the eyes of these nations.

To this we may also add that the situation of the army, the reluctance of the people to pay taxes, and the circumstances under which Congress removed from Philadelphia have diminished the admiration in which the people of America were held among the nations of Europe, and somewhat abated their ardor for forming connections with us before our affairs acquire a greater degree of order and consistence.

Permit us to observe that in our opinion the recommendation of Congress promised in the fifth article should immediately be made in the terms of it and published, and that the States should be requested to take it into consideration as soon as the evacuation by the enemy shall be completed. It is also much to be wished that the legislatures may not involve all the Tories in banishment and ruin; but

that such discriminations may be made as to entitle their decisions to the approbation of disinterested men and dispassionate posterity.

On the 7th instant we received your Excellency's letters of the 16th June last, covering a resolution of Congress of the 1st May, directing a commission to us for making a treaty of commerce, etc., with Great Britain. This intelligence arrived very opportunely to prevent the anti-American party in England from ascribing any delays on our part to motives of resentment to that country. Great Britain will send a minister to Congress as soon as Congress shall send a minister to Britain, and we think much good might result from that measure.

The information of Mr. Dumas, that we encouraged the idea of entering into engagements with the Dutch to defend the freedom of trade, was not well founded. Our sentiments on that subject exactly correspond with those of Congress, nor did we even think or pretend that we had authority to adopt any such measures.

We have reason to think that the Emperor of Russia and other commercial nations are ready to make treaties of commerce with the United States. Perhaps it might not be improper for Congress to direct that their disposition on the subject be communicated to those courts, and thereby prepare the way for such treaties.

The Emperor of Morocco has manifested a very friendly disposition towards us. He expects, and is ready to receive, a minister from us, and as he may either change his mind or may be succeeded by a

prince differently disposed, a treaty with him may be of importance. Our trade to the Mediterranean will not be inconsiderable, and the friendship of Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli may become very interesting in case the Russians should succeed in their endeavors to navigate freely into it by Constantinople. Much, we think, will depend on the success of our negotiations with England. If she could be prevailed upon to agree to a liberal system of commerce, France, and perhaps some other nations, will follow her example; but if she should prefer an extensive monopolizing plan, it is probable that her neighbors will continue to adhere to their favorite restrictions.

Were it certain that the United States could be brought to act as a nation, and would jointly and fairly conduct their commerce on principles of exact reciprocity with all nations, we think it probable that Britain would make extensive concessions. But, on the contrary, while the prospect of disunion in our councils, or want of power and energy in our executive departments exist, they will not be apprehensive of retaliation, and consequently lose their principal motive to liberality. Unless, with respect to all foreign nations and transactions, we uniformly act as an entire united nation, faithfully executing and obeying the constitutional acts of Congress on those subjects, we shall soon find ourselves in the situation in which all Europe wishes to see us, viz., as unimportant consumers of her manufactures and productions, and as useful laborers to furnish her with raw materials.

We beg leave to assure Congress that we shall apply our best endeavors to execute the new commission to their satisfaction, and punctually obey such instructions as they may be pleased to give us relative to it. Unless Congress should have nominated a secretary to that commission we shall consider ourselves at liberty to appoint one; and as we are well satisfied with the conduct of Mr. T. Franklin, the secretary to our late commission, we purpose to appoint him, leaving it to Congress to make such compensation for his services as they may judge proper.

Count de Vergennes communicated to us a proposition (viz., No. 9, herewith enclosed) for explaining the second and third articles of our treaty with France in a manner different from the sense in which we understood them. This being a matter in which we had no right to interfere, we have not expressed any opinion about it to the Count. With great respect we have the honor to be, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and humble servants,

[Signed] { JOHN ADAMS.
B. FRANKLIN.
JOHN JAY.

MCCXI

FROM JOHN JAY

PASSY, 11 September, 1783.

SIR:—I have been favored with your letter of yesterday, and will answer it explicitly. I have no reason whatever to believe that you were 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, a steady attachment to both those objects, and, in my opinion, promoted the attainment of them.

I remember that in a conversation which M. 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 perceive the least disposition in either of us to recede from our claims, or be satisfied with less than we obtained. I have the honor to be, with great respect and esteem, etc.,

JOHN JAY.

MCCXII

TO JOSIAH QUINCY

PASSY, 11 September, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—Mr. Storer told me, not long since, that you complained of my not writing to you. You had reason, for I find among your letters to me two unanswered. The truth is, I have had too much

business to do for the public, and too little help allowed me, so that it became impossible for me to keep up my private correspondences. I promised myself more leisure when the definitive treaty of peace should be concluded. But that it seems is to be followed by a treaty of commerce, which will probably take up a good deal of time, and require much attention. I seize this little interim to sit down and have a little chat with my friends in America.

I lament with you the many mischiefs, the injustice, the corruption of manners, etc., that attended a depreciating currency. It is some consolation to me, that I washed my hands of that evil by predicting it in Congress, and proposing means that would have been effectual to prevent it, if they had been adopted. Subsequent operations, that I have executed, demonstrate that my plan was practicable; but it was unfortunately rejected. Considering all our mistakes and mismanagements, it is wonderful we have finished our affairs so well, and so soon. Indeed, I am wrong in using that expression "*we* have finished our affairs so well." Our blunders have been many, and they serve to manifest the hand of Providence more clearly in our favor; so that we may much more properly say, "These are *thy* doings, O Lord, and they are marvellous in our eyes."

Mr. Storer, whom you recommended to me, is now in England. He needed none of the advice you desired me to give him. His behavior here was unexceptionable, and he gained the esteem of all that knew him.

The epitaph on my dear and much esteemed young friend,¹ is too well written to be capable of improvement by any corrections of mine. Your moderation appears in it, since the natural affection of a parent has not induced you to exaggerate his virtues. I shall always mourn his loss with you, a loss not easily made up to his country.

How differently constituted was his noble and generous mind from that of the miserable calumniators you mention. Having plenty of merit in himself, he was not jealous of the appearance of merit in others, but did justice to their characters with as much pleasure as these people do injury. It is now near two years since your friendship induced you to acquaint me with some of their accusations. I guessed easily at the quarter from whence they came; but, conscious of my innocence, and unwilling to disturb public operations by private resentment or contentions, I passed them over in silence; and I have not, till within these few days, taken the least step towards my vindication. Informed that the practice of abusing me continues, and that some heavy charges are lately made against me, respecting my conduct in the treaty, written from Paris and propagated among you, I have demanded of all my colleagues that they do me justice, and I have no doubt of receiving it from each of them. I did not think it necessary to justify myself to you by answering the calumnies you mentioned. I knew you did not believe them.

It was improbable that I should at this distance

¹ Josiah Quincy, Junior.

combine with anybody to urge the redemption of the paper on those unjust terms, having no interest in such redemption. It was impossible that I should have traded with the public money, since I had not traded with any money, either separately or jointly with any other person, directly or indirectly, to the value of a shilling since my being in France. And the fishery, which it was said I had relinquished, had not then come in question, nor had I ever dropped a syllable to that purpose in word or writing, but was always firm in this principle, that, having had a common right with the English to the fisheries while connected with that nation; and having contributed equally with our blood and treasure in conquering what had been gained from the French, we had an undoubted right, in breaking up our partnership, to a fair division. As to the two charges of age and weakness, I must confess the first, but I am not quite so clear in the latter; and perhaps my adversaries may find that they presumed a little too much upon it, when they ventured to attack me.

But enough of these petty personalities. I quit them to rejoice with you in the *peace* God has blessed us with, and in the prosperity it gives us a prospect of. The definitive treaty was signed the 3d instant. We are now friends with England and with all mankind. May we never see another war, for in my opinion *there never was a good war or a bad peace*. Adieu, and believe me ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXIII

FROM JOHN ADAMS

PARIS, 13 September, 1783.

SIR:—I have received the letter which you did me the honor to write to me on the 10th of this month, in which you say you 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 the 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 favored, 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 unnecessary for me to say any thing upon this subject, more than to quote the words which I wrote in the evening of the 30th of November, 1782, and which have been received and read in Congress, viz.: “As soon as I arrived in Paris I waited on Mr. Jay, and learned from him the rise and progress of the negotiation. Nothing that has happened since the beginning of the controversy in 1761 has ever struck me more forcibly, or affected me more intimately, than the entire coincidence of principles and opinion between him and me. In about three days I went out to Passy, and spent the evening with Dr. Franklin, and entered largely into conversation with him upon the course and present state of

our foreign affairs. I told him my opinion without reserve of the policy of this court, and of the principles, wisdom, and firmness with which Mr. Jay had conducted the negotiation in his sickness and my absence, and that I was determined to support Mr. Jay to the utmost of my power in pursuit of the same system. The Doctor heard me patiently and said nothing.

“The first conference we had afterwards with Mr. Oswald in considering one point and another, Dr. Franklin turned to Mr. Jay and said: ‘I am of your opinion, and will go on with these gentlemen without consulting this court.’ He has accordingly met us in most of our conferences, and has gone on with us in entire harmony and unanimity throughout, and has been able and useful, both by his sagacity and reputation, in the whole negotiation.”¹ I have the honor to be, very respectfully, sir,

JOHN ADAMS.

MCCXIV

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

PASSY, 13 September, 1783

SIR:—I received, a few days since, the private letter your Excellency did me the honor of writing to me of the 13th of June. I regret with you the resignation of the late secretary. Your present cares are

¹ For further information on this subject, and particularly for an account of the part taken by Dr. Franklin in the negotiation before he was joined by Mr. Jay and Mr. Adams, see the *North American Review* for January, 1830, pp. 15 *et seq*

increased by it, and it will be difficult to find a successor of equal abilities.

We found no difficulty in deciphering the resolution of Congress. The Commissioners have taken no notice of it in our public letter.

I am happy to hear that both the device and workmanship of the medal are approved with you, as they have the good fortune to be by the best judges on this side of the water. It has been esteemed a well-timed as well as a well-merited compliment here, and has its good effects. Since the two first which you mention as received, I have sent by different opportunities so many as that every member of Congress might have one. I hope they are come safe to hand by this time. I wrote a long letter to Mr. Livingston by Barney, to which I beg leave to refer, enclosing a copy.

We had, before signing the definitive treaty, received the ratification of the preliminary articles by his Britannic Majesty, exchanged with us by Mr. Hartley for that of the Congress. I send herewith a copy of the first and last clauses.

In a former letter I mentioned the volunteer proceedings of a merchant at Alicant, towards obtaining a treaty between us and the Emperor of Morocco. We have since received a letter from a person who says, as you will see by the copy enclosed, that he is sent by the Emperor to be the bearer of his answer to the United States, and that he is arrived in Spain on his way to Paris. He has not yet appeared there, and we hardly know what answer to give him. I hope the sending a minister

to that court, as recommended in my last, has been taken into consideration, or at least that some instructions respecting that nation have been sent to your minister in Spain, who is better situated than we are for such a negotiation.

The minister from Denmark often speaks to me about the proposed treaty, of which a copy went by Mr. Barney. No commission to sign it, nor any instructions from Congress relating to it, are yet arrived; and, though pressed, I have not ventured to do any thing further in the affair.

I forward herewith a letter to the Congress from the city of Hamburg.¹ I understand that a good disposition towards us prevails there, which it may be well to encourage.

No answer has yet been given me from the court of Portugal, respecting the plan of a treaty concerted between its ambassador here and me. He has been unwell and much in the country, so that I have not seen him lately. I suspect that the false or exaggerated reports of the distracted situation of our government, industriously propagated throughout Europe by our enemies, have made an impression in that kingdom to our disadvantage, and inclined them to hesitate in forming a connection with us. Questions asked me, and observations made by several of the foreign ministers here, convince me that the idle stories of our disunion, contempt of authority, refusal to pay taxes, etc.; have been too much credited, and been very injurious to our reputation.

I sent before a copy of the letter I wrote to the

¹ See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol IV, p. 88.

Grand Master of Malta, with a present of our medal. With this you will have a copy of his answer.

I send also a copy of a note I received from the Pope's Nuncio. He is very civil on all occasions, and has mentioned the possibility of an advantageous trade America might have with the Ecclesiastical State, which he says has two good ports, Civita Vecchia and ———.

This court continues favorable to us. Count de Vergennes was resolute in refusing to sign the definitive treaty with England before ours was signed. The English ministers were offended, but complied. I am convinced that court will never cease endeavoring to disunite us. We shall, I hope, be constantly on our guard against those machinations; for our safety consists in a steady adherence to our friends, and our reputation in a faithful regard to treaties, and in a grateful conduct towards our benefactors.

I send herewith sundry memorials recommended to my care by Count de Vergennes, viz., one respecting a claim of Messieurs Fosters, of Bordeaux, one of M. Pequet, and one of M. Bayard. The Congress will take such notice of them as they shall think proper. With great esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, etc.,

————— B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXV

TO DR. PRICE

PASSY, NEAR PARIS, 16 September, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—Having this opportunity by Mr. Bingham, who has the honor of being known to

you, I seize it to thank you for your excellent book, and other favors, and to let you know that I continue well, except a little gout, which perhaps is not more a disease than a remedy. Mr. Petrie informed me of your being also well with Mrs. Price lately at Brighthelmstone, which gave me great pleasure; please to present my affectionate respects to that good lady.

All the conversation here at present turns upon the balloons filled with light inflammable air, and the means of managing them, so to give men the advantage of flying. One is to be let off on Friday next at Versailles, which it is said will be able to carry up a thousand pounds' weight—I know not whether inclusive or exclusive of its own.

I have sent an account of the former to Sir Joseph Banks, our President, and shall be glad to hear if the experiment is repeated with success in England. Please to forward him the enclosed print.

Inflammable air puts me in mind of a little jocular paper I wrote some years since in ridicule of a prize question given out by a certain academy on this side the water, and I enclose it for your amusement. On second thoughts, as it is a mathematical question, and perhaps I think it more trifling than it really is, and you are a mathematician, I am afraid I have judged wrong in sending it to you. Our friend, Dr. Priestley, however, who is *apt* to give himself *airs*,¹ and has a kind of right to every thing his friends *produce* upon that subject, may perhaps like to see it, and you can send it to him without reading it.

¹ *I. e.*, fixed, deflogasticated, etc. *Sic.*

We have at length signed our preliminary articles as definitive; all the additions we have been so long discussing, being referred to a future treaty of commerce. I have now a little leisure, and long to see and be merry with the club, but I doubt I cannot undertake the journey before spring. Adieu, and believe me ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

They make small balloons now of the same materials with what is called gold-beater's leaf. Enclosed I send one, which being filled with inflammable air, by my grandson, went up, last night, to the ceiling in my chamber, and remained rolling about there for some time. Please give it also to Sir Joseph Banks. If a man should go up with one of the large ones, might there not be some mechanical contrivance to compress the globe at pleasure, and thereby incline it to descend, and let it expand when he inclines to rise again?

MCCXVI

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

PASSY, 27 September, 1783.

SIR:—Mr. Thaxter, late secretary of Mr. Adams, who is charged with all our despatches that were intended to go by the French packet boat, writes from L'Orient that, though he arrived there two days before the time appointed for her sailing, he missed reaching her by four hours; but another light

vessel was fitting, and would sail the 21st instant, in which he hoped to arrive in New York nearly as soon as the packet. We shall send duplicates by the next from hence.

In the meantime I enclose a printed copy of the definitive treaty, which I hear is ratified. Indeed, we have the ratification of the preliminaries.

Mr. Hartley, when he left us, expected to return in three weeks, in order to proceed with us in forming a treaty of commerce. The new commission that was intended for us is not yet come to hand. With great respect, I have the honor to be, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXVII

TO SIR EDWARD NEWENHAM

PASSY, 2 October, 1783.

DEAR SIR:—I have just received your very kind letter of the 16th past. I rejoice sincerely to hear of your safe return to your own country, family, and friends, and of the success of your election.

It is a pleasing reflection, arising from the contemplation of our successful struggle, and the manly, spirited, and unanimous resolves at Dungannon, that liberty, which some years since appeared in danger of extinction, is now regaining the ground she had lost; that arbitrary governments are likely to become more mild and reasonable, and to expire by degrees, giving place to more equitable forms: one of the effects this of the art of printing, which diffuses so general a light, augmenting with the

growing day, and of so penetrating a nature, that all the window-shutters which despotism and priest craft can oppose to keep it out, prove insufficient.

In answer to your question, respecting what may be necessary to fix a trade between Ireland and America, I may acquaint you between ourselves that there is some truth in the report you may have heard, of our desiring to know of Mr. Hartley whether he was empowered or instructed to include Ireland in the treaty of commerce proposed to us, and of his sending for instructions on that head, which never arrived. That treaty is yet open, may possibly be soon resumed; and it seems proper that something should be contained in it to prevent the doubts and misunderstandings that may hereafter arise on the subject, and secure to Ireland the same advantages in trade that England may obtain. You can best judge whether some law or resolution of your Parliament may not be of use towards gaining that point.

My grandson joins with me in wishes of every kind of felicity for you, Lady Newenham, and all your amiable family. God bless you, and give success to your constant endeavors for the welfare of your country. With true and great respect and esteem, I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXVIII

TO THOMAS BRAND HOLLIS

PASSY, 5 October, 1783.

SIR:—I received but lately (though sent in June) your most valuable present of the *Memoirs of*

Thomas Hollis, who was truly, as you describe him in your letter, "a good citizen of the world, and a faithful friend of America." America, too, is extremely sensible of his benevolence and great beneficence towards her, and will ever revere his memory. These volumes are a proof of what I have sometimes had occasion to say, in encouraging people to undertake difficult public services, that it is prodigious the quantity of good that may be done by one man, *if he will make a business of it*. It is equally surprising to think of the very little that is done by many; for, such is the general frivolity of employments and amusements of the rank we call *gentlemen*, that every century may have seen three successions of a set of a thousand each, in every kingdom of Europe (gentlemen, too, of equal or superior fortune), no one of which sets, in the course of their lives, has done the good effected by this man alone! Good, not only to his own nation, and to his contemporaries, but to distant countries, and to late posterity; for such must be the effect of his multiplying and distributing copies of the works of our best English writers, on subjects the most important to the welfare of society.

I knew him personally but little. I sometimes met with him at the Royal Society and the Society of Arts; but he appeared shy of my acquaintance, though he often sent me valuable presents, such as Hamilton's works,¹ Sidney's works, etc., which are now among the most precious ornaments of my

¹ There is here probably a fault of memory in regard to the name of the author, or perhaps an error of the press. The work alluded to may have been Toland's *Life of Milton*, an elegant edition of which was published by Thomas Hollis.

library. We might, possibly, if we had been more intimate, have concerted some useful operations together; but he loved to do his good alone and secretly; and I find besides, in perusing these Memoirs, that I was a doubtful character with him. I do not respect him less for his error, and I am obliged to the editors for the justice they have done me. They have made a little mistake in page 400, where a letter, which appeared in a London paper, January 7, 1768, is said to have been written by Mr. Adams. It was written by me, and is reprinted in Mr. Vaughan's collection of my political pieces, p. 231. This erratum is of no great importance, but may be corrected in a future edition.

I see Mr. Hollis had a collection of curious medals. If he had been still living I should certainly have sent him one of the medals that I have caused to be struck here. I think the countenance of my *Liberty* would have pleased him. I suppose you possess the collection and have the same taste. I beg you, therefore, to accept of one of these medals as a mark of my respect, and believe me to be, with sincere esteem, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXIX

TO SIR JOSEPH BANKS

PASSY, 8 October, 1783.

The public were promised a printed particular account of the rise and progress of the balloon invention, to be published about the end of last month.

I waited for it to send it to you, expecting it would be more satisfactory than any thing I could write, but it does not appear. We have only at present the enclosed pamphlet, which does not answer the expectation given us. I send you with it some prints. That of the balloon raised at Versailles is said to be an exact representation. I was not present, but am told it was filled in about ten minutes by means of burning straw. Some say water was thrown into the flame, others that it was spirits of sal volatile. It was supposed to have risen about two hundred toises, but did not continue long at that height, was carried horizontally by the wind, and descended gently as the air within grew cooler. So vast a bulk when it began to rise so majestically in the air, struck the spectators with surprise and admiration. The basket contained a sheep, a duck, and a cock, who, except the cock, received no hurt by the fall.

The Duke de Crillon made a feast last week in the Bois de Boulogne, just by my habitation, on occasion of the birth of two Spanish princes. After the fireworks we had a balloon of about five feet diameter, filled with permanent inflammable air. It was dismissed about one o'clock in the morning. It carried under it a large lantern with inscriptions on its sides. The night was quite calm and clear, so that it went right up. The appearance of the light diminished gradually, till it appeared no bigger than one of the stars, and in about twenty minutes I lost sight of it entirely. It fell the next day on the other side of the same wood near the village Boulogne, about half after twelve, having been suspended in

the air eleven and a half hours. It lodged in a tree and was torn in getting it down, so that it cannot be ascertained whether it burst when above or not, though that is supposed. Smaller repetitions of the experiment are making every day in all quarters. Some of the larger balloons that have been up are preparing to be sent up again in a few days, but I do not hear of any material improvements yet made either in the mechanical or chemical parts of the operation. Most is expected from the new one undertaken upon subscription by Messrs. Charles & Robert, who are men of science and mechanical dexterity. It is to carry up a man. I send you enclosed the proposals, which it is said are already subscribed to by a considerable number, and likely to be carried into execution. If I am well at the time I purpose to be present, being a subscriber myself, and shall send you an exact account of particulars.

B. FRANKLIN.

Extract of the Proposals.

It is to be of gummed silk, twenty-six feet in diameter, and to be despatched in the course of the month of November.

One hundred subscribers are required at four louis each, who are to have each a billet for a particular *enceinte* for them, and thirty billets for another *enceinte* to distribute.

If the subscription is not filled the 20th of October, the money is to be returned to those that have subscribed.

MCCXX

TO DAVID HARTLEY

PASSY, 16 October, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—I have nothing material to write to you respecting public affairs; but I cannot let Mr. Adams, who will see you, go without a line to inquire after your welfare, to inform you of mine, and assure you of my constant respect and attachment.

I think with you, that your Quaker article is a good one, and that men will in time have sense enough to adopt it, but I fear that time is not yet come.

What would you think of a proposition, if I should make it, of a compact between England, France, and America? America would be as happy as the Sabine girls, if she could be the means of uniting in perpetual peace her father and her husband. What repeated follies are those repeated wars! You do not want to conquer and govern one another. Why then should you be continually employed in injuring and destroying one another? How many excellent things might have been done to promote the internal welfare of each country; what bridges, roads, canals, and other useful public works and institutions, tending to the common felicity, might have been made and established with the money and men foolishly spent during the last seven centuries by our mad wars in doing one another mischief! You are near neighbors, and each have very respectable qualities. Learn to be quiet and

to respect each other's rights. You are all Christians. One is *The Most Christian King*, and the other *Defender of the Faith*. Manifest the propriety of these titles by your future conduct. "By this, says Christ, "shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another." "Seek peace, and ensue it." Adieu. Yours, etc.

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXXI

TO EDWARD NAIRNE

PASSY, 18 October, 1783.

DEAR SIR:—I received your favor of August 14th, by Mr. Sykes, with the book of directions for using your patent electric machine. The machine itself is also come to hand in good order, after some delay on the road; and I think it very ingeniously contrived indeed. I wish your success in the sale may be equal to its merits. The experiments in your pamphlet gave me pleasure, and I shall be glad to see the account you mention of the shortening of wires by lightning.

What you have heard of the eyes of sheep forced out by a stroke of lightning which killed them, puts me in mind of having formerly seen at Philadelphia six horses all killed by lightning in a stable, every one of whom appeared to have bled at the eyes, nose, and mouth, though I do not recollect that any of their eyes were out.

You are so good as to consider how much my

time has been taken up, and to excuse on that account my being a bad correspondent. Near three years ago I began a letter to you on the subject of hygrometers. I had written three folio pages of it, when I was interrupted by some business; and before I had time to finish it I had mislaid it. I have now found it, and having added what I suppose I had intended to add, I enclose it. You can judge better than myself whether my idea of such an instrument is practicable and may be useful.¹

If you favor me with another line, let me know how Mrs. Nairne does, and your amiable children. With great esteem, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXXII

TO DAVID HARTLEY

PASSY, 22 October, 1783

I received my dear friend's kind letter of the 4th instant from Bath with your proposed temporary convention, which you desire me to show to my colleagues. They are both by this time in London, where you will undoubtedly see and converse with them on the subject. The apprehension you mention, that the cement of the confederation may be annihilated, etc., has not, I think, any foundation. There is sense enough in America to take care of their own china vase. I see much in your papers about our divisions and distractions, but I hear

¹The letter here mentioned is dated November 13, 1780. It will be found among the *Philosophical Papers*, under that date.—EDITOR.

little of them from America; and I know that most of the letters, said to come from there with such accounts, are mere London fictions. I will consider attentively the proposition above mentioned, against the return of my colleagues, when I hope our commission will have arrived.

I rejoice to hear that your dear sister's recovery advances, and that your brother is well. Please to present my affectionate respects to them, and believe me ever yours, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXXIII

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

PASSY, 1 November, 1783.

SIR:—Enclosed is a copy of my last, which went by the English packet. I heard after I wrote it, that, the French packet putting back by contrary winds, Mr. Thaxter had an opportunity of getting on board her, and that she sailed the 26th of September.

The mentioned new commission is not yet come to hand. Mr. Hartley is not returned, and I hear will stay for the meeting of Parliament, which is to be the 11th instant, and he will not come hither till the recess for the Christmas holidays. Mr. Jay went to England about three weeks since on some personal affairs; and Mr. Adams followed last week to see that country, and take some exercise during this vacancy of business.

This court is now at Fontainebleau, but will return to Versailles in a few days. Its good disposition towards us continues. The late failure of payment in the Caisse d'Escompte, an institution similar to the Bank of England, occasioned partly by its having gone too far in assisting the government with money, and the inability of the government to support their credit, though extremely desirous of doing it, is a fresh proof that our not obtaining a further loan was not occasioned by want of good will to assist us, as some have unjustly supposed, but by a real want of the means. Money is at present unaccountably scarce here; what is arrived and expected in Spain since the peace, it is thought, will set things right. The government has proposed a second lottery for this year, by which they borrow twenty-four millions, and it is filled readily. This helps, and the Caisse d'Escompte goes on again with its operations; but it is said the interest paid by the lottery plan is nearly seven per cent.

I have received the duplicates of your Excellency's letter of the 15th of July, to the Commissioners, which is very satisfactory, though it came to hand but lately. The first, sent *via* New York, has not yet appeared. I have sent copies of it to the Hague and Madrid. The substance is published in several papers.

I have acquainted the minister of Sweden that I have received the ratification of the treaty; and he has written to me that he shall be in town in a few days, when he will make the exchange. The conclusion of the Danish treaty waits only for the

commission and instructions from Congress. The ambassador of Portugal informed me lately that his court had our proposed plan under consideration, and that we should soon hear from them. I sent it to Congress by Barney, and hear the ship is arrived. A commission and instructions will be wanting for that also, should the Congress be disposed to conclude a treaty with that nation.

I see by the public prints that the Congress have ratified the contract I made with the minister here, respecting the loans and aids we had received; but the ratification itself, though directed to be sent me, has never come to hand, and I am often asked for it. I beg it may be forwarded by the first opportunity.

There has been with me lately M. Pierre du Calvet, a merchant of Montreal, who, when our army was in Canada, furnished our generals and officers with many things they wanted, taking their receipts and promissory notes for payment; and, when the English repossessed the country, he was imprisoned, and his estate seized, on account of the services he had rendered us. He has shown me the originals of his papers, which I think are genuine. He produced also a quantity of Congress paper, which he says he received in payment for some of the supplies, and which appeared to me of our first emissions, and yet all fresh and clean, as having passed through no other hands. When he was discharged from prison he could not obtain permission to go into the United States to claim the debt, but was allowed to go to England; and from thence came hither to solicit payment from me. Having no authority to meddle

with such debts, and the sum being considerable, I refused, and advised him to take passage for America and make his application to Congress. He said he was growing old, much broken and weakened by near three years' imprisonment, and that the voyage from Canada to London had like to have been too much for him, he being sick all the way; so that he could not think of another, though distressed for want of his money. He appears an honest man, and his case a hard one. I have therefore undertaken to forward his papers, and I beg leave to recommend them to the speedy consideration of Congress, to whom I request you would be pleased to present my dutiful respects, and assure them of my most faithful services. With great esteem and regard, I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXXIV

TO SIR JOSEPH BANKS

PASSY, 21 November, 1783.

DEAR SIR:—I received your friendly letter of the 7th inst. I am glad my letters respecting the aerostatic experiment were not unacceptable. But as more perfect accounts of the construction and management of that machine have been and will be published before your *Transactions*, and from which extracts may be made that will be more particular and therefore more satisfactory, I think it best not to print those letters. I say this in answer to your

question, for I did not indeed write them with a view of their being inserted. Mr. Faujas de St. Fond acquainted me yesterday that a book on the subject, which has been long expected, will be published in a few days, and I shall send you one of them. Enclosed is a copy of the *procès verbal* taken of the experiment made yesterday in the garden of the queen's palace *la Muette*, where the dauphin now resides, which being near my house, I was present. This paper was drawn up hastily, and may in some places appear to you obscure, therefore I shall add a few explanatory observations.

This balloon was larger than that which went up from Versailles and carried the sheep, etc. Its bottom was open, and in the middle of the opening was fixed a kind of basket grate, in which faggots and sheaves of straw were burnt. The air, rarefied in passing through this flame, rose in the balloon, swelled out its sides, and filled it.

The persons, who were placed in the gallery made of wicker and attached to the outside near the bottom, had each of them a port through which they could pass sheaves of straw into the grate to keep up the flame, and thereby keep the balloon full. When it went over our heads, we could see the fire, which was very considerable. As the flame slackens, the rarefied air cools and condenses, the bulk of the balloon diminishes, and it begins to descend. If those in the gallery see it likely to descend in an improper place, they can, by throwing on more straw and renewing the flame, make it rise again, and the wind carries it farther.

La machine poussée par le vent s'est dirigée sur une des allées du jardin—that is, against the trees of one of the walks; the gallery hitched among the top boughs of those trees which had been cut and were stiff, while the body of the balloon leaned beyond and seemed likely to overset. I was then in great pain for the men, thinking them in danger of being thrown out, or burnt, for I expected that the balloon, being no longer upright, the flame would have laid hold of the inside that leaned over it. But by means of some cords that were still attached to it, it was soon brought upright again, made to descend, and carried back to its place. It was, however, much damaged.

Planant sur l' horizon. When they were as high as they chose to be, they made less flame and suffered the machine to drive horizontally with the wind, of which, however, they felt very little, as they went with it, and as fast. They say they had a charming view of Paris and its environs, the course of the river, etc., but that they were once lost, not knowing what part they were over, till they saw the dome of the Invalides, which rectified their ideas. Probably while they were employed in keeping up the fire, the machine might turn, and by that means they were *desorientés*, as the French call it.

There was a vast concourse of gentry in the garden who had great pleasure in seeing the adventurers go off so cheerfully, and applauded them by clapping, etc.; but there was at the same time a good deal of anxiety for their safety. Multitudes in Paris saw the balloon passing, but did not know there were

men with it, it being then so high that they could not see them.

Developpant du gaz—that is, in plain English, *burning more straw*; for though there is a little mystery made concerning the kind of air with which the balloon is filled, I conceive it to be nothing more than hot smoke, or common air rarefied; though in this I may be mistaken.

Aiant encore dans leur galerie le deux tiers de leur approvisionnement—that is, their provision of straw, of which they carried up a great quantity. It was well that in the hurry of so hazardous an experiment the flame did not happen, by any accidental mismanagement, to lay hold of this straw; though each had a bucket of water by him by way of precaution.

One of these courageous philosophers, the Marquis d'Arlandes, did me the honor to call upon me in the evening after the experiment, with Mr. Montgolfier, the very ingenious inventor. I was happy to see him safe. He informed me that they lit gently, without the least shock, and the balloon was very little damaged.

This method of filling the balloon with hot air is cheap and expeditious, and it is supposed may be sufficient for certain purposes, such as elevating an engineer to take a view of an enemy's army, works, etc., conveying intelligence into or out of a besieged town, giving signals to distant places, or the like.

The other method of filling a balloon with permanently elastic inflammable air, and then closing it, is a tedious operation, and very expensive; yet we are to have one of that kind sent up in a few days. It

is a globe of twenty-six feet diameter. The gores that compose it are red and white silk, so that it makes a beautiful appearance. A very handsome triumphal car will be suspended to it, in which Messrs. Robert, two brothers, very ingenious men, who have made it in concert with Mr. Charles, propose to go up. There is room in this car for a little table to be placed between them, on which they can write and keep their journal; that is, take notes of every thing they observe, the state of their thermometer, barometer, hygrometer, etc., which they will have more leisure to do than the others, having no fire to take care of. They say they have a contrivance which will enable them to descend at pleasure. I know not what it is, but the expense of this machine, filling included, will exceed, it is said, ten thousand livres.

This balloon of only twenty-six feet diameter, being filled with air ten times lighter than common air, will carry up a greater weight than the other, which, though vastly bigger, was filled with an air that could scarcely be more than twice as light. Thus the great bulk of one of these machines, with the short duration of its power, and the great expense of filling the other, will prevent the invention being of so much use as some may expect, till chemistry can invent a cheaper light air producible with more expedition.

But the emulation between the two parties running high, the improvement in the construction and management of the balloons has already made a rapid progress, and one cannot say how far it may go. A few months since the idea of witches riding thro'

the air upon a broomstick, and that of philosophers upon a bag of smoke, would have appeared equally impossible and ridiculous.

These machines must always be subject to be driven by the winds. Perhaps mechanic art may find easy means to give them progressive motion in a calm, and to slant them a little in the wind.

I am sorry this experiment is totally neglected in England, where mechanic genius is so strong. I wish I could see the same emulation between the two nations as I see between the two parties here. Your philosophy seems to be too bashful. In this country we are not so much afraid of being laughed at. If we do a foolish thing, we are the first to laugh at it ourselves, and are almost as much pleased with a *bon-Mot* or a good *chanson*, that ridicules well the disappointment of a project, as we might have been with its success. It does not seem to me a good reason to decline prosecuting a new experiment which apparently increases the power of man over matter, till we can see to what use that power may be applied. When we have learnt to manage it, we may hope some time or other to find uses for it, as men have done for magnetism and electricity, of which the first experiments were mere matters of amusement.

This experiment is by no means a trifling one. It may be attended with important consequences that no one can foresee. We should not suffer pride to prevent our progress in science.

Beings of a frank and [*sic*] nature far superior to ours have not disdained to amuse themselves with making and launching balloons, otherwise we should never

have enjoyed the light of those glorious objects that rule our day and night, nor have had the pleasure of riding round the sun ourselves upon the balloon we now inhabit.

With great and sincere esteem, I am, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. *Nov. 25th.*—The *procès verbal* to which this letter relates went by last post. I have now got the within mentioned book, but it being too bulky to send by post, I shall try to get it forwarded to you by the Duke of Manchester's courier, who goes usually on Thursdays. I enclose one of the plates of it, which gives a perfect representation of the last great balloon. You can put it in its place when you receive the book.

B. F.

MCCXXV

FROM GIACOMO F. CROCCO

CADIZ, 25 November, 1783.

SIR:—On the 15th of July last I had the honor to acquaint your Excellency of my arrival in Europe, and that I was appointed by his Majesty, the Emperor of Morocco, bearer of the answer to the Congress, sovereign of the Thirteen United States of North America, and that, according to my instructions, I was to meet at Paris the ambassador that would be appointed by the Congress to sign at the court of Morocco the treaty of peace and commerce, agreeably to the proposals made to his Imperial

Majesty, by Robert Montgomery, in his letter dated at Alicant, the 4th of January, 1783. Since I have been at the court of Madrid, where I had some commissions from the emperor, and to see the execution of them, I came to this place, from whence I intend to embark in three or four months for Barbary, unless in the meantime I should receive an answer from your Excellency, with orders that Mr. Richard Harrison should give me for my travelling charges fifteen hundred hard dollars, although the courts of Europe are accustomed to allow the ministers of my master at the rate of ten pounds sterling per day, while they are in Europe, to defray their expenses, besides presents for their good offices in those important affairs.

His Imperial Majesty was graciously pleased at my solicitation to agree, at the request of Congress, to grant them a treaty of peace (which other powers in Europe could not obtain but after many years), and my return, without the full execution of his commands, I apprehend may for ever indispose him against the United Provinces. I remain, most truly, sir, etc.,

GIACOMO F. CROCCO.

MCCXXVI

TO SIR JOSEPH BANKS

PASSY, 1 December, 1783.

