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THE COMPLETE WRITINGS OF  
THOMAS PAINE

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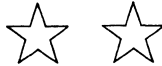
COLLECTED AND EDITED BY PHILIP S. FONER, Ph.D.

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WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY, AND NOTES AND INTRODUCTIONS  
PRESENTING THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PAINE'S WRITINGS

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*COMPLETE IN TWO VOLUMES*



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## INTRODUCTORY NOTE

At various stages during his life Thomas Paine outlined plans for the publication of his writings, but the project was never carried out. Not until 1896 did the first comprehensive collection of his writings, edited by Moncure D. Conway, make its appearance. Since that time additional writings have been printed by others; in 1925 a ten-volume edition of Paine's works, edited by William M. Van der Weyde, was published under the auspices of the Thomas Paine National Historical Association. Even then, however, a considerable body of Paine's writings in the form of essays and articles written for contemporary journals and letters and memorials in the manuscript collections of libraries and historical societies remained to be included in a collected edition of his works.

All of these additional writings available at present have been included in this volume along with all of Paine's other writings previously published, except what has already appeared in the first volume of this edition. About 225 pieces in this volume have never been included in any previous collection of Paine's writings. These include a number of extremely significant essays on political and economic affairs in America and Europe which were never before known to have been written by Paine and which were only identified through references in Paine's unpublished manuscripts. The volume includes a section of correspondence and memorials which consists of scores of letters which either have never been printed before or have been printed in part only. The source of the texts appear in the notes and introductions which also describe the circumstances of publication and orient the individual selections to the events of the time.

In the first volume a chronological arrangement of the texts was followed. *It has seemed best in this volume to arrange the texts topically* so that the reader could follow Paine's ideas on various issues without being distracted by other questions he discussed at the same time. Within each section, however, a chronological arrangement of the articles and letters has usually been followed, and cross-references have been included throughout the volume to guide the reader to other

writings of Paine referred to in the text. It is to be hoped that those who wish to study Paine's ideas as they developed will be assisted by the Chronological Table of his writings printed in the first volume.

The writings in this volume amply justify the recent election of Thomas Paine to the Hall of Fame in New York University. In this volume the reader meets the Thomas Paine who is still too little known even to learned students of the period. Here he will see not only Paine, the humanitarian and inspired agitator, but also Paine, the keen analyst of social and economic problems, Paine, the champion of a strong Federal Union, Paine, the potent advocate of universal suffrage and equality of men, Paine, the staunch defender of Jeffersonian Democracy, Paine, the proponent of intensive scientific research, and Paine, the distinguished inventor who influenced the entire development of the iron bridge and, in the words of George Stephenson, the locomotive engineer, whose "daring in engineering does full justice to the fervor of his political career."<sup>1</sup> Seeing all this, the reader will readily agree that the time has come once and for all to end the torrent of abuse that has been heaped upon Thomas Paine for about a hundred and fifty years.

<sup>1</sup> *New American Cyclopedia*, vol. XII, 1863, p. 665.

# HUMANITARIANISM

CASE OF THE OFFICERS OF EXCISE

AFRICAN SLAVERY IN AMERICA

A SERIOUS THOUGHT

EMANCIPATION OF SLAVES

REFLECTIONS ON THE LIFE AND DEATH OF LORD CLIVE

DUELLING

REFLECTIONS ON TITLES

AN OCCASIONAL LETTER ON THE FEMALE SEX

THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

THE SOCIETY FOR POLITICAL INQUIRIES

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Paine's proposals for democratic reforms in existing society run through almost all of his writings, but on several occasions he devoted special articles to the subject. An examination of these articles reveal the extent of Paine's interest in the improvement of society, for they range from discussions on the need for higher wages for workingmen to observations on the barbaric custom of duelling, with such basic questions as anti-slavery, woman's rights, educational reform, and oppression of colonial peoples occupying a prominent place in the discussion. Even if he had never written anything else, the articles contained in this section would have made Paine one of America's significant writers.

## CASE OF THE OFFICERS OF EXCISE

WITH REMARKS ON THE QUALIFICATIONS OF OFFICERS, AND ON THE  
NUMEROUS EVILS ARISING TO THE REVENUE, FROM THE INSUF-  
FICIENCY OF THE PRESENT SALARY: HUMBL Y ADDRESS ED TO  
THE MEMBERS OF BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

*The Case of the Officers of Excise*, Paine's earliest known prose composition and his first important pamphlet, was written in 1772 at the request of the overworked and underpaid excisemen who urged him to address Parliament in their behalf. Not only did he write the appeal for higher wages for his fellow-workers in the excise, but he even spent the winter of 1772-1773 trying to influence members of Parliament. For attempting to organize the excise officers to win a raise in pay, Paine was dismissed from the service. Twenty years later in the *Rights of Man* he again called attention to the "condition of the inferior revenue-officers," and urged that their wages be increased. (See Volume I of the present edition, page 441.)

Although the appeal was printed in 1772 for use in Parliament, it was not released to the public until 1793, when a London printer published it as a pamphlet.

For additional details on this appeal, see Paine's letter to Oliver Goldsmith, December 21, 1772, pages 1129-1130 below.—*Editor*.

### THE INTRODUCTION

AS a design among the excise officers throughout the kingdom is on foot for a humble application to Parliament next session, to have the state of their salaries taken into consideration; it has been judged not only expedient, but highly necessary, to present a state of their case, previous to the presentation of their petition.



There are some cases so singularly reasonable, that the more they are considered, the more weight they obtain. It is a strong evidence both of simplicity and honest confidence, when petitioners in any case ground their hopes of relief on having their case fully and perfectly known and understood.

Simple as this subject may appear at first, it is a matter, in my humble opinion, not unworthy a Parliamentary attention. 'Tis a subject interwoven with a variety of reasons from different causes. New matter will arise on every thought. *If the poverty of the officers of excise, if the temptations arising from their poverty, if the qualifications of persons to be admitted into employment, if the security of the revenue itself*, are matters of any weight, then I am conscious that my voluntary services in this business, will produce some good effect or other, either to the better security of the revenue, the relief of the officers, or both.

#### THE STATE OF THE SALARY OF THE OFFICERS OF EXCISE

When a year's salary is mentioned in the gross, it acquires a degree of consequence from its *sound*, which it would not have if separated into daily payments, and if the charges attending the receiving and other unavoidable expenses were considered with it. Fifty pounds a year, and one shilling and ninepence farthing a day, carry as different degrees of significancy with them, as My Lord's steward, and the steward's laborer; and yet an outride officer in the excise, under the name of fifty pounds a year, receives for himself no more than one shilling and ninepence farthing a day.

After tax, charity and sitting expenses are deducted there remains very little more than forty-six pounds; and the expenses of horsekeeping in many places cannot be brought under fourteen pounds a year, besides the purchase at first, and the hazard of life, which reduces it to thirty-two pounds *per annum*, or one shilling and ninepence farthing per day.

I have spoken more particularly of the outrides, as they are by far the most numerous, being in proportion to the footwalks as eight is to five throughout the kingdom. Yet in the latter the same misfortunes exist; the channel of them only is altered. The excessive dearness of house-rent, the great burden of rates and taxes, and the excessive price of all necessaries of life, in cities and large trading towns, nearly counter-balance the expenses of horsekeeping. Every office has its stages of promotions, but the pecuniary advantages arising from a footwalk are

so inconsiderable, and the loss of disposing of effects, or the charges of removing them to any considerable distance so great, that many out-ride officers with a family remain as they are, from an inability to bear the loss, or support the expense.

The officers resident in the cities of *London* and *Westminster*, are exempt from the particular disadvantages of removals. This seems to be the only circumstance which they enjoy superior to their country brethren. In every other respect they lay under the same hardships, and suffer the same distresses.

There are no perquisites or advantages in the least annexed to the employment. A few officers who are stationed along the coast, may sometimes have the good fortune to fall in with a seizure of contraband goods, and yet, that frequently at the hazard of their lives: but the inland officers can have no such opportunities. Besides, the surveying duty in the excise is so continual that without remissness from the real business itself there is no time to seek after them. With the officers of the customs it is quite otherwise; their whole time and care is appropriated to that service, and their profits are in proportion to their vigilance.

If the increase of money in the kingdom is one cause of the high price of provisions, the case of the excise officers is peculiarly pitiable. No increase comes to them—they are shut out from the general blessing—they behold it like a map of *Peru*. The answer of Abraham to Dives is somewhat applicable to them, "*There is a great gulf fixed.*"

To the wealthy and humane it is a matter worthy of concern that their affluence should become the misfortune of others. Were the money in the kingdom to be increased double the salary would in value be reduced one-half. Every step upward is a step downward with them. Not to be partakers of the increase would be a little hard, but to be sufferers by it exceedingly so. The mechanic and the laborer may in a great measure ward off the distress by raising the price of their manufactures or their work, but the situation of the officers admits of no such relief.

Another consideration in their behalf (and which is peculiar to the excise) is that, as the law of their office removes them far from all their natural friends and relations, it consequently prevents those occasional assistance from them, which are serviceably felt in a family, and which even the poorest among the poor enjoys. Most poor mechanics, or even common laborers, have some relations or friends, who, either out of benevolence or pride, keep their children from nakedness, supply them occasionally with perhaps half a hog, a load of wood, a chaldron of coals,

or something or other which abates the severity of their distress; and yet those men thus relieved will frequently earn more than the daily pay of an excise officer.

Perhaps an officer will appear more reputable with the same pay than a mechanic or laborer. The difference arises from sentiment, not circumstances. A something like reputable pride makes all the distinction, and the thinking part of mankind well knows that none suffers so much as they who endeavor to conceal their necessities.

The frequent removals which unavoidably happen in the excise are attended with such an expense, especially where there is a family, as few officers are able to support. About two years ago, an officer with a family, under orders for removing, and in rather embarrassed circumstances, made his application to me, and from a conviction of his distress I advanced a small sum to enable him to proceed. He ingenuously declared, that without the assistance of some friend, he should be driven to do injustice to his creditors, and compelled to desert the duty of his office. He has since honestly paid me, and does as well as the narrowness of such circumstances can admit of.

There is one general allowed truth which will always operate in their favor, which is, that no set of men under His Majesty earn their salary with any comparison of labor and fatigue with that of the officers of excise. The station may rather be called a seat of constant work than either a place or an employment. Even in the different departments of the general revenue they are unequalled in the burden of business; a riding officer's place in the customs, whose salary is sixty pounds a year, is *ease* to theirs; and the work in the window-light duty, compared with the excise, is lightness itself; yet their salary is subject to no tax, they receive forty-nine pounds twelve shillings and sixpence, without deduction.

The inconveniences which affect an excise officer are almost endless; even the land-tax assessment upon their salaries, which though the Government pays, falls often with hardship upon them. The place of their residence, on account of the land tax, has in many instances, created frequent contentions between parishes, in which the officer, though the innocent and unconcerned cause of the quarrel, has been the greater sufferer.

To point out particularly the impossibility of an excise officer supporting himself and family, with any proper degree of credit and reputation, on so scanty a pittance, is altogether unnecessary. The times, the voice

of general want, is proof itself. Where facts are sufficient, arguments are useless; and the hints which I have produced are such as affect the officers of excise *differently* to any other set of men. A single man may barely live; but as it is not the design of the Legislature or the honorable Board of Excise, to impose a state of celibacy on them, the condition of much the greater part is truly wretched and pitiable.

Perhaps it may be said, why do the excise officers complain; they are not pressed into the service, and may relinquish it when they please; if they can mend themselves, why don't they? Alas! what a mockery of pity would it be to give such an answer to an honest, faithful old officer in the excise, who had spent the prime of his life in the service, and was become unfit for anything else. The time limited for an admission into an excise employment, is between twenty-one and thirty years of age—the very flower of life. Every other hope and consideration is then given up, and the chance of establishing themselves in any other business becomes in a few years not only lost to them, but they become lost to it. "There is a tide in the affairs of men," which if embraced, leads on to fortune—*that neglected*, all beyond is misery or want.

When we consider how few in the excise arrive at any comfortable eminence, and the date of life when such promotions only can happen, the great hazard there is of ill rather than good fortune in the attempt, and that all the years antecedent to that is a state of mere existence, wherein they are shut out from the common chance of success in any other way: a reply like that can be only a derision of their wants. 'Tis almost impossible after any longer continuance in the excise that they *can* live any other way. Such as are of trades would have their trade to learn over again; and people would have but little opinion of their abilities in any calling who had been ten, fifteen, or twenty years absent from it. Every year's experience gained in the excise is a year's experience lost in trade; and by the time they become wise officers they become foolish workmen.

Were the reasons for augmenting the salary grounded only on the charitableness of so doing, they would have great weight with the compassionate. But there are auxiliaries of such a powerful cast that in the opinion of policy they obtain the rank of originals. The first is truly the case of the officers, but this is rather the case of the revenue.

The distresses in the excise are so generally known that numbers of gentlemen, and other inhabitants in places where officers are resident, have generously and humanely recommended their case to the members

of the Honorable House of Commons: and numbers of traders of opulence and reputation, well knowing that the poverty of an officer may subject him to the fraudulent designs of some selfish persons under his survey, to the great injury of the fair trader, and trade in general, have, from principles both of generosity and justice, joined in the same recommendation.

THOUGHTS ON THE CORRUPTION OF PRINCIPLES, AND ON THE  
 NUMEROUS EVILS ARISING TO THE REVENUE, FROM THE  
 TOO GREAT POVERTY OF THE OFFICERS OF EXCISE

It has always been the wisdom of Government to consider the situation and circumstances of persons in trust. Why are large salaries given in many instances, but to proportion it to the trust, to set men above temptation, and to make it even literally worth their while to be honest? The salaries of the judges have been augmented, and their places made independent even on the Crown itself, for the above wise purposes.

Certainly there can be nothing unreasonable in supposing there is such an instinct as frailty among the officers of excise, in common with the rest of mankind; and that the most effectual method to keep men honest is to enable them to live so. The tenderness of conscience is too often overmatched by the sharpness of want; and principle, like chastity, yields with just reluctance enough to excuse itself.

There is a powerful rhetoric in necessity, which exceeds even a *Dunning* or a *Wedderburne*. No argument can satisfy the feelings of hunger, or abate the edge of appetite. Nothing tends to a greater corruption of manners and principles than a too great distress of circumstances; and the corruption is of that kind that it spreads a plaster for itself: like a viper it carries a cure, though a false one, for its own poison. *Agur*, without any alternative, has made dishonesty the immediate consequence of poverly. "Lest I be poor and steal." A very little degree of that dangerous kind of philosophy, which is the almost certain effect of involuntary poverty, will teach men to believe that to starve is more criminal than to steal, by as much as every species of self-murder exceeds every other crime; that true honesty is sentimental, and the practice of it dependent upon circumstances.

If the gay find it difficult to resist the allurements of pleasure, the great the temptation of ambition, or the miser the acquisition of wealth,

how much stronger are the provocations of want and poverty? The excitements to pleasure, grandeur or riches, are mere "shadows of a shade" compared to the irresistible necessities of nature. Not to be led into temptation is the prayer of Divinity itself; and to guard against, or rather to prevent, such insnaring situations is one of the greatest heights of human prudence: in private life it is partly religious; and in a revenue sense it is truly political.

The rich, in ease and affluence, may think I have drawn an unnatural portrait; but could they descend to the cold regions of want, the circle of polar poverty, they would find their opinions changing with the climate. There are habits of thinking peculiar to different conditions, and to find them out is truly to study mankind.

That the situation of an excise officer is of this dangerous kind, must be allowed by every one who will consider the trust unavoidably reposed in him, and compare the narrowness of his circumstances with the hardship of the times. If the salary was judged competent a hundred years ago, it cannot be so now. Should it be advanced that if the present set of officers are dissatisfied with the salary enough may be procured not only for the present salary, but for less, the answer is extremely easy. The question needs only be put; it destroys itself. Were two or three thousand men to offer to execute the office without any salary, would the Government accept them? No. Were the same number to offer the same service for a salary less than can possibly support them, would the Government accept them? Certainly no; for while nature, in spite of law or religion, makes it a ruling principle not to starve, the event would be this, that if they could not live on the salary they would discretionarily live out of the duty.

Query, whether poverty has not too great an influence now? Were the employment a place of direct labor, and not of trust, then frugality in the salary would be sound policy: but when it is considered that the greatest single branch of the revenue, a duty amounting to near five millions sterling, is annually charged by a set of men, most of whom are wanting even the common necessaries of life, the thought must, to every friend to honesty, to every person concerned in the management of the public money, be strong and striking. Poor and in power are powerful temptations; I call it power, because they have it in their power to defraud. The trust unavoidably reposed in an excise officer is so great that it would be an act of wisdom, and perhaps of interest, to secure him from the temptations of downright poverty. To relieve their wants

would be charity, but to secure the revenue by so doing would be prudence.

Scarce a week passes at the office but some detections are made of fraudulent and collusive proceedings. The poverty of the officers is the fairest bait for a designing trader that can possibly be; such introduce themselves to the officer under the common plea of the insufficiency of the salary. Every considerate mind must allow that poverty and opportunity corrupt many an honest man. I am not at all surprised that so many opulent and reputable traders have recommended the case of the officers to the good favor of their representatives. They are sensible of the pinching circumstances of the officers, and of the injury to trade in general, from the advantages which are taken of them.

The welfare of the fair trader and the security of the revenue are so inseparably one, that their interest or injuries are alike. It is the opinion of such whose situation gives them a perfect knowledge in the matter that the revenue suffers more by the corruption of a few officers in a county than would make a handsome addition to the salary of the whole number in the same place.

I very lately knew an instance where it is evident, on comparison of the duty charged since, that the revenue suffered by one trade (and he not a very considerable one) upward of one hundred and sixty pounds *per annum* for several years; and yet the benefit to the officer was a mere trifle, in consideration of the trader's. Without doubt the officer would have thought himself much happier to have received the same addition another way. The bread of deceit is a bread of bitterness; but alas! how few in times of want and hardship are capable of thinking so: objects appear under new colors and in shapes not naturally their own; hunger sucks in the deception and necessity reconciles it to conscience.

The commissioners of excise strongly enjoin that no officer accept any treaty, gratuity or, in short, lay himself under any kind of obligation to the traders under their survey: the wisdom of such an injunction is evident; but the practice of it, to a person surrounded with children and poverty, is scarcely possible; and such obligations, wherever they exist, must operate, directly or indirectly, to the injury of the revenue. Favors will naturally beget their likenesses, especially where the return is not at our own expense.

I have heard it remarked by a gentleman whose knowledge in excise business is indisputable that there are numbers of officers who are even

afraid to look into an unentered room, lest they should give offense. Poverty and obligation tie up the hands of office and give a prejudicial bias to the mind.

There is another kind of evil, which, though it may never amount to what may be deemed criminality in law, yet it may amount to what is much worse in effect, and that is, *a constant and perpetual leakage in the revenue*: a sort of gratitude in the dark, a distant requital for such civilities as only the lowest poverty would accept, and which are a thousand *per cent.* above the value of the civility received. Yet there is no immediate collusion; the trader and officer are both safe; the design, if discovered, passes for error.

These, with numberless other evils, have all their origin in the poverty of the officers. Poverty, in defiance of principle, begets a degree of meanness that will stoop to almost anything. A thousand refinements of argument may be brought to prove that the practice of honesty will be still the same, in the most trying and necessitous circumstances. He who never was an hungered may argue finely on the subjection of his appetite; and he who never was distressed, may harangue as beautifully on the power of principle. But poverty, like grief, has an incurable deafness, which never hears; the oration loses all its edge; and "*To be, or not to be*" becomes the only question.

There is a striking difference between dishonesty arising from want of food, and want of principle. The first is worthy of compassion, the other of punishment. Nature never produced a man who would starve in a well-stored larder, because the provisions were not his own: but he who robs it from luxury of appetite deserves a gibbet.

There is another evil which the poverty of the salary produces, and which nothing but an augmentation of it can remove; and that is negligence and indifference. These may not appear of such dark complexion as fraud and collusion, but their injuries to the revenue are the same. It is impossible that any office or business can be regarded as it ought, where this ruinous disposition exists. It requires no sort of argument to prove that the value set upon any place or employment will be in proportion to the value of it; and that diligence or negligence will arise from the same cause. The continual number of relinquishments and discharges always happening in the excise, are evident proofs of it.

Persons first coming into the excise form very different notions of it, to what they have afterwards. The gay ideas of promotion soon expire. The continuance of work, the strictness of the duty, and the



poverty of the salary, soon beget negligence and indifference: the course continues for a while, the revenue suffers, and the officer is discharged: the vacancy is soon filled up, new ones arise to produce the same mischief and share the same fate.

What adds still more to the weight of this grievance is that this destructive disposition reigns most among such as are otherwise the most proper and qualified for the employment; such as are neither fit for the excise, or anything else, are glad to hold it by any means; but the revenue lies at as much hazard from their want of judgment, as from the others' want of diligence.

In private life, no man would trust the execution of any important concern to a servant who was careless whether he did it or not, and the same rule must hold good in a revenue sense. The commissioners may continue discharging every day, and the example will have no weight while the salary is an object so inconsiderable, and this disposition has such a general existence. Should it be advanced that if men will be careless of such bread as is in their possession they will still be the same were it better, I answer that, as the disposition I am speaking of it not the effect of natural idleness, but of dissatisfaction in point of profit, they would *not* continue the same.

A good servant will be careful of a good place, though very indifferent about a bad one. Besides, this spirit of indifference, should it procure a discharge, is no ways affecting to their circumstances. The easy transition of a qualified officer to a counting-house, or at least to a school master, at any time, as it naturally supports and backs his indifference about the excise, so it takes off all punishment from the order whenever it happens.

I have known numbers discharged from the excise who would have been a credit to their patrons and the employment, could they have found it worth their while to have attended to it. No man enters into excise with any higher expectations than a competent maintenance; but not to find even that, can produce nothing but *Corruption, Collusion and Neglect*.

#### REMARKS ON THE QUALIFICATIONS OF OFFICERS

In employments where direct labor only is wanted, and trust quite out of the question, the service is merely animal or mechanical. In cutting a river, or forming a road, as there is no possibility of fraud, the merit of

honesty is but of little weight. Health, strength and hardiness are the laborer's virtues. But where property depends on the trust, and lies at the discretion of the servant, the judgment of the master takes a different channel, both in the choice and the wages. The honest and the dissolute have here no comparison of merit. A known thief may be trusted to gather stones; but a steward ought to be proof against the temptations of uncounted gold.

The excise is so far from being of the nature of the first that it is all and more than can commonly be put together in the last: "Tis a place of *poverty, of trust, of opportunity, and temptation*. A compound of disorders, where the more they harmonize the more they offend. Ruin and reconciliation are produced at once.

To be properly qualified for the employment it is not only necessary that the person should be honest, but that he be sober, diligent and skilful: sober, that he may be always capable of business; diligent, that he may be always in his business; and skilful, that he may be able to prevent or detect frauds against the revenue. The want of any of these qualifications is a capital offense in the excise. A complaint of drunkenness, negligence or ignorance, is certain death by the laws of the board.

It cannot then be all sorts of persons who are proper for the office. The very notion of procuring a sufficient number for even less than the present salary is so destitute of every degree of sound reason that it needs no reply. The employment, from the insufficiency of the salary, is *already* become so inconsiderable in the general opinion that persons of any capacity or reputation will keep out of it; for where is the mechanic, or even the laborer, who cannot earn at least 1s. 9¼d. per day? It certainly cannot be proper to take the dregs of every calling, and to make the excise the common receptacle for the indigent, the ignorant and the calamitous.

A truly worthy commissioner, lately dead, made a public offer a few years ago, of putting any of his neighbors' sons into the excise; but though the offer amounted almost to an invitation, one only, whom seven years' apprenticeship could not make a tailor, accepted it; who, after a twelve-months' instruction, was ordered off, but in a few days finding the employment beyond his abilities, he prudently deserted it and returned home, where he now remains in the character of a husbandman.

There are very few instances of rejection even of persons who can scarce write their own names legibly; for as there is neither law to com-

pel, nor encouragement to incite, no other can be had than such as offer, and none will offer who can see any other prospect of living. Everyone knows that the excise is a place of labor, not of ease; of hazard, not of certainty; and that downright poverty finishes the character.

It must strike every considerate mind to hear a man with a large family faithful enough to declare that he cannot support himself on the salary with that honest independence he could wish. There is a great degree of affecting honesty in an ingenuous confession. Eloquence may strike the ear, but the language of poverty strikes the heart; the first may charm like music, but the second alarms like a knell.

Of late years there has been such an admission of improper and ill-qualified persons into the excise that the office is not only become contemptible, but the revenue insecure. Collectors whose long services and qualifications have advanced them to that station are disgraced by the wretchedness of new supers continually. Certainly some regard ought to be had to decency, as well as merit.

These are some of the capital evils which arise from the wretched poverty of the salary. Evils they certainly are; for what can be more destructive in a revenue office, than CORRUPTION, COLLUSION, NEGLECT AND ILL QUALIFICATIONS?

Should it be questioned whether an augmentation of salary would remove them, I answer there is scarce a doubt to be made of it. Human wisdom may possibly be deceived in its wisest designs; but here every thought and circumstance establish the hope. They are evils of such a ruinous tendency that they must, by some means or other, be removed. Rigor and severity have been tried in vain; for punishment loses all its force where men expect and disregard it.

Of late years the Board of Excise has shown an extraordinary tenderness in such instances as might otherwise have affected the circumstances of their officers. Their compassion has greatly tended to lessen the distresses of the employment: but as it cannot amount to a total removal of them, the officers of excise throughout the kingdom have (as the voice of one man) prepared petitions to be laid before the Honorable House of Commons on the ensuing Parliament.

An augmentation of salary sufficient to enable them to live honestly and competently would produce more good effect than all the laws of the land can enforce. The generality of such frauds as the officers have been detected in have appeared of a nature as remote from inherent dishonesty as a temporary illness is from an incurable disease. Surrounded

with *want*, *children* and *despair*, what can the *husband* or the *father* do? No laws compel like nature—no connections bind like blood.

With an addition of salary the excise would wear a new aspect, and recover its former constitution. Languor and neglect would give place to care and cheerfulness. Men of reputation and abilities would seek after it, and finding a comfortable maintenance, would stick to it. The unworthy and the incapable would be rejected; the power of superiors be re-established, and laws and instructions receive new force. The officers would be secured from the temptations of poverty, and the revenue from the evils of it; the cure would be as extensive as the complaint, and new health out-root the present corruptions.

THOMAS PAINE.

## AFRICAN SLAVERY IN AMERICA

A few weeks after coming to America, Paine wrote this essay, one of the earliest documents in the American anti-slavery movement. It was not the first denunciation of slavery in America, for anti-slavery literature had been written in this country from the earliest colonial days. Nor was Paine alone in advocating the abolition of slavery. Thomas Jefferson, to cite but one example, had urged the Assembly in Virginia to emancipate the slaves in the colony as early as 1769. Nevertheless, while Paine does not deserve the "honor" bestowed upon him by Moncure Daniel Conway "of being the first American abolitionist," he was certainly among the early pioneers in this great cause.

In this essay Paine denounces slavery as no less immoral than "murder, robbery, lewdness, and barbarity," and calls upon Americans immediately to "discontinue and renounce it, with grief and abhorrence." Nor is he content to condemn slavery, but proceeds to present a specific plan for its abolition in America. He proposes that "prudent men, with the assistance of legislatures, determine what is practicable for masters, and best for them [the slaves]. . . ."

Although the essay was written at the close of 1774, it was not published until March 8, 1775 when it appeared in the *Pennsylvania Journal and the Weekly Advertiser*. A few weeks later, April 14, 1775, the first anti-slavery society in America was organized in Philadelphia. Paine was one of the members.—*Editor*.

**T**O Americans: That some desperate wretches should be willing to steal and enslave men by violence and murder for gain, is rather lamentable than strange. But that many civilized, nay, Christianized people should approve, and be concerned in the savage practice, is surprising; and still persist, though it has been so often proved contrary to the light of nature, to every principle of justice and humanity, and even good policy, by a succession of eminent men,<sup>1</sup> and several late publications.

Our traders in MEN (*an unnatural commodity!*) must know the wickedness of that SLAVE-TRADE, if they attend to reasoning, or the dictates of their own hearts; and such as shun and stifle all these, wilfully sacrifice conscience, and the character of integrity to that golden idol.

The managers of that trade themselves, and others, testify, that many of these African nations inhabit fertile countries, are industrious farmers, enjoy plenty, and lived quietly, averse to war, before the Europeans debauched them with liquors, and bribing them against one another; and that these inoffensive people are brought into slavery, by stealing them, tempting kings to sell subjects, which they can have no right to do, and hiring one tribe to war against another, in order to catch prisoners. By such wicked and inhuman ways the English are said to enslave towards one hundred thousand yearly; of which thirty thousand are supposed to die by barbarous treatment in the first year; besides all that are slain in the unnatural wars excited to take them. So much innocent blood have the managers and supporters of this inhuman trade to answer for to the common Lord of all!

Many of these were not prisoners of war, and redeemed from savage conquerors, as some plead; and they who were such prisoners, the English, who promote the war for that very end, are the guilty authors of their being so; and if they were redeemed, as is alleged, they would owe nothing to the redeemer but what he paid for them.

They show as little reason as conscience who put the matter by with saying—"Men, in some cases, are lawfully made slaves, and why may not these?" So men, in some cases, are lawfully put to death, deprived of their goods, without their consent; may any man, therefore, be treated so, without any conviction of desert? Nor is this plea mended by adding—"They are set forth to us as slaves, and we buy them without far-

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Ames, Baxter, Durham, Locke, Carmichael, Hutcheson, Montesquieu, and Blackstone, Wallace, etc., etc. Bishop of Gloucester.—*Author.*

ther inquiry, let the sellers see to it." Such men may as well join with a known band of robbers, buy their ill-got goods, and help on the trade; ignorance is no more pleadable in one case than the other; the sellers plainly own how they obtain them. But none can lawfully buy without evidence that they are not concurring with men-stealers; and as the true owner has a right to reclaim his goods that were stolen, and sold; so the slave, who is proper owner of his freedom, has a right to reclaim it, however often sold.

Most shocking of all is alleging the sacred scriptures to favor this wicked practice. One would have thought none but infidel cavillers would endeavor to make them appear contrary to the plain dictates of natural light, and conscience, in a matter of common justice and humanity; which they cannot be. Such worthy men, as referred to before, judged otherways; Mr. Baxter declared, *the slave-traders should be called devils, rather than Christians; and that it is a heinous crime to buy them.* But some say, "the practice was permitted to the Jews." To which may be replied.

1. The example of the Jews, in many things, may not be imitated by us; they had not only orders to cut off several nations altogether, but if they were obliged to war with others, and conquered them, to cut off every male; they were suffered to use polygamy and divorces, and other things utterly unlawful to us under clearer light.

2. The plea is, in a great measure, false; they had no permission to catch and enslave people who never injured them.

3. Such arguments ill become us, *since the time of reformation came*, under gospel light. All distinctions of nations, and privileges of one above others, are ceased; Christians are taught to *account all men their neighbors; and love their neighbors as themselves; and do. to all men as they would be done by; to do good to all men; and man-stealing is ranked with enormous crimes.* Is the barbarous enslaving our inoffensive neighbors, and treating them like wild beasts subdued by force, reconcilable with all these *divine precepts*? Is this doing to them as we would desire they should do to us? If they could carry off and enslave some thousands of us, would we think it just?—One would almost wish they could for once; it might convince more than reason, or the Bible.

As much in vain, perhaps, will they search ancient history for examples of the modern slave-trade. Too many nations enslaved the prisoners they took in war. But to go to nations with whom there is no war, who have no way provoked, without farther design of conquest, purely to

catch inoffensive people, like wild beasts, for slaves, is an height of outrage against humanity and justice, that seems left by heathen nations to be practised by pretended Christians. How shameful are all attempts to color and excuse it!

As these people are not convicted of forfeiting freedom, they have still a natural, perfect right to it; and the governments whenever they come should, in justice set them free, and punish those who hold them in slavery.

So monstrous is the making and keeping them slaves at all, abstracted from the barbarous usage they suffer, and the many evils attending the practice; as selling husbands away from wives, children from parents, and from each other, in violation of sacred and natural ties; and opening the way for adulteries, incests, and many shocking consequences, for all of which the guilty masters must answer to the final Judge.

If the slavery of the parents be unjust, much more is their children's; if the parents were justly slaves, yet the children are born free; this is the natural, perfect right of all mankind; they are nothing but a just recompense to those who bring them up: And as much less is commonly spent on them than others, they have a right, in justice, to be proportionably sooner free.

Certainly one may, with as much reason and decency, plead for murder, robbery, lewdness, and barbarity, as for this practice. They are not more contrary to the natural dictates of conscience, and feelings of humanity; nay, they are all comprehended in it.

But the chief design of this paper is not to disprove it, which many have sufficiently done; but to entreat Americans to consider.

1. With that consistency, or decency they complain so loudly of attempts to enslave them, while they hold so many hundred thousands in slavery; and annually enslave many thousands more, without any pretence of authority, or claim upon them?

2. How just, how suitable to our crime is the punishment with which providence threatens us? We have enslaved multitudes, and shed much innocent blood in doing it; and now are threatened with the same. And while others evils are confessed, and bewailed, why not this especially, and publicly; than which no other vice, if all others, has brought so much guilt on the land?

3. Whether, then, all ought not immediately to discontinue and renounce it, with grief and abhorrence? Should not every society bear testimony against it, and account obstinate persisters in it bad men,

enemies to their country, and exclude them from fellowship; as they often do for much lesser faults?

4. The great question may be—What should be done with those who are enslaved already? To turn the old and infirm free, would be injustice and cruelty; they who enjoyed the labors of their better days should keep, and treat them humanely. As to the rest, let prudent men, with the assistance of legislatures, determine what is practicable for masters, and best for them. Perhaps some could give them lands upon reasonable rent, some, employing them in their labor still, might give them some reasonable allowances for it; so as all may have some property, and fruits of their labors at their own disposal, and be encouraged to industry; the family may live together, and enjoy the natural satisfaction of exercising relative affections and duties, with civil protection, and other advantages, like fellow men. Perhaps they might sometime form useful barrier settlements on the frontiers. Thus they may become interested in the public welfare, and assist in promoting it; instead of being dangerous, as now they are, should any enemy promise them a better condition.

5. The past treatment of Africans must naturally fill them with abhorrence of Christians; lead them to think our religion would make them more inhuman savages, if they embraced it; thus the gain of that trade has been pursued in opposition to the Redeemer's cause, and the happiness of men. Are we not, therefore, bound in duty to him and to them to repair these injuries, as far as possible, by taking some proper measures to instruct, not only the slaves here, but the Africans in their own countries? Primitive Christians labored always to spread their *divine religion*; and this is equally our duty while there is an heathen nation. But what singular obligations are we under to these injured people!

These are the sentiments of

JUSTICE AND HUMANITY.

## A SERIOUS THOUGHT

This short piece, published in the *Pennsylvania Journal* of October 18, 1775, is another illustration of Paine's hatred of Negro slavery. In it he looks



forward to the day when America, as an independent nation, will pass "an act of legislation, which shall put a stop to the importation of Negroes for sale, soften the hard fate of those already here, and in time procure their freedom." The article also reveals Paine's opposition to England's treatment of the people of India and the Indians in America. In addition, it is definite evidence that Paine was thinking at this time of separation of the colonies from Great Britain.—*Editor.*

WHEN I reflect on the horrid cruelties exercised by Britain in the East Indies—How thousands perished by artificial famine—How religion and every manly principle of honor and honesty were sacrificed to luxury and pride—When I read of the wretched natives being blown away, for no other crime than because, sickened with the miserable scene, they refused to fight—When I reflect on these and a thousand instances of similar barbarity, I firmly believe that the Almighty, in compassion to mankind, will curtail the power of Britain. And when I reflect on the use she has made of the discovery of this new world—that the little paltry dignity of early kings has been set up in preference to the great cause of the King of kings—That instead of Christian examples to the Indians, she has basely tampered with their passions, imposed on their ignorance, and made them tools of treachery and murder—And when to these and many other melancholy reflections I add this sad remark, that ever since the discovery of America she has employed herself in the most horrid of all traffics, that of human flesh, unknown to the most savage nations, has yearly (without provocation and in cold blood) ravaged the hapless shores of Africa, robbing it of its unoffending inhabitants to cultivate her stolen dominions in the West—When I reflect on these, I hesitate not for a moment to believe that the Almighty will finally separate America from Britain. Call it independence or what you will, if it is the cause of God and humanity it will go on.

And when the Almighty shall have blest us, and made us a people *dependent only upon Him*, then may our first gratitude be shown by an act of continental legislation, which shall put a stop to the importation of Negroes for sale, soften the hard fate of those already here, and in time procure their freedom.

HUMANUS.

## EMANCIPATION OF SLAVES

Five years after the short article "A Serious Thought" was published Paine wrote the "Preamble to the Act Passed by the Pennsylvania Assembly, March 1, 1780," which was the first legislative measure for the emancipation of Negro slaves in America. Paine, who became Clerk of the Assembly on the day the measure was introduced, November 2, 1779, worked closely with Charles W. Peale and George Bryan in putting it through the legislature. Probably Paine had originally hoped to have the act provide for the immediate abolition of slavery, but owing to opposition was forced to write a compromise measure outlining the gradual emancipation of Negro slaves.