DEAR SIR:—In mine of yesterday I promised to give you an account of Messrs. Charles & Robert's

experiment, which was to have been made this day, and at which I intended to be present. Being a little indisposed, and the air cool, and the ground damp, I declined going into the garden of the Tuileries, where the balloon was placed, not knowing how long I might be obliged to wait there before it was ready to depart, and chose to stay in my carriage near the statue of Louis XV., from whence I could well see it rise, and have an extensive view of the region of air through which, as the wind sat, it was likely to pass. The morning was foggy, but about one o'clock the air became tolerably clear, to the great satisfaction of the spectators, who were infinite, notice having been given of the intended experiment several days before in the papers, so that all Paris was out, either about the Tuileries, on the quays and bridges, in the fields, the streets, at the windows, or on the tops of houses, besides the inhabitants of all the towns and villages of the environs. Never before was a philosophical experiment so magnificently attended. Some guns were fired to give notice that the departure of the great balloon was near, and a small one was discharged, which went to an amazing height, there being but little wind to make it deviate from its perpendicular course, and at length the sight of it was lost. Means were used, I am told, to prevent the great balloon's rising so high as might endanger its bursting. Several bags of sand were taken on board before the cord that held it down was cut, and the whole weight being then too much to be lifted, such a quantity was discharged as to permit its rising slowly. Thus it would sooner arrive at that region

where it would be in equilibrio with the surrounding air, and by discharging more sand afterwards, it might go higher if desired. Between one and two o'clock, all eyes were gratified with seeing it rise majestically from among the trees, and ascend gradually above the buildings, a most beautiful spectacle. When it was about two hundred feet high, the brave adventurers held out and waved a little white pennant, on both sides their car, to salute the spectators, who returned loud claps of applause. The wind was very little, so that the object, though moving to the northward, continued long in view; and it was a great while before the admiring people began to disperse. The persons embarked were Mr. Charles, professor of experimental philosophy, and a zealous promoter of that science; and one of the Messieurs Robert, the very ingenious constructors of the machine. When it arrived at its height, which I suppose might be three hundred or four hundred toises, it appeared to have only horizontal motion. I had a pocket-glass, with which I followed it, till I lost sight, first of the men, then of the car, and when I last saw the balloon, it appeared no bigger than a walnut. I write this at seven in the evening. What became of them is not yet known here. I hope they descended by daylight, so as to see and avoid falling among trees or on houses, and that the experiment was completed without any mischievous accident, which the novelty of it and the want of experience might well occasion. I am the more anxious for the event, because I am not well informed of the means provided for letting themselves gently down, and the

loss of these very ingenious men would not only be a discouragement to the progress of the art, but be a sensible loss to science and society.

I shall enclose one of the tickets of admission, on which the globe was represented, as originally intended, but is altered by the pen to show its real state when it went off. When the tickets were engraved the car was to have been hung to the neck of the globe, as represented by a little drawing I have made in the corner A.¹

I suppose it may have been an apprehension of danger in straining too much the balloon or tearing the silk, that induced the constructors to throw a net over it, fixed to a hoop which went round its middle, and to hang the car to that hoop, as you see in Fig. B.

Tuesday morning, December 2d.—I am relieved from my anxiety by hearing that the adventurers descended well near l'Isle Adam before sunset. This place is near seven leagues from Paris. Had the wind blown fresh they might have gone much farther.

If I receive any further particulars of importance, I shall communicate them hereafter.

With great esteem, I am, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Tuesday evening.—Since writing the above I have received the printed paper and the manuscript containing some particulars of the experiment, which I enclose. I hear further that the travellers had perfect command of their carriage, descending as they

¹ The copy of this letter that has fallen into our hands does not give the drawings here referred to.

pleased by letting some of the inflammable air escape, and rising again by discharging some sand; that they descended over a field so low as to talk with the laborers in passing, and mounted again to pass a hill. The little balloon falling at Vincennes shows that mounting higher it met with a current of air in a contrary direction, an observation that may be of use to future aerial voyagers.

MCCXXVII

TO THE HON. MR. LAURENS

PASSY, 6 December, 1783.

DEAR SIR:—I received your kind letter of the 28th past, and I send you herewith the anonymous Brussels letter, as you desire. When I had last the pleasure of seeing you at Passy, I forgot to mention to you that Mr. Ridley, soon after your departure for the south of France, called upon me with a request that I would let him see that letter, and then that I would let him take it home with him, which I complied with, understanding it was to show it to Mr. Adams. Some days after he acquainted me that the handwriting was like that of M. de Neufville's clerk, and proposed to have it compared with some of Neufville's letters in my possession, which at his desire I lent him. When he returned them he remarked some similarities, which I did not think very striking. What appeared most so to me at the time was the very long stroke or dash of the pen across the top

of the small t, thus τ , though I did not think that conclusive; and I have since observed it to be a more general practice in writing than I imagined. I indeed seldom make that mark to my t's, except when they are double; yet I find when I do make it, it is nearly as long as in the Brussels letter; and I see in your last that you do the same, the dash sometimes passing over the whole word in which the t is placed. I saw neither Mr. Barclay nor Mr. Adams on that occasion, but Mr. Ridley only. I suppose the opinion you mention as pronounced, might be by them at Auteuil. I enclose the other anonymous, and the two letters of Neufville, that you may compare them and judge for yourself.

We think of nothing here at present but of flying; the balloons engross all conversation. Messrs. Charles and Robert made a trip last Monday through the air to a place farther distant than Dover is from Calais; and could have gone much farther if there had been more wind and daylight. They have perfect command of the machine, descending and rising again at pleasure. The progress made in the management of it has been rapid, yet I fear it will hardly become a common carriage in my time, though being the easiest of all voitures it would be extremely convenient to me, now that my malady forbids the use of the old ones over a pavement.

The kind inquiry made respecting me by the person you mention does not surprise me. He is so unequal in his temper, and so different from himself on different occasions, that I should not wonder if he sometimes loved me.

The promised commission is not yet come to my hands, nor have I any advice from the Congress later than the 9th of September.

My grandson joins me in affectionate respects to you and Miss Laurens, and best wishes for your health and prosperity. With great and sincere esteem, I am ever, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXXVIII

TO THE COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 6 December, 1783.

SIR:—Being now disabled by the stone which in the easiest carriage gives me pain, wounds my bladder, and occasions me to make bloody urine, I find I can no longer pay my devoirs personally at Versailles, which I hope will be excused. I have yet received from Congress no answer to my request of being recalled. In the meantime I must beg your Excellency to receive my respects by my grandson, with such matters as I may occasionally have to communicate, he being Secretary of the Legation. I am, with great and sincere respect, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXXIX

TO WILLIAM CARMICHAEL

PASSY, 15 December, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—I am much concerned to find, by your letter to my grandson, that you are hurt by

my long silence, and that you ascribe it to a supposed diminution of my friendship. Believe me, that is by no means the case; but I am too much harassed by a variety of correspondence, together with gout and gravel, which induce me to postpone doing what I often fully intend to do, and particularly writing, where the urgent necessity of business does not seem to require its being done immediately, my sitting too much at the desk having already almost killed me; besides, since Mr. Jay's residence here, I imagined he might keep you fully informed of what was material for you to know; and I beg you to be assured of my constant and sincere esteem and affection.

I do not know whether you have been informed that a Mr. Montgomery, who lives at Alicant, took upon himself (for I think he had no authority) to make overtures last winter, in behalf of our States, towards a treaty with the Emperor of Morocco. In consequence of his proceedings I received a letter in August from a person who acquainted me that he was arrived in Spain by the Emperor's order, and was to come to Paris, there to receive and conduct to Morocco the minister of Congress appointed to make that treaty, intimating at the same time an expectation of money to defray his expenses. I communicated the letter to Mr. Jay. The conduct of Mr. Montgomery appeared to us very extraordinary and irregular; and the idea of a messenger from Morocco coming to Paris to meet and conduct a minister of Congress appearing absurd and extravagant, as well as the demand of money by a person unknown, I made no answer to the letter; and I know not

whether Mr. Jay made any to Mr. Montgomery, who wrote about the same time. But I have lately received another letter from the same person, a copy of which I enclose, together with my answer open for your perusal, and it is submitted to your discretion whether to forward it or not. The Mr. *Crocco*, who writes to me, having been, as he says, at Madrid, you possibly may know more of him than I can, and judge whether he is really a person in credit with the Emperor, and sent as he pretends to be, or not rather an *escroc*, as the French call cheats and impostors.

I would not be wanting in any thing proper for me to do towards keeping that prince in good humor with us till the pleasure of Congress is known, and therefore would answer Mr. Crocco, if he be in his employ; but am loth to commit myself in correspondence with a *fripon*. It will be strange if, being at Madrid, he did not address himself to you. With great and unalterable regard, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXXX

TO THE COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 15 December, 1783.

SIR:—I understand that the bishop or spiritual person who superintends or governs the Roman Catholic clergy in the United States of America resides in London, and is supposed to be under obligations to that court, and subject to be influenced by its ministers. This gives me some uneasiness,

and I cannot but wish that one should be appointed to that office who is of this nation and who may reside here among our friends. I beg your Excellency to think a little of this matter, and to afford me your counsels upon it. With the greatest respect, I am, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXXXI

TO DAVID RITTENHOUSE

PASSY, 15 December, 1783.

SIR:—All astronomical news that I receive I think it my duty to communicate to you. The following is just come to hand, in a letter from the President of the Royal Society, dated at London the 9th instant:

“A miserable comet made its appearance to Mr. Nathan Pigot, in his observatory at Yorkshire, on the 19th past, and the weather has been so hazy in the evenings that it has scarce been observed since. It was on the 19th

	h	m.	Right Ascen.	North Dec	
at 11	15	41	00	3° 10'	
“On the 20th	10	54	40	00	4 32

“On the 21st it was seen in the place where it was expected; but the night was too hazy to observe it.

“It appears like a nebula, with a diameter of about two minutes of a degree; the nucleus faint. It is seen with difficulty when the wires of the instrument are illuminated, but is not visible with an open glass.

“MR. PIGOT.”

“*Nov. 29th.*—It was seen near the chin of Aries, and appeared like a nebulous star; as there was some moonlight, it was difficult to find it.

“*Dec. 1st.*—It was removed near the preceding eye of Aries; but, conceiving other astronomers, who had fixed instruments, have noted its place, he has not calculated the distance from any known star.

“MR. HERSCHELL.”

With great esteem, I have the honor to be, etc.,
B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXXXII

TO GIACOMO FRANCESCO CROCCO

PASSY, 15 December, 1783.

SIR:—I have just received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me the 25th past. I did indeed receive your former letter of July, but being totally a stranger to the mentioned proceedings of Mr. Montgomery, and having no orders from Congress on the subject, I knew not how to give you any satisfactory answer till I should receive further information; and I communicated your letter to Mr. Jay, Minister of the United States for Spain, in whose district Mr. Montgomery is, and who is more at hand than I am for commencing that negotiation.

Mr. Jay, who is at present in England, has possibly written to you, though his letter may have miscarried, to acquaint you that Mr. Montgomery had probably no authority from Congress to take the step

he has done, and that it was not likely that they, desiring to make a treaty with the Emperor, would think of putting his Majesty to the trouble of sending a person to Paris to receive and conduct their minister, since they have ships, and could easily land him at Cadiz, or present him at one of the Emperor's ports. We have, however, written to Congress, acquainting them with what we had been informed of, the good and favorable disposition of his Imperial Majesty to enter into a treaty of amity and commerce with the United States; and we have no doubt but that as soon as their affairs are a little settled, which, by so severe a war carried on in the very bowels of their country by one of the most powerful nations of Europe, have necessarily been much deranged, they will readily manifest equally good dispositions, and take all the proper steps to cultivate and secure the friendship of a monarch whose character I know they have long esteemed and respected. I am, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXXXIII

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

PASSY, 25 December, 1783.

SIR:—Not having heard of the appointment of a new Secretary for Foreign Affairs, I take the liberty of addressing this despatch directly to your Excellency. I received by Captain Barney a letter from the late President, directed to the Commissioners, dated November the 1st, with a set of instructions, dated the 29th of October, a resolution of the same

date respecting Hamburg, and another of the 1st of November, relating to Captain Paul Jones, all which will be duly regarded.

Captain Jones in passing through England, communicated these papers to Mr. Adams, then at London. Mr. Adams, disappointed in not finding among them the commission we had been made to expect, empowering us to make a treaty of commerce with England, wrote to me that he imagined it might be contained in a packet that was directed to me, and requested to be immediately informed; adding, that in case no such commission was come, he should depart directly for Holland; so I suppose he is now there. Mr. Laurens is gone to England, with an intention of embarking soon for America. Mr. Jay is at Bath, but expected here daily. The English ministers, the Duke of Manchester and Mr. Hartley, are both at present in Parliament. As soon as either of them returns we shall endeavor to obtain an additional article to the treaty, explaining that mentioned in the instructions.

The affairs of Ireland are still unsettled. The Parliament and volunteers are at variance; the latter are uneasy that in the late negotiations for a treaty of commerce between England and America the British ministers had made no mention of Ireland, and they seem to desire a separate treaty of commerce between America and that kingdom.

It was certainly disagreeable to the English ministers that all their treaties for peace were carried on under the eye of the French court. This began to appear towards the conclusion, when Mr. Hartley re-

fused going to Versailles, to sign there with the other powers our definitive treaty, and insisted on its being done at Paris, which we in good humor complied with, but at an earlier hour than we might have time to acquaint Count de Vergennes before he was to sign with the Duke of Manchester.

The Dutch definitive treaty was not then ready, and the British court now insists on finishing it either at London or the Hague. If, therefore, the commission to us, which has been so long delayed, is still intended, perhaps it will be well to instruct us to treat either here or at London, as we may find most convenient.

The treaty may be conducted, even there, in concert and in the confidence of communication with the ministers of our friends, whose advice may be of use to us.

With respect to the British court, we should, I think, be constantly upon our guard, and impress strongly upon our minds that, though it has made peace with us, it is not in truth reconciled either to us or to its loss of us, but still flatters itself with hopes that some change in the affairs of Europe, or some disunion among ourselves, may afford them an opportunity of recovering their dominion, punishing those who have most offended, and securing our future dependence. It is easy to see by the general turn of the ministerial newspapers (light things, indeed, as straws and feathers, but like them they show which way the wind blows), and by the malignant improvement their ministers make, in all the foreign courts, of every little accident or dissension among

us, the riot of a few soldiers at Philadelphia, the resolves of some town meetings, the reluctance to pay taxes, etc., all which are exaggerated, to represent our government as so many anarchies, of which the people themselves are weary, and the Congress as having lost its influence, being no longer respected; I say it is easy to see from this conduct that they bear us no good-will, and that they wish the reality of what they are pleased to imagine. They have, too, a numerous royal progeny to provide for, some of whom are educated in the military line. In these circumstances we cannot be too careful to preserve the friendships we have acquired abroad, and the union we have established at home, to secure our credit by a punctual discharge of our obligations of every kind, and our reputation by the wisdom of our councils, since we know not how soon we may have a fresh occasion for friends, for credit, and for reputation.

The extravagant misrepresentations of our political state in foreign countries made it appear necessary to give them better information, which I thought could not be more effectually and authentically done than by publishing a translation into French, now the most general language in Europe, of the book of Constitutions, which had been printed by order of Congress. This I accordingly got well done, and presented two copies, handsomely bound, to every foreign minister here, the one for himself, the other more elegant for his sovereign. It has been well taken, and has afforded matter of surprise to many, who had conceived mean ideas of the state of civilization in America, and could not have expected so

much political knowledge and sagacity had existed in our wilderness. And from all parts I have the satisfaction to hear that our Constitutions in general are much admired. I am persuaded that this step will not only tend to promote the emigration to our country of substantial people from all parts of Europe, by the numerous copies I shall disperse, but will facilitate our future treaties with foreign courts, who could not before know what kind of government and people they had to treat with. As, in doing this, I have endeavored to further the apparent views of Congress in the first publication, I hope it may be approved, and the expense allowed. I send herewith one of the copies.

Our treaties with Denmark and Portugal remain unfinished, for want of instructions respecting them from Congress, and a commission empowering some minister or ministers to conclude them. The Emperor of Morocco, we understand, has expressed a disposition to make a treaty of amity and commerce with the United States. A Mr. Montgomery, who is a merchant settled at Alicant, has been, it seems, rather forward in proposing a negotiation, without authority for so doing, and has embarrassed us a little, as may be seen by some letters I enclose. Perhaps it would be well for the Congress to send a message to that prince, expressing their respect and regard for him, till such time as they may judge it convenient to appoint the ambassador in form, furnished with proper presents, to make a treaty with him. The other Barbary States, too, seem to require consideration, if we propose to carry on any trade in

the Mediterranean; but, whether the security of that trade is of sufficient importance to be worth purchasing at the rate of the tributes usually exacted by those piratical states, is a matter of doubt, on which I cannot at present form a judgment.

I shall immediately proceed, in pursuance of the first instruction, to take the proper steps for acquainting his Imperial Majesty of Germany with the dispositions of Congress, having some reason to believe the overture may be acceptable. His minister here is of late extremely civil to me, and we are on very good terms. I have likewise an intimate friend at that court.

With respect to other powers, it seems best not to make advances at present, but to meet and encourage them when made, which I shall not fail to do, as I have already done as to those of Sweden, Denmark, and Portugal. Possibly Hamburg, to whom I have forwarded the letter of Congress, may send a minister to America, if they wish for a treaty, to conclude it there. They have no minister here.

I have lately received a memorial from the minister of Denmark, respecting a ship of that nation, the *Providentia*, taken by one of our privateers and carried into Boston. I enclose a copy of it, and request to be furnished with directions and informations for the answer. It may be well to send me a copy of the proceedings in the courts. From a perusal of the papers communicated with it I am satisfied that the cargo was clearly British property.

We have hitherto entered into no engagements respecting the armed neutrality, and, in obedience to

the fifth instruction, we shall take care to avoid them hereafter. The treaty between this court and the United States for regulating the powers, privileges, etc., of consuls, is at length completed, and is transcribing in order to be signed. I hope to transmit a copy by the next packet. I have received the Congress ratification of the two money treaties, which will be soon exchanged, when I shall send copies of them with that of Sweden.

I have given, and shall continue to give, Captain Paul Jones all the assistance in my power towards recovering the prize money; and I hope it may soon be accomplished.

When Mr. Jay returns I shall desire him to make the inquiry directed in the fourth instruction, respecting the expedition under that commodore, and report thereon to Congress. In the meantime I can answer respecting one of the questions, that the king paid the whole expense, and that no part of it has ever been placed to the account of Congress. There exists indeed a demand of one Puchelberg, a person in the employ of M. Schweighauser, of about thirty thousand livres, for provisions and other things furnished to Captain Landais, after he took the *Alliance* out of the hands of Captain Jones; but as the ship was at that time under the king's supply, who, having borrowed her for the expedition when fitted for sea and just ready to sail with Mr. Adams, had ordered her to be delivered in the same condition, free of all charges accrued, or accruing, by her being in Holland and in L'Orient, and as M. Puchelberg had not only no orders from me to furnish

Captain Landais, but acted contrary to my orders given to M. Schweighauser, and contrary to the orders of M. Schweighauser himself, I refused to pay his account, which, besides, appeared extravagant, and it has never yet been paid.

I shall do my best in executing the third instruction, respecting our claim upon Denmark. I have written to London to obtain, if possible, an account of the sums insured upon the ships delivered up, as such an account may be some guide in the valuation of the prizes.

A Captain Williams, formerly in the British service, and employed upon the Lakes, has given me a paper containing information of the state of the back country. As those informations may possibly be of some use, I send herewith the paper. Mr. Carmichael has sent me the accounts of the money transactions at Madrid. As soon as Mr. Jay returns they will be examined.

Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to Congress, and assure them of my most faithful services. With great esteem and regard, I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.¹

MCCXXXIV

TO ROBERT MORRIS

PASSY, 25 December, 1783.

SIR:—I have received your favor of the 20th of September, for which I thank you. My apprehen-

¹ The "Set of Instructions" alluded to in this letter may be found in the *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. X, p. 222. The resolutions respecting Hamburg and Paul Jones are contained in the *Secret Journal of Congress*, Vol. III., pp. 416, 430.

sion that the union with France might be diminished by accounts from home, was occasioned by the extravagant and violent language held here by a public person, in public company, which had that tendency; and it was natural for me to think his letters might hold the same language, in which I was right; for I have since had letters from Boston informing me of it. Luckily here, and I hope there, it is imputed to the true cause—a disorder in the brain, which, though not constant, has its fits too frequent. I will not fill my letter with an account of those discourses. Mr. Laurens, when you see him, can give it to you; I mean such as he heard in company with other persons, for I would not have him relate private conversations. They distressed me much at the time, being then at your earnest instance soliciting for more aids of money, the success of which solicitation such ungrateful and provoking language might, I feared, have had a tendency to prevent. Enough of this at present.

I have been exceedingly hurt and afflicted by the difficulty some of your late bills met with in Holland. As soon as I received the letter from Messrs. Willinck & Co., which I enclose, I sent for Mr. Grand, who brought me a sketch of his account with you, by which it appeared that the demands upon us, existing and expected, would more than absorb the funds in his hands. We could not indulge the smallest hope of obtaining further assistance here, the public finances being in a state of embarrassment, private persons full of distrust, occasioned by the stoppage of payment at the *Caisse d'Escompte*, and money in

general extremely scarce. But he agreed to do what I proposed, and lend his credit in the way of drawing and redrawing between Holland and Paris, to gain time till you could furnish funds to reimburse Messrs. Willinck & Co. I believe he made this proposition to them by the return of the express. I know not why it was not accepted. Mr. Grand will himself, I suppose, give you an account of all the transaction, and of his application to Messrs. Couteulx & Co.; therefore, I need not add more upon this disagreeable subject.

I have found difficulties in settling the account of salaries with the other ministers that have made it impracticable for me to do it. I have, therefore, after keeping the bills that were to have been proportioned among us long in my hands, given them up to Mr. Grand, who, finding the same difficulties, will, I suppose, return them to you. None has come to hand for the two or three last quarters, and we are indebted to his kindness for advancing us money, or we must have run in debt for our subsistence. He risks in doing this, since he has not for it your orders.

There arise frequently contingent expenses, for which no provision has yet been made. In a former letter to the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, I gave a list of them, and desired to know the pleasure of Congress concerning them. I have only had for answer that they were under consideration, and that he believed house-rent would not be allowed; but I am still in uncertainty as to that and the rest. I wish some resolutions were taken on this point of contingencies, that I may know how to settle my accounts

with Mr. Barclay. American ministers in Europe are too remote from their constituents to consult them, and take their orders on every occasion, as the ministers here of European courts can easily do. There seems, therefore, a necessity of allowing more to their discretion, and of giving them a credit to a certain amount on some banker, who may answer their orders; for which, however, they should be accountable. I mention this for the sake of other ministers, hoping and expecting soon to be discharged myself, and also for the good of the service.

The remissness of our people in paying taxes is highly blamable; the unwillingness to pay them is still more so. I see, in some resolutions of town meetings, a remonstrance against giving Congress the power to take, as they call it, the people's money out of their pockets, though only to pay the interest and principal of debts duly contracted. They seem to mistake the point. Money, justly due from the people, is their creditors' money, and no longer the money of the people, who, if they withhold it, should be compelled to pay by some law.

All property, indeed, except the savage's temporary cabin, his bow, his match-coat, and other little acquisitions absolutely necessary for his subsistence, seems to me to be the creature of public convention. Hence the public has the right of regulating descents, and all other conveyances of property, and even of limiting the quantity and the uses of it. All the property that is necessary to a man, for the conservation of the individual and the propagation of the species, is his natural right, which none can justly

deprive him of; but all property superfluous to such purposes is the property of the public, who, by their laws, have created it, and who may therefore by other laws dispose of it, whenever the welfare of the public shall demand such disposition. He that does not like civil society on these terms, let him retire and live among savages. He can have no right to the benefits of society who will not pay his club towards the support of it.

The Marquis de Lafayette, who loves to be employed in our affairs, and is often very useful, has lately had several conversations with the ministers and persons concerned in forming new regulations, respecting the commerce between our two countries, which are not yet concluded. I therefore thought it well to communicate to him a copy of your letter, which contains so many sensible and just observations on that subject. He will make a proper use of them, and perhaps they may have more weight, as appearing to come from a Frenchman, than they would have if it were known that they were the observations of an American. I perfectly agree with you in all the sentiments you have expressed on this occasion.

I am sorry for the public's sake, that you are about to quit your office, but on personal considerations I shall congratulate you; for I cannot conceive of a more happy man than he, who, having been long loaded with public cares, finds himself relieved from them, and enjoying repose in the bosom of his friends and family. With sincere regard and attachment, I am ever, dear sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXXXV

FROM JOHN JAY

BATH, 26 December, 1783.

DEAR SIR:—Since we parted I have been so much and so long indisposed, as that, except short letters to Mrs. Jay, I have denied myself the pleasure of writing to my friends. The kindness you have shown to us both has, nevertheless, not been forgotten, nor has my disposition to acknowledge and be influenced by it in the least abated.

We have lately had a report here that you were very ill with the stone; and some have said that you intended to seek relief from an operation. This report has alarmed your friends, and I am anxious to know how far it may be well founded. It would give me sincere satisfaction to have it contradicted under your own hand.

I decline saying any thing about politics for obvious reasons. The public papers afford you the means of forming a judgment of them, especially as your long experience and knowledge of this country enable you to see further than ordinary observers. There are many in this country who speak of you with great respect. The honest Whig Club drank your health very affectionately. There are others, who like you as little as the eagle did the cat, and probably for the same reasons. When we meet we will talk these matters over with less reserve than I can write. Present my affectionate compliments to your two grandsons, and believe me to be, with great esteem and regard, dear sir, etc.,

JOHN JAY.

MCCXXXVI

TO THOMAS MIFFLIN, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

PASSY, 26 December, 1783.

DEAR SIR:—I congratulate you very sincerely on your appointment to that very honorable station, the Presidency of Congress. Every testimony you receive of the public sense of your services and talents gives me pleasure.

I have written to you a long letter on business, in my quality of minister. This is a private letter, respecting my personal concerns, which I presume to trouble you with on the score of our ancient friendship.

In a letter of the 12th of March, 1781, I stated my age and infirmities to the Congress, and requested they would be pleased to recall me, that I might enjoy the little left me of the evening of life in repose, and in the sweet society of my friends and family. I was answered by the then President that, when peace should be made, if I persisted in the same request, it should be granted; I acquiesced; the preliminaries were signed in November, 1782, and I then repeated my petition.¹ A year is past, and I have no answer. Undoubtedly, if the Congress should think my continuing here necessary for the public service, I ought, as a good citizen, to submit to their judgment and pleasure; but, as they may easily supply my place to advantage, that cannot be the case. I suppose, therefore, that it is merely the multiplicity of more important affairs that has put my request out of

¹See a letter to Robert R. Livingston, dated December 5, 1782.

their mind. What I would then desire of you is, to put this matter in train to be moved and answered as soon as possible, that I may arrange my affairs accordingly.

In the first letter above mentioned, to which I beg leave to refer you, I gave a character of my grandson, William Temple Franklin, and solicited for him the favor and protection of Congress. I have nothing to abate of that character; on the contrary, I think him so much improved as to be capable of executing, with credit to himself and advantage to the public, any employment in Europe the Congress may think fit to honor him with. He has been seven years in the service, and is much esteemed by all that know him, particularly by the minister here, who, since my new disorder (the stone) makes my going to Versailles inconvenient to me, transacts our business with him in the most obliging and friendly manner. It is natural for me, who love him, to wish to see him settled, before I die, in some employ that may probably be permanent; and I hope you will be so good to me as to get that affair likewise moved and carried through in his favor.

He has, I think, this additional merit to plead, that he has served in my office as secretary several years, for the small salary of three hundred louis a year, while the Congress gave one thousand a year to the secretaries of other ministers, who had not half the employ for a secretary that I had. For it was long before a consul was sent here, and we had all that business on our hands, with a great deal of admiralty business in examining and condemning captures

taken by our cruisers and by the French cruisers under American commissions; besides the constant attendance in examining and recording the acceptances of the Congress bills of exchange, which has been, from the immense number, very fatiguing; with many other extra affairs not usually occurring to other ministers, such as the care of the prisoners in England, and the constant correspondence relating to them; in all of which he served me as secretary, with the assistance only of a clerk at low wages (fifty louis a year), so that the saving has been very considerable to the public. I am, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXXXVII

TO THE REV. DR. COOPER

PASSY, 26 December, 1783.

DEAR SIR:—I have received your favor of the 16th October, and am much obliged for the intelligence it contains. I am happy to hear that your government has agreed to furnish Congress with the means of discharging the national debt. The obstruction that measure met with in some of the States has had many mischievous effects on this side the water. It discouraged the loan going on in Holland, and thereby occasioned a protest of some of Mr. Morris' bills. Nothing can recover our credit in Europe and our reputation in its courts, but an immediate proof of our honesty and prudence by a general provision in all the States for the punctual

payment of the interest and the final regular discharge of the principal. I hope we shall never deserve, nor any longer appear likely to deserve, the reproof given to an enthusiastical knave in Pennsylvania, who being called upon for an old debt, said to his creditor: *Thou must have a little more patience; I am not able yet to pay thee.* Give me then your bond, says the creditor, and pay me interest. *No, I cannot do that; I cannot in conscience either receive or pay interest, it is against my principle.* You have then the conscience of a rogue, says the creditor: You tell me it is against your principle to pay interest; and it being against your interest to pay the principal, I perceive you do not intend to pay me either one or t' other.

My young friend, your grandson, must have had a long passage, since he was not arrived when you wrote. Indeed all the vessels that left Europe for America about the time he did have had long passage which makes me less uneasy on his account. I hope he is in your arms long before this time. His father never made any provision here for his return, that I have heard of, and therefore I have drawn on you for the balance of the account as you directed.

I wrote you a too long letter some time since, respecting Mr. A.'s calumnies, of which perhaps it was not necessary to take so much notice.

The government of England is again disordered: the Lords have rejected the ministry's favorite bill for demolishing the power of the India Company. The Commons have resented it by some angry resolutions. And it is just now reported here that the

Parliament dissolved. Of this we have yet no certain advice, but expect it hourly.

There are hopes that the war against the Turks will blow over; the rather, as all flames are apt to spread, and the late belligerent powers have all need of a continued peace; this, however, is not certain, and it behooves us to preserve with care our friends and our credit abroad, and our union at home, as we know not how soon we may have occasion for all of them.

With great and sincere esteem, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXXXVIII

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

PASSY, 26 December, 1783.

SIR:—If the Congress should think it fit to have a consul for the United States in London, and do not appoint one of our own countrymen to that office, I beg leave to mention the merits of Mr. William Hodgson, a merchant of that city, who has always been a zealous friend of America, was a principal promoter of the subscription for the relief of American prisoners, and chairman of the committee for dispensing the money raised by that subscription. He also took the trouble of applying the moneys I furnished him with, when the subscription was exhausted, and constantly assisted me in all the negotiations I had with the British ministers, in their favor, wherein he generally succeeded, being a man

of weight and credit, very active, and much esteemed for his probity and integrity. These his services, continued steadily during the whole war, seem to entitle him to the favorable notice of Congress, when any occasion offers of doing him service or pleasure. With great respect, I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXXXIX

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON

PASSY, 26 December, 1783.

DEAR POLLY:—In reading Mr. Viny's letter, when I received it, I missed seeing yours, which was written behind it in a corner. I thank you much for your kind offer respecting my grandson. I was fully resolved on sending him in September last, and engaged Mr. Jay, one of my colleagues, then going to England, to take him over in his company. But when it came to be proposed to him he showed such an unwillingness to leave me, and Temple such fondness for retaining him, that I concluded to keep him till I should go over myself. He behaves very well, and we love him very much.

I send herewith two different French grammars, not knowing which to prefer, opinions here being divided. Your French master may take his choice, and you will present the other to my godson as my New Year's gift, with the two volumes of *Synonymes Français*, an excellent work. They will be left at Mr. Hodgson's, merchant, in Coleman Street, where you may have them on sending for them.

Adieu, my dear friend. I long to see you and yours, but God only knows when that may happen. I am nevertheless yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

January 1, 1784.—Health and prosperity and many happy years to my dear friend and her children, for whom I send the enclosed book.

MCCXL

BAYNES' JOURNAL ¹

Wednesday, August 27th.—Hired a coach for the day and went to visit the ambassador (the Duke of

¹ Mr. John Baynes, whose journal of a brief sojourn in Paris in 1783 is here given, was a very intimate friend of Sir Samuel Romilly. "His great talent," says Sir Samuel, "and his learning as a classical scholar, as an English antiquary, and as a profound lawyer, must, if he had lived, have raised him to a very great eminence in his profession, though his honest and independent spirit would probably to him have barred all access to its highest offices."

Baynes, who accompanied Romilly to Paris, had a letter of introduction to Dr. Franklin, and took Romilly with him to call upon the Doctor. Of this visit Romilly wrote in his journal.

"Of all the celebrated persons whom in my life I have chanced to see, Dr. Franklin, both from his appearance and his conversation, seemed to me the most remarkable. His venerable patriarchal appearance, the simplicity of his manner and language, and the novelty of his observations, at least the novelty of them at that time to me, impressed me with an opinion of him as one of the most extraordinary men that ever existed. The American Constitutions were then very recently published. I remember his reading us some passages out of them, and expressing some surprise that the French government had permitted the publication of them in France. They certainly produced a very great sensation in Paris, the effects of which were felt many years afterwards."—*Life of Sir Samuel Romilly*. By his sons. Vol. I, p. 50.—EDITOR.

Manchester), who received me very politely; asked me to dine on Friday. From thence I went to Passy (a pleasant town, two miles from Paris, and on the Seine) to present Dr. Jebb's letter to Dr. Franklin. Mr. Romilly went with me, having inquired most particularly into the propriety of his going, and finding that there would be nothing improper. His house is delightfully situated, and seems very spacious; and he seemed to have a great number of domestics. We sent up the letter, and were then shown up into his bedchamber, where he sat in his nightgown, his feet wrapped up in flannels and resting on a pillow, he having for three or four days been much afflicted with the gout and the gravel. He first inquired particularly after Dr. Jebb, which led us to the subject of parliamentary reformation. I mentioned that Dr. Jebb was for having every man vote; he said he thought Dr. Jebb was right, as the all of one man was as dear to him as the all of another. Afterwards, however, he seemed to qualify this by expressing his approbation of the American system, which excludes minors, servants, and others, who are liable to undue influence. He said that he much doubted whether a parliamentary reform at present would have the desired effect; that we had been much too tender in our economical reform; that offices ought never to be accompanied with such salaries as will make them the objects of desire. In support of this he read the 36th Article of the Pennsylvania Constitution (a most wise and salutary rule). He mentioned the absurd manner in which the *Courrier de l'Europe* had spoken of General

Washington's resignation and retirement, as if it were a dissolution of the original compact. He said that the General was an officer appointed by the state, and no integral part of the Constitution, and that his retirement could affect the state no more than a constable, or other executive officer, going out of office. I observed how some of our papers had affected to depreciate his motive in retiring, and added that I should always suppose a man to act from good motives till I saw cause to think otherwise. "Yes," said he, "so would every honest man"; and then he took an opportunity of reprobating the maxim that all men were equally corrupt. "And yet," said Mr. Romilly, "that was the favorite maxim of Lord North's administration." Dr. Franklin observed that such men might hold such opinions with some degree of reason, judging from themselves and the persons they knew. "A man," added he, "who has seen nothing but hospitals, must naturally have a poor opinion of the health of mankind."

Mr. Romilly asked as to the slave-trade in America, whether it was likely to be abolished. He answered that in several States it now did not exist; that, in Pennsylvania, effective measures were taken for suppressing it; and that, if it had not been for the Board of Trade, he believed it would have been abolished everywhere. To that Board he attributed all our misfortunes, the old members corrupting the young ones.

He seemed equally liberal in religious and in political opinions. The excellence of the Constitution of Massachusetts in point of religious liberty being

mentioned, he observed that they had always shown themselves equally so; that the land was originally granted out to them subject to the payment of a small sum for the support of a Presbyterian minister; that, many years ago, on the application of persons of other religions, they agreed that the sum actually paid by any congregation should go to its own minister, whatever was his persuasion. This was certainly a great act of liberality, because they were not bound to do it in point even of justice, the annual payment being, in fact, the price or rent of the land. He mentioned his having had a conversation with Lord Briston (the Bishop of Derry) on a similar subject; that the Bishop said he had long had in hand a work for the purpose of freeing Roman Catholics from their present state, and giving them a similar indulgence. "And pray, my Lord, while your hand is in, do extend your plan to dissenters, who are clearly within all the reasons of the rule." His Lordship was astonished; no, he saw some distinction or other, which he could not easily explain. In fact, the revenue of his Lordship would have suffered considerable diminution by suffering dissenters to pay their tithes to their own pastors. He reprobated the statute of Henry VI. for limiting votes to forty-shilling freeholders, and observed that the very next statute in the book was an act full of oppression upon poor artificers.

He conversed with greater freedom and openness than I had any right to expect, which I impute partly to Dr. Jebb's friendly letter, partly to his own disposition. I never enjoyed so much pleasure in

my life as in the present conversation with this great and good character. He looked very well, notwithstanding his illness, and, as usual, wore his spectacles, which made him very like a small print I have seen of him in England. He desired us, on taking leave, to come and visit him again, which we resolved to do.

We went to dinner with a bourgeois, a namesake of Mr. R., Mons. Romilly, a watchmaker, Rue St. Louis, near the Pont Neuf—a very pleasant, agreeable man, and an ingenious artist.

Monday, September 1st.—Mr. S. R. left me and set off for Geneva or Lausanne with M. Gautier in a cabriolet or single-horse chair. I never parted with any man more unwillingly, for, besides his excellent disposition, he has such a fund of information on all subjects of importance as must make his company an object of the first consequence. He asked me repeatedly to write to him, which I promised to do.

Monday, September 15th.—Called on Lieutenant Hermon, and walked with him as far as the Barrière de la Conference, on the way to Passy. He left me there, and I proceeded to Dr. Franklin's house. On entering a confounded Swiss servant told me to go up stairs and I should meet with domestics. I went up, but not a domestic was there; I returned and told him there was nobody. He then walked up with me, and pointing to the room before me, told me I might enter, and I should find his master alone. I desired him to announce me. "O Monsieur, ce n'est pas nécessaire; entrez, entrez!" on which I proceeded, and, rapping at the door, I perceived that I had disturbed the old man from a sleep he had

been taking on a sofa. My confusion was inexpressible. However, he soon relieved me from it, saying that he had risen early that morning, and that the heat of the weather had made a little rest not unacceptable, and desiring me to sit down. He inquired if I heard from Dr. Jebb. I then showed him an excellent letter which I had just received from him, with which he seemed much pleased. The letter contained some sentiments on the American religious Constitution, particularly noticing the liberality of that of Massachusetts Bay. Dr. Franklin observed that notwithstanding its excellence he thought there was a fault in it; that when the government of that colony had, thirty or forty years ago, upon the application of dissenters, permitted them to apply their portion of the sum raised for religious purposes to the use of their own minister (as he had mentioned in his former conversation), the Quakers likewise applied for a total exemption from this burden upon this ground, that they did, one among another, gratis, the same duties as the other sects paid a duty for performing. "The government," said he, "considered their case and exempted them from burden, the person claiming an exemption being obliged to produce a certificate from the meeting that he was really *bona fide* one of that persuasion. The present Constitution of Massachusetts Bay does not appear to make any provision of that sort in favor of Quakers. Now I own I think this a fault; for if their regulations, one among another, be such that they answer the ends of a minister, I see no good reason why they should be obliged to contribute to a

useless expense. We find the Quakers to be as orderly and as good subjects as any other religious sect whatever; and indeed," said he, "in one respect I think their mode of instruction has the advantage, for it is always delivered in language adapted to the audience, and consequently is perfectly intelligible. I remember once in England being at a Church near Lord Despencer's with his Lordship, who told me that the clergyman was a very sensible young man, to whom he had just given the living. His sermon was a sensible discourse and in elegant language; but notwithstanding this I could not perceive that the audience seemed at all struck with it. The Quakers in general attend to some plain, sensible man of their sect, whose discourse they all understand. I therefore rather incline to doubt of the necessity of having teachers, or ministers, for the express purpose of instructing the people in their religious duties.

"All this is equally applicable to the law: the Quakers have no lawsuits except as are determined at their own meetings; there is an appeal from the monthly to the annual meeting. All is done without expense, and nobody grumbles at the trouble of deciding. In fact, the honor of being listened to as a preacher, or of presiding to decide lawsuits, is in itself sufficient. A salary only tends to diminish the honor of the office, and this, if considered, will tend to support the doctrine held in the Pennsylvania Constitution which I mentioned to you in our last conversation. Persons will play at chess by the hour, without being paid for it; this you may see in

every coffee-house in Paris. Deciding causes is in fact only a matter of amusement to sensible men."

I mentioned the mode in France of buying seats in the Parliament for the purpose of ennobling themselves. He observed that that very practice would confirm the ideas he had just thrown out. Here a bourgeois gives a sum of money for his seat in Parliament as a *conseiller*. The fees of his office do not bring him in three per cent., or at least not more. Therefore, for the noblesse or honor which his seat gives him he pays two fifths of the price of the office, and at the same time gives up his labor without any recompense.

In the course of our conversation I asked if they did not still imprison for debt in America. He answered that they did, but he expressed his disapprobation of this usage in very strong terms. He said he could not compare any sum of money with imprisonment—they were not commensurable quantities. Nobody, however, in America who possessed a freehold (and almost everybody had a freehold) could be arrested on mesne process. He inclined to think that all these sorts of methods to compel payment were very impolitic; some people indeed think that credit, and consequently commerce, would be diminished if such means were not permitted, but he said that he could not think that the diminution of credit was an evil, for that the commerce which arose from credit was in a great measure detrimental to a state.

He mentioned one instance to show how unnecessary such compulsory means were, and he seemed to

think it would be better if there were no legal means of compelling the payment of debts of a certain magnitude. In the interval between the declaration of independence and the formation of the code of laws in America there was no method of compelling payment of debts, yet, notwithstanding this, the debts were paid as regularly as ever; and if any man had refused to pay a just debt because he was not legally compellable, he durst not have shown his face in the streets. Dr. Jebb having requested me to inquire if there were any good political tracts or pamphlets, I took the liberty to ask if he knew any. He told me that there were a good many upon one particular subject, which had been fully discussed, but which was little known in England as yet. Of these he said one might make a little library. The subject was on the giving information to the public on matters of finance. The books in question had given rise to a set of persons or to a sect called economists, who held that if the people were well informed on matters of finance, it would be unnecessary to use force to compel the raising of money; that the taxes might be too great—so great as in the fact to diminish the revenue—for that a farmer should have at the end of the year not only wherewith to pay his rent and to subsist his family, but also enough to defray the expense of sowing, etc., of next year's crop; otherwise, if the taxes are so high as to prevent this, part of this land must remain unsown, and consequently the crop which is the subject of taxation be diminished, and the taxes of course must suffer the same fate. Some of their principles, he

observed, were perhaps not quite tenable. However, the subject was discussed thoroughly. The Marquis de Mirabeau was said to be the author of the system. Dr. Franklin waited on him, but he assured him that he was not the author originally—that the founder was a Dr. Chenelle, or Quenelle. The Marquis introduced Dr. Franklin to him, but he could not make much out of him, having rather an obscure mode of expressing himself.

He said that he was acquainted with an Abbé now abroad, but who would return in a fortnight or so, and who would give him a list of the principal pamphlets on both sides.

I then left him, and he desired me to call from time to time during my stay at Paris.

Tuesday, September 23d.—Walked to Passy to see Dr. Franklin, but took care to make the servant announce me regularly. Found him with some American gentlemen and ladies, who were conversing upon American commerce, in which the ladies joined. On their departure I was much pleased to see the old man attend them down stairs and hand the ladies to their carriage. On his return I expressed my pleasure in hearing the Americans, and even the ladies, converse entirely upon commerce. He said that it was so throughout the country; not an idle man, and consequently not a poor man, was to be found.

In speaking of American politics, I mentioned Dr. Jebb's sentiments on the famous vote of the House of Commons which put an end to the American war; that he disapproved of the terms of the resolution, which was, on the face of it, founded on our being

better able to combat France, and which therefore could not be very agreeable to America. "Certainly not," said he; "I trust we shall never forget our obligations to France, or prove ungrateful." "You are at so great a distance," said I, "from the European powers, that there does not seem much probability of your quarrelling with any of them, unless on account of Canada or the West Indies." He said that he hoped they would keep themselves out of European politics as much as possible, and that they should make a point of adhering to their treaties.

In the course of this conversation, I mentioned the shameful neglect of treaties which so prevailed at present; the great injustice of several of our own wars, and the triviality of the avowed cause of others. I likewise mentioned Dr. Price's plan for a general peace in Europe. He observed that nothing could be more disgraceful than the scandalous inattention to treaties, which appeared in almost every manifesto; and that he thought the world would grow wiser, and wars become less frequent. But he observed that the plans which he had seen for this purpose were in general impracticable in this respect, viz., that they supposed a general agreement among the sovereigns of Europe to send delegates to a particular place. Now, though perhaps two or three of them might be willing to come into this measure, it is improbable and next to impossible that all, or even a majority of them, would do it. "But," said he, "if they would have patience, I think they might accomplish it, agree upon an alliance against all aggressors, and agree to refer all disputes between each other to

some third person, or set of men, or power. Other nations, seeing the advantage of this, would gradually accede; and perhaps in one hundred and fifty or two hundred years, all Europe would be included. I will, however," continued he, "mention one plan to you, which came to me in rather an extraordinary manner, and which seems to me to contain some very sensible remarks. In the course of last year, a man very shabbily dressed—all his dress together was not worth five shillings—came and desired to see me. He was admitted, and, on asking his business, he told me that he had walked from one of the remotest provinces in France, for the purpose of seeing me and showing me a plan which he had formed for a universal and perpetual peace. I took his plan and read it, and found it to contain much good-sense. I desired him to print it. He said he had no money; so I printed it for him. He took as many copies as he wished for, and gave several away; but no notice whatever was taken of it." He then went into a closet and brought a copy of this plan, which he gave me. I took the liberty to remind him of his list of books, which he promised not to forget, saying the Abbé was now with Lord Shelburne in Holland.

N. B.—He this day expressed his opinion that in England the executive power might maintain all the expense which at present seems to be esteemed so necessary for its establishment.

Thursday, October 2d.—Walked with M. Hernon to Passy. Called upon Dr. Franklin, who showed me an Irish newspaper he had just received, containing the noble and spirited resolutions of the delegates of

the Ulster volunteers at Dungannon, in which they appointed a grand national convention at Dublin. He expressed his sentiments very strongly that they would carry their point, and that, if Parliament would not execute their plan of reform, they would drop the Parliament and execute it themselves. On my asking his opinion of our hopes of success in England, he said he feared we were too corrupt a nation to carry the point. "I have not patience," said he, "to read even your newspapers; they are full of nothing but robberies, murders, and executions, and when a nation once comes to that, nothing short of absolute government can keep it in order."

In speaking of the Irish volunteers I took the liberty of mentioning what seemed to me an omission in the Constitution of America, the want of any sufficient armed force. He said they had a militia who met and exercised five or six days in a year. I objected the smallness of the time, and their serving by substitutes, and, in support of personal service mentioned Andrew Fletcher's opinion.

He seemed to think the objections of no great weight. "For," said he, "America is not, like any European power, surrounded by others, every one of which keeps an immense standing army; therefore she is not liable to attacks from her neighbors—at least, if attacked she is on an equal footing with the aggressor, and if attacked by any distant power she will always have time to form an army. Could she possibly be in a worse situation than at the beginning of this war, and could we have had better success?"

Insensibly we began to converse on standing armies, and he seeming to express an opinion that this system might some time or other be abolished, I took the liberty to ask him in what manner he thought it could be abolished; that at present a compact among the powers of Europe seemed the only way, for one or two powers singly and without the rest would never do it; and that even a compact did not seem likely to take place, because a standing army seemed necessary to support an absolute government, of which there were many in Europe. "That is very true," said he; "I admit that if one power singly were to reduce their standing army, it would be instantly overrun by other nations; but yet I think that there is one effect of a standing army which must in time be felt in such a manner as to bring about the total abolition of the system." On my asking what the effect was to which he alluded, he said he thought they diminished not only the population, but even the breed and the size of the human species. "For," said he, "the army in this and every other country is in fact the flower of the nation—all the most vigorous, stout, and well-made men in a kingdom are to be found in the army. These men in general never marry."

I mentioned to him that in England, our military establishment not being so large, we did not as yet feel these effects, but that the multiplication of the species was dreadfully retarded by other causes, viz.: 1, our habits of luxury, which make us fancy that a young man is ruined if he marries early, nobody ever thinking of retrenching their expenses; and 2, our

absurd laws, *e. g.*, the Marriage Act and the law of descents, which gives all to the eldest son, whereby younger sons are generally excluded.

"Yes," said he, "I have observed that myself in England. I remember dining at a nobleman's house where they were speaking of a distant relation of his who was prevented from marrying a lady whom he loved, by the smallness of their fortunes; everybody was lamenting their hard situation, when I took the liberty to ask the amount of fortunes. 'Why,' said a gentleman near me, 'all they can raise between them will scarce be £40,000.' I was astonished; however, on recollecting myself, I suggested that £40,000 was a pretty handsome fortune; that it would, by being vested in the Three Per Cents, bring in £1,200 a year. 'And pray, sir, consider what is £1,200 a year? There is my lord's carriage and my lady's carriage, etc. etc.' So he ran up £1,200 in a moment. I did not attempt to confute him; but only added that, notwithstanding all he had said, if he would give me the £40,000, I would endow 400 American girls with it, every one of whom should be esteemed a fortune in her own country. As to the custom of giving the eldest son more than the others, we have not actually been able to get entirely rid of it in America. The eldest son in America. . . . Massachusetts has, without either rhyme or reason, a share more than any of the rest. I remember before I was a member of the Assembly, when I was clerk to it, the question was fully agitated. Some were for having the eldest son to have the extraordinary share; others were for

giving it to the youngest son, which seemed indeed the most reasonable, as he was the most likely to want his education, which the others might probably have already had from their father. After three days' debate it was left as it stood before, viz., that the eldest son should have one share more."

I observed that this was the Jewish law of descent. He asked me if it was to be found among Moses' laws? I answered that it was. Upon which he said it was remarkable that he had not seen or heard of it before. "But," said he, "the mention of Moses' laws reminds me of one which always struck me as very extraordinary—and I do not remember an instance where it appears to have been carried into execution; I mean the law prohibiting the alienation of land for a longer time than from jubilee to jubilee, *i. e.*, for 50 years. This must evidently have been intended to prevent accumulation of landed property, but it seems very difficult to execute; indeed, in one respect, it is perhaps impolitic, for it must necessarily follow that the land will be run out at the end of the term."

"That," said I, "will always be the case, even at the end of a fourteen or seven years' lease, and it seems a difficult thing to determine how long a lease to prudence and justice ought to be; these long leases throw too much into the power of the tenant, and in leases from year to year the tenant is too dependent."

"That very thing," replied he, "convinces me that no man should cultivate any land but his own. I rather am of opinion that land at present is of too

high a value throughout these parts of the world. I was reading the other day some accounts of China, sent over by two young Chinese, who were educated here at the expense of government, and sent into their own country again. They were desired to send over minute accounts of every thing relative to that country, and several volumes have been published already. In the last of these I find that they allow a very high interest on money (about 30 per cent.), and it struck me that it was a politic measure, for the consequence would be that no person would be desirous of having a large quantity of land, which therefore must be the more equally divided. All laws for keeping the landed property exactly equal are impracticable on account of the fluctuating state of population; and where at the first the property is equal, if alienation be allowed, it will very soon be unequal again. Antigua was at first divided into lots of ten acres; it is not an ancient colony. I remember one, who was a very old man when I was a very young one, observe that he recollected there being a great number of ten-acre men in the island, and yet that when he spoke there was hardly a ten-acre man to be met with. At this time I do not believe there is one remaining."

I mentioned to him my intention of leaving Paris in ten days: he said he expected his Abbé in less than that time.

Walked with M. Hernon to see the two places of La Muette and Madrid, both in the Bois de Boulogne. On our return we dined at a table-d'hôte where I had often dined before, at the Hotel d'Angleterre,

Rue St. Honore. One of the girls who waited on us had often struck me before with her elegance of figure and her wonderful attention, but this day I heard a story of her which would do honor to a princess. An old Knight of St. Louis who had lived there long happened to have incurred a debt which he found himself unable to pay; he was upwards of eighty, and had outlived all his friends; on his being threatened with the process of the law, Marianne, out of the little she had saved actually paid the debt and supported him to his death.

Sunday, October 12th.—Walked to Passy to call on Dr. Franklin. Found him with two French gentlemen, conversing on the subject of the balloon. Dr. Franklin said he had subscribed to another balloon, and that one of the conditions of the subscription was that a man should be sent up along with it. The gentlemen did not stay long. After they were gone our conversation turned chiefly on the state of the arts here and in other countries, particularly printing and engraving. He admitted that we had one or two artists superior to any French engravers, but he seemed to think the art in much higher perfection here than in England. He showed some engravings (colored in the engraving) of birds, etc., for Buffon's *Natural History*, which were wonderfully finely executed. I cannot, however, think that they can execute a large print so finely as we do in England. I have never seen a large print engraved here which had not a sort of coarseness not to be found in Bartolozzi. Their small designs, vignettes, etc., are beautiful, both in design and execution.

He showed me, among other specimens of printing, the Spanish *Don Quixote*, in 5 vols. 4to, which for elegance of typography and engraving equals any thing I ever saw, except the translation of Sallust by Don Gabriel, the second son of the king of Spain.

I mentioned to him Howard's book on prisons, as one of our best-printed books. He said he had never seen it; I promised to send it to him.

In the course of conversation he again expressed his doubts of our success in accomplishing a parliamentary reform, and repeated his opinion that we had been too tender of places and pensions. He said that these were in general, either directly or indirectly, the object, of coming into Parliament. This he confirmed by an instance taken from America, where he said that he had sat in the Assembly twelve years and had never solicited a single vote; that this was not peculiar to him—hundreds had done the same; that the office of Assemblyman was looked upon as an office of trouble, and that you perpetually saw the papers filled with advertisements requesting to decline the honor. And to show that the salary is the thing which makes the office desirable, the sheriff's place is always sought for by a number of candidates. Anciently when the office of sheriff was instituted in America, the fees were fixed at rather too small a rate to make a sufficient salary, there being then very few writs: the fees were therefore increased; but since that time the number of lawsuits having increased, the salary is increased so as to make the office an object of desire. He seemed to express a fear that the spirit of the Pennsylvania

Constitution was not in this instance perfectly kept up; however, he said if he ever went into America, he would endeavor to diminish the sheriff's salary. He therefore strongly recommended us to persist in the present economical reform, as that would at all events save us from ruin, by taking away the object at which most men at present aim who seek a seat in Parliament.

I asked if the Abbé was yet arrived. "Upon my word," said he, "I had actually forgot your list. The Abbé is arrived, and he was one of the gentlemen who were with me when you came in. But I will write him a note to request he will send you the list of books you wish to have." I promised to send him word when I intended to set off, as he wished to send a letter or two by me to England.

Wednesday, October 15th.—Not being able to get a place for Rouen sooner, engaged one for Friday night. Dr. Franklin having expressed a wish to read Mason's *English Garden*, I sent it to him to-day, with a letter of thanks for his politeness. He returned a most obliging answer.

Thursday, October 16th.—Called on M. l'Abbé Morellet, at Dr. Franklin's instance, to get my list, but he was in the country.

Friday, October 17th.—Called again, but he was still in the country; therefore I was at last disappointed of my list.

MCCXLI

TO JOHN JAY

PASSY, 6 January, 1784.

DEAR SIR:—I received your kind letter of the 26th past, and immediately sent that enclosed to Mrs. Jay, whom I saw a few days since with the children, all perfectly well. It is a happy thing that the little ones are so finely past the small-pox, and I congratulate you upon it most cordially.

It is true, as you have heard, that I have the stone, but not that I have had thoughts of being cut for it. It is as yet very tolerable. It gives me no pain but when in a carriage on the pavement, or when I make some sudden quick movement. If I can prevent its growing larger, which I hope to do by abstemious living and gentle exercise, I can go on pretty comfortably with it to the end of my journey, which can now be at no great distance. I am cheerful, enjoy the company of my friends, sleep well, have sufficient appetite, and my stomach performs well its functions. The latter is very material to the preservation of health. I therefore take no drugs lest I should disorder it. You may judge that my disease is not very grievous, since I am more afraid of the medicines than of the malady.

It gives me pleasure to learn from you that my friends still retain their regard for me. I long to see them again, but I doubt I shall hardly accomplish it. If our commission for the treaty of commerce were arrived, and we were at liberty to treat in England, I might then come over to you, suppos-

ing the English ministry disposed to enter into such a treaty.

I have, as you observe, some enemies in England, but they are my enemies as an *American*; I have also two or three in America, who are my enemies as a *minister*; but I thank God there are not in the whole world any who are my enemies as a *man*; for by his grace, through a long life, I have been enabled so to conduct myself that there does not exist a human being who can justly say, "Ben. Franklin has wronged me." This, my friend, is in old age a comfortable reflection. You too have, or may have, your enemies; but let not that render you unhappy. If you make a right use of them, they will do you more good than harm. They point out to us our faults; they put us upon our guard, and help us to live more correctly.

My grandsons are sensible of the honor of your remembrance, and join their respectful compliments and best wishes with those of, dear sir, your affectionate humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXLII

TO SAMUEL CHASE

PASSY, 6 January, 1784.

DEAR SIR:—I duly received your letter of the 18th of September,¹ with the papers that accompanied it; but being at that time afflicted with two painful disorders, the gout and gravel, I could not

¹ At the time of writing this letter Mr. Chase was in London.

then give any attention to business; and, before my recovery, the letters and papers were both most unaccountably missing. I spent hours, from time to time, in searching for them, and delayed writing in continual hopes of finding them, which I was not able to do till within these few days, when, on removing a writing-press in my closet, I discovered that they had fallen and lay concealed behind it.

I had delivered the letter you enclosed to the Marquis de Lafayette, and, as the court was then at Fontainebleau, and I could not follow it by reason of my illness, I requested him to sound the Marquis de Castries on the subject of the loss of your ship. He did so; and the result of the conversation was that, if you thought fit to prosecute the matter, you should present a memorial, upon which he might regularly take the affair into consideration. You mentioned your coming to Paris before finishing your other business, in case I should think there was a probability of obtaining compensation, either from the property of the captain, or the generosity of the prince. I have not yet been able to learn any thing of the captain's circumstances; and, as clear proof of his delinquency must precede an application to the king, and perhaps the protest of Captain Belt will hardly be thought sufficient testimony, and other evidences corroborating cannot be obtained but with great expense and loss of time, and as the chicanery practised in the courts here to procure delay is immense and endless; on these considerations I cannot advise your coming hither for the purpose of such a prosecution to the prejudice of your other

affairs; though I shall be happy to see you, when it may be convenient to you, and when you are here we will take the advice of some judicious persons, and if it appear possible for me to serve your cause I shall do it with great pleasure.

M. de Rochambeau was not in town, but I forwarded Mr. Carroll's letter to him. I have written, as you desired, to Brest, and, as soon as I receive an answer, I will communicate it to you. I am not enough acquainted with the French laws or customs to inform you what claims the widow of M. le Vaché may have on his property. I only think I have heard that marriages by a Protestant minister are not deemed valid. I will make inquiry.

Since writing the above, I am informed that, if celebrated in a Protestant country according to the laws of that country, they are deemed valid here; as are also the marriages of Protestants here, if in the chapel a Protestant ambassador.

I shall be glad to hear that you have succeeded in recovering the public money, and that you continue to enjoy your health, being, with sincere and great esteem, dear sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXLIII

TO DAVID HARTLEY

PASSY, 7 January, 1784.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—I have this moment received your favor of the 25th past, acquainting me with the

change in administration. I am not sure that in reforming the constitution, which is sometimes talked of, it would not be better to make your great officers of state hereditary, than to suffer the inconvenience of such frequent and total changes. Much faction and cabal would be prevented by having an hereditary First Lord of the Treasury, an hereditary Lord Chancellor, Privy Seal, President of Council, Secretary of State, First Lord of the Admiralty, etc. etc. It will not be said that, the duties of these offices being important, we cannot trust to nature for the chance of requisite talents, since we have an hereditary set of judges in the last resort, the House of Peers; an hereditary king; and, in a certain German university, an hereditary professor of mathematics.

We have not yet heard of the arrival of our express in America, who carried the definitive treaty. He sailed the 26th of September. As soon as the ratification arrives, I shall immediately send you word of it. With great esteem I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXLIV

FROM CHARLES THOMSON

ANNAPOLIS, 15 January, 1784.

DEAR SIR:—Yesterday nine States being for the first time since October last represented, Congress immediately took up and ratified the definitive treaty, with the unanimous consent not only of all

the States represented, but of every individual member of Congress; and, that it might reach you with the greatest despatch, they immediately sent off Colonel Harmar with the ratification by the way of New York, there being no vessel sailing from this bay. They also send a duplicate to be forwarded by Mr. Morris, and this day, from an earnest desire that it may, if possible, arrive in due time, they have determined to send Colonel Franks with a triplicate, to take the chance of a vessel from some of the eastern ports.

I have the satisfaction to inform you that a disposition begins to prevail in the States to comply with the requisitions of Congress, and to grant funds for the regular payment of the interest and discharge of the principal of the debts contracted during the war. I make no doubt but the creditors in Europe are anxious and uneasy at the backwardness of the States. But whoever consults the history of nations will find that taxation is among the late acts of government; that in governments which have been long established, it is not without great difficulty that permanent funds are introduced, and even in the oldest governments new taxes often occasion great uneasiness. Considering, therefore, that in the United States every thing is new and unusual, instead of being surprised at the backwardness of the people in this respect, it is rather a matter of wonder, that they have made so great a progress, and have discovered such a felicity in getting the better of that aversion to taxes which is so universally prevalent. For my own part, I have a great confi-

dence in the good sense of my countrymen in general, nor can I admit a doubt that they will speedily fall upon measures to do justice to all the public creditors. Though you and I have lived to see a great work accomplished, yet much still remains to be done to secure the happiness of this country. May that Almighty Being, who has thus far conducted us safely through many scenes of difficulty and distress, inspire the people of these United States with wisdom to improve the opportunity now afforded of becoming a happy nation!

I need not recommend Colonel Franks to your notice, as you are already acquainted with him. He has great merit for the early part he took, and the sacrifices he has made in the late controversy, and his steady adherence to our cause.

I long for the pleasure of seeing you, but forego that pleasure with the more ease, as I am sensible you are usefully employed in a work which is of great importance to our country. I need not assure you that I am, with the most perfect esteem and respect, dear sir, your affectionate old friend,

CHARLES THOMSON.

MCCXLV

TO JOHN INGENHOUSZ

PASSY, 16 January, 1784.

DEAR FRIEND:—I have this day received your favor of the 2d instant. Every information in my

power, respecting the balloons, I sent you just before Christmas, contained in copies of my letters to Sir Joseph Banks. There is no secret in the affair, and I make no doubt that a person coming from you would easily obtain a sight of the different balloons of Montgolfier and Charles, with all the instructions wanted; and if you undertake to make one, I think it extremely proper and necessary to send an ingenious man here for that purpose; otherwise, for want of attention to some particular circumstance, or of not being acquainted with it, the experiment might miscarry, which, in an affair of so much public expectation, would have bad consequences, draw upon you a great deal of censure, and affect your reputation. It is a serious thing to draw out from their affairs all the inhabitants of a great city and its environs, and a disappointment makes them angry. At Bordeaux lately a person pretended to send up a balloon, and received money from many people, but not being able to make it rise, the populace were so exasperated that they pulled down his house and had like to have killed him.

It appears, as you observe, to be a discovery of great importance, and what may possibly give a new turn to human affairs. Convincing sovereigns of the folly of wars may perhaps be one effect of it, since it will be impracticable for the most potent of them to guard his dominions. Five thousand balloons, capable of raising two men each, could not cost more than five ships of the line, and where is the prince who can afford so to cover his country with troops for its defence as that ten thousand men descending

from the clouds might not in many places do an infinite deal of mischief before a force could be brought together to repel them? It is a pity that any national jealousy should, as you imagine it may, have prevented the English from prosecuting the experiment, since they are such ingenious mechanics, that in their hands it might have made a more rapid progress towards perfection, and all the utility it is capable of affording.

The balloon of Messrs. Charles and Robert was really filled with inflammable air. The quantity being great, it was expensive and tedious filling, requiring two or three days' and nights' constant labor. It had a *soupape*, or valve, near the top, which they could open by pulling a string and thereby let out some air when they had a mind to descend, and they discharged some of their ballast of sand when they would rise again. A great deal of air must have been let out when they landed, so that the loose part might envelop one of them; yet, the car being lightened by that one getting out of it, there was enough left to carry up the other rapidly. They had no fire with them. That is used only in M. Montgolfier's globe, which is open at bottom, and straw constantly burned to keep it up. This kind is sooner and cheaper filled, but must be of much greater dimensions to carry up the same weight, since air rarefied by heat is only twice as light as common air, and inflammable air ten times lighter. M. Morveau, a famous chemist at Dijon, has discovered an inflammable air that will cost only a twenty-fifth part of the price of what is made by oil of vitriol

poured on iron filings. They say it is made from sea coal. Its comparative weight is not mentioned. I am, as ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXLVI

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 17 January, 1784

SIR:—I received the letter your Excellency did me the honor of writing to me the [faded out] enclosing one from a certain Schaffer, who calls himself Lieutenant-Colonel of the Continental Militia, requesting that you would cause to be returned to him a bill of exchange for sixty dollars that has my name on it, and which, with his other papers, has been seized and deposited in the “*greffe criminel du chatelet*,” and complaining that neither the consul nor myself afford him any protection; and you are pleased to desire my sentiments on the affair.

This same Schaffer has been in Paris now about three years, but this is the first time I have heard any mention of his military character; he brought a little money with him, as I understood, to purchase goods, but he soon fell into the hands of a set of sharpers, and being a young man of very weak understanding, having neither good sense enough to be an honest man nor wit enough for a rogue, though with a strong inclination, they first cheated him (as he complained to me) and then joined with him to cheat others. For this purpose they got his name

inserted in the *Almanack Royal* of 1782 and 1783 among the bankers, and the title of *John Schaffer & Compagnie, Commissionnaires des Etats-Unis de l'Amerique, Rue des Fosses, St. Marcel*, to which title they had not the smallest pretence; but it served to give them some credit with the honest but ignorant shopkeepers of Paris, with whose complaints of our *Commissionnaires* not paying I have been —ly troubled. It is by thus running in debt, and by borrowing where he could, that he has for some time subsisted; and I understand that for some of these *escroqueries* he is now in prison. When he was there the first time, about two years ago, not having then so bad an opinion of him, I interested myself in his favor, endeavored to accommodate his affairs, and lent him some money in his distress, which he has never repaid, and yet on various pretences of sickness and misery has obtained more from me lately; but I am now quite tired of him, as is also Mr. Barclay, and if I have refused to make use of any interest I may be supposed to have to screen him from punishment, it is because I think it prostituting the interest of a minister to employ it in protection of knaves; and I am really ashamed to appear in his favor, and afraid that my doing it would tend to lessen the weight of any application I might hereafter have occasion to make in behalf of an honest man. The bill he mentions is, I suppose, one of the Loan-office interest bills sent to him by his brother through the hands of Mr. Barclay, which I accepted, and it will be paid when presented to Mr. Grand. I make no objection to its being delivered up to him,

though the creditors, perhaps, who prosecute him may, for whose use probably his effects have been seized.

The account he gives of his riches is, I believe, altogether as fictitious as his characters [of] Lieut.-Colonel and Commissionaire des Etats-U[nis.] but that his father and brother-in-law are respectable persons in Pennsylvania is true. Mr. Barclay [has] some knowledge of them; for their sakes if [the] punishment of the *carcan*, which I [hear is] intended for him, could be commuted for [a] less *flétrissant*, a longer banishment, or [such] like, I should be glad, and if your Excellency can obtain this for him without too much trouble I shall, in their behalf, acknowledge it as a favor.

With great respect, I am, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S.—I return the letter enclosed. I take it to be written by one Beaumont, his advocate.

MCCXLVII

TO ———

PASSY, 25 January, 1784.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—Your letter of the 12th inst. came duly to hand. I congratulate you and Mr. Hare on your marriage, and wish you every felicity.

I will answer your inquiries as well as I can. The cultivators of land are a respectable part of our people in Pennsylvania, being generally proprietors of

the land they cultivate, out of whom are chosen the majority of our magistrates, legislators, etc., and a year's residence gives a stranger all the rights of a citizen. I am not much acquainted with country affairs, having been always an inhabitant of cities, but I imagine a good plantation ready formed, with a dwelling-house, etc., may be bought for half the sum you mention to be now in your possession, and that the other half would amply furnish the stock, etc., necessary for working the land to advantage. A farm of two or three hundred acres, in the hands of a man who understands agriculture and will attend to it, is capable of furnishing subsistence to a family. If this may be the case with Mr. Hare, you see that your £300 a year will be an accumulating fund, providing for the establishment of children, and for a retirement of ease and comfort in old age. The law is also an honorable profession with us and more profitable than agriculture; and if Mr. Hare is already acquainted with the English common law, which is the basis of ours, he might be admitted to practise immediately, and would find but little difficulty in acquiring a knowledge of our few additions to, or variations of, that law. I have known in my time several considerable estates made by that profession. But the study is dry and laborious and long, that is requisite to arrive at eminence; and if Mr. Hare has not already gone through it, he will consider whether he has the habits of application, industry, and perseverance that are necessary. Not knowing his character and dispositions, it is impossible for me to advise well, or to judge whether sit-

ting down quietly in some cheap part of Europe, and living prudently on two thirds of your income, may not be preferable to any scheme in America. I can only say that if I should be there when you are, my best counsels and services will not be wanting, and to see you happily settled and prosperous there would give me infinite pleasure; but I have not yet obtained leave to go home, and am besides in my 80th year; of course if I ever arrive there my stay can be but short. While I do exist wherever it is, you will find me with unalterable esteem and affection, my dear friend, yours most sincerely,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXLVIII

TO MRS. SARAH BACHE ¹

PASSY, 26 January, 1784

MY DEAR CHILD:—Your care in sending me the newspapers is very agreeable to me. I received by Captain Barney those relating to the *Cincinnati*. My opinion of the institution cannot be of much importance. I only wonder that, when the united wisdom of our nation had, in the Articles of Confederation, manifested their dislike of establishing ranks of nobility, by authority either of the Congress or of any particular State, a number of private persons should think proper to distinguish themselves and their posterity, from their fellow-citizens, and form an order of *hereditary knights*, in direct oppo-

¹ Dr. Franklin's only daughter, married to a merchant in Philadelphia

sition to the solemnly declared sense of their country! I imagine it must be likewise contrary to the good sense of most of those drawn into it by the persuasion of its projectors, who have been too much struck with the ribands and crosses they have seen hanging to the button-holes of foreign officers. And I suppose those who disapprove of it have not hitherto given it much opposition, from a principle somewhat like that of your good mother, relating to punctilious persons, who are always exacting little observances of respect: that, "*if people can be pleased with small matters, it is a pity but they should have them.*"

In this view, perhaps, I should not myself, if my advice had been asked, have objected to their wearing their ribands and badges themselves according to their fancy, though I certainly should to the entailing it as an honor on their posterity. For honor, worthily obtained (as that, for example, of our officers), is in its nature a *personal* thing, and incommunicable to any but those who had some share in obtaining it. Thus among the Chinese, the most ancient, and from long experience the wisest of nations, honor does not *descend*, but *ascends*. If a man, from his learning, his wisdom, or his valor, is promoted by the emperor to the rank of Mandarin, his parents are immediately entitled to all the same ceremonies of respect from the people that are established as due to the Mandarin himself; on the supposition that it must have been owing to the education, instruction, and good example afforded him by his parents, that he was rendered capable of serving the public.

This *ascending* honor is therefore useful to the state, as it encourages parents to give their children a good and virtuous education. But the *descending honor*, to a posterity who could have no share in obtaining it, is not only groundless and absurd, but often hurtful to that posterity, since it is apt to make them proud, disdaining to be employed in useful arts, and thence falling into poverty, and all the meannesses, servility, and wretchedness attending it; which is the present case with much of what is called the *noblesse* in Europe. Or if, to keep up the dignity of the family, estates are entailed entire on the eldest male heir, another pest to industry and improvement of the country is introduced, which will be followed by all the odious mixture of pride, and beggary, and idleness, that have half depopulated and *decultivated* Spain; occasioning continual extinction of families by the discouragements of marriage and neglect in the improvement of estates.

I wish, therefore, that the Cincinnati, if they must go on with their project, would direct the badges of their order to be worn by their fathers and mothers, instead of handing them down to their children. It would be a good precedent, and might have good effect. It would also be a kind of obedience of the fourth commandment, in which God enjoins us to *honor* our father and mother, but has nowhere directed us to honor our children. And certainly no mode of honoring those immediate authors of our being can be more effectual, than that of doing praiseworthy actions, which reflect honor on those who gave us our education; or more becoming, than

that of manifesting, by some public expression or token, that it is to their instruction and example we ascribe the merit of those actions.