For evidence that Paine wrote this measure and for general background, see Robert I. Brunhouse, *The Counter-Revolution in Pennsylvania, 1776-1790*, Philadelphia, 1942, pp. 80-81.—*Editor*.

WHEN we contemplate our abhorrence of that condition, to which the arms and tyranny of Great Britain were exerted to reduce us, when we look back on the variety of dangers to which we have been exposed, and how miraculously our wants in many instances have been supplied, and our deliverances wrought, when even hope and human fortitude have become unequal to the conflict, we are unavoidably led to a serious and grateful sense of the manifold blessings which we have undeservedly received from the hand of that Being, from whom every good and perfect gift cometh.

Impressed with these ideas, we conceive that it is our duty, and we rejoice that it is in our power, to extend a portion of that freedom to others, which has been extended to us, and release them from the state of thralldom, to which we ourselves were tyrannically doomed, and from which we have now every prospect of being delivered. It is not for us to inquire why, in the creation of mankind, the inhabitants of the several parts of the earth were distinguished by a difference in feature or complection. It is sufficient to know that all are the work of the Almighty Hand. We find in the distribution of the human species, that the most fertile as well as the most barren parts of the earth are inhabited by men of complexions different from ours, and from each other; from whence we may reasonably as well as religiously infer, that He, who

placed them in their various situations, has extended equally His care and protection to all, and that it becomes not us to counteract His mercies.

We esteem it a peculiar blessing granted to us, that we are enabled this day to add one more step to universal civilization, by removing, as much as possible, the sorrows of those who have lived in undeserved bondage, and from which, by the assumed authority of the kings of Great Britain, no effectual legal relief could be obtained. Weaned, by a long course of experience, from those narrow prejudices and partialities we had imbibed, we find our hearts enlarged with kindness and benevolence toward men of all conditions and nations; and we conceive ourselves at this particular period particularly called upon by the blessings which we have received, to manifest the sincerity of our profession, and to give a substantial proof of our gratitude.

2. And whereas the condition of those persons, who have heretofore been denominated Negro and mulatto slaves, has been attended with circumstances, which not only deprived them of the common blessings that they were by nature entitled to, but has cast them into the deepest afflictions, by an unnatural separation and sale of husband and wife from each other and from their children, an injury, the greatness of which can only be conceived by supposing that we were in the same unhappy case. In justice, therefore, to persons so unhappily circumstanced, and who, having no prospect before them whereon they may rest their sorrows and their hopes, have no reasonable inducement to render their services to society, which they otherwise might, and also in grateful commemoration of our own happy deliverance from that state of unconditional submission to which we were doomed by the tyranny of Britain.

3. *Be it enacted, etc.*

## REFLECTIONS ON THE LIFE AND DEATH OF LORD CLIVE

Paine signed this article, which was published in the *Pennsylvania Magazine* of March, 1775, "Atlanticus." Together with "A Serious Thought"

and references in *Common Sense*, it reveals Paine's great interest in the struggle of the people of India for freedom and independence.—*Editor*.

AH! The tale is told—The scene is ended—and the curtain falls. As an emblem of the vanity of all earthly pomp, let his monument be a globe, but be that globe a bubble; let his effigy be a man walking round it in his sleep; and let fame, in the character of a shadow, inscribe his honors on the air.

I view him but as yesterday on the burning plains of Plassey,<sup>2</sup> doubtful of life, health, or victory. I see him in the instant when "*To be or not to be*," were equal chances to a human eye. To be a lord or a slave, to return loaded with the spoils, or remain mingled with the dust of India. Did necessity always justify the severity of a conqueror, the rude tongue of censure would be silent, and however painfully he might look back on scenes of horror, the pensive reflection would not alarm him. Though his feelings suffered, his conscience would be acquitted. The sad remembrance would move serenely, and leave the mind without a wound. But oh India! thou loud proclaimer of European cruelties, thou bloody monument of unnecessary deaths, be tender in the day of inquiry, and show a Christian world thou canst suffer and forgive.

Departed from India, and loaded with plunder, I see him doubling the Cape and looking wistfully to Europe. I see him contemplating on years of pleasure, and gratifying his ambition with expected honors. I see his arrival pompously announced in every newspaper, his eager eye rambling through the crowd in quest of homage, and his ear listening lest an applause should escape him. Happily for him he arrived before his *fame*, and the short interval was a time of rest. From the crowd I follow him to the court, I see him enveloped in the sunshine of sovereign favor, rivalling the great in honors, the proud in splendor, and the rich in wealth. From the court I trace him to the country, his equipage moves like a camp; every village bell proclaims his coming; the wondering peasants admire his pomp, and his heart runs over with joy.

But, alas! not satisfied with uncountable thousands, I accompany him *again* to India. I mark the variety of countenances which appear at his landing. Confusion spreads the news. Every passion seems alarmed.

<sup>2</sup> Battle of Plassey, in the East Indies, where Lord Clive, at that time Colonel Clive, acquired an immense fortune, and from which place his title is taken.—*Author*.

The wailing widow, the crying orphan, and the childless parent remember and lament; the rival nabobs court his favor; the rich dread his power, and the poor his severity. Fear and terror march like pioneers before his camp, murder and rapine accompany it, famine and wretchedness follow in the rear.

Resolved on accumulating an unbounded fortune, he enters into all the schemes of war, treaty, and intrigue. The British sword is set up for sale; the heads of contending nabobs are offered at a price, and the bribe taken from both sides. Thousands of men or money are trifles in an India bargain. The field is an empire, and the treasure almost without end. The wretched inhabitants are glad to compound for offences never committed, and to purchase at any rate the privilege to breathe; while he, the sole lord of their lives and fortunes, disposes of either as he pleases, and prepares for Europe.<sup>3</sup>

Uncommon fortunes require an uncommon date of life to enjoy them in. The usual period is spent in preparing to live: And unless nature prolongs the time, fortune bestows her excess of favors in vain.

The conqueror of the east having nothing more to expect from the one, has all his court to make to the other. Anxïety for wealth gives place to anxiety for life; and wisely recollecting that the sea is no re-

<sup>3</sup> In April, 1773, a Committee of the House of Commons, under the name of the Select Committee, were appointed to inquire into the state of the East India affairs, and the conduct of the several Governors of Bengal. The Committee having gone through the examinations, General Burgoyne, the chairman, prefaced their report to the House, informing them, "that the reports contained accounts shocking to human nature, that the most infamous designs had been carried into execution by perfidy and murder." He recapitulated the wretched situation of the East-Indian princes, who held their dignities on the precarious condition of being the highest bribers. No claim, however just on their part, he said, could be admitted without being introduced with enormous sums of rupees, nor any prince suffered to reign long, who did not quadrate with this idea; and that Lord Clive, over and above the enormous sums he might with some appearance of justice lay claim to, had obtained others to which he could have no title. He (General Burgoyne) therefore moved, "That it appears to this house, that Robert Lord Clive, Baron of Plassey, about the time of deposing Surajah Dowla, nabob of Bengal, and establishing Meer Jaffier in his room, did, through the influence of the power with which he was intrusted, as member of the Select Committee in India, and Commander-in-Chief of the British forces there, obtain and possess himself of two lacks of rupees, as member of the Select Committee; a further sum of two lacks and 80,000 rupees, as member of the Select Committee; a further sum of two lacks of rupees, as Commander-in-Chief; a further sum of 16 lacks of rupees, or more, under the denomination of *private donations*; which sums, amounting together to 20 lacks and 80,000 rupees, were of the value, in English money, of £234,000, (equal to £340,000 Pennsylvania currency), and that in so doing, the said Robert Lord Clive abused the powers with which he was intrusted, to the evil example of the servants of the public."—*Author*.

specter of persons, resolves on taking his route to Europe by land. Little beings move unseen, or unobserved, but he engrosses whole kingdoms in his march, and is gazed at like a comet. The burning desert, the pathless mountains, and the fertile valleys, are in their turns explored and passed over. No material accident distresses his progress, and England once more receives the spoiler.

How sweet is rest to the weary traveller; the retrospect heightens the enjoyment; and if the future prospect be serene, the days of ease and happiness are arrived. An uninquiring observer might have been inclined to consider Lord Clive, under all these agreeable circumstances, one whose every care was over, and who had nothing to do but sit down and say, *Soul, take thine ease, thou hast goods laid up in store for many years.*

The reception which he met with on his second arrival, was in every instance equal to, and in many exceeded, the honors of the first. 'Tis the peculiar temper of the English to applaud before they think. Generous of their praise, they frequently bestow it unworthily: but when once the truth arrives, the torrent stops, and rushes back again with the same violence.<sup>4</sup> Scarcely had the echo of the applause ceased upon the ear,

<sup>4</sup> Lord Clive, in the defence which he made in the House of Commons, against the charges mentioned in the preceding note, very positively insists on his innocence, and very pathetically laments his situation; and after informing the House of the thanks which he had some years before received, for the same actions which they are now endeavoring to censure him for, he says,

"After such certificates as these, Sir, am I to be brought here like a criminal, and the very best part of my conduct construed into crimes against the State? Is this the reward that is now held out to persons who have performed such important services to their country? If it is, Sir, the future consequences that will attend the execution of any important trust, committed to the persons who have the care of it, will be fatal indeed; and I am sure the noble Lord upon the treasury bench, whose great humanity and abilities I revere, would never have consented to the resolutions that passed the other night, if he had thought on the dreadful consequences that would attend them. Sir, I cannot say that I either sit or rest easy, when I find that all I have in the world is likely to be confiscated, and that no one will take my security for a shilling. These, Sir, are dreadful apprehensions to remain under, and I cannot but look upon myself as a bankrupt. I have not anything left which I can call my own, except my paternal fortune of £500 per annum, and which has been in the family for ages past. But upon this I am contented to live, and perhaps I shall find more real content of mind and happiness than in the trembling affluence of an unsettled fortune. But, Sir, I must make one more observation, that, if the definition of the Hon. Gentleman, [General Burgoyne,] and of this House, is that the *State*, as expressed in these resolutions is, *quoad hoc*, the company, then, Sir, every farthing that I enjoy is granted to me. But to be called, after sixteen years have elapsed, to account for my conduct in this manner, and after an uninterrupted enjoyment of my property, to be questioned and considered as obtaining it unwarrantably, is hard indeed! and a treatment I should not think the British Senate capable of. But if it should

then the rude tongue of censure took up the tale. The newspapers, fatal enemies to ill-gotten wealth! began to buzz a general suspicion of his conduct, and the inquisitive public soon refined it into particulars. Every post gave a stab to his fame—a wound to his peace—and a nail to his coffin. Like spectres from the grave they haunted him in every company, and whispered murder in his ear. A life chequered with uncommon varieties is seldom a long one. Action and care will in time wear down the strongest frame, but guilt and melancholy are poisons of quick despatch.

Say, cool deliberate reflection was the prize, though abstracted from the guilt, worthy of the pains? Ah no! Fatigued with victory he sat down to rest, and while he was recovering breath he lost it. A conqueror more fatal than himself beset him, and revenged the injuries done to India.

As a cure for avarice and ambition let us take a view of him in his latter years. Ha! what gloomy being wanders yonder? How visibly is the melancholy heart delineated on his countenance. He mourns no common care—his very steps are timed to sorrow—he trembles with a kind of mental palsy. Perhaps 'tis some broken hearted parent, some David mourning for his Absalom, or some Heraclitus weeping for the world. I hear him mutter something about wealth. Perhaps he is poor, and has not wherewithal to hide his head. Some debtor started from his sleepless pillow, to ruminate on poverty and ponder on the horrors of a jail. Poor man! I'll to him and relieve him. Ha! 'tis Lord Clive himself! Bless me, what a change! He makes, I see, for yonder cypress shade—fit scene for melancholy hearts! I'll watch him there and listen to his story.

LORD CLIVE. "Can I but suffer when a beggar pities me. Erewhile I heard a ragged wretch, who every mark of poverty had on, say to a sooty sweep. Ah, poor Lord Clive! while 'he the Negro-colored vagrant, more mercifully cruel, cursed me in my hearing.

"There was a time when fortune, like a yielding mistress, courted me with smiles—She never waited to be told my wishes, but studied to discover them, and seemed not happy to herself, but when she had some

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be the case, I have a conscious innocence within me, that tells me my conduct is irreproachable. *Frangas, non flectes*. They may take from me what I have; they may, as they think, make me poor, *but I will be happy!* I mean not this as my defence. My defence will be made at the bar; and before I sit down, I have one request to make to the House, *that when they come to decide upon my honor, they will not forget their own.*"—*Author.*

favor to bestow. Ah! little did I think the fair enchantress would desert me thus; and after lavishing her smiles upon me, turn my reproacher, and publish me in folio to the world. Volumes of morality are dull and spiritless compared to me. Lord Clive is himself a treatise upon vanity, printed in a golden type. The most unlettered clown writes explanatory notes thereon, and reads them to his children. Yet I could bear these insults could I but bear myself. A strange unwelcome something hangs about me. In company I seem no company at all. The festive board appears to me a stage, the crimson colored port resembles blood. Each glass is strangely metamorphosed to a man in armor, and every bowl appears a nabob. The joyous toast is like the sound of murder, and the loud laughs are groans of dying men. The scenes of India are all rehearsed, and no one sees the tragedy but myself. Ah! I discover things which are not, and hear unuttered sounds—

“O peace, thou sweet companion of the calm and innocent! Whither art thou fled? Here take my gold, and all the world calls mine, and come thou in exchange. Or thou, thou noisy sweep, who mix thy food with soot and relish it, who canst descend from lofty heights and walk the humble earth again, without repining at the change, come teach that *mystery* to me. Or thou, thou ragged wandering beggar, who, when thou canst not beg successfully, will pilfer from the hound, and eat the dirty morsel sweetly; be thou Lord Clive, and I will beg, so I may laugh like thee.

“Could I unlearn what I’ve already learned—unact what I’ve already acted—or would some sacred power convey me back to youth and innocence, I’d act another part—I’d keep within the value of humble life, nor wish for what the world calls pomp.

“But since this cannot be,  
And only a few days and sad remain for me,  
I’ll haste to quit the scene; for what is life  
When every passion of the soul’s at strife?”<sup>5</sup>

ATLANTICUS.

<sup>5</sup> Some time before his death he became very melancholy—subject to strange imaginations—and was found dead at last.—*Author*.



## DUELLING

This article was written after Paine read a pamphlet entitled *Cursory Reflections on the Single Combat or Modern Duel. Addressed to Gentlemen in every Class of Life*, the author of which remains unknown. Paine's article appeared in the *Pennsylvania Magazine* of May, 1775.

Paine and Jefferson both voiced disapproval of the "murderous Practice of Duelling," regarding it as a hang-over from the age of feudalism and entirely out of date in civilized society. Paine was not too confident that the practice would soon disappear, and the number of duels fought during and immediately after the War for Independence proves that his pessimism was justified. For an excellent discussion of the practice of duelling in the Revolutionary period, see Evarts B. Greene, "The Code of Honor in Colonial and Revolutionary Times, with Special Reference to New England," in *Colonial Society of Massachusetts, Publications*, vol. XXVI, 1925, pp. 367-388.—*Editor*.

**G**OTHIC and absurd as the custom of duelling is generally allowed to be, there are advocates for it on principle; reasoners, who coolly argue for the necessity and even convenience, of this mode of accommodating certain kinds of personal differences, and of redressing certain species of injuries, for which the laws have not provided proper or adequate remedies: they conclude, therefore, that an appeal to the sword is a requisite supplement to the law, and that this sort of satisfaction for extra judicial offences, must take place till some other mode shall be devised and established. The learned Dr. Robertson has observed, in favor of this practice—even while he condemns it—that its influence on modern manners, has been found, in some respects, beneficial to mankind.

"To this absurd custom," says he, "we must ascribe, in some degree, the extraordinary gentleness and complaisance of modern manners, and that respectful attention of one man to another, which, at present, render the social intercourses of life far more agreeable and decent than amongst the most civilized nations of antiquity."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> The reference is to *Reign of Charles V*, Book V, by Dr. William Robertson, the historian.—*Editor*.

The author of these considerations ["Cursory Reflections"] reduces the arguments which have been offered in behalf of the private combat to these two.

I. That the duel is the only expedient to obtain satisfaction for those injuries of which the laws take no cognizance.

II. That a man of honor is bound on pain of infamy to resent every indignity that may be offered to him with the point of his sword or with a pistol.

These positions our sensible author undertakes to refute; and we shall give a specimen of his reasoning: but, first, it will not be improper to lay before our readers part of what he has said on the origin of the single combat, or duel.

"The ancient states," says he, "of Greece and Rome, from whence we derive the noblest models of heroism, supported private honor, without delivering down to us any evidences of this baneful custom of demanding so severe a decision of private affronts; which, considering the military spirit of these nations, must, if it obtained at all, have proved more destructive to them at home, than the united swords of their enemies abroad. The practice is in fact of later and more ignoble birth; the judicial combat, the parent of modern duels, springing from monkish superstition, grafted on feudal barbarism. Whoever reads Hurd's entertaining and ingenious "Letters on Chivalry and Romance," with Robertson's elaborate "History of the Emperor Charles V.," will no longer hesitate concerning the clear fact.

"The judicial combat obtained in ignorant ages, on a conclusion that in this appeal to Providence, innocence and right would be pointed out by victory, and guilt stigmatised and punished by defeat. But alas! experience at length taught us not to expect a miraculous interposition, whenever superior strength, superior skill, and superior bravery or ferocity, either or all of them, happened to appear on the side of injustice."

Dr. Robertson, above quoted, denies the *fashion* (as the writer of these reflections has observed) of terminating private differences by the sword, or pistol, by the illustrious example of the challenge sent by Francis I. of France to the Emperor Charles V. This was not, indeed, the first instance of such challenges, among princes; but, as our author remarks, the dignity of the parties, in the present case, afforded a sufficient sanction for extending this mode of deciding differences; to which we may add, that the spirit of chivalry and romantic knight-hood still prevailing in those fighting times, was continually exciting the

heroes of the age to this mode of proving their personal prowess and valor.

We now return to our author's manner of reasoning upon the postulate before stated:

"With respect to the first argument," says he, "if we annex any determined ideas to our words, by satisfaction we are to understand redress, compensation, amends or atonement. Now, gentlemen! for the sake of all that is valuable in life, condescend for a minute to bring down your refined notions to the sure standard of common sense, and then weigh the satisfaction to be obtained in a duel.

"Is satisfaction to be enforced from an adversary by putting a weapon into his hand, and standing a contention with him, life for life, upon an equal chance?

"Is an offender against the rules of gentility, or against the obligations of morality, a man presumptively destitute of honor himself, fairly entitled to this equal chance of extending an injury already committed, to the irreparable degree of taking the life also from an innocent man?

"If a gentleman is infatuated enough to meet a person who has degraded himself from the character of a gentleman, upon these equal terms, and loses a limb, or his life, what species of satisfaction can that be called? But it is better to suffer death than indignity. What, from the injurious hand? Correct your ideas, and you will esteem life too valuable to be complimented away for a mistaken notion.