But the absurdity of *descending honors* is not a mere matter of philosophical opinion; it is capable of mathematical demonstration. A man's son, for instance, is but half of his family, the other half belonging to the family of his wife. His son, too, marrying into another family, his share in the grandson is but a fourth; in the great-grandson, by the same process, it is but an eighth; in the next generation a sixteenth; the next a thirty-second; the next a sixty-fourth; the next an hundred and twenty-eighth; the next a two hundred and fifty-sixth; and the next a five hundred and twelfth. Thus in nine generations, which will not require more than three hundred years (no very great antiquity for a family), our present Chevalier of the Order of Cincinnati's share in the then existing knight will be but a five hundred and twelfth part, which, allowing the present certain fidelity of American wives to be insured down through all those nine generations, is so small a consideration that methinks no reasonable man would hazard for the sake of it the disagreeable consequences of the jealousy, envy, and ill-will of his countrymen.

Let us go back with our calculation from this young noble, the five hundred and twelfth part of the present knight, through his nine generations, till we return to the year of the institution. He must have had a father and a mother, they are two; each of them had a father and a mother, they are

four. Those of the next preceding generation will be eight, the next sixteen, the next thirty-two, the next sixty-four, the next one hundred and twenty-eight, the next two hundred and fifty-six, and the ninth in this retrocession five hundred and twelve, who must be now existing, and all contribute their proportion of their future *Chevalier de Cincinnatus*. These, with the rest, make together as follows:

	2
	4
	8
	16
	32
	64
	128
	256
	512
	<hr/>
Total . . .	1,022

One thousand and twenty-two men and women, contributors to the formation of one knight. And if we are to have a thousand of these future knights, there must be now and hereafter existing one million and twenty-two thousand fathers and mothers who are to contribute to their production, unless a part of the number are employed in making more knights than one. Let us strike off, then, the twenty-two thousand, on the supposition of this double employ, and then consider whether, after a reasonable estimation of the number of rogues, and fools, and scoundrels, and prostitutes that are mixed with, and

help to make up, necessarily their million of predecessors, posterity will have much reason to boast of the noble blood of the then existing set of Chevaliers of Cincinnatus. The future genealogists, too, of these Chevaliers, in proving the lineal descent of their honor through so many generations (even supposing honor capable in its nature of descending), will only prove the small share of this honor which can be justly claimed by any one of them, since the above simple process in arithmetic makes it quite plain and clear that, in proportion as the antiquity of the family shall augment, the right to the honor of the ancestor will diminish; and a few generations more would reduce it to something so small as to be very near an absolute nullity. I hope, therefore, that the Order will drop this part of their project, and content themselves, as the Knights of the Garter, Bath, Thistle, St. Louis, and other Orders of Europe do, with a life enjoyment of their little badge and riband, and let the distinction die with those who have merited it. This, I imagine, will give no offence. For my own part, I shall think it a convenience when I go into a company where there may be faces unknown to me, if I discover, by this badge, the persons who merit some particular expression of my respect; and it will save modest virtue the trouble of calling for our regard by awkward round-about intimations of having been heretofore employed as officers in the Continental service.

The gentleman who made the voyage to France to provide the ribands and medals, has executed his commission. To me they seem tolerably done; but

all such things are criticised. Some find fault with the Latin, as wanting classical elegance and correctness; and, since our nine universities were not able to furnish better Latin, it was pity, they say, that the mottoes had not been in English. Others object to the title, as not properly assumable by any but General Washington, and a few others, who served without pay. Others object to the *bald eagle* as looking too much like a *dindon*, or turkey. For my own part, I wish the bald eagle had not been chosen as the representative of our country; he is a bird of bad moral character; he does not get his living honestly; you may have seen him perched on some dead tree, where, too lazy to fish for himself, he watches the labor of the fishing-hawk; and, when that diligent bird has at length taken a fish, and is bearing it to his nest for the support of his mate and young ones, the bald eagle pursues him and takes it from him. With all this injustice he is never in good case; but, like those among men who live by sharpening and robbing, he is generally poor, and often very lousy. Besides, he is a rank coward; the little king-bird, not bigger than a sparrow, attacks him boldly and drives him out of the district. He is therefore by no means a proper emblem for the brave and honest Cincinnati of America, who have driven all the *king-birds* from our country; though exactly fit for that order of knights which the French call *Chevaliers d'Industrie*.

I am, on this account, not displeased that the figure is not known as a bald eagle, but looks more like a turkey. For in truth, the turkey is in com-

parison a much more respectable bird, and withal a true original native of America. Eagles have been found in all countries, but the turkey was peculiar to ours; the first of the species seen in Europe being brought to France by the Jesuits from Canada, and served up at the wedding table of Charles the Ninth.¹ He is, besides, (though a little vain and silly, it is true, but not the worse emblem for that,) a bird of courage, and would not hesitate to attack a grenadier of the British Guards, who should presume to invade his farmyard with a *red* coat on.

I shall not enter into the criticisms made upon their Latin. The gallant officers of America may not have the merit of being great scholars, but they undoubtedly merit much, as brave soldiers, from their country, which should therefore not leave them merely to *fame* for their "*virtutis premium*," which is one of their Latin mottoes. Their "*esto perpetua*," another, is an excellent wish, if they meant it for their country; bad, if intended for their order. The States should not only restore to them the *omnia* of their first motto,² which many of them have left and lost, but pay them justly, and reward them generously. They should not be suffered to remain, with all their new-created chivalry, *entirely* in the situation of the gentleman in the story, which their *omnia*

¹ A learned friend of the Editor's has observed to him that this is a mistake, as *turkeys* were found in great plenty by Cortes when he invaded and conquered Mexico, before the time of Charles the Twelfth; that this, and their being brought to old Spain, is mentioned by Peter Martyr of Anghiera, who was Secretary to the Council of the Indies, established immediately after the discovery of America, *and personally acquainted with Columbus* — W. T. F.

² "*Omnia reliquit servare Republicain.*"

reliquit reminds me of. You know every thing makes me recollect some story. He had built a very fine house, and thereby much impaired his fortune. He had a pride, however, in showing it to his acquaintance. One of them, after viewing it all, remarked a motto over the door "*ŌĪA VANITAS.*" "What," says he, "is the meaning of this *ŌĪA*? It is a word I don't understand." "I will tell you," said the gentleman; "I had a mind to have the motto cut on a piece of smooth marble, but there was not room for it between the ornaments, to be put in characters large enough to read. I therefore made use of a contraction anciently very common in Latin manuscripts, whereby the *m*'s and *n*'s in words are omitted, and the omission noted by a line above, which you may see there; so that the word is *omnia*, OMNIA VANITAS." "Oh," said his friend, "I now comprehend the meaning of your motto: it relates to your edifice; and signifies that, if you have abridged your *omnia*, you have, nevertheless, left your VANITAS legible at full length." I am, as ever, your affectionate father,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXLIX

FROM WILLIAM STRAHAN

LONDON, 1 February, 1784.

DEAR SIR:—I wrote to you in August last, in answer to your very kind note of July 29th, enclosing a line to you from Mrs. Bache, which I then forgot

to return to you, but which I now enclose. This letter I sent by the common post, which I hope came safe to hand, though I have not had the pleasure of hearing from you since.

I therein acknowledged, and beg leave to repeat my warmest acknowledgments for the very friendly and affectionate patronage, you and your good family on the other side of the water afforded my poor, helpless, and singularly distressed kinswoman, than whom none can be more grateful or more deserving the great kindness you have shown her. By this time, I dare say, you are convinced that the high character I presumed to give you of her was in no shape exaggerated, and that she is really the worthy and accomplished young woman I represented her to be. Her late letters to me are all full of the strongest expressions of gratitude for Mrs. Bache's continued goodness to her.

Notwithstanding what you told me in your last, I cannot, nor will I, renounce all hope of seeing you again, and that soon too. You have so many friends here, whom you love, because they love you, and whom you must therefore be anxiously eager to see, that I judge it needless to add any other inducements. though I could mention many, which I dare say will readily occur to yourself. In short, I am clearly for your spending the rest of your days here, where you know you may have every comfort and amusement this world can afford, and where you can most easily and most perfectly enjoy yourself in your own way. I earnestly request you will give all due attention to this advice, which I wish to impress upon

you with all possible earnestness. One argument only will I now add more. I hear, and with real concern I hear it, that you are afflicted with the gout. I need not tell you that here is the best medical assistance this world affords. And now I will not tease you more upon this subject, till I have the happiness of hearing from you again.

We are still in the greatest political confusion here. After several adjournments, we, the House of Commons, meet again to-morrow; but I do not hear that any conciliation, so much wanted, is likely to take place. What this will end in, it is impossible for me to say; but it is not probable we can remain many days longer in our present situation. My family are all in their ordinary health, and will be very happy to see you once more in this still most agreeable country. I remain with unalterable esteem and affection, dear sir, etc.,

WILLIAM STRAHAN.

MCCL

TO HENRY LAURENS

PASSY, 12 February, 1784.

DEAR SIR:—I received your favor of the 3d instant by your son, with the newspapers, for which I thank you. The disorders of that government, whose constitution has been so much praised, are come to a height that threatens some violent convulsion, if not a dissolution, and its physicians do not even seem to guess at the cause of the disease,

and therefore prescribe insufficient remedies, such as place bills, more equal representation, more frequent elections, etc. In my humble opinion, the malady consists in the enormous salaries, emoluments, and patronage of great offices. Ambition and avarice are separately strong passions. When they are united in pursuit of the same object they are too strong to be governed by common prudence, or influenced by public spirit and love of country; they drive men irresistibly into factions, cabals, dissensions, and violent divisions, always mischievous to public councils, destructive to the peace of society, and sometimes fatal to its existence. As long as the immense profits of these offices subsist, members of the shortest and most equally chosen Parliaments will have them in view, and contend for them, and their contentions will have all the same ruinous consequences.

To me, then, there seems to be but one effectual remedy, and that not likely to be adopted by so corrupt a nation, which is to abolish these profits, and make every place of *honor* a place of *burden*. By that means the effect of one of the passions above-mentioned would be taken away, and something would be added to counteract the other. Thus the number of competitors for great offices would be diminished, and the efforts of those who still would obtain them moderated.

Thank God we have now less connection with the affairs of these people, and are more at liberty to take care of our own, which I hope we shall manage better.

We have a terrible winter here; such another in

this country is not remembered by any man living. The snow has been thick upon the ground ever since Christmas, and the frost constant. My grandson joins in best compliments to yourself and Miss Laurens. With sincere esteem and affection, I have the honor to be, dear sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLI

TO WILLIAM STRAHAN

PASSY, 16 February, 1784.

DEAR SIR:—I received and read with pleasure your kind letter of the 1st instant, as it informed me of the welfare of you and yours. I am glad the accounts you have from your kinswoman at Philadelphia are agreeable, and I shall be happy if any recommendations from me can be serviceable to Dr. Ross, or any others, friends of yours, going to America.

Your arguments, persuading me to come once more to England, are very powerful. To be sure, I long to see again my friends there, whom I love abundantly; but there are difficulties and objections of several kinds, which at present I do not see how to get over.

I lament with you the political disorders England at present labors under. Your papers are full of strange accounts of anarchy and confusion in America, of which we know nothing, while your own affairs are really in a deplorable situation. In my

humble opinion the root of the evil lies not so much in too long or too unequally chosen Parliaments, as in the enormous salaries, emoluments, and patronage of your great offices, and that you will never be at rest till they are all abolished, and every place of honor made at the same time, instead of a place of profit, a place of expense and burden.

Ambition and avarice are each of them strong passions, and when they are united in the same persons, and have the same objects in view for their gratification, they are too strong for public spirit and love of country, and are apt to produce the most violent factions and contentions. They should therefore be separated and made to act one against the other. Those places, to speak in our old style (brother type) may be good for the *chapel*, but they are bad for the master, as they create constant quarrels that hinder the business. For example, here are two months that your government has been employed in *getting its form to press*; which is not yet fit to *work on*, every page of it being *squabbled*, and the whole ready to fall into *pie*. The fonts, too, must be very scanty, or strangely *out of sorts*, since your *compositors* cannot find either *upper* or *lower case letters* sufficient to set the word ADMINISTRATION, but are forced to be continually *turning for them*. However, to return to common (though perhaps too saucy) language, do not despair; you have still one resource left, and that not a bad one, since it may reunite the empire. We have some remains of affection for you, and shall always be ready to receive and take care of you in case of distress. So if you have not sense and virtue

enough to govern yourselves, e'en dissolve your present old crazy constitution, and send members to Congress.

You will say my *advice* "smells of *Madeira*." You are right. This foolish letter is mere chitchat *between ourselves* over the *second bottle*. If, therefore, you show it to anybody (except our indulgent friends, Dagge and Lady Strahan), I will positively *solless* you. Yours ever most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLII

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 26 February, 1784.

SIR:—Mr. Williams, desiring no further surseance against the bulk of his creditors, with whom he has amicably arranged his affairs, and to whom he proposes to do exact justice, I the more willingly join my request with his, that he may be secured against the small number remaining, who aim at forcing him to favor them to the prejudice of the others. I am, with great respect, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLIII

TO PAUL JONES

PASSY, 4 March, 1784.

SIR:—I return herewith the paper you communicated to me yesterday. I perceive by the extract

from M. de Sartine's letter that it was his intention that all the charges which had accrued upon the *Serapis* and *Countess of Scarborough* should be deducted from the prize-money payable to the captors, particularly the expense of victualling the seamen and prisoners, and that the liquidation of those charges should be referred to me. This liquidation, however, never was referred to me, and, if it had been, I should have been cautious of acting in it, having received no power from the captors, either French or Americans, authorizing me to decide upon any thing respecting their interests. And I certainly should not have agreed to charge the American captors with any part of the expense of maintaining the 600 prisoners in Holland till they should be exchanged, when none of them were exchanged for Americans in England, as was your intention, and as we both had been made to expect. With great esteem, I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLIV

TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN

PASSY, 5 March, 1784.

DEAR SIR:—You mention that I may now see verified all you said about binding down England to so hard a peace. I suppose you do not mean by the American treaty; for we were exceeding favorable in not insisting on the reparations so justly due for the wanton burnings of our fine towns, and devastations of our plantations in a war now universally

allowed to have been originally unjust. I may add that you will also see verified all I said about the article respecting the royalists, that it will occasion more mischief than it was intended to remedy, and that it would have been better to have omitted all mention of them. England might have rewarded them according to their merits at no very great expense. After the harms they had done to us, it was imprudent to insist on our doing them good.

I am sorry for the overturn you mention of those beneficial systems of commerce that would have been exemplary to mankind. The making England entirely a free port would have been the wisest step ever taken for its advantage.

I wish much to see what you say a respectable friend of mine has undertaken to write respecting the peace. It is a pity it has been delayed. If it had appeared earlier it might have prevented much mischief by securing our friends in their situations; for we know not who will succeed them, nor what credit they will hold.

By my doubts of the propriety of my going soon to London, I meant no reflection on my friends or yours. If I had any call there besides the pleasure of seeing those whom I love, I should have no doubts. If I live to arrive there, I shall certainly embrace your kind invitation, and take up my abode with you. Make my compliments and respects acceptable to Mrs. Vaughan. I know not what foundation there can be for saying that I abuse England as much as before the peace. I am not apt, I think, to be abusive; of the two, I had rather be abused.

Enclosed are the letters you desire. I wish to hear from you more frequently, and to have, through you, such new pamphlets as you may think worth my reading. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLV

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 5 March, 1784.

SIR:—I received the letter which your Excellency did me the honor of writing to me, respecting the necessity of producing legal proof of the arrangement made with the creditors mentioned in Mr. Williams' state of his affairs. I am much obliged by the attention you are so good as to afford this business on my recommendation, and I send herewith the original of those arrangements for your inspection. With great respect, I am, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S.—These papers being Mr. Williams' only discharge, he requests they may be returned to him after examination.

MCCLVI

TO CHARLES THOMSON, SECRETARY OF CONGRESS

PASSY, 9 March, 1784.

SIR:—I received a few days since a letter from Annapolis, dated June the 5th, in your handwriting, but not signed, acquainting the Commissioners with the

causes of delay in sending the ratification of the definitive treaty. The term was expired before that letter came to hand; but I hope no difficulty will arise from a failure in a point not essential, and which was occasioned by accidents. I have just received from Mr. Hartley a letter on the subject, of which I enclose a copy.

We have had a terrible winter, too, here, such as the oldest men do not remember, and indeed it has been very severe all over Europe.

I have exchanged ratifications with the ambassador of Sweden, and enclose a copy of that I received from him.

Mr. Jay is lately returned from England. Mr. Laurens is still there, but proposes departing for America next month, as does also Mr. Jay, with his family. Mr. Adams is in Holland, where he has been detained by business and bad weather. These absences have occasioned some delays in our business, but not of much importance.

The war long expected between the Turks and Russians is prevented by a treaty, and it is thought an accommodation will likewise take place between them and the emperor. Every thing here continues friendly and favorable to the United States. I am pestered continually with numbers of letters from people in different parts of Europe, who would go to settle in America, but who manifest very extravagant expectations, such as I can by no means encourage, and who appear otherwise to be very improper persons. To save myself trouble, I have just printed some copies of the enclosed little piece, which I

purpose to send hereafter in answer to such letters. Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to Congress, and believe me to be, with sincere esteem, dear sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLVII

TO HENRY LAURENS

PASSY, 12 March, 1784

DEAR SIR:—I received your kind letter by Mr. Chollet with the pamphlets and newspapers, and since, a paper of the 5th, which came under cover to Mr. Grand. I am much obliged to you for these communications.

Your sentiments and mine respecting the continual drafts on Europe coincide perfectly. I have just received a letter from Mr. Carmichael, dated the 14th past, in which he says: “Bills from Congress come to hand from time to time, some of which Mr. M. has advised me of; the others I am at a loss what to do with; but having no instructions to the contrary, I cannot refuse accepting them. I should be glad to know your sentiments thereon.” All I can say to him in answer is, that it will behoove him to consider where he can find funds for payment, since there is not the smallest probability that I shall be able to assist him from hence. Sure it must be some unavoidable necessity that induces so prudent a man as Mr. Morris to take such measures; and the several States must be much to blame to leave him under that necessity.

I heartily wish you success in your endeavors to recover your £2,800 from the Treasury. I know too well the dexterity of that board (dexterity is acquired by much practice) in fighting off payments, not to think you very lucky if you can obtain your right by only mounting twice more their seventy steps.

The commission for a commercial treaty, ordered to be prepared by the vote of May last, is indeed not yet come to hand; but by their sending us repeatedly copies of that vote, and nothing more, it looks as if they thought we might proceed, by virtue of it, to prepare a plan of a treaty. Having written expressly on the subject, we may expect soon to know their minds more perfectly.

I thank you much for your information of the proceedings of the West India people. It seems to me that we cannot be much hurt by any selfish regulations the English may make respecting our trade with their islands. Those who at present wish to kick the hedge-hog will grow tired of that sport when they find their own toes bleed.

I have just received a letter from the Secretary of Congress, Mr. Thomson, of which I enclose a copy. The term for exchanging the ratifications was expired before it came to hand. Mr. Hartley having frequently written to me to know if the ratification was arrived, I have communicated to him this letter, that he might see the delay was occasioned only by unforeseen accidents, and that we had reason to expect receiving it by the return of the Washington packet. I do not imagine that any difficulty will be

occasioned by this circumstance; but perhaps it may not be amiss, if you are well enough, to see Mr. Hartley on the subject, and should any agreement to extend the term be necessary, you can enter into it as well as if we were all present.

MCCLVIII

TO HENRY LAURENS

PASSY, 12 March, 1784.

DEAR SIR:—I write this in great pain from the gout in both feet; but my young friend, your son, having informed me that he sets out for London tomorrow, I could not let slip the opportunity, as perhaps it is the only safe one that may occur before your departure for America. I wish mine was as near. I think I have reason to complain that I am so long without an answer from Congress to my request of recall. I wish rather to die in my own country than here; and though the upper part of the building appears yet tolerably firm, yet, being undermined by the stone and gout united, its fall cannot be far distant.

You are so good as to offer me your friendly services. You cannot do me one more acceptable at present than that of forwarding my dismissal. In all other respects, as well as that, I shall ever look on your friendship as an honor to me; being with sincere and great esteem, dear sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. *March 13th.*—Having had a tolerable night, I find myself something better this morning. In

reading over my letter, I perceive an omission of my thanks for your kind assurances of never forsaking my defence, should there be need. I apprehend that the violent antipathy of a certain person to me may have produced some calumnies, which what you have seen and heard here may enable you to refute. You will thereby exceedingly oblige one, who has lived beyond all other ambition than that of dying with the fair character he has long endeavored to deserve. As to my infallibility, which you do not undertake to maintain, I am too modest myself to claim it—that is, *in general*; though when we come to *particulars*, I, like other people, give it up with difficulty. Steele says that the difference between the Church of Rome and the Church of England on that point is only this: that the one pretends to be *infallible*, and the other to be *never in the wrong*. In this latter sense, we are most of us Church of England men, though few of us confess it, and express it so naturally and frankly as a certain lady here, who said: “I do not know how it happens, but I meet with nobody, except myself, that is *always* in the right—*Je ne trouve que moi qui a toujours raison*.”

My grandson joins me in affectionate respects to you and the young lady; with best wishes for your health and prosperity,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLIX

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON

PASSY, 19 March, 1784.

You will forget me quite, my dear old friend, if I do not write to you now and then.

I still exist, and still enjoy some pleasure in that existence, though now in my seventy-ninth year. Yet I feel the infirmities of age come on so fast, and the building to need so many repairs, that in a little time the owner will find it cheaper to pull it down and build a new one. I wish, however, to see you first, but I begin to doubt the possibility. My children join in love to you and yours, with your affectionate friend,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLX

TO M. DE LA CONDAMINE

PASSY, 19 March, 1784.

SIR:—I received the very obliging letter you did me the honor of writing to me the 8th instant, with the epigram, for which please to accept my thanks.

You desire my sentiments concerning the cures performed by Camus and Mesmer. I think that, in general, maladies caused by obstructions may be treated by electricity with advantage. As to the animal magnetism so much talked of, I must doubt its existence till I can see or feel some effect of it. None of the cures said to be performed by it have fallen under my observation, and there being so many disorders which cure themselves, and such a disposition in mankind to deceive themselves and one another on these occasions, and living long has given me so frequent opportunity of seeing certain remedies cried up as curing every thing, and yet soon after totally laid aside as useless, I cannot but

fear that the expectation of great advantage from this new method of treating diseases will prove a delusion. That delusion may, however, and in some cases, be of use while it lasts. There are in every great, rich city a number of persons who are never in health, because they are fond of medicines and always taking them, whereby they derange the natural functions and hurt their constitution. If these people can be persuaded to forbear their drugs, in expectation of being cured by only the physician's finger, or an iron rod pointing at them, they may possibly find good effects, though they mistake the cause.¹ I have the honor to be, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ Mesmer enjoyed at this time the most lucrative practice of any physician in Paris, and had Lafayette and Puysegur among his paying pupils. On the 12th of March, 1784, the king named five eminent members of the medical faculty to investigate his theory and pretensions. At the request of these gentlemen, the king added to the commission five members of the Academy of Sciences, among whom the first named was Franklin. The others were Le Roy, Lavoisier, Bailly, and de Bory. To these were joined Majault, Sallin, D'Arcet, and Guillotin from the faculty of medicine. Mesmer declined to appear before the commissioners, but M. Desson, one of the disciples of Mesmer volunteered to become the champion of his system of cure. He read a memoir on the subject before the commission, and undertook.

1. To demonstrate the existence of animal magnetism.
2. To communicate what he knew of it.
3. To make manifest its usefulness in the cure of disease.

Desson made a great variety of experiments, and repeatedly met with the commissioners for these experiments at Franklin's residence in Passy, the Doctor's health or occupations not allowing him to attend the experiments, made elsewhere. On one occasion, M. Desson attempted to magnetize the Doctor and his two grandchildren and some other Americans who chanced to be at the Legation, but without edifying results.

On another occasion, the commission assembled at Passy to see a tree magnetized, and subsequently two female invalids. The results were not such as to sustain M. Desson's theory in the eyes of the commis-

MCCLXI

TO PAUL JONES

PASSY, 23 March, 1784.

SIR:—I received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me this morning respecting the settlement of charges incurred in Holland, etc. Be so good as to send me a copy of the letter written by M. de Sartine, which you mention. On sight of that I shall immediately give you an explicit answer.

With great esteem, I am, sir, your most obedient and humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLXII

TO CHARLES THOMSON

PASSY, 31 March, 1784.

DEAR SIR:—I write this line by the English packet, just to inform you that Colonel Harmar

sioners. In their report, submitted on the 11th August, 1784, they found that the phenomena they witnessed were mainly the work of the imagination acting usually upon a nervous system morbidly sensitive, and that its influence is rather destructive than remedial. See *Rapport des Commissaires Chargés par le Roi de l'Examen du Magnétisme Animal Imprimé par Ordre du Roi à Paris*, 1784.

Other authorities state that Jussieu, the eminent naturalist, declined to sign the report, being persuaded that there was something in the phenomena exhibited not to be fully explained by the activity of the imagination. His name does not appear in the official report, however.

Mesmer's theory was supplemented by the discovery, in the following year (1785), of magnetic somnambulism with insensibility to pain, and clairvoyance, by one of his pupils, the Marquis de Puységur. This really great discovery gave an importance to mesmerism, which has rescued its author's name from the contempt to which the hostile report of such a board was calculated to consign it —EDITOR.

arrived here last Monday evening with the ratification, and that Mr. Jay and myself (Messrs. Adams and Laurens being absent) have written to Mr. Hartley at London, that we are ready to exchange with him. I have not heard that the delay is likely to occasion any difficulty. I had before communicated to him your letter of the 5th of January, which gave the reason of it. With great esteem, I am,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLXIII

IMPOLICY OF WAR

. . . I agree with you perfectly in your disapprobation of war. [*Illegible in MS.*] from the inhumanity of it, I think it wrong in point of human prudence, for whatever advantage one nation would obtain from another, whether it be part of their territory, the liberty of commerce with them, free passage on their river, etc., it would be much cheaper to purchase such advantage with ready money, than to pay the expense of acquiring it by war. An army is a devouring monster, and when you have raised it you have, in order to assist it, not only the fair charges of pay, clothing, provision, arms, and ammunition, with numberless other contingent and just charges, to answer and satisfy, but you have all the additional knavish charges of the numerous tribe of contractors to defray, with those of any other dealer who furnishes the articles wanted for your army, and

takes advantage of that want to demand exorbitant prices. It seems to me that if statesmen had a little more arithemtic, or were more accustomed to calculation, wars would be much less frequent. I am confident that '——might have been purchased from France for a tenth part of the money England spent in the conquest of it. And if instead of fighting with us for the power of [*illegible in MS.*] us, it had kept us in good humor by allowing us to dispose of our own money, and now and then giving us a little of hers by way of donation to colleges, or hospitals, or for cutting canals, or fortifying ports, she might easily have drawn from us much more of our occasional voluntary grants and contributions than ever she could by taxes. Sensible people will give a bucket or two of water to a dry pump, that they may afterwards get from it all they have occasion for. Her ministry were deficient in that little point of common-sense, and so they spent one hundred millions of her money, and, after all, lost what they contended for.

I lament the loss your town has suffered this year by fire. I sometimes think men do not act like reasonable creatures when they build for themselves combustible dwellings, in which they are every day obliged to use fire. In my new buildings I have taken a few precautions not generally used, to wit: none of the wooden work of one room communicates with the wooden work of any other room, and all the floors, and even the steps of the stairs, are plastered close. Yours, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ Illegible in MS. "Canada" probably was the word.

MCCLXIV

FROM RICHARD PRICE

NEWINGTON GREEN, 6 April, 1784.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—I have been long intending to write to you, and I feel ashamed that I have not done it sooner. Your letter, which was brought to me by Mr. Bingham, gave me great pleasure. It enclosed a case for an air balloon, and a print, which, in conformity to your desire, I delivered to the President of the Royal Society. Soon after Mr. Bingham's arrival, Mr. Dagge brought me your paper on a mathematical prize question,¹ proposed by the Royal Academy of Brussels. I conveyed this to Dr. Priestley, and we have been entertained with the pleasantry of it and the ridicule it contains.

The discovery of air balloons seems to make the present time a new epoch, and the last year will, I suppose, be always distinguished as the year in which mankind began to fly in France. Nothing has yet been done here in this way of any consequence. In the Royal Society a great part of the winter has been employed in a manner very unworthy of philosophers. An opposition has been formed to the President. Motions for censuring him have been repeatedly made at our weekly meetings, and supported by Dr. Horsley, the Astronomer Royal, Mr. Maseres, Mr. Maty, and others. These motions have produced long and warm debates. Lately there has been a suspension of these debates; but there is now some danger that they may be revived again,

¹ See letter to Dr. Price, 16 September, 1783.—EDITOR.

for Mr. Maty has just resigned his place of Secretary, in resentment.

In your letter you have intimated that you then entertained some thoughts of visiting London in the spring. This is much wished for by your friends here, and particularly by the Club at the London Coffee House, which you have so often made happy by your company. Dr. Priestley intends coming to London from Birmingham in about a fortnight; but could he reckon upon the pleasure of seeing you in London at any time, he would contrive to come up at that time. He has, I find, been chosen a member of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris. This is indeed a singular honor, and must give him particular pleasure.

Political affairs in this country are at present in great confusion. The king, after dismissing from his service the leaders of the late odious coalition, and appointing other ministers in their room, to the great joy of the kingdom, has at last found it necessary, in order to maintain the new ministers in power, and to carry on the public business, to dissolve the Parliament. We are therefore now in the midst of the heat and commotion of a general election, and such is the influence of government on elections, and also the present temper of the people, that probably the new ministers will have a great majority in their favor in the new Parliament.

The most wise and virtuous part of the nation are struggling hard to gain a Parliamentary reform, and think, with great reason, that while the representation continues such a mockery as it is, no change of

ministers can do us much good. But an equal representation is a blessing which probably we shall never obtain till a convulsion comes, which will dissolve all government and give an opportunity for erecting a new frame.

In America there is, I hope, an opening for a better state of human affairs. Indeed I look upon the revolution there as one of the most important events in the history of the world. Wishing, for the sake of mankind, that the United States may improve properly the advantages of their situation, I have been lately employing myself in writing *sentiments of caution and advice*, which I mean to convey to them as a last offering of my good-will. I know I am by no means qualified for such a work, nor can I expect that any advice I can give will carry much weight with it, or be much worth their acceptance. I cannot, however, satisfy my own mind without offering it, such as it is.¹ I always think of your friendship with particular satisfaction, and consider it as one of the honors and blessings of my life. You have attained an eminence of credit and usefulness in the world to which few can aspire. That it may be continued as long as the course of nature will allow, and that you may enjoy every comfort that can make you most happy, is, dear sir, the sincere wish of yours most affectionately,

RICHARD PRICE.

¹ This design was carried into execution in a pamphlet entitled *Observations on the Importance of the American Revolution*.

MCCLXV

TO CHARLES THOMSON

PASSY, 16 April, 1784.

DEAR FRIEND:—I received your kind letter by Colonel Harmar and Lieutenant - Colonel Franks, with the despatches, in good order; triplicates of which are since come to hand. You will see by our letter to the President that we daily expect Mr. Hartley from London, with the British ratification to exchange with us. There was no difficulty occasioned by the lapse of the term.

I send you, herewith, four packets of newspapers, by which you will be informed of the confusions that have reigned all winter in England, and the probability of their being finished by the choice of a new Parliament, in which the present ministry will have a great majority. The newspapers are directed for the President. You are good in excusing the trouble I have given you with so many little affairs and inquiries, and enabling me to give some answer to the persons who make them. I am pestered continually with such matters.

I am happy in learning from you that a disposition begins to prevail in the States, to comply with the requisitions of Congress, and to grant funds for the regular payment of the interest, and discharge of the principal, of the debts contracted by the war. Punctuality and exact justice will contribute more to our reputation, and, of course, to our strength, than people generally imagine. Without those virtues, we shall find it difficult, in case of another war, to obtain

either friends or money; and a reliance on that may encourage and hasten another attack upon us. Gratitude to our former benefactors is another point we should seize every opportunity of demonstrating. I place, with you, much confidence in the good sense of our countrymen; and thence I hope that the endeavors of some persons on both sides of the water, to sow jealousies and suspicions and create misunderstandings between France and us, will be ineffectual.

A commission from Congress for a commercial treaty with Britain has long been expected. If the intention of sending such a commissioner is not changed, I wish it may arrive before Mr. Laurens leaves us, who has a more perfect knowledge of the subject than any of us, and might be greatly useful. A minister from Denmark has been waiting in Paris all winter for the result of Congress on the proposed treaty, a plan of which was long since sent, as also one for a treaty with Portugal. I hope, by the return of the *Washington* packet, we may receive some directions respecting them. I am, with sincere and great esteem, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLXVI

TO JOHN WALTER

PASSY, 17 April, 1784.

SIR:—I have received a book, for which I understand I am obliged to you, the *Introduction to Logography*. I have read it with attention, and, as

far as I understand it, am much pleased with it. I do not perfectly comprehend the arrangement of his cases; but the reduction of the number of pieces by the roots of words, and their different terminations, is extremely ingenious; and I like much the idea of cementing the letters, instead of casting words of syllables, which I formerly attempted, and succeeded in having invented a mould and method by which I could in a few minutes form a matrice, and adjust it, of any word in any font at pleasure, and proceed to cast from it.

I send enclosed a specimen of some of my terminations, and would willingly instruct Mr. Johnson in the method if he desired it; but he has a better. He mentions some improvements that have been proposed, but takes no notice of one published here at Paris, in 1776; so I suppose he has neither seen nor heard of it. It is in a quarto pamphlet, entitled, "*Nouveau Système Typographique, ou Moyen de diminuer, de Moitié dans toutes les Imprimeries de l'Europe, le Travail et les Frais de Composition, de Correction, de Distribution, découvert en 1774, par Madame de * * ** Frustra fit per plura potest fieri per pauciora. *A Paris, de l'Imprimerie Royale, MDCCLXXVI.*" It is dedicated to the king, who was at the expense of the experiments. Two commissaries were named to examine and render an account of them; they were M. Desmarets, of the Academy of Sciences, and M. Barbou, an eminent printer. Their report concludes thus: "Nous nous contenterons de dire ici, que M. de St. Paul a rempli les engagemens qu'il avoit contractés avec le Gou-

vernement; que ses expériences projetées ont été conduites avec beaucoup de méthode et d'intelligence de sa part; que par des calculs longs et pénibles, qui sont le fruit d'un grand nombre de combinaisons raisonnées, il en déduit plusieurs résultats qui méritent d'être proposés aux artistes, et qui nous paroissent propres à éclairer la pratique de l'imprimerie actuelle, et à abrégér certainement les procédées. Son projet ne peut que gagner aux contradictions qu'il essuiera sans doute, de la part des gens de l'art. A Paris, le 8 Janvier, 1776." The pamphlet consists of sixty-six pages, containing a number of tables of words and parts of words, explanations of those tables, calculations, answers to objections, etc. I will endeavor to get one to send you if you desire it; mine is bound up with others in a volume.

It was after seeing this piece, that I cast the syllables I send you a sample of. I have not heard that any of the printers here make at present the least use of the invention of Madame de . . . You will observe that it pretended only to lessen the work by one half; Mr. Johnson's method lessens it three fourths. I should be glad to know with what the letters are cemented. I think cementing better than casting them together, because if one letter happens to be battered, it may be taken away and another cemented in its place. I received no letter with the pamphlet.¹ I am, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ The *logographic* method of printing was tried by a most diligent and laborious series of experiments, at an enormous expense, by Mr. Walter,

MCCLXVII

TO BENJAMIN WEBB

PASSY, 22 April, 1784.

DEAR SIR:—I received yours of the 15th instant, and the memorial it enclosed. The account they give of your situation grieves me. I send you herewith a bill for ten louis d'ors. I do not pretend to *give* such a sum; I only *lend* it to you. When you shall return to your country with a good character, you cannot fail of getting into some business that will in time enable you to pay all your debts. In that case, when you meet with another honest man in similar distress, you must pay me by lending this sum to him; enjoining him to discharge the debt by a like operation when he shall be able, and shall meet with such another opportunity. I hope it may thus go through many hands before it meets with a knave that will stop its progress. This is a trick of mine for doing a deal of good with a little money. I am not rich enough to afford *much* in good works, and so am obliged to be cunning and make the most of a *little*. With best wishes for the success of your

who knew nothing of the art himself Several works were printed, as was the newspaper called the *Times* originally, by that method But it really failed, some little time was saved in the *compositors'* part, but it was lost in distribution. The casting was also triple the cost of single types; for, even for the logography, single letters were first cast with one half the shank of the letter shaped, in carpenter's language, like a *tenon*, those were composed into words or parts of words, and put into a common matrix, so that the part resembling the *mortise* should be cast round them, when they were dressed like common types It was an art travelling backward. The expense was enormous, and it failed. It was exactly the same method as that pursued in France.—DUANE.

memorial, and your future prosperity, I am, dear sir,
your most obedient servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLXVIII

TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN

PASSY, 20 April, 1784.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—I received your kind letters of the 16th and 20th instant. I thank you for your philosophical news. We have none here. I see your philosophers are in the way of finding out at last what fire is. I have long been of opinion that it exists everywhere in the state of a subtile fluid; that too much of that fluid in our flesh gives us the sensation we call heat; too little, cold; its vibrations, light; that all solid or fluid substances which are inflammable, have been composed of it; their dissolution in returning to their original fluid state, we call fire. This subtile fluid is attracted by plants and animals in their growth, and consolidated; is attracted by other substances, thermometers, etc., variously; has a particular affinity with water, and will quit many other bodies to attach itself to water and go off with it in evaporation. Adieu. Yours,
most sincerely,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLXIX

TO H. LAURENS, ESQ.

PASSY, 29 April, 1784.

DEAR SIR:—I received your favor by Mr. Bourdieu and yesterday another of the 18th, per Mr. Hartley,

who also gave me the gazette with the proclamation. I am, with you, very little uneasy about that, or any other measures the ministers may think proper to take with respect to the commerce with us. We shall do very well. They have long lost sight of their true interest, and are now wandering blindfold in search of it, without being able to find it; but they may *feel* what they cannot at present *see*; and all as you say will come right at last.

Mr. Hartley seems to have some expectation of receiving instructions to negotiate a commercial treaty. He thinks he could hardly be sent here merely to exchange the ratifications. I have not much dependence on this. Yet as we are authorized to receive overtures from any European power, and to plan treaties to be sent to Congress for approbation, and I am not yet dismissed, I shall much regret your absence if such a treaty should be brought upon the tapis; for Mr. Jay will probably be gone, and I shall be left alone, or with Mr. A., and I can have no favorable opinion of what may be the offspring of a coalition between my ignorance and his positiveness. It would help much if we could have from you a sketch of the outlines and leading features of the treaty, in case your proposed embarkation for America should take place before Mr. Hartley makes his overtures.

There being but nine States present at the ratification, was owing only to the extreme inclemency of the season, which obstructed travelling. There was in Congress one member from each of three more States; and all were unanimous though the votes of those three could not be reckoned. It is therefore

without foundation that those gentlemen flatter themselves from that circumstance with a defection of four States from the Union, and thence a probability of a return of the whole to the dominion of Britain. What folly!

My grandson joins in respectful compliments and best wishes with, dear sir, your most obedient humble servant.

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLXX

A LETTER FROM CHINA ¹

LISBON, May 5, 1784.

SIR:—Agreeable to your desire, I have examined the sailor more particularly, and shall now give you the circumstances of his story, with all the observations he made in the country, concerning which you are so curious. He appears a more intelligent fellow than seamen in general. He says that he belonged to the *Resolution*, an English ship, one of those that made the last voyage with Captain Cook. That on their return, being at Macao, he and a comrade of his were over-persuaded by a Portuguese captain, who spoke English and Chinese, to desert, in order to go with him in a brigantine to the northwestern

¹ This *jeu d'esprit* was first published in *The Repository* for May, 1788. A correspondent, who was for several years personally and intimately acquainted with Dr. Franklin, writes to me: "He was very fond of reading about China, and told me that if he were a young man he should like to go to China." In the form of a pretended narrative of a sailor, he has embodied in the following letter some of his knowledge derived from books, with fanciful descriptions of his own. In a few passages his peculiar manner of thought and style is very apparent.—SPARKS.

coast of America, to purchase sea-beaver skins from the savages, by which they hoped to make fortunes. That accordingly they took a boat belonging to the ship, got ashore in the night, turned the boat adrift, and were hid by the Portuguese captain till the *Resolution* was gone. That this was in January, 1780, and that in April following they sailed from Macao, intending to go first to a place he calls Nooky-Bay, in latitude 50. That they had twenty-five men, with eight guns and small-arms for their defence, and a quantity of iron-ware, cutlery, with European and Chinese toys for trade.

That about the beginning of May, in a dark night, the captain being sick in his cabin, they were surprised and suddenly boarded by two boats full of armed men, to the number of forty, who took possession of the brig, no resistance being made. That these strangers altered her course, and stood, as he saw by the compass, to the northwest; that the next day the captain understood by a Chinese among them that they were Curry¹ ladrones, or pirates; that they had been cruising on the coast of China, and had lost their vessel on a reef the night before; and it was explained to the captain that if he and his people would work the ship, and fight upon occasion, they should be well used, and have a share of plunder, or otherwise be thrown overboard. That all consented, and three days after they saw land, and coasted it northward; that they took two Chinese junks, who were sent away steering northeast, eight men being put into each, and some of the Chinese

¹ Perhaps *Corea*.

taken out. That the brig went on to the northward for four days after without taking any thing; but running too near the coast in chase of another Chinese, they stuck fast on a shoal in a falling tide; that they hoped to get off by the night flood, but were mistaken, and the next morning were surrounded by a great many armed boats and vessels, which the chased vessel, which got in, had probably occasioned to come out against them. That at first they beat off those vessels, but, reinforcements coming, they saw it impossible to escape, and submitted, and were all brought on shore and committed to prison.

That a few days after they were taken out and examined, and, the Portuguese captain making it appear that he and his people were prisoners to the ladrones, they were recommitted, and the ladrones all beheaded. That the brig, being got off, was, after some time, as he understood, by an order from court, restored to the Portuguese captain, who went away in her with all his people, except this relator and a Portuguese lad, who, being both ill of the flux, and likely to die, were left behind in prison. What became of the brig afterwards, he never heard. That they were well attended in their sickness, and soon recovered, but were not set at liberty. That the prison was a very clean, airy place, consisting of several courts and ranges of building, the whole securely walled and guarded, and governed with great order. That everybody was obliged to work; but his work was not hard. It was weaving rushes upon hoops for the bottom of chairs, and they had some small pay for them, which, added to the prison

allowance of rice and *chong*, was more than a sufficiency; and he thinks there are no such comfortable prisons in England, at least among those he had been acquainted with. That he applied himself to learn the Chinese language, and succeeded so far at last as to understand and make himself understood in common matters. That some of the most orderly prisoners were allowed to assist the neighboring country people in time of harvest, under the care of the overseers. That he and his companion were from time to time made to expect that orders would come from court for their release; but he supposes they were quite forgotten. They had written frequently to the Popish missionaries at Peking, requesting their solicitations, but received no answer; and perhaps the prison-keeper, who had a profit on their labor, never sent their letters.

That after more than a year's confinement, being in the country at a harvest, he accidentally cut his foot very badly, and was left behind at a farmer's house to be cured; the farmer undertaking to return him to prison when recovered. That he got into favor in the family; that he taught the farmer's wife to make soap, which he understood, it being his father's trade. That he had himself been apprentice to a shoemaker before he took to sea; and, finding some leather in the house, he made himself, with such tools as he could get or make, a large shoe for his lame foot. That the farmer admired the shoe much above the Chinese shoes, and requested a pair for himself. That he accordingly made shoes for the farmer, his wife, two sons, and a daughter. That

he was obliged first to make the lasts for all of them; and that it is not true that the feet of Chinese women are less than those of English women. That, these shoes being admired, many inhabitants of the neighboring village desired to have them; so he was kept constantly at work, the farmer finding the leather, selling the shoes, and allowing him some share of the profit, by which he got about an ounce of silver per week, all money being weighed there. That the Chinese tan their leather with oaken chips, saw-dust, and shavings, which are saved by the carpenters for the farmers, who boil them, and steep their hides in the warm liquor, so that it is sooner fit for use. The farmer's wife began to get money by selling soap, and they proposed to obtain his liberty, and keep him in the family, by giving him their daughter, when a little older, for wife, with a piece of land; and he believes that they did prevail with the jailer, by presents, to connive at his stay, on pretence of his lameness.

He liked their way of living, except their sometimes eating dog's flesh. Their pork was excellent; the rice, dressed various ways, all very good; and the *chong* he grew fond of, and learnt to make it. They put kidney-beans in soak for twenty-four hours, then grind them in a hand-mill, pouring in water from time to time to wash the meal from between the stones, which falls into a tub covered with a coarse cloth that lets the meal and water pass through, retaining only the skins of the beans; that a very small quantity of alum, or some sort of salt, put into it, makes the meal settle to the bottom, when they pour

off the water. That it is eaten various ways, by all sorts of people, with milk, with meat, as thickening in broth, etc. That they used to put a little alum in their river water when foul, to clear it for use, and by that means made it clear as rock water, the dirt all settling. Their house was near a great river, but he does not remember its name. That he lived in this family about a year, but did not get the daughter, her grandfather refusing his consent to her marriage with a stranger.

That they have a sort of religion, with priests and churches, but do not keep Sunday, nor go to church, being very heathenish. That in every house there is a little idol, to which they give thanks, make presents, and show respect in harvest time, but very little at other times; and, inquiring of his master why they did not go to church to pray, as we do in Europe, he was answered, they paid the priests to pray for them, that they might stay at home and mind their business, and that it would be a folly to pay others for praying and then go and do the praying themselves, and that the more work they did while the priests prayed, the better able they were to pay them well for praying.

That they have horses, but not many; the breed small, but strong; kept chiefly for war, and not used in labor, nor to draw carriages. That oxen are used, but the chief of their labor is done by men, not only in the fields, but on the roads, travellers being carried from town to town in bamboo chairs, by hired chairmen throughout the country; and goods also, either hanging on poles between two, and sometimes four

men, or in wheel-barrows, they having no coaches, carts, or wagons, and the roads being paved with flat stones.

They say that their great father (so they call the emperor) forbids the keeping of horses, because he had rather have his country filled with his children than with brutes, and one horse requires as much ground to produce him food as would feed six men; yet some great people obtain leave to keep one horse for pleasure. That the master, having a farm left to him by a deceased relation in a distant part of the country, sold the land he lived on and went with the whole family to take possession and live on the other. That they embarked in one of the boats that carry sea fish into the heart of the empire, which are kept fresh even in hot weather by being packed in great hampers with layers of ice and straw, and repacked every two or three days with fresh ice taken at ice-houses on the way. That they had been ten days on their voyage, when they arrived at the new farm, going up always against the stream. That the owner of the boat, finding him handy and strong in rowing and working her, and one of the hands falling sick, persuaded him to go fifteen days farther, promising him great pay and to bring him back to the family. But that, having unloaded the fish, the Chinese went off with his boat in the night, leaving him behind without paying him. That there is a great deal of cheating in China, and no remedy. That stealing, robbing, and house-breaking are punished severely, but cheating is free there in every thing, as cheating in horses is among our gentlemen in England.

That, meeting at that place with a boat bound towards Canton in a canal, he thought it might be a means of escaping out of that country if he went in her; so he shipped himself to work for his passage, though it was with regret he left for ever the kind family he had so long lived with. That after twenty-five days' voyage on the canal, the boat stopping at a little town, he went ashore, and walked about to look at it and buy some tobacco; and in returning he was stopped, taken up, examined, and sent away, under a guard, across the country to a mandarin, distant two days' journey. That here he found the lingo somewhat different, and could not so well make himself understood; that he was kept a month in prison before the mandarin had leisure to examine him. That, having given a true account of himself, as well as he could, the mandarin set him at liberty, but advised him to wait the departure of some persons for Canton, with whom he proposed to send him as a shipwrecked stranger, at the emperor's expense. That in the meantime he worked in the mandarin's garden, and conversed with the common people. He does not recollect the name of the province, but says it was one of the tea countries; and that, besides the true tea, they made a vast deal of counterfeit tea, which they packed up in boxes, some mixed with good tea, but mostly unmixed, and sent it away to different seaports for the supply of foreign countries. That he observed they made ordinary tea of the leaves of sweet potatoes, which they cut into form by stamps, and had the art of giving such color and taste as they

judged proper. When he spoke of this practice as a fraud, they said there was no harm in it, for strangers liked the false tea as well, or better, than the true; and that it was impossible to load with true tea all the ships that came for it; China could not furnish such a quantity; and, if the demand went on increasing as it had done some years past, all the leaves of all the trees in the country would not be sufficient to answer it. This tea was sold cheap, as he understood twenty catty of it (a catty is near one pound) for about an ounce of silver. They did not drink it themselves, but said it was not unwholesome, if drunk moderately.

That after some time he set out in the train of seven merchants for Canton, with a passport from the mandarin, going partly by land, but chiefly by water in canals. That they stopt a week in a part of the country where a great deal of China ware is made; that many farmers had little furnaces in some out-house, where they worked at leisure times, and made, some nothing but tea-cups, others nothing but saucers, etc., which they sold to country shopkeepers, who collected quantities for the merchants. The ware is there very cheap. He could have bought a dozen pretty cups and saucers for as much silver as is in an English half-crown.

He says it is not true, that they have large wheel carriages in China driven by the wind; at least he never saw or heard of any such; but that the wheelbarrow porters indeed, when passing some great open countries, do sometimes, if the wind is fair, spread a thin cotton sail, supported by a light bamboo mast,

which they stick up on their wheel-barrows, and it helps them along. That he once saw a fleet of near three hundred sail of those wheel-barrows, each with a double wheel. That, when he arrived at Canton, he did not make himself known to the English there, but got down as soon as he could to Macao, hoping to meet with his Portuguese captain; but he had never returned. That he worked there in rigging of vessels, till he had an opportunity of coming home to Europe; and, hearing on his arrival here, from an old comrade in the packet, that his sweetheart is married, and that the *Resolution* and *Endeavor* got home, he shall decline going to England yet a while, fearing he may be punished for carrying off the boat; therefore he has shipped himself, as I wrote you before, on a voyage to America. He was between three and four years in China. This is the substance of what I got from him, and nearly as he related it. He gave me the names of some places, but I found them hard to remember, and cannot recollect them.

MCCLXXI

TO SAMUEL MATHER

PASSY, 12 May, 1784.

REVEREND SIR:—I received your kind letter, with your excellent advice to the people of the United States, which I read with great pleasure, and hope it will be duly regarded. Such writings, though they may be lightly passed over by many readers, yet, if

they make a deep impression on one active mind in a hundred, the effects may be considerable. Permit me to mention one little instance, which, though it relates to myself, will not be quite uninteresting to you. When I was a boy, I met with a book entitled *Essays to do Good*, which I think was written by your father.¹ It had been so little regarded by a former possessor, that several leaves of it were torn out; but the remainder gave me such a turn of thinking, as to have an influence on my conduct through life; for I have always set a greater value on the character of a *doer of good*, than on any other kind of reputation; and if I have been, as you seem to think, a useful citizen, the public owes the advantage of it to that book.

You mention your being in your seventy-eighth year; I am in my seventy-ninth; we are grown old together. It is now more than sixty years since I left Boston, but I remember well both your father and grandfather, having heard them both in the pulpit, and seen them in their houses. The last time I saw your father was in the beginning of 1724, when I visited him after my first trip to Pennsylvania. He received me in his library, and on my taking leave showed me a shorter way out of the house, through a narrow passage, which was crossed by a beam overhead. We were all talking as I withdrew, he accompanying me behind, and I turning partly towards him, when he said hastily, "*Stoop, stoop!*" I did not understand him till I felt my head hit against the beam. He was a man that never missed any occasion of

¹ Cotton Mather.

giving instruction, and upon this he said to me: "*You are young, and have the world before you; stoop as you go through it, and you will miss many hard thumps.*" This advice, thus beat into my head, has frequently been of use to me, and I often think of it when I see pride mortified and misfortunes brought upon people by their carrying their heads too high.

I long much to see my native place, and to lay my bones there. I left it in 1723; I visited it in 1733, 1743, 1753, and 1763. In 1773 I was in England; in 1775 I had a sight of it, but could not enter, it being in possession of the enemy.¹ I did hope to have been there in 1783, but could not obtain my dismissal from this employment here, and now I fear I shall never have that happiness. My best wishes, however, attend my dear country. *Esto perpetua.* It is now blest with an excellent constitution; may it last for ever!

This powerful monarchy continues its friendship for the United States. It is a friendship of the utmost importance to our security, and should be carefully cultivated. Britain has not yet well digested the loss of its dominion over us, and has still at times some flattering hopes of recovering it. Accidents may increase those hopes and encourage dangerous attempts. A breach between us and France would infallibly bring the English again upon our backs; and yet we have some wild heads among our countrymen who are endeavoring to weaken

¹ In October, 1775, he went to the camp at Cambridge, as one of the committee from Congress to consult with General Washington respecting the affairs of the army then besieging Boston.

that connection! Let us preserve our reputation by performing our engagements, our credit by fulfilling our contracts, and friends by gratitude and kindness; for we know not how soon we may again have occasion for all of them. With great and sincere esteem, I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLXXII

METEOROLOGICAL IMAGINATIONS AND CONJECTURES ¹

PASSY, May, 1784

There seems to be a region high in the air over all countries, where it is always winter, where frost exists continually, since in the midst of summer, on the surface of the earth, ice falls often from above in the form of hail.

Hailstones of the great weight we sometimes find them did not probably acquire their magnitude before they began to descend. The air being eight hundred times rarer than water, is unable to support it but in the shape of vapor, a state in which its particles are separated. As soon as they are condensed by the cold of the upper region, so as to form a drop, that drop begins to fall. If it freezes into a grain of ice, that ice descends. In descending, both the drop of water and the grain of ice are augmented by particles of the vapor they pass through in falling, and which they condense by coldness, and attach to themselves.

¹ First printed in the *Memoirs of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester*, Vol. II., p. 357. It was communicated to the society by Dr. Percival, and read December 22, 1784.

It is possible that in summer much of what is rain when it arrives at the surface of the earth, might have been snow when it began its descent, but being thawed in passing through the warm air near the surface, it is changed from snow into rain.

How immensely cold must be the original particle of hail which forms the centre of the future hailstone, since it is capable of communicating sufficient cold, if I may so speak, to freeze all the mass of vapor condensed round it, and form a lump of perhaps six or eight ounces in weight!

When in summer-time the sun is high, and continues long every day above the horizon, his rays strike the earth more directly, and with longer continuance, than in the winter; hence the surface is more heated, and to a greater depth, by the effect of those rays.

When rain falls on the heated earth, and soaks down into it, it carries down with it a great part of the heat, which by that means descends still deeper.

The mass of earth, to the depth perhaps of thirty feet, being thus heated to a certain degree, continues to retain its heat for some time. Thus the first snows that fall in the beginning of winter seldom lie long on the surface, but are soon melted, and soon absorbed. After which the winds that blow over the country on which the snows had fallen, are not rendered so cold as they would have been by those snows if they had remained, and thus the approach of the severity of winter is retarded, and the extreme degree of its cold is not always at the time we expect it, viz.: when the sun is at its greatest distance and the day shortest, but some time after that period,

according to the English proverb, which says: "As the day lengthens the cold strengthens," the causes of refrigeration continuing to operate, while the sun returns too slowly and his force continues too weak to counteract them.

During several of the summer months of the year 1783, when the effects of the sun's rays to heat the earth in these northern regions should have been the greatest, there existed a constant fog over all Europe and great part of North America. This fog was of a permanent nature; it was dry, and the rays of the sun seemed to have little effect towards dissipating it, as they easily do a moist fog arising from water. They were indeed rendered so faint in passing through it, that when collected in the focus of a burning-glass they would scarce kindle brown paper. Of course their summer effect in heating the earth was exceedingly diminished.

Hence the surface was easily frozen.

Hence the first snows remained on it unmelted, and received continual additions.

Hence perhaps the winter of 1783-4 was more severe than any that had happened for many years.

The cause of this universal fog is not yet ascertained. Whether it was adventitious to this earth, and merely a smoke proceeding from the consumption by fire of some of those great burning balls or globes which we happen to meet with in our rapid course round the sun, and which are sometimes seen to kindle and be destroyed in passing our atmosphere, and whose smoke might be attracted and retained by our earth; or whether it was the vast

quantity of smoke, long continuing to issue during the summer from Hecla, in Iceland, and that other volcano which arose out of the sea near that island, which smoke might be spread by various winds over the northern part of the world, is yet uncertain.

It seems, however, worth the inquiry, whether other hard winters recorded in history were preceded by similar permanent and widely extended summer fogs. Because, if found to be so, men might from such fogs conjecture the probability of a succeeding hard winter, and of the damage to be expected by the breaking up of frozen rivers in the spring, and take such measures as are possible and practicable to secure themselves and effects from the mischief that attended the last.

MCCLXXIII

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

PASSY, 12 May, 1784.

SIR:—In my last I acquainted your Excellency, that Mr. Hartley was soon expected here to exchange ratifications of the definitive treaty. He is now arrived, and proposes to make the exchange this afternoon. I shall then be enabled to send a copy. Enclosed is the new British proclamation respecting our trade with their colonies. It is said to be a temporary provision, till Parliament can assemble and make some proper regulating law, or till a commercial treaty shall be framed and agreed to. Mr. Hartley expects instructions for planning with us such a

treaty. The ministry are supposed to have been too busy with the new elections, when he left London, to think of those matters.

This court has not completed its intended new system for the trade of their colonies, so that I cannot yet give a certain account of the advantages that will in fine be allowed us. At present it is said we are to have two free ports, Tobago and the Mole, and that we may carry lumber and all sorts of provisions to the rest, except flour, which is reserved in favor of Bordeaux, and that we shall be permitted to export coffee, rum, molasses, and some sugar, for our own consumption.

We have had under consideration a commercial treaty proposed to us by the king of Prussia, and have sent it back with our remarks to Mr. Adams, who will, I suppose, transmit it immediately to Congress. Those planned with Denmark and Portugal wait its determination.

Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to the Congress, and believe me to be, with sincere and great esteem, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

May 13th.—I now enclose a copy of the ratification of the definitive treaty on the part of his Britannic Majesty.

MCCLXXIV

TO HENRY LAURENS

PASSY, 13 May, 1784.

DEAR SIR:—I am sorry for the numerous disappointments you have lately met with. The world, it

is true, is full of disappointments, but they are not equally divided, and you have had more than your share.

The ratifications of the definitive treaty are now exchanged; but Mr. Hartley waits for instructions respecting a treaty of commerce, which, from what you observe, may probably never arrive. I shall, however, be glad to receive what you are so good as to promise me, your thoughts on the subject of such a treaty.

You have been so kind as to offer me your friendly services in America. You will oblige me greatly in forwarding my dismissal from this employment, for I long much to be at home; and if you should think my grandson qualified to serve the States as secretary to my successor, or *Chargé d'Affaires*, till a successor arrives, I shall thank you for recommending him. His knowledge of this court, and acquaintance with the language, and the esteem the minister has for him are circumstances in his favor; his long experience in the business here is another, he having served an apprenticeship to it for more than seven years. His intelligence, discretion, and address you can judge better of than myself, who may be partial. His fidelity and exactitude in performing his duty I can answer for.

My best wishes attend you, your very valuable son, and amiable daughter. God bless you all, and give you a good voyage, and a happy meeting with your friends, with long life, health, and prosperity, is the sincere prayer of your affectionate humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLXXV

TO CHARLES THOMSON, SECRETARY OF CONGRESS

PASSY, 13 May, 1784.

· DEAR SIR:—Yesterday evening Mr. Hartley met with Mr. Jay and myself, when the ratifications of the definitive treaty were exchanged. I send a copy of the English ratification to the President.

Thus the great and hazardous enterprise we have been engaged in, is, God be praised, happily completed, an event I hardly expected I should live to see. A few years of peace, well improved, will restore and increase our strength, but our future safety will depend on our union and virtue. Britain will be long watching for advantages to recover what she has lost. If we do not convince the world that we are a nation to be depended on for fidelity in treaties, if we appear negligent in paying our debts, and ungrateful to those who have served and befriended us, our reputation, and all the strength it is capable of procuring, will be lost, and fresh attacks upon us will be encouraged and promoted by better prospects of success. Let us therefore beware of being lulled into a dangerous security, and of being both enervated and impoverished by luxury; of being weakened by internal contention and divisions; of being shamefully extravagant in contracting private debts, while we are backward in discharging honorably those of the public; of neglect in military exercise and discipline, and in providing stores of arms and munitions of war to be ready on occasion; for all these are circumstances that give confidence to enemies and

diffidence to friends, and the expenses required to prevent a war are much lighter than those that will, if not prevented, be absolutely necessary to maintain it.

I am long kept in suspense without being able to learn the purpose of Congress respecting my request of recall, and that of some employment for my secretary, William Temple Franklin. If I am kept here another winter, and as much weakened by it as by the last, I may as well resolve to spend the remainder of my days here, for I shall hardly be able to bear the fatigues of the voyage in returning. During my long absence from America, my friends are continually diminishing by death, and my inducements to return lessened in proportion. But I can make no preparations either for going conveniently or staying comfortably here, nor take any steps towards making some other provision for my grandson till I know what I am to expect. Be so good, my dear friend, as to send me a little private information. With great esteem, I am ever yours, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLXXVI

TO MR. AND MRS. JAY

PASSY, 13 May, 1784.

MY DEAR FRIENDS:—I find I shall not be able to see you as I intended. My best wishes, however, go with you, that you may have a prosperous voyage and a happy sight of your friends and families.

Mr. Jay was so kind as to offer his friendly services to me in America. He will oblige me much by endeavoring to forward my discharge from this employment. Repose is now my only ambition. If, too, he should think with me, that my grandson is qualified to serve the States as secretary to a future minister at this court, or as *Chargé d'Affaires*, and will be kind enough to recommend such an appointment, it will exceedingly oblige me. I have twice mentioned this in my letter to Congress, but have not been favored with any answer; which is hard, because the suspense prevents my endeavoring to promote him in some other way. I would not, however, be importunate; and therefore, if Mr. Jay should use his interest without effect, I will trouble them no more on the subject. My grandson's acquaintance with the language, with the court and customs here, and the particular regard M. de Vergennes has for him, are circumstances in his favor.

God bless and protect you both. Embrace my little friend for me, and believe me ever yours, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLXXVII

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 31 May, 1784.

Some inconveniences are said to have arisen from a want of certainty in the powers of our consuls. The articles respecting that matter have been some time prepared and agreed to between

M. de Rayneval and me. If there is no change of sentiment respecting them, I beg leave to request your Excellency would direct such steps to be taken as may be proper for completing them. I am ready on the part of the United States to sign them at any time. With great respect, I am sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLXXVIII

FROM DAVID HARTLEY

PARIS, 1 June, 1784.

SIR:—I have the honor to inform you that I have transmitted to London the ratification on the part of Congress of the definitive treaty of peace between Great Britain and the United States of America, and I am ordered to represent to you that a want of form appears in the first paragraph of that instrument, wherein the United States are mentioned before his Majesty, contrary to the established custom in every treaty in which a crowned head and a republic are parties. It is likewise to be observed that the definitive *articles* is used instead of definitive *treaty*, and the conclusion appears likewise deficient, as it is neither signed by the President, nor is it dated, and consequently is wanting in some essential points of form necessary towards authenticating the validity of the instrument.

I am ordered to propose to you, sir, that these defects in the ratification should be corrected; which might very easily be done, either by signing a decla-

ration in the name of Congress for preventing the particular mode of expression, so far as it relates to precedency in the first paragraph, being considered as a precedent to be adopted on any future occasion, or else by having a new copy made out in America, in which these mistakes should be corrected, and which might be done without any prejudice arising to either of the parties from the delay.¹ I am sir, with great respect and consideration, etc.,

D. HARTLEY.

MCCLXXIX

TO DAVID HARTLEY

PASSY, 2 June, 1784.

SIR:—I have considered the observations you did me the honor of communicating to me, concerning certain inaccuracies of expression and supposed defects of formality in the instrument of ratification, some of which are said to be of such a nature as to affect the validity of the instrument.

The first is, “that the United States are named

¹ “I received this morning the ratification of the treaty between Great Britain and the United States of America; and I own that it was with the greatest surprise that I perceived so essential a want of form as appears in the very first paragraph of that instrument, wherein the United States are mentioned before his Majesty, contrary to the established custom observed in every treaty in which a crowned head and a republic are contracting parties. The conclusion likewise appears extremely deficient, as it is neither signed by the President, nor is it dated, and consequently is wanting in some of the most essential points of form necessary towards authenticating the validity of the instrument.”—*St. James'*, May 28, 1784. Lord Carmathen to Mr. Hartley.

before his Majesty, contrary to the established custom observed in every treaty in which a crowned head and a republic are the contracting parties." With respect to this, it seems to me we should distinguish between that act in which both join, to wit, the treaty, and that which is the act of each separately, the ratification. It is necessary that all the modes of expression in the joint act should be agreed to by both parties, though in their separate acts each party is master of, and alone accountable for, its mode. And, on inspecting the treaty, it will be found that his Majesty is always regularly named before the United States. Thus "the established custom *in treaties* between crowned heads and republics," contended for on your part, is strictly observed; and the ratification following the treaty contains these words: "Now know ye, that we, the United States in Congress assembled, having seen and considered the definitive articles aforesaid, have *approved, ratified, and confirmed*, and by these presents do *approve, ratify, and confirm* the said articles, AND EVERY PART AND CLAUSE THEREOF," etc. Hereby all those articles, parts, and clauses wherein the king is named before the United States are *approved, ratified, and confirmed*, and this solemnly, under the signature of the President of Congress, with the public seal affixed by their order, and countersigned by their secretary.

No declaration on this subject more determinate or more authentic can possibly be made or given; which, when considered, may probably induce his Majesty's ministers to waive the proposition of our

signing a similar declaration, or of sending back the ratification to be corrected in this point, neither appearing to be really necessary. I will, however, if it be still desired, transmit to Congress the observation, and the difficulty occasioned by it, and request their orders upon it. In the meantime I may venture to say that I am confident there was no intention of affronting his Majesty by their order of nomination, but that it resulted merely from that sort of complaisance which every nation seems to have for itself, and of that respect for its own government, customarily so expressed in its own acts, of which the English among the rest afford an instance, when in the title of the king they always name Great Britain before France.

The second objection is, "that the term *definitive articles* is used instead of *definitive treaty*." If the words *definitive treaty* had been used in the ratification instead of *definitive articles*, it might have been more correct, though the difference seems not great nor of much importance, as in the treaty itself it is called "the present *definitive treaty*."

The other objections are, "that the conclusion likewise appears deficient, as it is neither signed by the President, nor is it dated, and consequently is wanting in some of the most essential points of form necessary towards authenticating the validity of the instrument." The situation of seals and signatures in public instruments differs in different countries, though all equally valid; for, when all the parts of an instrument are connected by a riband, whose ends are secured under the impression of the seal, the sig-

nature and seal, wherever placed, are understood as relating to and authenticating the whole. Our usage is to place them both together in the broad margin near the beginning of the piece; and so they stand in the present ratification, the concluding words of which declare the intention of such signing and sealing to be giving authenticity to the whole instrument, viz.: "*In testimony* whereof, We have *caused* the seal of the United States to be hereunto affixed; Witness his Excellency Thomas Mifflin, Esquire, President"; and the date supposed to be omitted, perhaps from its not appearing in figures, is nevertheless to be found written in words at length, viz.: "this fourteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-four," which made the figures unnecessary. With great esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLXXX

TO THE COUNT DE CAMPOMANES ¹

PASSY, 5 June, 1784.

SIR:—I have received much instruction and pleasure in reading your excellent writings. I wish it

¹ Campomanes held various high offices at different times in Spain, and, among others, those of President of the Royal Academy of History, President of the Council of Castile, and Minister of State. Dr. Robertson, speaking of some of his writings, said: "There are not many authors, even in the nations most eminent for commercial knowledge, who have carried on their inquiries with a more thorough knowledge of those various subjects, and a more perfect freedom from vulgar and national prejudices, or who have united more happily the calm researches of philosophy with the ardent zeal of a public-spirited citizen."—EDITOR.

were in my power to make you a suitable return of the same kind. I embrace the opportunity my much esteemed friend, Mr. Carmichael, affords me, of sending you a late collection of some of my occasional pieces, of which, if I should live to get home, I hope to publish another edition much larger, more correct, and less unworthy your acceptance.

You are engaged in a great work, reforming the ancient habitudes, removing the prejudices, and promoting the industry of your nation. You have in the Spanish people good stuff to work upon, and by a steady perseverance you will obtain perhaps a success beyond your expectation; for it is incredible the quantity of good that may be done in a country by a single man who will *make a business* of it, and not suffer himself to be diverted from that purpose by different avocations, studies, or amusements.

There are two opinions prevalent in Europe which have mischievous effects in diminishing national felicity—the one, that useful labor is dishonorable; the other, that families may be perpetuated with estates. In America we have neither of these prejudices, which is a great advantage to us. You will see our ideas respecting the first in a little piece I send you, called “Information to Those Who Would Remove to America.” The second is mathematically demonstrable to be an impossibility under the present rules of law and religion, since, though the estate may remain entire, the family is continually dividing. For a man’s son is but half of his family, his grandson but a fourth, his great-grandson but an eighth, the next but a sixteenth of his family, and,

by the same progression, in only nine generations the present proprietor's part in the then possessor of the estate will be but a five hundred and twelfth, supposing the fidelity of all the succeeding wives equally certain with that of those now existing; too small a portion, methinks, to be anxious about, so as to oppose a legal liberty of breaking entails and dividing estates, which would contribute so much to the prosperity of the country. With great and sincere esteem and respect, and best wishes for the success of your patriotic undertaking, I have the honor to be, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLXXXI

TO CHARLES THOMSON

PASSY, 14 June, 1784.

DEAR SIR:—I received yours of April 19th, with the information you obtained from our old neighbor, Reuben Haines, respecting Marggrander, for which I thank you. I am much pestered with applications to make such inquiries, and often obliged to promise that I will transmit them; but I would not wish you to take more trouble than to ask questions of the members of Congress, or others that fall in your way, and communicate to me their answers, if of any importance. I have also multitudes of projects sent to me, with requests that I would lay them before Congress. They are plans and schemes of governments, legislation, education, defence, manufactures, com-

merce, etc., formed by people who have great goodwill to us, but are totally ignorant of our affairs and circumstances; whence their projects are, for the most part, wild and impracticable, or unfit to be presented to Congress, as not pertaining to their jurisdiction. I have therefore not forwarded them; but now and then send some of them for your amusement, if you should have any leisure, that you may see how people make shoes for feet they have never measured.

As your letter mentions nothing of public affairs, I imagined I might have had, by the same conveyance, some despatches from Congress, perhaps in the care of some passenger; but a fortnight has passed since the arrival of the packet-boat, and no letters appear; so that I have nothing from Congress later than the 14th of January, and continue in great uncertainty as to my return.

Mr. Norris came here, after residing some time at Liege. He stayed but a week or two at Paris, and then moved to a country town not far distant, where nothing but French is spoken, in order to improve himself in that language. He seems a sensible, discreet young man, and I shall with pleasure render him any service that may be in my power.

The King of Sweden is now at this court, enjoying the various splendid entertainments provided for him. The Danish minister is astonished that the Congress are so long without taking any notice of the proposed treaty. With great esteem, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLXXXII

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

PASSY, 16 June, 1784.

SIR:—My letter by Mr. Jay acquainted your Excellency that the ratifications of the definitive treaty were exchanged. A copy of the British part was also sent by him.

Mr. Hartley remained here expecting instructions to treat with us on the subject of commerce. The bustle attending a new election and meeting of Parliament he imagined might occasion the long delay of those instructions. He now thinks that the affair of the American trade being under the consideration of Parliament, it is probable no treaty will be proposed till the result is known. Mr. Jay, who sailed for America the 1st instant from Dover, and who saw there several of our friends from London before his departure, and Mr. Laurens, who left London the 6th, to go on in the Falmouth packet, will be able to give you more perfect informations than I can, of what may be expected as the determination of the British government respecting our intercourse with their islands, and therefore I omit my conjectures, only mentioning that from various circumstances there seems to be some lurking remains of ill humor there, and of resentment against us, which only wants a favorable opportunity to manifest itself.

This makes it more necessary for us to be upon our guard and prepared for events that a change in the affairs of Europe may produce, its tranquillity depending, perhaps, on the life of one man, and it

being impossible to foresee in what situation a new arrangement of its various interests may place us. Ours will be respected in proportion to the apparent solidity of our government, the support of our credit, the maintenance of a good understanding with our friends, and our readiness for defence. All which I persuade myself will be taken care of.

Enclosed I send a copy of a letter from Mr. Hartley to me respecting some supposed defects in the ratification, together with my answer, which he has transmitted to London. The objections appeared to me trivial and absurd, but I thought it prudent to treat them with as much decency as I could, lest the ill temper should be augmented, which might be particularly inconvenient while the commerce was under consideration. There has not yet been time for Mr. Hartley to hear whether my answer has been satisfactory, or whether the ministers will still insist on my sending for an amended copy from America, as they proposed.

I do not perceive the least diminution in the good disposition of this court towards us, and I hope care will be taken to preserve it.

The Marquis de Lafayette, who will have the honor of delivering this to you, has, ever since his arrival in Europe, been very industrious in his endeavors to serve us and promote our interests, and has been of great use on several occasions. I should wish the Congress might think fit to express in some proper manner their sense of his merit.

My malady prevents my going to Versailles, as I cannot bear a carriage upon pavement, but my

grandson goes regularly on court days to supply my place, and is well received there. The last letters I have had the honor of receiving from you are of the 14th of January. With great respect, I am, sir, etc.,
B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLXXXIII

FROM THOMAS JEFFERSON ¹

BOSTON, 19 June, 1784.