"If the aggressor falls, the full purpose of the injured person is thus answered, but what is the satisfaction? The survivor becomes a refugee, like a felon; or if he should be cleared by the equivocal tenderness of a court of justice, must he not be a barbarian instead of a gentleman, who can feed upon this inhuman bloody satisfaction, without experiencing the pangs of self-reproach, for having sacrificed the life of a fellow creature to a mere punctilio; and perhaps involved the ruin of an innocent family by the brutal deed? If, on the other hand, he is really a mistaken man of humanity, what has he obtained? The satisfaction of embittering all the remainder of his life with the keenest sorrow; of having forfeited all his future peace of mind by a consciousness of guilt, from which his notions of honor can never release him, till the load drags him down to the grave!

"If a man of strict honor is reduced to beg his life of a mere pretender to honor, a scoundrel, what satisfaction can this be esteemed? Is not this a mortifying, a painful aggravation of a wrong already sustained? What consolation can honor afford for such a disgrace?"

Our author has some other very sensible animadversions on this first branch of the argument in defence of duelling; after which, he proceeds

to the second plea, viz. "The obligation of resenting affronts in this manner, founded on the infamy of suspected courage"; and, in our opinion, he satisfactorily proves that this argument is by no means irrefragable: but for his reasoning on this delicate point, we must refer to his pamphlet, and proceed to take notice of his plan for putting a stop to the practice of duelling.

In the first place, he recommends that a law be passed, "declaring the act of sending a challenge, or the reducing a person to defend his life with sword or pistol, to be felony; and the killing a person in a duel, to be punished as murder, without benefit of clergy, unless sufficient proof is made that the party killed, really urged the combat."

As this first part of his proposal relates rather to the mode of punishing, than the means of preventing duels, he proceeds:

"In every quarrel between two gentlemen where satisfaction is thought necessary, let the parties be empowered to summon a jury of honor from among their friends, six to be appointed by one gentleman, and six by the other, or in case of a refusal of either party, let the six chosen by the other complete the number by their own appointment, each nominating one; and finally, let all this be done, if possible, free from the embarrassing intervention of lawyers.

"Let this jury of honor, when duly assembled, discuss the merits of the dispute in question, and form their opinion by a majority of votes; but to guard against generating fresh quarrels by the discovery of the votes on either side, let the whole twelve be bound to secrecy upon their honor, and the whole twelve sign the verdict of the majority. Let a copy of this verdict be delivered to the gentleman whose conduct is condemned; and if he refuses to make the required concession or due satisfaction, let this opinion be published in such a manner as may be thought proper, and be understood to divest him of his character as a gentleman so long as he remains contumacious.

"By this single expedient, conveyed in few words, it is hoped the necessity of duels may be effectually superseded, the practice suppressed, and ample satisfaction enforced for all injuries of honor. In the examination of subjects of importance we are often tempted to overlook the thing we want, on a supposition that it cannot be near at hand. This plan may perhaps admit of amendment, but it is feared the more complicated it is rendered, the more difficult it may prove to carry into execution: and it is hoped, as it is, it will not be the worse thought of, for coming from an unknown pen."

With respect to the practicability of this scheme, we apprehend that the great difficulty would lie in obliging the quarrelling parties, or either of them (who by the author's plan are merely empowered), to refer the matter to a court of honor. But the writer does not give this as a finished plan: he barely suggests the hint; leaving others to improve upon it, if thought worthy of farther consideration.

As to the proposed act for punishing the survivor, where one of the parties has fallen in the conflict, it is, indeed, a melancholy truth, that our laws in being have been found inadequate to the purpose of preventing duels by the dread of legal consequences. The king of Sweden's method was virtually the same which is here recommended; and it is said to have been effectual in that kingdom.

The great Gustavus Adolphus, finding that the custom of duelling was becoming alarmingly prevalent among the officers in his army, was determined to suppress, if possible, those false notions of honor. Soon after the king had formed this resolution, and issued some very rigorous edicts against the practice, a quarrel arose between two of his generals; who agreed to crave His Majesty's pardon to decide the quarrel by the laws of honor. The king consented, and said he would be a spectator of the combat; he went, accordingly, to the place appointed, attended by a body of guards, and the public executioner. He then told the combatants that "they must fight till one of them died"; and turning to the executioner, he added, "Do you immediately strike off the head of the survivor." The monarch's inflexibility had the desired effect: the difference between the two officers was adjusted; and no more challenges were heard of in the army of Gustavus Adolphus.

From the peculiar prevalence of this custom in countries where the religious system is established, which, of all others, most expressly prohibits the gratification of revenge, with every species of outrage and violence, we too plainly see, how little mankind are, in reality, influenced by the principles of the religion by which they profess to be guided, and in defence of which they will occasionally risk even their lives.

## REFLECTIONS ON TITLES

This brief essay appeared in the *Pennsylvania Magazine* of May, 1775. It anticipated Paine's remarks on the King of England in *Common Sense* and his more elaborate discussion of the subject of titles in *Rights of Man*. The only ones deserving of titles, Paine argued, was a body of public-spirited men who had the welfare of the people in mind. The only titles kings and their courtiers were worthy of were such designations as "the Right Honorable murderer of mankind."—*Editor*.

Ask me what's honor? I'll the truth impart:  
Know, honor then, is *Honesty of Heart*.

WHITEHEAD.

WHEN I reflect on the pompous titles bestowed on unworthy men, I feel an indignity that instructs me to despise the absurdity. The *Honorable* plunderer of his country, or the *Right Honorable* murderer of mankind, create such a contrast of ideas as exhibit a monster rather than a man. Virtue is inflamed at the violation, and sober reason calls it nonsense.

Dignities and high sounding names have different effects on different beholders. The lustre of the *Star* and the title of *My Lord*, overawe the superstitious vulgar, and forbid them to inquire into the character of the possessor: Nay more, they are, as it were, bewitched to admire in the great, the vices they would honestly condemn in themselves. This sacrifice of common sense is the certain badge which distinguishes slavery from freedom; for when men yield up the privilege of thinking, the last shadow of liberty quits the horizon.

But the reasonable freeman sees through the magic of a title, and examines the man before he approves him. To him the honors of the worthless serve to write their masters' vices in capitals, and their stars shine to no other end than to read them by. The possessors of undue honors are themselves sensible of this; for when their repeated guilt renders their persons unsafe, they disown their rank, and, like glow-worms, extinguish themselves into common reptiles, to avoid discovery. Thus Jeffries sunk into a fisherman, and his master escaped in the habit of a peasant.

Modesty forbids men, separately or collectively, to assume titles. But as all honors, even that of kings, originated from the public, the public may justly be called the fountain of true honor. And it is with much pleasure I have heard the title of *Honorable* applied to a body of men, who nobly disregarding private ease and interest for public welfare, have justly merited the address of The Honorable Continental Congress.

VOX POPULI.

## AN OCCASIONAL LETTER ON THE FEMALE SEX

Although there is evidence to prove that this article, which appeared in the *Pennsylvania Magazine* of August, 1775, was not written by Paine (see Frank Smith, "The Authorship of 'An Occasional Letter on the Female Sex,'" *American Literature*, vol. II, Nov. 1930, pp. 277-280), it has been included in the present edition of Paine's writings because it indicates his interest as editor of the magazine in the subject, and because some of the language of the essay is his. The article represents one of the earliest pleas for the emancipation of women published in America.—*Editor*.

O Woman! lovely Woman!  
Nature made thee to temper man,  
We had been Brutes without you.

OTWAY.

**I**F we take a survey of ages and of countries, we shall find the women, almost—without exception—at all times and in all places, adored and oppressed. Man, who has never neglected an opportunity of exerting his power, in paying homage to their beauty, has always availed himself of their weakness. He has been at once their tyrant and their slave.

Nature herself, in forming beings so susceptible and tender, appears to have been more attentive to their charms than to their happiness. Continually surrounded with griefs and fears, the women more than share all our miseries, and are besides subjected to ills which are peculiarly their own. They cannot be the means of life without exposing them-

selves to the loss of it; every revolution which they undergo, alters their health, and threatens their existence. Cruel distempers attack their beauty—and the hour which confirms their release from those is perhaps the most melancholy of their lives. It robs them of the most essential characteristic of their sex. They can then only hope for protection from the humiliating claims of pity, or the feeble voice of gratitude.

Society, instead of alleviating their condition, is to them the source of new miseries. More than one half of the globe is covered with savages; and among all these people women are completely wretched. Man, in a state of barbarity, equally cruel and indolent, active by necessity, but naturally inclined to repose, is acquainted with little more than the physical effects of love; and, having none of those moral ideas which only can soften the empire of force, he is led to consider it as his supreme law, subjecting to his despotism those whom reason had made his equal, but whose imbecility betrayed them to his strength. "Nothing" (says Professor Miller, speaking of the women of barbarous nations) "can exceed the dependence and subjection in which they are kept, or the toil and drudgery which they are obliged to undergo. The husband, when he is not engaged in some warlike exercise, indulges himself in idleness, and devolves upon his wife the whole burden of his domestic affairs. He disdains to assist her in any of those servile employments. She sleeps in a different bed, and is seldom permitted to have any conversation or correspondence with him."

The women among the Indians of America are what the Helots were among the Spartans, a vanquished people, obliged to toil for their conquerors. Hence on the banks of the Oroonoko, we have seen mothers slaying their daughters out of compassion, and smothering them in the hour of their birth. They consider this barbarous pity as a virtue.

"The men (says Commodore Byron, in his account of the inhabitants of South-America) exercise a most despotic authority over their wives, whom they consider in the same view they do any other part of their property, and dispose of them accordingly. Even their common treatment of them is cruel; for though the toil and hazard of procuring food lies entirely on the women, yet they are not suffered to touch any part of it till the husband is satisfied; and then he assigns them their portion, which is generally very scanty, and such as he has not a stomach for himself."

Among the nations of the East we find another kind of despotism and dominion prevail—the Seraglio, and the domestic servitude of



woman, authorized by the manners and established by the laws. In Turkey, in Persia, in India, in Japan, and over the vast empire of China, one half of the human species is oppressed by the other.

The excess of oppression in those countries springs from the excess of love.

All Asia is covered with prisoners, where beauty in bondage awaits the caprices of a master. The multitude of women there assembled have no will, no inclinations but his. Their triumphs are only for a moment; and their rivalry, their hate, and their animosities continue till death. There the lovely sex are obliged to repay even their servitude with the most tender affections; or, what is still more mortifying, with the counterfeit of an affection, which they do not feel. There the most gloomy tyranny has subjected them to creatures, who, being of neither sex, are a dishonor to both. There, in short, their education tends only to debase them; their virtues are forced; their very pleasures are involuntary and joyless; and after an existence of a few years—till the bloom of youth is over—their period of neglect commences, which is long and dreadful. In the temperate latitude where the climates, giving less ardor to passion, leave more confidence in virtue, the women have not been deprived of their liberty, but a severe legislation has, at all times, kept them in a state of dependence. One while they were confined to their own apartments, and debarred at once from business and amusement; at other times, a tedious guardianship defrauded their hearts, and insulted their understandings. Affronted in one country by polygamy, which gives them their rivals for their inseparable companions; enslaved in another by indissoluble ties, which often join the gentle to the rude, and sensibility to brutality. Even in countries where they may be esteemed most happy, constrained in their desires in the disposal of their goods, robbed of freedom of will by the laws, the slaves of opinion, which rules them with absolute sway, and construes the slightest appearances into guilt; surrounded on all sides by judges, who are at once tyrants and their seducers, and who, after having prepared their faults, punish every lapse with dishonor—nay, usurp the right of degrading them on suspicion! Who does not feel for the tender sex? Yet such, I am sorry to say, is the lot of women over the whole earth. Man with regard to them, in all climates, and in all ages, has been either an insensible husband or an oppressor; but they have sometimes experienced the cold and deliberate oppression of pride, and sometimes the violent and terrible tyranny of jealousy. When they are not beloved they are nothing; and, when they are, they

are tormented. They have almost equal cause to be afraid of indifference and of love. Over three-quarters of the globe nature has placed them between contempt and misery.

"The melting desires, or the fiery passions," says Professor Ferguson, "which in one climate take place between the sexes, are, in another, changed into a sober consideration, or a patience of mutual disgust. This change is remarked in crossing the Mediterranean, in following the course of the Mississippi, in ascending the mountains of Caucasus, and in passing from the Alps and the Pyrenees to the shores of the Baltic.

"The burning ardors and torturing jealousies of the seraglio and harem, which have reigned so long in Asia and Africa, and which, in the southern parts of Europe, have scarcely given way to the differences of religion and civil establishments, are found, however, with an abatement of heat in the climate, to be more easily changed, in one latitude, into a temporary passion, which engrosses the mind without enfeebling it, and which excites to romantic achievements. By a farther progress to the north it is changed into a spirit of gallantry, which employs the wit and fancy more than the heart, which prefers intrigue to enjoyment, and substitutes affection and vanity where sentiment and desire have failed. As it departs from the sun, the same passion is further composed into a habit of domestic connection, or frozen into a state of insensibility, under which the sexes at freedom scarcely choose to unite their society."

Even among people where beauty received the highest homage we find men who would deprive the sex of every kind of reputation. "The most virtuous woman," says a celebrated Greek, "is she who is least talked of." That morose man, while he imposes duties upon women, would deprive them of the sweets of public esteem, and in exacting virtues from them, would make it a crime to aspire at honor.

If a woman were to defend the cause of her sex, she might address him in the following manner:

"How great is your injustice? If we have an equal right with you to virtue, why should we not have an equal right to praise? The public esteem ought to wait upon merit. Our duties are different from yours, but they are not therefore less difficult to fulfil, or of less consequence to society: They are the fountains of your felicity, and the sweetness of life. We are wives and mothers. 'Tis we who form the union and the cordiality of families. 'Tis we who soften that savage rudeness which considers everything as due to force, and which would involve man with man in eternal war. We cultivate in you that humanity which makes

you feel for the misfortunes of others, and our tears forewarn you of your own danger. Nay, you cannot be ignorant that we have need of courage not less than you. More feeble in ourselves, we have perhaps more trials to encounter. Nature assails us with sorrow, law and custom press us with constraint, and sensibility and virtue alarm us with their continual conflict. Sometimes also the name of citizen demands from us the tribute of fortitude. When you offer your blood to the State think that it is ours. In giving it our sons and our husbands we give more than ourselves. You can only die on the field of battle, but we have the misfortune to survive those whom we love most. Alas! while your ambitious vanity is unceasingly laboring to cover the earth with statues, with monuments, and with inscriptions to eternize, if possible, your names, and give yourselves an existence, when this body is no more, why must we be condemned to live and to die unknown? Would that the grave and eternal forgetfulness should be our lot. Be not our tyrants in all: Permit our names to be sometimes pronounced beyond the narrow circle in which we live. Permit friendship, or at least love, to inscribe its emblem on the tomb where our ashes repose; and deny us not that public esteem which, after the esteem of one's self, is the sweetest reward of well doing."

All men, however, it must be owned, have not been equally unjust to their fair companions. In some countries public honors have been paid to women. Art has erected them monuments. Eloquence has celebrated their virtues, and history has collected whatever could adorn their character.

## THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

AN ACT FOR INCORPORATING THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY,  
HELD AT PHILADELPHIA FOR PROMOTING USEFUL KNOWLEDGE

This Bill was entered by Paine, as Clerk of the General Assembly of Pennsylvania during its second reading on February 14, 1780. It was later published as his in London, and a copy deposited in the British Museum. The Society emerged from the Junto, a club organized by Benjamin Franklin in 1727 in Philadelphia. Ironically enough, Paine was rejected for member-

ship in the Society in 1781, and was not elected a member until January 22, 1785. See *Library Bulletin of the American Philosophical Society*, 1943, p. 71.

Paine's interest in "the cultivation of useful knowledge, and the advancement of the liberal arts and sciences" was so great that he believed that a historical "society for inquiring into the ancient state of the worke and the state of ancient history, so far as history is connected with systems of religion ancient and modern, may be a useful and instructive institution." See Paine's letter to Lewis Morris, p. 1245 below for further discussion of Philosophical Societies.—*Editor*.

WHEREAS the cultivation of useful knowledge, and the advancement of the liberal arts and sciences in any country, have the most direct tendency toward the improvement of agriculture, the enlargement of trade, the ease and comfort of life, the ornament of society, and the ease and happiness of mankind. And whereas this country of North America, which the goodness of providence hath given us to inherit, from the vastness of its extent, the variety of its climate, the fertility of its soil, the yet unexplored treasures of its bowels, the multitude of its rivers, lakes, bays, inlets and other conveniences of navigation, offers to these United States one of the richest subjects of cultivation ever presented to any people upon earth. And whereas the experience of ages shows that improvements of a public nature are best carried on by societies of liberal and ingenious men, uniting their labors without regard to nation, sect, or party, in one grand pursuit, alike interesting to all, whereby mutual prejudices are worn off, a humane and philosophical spirit is cherished, and youth is stimulated to a laudable diligence and emulation in the pursuit of wisdom.

And whereas, upon these principles, divers public-spirited gentlemen of Pennsylvania and other American States did heretofore unite themselves, under certain regulations into one voluntary Society, by the name of "The American Philosophical Society, held at Philadelphia for Promoting Useful Knowledge," and by their successful labors and investigations, to the great credit of America, have extended their reputation so far, that men of the first eminence in the republic of letters in the most civilized nations of Europe have done honor to their publications, and desired to be enrolled among their members: And whereas the said Society, after having been long interrupted in their laudable pursuits by the calamities of war, and the distresses of our country, have found means to revive their design, in hopes of being able to prosecute the same with their former success, and of being further encouraged therein

by the public, for which purpose they have prayed us, the representatives of the freemen of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, that they may be created one body politic and corporate forever, with such powers, and privileges, and immunities as may be necessary for answering the valuable purposes which the said Society had originally in view.

Wherefore, in order to encourage the said Society in the prosecution and advancement of all useful branches of knowledge, for the benefit of their country and mankind, Be it enacted, and it is hereby enacted by the representatives of the freemen of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in General Assembly met, and by the authority of the same, That the members of the said Philosophical Society, heretofore voluntarily associated for promoting useful knowledge, and such other persons as have been duly elected members and officers of the same, agreeably to the fundamental laws and regulations of the said Society, comprised in twelve sections, prefixed to their first volume of transactions, published in Philadelphia, and such other laws and regulations as shall hereafter be duly made and enacted by the Society, according to the tenor hereof, be and for ever hereafter shall be, one body corporate and politic in deed, by the name and style of "The American Philosophical Society held at Philadelphia, for promoting useful knowledge."

And whereas—nations truly civilized (however unhappily at variance on other accounts) will never wage war with the arts and sciences, and the common interests of humanity; Be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that it shall and may be lawful for the said Society, by their proper officers, at all times, whether in peace or war, to correspond with learned societies, as well as individual learned men, of any nation or country; upon matters merely belonging to the business of the said Societies, such as the mutual communication of their discoveries and proceedings in philosophy and science; the procuring books, apparatus, natural curiosities, and such other articles and intelligence as are usually exchanged between learned bodies, for furthering their common pursuits: Provided always, that such correspondence of the said Society be at all times open to the inspection of the supreme Executive Council of this Commonwealth, etc.

## THE SOCIETY FOR POLITICAL INQUIRIES

This body, set up in Philadelphia in February, 1787, met usually at the home of Benjamin Franklin. The following rules and regulations of the organization were written by Paine and read at its first meeting. Paine does not seem to have taken an active part in the discussions at these meetings, but he did write an essay on the inexpediency of incorporating towns which he read to the body. No copy of this dissertation has ever been located.

The preamble to the rules and regulations is highly significant, for, in emphasizing that citizens in a Republic should study the nature of their political institutions, it foreshadowed the approach of the Democratic-Republican Societies formed during the 1790's. See Eugene P. Link, *Democratic-Republican Societies, 1790-1800*, New York, 1942, Chapter I.—*Editor*.

THE moral character and happiness of mankind are so interwoven with the operations of government, and the progress of the arts and sciences is so dependent on the nature of our political institutions that it is essential to the advancement of civilized society to give ample discussion to these topics.

But important as these inquiries are to all, to the inhabitants of these republics they are objects of peculiar magnitude and necessity. Accustomed to look up to those nations, from whom we have derived our origin, for our laws, our opinions and our manners, we have retained with undistinguishing reverence their errors with their improvements; have blended with our public institutions the policy of dissimilar countries; and have grafted on an infant commonwealth the manners of ancient and corrupted monarchies. In having effected a separate government, we have as yet effected but a partial independence. The Revolution can only be said to be complete, when we shall have freed ourselves, no less from the influence of foreign prejudices than from the fetters of foreign power. When breaking through the bounds, in which a dependent people have been accustomed to think and act, we shall probably comprehend the character we have assumed and adopt those maxims of policy which are suited to our new situation. While objects of subordinate importance have employed the associated labors of learned and ingenious men, the arduous and complicated science of

government has been generally left to the care of practical politicians, or the speculations of individual theorists. From a desire of supplying this deficiency, and of promoting the welfare of our country, it is now proposed to establish a society for mutual improvement in the knowledge of government, and for the advancement of political science.

With these views, the subscribers associate themselves under the title of THE SOCIETY FOR POLITICAL INQUIRIES, and under the following laws and regulations:

#### LAWS AND REGULATIONS

I. This society shall consist of fifty residing members, and shall meet every Friday fortnight, at half past six o'clock in the evening (the chair to be taken precisely at seven) except during the months of June, July, August and September, when their meetings shall be discontinued.

II. There shall be a president, two vice-presidents, a treasurer, and two secretaries, who shall be elected annually by ballot on the second Friday in February.

III. Persons residing at a distance shall be eligible into the society as honorary members, but shall not be entitled to the privilege of electing.

IV. Every candidate for admission shall be proposed by at least two residing members, who shall give in his name in writing with their own subscribed to it. After which one of the acting secretaries shall read aloud the name of the candidate as well as of the nominating members, at two successive meetings previous to the election.

V. Every election shall be conducted by ballot, twelve members at least being present; and the votes of three-fourths of the number present, shall be necessary to the admission of the candidate.

VI. Each residing member shall pay twenty shillings on his admission, as well as fifteen shillings annually, toward the expenses of the society.

VII. A committee of papers shall be appointed annually by ballot, on the same evening that the officers of the society are elected. This committee shall consist of the president, vice-president, and six other members of the society, and shall decide on the propriety of reading or publishing any paper which shall be presented to the society. But they shall not proceed to any decision unless five of their number are present. Nor shall any essay, or the name of its author be published, without previously obtaining his consent.

VIII. The attention of the society shall be confined to subjects of *government and political economy*. And members having any essays, facts, or observations on these subjects, that they wish to have read in the society, or any political queries that they may be desirous of having discussed in conversation, shall give the same into the hands of the president or vice-president

who shall communicate the same to the committee of papers and take order thereon.

IX. The president or vice-president shall announce to the society, what papers are to be read, and what subjects to be discussed at their next meeting.

X. A fair record shall be kept of the proceedings of the society, which shall be open to the inspection of the members.

XI. Medals shall be adjudged at the discretion of the society to the authors (whether members or not) of the best essays upon such subjects as the society may propose for that purpose. The votes in these cases shall be taken by ballot.

XII. If any person to whom a medal shall be adjudged, should not be a member of the society, he shall be included in the list of honorary members.

XIII. The president or vice-president shall have power to call at any time a special meeting of the society.

XIV. The society shall be subject to such laws and regulations as shall be made from time to time. But no laws shall be enacted, rescinded or altered without the presence of twelve members, and without the consent of three-fourths of the number present: Nor shall any such measures be proposed, without notice has been previously given at two successive meetings of the alterations or additions intended to be made.

XV. There shall be a penalty of one shilling paid by every member not attending at any meeting, either stated or special, provided he be not out of town or confined by sickness.





# THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN GENERAL WOLFE AND GENERAL GAGE

THE DREAM INTERPRETED

THOUGHTS ON DEFENSIVE WAR

EPISTLE TO QUAKERS

THE FORESTER'S LETTERS

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE GHOST OF GENERAL MONTGOMERY  
AND AN AMERICAN DELEGATE

RETREAT ACROSS THE DELAWARE

THE AFFAIR OF SILAS DEANE

PEACE, AND THE NEWFOUNDLAND FISHERIES

A PLAN FOR RECRUITING THE ARMY

TWO PLANS FOR PROCURING THE SUPPLIES

LETTER TO THE ABBÉ RAYNAL

ADDRESS OF THE CITIZENS OF PHILADELPHIA TO CONGRESS

## EDITOR'S NOTE

*Common Sense* and the sixteen papers in the series entitled *The American Crisis* are well known, but too often the other articles written by Paine on the American Revolution are entirely ignored. Yet at the time these articles were written, they were widely reprinted throughout the country, inspired the patriots and provided them with useful ammunition with which to combat the enemy and his allies in this country. Paine's observations on critical issues related to the conduct of a people's war are still valuable today, and even when the discussion seems remote, the fact that it is presented in his usual clear and vigorous style makes it fascinating reading.

## A DIALOGUE BETWEEN GENERAL WOLFE AND GENERAL GAGE IN A WOOD NEAR BOSTON.

Paine was sometimes fond of using the form of an imaginary dialogue to make a political point. In this case he uses the conversation between Thomas Gage, the last British Governor of Massachusetts and the ghost of the British General James Wolfe, who was killed during the attack on Quebec, September 13, 1759, to expose the policies of the British Ministry and Parliament toward the American colonies. The article was published in the *Pennsylvania Journal* of January 4, 1775.—*Editor*.

**G**EN. WOLFE. Welcome my old friend to this retreat.  
*Gen. GAGE.* I am glad to see you my dear Mr. Wolfe, but what has brought you back again to this world?

*Gen. WOLFE.* I am sent by a group of British heroes to remonstrate with you upon your errand to this place. You are come upon a business unworthy a British soldier, and a freeman. You have come here to deprive your fellow subjects of their liberty.

*Gen. GAGE.* God forbid! I am come here to execute the orders of my sovereign,—a prince of unbounded wisdom and goodness, and who aims at no higher honor than that of being the king of a free people.

*Gen. WOLFE.* Strange language from a British soldier! I honor the crown of Great-Britain as an essential part of her excellent constitution. I served a sovereign to whom the impartial voice of posterity has ascribed the justice of the man as well as the magnanimity of a king, and yet such was the free spirit of the troops under my command, that I could never animate them with a proper martial spirit without setting before them the glorious objects, of their king and their COUNTRY.

*Gen. GAGE.* The orders of my sovereign have been sanctified by the Parliament of Great-Britain. All the wisdom and liberty of the whole empire are collected in that august assembly. My troops therefore cannot want the same glorious motives which animated yours, in the present expedition. They will fight for their country as well as their king.

*Gen. WOLFE.* The wisest assemblies of men are as liable as individuals to corruption and error. The greatest ravages which have ever been committed upon the liberty and happiness of mankind have been by weak and corrupted republics. The American colonies are entitled to all the privileges of British subjects. Equality of liberty is the glory of every Briton. He does not forfeit it by crossing the ocean. He carries it with him into the most distant parts of the world, because he carries with him the immutable laws of nature. A Briton or an American ceases to be a British subject when he ceases to be governed by rulers chosen or approved of by himself. This is the essence of liberty and of the British constitution.

*Gen. GAGE.* The inhabitants of the province of Massachusetts Bay, have not only thrown off the jurisdiction of the British Parliament, but they are disaffected to the British crown. They cannot even bear with that small share of regal power and grandeur which have been delegated to the governors of this province. They traduced Sir Francis Bernard, and petitioned the king to remove Mr. Hutchinson from the seat of government.<sup>1</sup> But their opposition to my administration has arisen to open rebellion. They have refused to obey my proclamations. They have assembled and entered into associations to eat no mutton and to wear clothes manufactured in this country,—they have even provided themselves with arms and ammunition, and have acquired a complete knowledge of the military exercises, in direct opposition to my proclamations.

*Gen. WOLFE.* The inhabitants of Massachusetts Bay were once a brave and loyal people. If they are disaffected to his present Majesty, it is because his ministers have sent counterfeit impressions of his royal virtues to govern them. Bernard and Hutchinson must have been a composition of all the base and wicked qualities in human nature to have diminished the loyalty of those illustrious subjects, or weakened their devotion to every part of the British constitution. I must add here that the late proceedings of the British Parliament towards the American colonists have reached the British heroes in Elysium, and have produced a suspension

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Hutchinson was Royal Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Thomas Gage was appointed Governor in 1774 when Hutchinson left for England.—*Editor.*

of their happiness. The Quebec Bill in a particular manner has roused their resentment. It was once the glory of Englishmen to draw the sword only in defence of liberty and the Protestant religion, or to extend the blessings of both to their unhappy neighbors. These godlike motives reconciled me to all the hardships of that campaign which ended in the reduction of Canada. These godlike motives likewise reconciled me to the horror I felt in being obliged to shed the blood of those brave Frenchmen, who opposed me on the plains of Abraham. I rejoiced less in the hour of my death, in the honor of my victory, than in the glory of having communicated to an enslaved people the glorious privileges of an English constitution. While my fellow soldiers hailed me as their conqueror, I exulted only in being their DELIVERER. But popery and French laws in Canada are but a part of that system of despotism, which has been prepared for the colonies. The edicts of the British Parliament (for they want the sanction of British laws) which relate to the province of Massachusetts Bay are big with destruction to the whole British Empire. I come therefore in the name of Blakeney—Cumberland—Granby—and an illustrious band of English heroes to whom the glory of Old England is still dear, to beg you to have no hand in the execution of them. Remember, Sir, you are a man as well as a soldier. You did not give up your privileges as a citizen when you put on your sword. British soldiers are not machines, to be animated only with the voice of a minister of State. They disdain those ideas of submission which preclude them from the liberty of thinking for themselves, and degrade them to an equality with a war horse, or an elephant. If you value the sweets of peace and liberty,—if you have any regard to the glory of the British name, and if you prefer the society of Grecian, Roman, and British heroes in the world of spirits, to the company of Jeffries, Kirk, and other royal executioners, I conjure you immediately to resign your commission. Assign the above reasons to your sovereign for your conduct, and you will have the *sole* glory of performing an action which would do honor to an angel. You will restore perpetual harmony between Britain and her colonies.

## THE DREAM INTERPRETED

This essay, published in the May, 1775 issue of the *Pennsylvania Magazine* is an interesting example of Paine's ability to use different literary techniques to bring home a vital political message.—*Editor*.

**P**ARCHED with thirst and wearied with a fatiguing journey to Virginia, I turned out of the road to shelter myself among the shades; in a little time I had the good fortune to light on a spring, and the refreshing draught went sweetly down. How little of luxury does nature want! This cooling stream administered more relief than all the wines of Oporto; I drank and was satisfied; my fatigue abated, my wasted spirits were reinforced, and 'tis no wonder after such a delicious repast that I sunk insensibly into slumber. The wildest fancies in that state of forgetfulness always appear regular and connected; nothing is wrong in a dream, be it ever so unnatural. I am apt to think that the wisest men dream the most inconsistently. For as the judgment has nothing or very little to do in regulating the circumstances of a dream, it necessarily follows that the more powerful and creative the imagination is, the wilder it runs in that state of unrestrained invention; while those who are unable to wander out of the track of common thinking when awake, never exceed the boundaries of common nature when asleep.

But to return from my digression, which in this place is nothing more than that wandering of fancy which every dream is entitled to, and which cannot in either case be applied to myself, as in the dream I am about to relate I was only a spectator, and had no other business to do than to remember.

To what scene or country my ideas had conveyed themselves, or whether they had created a region on purpose to explore, I know not, but I saw before me one of the most pleasing landscapes I have ever beheld. I gazed at it, till my mind partaking of the prospect became incorporated therewith, and felt all the tranquillity of the place. In this state of ideal happiness I sat down on the side of a mountain, totally forgetful of the world I had left behind me. The most delicious fruits presented themselves to my hands, and one of the clearest rivers that ever watered the earth rolled along at the foot of the mountain, and

invited me to drink. The distant hills were blue with the tincture of the skies, and seemed as if they were the threshold of the celestial region. But while I gazed the whole scene began to change, by an almost insensible gradation. The sun, instead of administering life and health, consumed everything with an intolerable heat. The verdure withered. The hills appeared burnt and black. The fountains dried away; and the atmosphere became a motionless lake of air, loaded with pestilence and death. After several days of wretched suffocation, the sky grew darkened with clouds from every quarter, till one extended storm excluded the face of heaven. A dismal silence took place, as if the earth, struck with a general panic, was listening like a criminal to the sentence of death. The glimmering light with which the sun feebly penetrated the clouds began to fail, till Egyptian darkness added to the horror. The beginning of the tempest was announced by a confusion of distant thunders, till at length a general discharge of the whole artillery of heaven was poured down upon the earth. Trembling I shrunk into the side of a cave, and dreaded the event. The mountain shook, and threatened me with instant destruction. The rapid lightning at every blaze exhibited the landscape of a world on fire, while the accumulating torrent, not in rain, but floods of water, resembled another deluge.

At length the fury of the storm abated, and nature, fatigued with fear and watching, sank into rest. But when the morning rose, and the universal lamp of heaven emerged from the deep, how was I struck with astonishment! I expected to have seen a world in ruins, which nothing but a new creation could have restored. Instead of which, the prospect was lovely and inviting, and had all the promising appearance of exceeding its former glory. The air, purged of its poisonous vapors, was fresh and healthy. The dried fountains were replenished, the waters sweet and wholesome. The sickly earth, recovered to new life, abounded with vegetation. The groves were musical with innumerable songsters, and the long-deserted fields echoed with the joyous sound of the husbandman. All, all was felicity; and what I had dreaded as an evil, became a blessing. At this happy reflection I awoke; and having refreshed myself with another draught from the friendly spring, pursued my journey.

After travelling a few miles I fell in with a companion, and as we rode through a wood but little frequented by travellers, I began, for the sake of chatting away the tediousness of the journey, to relate my dream. I think, replied my friend, that I can interpret it. That beautiful country



which you saw is America. The sickly state you beheld her in has been coming on her for these ten years past. Her commerce has been drying up by repeated restrictions, till by one merciless edict the ruin of it is completed. The pestilential atmosphere represents that ministerial corruption which surrounds and exercises its dominion over her, and which nothing but a storm can purify. The tempest is the present contest, and the event will be the same. She will rise with new glories from the conflict, and her fame be established in every corner of the globe; while it will be remembered to her eternal honor that she has not sought the quarrel, but has been driven into it. He who guides the natural tempest will regulate the political one, and bring good out of evil. In our petition to Britain we asked but for peace; but the prayer was rejected. The cause is now before a higher court, the court of providence, before whom the arrogance of kings, the infidelity of ministers, the general corruption of government, and all the cobweb artifice of courts, will fall confounded and ashamed.

BUCKS COUNTY.

## THOUGHTS ON DEFENSIVE WAR

Paine frequently argued that the “established principle of the Quakers not to shed blood” was a good one and if “universally established, arms and the art of war would be wholly extirpated.” But he was no pacifist, for he understood that liberty could not be defended by words alone. In this essay, published in the *Pennsylvania Magazine* of July, 1775, he shows why a “*Lover of Peace*” should be willing to take up his musket in defense of American freedom. The second paragraph has special significance today. It is interesting to note his statement that he “would gladly agree with all the world to lay aside the use of arms, and settle matters by negotiation; but unless the whole will, the matter ends, and I take up my musket and thank heaven he has put it in my power.” He did more than write about shouldering a gun, for he enlisted in the Continental army immediately after the outbreak of the War for Independence.—*Editor*.

**C**OULD the peaceable principle of the Quakers be universally established, arms and the art of war would be wholly extirpated. But we live not in a world of angels. The reign of Satan is not ended; neither are we to expect to be defended by miracles. The pillar of the cloud

existed only in the wilderness. In the nonage of the Israelites. It protected them in their retreat from Pharaoh, while they were *destitute* of the natural means of defence, for they brought no arms from Egypt; but it neither fought their battles nor shielded them from dangers afterwards.

I am thus far a Quaker, that I would gladly agree with all the world to lay aside the use of arms, and settle matters by negotiation; but unless the whole will, the matter ends, and I take up my musket and thank heaven he has put it in my power.

Whoever considers the unprincipled enemy we have to cope with, will not hesitate to declare that nothing but arms or miracles can reduce them to reason and moderation. They have lost sight of the limits of humanity. The portrait of a parent red with the blood of her children is a picture fit only for the galleries of the infernals. From the House of Commons the troops of Britain have been exhorted to fight, not for the defence of their natural rights, not to repel the invasion or the insult of enemies; but on the vilest of all pretences, gold. "Ye fight for solid revenue" was vociferated in the House. Thus America *must suffer* because she has something to lose. Her crime is property. That which allures the highwayman has allured the ministry under a gentler name. But the position laid down by Lord Sandwich, is a clear demonstration of the justice of defensive arms. The Americans, quoth this Quixote of modern days, *will not fight*; therefore we will. His Lordship's plan when analyzed amounts to this. These people are either too superstitiously religious, or too cowardly for arms; they either *cannot* or *dare not* defend; their property is open to any one who has the courage to attack them. Send but your troops and the prize is ours. Kill a few and take the whole. Thus the peaceable part of mankind will be continually overrun by the vile and abandoned, while they neglect the means of self defence. The supposed quietude of a good man allures the ruffian; while on the other hand, arms like laws discourage and keep the invader and the plunderer in awe, and preserve order in the world as well as property. The balance of power is the scale of peace. The same balance would be preserved were all the world destitute of arms, for all would be alike; but since some *will not*, others *dare not* lay them aside. And while a single nation refuses to lay them down, it is proper that all should keep them up. Horrid mischief would ensue were one half the world deprived of the use of them; for while avarice and ambition have a place in the heart of man, the weak will become a prey to the strong. The

history of every age and nation establishes these truths, and facts need but little arguments when they prove themselves.