DEAR SIR:—Supposing that Congress would communicate to you directly the powers committed to yourself, Mr. Adams, and myself, I have delayed from day to day the honor of writing to you, in hopes that every day would open to me a certainty of the time and place at which I might sail. A French packet will leave New York early in the month. By her I mean to take my passage, and may therefore expect, in the ordinary course of things, to have the pleasure of joining you at Paris in the middle or latter part of August, and of communicating the commissions and instructions under which we are to act. The latter are more special than those heretofore sent. I shall then also have the pleasure of giving you more particular information of the situation of our affairs than I can do by letter; in general, I may observe to you that their aspect is encouraging.

Congress, understanding that Mr. Jay was prob-

¹ Mr. Jefferson was appointed by Congress, on the 7th of May, a commissioner to join Dr. Franklin and Mr. Adams in negotiating treaties of commerce with the European powers. He sailed from Boston on the 5th of July, and arrived in Paris on the 6th of August.

ably on his passage to America, appointed him their Secretary for Foreign Affairs. It would give me peculiar pleasure to meet with him before my departure, and to know that he will act in an office with which we shall be so immediately connected. Congress adjourned on the 3d of June, to meet at Trenton on the first Monday of November, leaving a committee of the States at the helm during their recess.

I have the pleasure to inform you that Mrs. Bache and her family were well when I left Philadelphia, which was about three weeks ago. In hopes of joining you nearly as soon as you will receive this letter, I subscribe myself, with very sincere esteem and regard, dear sir, your most affectionate humble servant,

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

MCCLXXXIV

TO DAVID RITTENHOUSE

PASSY, 25 June, 1784.

Universal space, as far as we know of it, seems to be filled with a subtile fluid, whose motion, or vibration, is called light.

This fluid may possibly be the same with that which, being attracted by and entering into other more solid matter, dilates the substance by separating the constituent particles, and so rendering some solids fluids, and maintaining the fluidity of others; of which fluid when our bodies are totally deprived, they are said to be frozen; when they have a proper

quantity, they are in health and fit to perform all their functions; it is then called natural heat; when too much, it is called fever; and when forced into the body in too great a quantity from without, it gives pain by separating and destroying the flesh, and is then called burning, and the fluid so entering and acting is called fire.

While organized bodies, animal or vegetable, are augmenting in growth, or are supplying their continual waste, is not this done by attracting and consolidating this fluid called fire, so as to form of it a part of their substance; and is it not a separation of the parts of such substance, which, dissolving its solid state, sets that subtile fluid at liberty, when it again makes its appearance as fire?

For the power of man relative to matter seems limited to the dividing it, or mixing the various kinds of it, or changing its form and appearance by different compositions of it, but does not extend to the making or creating of new matter, or annihilating the old. Thus, if fire be an original element, or kind of matter, its quantity is fixed and permanent in the world. We cannot destroy any part of it, or make addition to it; we can only separate it from that which confines it, and so set it at liberty, as when we put wood in a situation to be burnt; or transfer it from one solid to another, as when we make lime by burning stone, a part of the fire dislodged from the wood being left in the stone. May not this fluid, when at liberty, be capable of penetrating and entering into all bodies, organized or not, quitting easily in totality those not organized; and quitting easily

in part those which are; the part assumed and fixed remaining till the body is dissolved?

Is it not this fluid which keeps asunder the particles of air, permitting them to approach, or separating them more, in proportion as its quantity is diminished or augmented? Is it not the greater gravity of the particles of air, which forces the particles of this fluid to mount with the matters to which it is attached, as smoke or vapor?

Does it not seem to have a great affinity with water, since it will quit a solid to unite with that fluid, and go off with it in vapor, leaving the solid cold to the touch, and the degree measurable by the thermometer?

The vapor rises attached to this fluid, but at a certain height they separate, and the vapor descends in rain, retaining but little of it, in snow or hail less. What becomes of that fluid? Does it rise above our atmosphere and mix equally with the universal mass of the same kind? Or does a spherical stratum of it, denser, or less mixed with air, attracted by this globe, and repelled or pushed up only to a certain height from its surface, by the greater weight of air, remain there, surrounding the globe, and proceeding with it round the sun?

In such case, as there may be a continuity or communication of this fluid through the air quite down to the earth, is it not by the vibrations given to it by the sun that light appears to us; and may it not be that every one of the infinitely small vibrations, striking common matter with a certain force, enters its substance, is held there by attraction, and aug-

mented by succeeding vibrations, till the matter has received as much as their force can drive into it?

Is it not thus that the surface of this globe is continually heated by such repeated vibrations in the day, and cooled by the escape of the heat, when those vibrations are discontinued in the night, or intercepted and reflected by clouds?

Is it not thus that fire is amassed, and makes the greatest part of the substance of combustible bodies?

Perhaps when this globe was first formed and its original particles took their place at certain distances from the centre, in proportion to their greater or less gravity, the fluid fire, attracted towards that centre, might in great part be obliged, as lightest, to take place above the rest, and thus form the sphere of fire above supposed, which would afterwards be continually diminishing by the substance it afforded to organized bodies, and the quantity restored to it again by the burning or other separating of the parts of those bodies.

Is not the natural heat of animals thus produced, by separating in digestion the parts of food and setting their fire at liberty?

Is it not this sphere of fire which kindles the wandering globes that sometimes pass through it in our course round the sun, have their surface kindled by it, and burst when their included air is greatly rarefied by the heat on their burning surfaces? ¹

¹ This paper was read before the American Philosophical Society, June 20, 1788, as a letter to David Rittenhouse, with the addition only of the following sentence, viz.: "May it not have been from such considerations, that the ancient philosophers supposed a sphere of fire to exist above the air of our atmosphere?"—EDITOR.

MCCLXXXV

EXTRACT FROM A PRIVATE JOURNAL

Passy, June 26, 1784.—Mr. Walterstorf called on me, and acquainted me with a duel that had been fought yesterday morning between a French officer and a Swedish gentleman of that king's suite, in which the latter was killed on the spot, and the other dangerously wounded;—that the king does not resent it, as he thinks his subject was in the wrong.

He asked me if I had seen the king of Sweden? I had not yet had that honor. He said his behavior here was not liked; that he took little notice of his own ambassador, who, being acquainted with the usages of this court, was capable of advising him, but was not consulted. That he was always talking of himself, and vainly boasting of *his* revolution, though it was known to have been the work of M. de Vergennes. That they began to be tired of him here, and wished him gone; but he proposed staying here till the 12th of July. That he had now laid aside his project of invading Norway, as he found Denmark had made preparations to receive him. That he pretended the Danes had designed to invade Sweden, though it was a known fact that the Danes had made no military preparations, even for defence, till six months after his began. I asked if it was clear, that he had an intention to invade Norway. He said that the marching and disposition of his troops, and the fortifications he had erected, indicated it very plainly. He added that Sweden was at present greatly distressed for provisions; that many

people had actually died of hunger! That it was reported that the king came here to borrow money, and to offer to sell Gottenburg to France; a thing not very probable.

M. Dussaulx called, and said it is reported there is an alliance treating between the Emperor of Austria, Russia, and England; the purpose not known; and that a counter-alliance is proposed between France, Prussia, and Holland in which it is supposed Spain will join. He added, that changes in the ministry are talked of; that there are cabals against M. de Vergennes; that M. de Calonne is to be *Garde des Sceaux*, with some other rumors, fabricated perhaps at the Palais Royal.

June 29th.—Mr. Hammond, secretary to Mr. Hartley, called to tell me that Mr. Hartley had not received any orders by the last courier, either to stay or return, which he had expected; and that he thought it occasioned by their uncertainty what terms of commerce to propose, till the report of the committee of Council was laid before Parliament, and its opinion known; and that he looked on the delay of writing to him as a sign of their intending to do something.

He told me it was reported that the king of Sweden had granted the free use of Gottenburg as a port for France, which alarmed the neighboring powers. That, in time of war, the northern coast of England might be much endangered by it.

June 30th.—M. Dupont, inspector of commerce, came to talk with me about the free port of L'Orient, and some difficulties respecting it; I referred him to

Mr. Barclay, as American merchant and commissioner for accounts; and, as he said he did not well understand English when spoken, and Mr. Barclay did not speak French, I offered my grandson to accompany him as interpreter, which he accepted.

I asked him whether the Spaniards from the continent of America did not trade to the French sugar islands? He said not. The only commerce with the Spaniards was for cattle between them and the French at St. Domingo. I had been told the Spaniards brought flour to the French islands from the continent. He had heard of it. If we can find that such a trade is allowed (perhaps from Mississippi), have not the United States a claim by treaty to the same privilege.

July 1st.—The Pope's Nuncio called, and acquainted me that the Pope had, on my recommendation, appointed Mr. John Carroll superior of the Catholic clergy in America, with many of the powers of a bishop; and that probably he would be made a bishop *in partibus* before the end of the year. He asked me which would be more convenient for him, to come to France, or go to St. Domingo, for ordination by another bishop, which was necessary. I mentioned Quebec as more convenient than either. He asked whether, as that was an English province, our government might not take offence at his going thither? I thought not, unless the ordination by that bishop should give him some authority over our bishop. He said, not in the least; that when our bishop was once ordained, he would be independent of the others, and even of the Pope; which I did not

clearly understand. He said the Congregation *de Propagandâ Fide* had agreed to receive, and maintain and instruct, two young Americans in the languages and sciences at Rome (he had formerly told me that more would be educated *gratis* in France). He added they had written from America that there are twenty priests, but that they are not sufficient, as the new settlements near the Mississippi have need of some.

The Nuncio said we should find that the Catholics were not so intolérant as they had been represented; that the Inquisition in Rome had not now so much power as that in Spain; and that in Spain it was used chiefly as a prison of state. That the Congregation would have undertaken the education of more American youths, and may hereafter, but that at present they are overburdened, having some from all parts of the world. He spoke lightly of their New Bostonian convert Thayer's conversion; that he had advised him not to go to America, but settle in France. That he wanted to go to convert his countrymen; but he knew nothing yet of his new religion himself, etc.

Received a letter from Mr. Bridgen of London, dated the 22d past, acquainting me that the Council of the Royal Society had voted me a gold medal, on account of my letter in favor of Captain Cook. Lord Howe had sent me his Journal, 3 vols. 4to, with a large volume of engravings, on the same account, and, as he writes, "*with the king's approbation.*"

July 3d.—Mr. Smeathman comes and brings two English and Scotch gentlemen; one a chevalier of

some order, the other a physician who had lived long in Russia. Much conversation. Putrid fevers common in Russia, and in winter much more than in summer; therefore supposed to be owing to their hot rooms. In a gentleman's house there are sometimes one hundred domestics; these have not beds, but sleep twenty or thirty in a close room warmed by a stove, lying on the floor and on benches. The stoves are heated by wood. As soon as it is burnt to coals, the chimney is stopped to prevent the escape of hot and entry of cold air. So they breathe the same air over and over again all night. These fevers he cured by wrapping the patient in linen wet with vinegar, and making them breathe the vapor of vinegar thrown on hot bricks. The Russians have the art of distilling spirit from milk. To prepare it for distillation it must, when beginning to sour, be kept in continual motion or agitation for twelve hours; it then becomes a uniform vinous liquor, the cream, curd, and aqueous part or whey, all intimately mixed. Excellent in this state for restoring emaciated bodies. This operation on milk was discovered long since by the Tartars, who in their rambling life often carry milk in leather bags on their horses, and the motion produced the effect. It may be tried with us by attaching a large keg of milk to some part of one of our mills.

July 6th.—Directed Temple Franklin, who goes to court to-day, to mention three things to the minister. The *main levée* of the arrested goods, the port of L'Orient, and the consular convention; which he did with effect. The port is fixed, and the conven-

tion preparing. Hear that Gottenburg is to be a free port for France, where they may assemble northern stores, etc.

Mr. Hammond came and dined with me. He acquaints me, from Mr. Hartley, that no instructions are yet come from England.

July 7th.—A very hot day. Received a visit from the secretary of the king of Sweden, M. Franke, accompanied by the secretary of the embassy.

July 8th.—M. Franke dines with me, in company with M. de Helvétius, Abbé de la Roche, M. Cabanis, and an American captain. The king of Sweden does not go to England.

July 10th.—Mr. Grand came to propose my dining with the Swedish court at his house, which is next door, and I consented. While he was with me, the consul came. We talked about the Barbary powers; they are four, Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli. He informed me that Salee, the principal port belonging to the Emperor of Morocco, had formerly been famous for corsairs. That this prince had discouraged them, and in 1768 published an edict declaring himself in peace with all the world, and forbade their cruising any more, appointing him consul for those Christian states who had none in his country. That Denmark pays him 25,000 *piastres fortes* yearly, in money; Sweden is engaged to send an ambassador every two years with presents; and the other powers buy their peace in the same manner, except Spain and the Italian states, with whom they have constant war. That he is consul for Sardinia and Prussia, for whom he procured treaties of peace. That he

proposed a peace for Russia; but that, the Emperor having heard that Russia was going to war with his brother, the Grand Seignior, he refused it.

M. Audibert Caille, the consul, thinks it shameful for Christendom to pay tribute to such *canaille*, and proposes two ways of reducing the barbarians to peace with all Europe, and obliging them to quit their piratical practices. They have need of many articles from Europe, and of a vent for their superfluous commodities. If, therefore, all Europe would agree to refuse any commerce with them but on condition of their quitting piracy, and such an agreement could be faithfully observed on our part, it would have its effect upon them. But if any one power would continue the trade with them, it would defeat the whole. There was another method he had projected, and communicated in a memorial to the court here, by M. de Rayneval; which was, that France should undertake to suppress their piracies and give peace to all Europe, by means of its influence with the Porte. For, all the people of these states being obliged by their religion to go at times in caravans to Mecca, and to pass through the Grand Seignior's dominions, who gives them escorts of troops through the desert, to prevent their being plundered and perhaps massacred by the Arabs, he could refuse them passage and protection but on condition of their living peaceably with the Europeans, etc. He spoke of Montgomery's transaction, and of Crocco, who, he understands, was authorized by the court. The barbarians, he observed, having no commercial ships at sea, had vastly

the advantage of the Europeans; for one could not make reprisals on their trade. And it has long been my opinion that, if the European nations who are powerful at sea were to make war upon us Americans, it would be better for us to renounce commerce in our own bottoms, and convert them all into cruisers. Other nations would furnish us with what we wanted, and take off our produce. He promised me a note of the commerce of Barbary, and we are to see each other again, as he is to stay here a month.

Dined at Mr. Grand's with the Swedish gentlemen. They were M. Rosenstein, secretary of the embassy, and ——, with whom I had a good deal of conversation relating to the commerce possible between our two countries. I found they had seen at Rome Charles Stuart, the *Pretender*. They spoke of his situation as very hard; that France, who had formerly allowed him a pension, had withdrawn it, and that he sometimes almost wanted bread!

July 11th.—M. Walterstorf called. He hears that the agreement with Sweden respecting the port of Gottenburg is not likely to be concluded; that Sweden wanted an island in the West Indies in exchange. I think she is better without it.

July 13th.—MM. Mirabeau and Champfort came and read their translation of (American) Mr. Burke's pamphlet against the Cincinnati,¹ which they have much enlarged, intending it as a covered satire against *noblesse* in general. It is well done. There are also remarks on the last letter of General Wash-

¹ A pamphlet by Ædanus Burke, of South Carolina, entitled *Considerations upon the Order of the Cincinnati*.—EDITOR.

ington on that subject. They say General Washington missed a *beau moment*, when he accepted to be of that society (which some affect to call an *order*). The same of the Marquis de la Fayette.

July 14th.—Mr. Hammond calls to acquaint me that Mr. Hartley is still without any instructions relating to the treaty of commerce; and supposes it occasioned by their attention to the India bill. I said to him: "Your court and this seem to be waiting for one another, with respect to the American trade, with your respective islands. You are both afraid of doing too much for us, and yet each wishes to do a little more than the other. You had better have accepted our generous proposal at first, to put us both on the same footing of free intercourse that existed before the war. You will make some narrow regulations, and then France will go beyond you in generosity. You never see your follies till too late to mend them." He said, Lord Sheffield was continually exasperating the Parliament against America. He had lately been publishing an account of loyalists murdered there, etc. Probably invented.

Thursday, July 15th.—The Duke de Chartres' balloon went off this morning from St. Cloud, himself and three others in the gallery. It was foggy, and they were soon out of sight. But, the machine being disordered, so that the trap or valve could not be opened to let out the expanding air, and fearing that the balloon would burst, they cut a hole in it, which ripped larger, and they fell rapidly, but received no harm. They had been a vast height, met

with a cloud of snow, and a tornado, which frightened them.

Friday, 16th.—Received a letter from two young gentlemen in London, who are come from America for ecclesiastical orders, and complain that they have been delayed there a year, and that the archbishop will not permit them to be ordained unless they will take the oath of allegiance; and desiring to know if they may be ordained here. Inquired, and learned that, if ordained here, they must vow obedience to the Archbishop of Paris. Directed my grandson to ask the Nuncio if their bishop in America might not be instructed to do it literally?

Saturday, 17th.—The Nuncio says the thing is impossible, unless the gentlemen become Roman Catholics. Wrote them an answer.

Sunday, 18th.—A good abbé brings me a large manuscript containing a scheme of reformation of all churches and states, religion, commerce, laws, etc., which he has planned in his closet, without much knowledge of the world. I have promised to look it over, and he is to call next Thursday. It is amazing the number of legislators that kindly bring me new plans for governing the United States.

Monday, July 19th.—Had the Americans at dinner, with Mr. White and Mr. Arbuthnot from England. The latter was an officer at Gibraltar during the late siege. He says the Spaniards might have taken it; and that it is now a place of no value to England. That its supposed use as a port for a fleet to prevent the junction of the Brest and Toulon squadrons, is chimerical. That while the Spaniards are in posses-

sion of Algeziras, they can with their gun-boats, in the use of which they are grown very expert, make it impossible for any fleet to lie there.

Tuesday, 20th.—My grandson went to court. No news there, except that the Spanish fleet against Algiers is sailed. Receive only one American letter by the packet, which is from the College of Rhode Island, desiring me to solicit benefactions of the king, which I cannot do, for reasons which I shall give them. It is inconceivable why I have no letters from Congress. The treaties with Denmark, Portugal, etc., all neglected! Mr. Hartley makes the same complaint. He is still without orders. Mr. Hammond called and dined with me; says Mr. Pitt begins to lose his popularity; his new taxes and project about the *navy bills* give great discontent. He has been burnt in effigy at York. His East India bill not likely to go down; and it is thought he cannot stand long. Mr. Hammond is a friend of Mr. Fox; whose friends, that have lost their places, are called *Fox's Martyrs*.

Wednesday, July 21st.—Count de Haga ¹ sends his card to take leave. Mr. Grand tells me he has bought here my bust, with that of M. D'Alembert or Diderot, to take with him to Sweden. He set out last night.

Thursday, 22d.—Lord Fitzmaurice, son of Lord Shelburne, arrives; brought me sundry letters and papers.

He thinks Mr. Pitt in danger of losing his majority in the House of Commons, though great at present;

¹ The King of Sweden.

for he will not have wherewithal to pay them. I said that governing by a Parliament which must be bribed, was employing a very expensive machine, and that the people of England would in time find out, though they had not yet, that since the Parliament must always do the will of the minister and be paid for doing it, and the people must find the money to pay them, it would be the same thing in effect, but much cheaper, to be governed by the minister at first hand, without a Parliament. Those present seemed to think the reasoning clear. Lord Fitzmaurice appears a sensible, amiable young man.

Tuesday, 27th.—Lord Fitzmaurice called to see me. His father having requested that I would give him such instructive hints as might be useful to him, I occasionally mentioned the old story of Demosthenes' answer to one who demanded what was the first point of oratory. *Action.* The second? *Action.* The third? *Action.* Which, I said, had been generally understood to mean the action of an orator with his hands, etc., in speaking; but that I thought another kind of action of more importance to an orator, who would persuade people to follow his advice, viz.: such a course of action in the conduct of life, as would impress them with an opinion of his integrity as well as of his understanding; that, this opinion once established, all the difficulties, delays, and oppositions, usually occasioned by doubts and suspicions, were prevented; and such a man, though a very imperfect speaker, would almost always carry his points against the most flourishing orator, who had not the character of sincerity. To express my

sense of the importance of a good private character in public affairs more strongly, I said the advantage of having it, and the disadvantage of not having it, were so great that I even believed if George the Third had had a bad private character, and John Wilkes a good one, the latter might have turned the former out of his kingdom. Lord Shelburne, the father of Lord Fitzmaurice, had unfortunately the character of being insincere; and it has hurt much his usefulness, though in all my concerns with him, I never saw any instance of that kind.

MCCLXXXVI

FROM WILLIAM CARMICHAEL.

MADRID, 9 July, 1784.

DEAR SIR:—I arrived here on the 26th of June. My first business was to present myself at Aranjuez, where the court then resided. I had, in some measure, engaged before my departure from Spain to return before the regal family left that residence. So far I have fulfilled my engagements. On this account I set off from Paris more abruptly than I wished to do. I do not know as yet whether I may not have given more offence to my personal friends there by the precipitation with which I left them, than I have given satisfaction to my political ones here by the desire which I have manifested to return agreeably to my promise. I have, however, the consolation to find that I have been received individually in a manner that is highly flattering to me.

I have delayed writing to your Excellency because I expected to have an answer to send you to the letter which you wrote to the Count de Campomanes by me. I have the honor to inform you that you are chosen a member of the Royal Academy of History here, and that I shall have the pleasure of enclosing you the diploma and the answer of the Count de Campomanes to your Excellency's letter by the next post. The little works you gave me will soon appear in a Spanish dress. If they lose by the change of costume I can assure you that it will not be the fault of the translator, who wishes to preserve the true sense, spirit, and simplicity of the original.

In a few days, as I hope to have more leisure, I shall have the honor of writing to you more explicitly. You seem to be a prophet on more than one occasion, for I shall have an opportunity of suggesting an idea that you gave me with respect to China. In the meantime I beg your Excellency to mention me in the proper manner to your grandson and to all those who do me the honor to remember me, and to believe me, with the highest respect and the most sincere affection, etc.,

WILLIAM CARMICHAEL.

MCCLXXXVII

FROM RICHARD PRICE

NEWINGTON GREEN, 12 July, 1784.

DEAR SIR:—I request your acceptance of the pamphlet which accompanies this letter.¹ It is in-

¹ Entitled *Observations on the Importance of the American Revolution*.

tended entirely for America, and you are one of the first persons to whom it has been communicated. Most of the few copies which I have printed will be conveyed to America, and I hope the United States will forgive my presumption in supposing myself qualified to advise them. Indeed, I almost feel myself ashamed at what I have done; but the consciousness which I have that it is well intended, and that my address to them is the effusion of a heart that wishes to serve the best interests of society, helps to reconcile me to myself in this instance, and it will, I hope, engage the candor of others.

The letter from M. Turgot, which you will receive with this, stands at present in the press, and will stand there till I shall be made acquainted with your opinion concerning the propriety of making it public by conveying it to the United States with my own pamphlet. The reason of my doubts about this is the charge of secrecy with which it concludes and which you will find written in the margin. In compliance with this charge I have hitherto kept this letter private, but lately I have considered that probably it was only some apprehension of personal inconvenience that led him to give this charge, and that consequently the obligation to comply with it ceased with his life. Dreading, however, every thing that might be reckoned a breach of confidence, my scruples are continually returning upon me, and I feel them the more when I think that possibly he may have a family which may suffer in France, when it appears there that he was so much a friend to liberty as this letter will show him to have been.

In this state of mind I cannot make myself easy in any other way than by determining to request the favor of your judgment, and to abide by it. Should you think that no ill consequences can result, from publishing this letter, to any family that M. Turgot may have left, and that his death has freed me from any obligation to keep it secret, I will order it to be printed off and send it to America with my pamphlet. Should you think the contrary, it shall be suppressed, and I shall depend on your being so good as to destroy the copy sent you. You will add much to the obligation I am under to you for all your friendship, by giving me a few lines on this subject as soon as may be convenient to you. Should you think it improper to write by the post, a letter or any parcel you may wish to convey to London may be sent by Miss Wilkes, who is on a visit with the Duchess de la Vallière at Paris, and will return by the 2d of August.¹

I wrote to you by the post about three months ago, and hope you received my letter. I have heard lately with pleasure that you are pretty well. May your health, and life, and usefulness be continued as long as the course of nature will admit. Are we never to have the satisfaction of seeing you again in London? I have lately been at Birmingham to visit Dr. Priestley. He is very happy there, and going on successfully with his experiments.

Mrs. Price desires to be respectfully remembered to you. She is in a very weak and low state, but not worse than she has been for some time. We are

¹ M. Turgot's letter was appended to Dr. Price's pamphlet.

thinking of spending the next month at Brighthelmston. Wishing you every blessing, I am, my dear friend, with the greatest regard, ever yours,

RICHARD PRICE.

MCCLXXXVIII

TO M. ST. JEAN DE CRÈVECŒUR ¹

Circa 1784.

SIR:—I have perused the foregoing memoir, and having formerly had some share in the management of the packet boats between England and America, I am enabled to furnish you with some small remarks.

The project is good, and if carried into execution

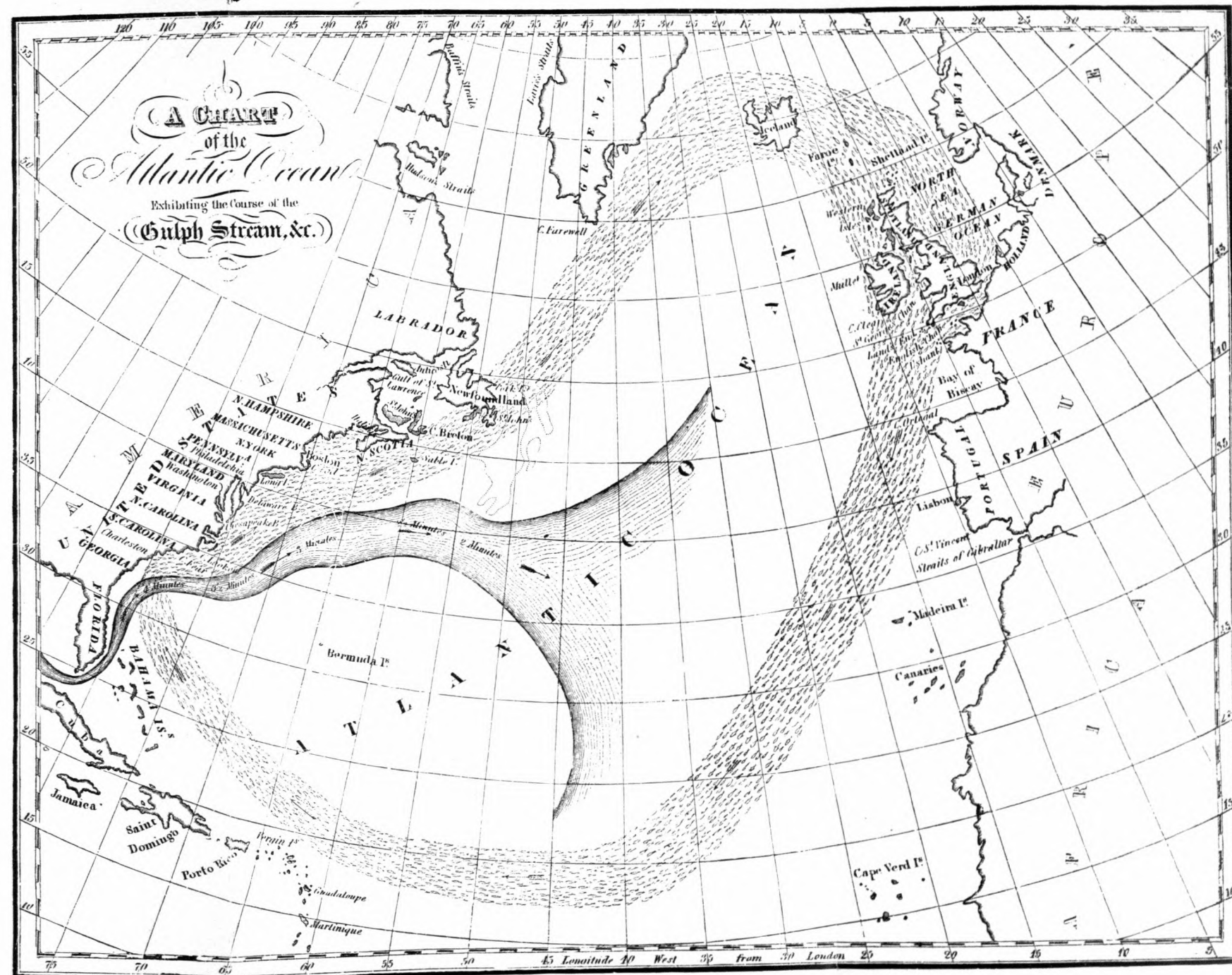
¹ St. John de Crèveccœur, whose real name was Michel-Guillaume-Jean de Crèveccœur, was born at Caen, in France, Jan. 31, 1731. He spent his youth with an aunt in England, and in 1754 went to Canada. He served two years in the French army there, 1758-9, and then went to Pennsylvania. In April, 1764, he became a naturalized citizen of New York; settled on a farm in Pine Hill, Ulster County in 1769, and married Mahetable Tippet, of Yonkers. In 1779, he set out for France but was arrested in New York by the British, then in possession, upon suspicion of having furnished Washington with plans of the harbor of New York. He sailed for Dublin in 1780. While in England, he sold a book he had been writing, entitled *The American Farmer*, a copy of which Franklin here acknowledges the receipt, to a London publisher for 30 guineas. In 1783, he was appointed French Consul at New York and the same year was elected to the Academy of Sciences of Paris. When the Revolution in France broke out, he lost his office and returned to Paris in 1790. Crèveccœur was zealous in his efforts to persuade the French government to interest itself in the development of Fitch's plan for the application of steam to purposes of navigation. See letters from Franklin to him dated Feb 16, 1788. He was also the author of a work entitled, *Voyage dans le haut Pennsylvanie et dans l'état de New York par un membre adoptif de la nation Oneida, traduit et publié par l'auteur des "Lettres d'un Cultivateur Americain."* Paris, 1805, 3 vols., 8vo. He died Nov 12, 1813.—EDITOR.

will certainly be very useful to merchants immediately, and profitable to the revenue of the post-office at least after some time, because not only commerce increases correspondence, but facility of correspondence increases commerce, and they go on mutually augmenting each other.

Four packet boats were at first thought sufficient between Falmouth and New York, so as to despatch one regularly the first Wednesday in every month. But by experience it was found that a fifth was necessary, as without it the regularity was sometimes broken by accidents of wind and weather, and the merchants disappointed and their affairs deranged, a matter of great consequence in commerce. A fifth packet was accordingly added.

It is probable, as you observe, that the English will keep up their packets. In which case I should think it advisable to order the despatch of the French packets in the intermediate times, that is on the third Wednesdays. This would give the merchants of Europe and America opportunities of writing every fortnight. And the English who had missed writing by their own packet of the first Wednesday, or have new matter to write which they wish to send before the next month, will forward their letters by the post to France to go by the French packet, and *vice versa*, which will increase the inland postage of both nations.

As these vessels are not to be laden with goods, their holds may, without inconvenience, be divided into separate apartments after the Chinese manner, and each of those apartments caulked tight so as to



keep out water. In which case if a leak should happen in one apartment, that only would be affected by it, and the others would be free; so that the ship would not be so subject as others to founder and sink at sea. This being known would be a great encouragement to passengers.¹

I send you a copy of a chart of the Gulf Stream,² which is little known by European navigators, and yet of great consequence; since in going to America they often get into that stream and unknowingly stem it, whereby the ship is much retarded and the voyage lengthened enormously.

The directions being imperfectly translated and expressed in French, I have put them more correctly in English. I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCLXXXIX

TO THOMAS PERCIVAL

PASSY, 17 July, 1784.

DEAR SIR:—I received yesterday, by Mr. White, your kind letter of May 11th, with the most agreeable present of your new book.³ I read it before I slept, which is a proof of the good effects your happy manner has of drawing your reader on, by mixing little anecdotes and historical facts with your instruc-

¹ This we believe is the first intimation of the compartment system, now universal in the construction of ocean steamers.—EDITOR.

² See Plate I.

³ *Moral and Literary Dissertations*, 2d edition.—W. T. F.

tions. Be pleased to accept my grateful acknowledgments for the pleasure it has afforded me.

It is astonishing that the murderous practice of duelling, which you so justly condemn, should continue so long in vogue. Formerly, when duels were used to determine lawsuits, from an opinion that Providence would in every instance favor truth and right with victory, they were excusable. At present they decide nothing. A man says something which another tells him is a lie. They fight; but, whichever is killed, the point at dispute remains unsettled. To this purpose they have a pleasant little story here. A gentleman in a coffee-house desired another to sit farther from him. "Why so?" "Because, sir, you stink." "That is an affront, and you must fight me." "I will fight you, if you insist upon it; but I do not see how that will mend the matter. For if you kill me, I shall stink too; and if I kill you, you will stink, if possible, worse than you do at present." How can such miserable sinners as we are entertain so much pride, as to conceit that every offence against our imagined honor merits *death*? These petty princes in their own opinion would call that sovereign a tyrant who should put one of them to death for a little uncivil language, though pointed at his sacred person; yet every one of them makes himself judge in his own cause, condemns the offender without a jury, and undertakes himself to be the executioner. With sincere and great esteem, I have the honor to be, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S.—Our friend, Mr. Vaughan, may perhaps communicate to you some conjectures of mine relating to the cold of last winter, which I sent to him in return for the observations on cold of Professor Wilson. If he should, and you should think them worth so much notice, you may show them to your Philosophical Society,¹ to which I wish all imaginable success. Their rules appear to me excellent.

MCCXC

TO MESSRS. WEEMS AND GANT

PASSY, 18 July, 1784.

GENTLEMEN:—On receipt of your letter, acquainting me that the Archbishop of Canterbury would not permit you to be ordained, unless you took the oath of allegiance, I applied to a clergyman of my acquaintance for information on the subject of your obtaining ordination here. His opinion was that it could not be done; and that if it were done, you would be required to vow obedience to the Archbishop of Paris. I next inquired of the Pope's Nuncio, whether you might not be ordained by their bishop in America, powers being sent him for that purpose, if he has them not already. The answer was: "The thing is impossible, unless the gentlemen become Catholics."

This is an affair of which I know very little, and therefore I may ask questions and propose means

¹ The Philosophical Society of Manchester, of which Dr. Percival was one of the principal founders and ornaments.—W. T. F.

that are improper or impracticable. But what is the necessity of your being connected with the Church of England? Would it not be as well if you were of the Church of Ireland? The religion is the same, though there is a different set of bishops and archbishops. Perhaps if you were to apply to the Bishop of Derry, who is a man of liberal sentiments, he might give you orders as of that Church. If both Britain and Ireland refuse you (and I am not sure that the bishops of Denmark or Sweden would ordain you unless you become Lutherans), what is then to be done? Next to becoming Presbyterians, the Episcopalian clergy of America, in my humble opinion, cannot do better than to follow the example of the first clergy of Scotland, soon after the conversion of that country to Christianity. When their king had built the Cathedral of St. Andrew's, and requested the king of Northumberland to lend his bishops to ordain one for them, that their clergy might not as heretofore be obliged to go to Northumberland for orders, and their request was refused, they assembled in the cathedral, and the mitre, crosier, and robes of a bishop being laid upon the altar, they, after earnest prayers for direction in their choice, elected one of their own number, when the king said to him: "*Arise, go to the altar, and receive your office at the hand of God.*" His brethren led him to the altar, robed him, put the crosier in his hand, and the mitre on his head, and he became the first Bishop of Scotland.

If the British Islands were sunk in the sea (and the surface of this globe has suffered greater changes),

you would probably take some such method as this; and, if they persist in denying you ordination, it is the same thing. A hundred years hence, when people are more enlightened, it will be wondered at that men in America, qualified by their learning and piety to pray for and instruct their neighbors, should not be permitted to do it till they had made a voyage of six thousand miles out and home, to ask leave of a cross old gentleman at Canterbury, who seems, by your account, to have as little regard for the souls of the people of Maryland as King William's Attorney-General, Seymour, had for those of Virginia. The Reverend Commissary Blair, who projected the college of that province, and was in England to solicit benefactions and a charter, relates that the queen, in the king's absence, having ordered Seymour to draw up the charter, which was to be given, with two thousand pounds in money, he opposed the grant, saying that the nation was engaged in an expensive war, that the money was wanted for better purposes, and he did not see the least occasion for a college in Virginia. Blair represented to him that its intention was to educate and qualify young men to be ministers of the Gospel, much wanted there, and begged Mr. Attorney would consider that the people of Virginia had souls to be saved, as well as the people of England. "*Souls!*" said he, "*damn your souls! Make tobacco!*" I have the honor to be, gentlemen, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXCI

FROM JOHN ADAMS

THE HAGUE, 19 July, 1784.