But there is a point to view this matter in of superior consequence to the defence of property; and that point is *liberty* in all its meanings. In the barbarous ages of the world, men in general had no liberty. The strong governed the weak at will; 'till the coming of Christ there was no such thing as political freedom in any known part of the earth. The Jewish kings were in point of government as absolute as the Pharaohs. Men were frequently put to death without trial at the will of the sovereign. The Romans held the world in slavery, and were themselves the slaves of their emperors. The madman of Macedon governed by caprice and passion, and strided as arrogantly over the world as if he had made and peopled it; and it is needless to imagine that other nations at that time were more refined. Wherefore political as well as spiritual freedom is the gift of God through Christ. The second in the catalogue of blessings; and so intimately related, so sympathetically united with the first, that the one cannot be wounded without communicating an injury to the other. Political liberty is the visible pass which guards the religions. It is the outwork by which the church militant is defended, and the attacks of the enemy are frequently made through this fortress. The same power which has established a restraining Port Bill in the Colonies,<sup>2</sup> has established a restraining Protestant Church Bill in Canada.<sup>3</sup>

I had the pleasure and advantage of hearing this matter wisely investigated, by a gentleman, in a sermon to one of the battalions of this city; <sup>4</sup> and am fully convinced, that spiritual freedom is the root of political liberty.

First. Because till spiritual freedom was made manifest, political liberty did not exist.

Secondly. Because in proportion that *spiritual freedom* has been manifested, *political liberty* has increased.

Thirdly. Whenever the visible church has been oppressed, political freedom has suffered with it. Read the history of Mary and the Stuarts. The popish world at this day by not knowing the full manifestation of spiritual freedom, enjoys but a shadow of political liberty. Though I am

<sup>2</sup> Paine is referring to the Boston Port Bill, effective June 1, 1774, which closed that town's harbor to all shipping until the East India Company was reimbursed for the tea dumped into Boston harbor on December 16, 1773.—*Editor*.

<sup>3</sup> The reference is to the Quebec Act of 1774.—*Editor*.

<sup>4</sup> The city is Philadelphia.—*Editor*.

unwilling to accuse the present government of popish principles, they cannot, I think, be clearly acquitted of popish practices; the facility with which they perceive the dark and ignorant are governed, in popish nations, will always be a temptation to the lovers of arbitrary power to adopt the same methods.

As the union between spiritual freedom and political liberty seems nearly inseparable, it is our duty to defend both. And defence in the first instance is best. The lives of hundreds of both countries had been preserved had America been in arms a year ago. Our enemies have mistaken our peace for cowardice, and supposing us unarmed have begun the attack.

A LOVER OF PEACE.

## EPISTLE TO QUAKERS

On January 20, 1776, at a general meeting of the Pennsylvania and New Jersey Quakers, a document was adopted and address issued to the people of America which placed the Quakers squarely on the Tory side. It was against this stand that Paine wrote his *Epistle to the Quakers* in which he accused that "factional and fractional part" of the whole body of Quakers which had published the address, of being traitors to their own principles. He did not, however, condemn all Quakers, for he was quite aware that many Quakers supported the American cause. For an analysis of the background leading to the writing of the *Epistle*, see Robert P. Falk, "Thomas Paine and the Attitude of the Quakers to the American Revolution," in *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. LXIII, July, 1939, pp. 302-310.

Paine's *Epistle* was part of the Appendix to the third edition of *Common Sense*.—*Editor*.

TO THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF THE PEOPLE CALLED QUAKERS, OR TO SO MANY OF THEM AS WERE CONCERNED IN PUBLISHING A LATE PIECE, ENTITLED "*The Ancient Testimony and Principles* OF THE PEOPLE CALLED *Quakers* RENEWED, WITH RESPECT TO THE *King* AND *Government*, AND TOUCHING THE *Commotions* NOW PREVAILING IN THESE AND OTHER PARTS OF *America*, ADDRESSED TO THE *People in General*."

THE writer of this is one of those few who never dishonors religion either by ridiculing or cavilling at any denomination whatsoever. To God, and not to man, are all men accountable on the score of religion. Wherefore, this epistle is not so properly addressed to you as a religious, but as a political body, dabbling in matters which the professed quietude of your principles instruct you not to meddle with. As you have, without a proper authority for so doing, put yourselves in the place of the whole body of the Quakers, so the writer of this, in order to be in an equal rank with yourselves, is under the necessity of putting himself in the place of all those who approve the very writings and principles against which your testimony is directed: And he hath chosen this singular situation, in order that you might discover in him that presumption of character which you cannot see in yourselves. For neither he nor you have any claim or title to *political representation*.

When men have departed from the right way, it is no wonder that they stumble and fall. And it is evident from the manner in which you have managed your testimony, that politics (as a religious body of men) is not your proper walk; for however well adapted it might appear to you, it is, nevertheless, a jumble of good and bad unwisely put together, and the conclusion drawn therefrom both unnatural and unjust.

The first two pages (and the whole makes but four) we give you credit for, and expect the same civility from you, because the love and desire of peace is not confined to Quakerism, it is the natural as well as the religious wish of all denominations of men. And on this ground, as men laboring to establish an independent Constitution of our own, do we exceed all others in our hope, end, and aim. *Our plan is peace for ever*. We are tired of contention with Britain, and can see no real end to it but in a final separation. We act consistently, because for the sake of introducing an endless and uninterrupted peace, do we bear the evils and the burdens of the present day. We are endeavoring, and will steadily continue to endeavor, to separate and dissolve a connection which has already filled our land with blood; and which, while the name of it remains, will be the fatal cause of future mischiefs to both countries.

We fight neither for revenge nor conquest; neither from pride nor passion; we are not insulting the world with our fleets and armies, nor ravaging the globe for plunder. Beneath the shade of our own vines are we attacked; in our own houses, and on our own lands, is the violence committed against us. We view our enemies in the characters of

highwaymen and housebreakers, and having no defence for ourselves in the civil law, are obliged to punish them by the military one, and apply the sword, in the very case where you have before now applied the halter. Perhaps we feel for the ruined and insulted sufferers in all and every part of the continent, with a degree of tenderness which hath not yet made its way into some of your bosoms. But be ye sure that ye mistake not the cause and ground of your testimony. Call not coldness of soul, religion; nor put the bigot in the place of the Christian.

O ye partial ministers of your own acknowledged principles. If the bearing arms be sinful, the first going to war must be more so, by all the difference between wilful attack and unavoidable defence. Wherefore, if you really preach from conscience, and mean not to make a political hobby-horse of your religion, convince the world thereof, by proclaiming your doctrine to our enemies, *for they likewise bear arms*. Give us proof of your sincerity, by publishing it at St. James's, to the commanders in chief at Boston, to the admirals and captains who are piratically ravaging our coasts, and to all the murdering miscreants who are acting in authority under HIM whom ye profess to serve. Had ye the honest soul of Barclay<sup>5</sup> ye would preach repentance to your king: ye would tell the royal wretch his sins, and warn him of eternal ruin. Ye would not spend your partial invectives against the injured and insulted only, but, like faithful ministers, would cry aloud and *spare none*. Say not that ye are persecuted, neither endeavor to make us the authors of that reproach which ye are bringing upon yourselves; for we testify unto all men, that we do not complain against you because ye are *Quakers*, but because ye pretend to *be* and are not Quakers.

Alas! it seems by the particular tendency of some part of your testimony, and other parts of your conduct, as if all sin was reduced to, and comprehended in, *the act of bearing arms*, and that by the *people only*. Ye appear to us to have mistaken party for conscience; because the general tenor of your actions wants uniformity. And it is exceedingly

<sup>5</sup> "Thou hast tasted of prosperity and adversity; thou knowest what it is to be banished thy native country, to be over-ruled as well as to rule, and sit upon the throne: and being *oppressed* thou hast reason to know how *hateful* the *oppressor* is both to God and man; If after all these warnings and advertisements, thou dost not turn unto the Lord with all thy heart, but forget him who remembered thee in thy distress, and give up thyself to follow lust and vanity, surely, great will be thy condemnation.—Against which snare, as well as the temptation of those who may or do feed thee, and prompt thee to evil, the most excellent and prevalent remedy will be, to apply thyself to that light of Christ which shineth in thy conscience, and which neither can nor will flatter thee, nor suffer thee to be at ease in thy sins."—*Barclay's Address to Charles II.*—*Author.*

difficult for us to give credit to many of your pretended scruples; because we see them made by the same men, who, in the very instant that they are exclaiming against the mammon of this world, are nevertheless hunting after it with a step as steady as time, and an appetite as keen as death.

The quotation which ye have made from Proverbs, in the third page of your testimony, that “when a man’s way please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him”; is very unwisely chosen on your part; because it amounts to a proof that the king’s ways (whom ye are so desirous of supporting) do *not* please the Lord, otherwise his reign would be in peace.

I now proceed to the latter part of your testimony, and that for which all the foregoing seems only an introduction, viz.

“It hath ever been our judgment and principle, since we were called to profess the light of Christ Jesus, manifested in our consciences unto this day, that the setting up and putting down kings and governments, is God’s peculiar prerogative; for causes best known to himself: And that it is not our business to have any hand or contrivance therein; nor to be busy bodies above our station, much less to plot and contrive the ruin, or overturn of any of them, but to pray for the king, and safety of our nation, and good of all men: That we may live a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty; *under the government which God is pleased to set over us.*”

If these are really your principles why do ye not abide by them? Why do ye not leave that, which ye call God’s work, to be managed by himself? These very principles instruct you to wait with patience and humility, for the event of all public measures, and to receive that event as the divine will towards you. Wherefore, what occasion is there for your *political testimony*, if you fully believe what it contains? And the very publishing it proves that either you do not believe what you profess, or have not virtue enough to practice what you believe.

The principles of Quakerism have a direct tendency to make a man the quiet and inoffensive subject of any, and every government which is set over him. And if the setting up and putting down of kings and governments is God’s peculiar prerogative, he most certainly will not be robbed thereof by us; wherefore, the principle itself leads you to approve of every thing which ever happened, or may happen to kings, as being his work. Oliver Cromwell thanks you. Charles, then, died not by the hands of man; and should the present proud imitator of him come to

the same untimely end, the writers and publishers of the testimony are bound, by the doctrine it contains, to applaud the fact. Kings are not taken away by miracles, neither are changes in governments brought about by any other means than such as are common and human; and such as we now are using. Even the dispersing of the Jews, though foretold by our Saviour, was effected by arms. Wherefore, as ye refuse to be the means on one side, ye ought not to be meddlers on the other; but to wait the issue in silence; and, unless you can produce divine authority to prove that the Almighty, who hath created and placed this new world at the greatest distance it could possibly stand, east and west, from every part of the old, doth, nevertheless, disapprove of its being independent of the corrupt and abandoned court of Britain; unless, I say, ye can show this, how can ye, on the ground of your principles, justify the exciting and stirring up the people "firmly to unite in the *abhorrence* of all such *writings*, and *measures*, as evidence a desire and design to break off the *happy* connection we have hitherto enjoyed with the kingdom of Great Britain, and our just and necessary subordination to the king, and those who are lawfully placed in authority under him." What a slap in the face is here! The men, who, in the very paragraph before, have quietly and passively resigned up the ordering, altering and disposal of kings and governments, into the hands of God, are now recalling their principles, and putting in for a share of the business. Is it possible, that the conclusion, which is here justly quoted, can any ways follow from the doctrine laid down! The inconsistency is too glaring not to be seen; the absurdity too great not to be laughed at; and such as could only have been made by those whose understandings were darkened by the narrow and crabbed spirit of a despairing political party; for ye are not to be considered as the whole body of the Quakers, but only as a factional and fractional part thereof.

Here ends the examination of your Testimony; (which I call upon no man to abhor, as ye have done, but only to read and judge of fairly;) to which I subjoin the following remark "That the setting up and putting down of kings" must certainly mean, the making him a king who is yet not so, and the making him no king who is already one. And pray what hath this to do in the present case? We neither mean to *set up* nor to *pull down*, neither to *make* nor to *unmake*, but to have nothing to do with them. Wherefore, your testimony, in whatever light it is viewed, serves only to dishonor your judgment, and for many other reasons had better have been let alone than published.



First, Because it tends to the decrease and reproach of all religion whatever, and is of the utmost danger to society, to make it a party in political disputes.

Secondly, Because it exhibits a body of men, numbers of whom disavow the publishing of political testimonies, as being concerned therein and approvers thereof.

Thirdly, Because it hath a tendency to undo that continental harmony and friendship which yourselves, by your late liberal and charitable donations, hath lent a hand to establish; and the preservation of which is of the utmost consequence to us all.

And here, without anger or resentment, I bid you farewell. Sincerely wishing, that as men and Christians, ye may always fully and uninterruptedly enjoy every civil and religious right, and be, in your turn, the means of securing it to others; but that the example which ye have unwisely set, of mingling religion with politics, *may be disavowed and reprobated by every inhabitant of AMERICA.*

## THE FORESTER'S LETTERS

Shortly after *Common Sense* was published, a number of Tories and conservative Whigs hurried into print with answers to Paine's great manifesto in the hope that they could persuade the American people not to follow Paine along "the dark and untrodden way of Independence and Republicanism." The most important attack upon *Common Sense* was a series of letters signed "Cato" which appeared in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* beginning in April, 1776. The letters were written by the Rev. Dr. William Smith, Provost of the College of Philadelphia and a clergyman of the Anglican church. Dr. Smith was the spokesman for the wealthy aristocracy and voiced their opposition to "Independence and Republicanism."

Paine's four letters in reply to "Cato," known as *The Forester's Letters*, first appeared in the *Pennsylvania Journal* for April 3, 10, 24, and May 8, 1776. They were immediately copied in many other contemporary newspapers, spread Paine's influence throughout different sections of the country, and helped to crystallize public opinion in favor of a Declaration of Independence. In these letters Paine brilliantly expanded and elaborated many of the arguments he had first advanced in *Common Sense*.—*Editor.*

## I

TO CATO

TO be *nobly wrong* is more manly than to be *meanly right*. Only let the error be disinterested—let it wear *not the mask*, but the *mark* of principle, and 'tis pardonable. It is on this large and liberal ground, that we distinguish between men and their tenets, and generously preserve our friendship for the one, while we combat with every prejudice of the other. But let not Cato take this compliment to himself; he stands excluded from the benefit of the distinction; he deserves it not. And if the sincerity of disdain can add a cubit to the stature of my sentiments, it shall not be wanting.

It is indifferent to me who the writer of Cato's letters is, and sufficient for me to know, that they are gorged with absurdity, confusion, contradiction and the most notorious and wilful falsehoods. Let Cato and his faction be against independence and welcome; their consequence will not *now* turn the scale: But let them have regard to justice, and pay some attention to the plain doctrine of reason. Where these are wanting, the sacred cause of truth applauds our anger, and dignifies it with the name of virtue.

Four letters have already appeared under the specious name of Cato. What pretensions the writer of them can have to the signature, the public will best determine; while, on my own part, I prophetically content myself with contemplating the similarity of their exits. The first of those letters promised a second, the second a third, the third a fourth; the fourth hath since made its appearance, and still the writer keeps wide of the question. Why does he thus loiter in the suburbs of the dispute? Why has he not shown us what the numerous blessings of reconciliation [with Great Britain] are, and *proved them practicable*? But he cunningly avoids the point. He cannot but discover the rock he is driving on. The fate of the Roman Cato is before his eyes. And that the public may be prepared for his funeral, and for his funeral oration, I will venture to predict the time and the manner of his exit. The moment he explains his terms of reconciliation the typographical Cato dies. If they be calculated to please the [British] Cabinet they will not go down with the colonies: and if they be suited to the colonies they will be rejected by the Cabinet: The line of no-variation is yet unfound; and, like the philosopher's stone, doth not exist. "I am bold," says Cato, "to

declare and yet hope to make it evident to every honest man, that the true interest of America lies in *reconciliation* with Great Britain on *constitutional principles*."

This is a curious way of lumping the business indeed! And Cato may as well attempt to catch lions in a mousetrap as to hope to allure the public with such general and unexplained expressions. It is now a mere bugbear to talk of *reconciliation* on *constitutional principles* unless the terms of the first be produced and the sense of the other be defined; and unless he does this he does nothing.

To follow Cato through every absurdity and falsehood in the compass of a <sup>6</sup> letter is impossible; neither is it *now* necessary. *Cassandra* (and I thank him) has saved me much trouble; there is a spirit in his remarks which honesty only can inspire, and a uniformity in the conduct of his letters which the want of principle can never arrive at.<sup>7</sup> Mark that, Cato.

One observation which I cannot help making on Cato's letters, is that they are addressed "*To the People of Pennsylvania*" only: In almost any other writer this might have passed unnoticed, but we know it hath mischief in its meaning. The particular circumstance of a convention is undoubtedly Provincial, but the great business of the day is Continental. And he who dares to endeavor to withdraw this province from the glorious union by which all are supported, deserves the reprobation of all men. It is the true interest of the whole to go hand in hand; and dismal in every instance would be the fate of that Colony should retreat from the protection of the rest.

The first of Cato's letters is insipid in its style, language and substance; crowded with personal and private innuendues and directly levelled against "*the Majesty of the People of Pennsylvania*." The Committee could only call, propose, or recommend a Convention;<sup>8</sup> but, like all other public measures, it still rested with the people at large, whether they would approve it or not; and Cato's reasoning on the right or wrong of that choice is contemptible; because, if the body of the people had thought, or should still think that the Assembly (or any of their delegates in Congress) by setting under the embarrassment of *oaths*, and entangled with *government* and *governors*, are not so per-

<sup>6</sup> *The writer intended at first to have contained his remarks in one letter.—Author.*

<sup>7</sup> In his second letter "Cato" devoted considerable space to a communication entitled "On sending Commissioners to treat with the Congress" signed by "Cassandra."—*Editor.*

<sup>8</sup> The committee referred to by Paine was appointed by the Pennsylvania Assembly in response to a recommendation by the Continental Congress. It summoned a Provincial Convention which changed the entire political structure in Pennsylvania.—*Editor.*

factly free as they ought to be, they undoubtedly had and still have both the *right* and the *power* to place even the whole authority of the Assembly in any body of men they please; and whoever is hardy enough to say to the contrary is an enemy to mankind. The constitution of Pennsylvania hath been twice changed through the cunning of former proprietors; surely, the people, whose right, power, and property is greater than that of any single man, may make such alterations in their mode of government as the change of times and things requires. Cato is exceedingly fond of impressing us with the importance of our "*chartered constitution.*" Alas! We are not now, Sir, to be led away by the jingle of a phrase. Had we framed our conduct by the contents of the present charters, we had ere now been in a state of helpless misery. That *very assembly* you mention has broken it, and been obliged to break it, in almost every instance of their proceedings. Hold it up to the public and it is transparent with holes; pierced with as many deadly wounds as the body of M'Leod.<sup>9</sup> Disturb not its remains, Cato, nor dishonor it with another funeral oration.

There is nothing in Cato's first letter worthy of notice but the following insinuating falsehood: "Grievous as the least restraint of the press must always be to a *people* entitled to freedom, it must be the more so, when it is not only unwarranted by *those* to whom *they* have committed the care of *their* liberties but cannot be warranted by *them*, consistent with liberty itself." The rude and unscholastical confusion of persons in the above paragraph, though it throws an obscurity on the meaning, still leaves it discoverable. Who, Sir, has laid any restraint on the liberty of the press? I know of no instance in which the press has ever been the object of notice in this province, except on account of the Tory letter from Kent county, which was first published last spring in the *Pennsylvania Ledger*, and which it was the duty of every good man to detect because the *honesty* of the press is as great an object to society as the *freedom* of it. If this is the restraint you complain of, we know your true character at once; and that it is so, appears evident from the expression which immediately follows the above quotation: your words are, "Nevertheless, *we* readily submitted to it while the least colorable pretence could be offered for requiring such a submission." Who submitted, Cato? *we* Whigs, or *we* Tories? Until you clear up this, Sir, you must content yourself with being ranked among the rankest of the *writing*

<sup>9</sup> In the battle of Moore's Creek Bridge, North Carolina, the Tories were defeated and their temporary commander, M'Leod, fell "pierced with twenty balls."—*Editor*.

Tories; because no other body of men can have any pretence to complain of want of freedom of the press. It is not your throwing out, now and then, little popular phrases which can protect you from suspicion; they are only the gildings under which the poison is conveyed, and without which you dared not to renew your attempts on the virtue of the people.

Cato's second letter, or the greatest part thereof, is taken up with the reverence due from us to the persons and authority of the commissioners, whom Cato vainly and ridiculously styles ambassadors *coming to negotiate a peace*. How came Cato not to be let a little better into the secret? The act of Parliament which describes the powers of these men has been in this city upwards of a month, and in the hands too of Cato's friends. No, Sir, they are not the *ambassadors of peace*, but the distributors of pardons, mischief, and insult. Cato discovers a gross ignorance of the British Constitution in supposing that these men *can* be empowered to act as ambassadors. To prevent his future errors I will set him right. The present war differs from every other, in this instance, viz. that it is not carried under the prerogative of the crown as other wars have always been, but under the authority of the whole legislative power united; and as the barriers which stand in the way of a negotiation are not proclamations but acts of Parliament, it evidently follows, that were even the king of England here in person, he could not ratify the terms or conditions of a reconciliation; because, in the single character of king he could not stipulate for the repeal of any *acts* of Parliament, neither can the Parliament stipulate for him. There is no body of men more jealous of their privileges than the Commons: Because they sell them. Mark that, Cato.

I have not the least doubt upon me but that their business (exclusive of granting us pardons) is down right bribery and corruption. It is the machine by which they effect all their plans. We ought to view them as enemies of a most dangerous species, and he who means not to be corrupted by them will enter his protest in time. Are they not the very men who are paid for voting in every measure against us, and ought we not to suspect their designs? Can we view the barbarians as friends? Would it be prudent to trust the viper in our very bosoms? Or to suffer them to ramble at large among us while such doubtful characters as Cato have a being upon the continent? Yet let their persons be safe from injury and outrage—but trust them not. Our business with them is short and explicit, viz.: We are desirous of peace, gentlemen; we are

ready to ratify the terms, and will virtuously fulfil the conditions thereof; but we should deserve all and every misery which tyranny can inflict, were we, after suffering such a repetition of savage barbarities, to come under your government again.

Cato, by way of stealing into credit, says, "that the contest we are engaged in is founded on the most noble and virtuous principles which can animate the mind of man. We are contending (says he) against an arbitrary ministry for the rights of Englishmen." No, Cato, we are *now* contending against an arbitrary king to get clear of his tyranny. While the dispute rested in words only, it might be called "contending with the ministry," but since it is broken out into open war, it is high time to have done with such silly and water-gruel definitions. But it suits not Cato to speak the truth. It is his interest to dress up the sceptred savage in the mildest colors. Cato's patent for a large tract of land is yet unsigned. Alas poor Cato!

Cato proceeds very importantly to tell us, "*that the eyes of all Europe are upon us.*" This stale and hackneyed phrase has had a regular descent, from many of the king's speeches down to several of the speeches in Parliament; from thence it took a turn among the little wits and bucks of St. James's; till after suffering all the torture of senseless repetition, and being reduced to a state of vagrancy, it was charitably picked up to embellish the second letter of Cato. It is truly of the bug-bear kind, contains no meaning, and the very using it discovers a barrenness of invention. It signifies nothing to tell us "that the eyes of all Europe are upon us," unless he had likewise told us what they are looking at us *for*: which as he hath not done, I will. They are looking at us, Cato, in hopes of seeing a final separation between Britain and the colonies, that they, the *lookers-on*, may partake of a free and uninterrupted trade with the whole continent of America. Cato, thou reasonest *wrong*.

For the present, Sir, farewell. I have seen thy soliloquy and despise it. Remember thou hast thrown me the glove, Cato, and either thee or I must tire. I fear not the field of fair debate, but thou hast stepped aside and made it personal. Thou hast tauntingly called on me by name; and if I cease to hunt thee from every lane and lurking hole of mischief, and bring thee not a trembling culprit before the public bar, then brand me with reproach, by naming me in the list of your confederates.

THE FORESTER.

PHILADELPHIA, March 28, 1776.

## II

## TO CATO

Before I enter on the more immediate purpose of this letter, I think it necessary, once for all, to endeavor to settle as clearly as I can, the following point, viz: How far personality is concerned in any political debate. The general maxim is, that measures and not men are the thing in question, and the maxim is undeniably just when rightly understood. Cato as a refuge for himself, hath quoted the author of *Common Sense* who in his preface says, "That the object for attention is the *doctrine itself* not the *man*," that is, not the *rank* or *condition* of the man. For whether he is with those whose fortune is *already* made, or with those whose fortune is *yet* to make, or among those who seldom think or care whether they make *any*, is a matter wholly out of the question and entirely confined to himself. But the political characters, political dependencies, and political connections of men, being of a public nature, differ exceedingly from the circumstances of private life; and are in many instances so nearly related to the measures they propose, that to prevent our being deceived by the last, we *must* be acquainted with the first. A total ignorance of men lays us under the danger of mistaking plausibility for principle. Could the wolf bleat like the lamb the flock would soon be enticed into ruin; wherefore to prevent the mischief, he ought to be *seen* as well as *heard*. There never was nor ever will be, nor ever ought to be, any important political debate carried on, in which a total separation in all cases between men and measures could be admitted with sufficient safety. When hypocrisy shall be banished from the earth, the knowledge of men will be unnecessary, because their measures cannot then be fraudulent; but until that time come (which never will come) they ought, under proper limitations, to go together. We have already too much secrecy in some things and too little in others. Were men more known, and measures more concealed, we should have fewer hypocrites and more security.

As the chief design of these letters is to detect and expose the falsehoods and fallacious reasonings of Cato, he must not expect (when detected) to be treated like one who had debated fairly; for I will be bold to say and to prove, that a grosser violation of truth and reason

scarcely ever came from the pen of a writer; and the explanations which he hath endeavored to impose on the passages which he hath quoted from *Common Sense*, are such as never existed in the mind of the author, nor can they be drawn from the words themselves. Neither must Cato expect to be spared where his carelessness of expression, and visible want of compassion and sentiment, shall give occasion to raise any moral or philosophical reflection thereon. These things being premised, I now proceed to review the latter part of Cato's second letter.

In this place Cato begins his first attack on *Common Sense*, but as he only discovers his ill will, and neither offers any arguments against it, nor makes any quotations from it, I should in this place pass him by, were it not for the following strange assertion: "If little notice," says Cato (*little opposition he means*) "has yet been taken of the publications concerning independence, it is neither owing to the popularity of the doctrine, the unanswerable nature of the arguments, nor the fear of opposing them, as the vanity of the author would suggest." As Cato has given us the *negative* reasons, he ought to have given us the *real* ones, for as he *positively* tells what it was *not* owing to, he undoubtedly knows what it *was* owing to, that *he* delayed *his* answers so long; but instead of telling us that (which perhaps is not proper to be told), he flies from the argument with the following plump declarations, "Nine-tenths of the people of Pennsylvania," says he, "yet abhor the doctrine." But stop, Cato! not quite so fast, friend! If this be true, how came they, so late as the second of March last, to elect for a Burgess of this city, a gentleman of known *independent principles*, and one of the very few to whom the author of *Common Sense* showed some part thereof while in manuscript.<sup>10</sup>

Cato is just as unfortunate in the following paragraph. "Those," says he, "who made the appeal (that is, published the pamphlet) have but little cause to triumph in its success. Of this they seem sensible: and, like true quacks, are constantly pestering us with additional doses till the stomachs of their patients *begin wholly* to revolt." It is Cato's hard fate to be always detected: for perhaps there never was a pamphlet, since the use of letters were known, about which so little pains were taken, and of which so great a number went off in so short a time; I am certain that I am within compass when I say one hundred and twenty thousand. The book was turned upon the world like an orphan to shift for itself; no plan was formed to support it, neither has the author ever published

<sup>10</sup> The reference is to David Rittenhouse, Paine's close friend.—*Editor*.



a syllable on the subject, from that time till after the appearance of Cato's fourth letter; wherefore what Cato says of additional doses administered by the author is an absolute falsity; besides which, it comes with an ill grace from one, who frequently publishes two letters in a week, and often puts them both into one paper—Cato here, Cato there, look where you will.

At the distance of a few lines from the above quotations, Cato presents us with a retrospective view of our former state, in which, says he, "we considered our connection with Great Britain as our chief happiness—we flourished, grew rich, and populous to a degree not to be paralleled in history." This assertion is truly of the legerdemain kind, appearing at once both right and wrong. All writers on Cato's side have used the same argument and conceived themselves invincible; nevertheless, a single expression properly placed dissolves the charm, for the cheat lies in putting the *time* for the *cause*. For the cheat lies in putting the *consequence* for the *cause*; for had we not *flourished* the *connection* had never *existed* or never been *regarded*, and this is fully proved by the neglect shown to the first settlers who had every difficulty to struggle with, unnoticed and unassisted by the British court.

Cato proceeds very industriously to sum up the former declarations of Congress and other public bodies, some of which were made upwards of a year ago, to prove, that the doctrine of independence hath no sanction from them. To this I shall give Cato one general answer which is, that had he produced a thousand more such authorities they would *now* amount to nothing, they are out of date; times and things are altered; the true character of the king was but little known among the body of the people of America a year ago; willing to believe him good, they fondly called him so, but have since found that Cato's royal sovereign, is a royal savage.

Cato has introduced the above-mentioned long quotation of authorities against independence, with the following curious preface. "Nor have many weeks," says he, "yet elapsed since the first open proposition for independence was published to the world. By what men of consequence this scheme is supported, or whether by any, may possibly be the subject of future enquiry. Certainly it has no countenance from the Congress, to whose sentiments we look up with reverence. On the contrary, it is *directly repugnant to every* declaration of that respectable body." Now Cato, thou hast nailed thyself with a witness! Directly repugnant to every declaration of that respectable body! Mind that,

Cato, and mark what follows. It appears by an extract from the resolves of the Congress, printed in the front of the oration delivered by Dr. Smith, in honor of that brave man General Montgomery,<sup>11</sup> that he, the doctor, was appointed by that honorable body to compose and deliver the same; in the *execution* of which, the orator exclaimed loudly against the doctrine of independence; but when a motion was afterwards made in Congress (according to former usage), to return the *orator* thanks, and request a copy for the press, the motion was rejected from every part of the house and thrown out without a division.

I now proceed to Cato's third letter, in the opening of which he deserts the subject of independence, and renews his attack on the committee. Cato's manner of writing has as much order in it as the motion of a squirrel. He frequently writes as if he knew not what to write next, just as the other jumps about, only because it cannot stand still. Though I am sometimes angry with him for his unprincipled method of writing and reasoning, I cannot help laughing at other times for his want of ingenuity. One instance of which he gives us in kindly warning us against "*the foul pages of interested writers, and strangers intermeddling in our affairs.*"<sup>12</sup> Were I to reply seriously my answer would be this: Thou seemest then ignorant, Cato, of that ancient and numerous order which are related to each other in all and every part of the globe—with whom the kindred is not formed by place or accident, but in principle and sentiment. A freeman, Cato, is a stranger nowhere—a slave, everywhere. But were I disposed to answer merrily, I should tell him, that as his notions of friendship were so very narrow and local, he obliges me to understand, that when he addresses the people with the tender title of "*my dear countrymen*" which frequently occurs in his letters, he particularly means the long list of Macs published in Donald M'Donald's Commission.<sup>13</sup>

In this letter Cato recommends the pamphlet called *Plain Truth*, a performance which hath withered away like a sickly unnoticed weed, and which even its advocates are displeased at, and the author ashamed

<sup>11</sup> Paine is referring to Dr. Smith's *An Oration in memory of General Montgomery, and of the Officers who fell with him, December 31, 1775, before Quebec; drawn up (and delivered February 19th, 1776,) at the desire of the Honourable Continental Congress.* It was printed in Philadelphia and reprinted in London.—*Editor.*

<sup>12</sup> This was the Tory device of blaming the movement for independence upon foreign agitators. Since Dr. William Smith was himself a Scotchman it must have aroused some laughter among the readers of "Cato's" letter.—*Editor.*

<sup>13</sup> Donald M'Donald was Brigadier-General of the Highlanders who went down to defeat at Moore's Creek Bridge on February 27, 1776.—*Editor.*

to own.<sup>14</sup> About the middle of this third letter, Cato gives notice of his being ready to take the field. "I now proceed," says he, "to give my reasons." How Cato has managed the attack we are now to examine; and the first remark I shall offer on his conduct is, that he has most unluckily entered the list on the wrong side, and discharged his first fire among the Tories.

In order to prove this, I shall give the paragraph entire:—"AGRICULTURE and COMMERCE," says Cato, "have hitherto been the happy employments, by which these middle colonies have risen into wealth and importance. By *them* the face of the country has been changed from a barren wilderness, into the hospitable abodes of peace and plenty. Without *them* we had either never existed as Americans, or existed only as savages. The oaks would still have possessed their *native spots of earth*, and never have *appeared in the form of ships and houses*. What are now well cultivated fields, or flourishing cities, would have remained only the solitary haunts of wild beasts or of men equally wild." The reader cannot help perceiving that through this whole paragraph *our connection* with Britain is left entirely out of the question, and our present greatness attributed to external causes, *agriculture and commerce*. This is a strange way, Cato, of overturning *Common Sense*, which says, "I challenge the warmest advocate for reconciliation, to show a single advantage which this continent can reap by being connected with Great Britain; I repeat," says he, "the challenge: not a single advantage is derived. *Our corn will fetch its price in any market in Europe; and our imported goods must be paid for, buy them where we will.*" Cato introduces his next paragraph with saying, "that much of our former felicity was owing to the protection of England *is not to be denied.*" Yes, Cato, I deny it wholly, and for the following clear and simple reasons, viz., that our being connected with, and submitting to be protected by her, made, and will still make, all *her* enemies, *our* enemies, or as *Common Sense* says, "sets us at variance with nations who would otherwise seek our friendship, and against whom we have neither anger nor complaint."

The following passage is so glaringly absurd that I shall make but a short comment upon it. "And if hereafter," says Cato, "in the fulness

<sup>14</sup> The reference is to *Plain Truth: addressed to the Inhabitants of America, containing Remarks on a late pamphlet, intitled Common Sense: etc. Written by CANDIDUS. Will ye turn from flattery and attend to this side?* For evidence that Dr. Smith was also the author of this pamphlet, see Paul Leicester Ford, "The Authorship of 'Plain Truth,'" in *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. XII, pp. 421-425.—Editor.

of time, it shall be necessary to separate from the land that gave birth to [some of] our ancestors, it will be in a state of perfect manhood, when we can fully wield our *own arms*, and *protect our commerce and coasts by our own fleets*." But how are we to come by *fleets*, Cato, while Britain has the government of the continent? Unless we are to suppose, as you have hinted in the former paragraph, that our oaks are to *grow* into ships, and be launched self-built from their "native spots of earth." It is Cato's misfortune as a writer, not to distinguish justly between magic and imagination; while on the other hand there are many passages in his letters so seriously and deliberately false, that nothing but the most hardened effrontery, and a cast of mind bordering upon impiety, would have uttered. He frequently forces me out of the common track of civil language, in order to do him justice; moderation and temper being really unequal to the task of exposing him.

Cato, unless he meant to destroy the ground he stood upon, ought not to have let the following paragraph be seen. "If our present *differences*," says he, "can be accommodated, there is *scarce a probability* that Britain will ever *renew* her late fatal system of policy, or attempt again to employ force against us." How came Cato to admit the *probability* of our being brought *again* into the same bloody and expensive situation? But it is worth remarking, that those who write without principle, cannot help sometimes blundering upon truth. Then there is no *real security*, Cato, in this *reconciliation* of yours on *constitutional principles*? It still amounts to nothing; and after all this expense of life and wealth, we are to rest at last upon hope, hazard, and uncertainty. Why then, by all that is sacred, "*it is time to part*."

But Cato, after admitting the *probability* of our being brought *again* into the same situation, proceeds to tell us how we are to conduct ourselves in the second quarrel; and that is, by the very same methods we have done the present one, viz., to expend millions of treasure, and thousands of lives, in order to patch up a *second union*, that the way may be open for a *third quarrel*; and in this endless and chequered round of blood and treacherous peace, has Cato disposed of the continent of America. That I may not be thought to do Cato injustice, I have quoted the whole passage: "But should Britain be so infatuated," says he, "at any future period, as to think of subjugating us, either by the arts of corruption, or oppressive exertions of power, can we entertain a doubt but we shall AGAIN, with a virtue equal to the present and with the *weapons of defence in our hands* (when necessary) convince her

that we are willing by a *constitutional connection* with her, to afford and receive reciprocal benefits; but although subjects of the same king, we will not consent to be her slaves."—Come hither, ye *little ones*, whom the poisonous hand of Cato is rearing for destruction, and remember the page that warns you of your ruin.