SIR:—I have the honor of your letters of the 27th of June and 4th July, and should advise your Excellency to present the C. de Mercy a copy of the instructions you propose.

By the length of time we have been left without information respecting foreign affairs, and by other circumstances, there are greater divisions among our countrymen respecting these, as well as their finances, than are salutary. It is now near two years that I have led the life of a spider, after having led that of a toad under a harrow for four years before. But I swear I will not lead one nor the other much longer.

I can't recollect that I have had a letter from Congress since the peace.

I read somewhere when I was young:

“ 'T is expectation makes the blessing dear,
Heaven were not heaven, if we knew what it were.”

But this expectation must not be disappointed continually.

Mr. Hartley will wait too, I apprehend, as long as we, and for my part I humbly propose that we should banish all thoughts of politics, and begin a course of experiments in physics or mechanics, of telescopical or microscopical observations. Bertholon and Spalanzini and Needham have so entertained me of late, that I think to devote myself to similar researches.

With great respect, I have the honor to be, sir, your
Excellency's most obedient humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

MCCXCII

TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN

PASSY, 26 July, 1784.

DEAR FRIEND:—I have received several letters from you lately, dated June 16th, June 30th, and July 13th. I thank you for the information respecting the proceedings of your West India merchants, or rather planters. The restraints, whatever they may be upon our commerce with your islands, will prejudice their inhabitants, I apprehend, more than us.

I have received Cook's *Voyages* which you put Mr. Oswald in the way of sending to me. By some mistake the first volume was omitted, and instead of it a duplicate sent of the third. If there is a good print of Cook, I should be glad to have it, being personally acquainted with him. I thank you for the pamphlets by Mr. Estlin. Every thing you send me gives me pleasure; to receive your account would give me more than all.

I am told that the little pamphlet of *Advice to Such as would Remove to America* is reprinted in London, with my name to it, which I would rather had been omitted; but wish to see a copy, when you have an opportunity of sending it.

Mr. Hartley has long continued here in expectation

of instructions for making a treaty of commerce, but they do not come, and I begin to suspect none are intended; though perhaps the delay is only occasioned by the over-great burden of business at present on the shoulders of your ministers. We do not press the matter, but are content to wait till they can see their interest respecting America more clearly, being certain that we can shift as well as you without a treaty

The conjectures I sent you concerning the cold of last winter still appear to me probable. The moderate season in Russia and Canada does not weaken them. I think our frost here began about the 24th of December; in America, the 12th of January. I thank you for recommending to me Mr. Arbuthnot; I have had pleasure in his conversation. I wish much to see the new pieces you had in hand. I congratulate you on the return of your wedding-day, and wish for your sake and Mrs. Vaughan's that you may see a great many of them, all as happy as the first.

I like the young stranger very much. He seems sensible, ingenious, and modest, has a good deal of instruction, and makes judicious remarks. He will probably distinguish himself advantageously. I have not yet heard from Mr. Nairne.

Dr. Price's pamphlet of advice to America is a good one and will do good. You ask "what remedy I have for the growing luxury of the country, which gives so much *offence* to all *English travellers* without exception." I answer that I think it exaggerated, and that travellers are no good judges whether our luxury is growing or diminishing. Our people are

hospitable, and have, indeed, too much pride in displaying upon their tables before strangers the plenty and variety that our country affords. They have the vanity, too, of sometimes borrowing one another's plate to entertain more splendidly. Strangers being invited from house to house, and meeting every day with a feast, imagine what they see is the ordinary way of living of all the families where they dine; when perhaps each family lives a week after upon the remains of the dinner given. It is, I own, a folly in our people to give such *offence* to *English travellers*. The first part of the proverb is thereby verified, that *fools make feasts*. I wish in this case the other were as true, *and wise men eat them*. These travellers might, one would think, find some fault they could more decently reproach us with, than that of our excessive civility to them as strangers.

I have not yet indeed thought of a remedy for luxury. I am not sure that in a great state it is capable of a remedy, nor that the evil is in itself always so great as it is represented. Suppose we include in the definition of luxury all unnecessary expense, and then let us consider whether laws to prevent such expense are possible to be executed in a great country, and whether, if they could be executed, our people generally would be happier, or even richer. Is not the hope of being one day able to purchase and enjoy luxuries a great spur to labor and industry? May not luxury, therefore, produce more than it consumes, if without such a spur people would be, as they are naturally enough inclined to be, lazy and indolent? To this purpose I remember

a circumstance. The skipper of a shallop, employed between Cape May and Philadelphia, had done us some small service, for which he refused to be paid. My wife, understanding that he had a daughter, sent her a present of a new-fashioned cap. Three years after, this skipper being at my house with an old farmer of Cape May, his passenger, he mentioned the cap, and how much his daughter had been pleased with it. "But," said he, "it proved a dear cap to our congregation." "How so?" "When my daughter appeared with it at meeting, it was so much admired, that all the girls resolved to get such caps from Philadelphia; and my wife and I computed that the whole could not have cost less than a hundred pounds." "True," said the farmer, "but you do not tell all the story. I think the cap was nevertheless an advantage to us, for it was the first thing that put our girls upon knitting worsted mittens for sale at Philadelphia, that they might have where-withal to buy caps and ribbons; and you know that industry has continued, and is likely to continue and increase to a much greater value, and answer better purposes." Upon the whole, I was more reconciled to this little piece of luxury, since not only the girls were made happier by having fine caps, but the Philadelphians by the supply of warm mittens.

In our commercial towns upon the sea-coast, fortunes will occasionally be made. Some of those who grow rich will be prudent, live within bounds, and preserve what they have gained for their posterity; others, fond of showing their wealth, will be extrava-

gant and ruin themselves. Law cannot prevent this; and perhaps it is not always an evil to the public. A shilling spent idly by a fool may be picked up by a wiser person, who knows better what to do with it. It is therefore not lost. A vain, silly fellow builds a fine house, furnishes it richly, lives in it expensively, and in a few years ruins himself; but the masons, carpenters, smiths, and other honest tradesmen have been by his employ assisted in maintaining and raising their families; the farmer has been paid for his labor, and encouraged, and the estate is now in better hands. In some cases, indeed, certain modes of luxury may be a public evil, in the same manner as it is a private one. If there be a nation, for instance, that exports its beef and linen, to pay for the importation of claret and porter, while a great part of its people live upon potatoes, and wear no shirts, wherein does it differ from the sot, who lets his family starve, and sells his clothes to buy drink? Our American commerce is, I confess, a little in this way. We sell our victuals to the Islands for rum and sugar—the substantial necessities of life for superfluities. But we have plenty, and live well nevertheless, though, by being sober, we might be richer.

The vast quantity of forest land we have yet to clear and put in order for cultivation will, for a long time keep the body of our nation laborious and frugal.

Forming an opinion of our people and their manners by what is seen among the inhabitants of the seaports, is judging from an improper sample. The

people of the trading towns may be rich and luxurious, while the country possesses all the virtues that tend to promote happiness and public prosperity. Those towns are not regarded by the country, they are hardly considered as an essential part of the States; and the experience of the last war has shown that their being in possession of the enemy did not necessarily draw on the subjection of the country, which bravely continued to maintain its freedom and independence notwithstanding.

It has been computed by some political arithmetician, that if every man and woman would work for four hours each day on something useful, that labor would produce sufficient to procure all the necessities and comforts of life, want and misery would be banished out of the world, and the rest of the twenty-four hours might be leisure and pleasure.

What occasions then so much want and misery? It is the employment of men and women in works that produce neither necessities nor conveniences of life, who, with those who do nothing, consume necessities raised by the laborious. To explain this.

The first elements of wealth are obtained by labor, from the earth and waters. I have land, and raise corn. With this, if I feed a family that does nothing, my corn will be consumed, and at the end of the year I shall be no richer than I was at the beginning. But if, while I feed them, I employ them, some in spinning, others in making bricks, etc., for building, the value of my corn will be arrested and remain with me, and at the end of the year we may all be better

clothed and better lodged. And if, instead of employing a man I feed in making bricks, I employ him in fiddling for me, the corn he eats is gone, and no part of his manufacture remains to augment the wealth and convenience of the family; I shall therefore be the poorer for this fiddling man, unless the rest of my family work more, or eat less, to make up the deficiency he occasions.

Look around the world and see the millions employed in doing nothing, or in something that amounts to nothing, when the necessities and conveniences of life are in question. What is the bulk of commerce, for which we fight and destroy each other, but the toil of millions for superfluities, to the great hazard and loss of many lives by the constant dangers of the sea? How much labor is spent in building and fitting great ships, to go to China and Arabia for tea and coffee, to the West Indies for sugar, to America for tobacco? These things cannot be called the necessities of life, for our ancestors lived very comfortably without them.

A question may be asked: Could all these people now employed in raising, making, or carrying superfluities be subsisted by raising necessities? I think they might. The world is large, and a great part of it still uncultivated. Many hundred millions of acres in Asia, Africa, and America are still in a forest, and a great deal even in Europe. On a hundred acres of this forest a man might become a substantial farmer, and a hundred thousand men, employed in clearing each his hundred acres, would hardly brighten a spot big enough to be visible from the moon, unless with

Herschel's telescope; so vast are the regions still in wood.

It is however, some comfort to reflect that upon the whole the quantity of industry and prudence among mankind exceeds the quantity of idleness and folly. Hence the increase of good buildings, farms cultivated, and populous cities filled with wealth, all over Europe, which a few ages since were only to be found on the coast of the Mediterranean; and this, notwithstanding the mad wars continually raging, by which are often destroyed in one year the works of many years' peace. So that we may hope the luxury of a few merchants on the coast will not be the ruin of America.

One reflection more and I will end this long, rambling letter. Almost all the parts of our bodies require some expense. The feet demand shoes; the legs, stockings; the rest of the body, clothing; and the belly, a good deal of victuals. Our eyes, though exceedingly useful, ask, when reasonable, only the cheap assistance of spectacles, which could not much impair our finances. But THE EYES OF OTHER PEOPLE are the eyes that ruin us. If all but myself were blind, I should want neither fine clothes, fine houses, nor fine furniture.

By the by, here is just issued an *arrêt* of Council taking off all the duties upon the exportation of brandies, which, it is said, will render them cheaper in America than your rum; in which case there is no doubt but they will be preferred, and we shall be better able to bear our restrictions on our commerce. There are views here, by augmenting their settle-

ments, of being able to supply the growing people of America with the sugar that may be wanted there. On the whole, I believe England will get as little by the commercial war she has begun with us, as she did by the military. Adieu, my dear friend. I am yours ever,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S.—This will be delivered to you by my grandson. I am persuaded you will afford him your civilities and counsels. Please to accept a little present of books, I send by him, curious for the beauty of the impression.

MCCXCIII

FROM COUNT DE CAMPOMANES

MADRID, 26 July, 1784.

SIR:—I have received by the hands of my friend Mr. Carmichael, your estimable letter of the 5th of June, the collection of your miscellaneous writings, and the piece entitled, *Information to Those Who would Remove to America*. All these writings exhibit proofs of their having proceeded from a statesman, endowed with foresight, and vigilant for the best interests of his country, according to the political combinations and systems of government under which they were composed; and they manifest, at the same time, an ardent desire for the general happiness of mankind, founded on principles and calculations carried to as high a degree of demonstration as the vicissitude and inconsistency of the various systems adopted for the government of men will admit. Your views and reflections show the

solidity and permanence of your principles, whether considered as applicable to the American colonies in their former condition, or in that of independent States. In both cases your efforts have been directed to the general good, without running into those extremes which are apt to lead astray weak minds in so long and arduous a contest, as we have seen in America, for the establishment of a new state consisting of thirteen provinces under different constitutions, and, at last, united in a bond of union for the mutual benefit of each other.

Nature, which you have profoundly studied, is indebted to you for investigating and explaining phenomena which wise men had not before been able to understand; and the great American philosopher, at the same time he discovers these phenomena, suggests useful methods for guarding men against their dangers.

The frankness with which you dissuade people in Europe from emigrating inconsiderately to America is a proof of your general philanthropy, and of a candor peculiar to a good man, true philosopher, and genuine patriot. You extend this same benevolence to Spain, in your remarks respecting the honor that is due to labor, and against the entailment of estates. The former is now confirmed among us by a recent law, a copy of which I send herewith, declaring the honorable light in which every description of artisans should be regarded. Laborers were always honored and favored by our laws. As to what regards entailments, I refer you to what I wrote in the year 1765, at the end of my treatise upon *Mortmain*

in which I think I have demonstrated that another regulation ought to precede this in the progress of legislation. I add also that there is some diversity of circumstances between a monarchical and democratical constitution in this respect.

I should have great pleasure in extending these reflections, if time would permit, although your penetration and sagacity would render them unnecessary. The honor conferred upon me by the American Philosophical Society, in electing me a member on the 16th of January, lays me under the pleasing obligation of expressing my gratitude through you, the worthy President of the Society. Desirous of reciprocating in some manner this act of courtesy, I proposed you as an honorary member of the Royal Academy of History, of which I am President. The proposal was responded to by universal acclamation; the Academy feeling in the highest degree honored by having on its list the name of a man so eminent in the world of letters, and so distinguished for the part he has acted in a revolution the most memorable in the history of modern times. I am, etc.,

COUNT DE CAMPOMANES.

MCCXCIV

FROM BENJAMIN HARRISON, GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA

RICHMOND, 27 July, 1784.

SIR:—The Assembly of this State have voted a statue of our late worthy commander-in-chief, General Washington, and have directed one side of the pedestal to be filled with an inscription; the other

three, with the dress, are left for the exercise of the genius of your humble servant and his Council, who are all too little acquainted with a business that requires such a refinement of genius and taste, to venture any thing of their own to the eyes of the critical world.

It was natural, therefore, for us to look round for the assistance of some of our own friends; and we unanimously pitched on yourself and Mr. Jefferson, as the most likely to come up to our wishes and the expectations of the Assembly. The friendship you have honored me with gave me the confidence to assure the gentlemen that they might depend on your complying with the request, and I am sure you will not disappoint me. I have written fully to Mr. Jefferson on this subject, enclosed to him a copy of the resolution of the Assembly, and ordered Mr. Peale to send to his address a full-length picture of the General, and have requested the favor of him to confer with you on the whole of this business.

I have had the pleasure of several of your recommendations, and have on every occasion paid that attention to them you had so good a right to expect. If in this or any other way I can be of use to you, you will please to command me; for be assured nothing will make me happier than to have it in my power to render you service. I have the honor to be, with the most perfect respect and esteem, dear sir, etc.,

BENJAMIN HARRISON.¹

¹ Mr. Houdon was the artist selected for executing the statue, which was placed in the State House at Richmond. See Sparks's *Life of Washington*.

MCCXCV

TO COUNT DE MERCY ARGENTEAU ¹

PASSY, 30 July, 1784.

SIR:—I have the honor to communicate to your Excellency an extract from the instructions of Congress to their late Commissioners for treating of peace, expressing their desire to cultivate the friendship of his Imperial Majesty, and to enter into a treaty of commerce for the mutual advantage of his subjects and the citizens of the United States, which I request you will be pleased to lay before his Majesty. The appointing and instructing Commissioners for treaties of commerce with the powers of Europe generally has, by various circumstances, been long delayed but is now done; and I have just received advice that Mr. Jefferson, late Governor of Virginia, commissioned with Mr. Adams, our minister in Holland, and myself, for that service, is on his way hither, and may be expected by the end of August, when we shall be ready to enter into a treaty with his Imperial Majesty for the above purpose, if such should be his pleasure. With great and sincere respect, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXCVI

TO MESSRS. SEARS AND SMITH

PASSY, 4 August, 1784.

GENTLEMEN:—Upon the receipt of yours relating to your cargo of slaves at Martinico, I endeavored to

¹ Austrian Ambassador at the Court of Versailles.

inform myself what was the law in such cases; and I found that by an *arrêt du Conseil d'Etat du Roi*, of the 28th of June, 1783, there is a duty laid, of one hundred livres per head, on all negroes imported in foreign ships, and this duty is granted and is to be paid as a premium to the French importers of negroes, as an encouragement to their own African trade. Under these circumstances I am advised that it cannot be expected that a general national law should be set aside in favor of a particular foreign ship; especially as the king, if he forgives the duty to the stranger, must thereby do injustice to his subjects, to whom he had promised the produce of that duty, unless he pays it to them out of his own money, which we cannot decently request him to do. I do not, therefore, see any possibility of your avoiding payment. I have the honor to be, gentlemen, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXCVII

TO ———

1784.

I am glad to hear that your family are safely arrived in London, and that you propose to bring them here with you. Your life will be more comfortable.

I thank you much for the translation of the Abbé de Mably's letters. The French edition is not yet published here. I have as yet only had time to run

over the translator's preface, which seems well written. I imagine Mr. Snowden to be a Presbyterian minister, as I formerly corresponded with one of that name in Holland, who, I suppose, might be his father. I have not seen the piece you mention of a Berlin academician. I should not object to his enjoyment of the discovery he has made, that *despotism* is the best possible form of government, by his living under it as long as he pleases. For I admire the decision of his prince in a similar case of a dispute among his clergy concerning the duration of hell torments. With great respect, I have the honor to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCXCVIII

THE SAVAGES OF NORTH AMERICA ¹

Savages we call them, because their manners differ from ours, which we think the perfection of civility; they think the same of theirs.

Perhaps, if we could examine the manners of different nations with impartiality, we should find no people so rude as to be without rules of politeness; nor any so polite as not to have some remains of rudeness.

The Indian men, when young, are hunters and warriors; when old, counsellors, for all their government is by counsel of the sages; there is no force,

¹ This paper and the two next in order were published in separate pamphlets in England, in the year 1784, and afterwards, in 1787, they formed a part of our author's papers printed for Dilly.

there are no prisons, no officers to compel obedience or inflict punishment. Hence they generally study oratory, the best speaker having the most influence. The Indian women till the ground, dress the food, nurse and bring up the children, and preserve and hand down to posterity the memory of public transactions. These employments of men and women are accounted natural and honorable. Having few artificial wants, they have abundance of leisure for improvement by conversation. Our laborious manner of life, compared with theirs, they esteem slavish and base; and the learning, on which we value ourselves, they regard as frivolous and useless. An instance of this occurred at the treaty of Lancaster, in Pennsylvania, *anno* 1744, between the government of Virginia and the Six Nations. After the principal business was settled, the commissioners from Virginia acquainted the Indians by a speech that there was at Williamsburg a college, with a fund for educating Indian youth; and that, if the Six Nations would send down half a dozen of their young lads to that college, the government would take care that they should be well provided for, and instructed in all the learning of the white people. It is one of the Indian rules of politeness not to answer a public proposition the same day that it is made; they think it would be treating it as a light matter, and that they show it respect by taking time to consider it, as of a matter important. They therefore deferred their answer till the day following; when their speaker began, by expressing their deep sense of the kindness of the Virginia government, in making them that offer;

“for we know,” says he, “that you highly esteem the kind of learning taught in those colleges, and that the maintenance of our young men, while with you, would be very expensive to you. We are convinced, therefore, that you mean to do us good by your proposal, and we thank you heartily. But you, who are wise, must know that different nations have different conceptions of things; and you will therefore not take it amiss, if our ideas of this kind of education happen not to be the same with yours. We have had some experience of it; several of our young people were formerly brought up at the colleges of the northern provinces; they were instructed in all your sciences; but when they came back to us they were bad runners, ignorant of every means of living in the woods, unable to bear cold or hunger, knew neither how to build a cabin, take a deer, nor kill an enemy, spoke our language imperfectly, were therefore neither fit for hunters, warriors, nor counsellors; they were totally good for nothing. We are however not the less obliged by your kind offer, though we decline accepting it; and, to show our grateful sense of it, if the gentlemen of Virginia will send us a dozen of their sons, we will take great care of their education, instruct them in all we know, and make *men* of them.”

Having frequent occasions to hold public councils, they have acquired great order and decency in conducting them. The old men sit in the foremost ranks, the warriors in the next, and the women and children in the hindmost. The business of the women is to take exact notice of what passes, imprint

it in their memories (for they have no writing), and communicate it to their children. They are the records of the council, and they preserve the tradition of the stipulations in treaties a hundred years back; which, when we compare with our writings, we always find exact. He that would speak, rises. The rest observe a profound silence. When he has finished and sits down, they leave him five or six minutes to recollect that, if he has omitted any thing he intended to say, or has any thing to add, he may rise again and deliver it. To interrupt another, even in common conversation, is reckoned highly indecent. How different this is from the conduct of a polite British House of Commons, where scarce a day passes without some confusion, that makes the Speaker hoarse in calling *to order*; and how different from the mode of conversation in many polite companies in Europe, where, if you do not deliver your sentence with great rapidity, you are cut off in the middle of it by the impatient loquacity of those you converse with, and never suffered to finish it!

The politeness of these savages in conversation is indeed carried to excess, since it does not permit them to contradict or deny the truth of what is asserted in their presence. By this means they indeed avoid disputes; but then it becomes difficult to know their minds, or what impression you made upon them. The missionaries who have attempted to convert them to Christianity, all complain of this as one of the great difficulties of their mission. The Indians hear with patience the truths of the Gospel explained to them, and give their usual tokens of

assent and approbation; you would think they were convinced. No such matter. It is mere civility.

A Swedish minister, having assembled the chiefs of the Susquehanna Indians, made a sermon to them, acquainting them with the principal historical facts on which our religion is founded; such as the fall of our first parents by eating an apple, the coming of Christ to repair the mischief, his miracles and sufferings, etc. When he had finished, an Indian orator stood up to thank him. "What you have told us," says he, "is all very good. It is indeed bad to eat apples. It is better to make them all into cider. We are much obliged by your kindness in coming so far, to tell us those things which you have heard from your mothers. In return, I will tell you some of those we have heard from ours: In the beginning, our fathers had only the flesh of animals to subsist on; and if their hunting was unsuccessful, they were starving. Two of our young hunters, having killed a deer, made a fire in the woods to broil some parts of it. When they were about to satisfy their hunger, they beheld a beautiful young woman descend from the clouds, and seat herself on that hill which you see yonder among the Blue Mountains. They said to each other, it is a spirit that perhaps has smelt our broiling venison and wishes to eat of it; let us offer some to her. They presented her with the tongue; she was pleased with the taste of it, and said: 'Your kindness shall be rewarded; come to this place after thirteen moons, and you shall find something that will be of great benefit in nourishing you and your children to the latest generations.' They did so,

and, to their surprise, found plants they had never seen before; but which, from that ancient time, have been constantly cultivated among us, to our great advantage. Where her right hand had touched the ground, they found maize; where her left hand had touched it, they found kidney-beans; and where her backside had sat on it, they found tobacco." The good missionary, disgusted with this idle tale, said: "What I delivered to you were sacred truths; but what you tell me is mere fable, fiction, and falsehood." The Indian, offended, replied: "My brother, it seems your friends have not done you justice in your education; they have not well instructed you in the rules of common civility. You saw that we, who understand and practise those rules, believed all your stories; why do you refuse to believe ours?"

When any of them come into our towns, our people are apt to crowd round them, gaze upon them, and incommode them, where they desire to be private; this they esteem great rudeness, and the effect of want of instruction in the rules of civility and good manners. "We have," say they, "as much curiosity as you, and when you come into our towns, we wish for opportunities of looking at you; but for this purpose we hide ourselves behind bushes, where you are to pass, and never intrude ourselves into your company."

Their manner of entering one another's village has likewise its rules. It is reckoned uncivil in travelling strangers to enter a village abruptly, without giving notice of their approach. Therefore, as soon as they arrive within hearing, they stop and halloo,

remaining there till invited to enter. Two old men usually come out to them, and lead them in. There is in every village a vacant dwelling, called *the strangers' house*. Here they are placed, while the old men go round from hut to hut, acquainting the inhabitants that strangers are arrived who are probably hungry and weary; and every one sends them what he can spare of victuals, and skins to repose on. When the strangers are refreshed, pipes and tobacco are brought, and then, but not before, conversation begins, with inquiries who they are, whither bound, what news, etc.; and it usually ends with offers of service, if the strangers have occasion for guides, or any necessaries for continuing their journey; and nothing is exacted for the entertainment.

The same hospitality, esteemed among them as a principal virtue, is practised by private persons; of which Conrad Weiser, our interpreter, gave me the following instance. He had been naturalized among the Six Nations, and spoke well the Mohock language. In going through the Indian country, to carry a message from our governor to the council at Onondaga, he called at the habitation of Canassetego, an old acquaintance, who embraced him, spread furs for him to sit on, and placed before him some boiled beans and venison, and mixed some rum and water for his drink. When he was well refreshed, and had lit his pipe, Canassetego began to converse with him; asked how he had fared the many years since they had seen each other, whence he then came, what occasioned the journey, etc. Conrad answered all his questions; and when the discourse began to flag,

the Indian, to continue it, said: "Conrad, you have lived long among the white people, and know something of their customs; I have been sometimes at Albany, and have observed that once in seven days they shut up their shops and assemble all in the great house; tell me what it is for. What do they do there?" "They meet there," says Conrad, "to hear and learn *good things*." "I do not doubt," says the Indian, "that they tell you so; they have told me the same; but I doubt the truth of what they say, and I will tell you my reasons. I went lately to Albany to sell my skins and buy blankets, knives, powder, rum, etc. You know I used generally to deal with Hans Hanson; but I was a little inclined this time to try some other merchants. However, I called first upon Hans, and asked what he would give for beaver. He said he could not give any more than four shillings a pound; 'but,' says he, 'I cannot talk on business now; this is the day when we meet together to learn *good things*, and I am going to meeting.' So I thought to myself: 'Since I cannot do any business to-day, I may as well go to the meeting too,' and I went with him. There stood up a man in black, and began to talk to the people very angrily. I did not understand what he said; but, perceiving that he looked much at me and at Hanson, I imagined he was angry at seeing me there; so I went out, sat down near the house, struck fire, and lit my pipe, waiting till the meeting should break up. I thought, too, that the man had mentioned something of beaver, and I suspected it might be the subject of their meeting. So when they came out I

accosted my merchant. 'Well, Hans,' says I, 'I hope you have agreed to give more than four shillings a pound.' 'No,' says he, 'I cannot give so much; I cannot give more than three shillings and sixpence.' I then spoke to several other dealers, but they all sung the same song,—three and sixpence—three and sixpence. This made it clear to me that my suspicion was right; and that whatever they pretended of meeting to learn *good things*, the real purpose was to consult how to cheat Indians in the price of beaver. Consider but a little, Conrad, and you must be of my opinion. If they met so often to learn *good things*, they would certainly have learned some before this time. But they are still ignorant. You know our practice. If a white man, in travelling through our country, encounters one of our cabins, we all treat him as I treat you; we dry him if he is wet, we warm him if he is cold, we give him meat and drink that he may allay his thirst and hunger, and spread soft furs for him to rest and sleep on; we demand nothing in return.¹ But if I go into a white man's house at Albany, and ask for victuals and drink, they say, 'Where is your money?' and if I have none, they say, 'Get out, you Indian dog!'

¹ It is remarkable that in all ages and countries hospitality has been allowed as the virtue of those whom the civilized were pleased to call barbarians.

The Greeks celebrated the Scythians for it. The Saracens possessed it eminently, and it is to this day the reigning virtue of the wandering Arabs.

St. Paul, too, in the relation of his voyage and shipwreck on the Island of Melita, says: *The barbarous people showed us no little kindness; for they kindled a fire and received every one because of the present rain and because of the cold.*—Acts, ch. xxviii. F.

You see they have not yet learned those little *good things*, that we need no meetings to be instructed in, because our mothers taught them to us when we were children; and therefore it is impossible their meetings should be, as they say, for any such purpose, or have any such effect; they are only to contrive *the cheating of Indians in the price of beaver.*"

MCCXCIX

THE INTERNAL STATE OF AMERICA; BEING A TRUE DESCRIPTION OF THE INTEREST AND POLICY OF THAT VAST CONTINENT

There is a tradition that, in the planting of New England, the first settlers met with many difficulties and hardships; as is generally the case when a civilized people attempt establishing themselves in a wilderness country. Being piously disposed, they sought relief from Heaven, by laying their wants and distresses before the Lord, in frequent set days of fasting and prayer. Constant meditation and discourse on these subjects kept their minds gloomy and discontented; and, like the children of Israel, there were many disposed to return to that Egypt which persecution had induced them to abandon. At length, when it was proposed in the Assembly to proclaim another fast, a farmer of plain sense rose, and remarked that the inconveniences they suffered, and concerning which they had so often wearied Heaven with their complaints, were not so great as

they might have expected, and were diminishing every day, as the colony strengthened; that the earth began to reward their labor, and to furnish liberally for their subsistence; that the seas and rivers were found full of fish, the air sweet, the climate healthy; and, above all, that they were there in the full enjoyment of liberty, civil and religious. He therefore thought that reflecting and conversing on these subjects would be more comfortable, as tending more to make them contented with their situation; and that it would be more becoming the gratitude they owed to the Divine Being, if, instead of a fast, they should proclaim a thanksgiving. His advice was taken; and from that day to this they have, in every year, observed circumstances of public felicity sufficient to furnish employment for a thanksgiving day; which is therefore constantly ordered and religiously observed.

I see in the public newspapers of different States frequent complaints of *hard times*, *deadness of trade*, *scarcity of money*, etc. It is not my intention to assert or maintain that these complaints are entirely without foundation. There can be no country or nation existing, in which there will not be some people so circumstanced as to find it hard to gain a livelihood; people who are not in the way of any profitable trade, and with whom money is scarce, because they have nothing to give in exchange for it; and it is always in the power of a small number to make a great clamor. But let us take a cool view of the general state of our affairs, and perhaps the prospect will appear less gloomy than has been imagined.

The great business of the continent is agriculture. For one artisan, or merchant, I suppose, we have at least one hundred farmers, by far the greatest part cultivators of their own fertile lands, from whence many of them draw, not only the food necessary for their subsistence, but the materials of their clothing, so as to need very few foreign supplies; while they have a surplus of productions to dispose of, whereby wealth is gradually accumulated. Such has been the goodness of Divine Providence to these regions, and so favorable the climate, that, since the three or four years of hardship in the first settlement of our fathers here, a famine or scarcity has never been heard of amongst us; on the contrary, though some years may have been more and others less plentiful, there has always been provision enough for ourselves, and a quantity to spare for exportation. And although the crops of last year were generally good, never was the farmer better paid for the part he can spare commerce, as the published price-currents abundantly testify. The lands he possesses are also continually rising in value with the increase of population; and, on the whole, he is enabled to give such good wages to those who work for him, that all who are acquainted with the old world must agree, that in no part of it are the laboring poor so generally well fed, well clothed, well lodged, and well paid, as in the United States of America.

If we enter the cities, we find that since the Revolution the owners of houses and lots of ground have had their interest vastly augmented in value; rents have risen to an astonishing height, and thence

encouragement to increase building, which gives, employment to an abundance of workmen, as does also the increased luxury and splendor of living of the inhabitants thus made richer. These workmen all demand and obtain much higher wages than any other part of the world would afford them, and are paid in ready money. This class of people therefore do not, or ought not, to complain of hard times; and they make a very considerable part of the city inhabitants.

At the distance I live from our American fisheries, I cannot speak of them with any degree of certainty; but I have not heard that the labor of the valuable race of men employed in them is worse paid, or that they meet with less success, than before the Revolution. The whalemens, indeed, have been deprived of one market for their oil; but another, I hear, is opening for them which it is hoped may be equally advantageous, and the demand is constantly increasing for their spermaceti candles, which therefore bear a much higher price than formerly.

There remain the merchants and shopkeepers. Of these, though they make but a small part of the whole nation, the number is considerable, too great indeed for the business they are employed in; for the consumption of goods in every country has its limits, the faculties of the people—that is, their ability to buy and pay—being equal only to a certain quantity of merchandise. If merchants calculate amiss on this proportion and import too much, they will of course find the sale dull for the overplus, and some of them will say that trade languishes. They

should, and doubtless will, grow wiser by experience and import less. If too many artificers in town, and farmers from the country, flattering themselves with the idea of leading easier lives, turn shopkeepers, the whole natural quantity of that business divided among them all may afford too small a share for each, and occasion complaints that trade is dead; these may also suppose that it is owing to scarcity of money, while in fact it is not so much from the fewness of buyers as from the excessive number of sellers that the mischief arises; and if every shop-keeping farmer and mechanic would return to the use of his plow and working-tools, there would remain of widows and other women shopkeepers sufficient for the business, which might then afford them a comfortable maintenance.

Whoever has travelled through the various parts of Europe, and observed how small is the proportion of people in affluence or easy circumstances there, compared with those in poverty and misery; the few rich and haughty landlords, the multitude of poor, abject, rack-rented, tithe-paying tenants and half-paid and half-starved ragged laborers; and views here the happy mediocrity that so generally prevails throughout these States, where the cultivator works for himself, and supports his family in decent plenty, will, methinks, see abundant reason to bless Divine Providence for the evident and great difference in our favor, and be convinced that no nation known to us enjoys a greater share of human felicity.

It is true that in some of the States there are parties and discords; but let us look back, and ask if we

were ever without them? Such will exist wherever there is liberty; and perhaps they help to preserve it. By the collision of different sentiments, sparks of truth are struck out, and political light is obtained. The different factions, which at present divide us, aim all at the public good; the differences are only about the various modes of promoting it. Things, actions, measures, and objects of all kinds present themselves to the minds of men in such a variety of lights, that it is not possible we should all think alike at the same time on every subject, when hardly the same man retains at all times the same ideas of it. Parties are therefore the common lot of humanity; and ours are by no means more mischievous or less beneficial than those of other countries, nations, and ages, enjoying in the same degree the great blessing of political liberty.

Some indeed among us are not so much grieved for the present state of affairs, as apprehensive for the future. The growth of luxury alarms them, and they think we are from that alone in the high road of ruin. They observe that no revenue is sufficient without economy, and that the most plentiful income of a whole people from the natural productions of their country may be dissipated in vain and needless expenses, and poverty be introduced in the place of affluence. This may be possible. It however rarely happens; for there seems to be in every nation a greater proportion of industry and frugality, which tend to enrich, than of idleness and prodigality, which occasion poverty; so that upon the whole there is a continual accumulation. Reflect what Spain,

Gaul, Germany, and Britain were in the time of the Romans, inhabited by people little richer than our savages, and consider the wealth they at present possess, in numerous well-built cities, improved farms, rich movables, magazines stocked with valuable manufactures, to say nothing of plate, jewels, and coined money; and all this, notwithstanding their bad, wasteful, plundering governments, and their mad, destructive wars; and yet luxury and extravagant living have never suffered much restraint in those countries. Then consider the great proportion of industrious frugal farmers inhabiting the interior parts of these American States, and of whom the body of our nation consists; and judge whether it is possible that the luxury of our seaports can be sufficient to ruin such a country. If the importation of foreign luxuries could ruin a people, we should probably have been ruined long ago; for the British nation claimed a right, and practised it, of importing among us, not only the superfluities of their own production, but those of every nation under heaven; we bought and consumed them, and yet we flourished and grew rich. At present, our independent governments may do what we could not then do, discourage by heavy duties, or prevent by heavy prohibitions, such importations, and thereby grow richer; if, indeed, which may admit of dispute, the desire of adorning ourselves with fine clothes, possessing fine furniture, with elegant houses, etc., is not, by strongly inciting to labor and industry, the occasion of producing a greater value than is consumed in the gratification of that desire.

The agriculture and fisheries of the United States are the great sources of increasing wealth. He that puts a seed into the earth is recompensed, perhaps, by receiving forty out of it; and he who draws a fish out of our water, draws up a piece of silver.

Let us (and there is no doubt but we shall) be attentive to these, and then the power of rivals, with all their restraining and prohibiting acts, cannot much hurt us. We are sons of the earth and seas, and, like Antæus in the fable, if, in wrestling with a Hercules, we now and then receive a fall, the touch of our parents will communicate to us fresh strength and vigor to renew the contest.

MCCC

TO JOHN ADAMS

PASSY, 6 August, 1784.

SIR:—Mr. Bingham sent me last night, from Paris, your Excellency's letter of the 27th past, enclosing a copy of one from Mr. Jefferson. I had before sent you a copy of one from the same to me, which I hope you received. I enclose herewith copies of a letter from Mr. Thomson, some new instructions, and one of the commissions. The other two are in the same words, except that instead of the words the United Netherlands, there is in one France, and in the other Sweden. These came by Monsieur de la Luzerne, but it was not before Wednesday last that I received them. You will see that a good deal of

business is cut out for us—treaties to be made with, I think, twenty powers in two years,—so that we are not likely to eat the bread of idleness; and that we may not surfeit by eating too much, our masters have diminished our allowance. I commend their economy, and shall imitate it by diminishing my expense. Our too liberal entertainment of our countrymen here has been reported at home by our guests, and has given offence. They must be contented for the future, as I am, with plain beef and pudding. The readers of Connecticut newspapers ought not to be troubled with any more accounts of our extravagance. For my own part, if I could sit down to dinner on a piece of their excellent salt pork and pumpkin, I would not give a farthing for all the luxuries of Paris.

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCCI

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON

PASSY, 15 August, 1784.

DEAR FRIEND:—I received your kind letter of July 20th. I wish you had executed your project of taking a little trip to see me this summer. You would have made me very happy, and might have bathed your children here, as well as at Southampton, I having a bath in my house, besides the river in view. I like your monthly account of them, and in return send you my daughter's account of my grandchildren in Philadelphia. You will see she ex-

pected me home this summer; but my constituents have sent me a new commission, and I must stay another winter. Can you not come and pass it with me here?

Temple, who proposes to have the pleasure of delivering this to you, will explain to you how you may be accommodated, and, if you can resolve to come, will conduct you. Except being at home, which I begin now to fear I never shall be, nothing could give me greater pleasure. Come, my dear friend, live with me while I stay here, and go with me, if I do go, to America. Yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S.—My love to the dear children, particularly my godson, for whom Temple has a little present of French books.

MCCCII

TO WILLIAM FRANKLIN

PASSY, 16 August, 1784.

DEAR SON:—I received your letter of the 22^d ultimo, and am glad to find that you desire to revive the affectionate intercourse that formerly existed between us. It will be very agreeable to me; indeed, nothing has ever hurt me so much, and affected me with such keen sensations, as to find myself deserted in my old age by my only son; and not only deserted, but to find him taking up arms against me in a cause wherein my good fame, fortune, and life were all at stake. You conceived, you say, that your duty

to your king and regard for your country required this. I ought not to blame you for differing in sentiment with me in public affairs. We are men, all subject to errors. Our opinions are not in our own power; they are formed and governed much by circumstances that are often as inexplicable as they are irresistible. Your situation was such that few would have censured your remaining neuter, though there are natural duties which precede political ones, and cannot be extinguished by them.¹

This is a disagreeable subject. I drop it; and we will endeavor, as you propose, mutually to forget what has happened relating to it, as well as we can. I send your son over to pay his duty to you. You will find him much improved. He is greatly

¹ Among some letters which turned up lately at an autograph sale in London was one from William Franklin to his father, dated June 8, 1771.

In it he complains of the hostility manifested towards him by Lord Hillsborough, and adds "He has no reason (other than the natural connection between us) to imagine that I entertain the same political opinions with my father, with regard to the dispute between Britain and America. My sentiments are really in many respects different from those which have yet been published on either side of the question, but as I could not expect the voice of an individual would be attended to in the temper both parties were in, I for the most part kept my sentiments to myself, and only endeavored to steer my little bark quietly through all the storms of political contest with which I was everywhere surrounded. I have, however, on no occasion given up a single point of the crown's prerogatives, nor have I ever attempted the least infringement of the people's privileges. An almost uninterrupted harmony has prevailed between me and the other branches of legislation of this province, we having had no difference of any importance until the session in April last, when they foolishly refused to grant any money for the supply of the king's troops, after all the other colonies had given up the point, and notwithstanding they had more money in the treasury, struck expressly for the use of the crown, than was necessary for the purpose," etc.

esteemed and beloved in this country, and will make his way anywhere. It is my desire that he should study the law, as the necessary part of knowledge for a public man, and profitable if he should have occasion to practise it. I would have you therefore put into his hands those law-books you have, viz., Blackstone, Coke, Bacon, Viner, etc. He will inform you that he received the letter sent him by Mr. Galloway, and the paper it enclosed, safe.

On my leaving America, I deposited with that friend for you, a chest of papers, among which was a manuscript of nine or ten volumes, relating to manufactures, commerce, and finance, which cost me in England about seventy guineas; and eight quire books, containing the rough drafts of all my letters while I lived in London. These are missing; I hope you have got them; if not, they are lost. Mr. Vaughan has published in London a volume of what he calls my political works. He proposes a second edition; but, as the first was very incomplete, and you had many things that were omitted (for I used to send you sometimes the rough drafts and sometimes the printed pieces I wrote in London), I have directed him to apply to you for what may be in your power to furnish him with, or to delay his publication till I can be at home again, if that may ever happen.

I did intend returning this year; but the Congress, instead of giving me leave to do so, have sent me another commission, which will keep me here at least a year longer; and perhaps I may then be too old and feeble to bear the voyage. I am here among

a people that love and respect me, a most amiable nation to live with; and perhaps I may conclude to die among them; for my friends in America are dying off, one after another and I have been so long abroad that I should now be almost a stranger in my own country.

I shall be glad to see you when convenient, but would not have you come here at present. You may confide to your son the family affairs you wished to confer upon with me, for he is discreet; and I trust that you will prudently avoid introducing him to company that it may be improper for him to be seen with. I shall hear from you by him; and letters to me afterwards will come safe under cover directed to Mr. Ferdinand Grand, banker, at Paris. Wishing you health, and more happiness than it seems you have lately experienced, I remain your affectionate father,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCCIII

TO RICHARD PRICE

PASSY, 16 August, 1784.

DEAR FRIEND:—I some time since answered your kind letter of July 12th, returning the proof of Mr. Turgot's letter, with the permission of his friends to print it. I hope it came safe to hand. I had before received yours of April, which gave me great pleasure, as it acquainted me with your welfare and that of Dr. Priestley.

The commencement here of the art of flying will,

as you observe, be a new epoch. The construction and manner of filling the balloons improve daily. Some of the artists have lately gone to England. It will be well for your philosophers to obtain from them what they know or you will be behind-hand, which in mechanic operations is unusual for Englishmen.

I hope the disagreements in our Royal Society are composed. Quarrels often disgrace both sides, and disputes even on small matters often produce quarrels for want of knowing how to differ decently,—an art which it is said scarce anybody possesses but yourself and Dr. Priestley.

I had, indeed, thoughts of visiting England once more, and of enjoying the great pleasure of seeing again my friends there; but my malady, otherwise tolerable, is, I find, irritated by the motion in a carriage, and I fear the consequence of such a journey; yet I am not quite resolved against it. I often think of the agreeable evenings I used to pass with that excellent collection of good men, the club at the *London*, and wish to be again among them. Perhaps I may pop in some Thursday evening when they least expect me. You may well believe it very pleasing to me to have Dr. Priestley associated with me among the foreign members of the Academy of Sciences. I had mentioned him upon every vacancy that has happened since my residence here, and the place has never been bestowed more worthily.

When you wrote the letter I am now answering, your nation was involved in the confusion of your new election. When I think of your present crazy

constitution and its diseases, I imagine the enormous emoluments of place to be among the greatest; and while they exist, I doubt whether even the reform of your representation will cure the evils constantly arising from your perpetual factions. As it seems to be a settled point at present that the minister must govern the Parliament, who are to do every thing he would have done, and he is to bribe them to do this, and the people are to furnish the money to pay these bribes, the Parliament appears to me a very expensive machine for government; and I apprehend the people will find out in time that they may as well be governed, and that it will be much cheaper to be governed, by the minister alone, no Parliament being preferable to the present.

Your newspapers are full of fictitious accounts of distractions in America. We know nothing of them. Mr. Jefferson, just arrived here after a journey through all the States from Virginia to Boston, assures me that all is quiet, that a general tranquillity reigns, and the people well satisfied with their present forms of government, a few insignificant persons only excepted. These accounts are, I suppose, intended as consolatory, and to discourage emigrations. I think with you that our Revolution is an important event for the advantage of mankind in general. It is to be hoped that the lights which we enjoy, which the ancient governments in their first establishment could not have, may preserve us from their errors. In this the advice of wise friends may do much good, and I am sure that which you have been so kind as to offer us will be of great service.

Mr. Jay has gone to America, but Mr. Adams is just arrived here, and I shall acquaint him with your remembrance of him. Poor Paradise, whom you mention, I respect and pity. But there is no helping him. He seems calculated by nature for unhappiness, and will be equally miserable whether with or without his wife, having no firmness of mind. I doubt his property in Virginia may suffer by his irresolution.

Many thanks for your kind wishes respecting my health and happiness, which I return fourfold, being ever, with the sincerest esteem, my dear friend, your most affectionate,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCCIV

TO LORD HOWE

MY LORD:—I received lately the very valuable *Voyage* of the late Captain Cook, kindly sent to me by your Lordship in consideration of my goodwill in issuing orders towards the protection of that illustrious discoverer from any interruption in his return home by American cruisers.¹ The reward vastly exceeds the small merit of the action, which was no more than a duty to mankind. I am very sensible of his Majesty's goodness in permitting this favor to me, and I desire that my thankful acknowledgments may be accepted. With great respect, I

¹ See Vol. VII., p. 447.

am, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.¹

MCCCV

TO WILLIAM STRAHAN

PASSY, 19 August, 1784.

DEAR FRIEND:—I received your kind letter of April 17th. You will have the goodness to place my delay in answering to the account of indisposition and business, and excuse it. I have now that letter before me, and my grandson, whom you may formerly remember a little scholar at Mr. Elphinston's, purposing to set out in a day or two on a visit to his father in London, I sit down to scribble a little to you, first recommending him as a worthy young man to your civilities and counsels.

You press me much to come to England. I am not without strong inducements to do so; the fund of knowledge you promise to communicate to me is an addition to them, and no small one. At present it is impracticable. But when my grandson returns, come with him. We will talk the matter over, and perhaps you may take me back with you. I have a bed at your service, and will try to make your residence, while you can stay with us, as agreeable to you, if possible, as I am sure it will be to me.

¹ A gold medal was struck by order of the Royal Society, with particular reference to the protection afforded to Captain Cook's vessels by the Emperor of Russia and the King of France. The Society bestowed upon Dr. Franklin one of these medals.

You do not "approve the annihilation of profitable places; for you do not see why a statesman, who does his business well, should not be paid for his labor as well as any other workman." Agreed. But why more than any other workman? The less the salary, the greater the honor. In so great a nation, there are many rich enough to afford giving their time to the public; and there are, I make no doubt, many wise and able men, who would take as much pleasure in governing for nothing, as they do in playing chess for nothing. It would be one of the noblest amusements. That this opinion is not chimerical, the country I now live in affords a proof; its whole civil and criminal law administration being done for nothing, or in some sense for less than nothing; since the members of its judiciary parliaments buy their places, and do not make more than *three per cent.* for their money by their fees and emoluments, while the legal interest is *five*; so that in fact they give two per cent. to be allowed to govern, and all their time and trouble into the bargain. Thus *profit*, one motive for desiring place, being abolished, there remains only *ambition*; and that being in some degree balanced by *loss*, you may easily conceive that there will not be very violent factions and contentions for such places, nor much of the mischief to the country that attends your factions, which have often occasioned wars, and overloaded you with debts impayable.

• I allow you all the force of your joke upon the vagrancy of our Congress. They have a right to sit *where* they please, of which perhaps they have made

too much use by shifting too often. But they have two other rights; those of sitting *when* they please, and as *long* as they please, in which methinks they have the advantage of your Parliament; for they cannot be dissolved by the breath of a minister, or sent packing as you were the other day, when it was your earnest desire to have remained longer together.

You "fairly acknowledge that the late war terminated quite contrary to your expectation." Your expectation was ill founded; for you would not believe your old friend, who told you repeatedly that by those measures England would lose her colonies, as Epictetus warned in vain his master that he would break his leg. You believed rather the tales you heard of our poltroonery and impotence of body and mind. Do you not remember the story you told me of the Scotch sergeant, who met with a party of forty American soldiers, and, though alone, disarmed them all, and brought them in prisoners? A story almost as improbable as that of the Irishman, who pretended to have alone taken and brought in five of the enemy by *surrounding* them. And yet, my friend, sensible and judicious as you are, but partaking of the general infatuation you seemed to believe it.

The word *general* puts me in mind of a general, your General Clarke, who had the folly to say in my hearing at Sir John Pringle's, that with a thousand British grenadiers he would undertake to go from one end of America to the other, and geld all the males, partly by force and partly by a little coaxing. It is plain he took us for a species of animals very

little superior to brutes. The Parliament too believed the stories of another foolish general, I forget his name, that the Yankeys never *felt bold*. Yankey was understood to be a sort of Yahoo, and the Parliament did not think the petitions of such creatures were fit to be received and read in so wise an assembly. What was the consequence of this monstrous pride and insolence? You first sent small armies to subdue us, believing them more than sufficient, but soon found yourselves obliged to send greater; these, whenever they ventured to penetrate our country beyond the protection of their ships, were either repulsed and obliged to scamper out, or were surrounded, beaten, and taken prisoners. An American planter, who had never seen Europe, was chosen by us to command our troops, and continued during the whole war. This man sent home to you, one after another, five of your best generals baffled, their heads bare of laurels, disgraced even in the opinion of their employers.

Your contempt of our understandings, in comparison with your own, appeared to be not much better founded than that of our courage, if we may judge by this circumstance, that, in whatever court of Europe a Yankey negotiator appeared, the wise British minister was routed, put in a passion, picked a quarrel with your friends, and was sent home with a flea in his ear.

But after all, my dear friend, do not imagine that I am vain enough to ascribe our success to any superiority in any of those points. I am too well acquainted with all the springs and levers of our

machine, not to see, that our human means were unequal to our undertaking, and that, if it had not been for the justice of our cause, and the consequent interposition of Providence, in which we had faith, we must have been ruined. If I had ever before been an atheist, I should now have been convinced of the being and government of a Deity! It is he who abases the proud and favors the humble. May we never forget his goodness to us, and may our future conduct manifest our gratitude.

But let us leave these serious reflections and converse with our usual pleasantries. I remember your observing once to me as we sat together in the House of Commons, that no two journeymen printers within your knowledge had met with such success in the world as ourselves. You were then at the head of your profession, and soon afterwards became a member of Parliament. I was an agent for a few provinces, and now act for them all. But we have risen by different modes. I, as a republican printer, always liked a form well *planed down*; being averse to those *overbearing* letters that hold their heads so *high* as to hinder their neighbors from appearing. You, as a monarchist, chose to work upon *crown* paper, and found it profitable; while I worked upon *pro patria* (often indeed called *foolscap*) with no less advantage. Both our *heaps hold out* very well, and we seem likely to make a pretty good day's work of it. With regard to public affairs (to continue in the same style), it seems to me that the compositors in your chapel do not *cast off their copy* well, nor perfectly understand *imposing*; their *forms*, too, are

continually pestered by the *outs* and *doubles*, that are not easy to be corrected. And I think they were wrong in laying aside some *faces*, and particularly certain *head-pieces*, that would have been both useful and ornamental. But, courage! The business may still flourish with good management; and the master become as rich as any of the company.

By the way, the rapid growth and extension of the English language in America must become greatly advantageous to the booksellers and holders of copyrights in England. A vast audience is assembling there for English authors, ancient, present, and future, our people doubling every twenty years; and this will demand large and of course profitable impressions of your most valuable books. I would, therefore, if I possessed such rights, entail them, if such a thing be practicable, upon my posterity; for their worth will be continually augmenting. This may look a little like advice, and yet I have drunk no *madeira* these six months.

The subject, however, leads me to another thought, which is that you do wrong to discourage the emigration of Englishmen to America. In my piece on population I have proved, I think, that emigration does not diminish but multiplies a nation. You will not have fewer at home for those that go abroad, and as every man who comes among us, and takes up a piece of land, becomes a citizen, and by our Constitution has a voice in elections and a share in the government of the country, why should you be against acquiring by this fair means a repossession of it, and leave it to be taken by foreigners of all

nations and languages, who by their numbers may drown and stifle the English, which otherwise would probably become in the course of two centuries the most extensive language in the world, the Spanish only excepted? It is a fact that the Irish emigrants and their children are now in possession of the government of Pennsylvania by their majority in the Assembly, as well as of a great part of the territory, and I remember well the first ship that brought any of them over. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCCVI

TO GEORGE WHATELY

PASSY, 21 August, 1784.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND:—I received your kind letter of May 3, 1783. I am ashamed that it has been so long unanswered. The indolence of old age, frequent indisposition, and too much business are my only excuses. I had great pleasure in reading it, as it informed me of your welfare.

Your excellent little work, *The Principles of Trade*, is too little known. I wish you would send me a copy of it by the return of my grandson and secretary, whom I beg leave to recommend to your civilities. I would get it translated and printed here. And if your bookseller has any quantity of them left, I should be glad he would send them to America. The ideas of our people there, though rather better

than those that prevail in Europe, are not so good as they should be, and that piece might be of service among them.

Since and soon after the date of your letter, we lost unaccountably, as well as unfortunately, that worthy, valuable young man you mention, your namesake, Maddison. He was infinitely regretted by all that knew him.

I am sorry your favorite charity ¹ does not go on as you wish it. It is shrunk indeed by your admitting only sixty children a year. What you have told your brethren respecting America is true. If you find it difficult to dispose of your children in England, it looks as if you had too many people. And yet you are afraid of emigration. A subscription is lately set on foot here to encourage and assist mothers in nursing their infants themselves at home, the practice of sending them to the *Enfants Trouvés* having risen here to a monstrous excess, as, by the annual bill, it appears they amount to near one third of the children born in Paris! The subscription is likely to succeed, and may do a great deal of good, though it cannot answer all the purposes of a foundling hospital.

Your eyes must continue very good, since you can write so small a hand without spectacles. I cannot distinguish a letter, even of large print, but am happy in the invention of double spectacles, which, serving for distant objects as well as near ones, make my eyes as useful to me as ever they were. If all the other defects and infirmities were as easily and cheaply

¹ The Foundling Hospital, of which Mr. Whately was the Treasurer.
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remedied, it would be worth while for friends to live a good deal longer, but I look upon death to be as necessary to our constitution as sleep. We shall rise refreshed in the morning. Adieu, and believe me ever yours, most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCCVII

TO A FRIEND IN ENGLAND ¹

PASSY, 21 August, 1784.

DEAR SIR:—Understanding that my letter intended for you by General Melvill was lost at the Hotel d'Espagne, I take this opportunity by my grandson to give you the purport of it, as well as I can recollect. I thanked you for the pleasure you had procured me of the General's conversation, whom I found a judicious, sensible, and amiable man. I was glad to hear that you possessed a comfortable retirement, and more so that you had thoughts of removing to Philadelphia, for that it would make me very happy to have you there. Your *companions* would be very acceptable to the Library, but I hoped you would long live to enjoy their company yourself. I agreed with you in sentiments concerning the Old Testament, and thought the clause in our Constitution, which required the members of Assembly to declare their belief *that the whole of it was given by divine inspiration*, had better have been omitted; that I had opposed the clause, but being overpowered by numbers, and fearing more might in future times

¹ Probably Dr. Priestley.

be grafted on it, I prevailed to have the additional clause "that *no further or more extended profession of faith should ever be exacted.*" I observed to you, too, that the evil of it was the less, as *no inhabitant*, nor any officer of government, except the members of Assembly, was obliged to make that declaration.

So much for that letter; to which I may now add that there are several things in the Old Testament impossible to be given by *divine* inspiration, such as the approbation ascribed to the angel of the Lord of that abominably wicked and detestable action of Jael, the wife of Heber, the Kenite.¹ If the rest of the book were like that, I should rather suppose it given by inspiration from another quarter, and renounce the whole.

By the way, how goes on the Unitarian Church in Essex Street? and the honest minister of it,² is he comfortably supported? Your old colleague, Mr. Radcliff, is he living? And what became of Mr. Denham?

My grandson, who will have the honor of delivering this to you, may bring me a line from you, and I hope will bring me an account of your continuing well and happy.

I jog on still, with as much health and as few of the infirmities of old age as I have any reason to expect. But notwithstanding the decay of my constitution, my regard for my old friends remains firm and entire. You will always have a good share of it, for I am ever, with great and sincere esteem, dear sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ Judges, chap. iv.

² Theophilus Lindsey.

MCCCVIII

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES

PASSY, 3 September, 1784.

SIR:—I have the honor to transmit to your Excellency, by order of Congress, a resolution of theirs, dated the 11th day of May last, which is in the words following, viz.:

“Resolved, That Dr. Franklin be instructed to express to the court of France the constant desire of Congress to meet their wishes; that these States are about to form a general system of commerce, by treaties with other nations; that at this time they cannot foresee what claim might be given to those nations by the explanatory propositions from the Count de Vergennes, on the second and third articles of our Treaty of Amity and Commerce with His Most Christian Majesty, but that he may be assured it will be our constant care to place no people on more advantageous ground than the subjects of his Majesty.”

With great respect, I am, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.¹

¹ On the 9th of September, the Count de Vergennes acknowledged the receipt of the resolution of Congress, and added: “This declaration founded on the treaty of the 6th February, 1778, has been very agreeable to the king; and you, sir, can assure Congress that the United States shall constantly experience a perfect reciprocity in France.”

MCCCIX

TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN

PASSY, 7 September, 1784.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—This will be delivered to you by Count Mirabeau, son of the marquis of that name, author of *L'Ami des Hommes*. This gentleman is esteemed here, and I recommend him to your civilities and counsels, particularly with respect to the printing of a piece he has written on the subject of “hereditary nobility,” on occasion of the order of Cincinnati lately attempted to be established in America, which cannot be printed here. I find that some of the best judges think it extremely well written, with great clearness, force, and elegance. If you can recommend him to an honest, reasonable bookseller that will undertake it, you will do him service, and perhaps some to mankind, who are too much bigoted in many countries to that kind of imposition.

I had formerly almost resolved to trouble you with no more letters of recommendation; but I think you will find this gentleman to possess talents that may render his acquaintance agreeable. With sincere esteem, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCCX

FROM WILLIAM CARMICHAEL

MADRID, 25 September, 1784.

DEAR SIR:—Since I had the honor to answer your Excellency's letter of the 28th ultimo, from St.

Ildefonso, this court has judged proper to adopt a measure which it has had in contemplation for some time past, by finally concluding to send M. Gardoqui, late Consul-General in England, to represent his Catholic Majesty in the character of *Chargé d'Affaires* to the United States; with a commission, however, of minister, in case, previous to his arrival or immediately after, Congress shall think fit to name a person in that character here to replace Mr. Jay. Accordingly his appointments are those of minister, his salary being twelve thousand hard dollars, with two thousand pistoles for his outfits. This gentleman is to embark before the middle of next month from Cadiz, on board a Spanish frigate ready for that purpose, the king defraying every expense of himself and suite on their passage.

On finding that this gentleman's mission would take place sooner than I expected, I took occasion to mention, though not officially, to the Count de Florida Blanca, the nature of the new commission appointed to treat with the European powers, mentioned in your letter above-mentioned. Finding that he did not appear altogether satisfied with this mode of negotiating, I endeavored to convince him that the measure had been adopted by Congress for the convenience of the European courts inclined to treat with the States.

I have the honor to inform you of these circumstances, as it is proper they should be known to Messrs. Adams and Jefferson, from whom I have not had the pleasure of hearing since their arrival at Paris; and I beg leave to solicit your and their

advice for my government, having been deprived of every kind of information from Congress since the 7th of May, 1783. M. Gardoqui is known to Mr. Adams and your Excellency, and is principally chosen by the court from a supposition that he will be agreeable in America, from his known affection to the country and his attachment to its interest. He is a very well-meaning man, and very sincerely disposed to promote and cultivate a lasting harmony between this country and ours. The choice of him, therefore, for this mission may be considered as a proof of the good disposition of the court; which, though hurt by the silence of Congress, has manifested much attention to the objects relative to the interests of individuals of America, for which I have had occasion to have recourse to its interference.

Having no precise information of the nature of the services rendered by the *South Carolina* frigate, or of the sum expected for those services, I shall make it a point to procure instruction for M. Gardoqui to settle that business in America, which can be done with more despatch there than in Europe, because the Count de Galvez, now on his way to Havana, was commander-in-chief when that frigate was employed, and must be consulted from hence before any step can be taken definitely satisfactory to the State of South Carolina. Not to omit any thing that may terminate this matter to the satisfaction of the State, I shall write on the subject to the Count de Galvez, whom I have the honor to know personally, and endeavor to dispose him to render all the good offices that may depend on him, in the arrangement of

this affair.¹ With very respectful compliments to Messrs. Adams and Jefferson, I have the honor to be, with high regard and much esteem, etc.,

WILLIAM CARMICHAEL.

MCCCXI

FROM COUNT DE MERCY ARGENTEAU

PASSY, 28 September, 1784.

SIR:—With respect to the proposition of the United States of America, that I forwarded to my court, concerning the arrangements of commerce to be adopted by the respective dominions, I have received the order, sir, which I have the honor to communicate to you, that his Majesty, the Emperor, has agreed to the said proposition, and that he has directed the government general of the Low Countries to adopt measures to put it in execution.

When the particulars respecting this matter shall be sent to me I shall instantly communicate them.

¹ The *South Carolina* frigate was the same that was commanded by Commodore Gillon, who sailed from Corunna to Teneriffe, where he remained some time, and then pursued his course for Charleston; but, while on his way, he fell in with and captured five English vessels from Jamaica laden with rum and sugar. Being blown off the coast when he approached Charleston he took his prizes to Havana, where they were sold. The Spaniards at this time having fitted out an expedition against the English in the West Indies, Gillon joined them with his frigate, and they made a successful descent upon the Bahama Islands. For the service of the frigate in this expedition, the State of South Carolina claimed an indemnity, and the American *Chargé d'Affaires* at the court of Madrid was instructed by Congress to present and support the claim. See *Journals of Congress*, May 3, 1784.

I avail myself of this opportunity to renew the assurances of the most perfect attachment, with which I have the honor to be, etc.,

DE MERCY ARGENTEAU.

MCCCXII

FROM ROBERT MORRIS

OFFICE OF FINANCE, 30 September, 1784.

DEAR SIR:—This is rather a late day to acknowledge your favors of the 25th of December and 15th of June last, but I have always intended, in my acknowledgment of them, to close our public correspondence, and I have always been disappointed in my expectation of being able speedily to quit this office. That period, however, so ardently desired, is at length nearly arrived, and, while I look back at the cares and dangers past, I feel an increased emotion of joy by a comparison with future hopes and expectations. But I cannot view the past scene without strong feelings of gratitude and respect for the able and active efforts you have made to support the finances of this country. I would to God that your sentiments on property and taxation were as fully felt as they must be clearly understood in America; but time is necessary to mellow the judgment of a country as well as of a man. Happy indeed shall we be if it produce that effect among us.

I am much obliged by your explanation of M. Chaumont's accounts. These, as well as the other

accounts, are lodged at the treasury, which is the most proper place for both. If any insinuations have been made injurious to you, in connection with Chaumont, they have not reached me, and I am persuaded that none such can make any impressions which ought to give you pain.

I have not remitted bills for the salaries of the foreign ministers, because the resolutions of Congress having varied, and Mr. Grand having informed me that he should pay them, I have left it as an account unsettled, to be arranged by Mr. Barclay; and as I cannot doubt that the attachments will have been taken off, and as I have given Mr. Grand a credit on the commissioners of the loan in Holland, for four hundred thousand livres, and directed Messrs. Le Couteulx to pay over to him a balance in their hands, I have no doubt that he will be in cash for the purpose. I agree with you that a fund ought to be set apart for contingencies, and, had I continued and been supported in administration, such a fund should certainly have been provided. I am at the same time an enemy to contingent accounts, and therefore I should have urged the ascertainment of every allowance, as far as possible, thereby curtailing the account of contingencies; but, after all, it cannot be annihilated. Congress have made no determination on this subject. Indeed, it is very difficult, and even almost disreputable, for them to make arrangements of expenditure, while the means of expenditure are so shamefully withheld by their constituents. These things, however, will mend; at least I hope so.

I have already said that I expected the attachments laid on the public goods would be discharged. Your letter to the Count de Vergennes on that subject is perfect; and if that minister did not immediately obtain a compliance with your request, I presume it must have been occasioned by some circumstances purely domestic, which we in this country cannot guess at; for certainly nothing can be more astonishing than to find a subject countenanced in arresting the property of a sovereign power in this enlightened age, and in the country which of all others has been most eminent for a sacred regard to the rights of nations.

From your last letters to your friends I find that your return to this country is somewhat doubtful. I am therefore disappointed in one of the great pleasures which I had promised myself. But, sir, in whatever country you may be, and whether in public or in private life, be assured of my warmest and most respectful esteem, and that my best wishes for your happiness shall be clothed with the utmost efforts in my power to promote it on every proper occasion. I am, with sincere regard, etc.,

ROBERT MORRIS.

MCCCXIII

TO CHARLES THOMSON

PASSY, 16 October, 1784.

DEAR SIR:—It was intended by the Commissioners to write a joint letter to Congress, but I am afraid

the opportunity may be missed. This may serve to inform you that propositions of treating have been made by us to all the powers of Europe according to our instructions, and we are waiting for their answers. There are apprehensions here of a war between the Emperor of Holland; but, as the season is not proper for opening a campaign, I hope the winter will give time for mediators to accommodate matters. We have not yet heard that Mr. Jay has accepted the secretaryship of foreign affairs. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCCXIV

TO CHARLES THOMSON

PASSY, 11 November, 1784.

DEAR FRIEND:—I received your kind letter of August 13th with the papers annexed, relative to the affair of Longchamps. I hope satisfaction will be given to M. Marbois. The Commissioners have written a joint letter to Congress. This serves to cover a few papers relative to matters with which I was particularly charged in the instructions. I shall write to you fully by the next opportunity, having now only time to add, that I am, as ever, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S.—I executed the instructions of October 29, 1783, as soon as I knew the commissions for treating with the emperor, etc., were issued, which was not till

July, 1784. The three letters between the emperor's minister and me are what passed on that occasion.

MCCCXV

FROM GEORGE WHATELY

LONDON, 15 November, 1784.

MY GOOD OLD FRIEND:—You flatter my vanity in thinking of having a translation made of *The Principles of Trade*. I have given to your grandson one of them, and I shall with pleasure send some copies to America.

I should be glad to know what the success may be of the new institution at Paris for assisting women, so as to suckle their own children at home. I approve of it much; though I hold as an axiom, "that the children of poor or dishonest persons should be taken care of by the public *in time*, lest, instead of serving, they come to hurt the public either through distress or bad education, if it can be done without any violence to the natural right of the parent, as it is better to make men good than to hang those that are bad." You see the voluntary sending of children to the foundling hospital takes away the thought of any violence to the natural right; and to my mind, from whatever cause parents may divest themselves of their affection for their offspring, so as to put them away, it is the duty of the public to intervene and take up such offspring, upon the certain principle

that the number of subjects makes the riches of a state.

By good luck I find I have kept your original notes on *The Principles of Trade*, those we agreed in, those I added, and those I dissented from, and were not published; moreover, some other ideas you favored me with. This I told your grandson, and wished to confer with him thereon, as well for his improvement, as to convey to you what we differed in, for your consideration. I have prepared copies of those notes, and shall hope to collate them with your grandson. If not so done, you may depend I have faithfully copied them.

Death is a concomitant of our existence. Your doctrine of our rising from it, or after it, refreshed in the morning, is what I do not comprehend. I have long contemplated the epitaph, thought to be written by the celebrated Mr. Pope, which allow me to send you, together with my paraphrase, if it may be so called.

“Under this marble, or under this sill,
Or under this turf, or e’en where they will;
Whatever an heir, or a friend in his stead,
Or any good creature, shall lay o’er my head,
Lies one who ne’er cared, and still cares not a pin,
What they said, or may say, of the mortal within;
But who, living and dying, serene, still, and free,
Trusts in God, that, as well as he was, he shall be.”

When we have considered things, and weighed them to the utmost extent of our faculties, we shall not, I apprehend, be able to say more, than that we can know nothing of what we were before we existed,

nor can we more certainly or more positively say what shall become of us on our dissolution. It is therefore submitted, whether it be not greatly satisfactory to contemplate, and to trust in God, *that what we were, we shall be*. It is presumed, the utmost of all religion must be *the trusting in God*; consequently, this idea seems not to militate against pure religion. As to the almost infinite notions of mankind, by which the minds of men are warped and bent, they will be found mere nothings, if from them we take, as Dean Swift says of what is called the happiness of mortal men, their false lights, varnish, and tinsel.

By way of speculation, I trouble you with a copy of an account I got from Paris of the number of foundling children there, received from 1741, the year of our beginning here, to the year 1755. I think it was obtained preparatory to the opening of our hospital, the 2d of June, 1756, for a general reception, to show what was done abroad. I should be glad if you could procure the subsequent years to 1783 inclusive. Whether it may be of any use I know not; nevertheless, it would please me to have it.

I have spoken to Dolland about your invention of double spectacles, and, by all I can gather, they can only serve for particular eyes, not in general. Dolland was to furnish me *gratis* with spectacles, thirty-five years ago, in virtue of my disinterested purchases of telescopes, for no small sums, for conjurers abroad. He has now done it, as I find spectacles are of use; though I can do without them

tolerably, and part of this letter was wrote so. They, as I said, give ease, and this is what we ought to covet and desire.

I long much to learn how the Philadelphia bank goes on. If your people will be pleased to let justice be the compass by which they shall steer, they may do any thing. I think I can prove this to be for their true interest, in every shape. You know I lay down as a maxim, that interest should govern as well public as private affairs. It is all a farce to pretend that it ought not. I hold your Cincinnati institution to be wrong, nor do I think those to blame who are against giving a power to Congress inconsistent with liberty; for men are not to be trusted with power but with a jealous eye, and so guarded that naught but the general interest shall be the rule of action. If poor states in union with others cannot, by reason of their small means, acquiesce in measures judged to be for public benefit so readily as the richer, these should assist and help out those who are poor, either by loan or gift. I will suppose all readiness in both rich and poor to do their utmost; for, if that be wanting, there is a clear want of justice, and consequently a deviation from the true interest of the whole.

I think the Abbé Raynal in some of his writings has said: "Establish no legal preference amongst the different forms of worship. Superstition is innocent, whenever it is neither persecuted nor protected." Whether such a principle can be brought into practice is doubtful; I fear it cannot. I full well remember what you told me long ago, of a place

in Philadelphia built for whoever might choose to talk in public, as some persons of a particular denomination have been refused holding forth, because they were of a certain color. How this doctrine may be relished in other parts, I know not; but, if mass has been said in Boston, I will hope there has been some relaxation, at least, in favor of the general interest of the State.

Your grandson, upon my insinuating to him you were so desirably situated as not to leave Paris, tells me you thought you would be more pleased and happy in America, where you might prosecute your philosophical studies. All I can say to this is, what I have read somewhere: "Happy only is he who in his mind lives contented; and he most of all unhappy, whom nothing that he hath can content." I am sure you cannot have more health, happiness, and contentment than I sincerely wish you; and I shall ever be happy in having opportunities of showing with what respect and regard I am, dear sir, your affectionate friend,

GEORGE WHATELY.

MCCCXVI

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON

PASSY, 23 November, 1784.

DEAR SIR:—These people are so accustomed to see every thing done by solicitation of interest, or what they call protection, and nothing without it,

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that they hardly conceive it possible to obtain the payment even of a just debt, but by means of persons whom they suppose to have influence enough to support and enforce their pretensions. We should naturally suppose that the proper time for asking such aid would be after a regular demand, and a refusal of justice; but they run about to everybody with their memorials, before they have even presented their account to those whom they consider as their debtors. Thus the creditors, not only of a State of America, but even of private merchants, tease the ministers of this country, as well as those of America here, with their petitions and cases, requesting assistance and interest to procure attention to their affairs, when it does not appear that their claims have been refused, or even made where they ought to be made.

I beg leave to refer you to the enclosed papers, and to request that, if you are acquainted with the affair, and can give any comfortable expectation or counsel to the poor man, you would be so good as to furnish me with it, that I may communicate it to him in my answer. With great and sincere esteem, I am, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

MCCCXVII

FROM JOHN JAY

TRENTON, 13 December, 1784.

DEAR SIR:—The Marquis de Lafayette is so obliging as to take charge of this letter. He has seen

much of our country since his arrival, and, having had many opportunities of knowing our true situation, will be able to give you full information on the subject. I think he is, and has reason to be, convinced, that the attachment of America to him has not been abated by the peace, and that we are *now* as little disposed to break friendship with France as we were during the war. This is a most favorable season for her to relax the severe commercial restrictions which oppose our trade to her islands. Her liberality would be contrasted to British ill-humor, and unavoidably produce correspondent impressions.

The present Congress promises well. There are many respectable members here. Federal ideas seem to prevail greatly amongst them, and, I may add, a strong disposition to conciliation and unanimity. Your letter on the subject of leave to return, is, with a variety of foreign papers, referred to a committee. They have as yet made no report, and therefore I can give you no satisfactory intelligence on that hand.

I lately saw Mrs. Bache in good health and spirits at Philadelphia, and I am persuaded she is no less anxious for your return than you can be. Mrs. Jay and our little family are at Elizabethtown, and her last letters inform me they are all well. Be pleased to make my compliments to your grandsons. I am, dear sir, etc.,

JOHN JAY.

END OF VOLUME X