Cato, in many of his expressions, discovers all that calm command over the passions and feelings which always distinguishes the man who has expelled them from his heart. Of this careless kind is the before mentioned phrase, "our present differences," and the same unpardonable negligence is conveyed in the following one: "*Although* I consider her," says he, "as having in her late conduct toward us, acted the part of a cruel stepdame." Wonderful sensibility indeed! All the havoc and desolation of unnatural war; the destruction of thousands; the burning and depopulating of towns and cities; the ruin and separation of friends and families, are just sufficient to extort from Cato, *this one* callous confession. But the cold and creeping soul of Cato is a stranger to the manly powers of sympathetic sorrow. He *moves* not, nor *can* he move in so pure an element. Accustomed to lick the hand that has made him visible, and to breathe the gross atmosphere of servile and sordid dependence, his soul would *now* starve on virtue, and suffocate in the clear region of disinterested friendship.

Surely when Cato sat down to write, he either did not expect to be called to an account, or was totally regardless of reputation, otherwise he would not have endeavored to persuade the public that the doctrine of independence was broached in a kind of seditious manner, at a time "*when*," says he, "*some gleams of reconciliation began first to break in upon us*." Come forth, Cato, and prove the assertion! Where do these gleams of reconciliation spring from? Are they to be found in the king's speech, in the address of either House of Parliament, or in the act which lets loose a whole kennel of pirates upon our property, and commissions another set to insult with pardons the very men whom their own measures had sought to ruin? Either prove the assertion, Cato, or take the reward of it, for it is the part of an incendiary to endeavor with specious falsehoods to mislead the credulity of unwary readers. Cato likewise says, that, while we continue united, and renounce all thoughts of independence, "we have the *utmost assurance* of obtaining a *full redress* of our *grievances*, and an *ample security* against any *future violation* of our *just rights*." If Cato means to insinuate that we have *received*

such an assurance, let him read the conclusion of the preceding paragraph again. The same answer will serve for both.

Perhaps when we recollect the long and unabated cruelty of the British court towards us, and remember the many prayers which we have put up both *to* them and *for* them, the following piece of declamation of Cato can hardly be equalled either for absurdity or insanity: "If we now effect independence," says he, "we must be considered as a *faithless people in the sight of all mankind, and could scarcely expect the confidence of any nation upon earth, or look up to Heaven for its approving sentence.*" Art thou mad, Cato, or art thou foolish—or art thou *both*—or art thou *worse* than both? In *this passage* thou hast fairly gone beyond me. I have not language to bring thee back. Thou art safely entrenched indeed! Rest therefore in thy stronghold till *He* who fortified thee in it shall come and fetch thee out.

Cato seems to be possessed of that Jesuitical cunning which always endeavors to disgrace what it cannot disprove; and this he sometimes effects, by unfairly introducing *our* terms into *his* arguments, and thereby begets a monster which he sends round the country for a show, and tells the good people that the name of it is *independence*. Of this character are several passages in his fourth and fifth letters, particularly when he quotes the term "*foreign assistance,*" which he ungenerously explains into a surrender of the continent to France and Spain. Such an unfair and sophistical reasoner doth not deserve the civility of good manners. He creates, likewise, the same confusion by frequently using the word *peace* for *union*, and thereby charges us falsely by representing us as being determined to "reject all proposition of *peace.*" Whereas, our wish is *peace* but *not re-union*; and though we would gladly listen to the former, we are determined to resist every proposal for the latter, *come from where it will*; being fully persuaded, that in the present state of affairs *separation of governments is the only and best thing that can be done for both countries.*

The following case is unjustly put. "There never was a war," says Cato, "so implacable, even among states naturally rivals and enemies, or among savages themselves, as not to have *peace* for its object as well as the end." But was there ever a war, Cato, which had *union* for its object? No. What Cato means by states naturally rivals and enemies, I shall not enquire into, but this I know (for myself at least) that it was not in the power of France or Spain, or all the other powers in Europe,

to have given such a wound, or raised us to such a mortal hatred as Britain hath done. We feel the same kind of undescribed anger at her conduct, as we would at the sight of an animal devouring its young; and this particular species of anger is not generated in the transitory temper of the man, but in the chaste and undefiled womb of nature.

Cato, towards the conclusion of his third letter (at which place I shall leave him for the present), compared the state of Britain and America to the quarrels of lovers, and from thence infers a probability, that our affections will be renewed thereby. This I cannot help looking on as one of the most unnatural and distorted similes that can be drawn. Come hither ye that are lovers, or ye that *have been* lovers, and decide the controversy between us! What comparison is there between the soft murmurs of an heart mourning in secret, and the loud horrors of war—between the silent tears of pensive sorrow, and rivers of wasted blood—between the *sweet* strife of affection, and the *bitter* strife of death—between the curable calamities of pettish lovers, and the sad sight of a thousand slain! “Get thee behind me,” Cato, for thou hast not the feelings of a man.

THE FORESTER.

PHILADELPHIA, April 8, 1776.

### III

#### TO CATO

Cato’s partisans may call me furious; I regard it not. There are men, too, who have not virtue enough to be angry and that crime perhaps is Cato’s. He who dares not offend cannot be honest. Having thus balanced the charge, I proceed to Cato’s 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th letters, all of which, as they contain but little matter, I shall dismiss with as little trouble and less formality.

His fourth letter is introduced with a punning soliloquy—Cato’s title to soliloquies is indisputable; because no man cares for his company.<sup>15</sup> However, he disowns the writing it, and assures his readers that it “was *really* put into his hands.” I always consider this confirming mode of expression as betraying a suspicion of one’s self; and in this place it

<sup>15</sup> *As this piece may possibly fall into the hands of some who are not acquainted with the word soliloquy, for their information the sense of it is given, viz. “talking to one’s self.”—Author.*

amounts to just as much as if Cato had said, "you know my *failing*, Sirs, but what I tell you now is really true." Well, be it so, Cato; you shall have all the credit you ask for; and as to when or where or how you got it, who was the author, or who the giver, I shall not enquire after; being fully convinced, by the poetical merit of the performance, that though the writer of it may be an *Allen*,<sup>16</sup> he'll never be a Ramsay.<sup>17</sup> Thus much for the soliloquy; and if this gentle chastisement should be the means of preventing Cato or his colleague from mingling their punning nonsense with subjects of such a serious nature as the present one truly is, it will answer *one* of the ends it was intended for.

Cato's fourth, and the greatest part of his fifth letter, are constructed on a false meaning uncivilly imposed on a passage quoted from *Common Sense*; and for which, the author of that pamphlet hath a right to expect from Cato the usual concessions. I shall quote the passage entire, with Cato's additional meaning, and the inferences which he draws therefrom. He introduces it with saying, "In my remarks on the pamphlet before me I shall first consider those arguments on which, he (the author) appears to lay his chief stress; and these are collected under four heads in his conclusion, one of which is, '*It is the custom of nations when any two are at war, for some other powers not engaged in the quarrel, to step in by way of mediators, and bring about the preliminaries of a peace; but while America calls herself the subject of Great Britain, no power, however well disposed she may be, can offer her mediation.*'" The meaning contained in this passage is so exceedingly plain, and expressed in such easy and familiar terms, that it scarcely admits of being made plainer. No one, I think, could have understood it any other wise, than that while we continue to call ourselves British subjects, the quarrel between us can only be called a *family quarrel*, in which, it would be just as indelicate for any other nation to advise, or any ways to meddle or make, even with their offers of mediation, as it would be for a third person to interfere in a quarrel between a man and his wife. Whereas were we to make use of that natural right which all other nations have done before us, and erect a government of our own, *independent of all the world*, the quarrel could then be no longer called a *family quarrel*, but a regular war between the two powers of Britain and America, in the same manner as one carried on between England and France; and in this state of political separation, the neutral powers might kindly

<sup>16</sup> Allen was a leading opponent of independence in Philadelphia.—*Editor*.

<sup>17</sup> Allan Ramsay, a famous Scotch poet of genuine wit and humor.—*Author*.



render their mediation (as hath always been the practice), and bring about the preliminaries of a *peace*,—not a *union*, Cato, that is quite another thing. But instead of Cato's taking it in this easy and natural sense, he flies away on a wrong scent, *charges the author with proposing to call in foreign assistance*; and under this willful falsehood raises up a mighty cry after nothing at all. He begins his wild and unintelligible comment in the following manner: "Is this," says he (meaning the passage already quoted), "*common sense*, or *common nonsense*? Surely peace<sup>18</sup> with Great Britain cannot be the object of this writer, after the horrible character he has given of the people of that country, and telling us, that reconciliation with them would be our ruin. The latter part of the paragraph seems to cast some light upon the former, although it contradicts it, for these mediators are not to interfere for making up the quarrel, but to widen it by supporting us in a declaration, That we are not the subjects of Great Britain. A new sort of business truly for mediators. But this," continues Cato, "leads us directly to the *main enquiry*—*What foreign power is able to give us this support?*" What support, Cato? The passage you have quoted neither says a syllable, nor insinuates a hint about support:—It speaks *only* of neutral powers in the neighborly character of mediators between those which are at war; and says it is the custom of European courts to do so. Cato has already raised commissioners into ambassadors; but how he could transform mediators into men in arms, and mediation into military alliance, is surpassingly strange. Read the part over again, Cato; if you find I have charged you wrongfully, and will point it out, I will engage that the author of *Common Sense* shall ask your pardon in the public papers, with his name to it: but if the error be yours, the concession on your part follows as a duty.

Though I am fully persuaded that Cato does not believe one half of what himself has written, he nevertheless takes amazing pains to *frighten* his readers into a belief of the whole. Tells them of foreign troops (which he supposes we are going to send for) ravaging up and down the country; of their "bloody massacres, unrelenting persecutions, which would *harrow up* (says he) *the very souls of protestants and freemen.*" Were they coming, Cato, which no one ever dreamed of but yourself (for thank God, we want them not), it would be impossible for them to exceed, or even to equal, the cruelties practised by the British

<sup>18</sup> It is a strange thing that Cato cannot be taught to distinguish between peace and union.—*Author.*

army in the East Indies: The tying men to the mouths of cannon and "*blowing them away*" was never acted by any but an English General, or approved by any but a British court.<sup>19</sup> Read the proceedings of the Select Committee on Indian Affairs.

From temporal fears Cato proceeds to spiritual ones, and in a hypocritical panic, asks, "To whose share will Pennsylvania fall—that of his most Catholic, or his most Christian king? I confess," continues he, "that these questions stagger me." I don't wonder at it, Cato—I am glad to hear that some kind of remorse hath overtaken you—that you begin to *feel* that you are "heavy laden." You have had a long run, and the stoutest heart must fail at last.

Cato perceiving that the falsehoods in his fourth letter past unrepented, ventured boldly on a fifth, in which he continues, enlarging on the same convenient bugbear. "In my last," says he, "some notice was taken of the dangerous proposition held up by the author of *Common Sense*, for having recourse to foreign assistance." When will Cato learn to speak the truth! The assistance which we hope for from France is not armies (we want them not), but arms and ammunition. We have already received into this province only, near two hundred tons of saltpeter and gunpowder, besides muskets. Surely we may continue to cultivate a useful acquaintance, without such malevolent beings as Cato raising his barbarous slander thereon. At *this time* it is not only illiberal, but impolitic, and perhaps dangerous to be pouring forth such torrents of abuse, as his fourth and fifth letters contain, against the only power that in articles of defence hath supplied our hasty wants.

Cato, after expending near two letters in beating down an idol which himself *only* had set up, proudly congratulates himself on the defeat, and marches off to new exploits, leaving behind him the following proclamation: "Having thus," says Cato, "*dispatched* his (the author of *Common Sense's*) *main argument for independence*, which he founds on the necessity of calling in *foreign assistance*, I proceed to examine some other parts of his work." Not a syllable, Cato, doth any part of the pamphlet in question say of calling in foreign assistance, or even forming military alliances. The dream is wholly your own, and is directly repugnant both to the letter and spirit of every page in the piece. The idea which *Common Sense* constantly holds up, is to have nothing to do with the political affairs of Europe. "As Europe," says the pamphlet,

<sup>19</sup> Lord Clive, the chief of Eastern plunderers, received the thanks of Parliament for "his honorable conduct in the East Indies."—*Author*.

"is our market for trade, we ought to form no political connections with *any part of it*. It is the true interest of America to steer clear of all European contentions." And where it proposes sending a manifesto to foreign courts (which it is high time to do) it recommends it only for the purpose of announcing to them the *impossibility of our living any longer under the British government, and of "assuring such courts of our peaceable disposition towards them, and of our desire of entering into trade with them."* Learn to be an honest man, Cato, and then thou wilt not be thus exposed. I have been the more particular in detecting Cato here, because it is on this *bubble* that his air-built battery against independence is raised—a poor foundation indeed! which even the point of a pin, or a pen, if you please, can demolish with a touch, and bury the formidable Cato beneath the ruins of a vapor.

From this part of his fifth letter to the end of his seventh he entirely deserts the subject of independence, and sets up the proud standard of kings, in preference to a republican form of government. My remarks on this part of the subject will be general and concise.

In this part of the debate Cato shelters himself chiefly in quotations from other authors, without reasoning much on the matter himself; <sup>20</sup> in answer to which, I present him with a string of maxims and reflections, drawn from the nature of things, without borrowing from any one. Cato may observe, that I scarcely ever quote; the reason is, I always think. But to return.

Government should always be considered as a matter of convenience, not of right. The scripture institutes no particular form of government, but it enters a protest against the monarchical form; and a negation on *one* thing, where *two only* are offered, and *one* must be chosen, amounts to an affirmative on the *other*. Monarchical government was first set up by the heathens, and the Almighty permitted it to the Jews as a punishment. "*I gave them a king in mine anger.*"—Hosea xiii. 11. A republican form of government is pointed out by nature—kingly governments by an inequality of power. In republican governments, the leaders of the

<sup>20</sup> *The following is an instance of Cato's method of conducting an argument: "If hereditary succession, says Common Sense (meaning succession of monarchical governments), did ensure a race of good and wise men, it would have the seal of divine authority"; "thus we find him," says Cato, "with his own hand affixing the seal of heaven to what he before told us the Devil invented and the Almighty entered his protest against." Cato's 7th letter.—This is a strange argument indeed, Cato, or rather it is no argument at all, for hereditary succession does not ensure a race of good and wise men, consequently has not the seal of divine authority."*—Author.

people, if improper, are removable by vote; kings only by arms: an unsuccessful vote in the first case, leaves the voter safe; but an unsuccessful attempt in the latter, is death. Strange, that that which is our *right* in the *one*, should be our *ruin* in the *other*. From which reflection follows this maxim: That that mode of government in which our *right* becomes our ruin, cannot be the *right one*. If all human nature be corrupt, it is needless to strengthen the corruption by establishing a succession of kings, who, be they ever so base, are still to be obeyed; for the manners of a court will always have an influence over the morals of a people. A republican government hath more *true grandeur* in it than a kingly one. On the part of the public it is more consistent with freemen to appoint their rulers than to have them born; and on the part of those who preside, it is far nobler to be a ruler by the choice of the people, than a king by the chance of birth. Every honest delegate is more than a monarch. Disorders will unavoidably happen in all states, but monarchical governments are the most subject thereto, because the balance hangs uneven. "*Nineteen rebellions and eight civil wars in England since the conquest.*" Whatever commotions are produced in republican states, are not produced by a republican spirit, but by those who seek to extinguish it. A republican state cannot produce its own destruction, it can only suffer it. No nation of people, in their true senses, when seriously reflecting on the rank which God hath given them, and the reasoning faculties he hath blessed them with, would ever, of their own consent, give any *one man* a negative power over the whole: No man since the fall hath ever been equal to the trust, wherefore 'tis insanity in us to intrust them with it; and in this sense, all those who have had it have done us right by abusing us into reason. Nature seems sometimes to laugh at mankind, by giving them so many fools for kings; at other times, she punishes their folly by giving them tyrants; but England must have offended highly to be cursed with both in one. *Rousseau* proposed a plan for establishing a perpetual European peace; which was, for every state in Europe to send ambassadors to form a General Council, and when any difference happened between any two nations, to refer the matter to arbitration instead of going to arms. This would be forming a kind of European Republic: But the proud and plundering spirit of kings has not peace for its object. They look not at the good of mankind. They set not out upon that plan. And if the history of the creation and the history of kings be compared together the result will be this—that God hath made a world, and kings have robbed him of it.

But that which sufficiently establishes the republican mode of government, in preference to a kingly one, even when all other arguments are left out, is this simple truth, that all men are republicans by nature, and royalists only by fashion. And this is fully proved by that passionate adoration which all men show to that great and almost only remaining bulwark of natural rights, *trial by juries*, which is founded on a pure republican basis. Here the power of kings is shut out. No royal negative can enter this court. The jury, which is here supreme, is a *Republic*, a body of *judges chosen from among the people*.

The charter which secures this freedom in England, was formed, not in the senate, but in the field; and insisted on by the people, not granted by the crown; the crown in that instance *granted nothing*, but only renounced its former tyrannies, and bound itself over to its future good behavior. It was the compromise, by which the wearer of it made his peace with the people, and the condition on which he was suffered to reign.

Here ends my reply to all the letters which have at present appeared under the signature of Cato, being at this time seven in number. I have made no particular remarks on his last two, which treat only of the mode of government, but answered them generally. In one place I observe, he accuses the writer of *Common Sense* with inconsistency in having declared, "That no man was a warmer wisher for reconciliation than himself, before the fatal 19th of April, 1775"<sup>21</sup>; "that is," (says Cato) "reconciliation to monarchical government." To which I reply that *war* ought to be no man's *wish*, neither ought any man to perplex a state, already formed, with his private opinions; "the mode of government being a proper consideration for those countries" only "which have their governments yet to form." (*Common Sense*).

On a review of the ground which I have gone over in Cato's letters, (exclusive of what I have omitted) I find the following material charges against him:

*First.* He has accused the committee with crimes generally; stated none, nor proved, nor attempted to prove any.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Paine is referring to the Battle of Lexington.—*Editor*.

<sup>22</sup> Cato and I differ materially in our opinion of committees; I consider them as the only constitutional bodies at present in this province, and that for the following reason; they were duly elected by the people, and cheerfully do the service for which they were elected. The House of Assembly were likewise elected by the people, but do the business for which they were not elected. Their authority is truly unconstitutional, being self-created. My charge is as a body, and not as individuals.—*Author*.

N. B. The pretence of charging the acts of a body of men on individuals, is too slender to be admitted.<sup>22</sup>

*Secondly.* He has falsely complained to the public of the restraint of the press.

*Thirdly.* He has wickedly asserted that "gleams of reconciliation hath lately broken in upon us," thereby grossly deceiving the people.

*Fourthly.* He has insinuated, as if he wished the public to believe, that we had *received* "the utmost assurance of having all our grievances redressed, and an ample security against any future violation of our just rights."

*Fifthly.* He has spread false alarms of calling in foreign troops.

*Sixthly.* He has turned the scripture into a jest. Ez. 35.

These falsehoods, if uncontradicted, might have passed for truths, and the minds of persons remote from better intelligence might have been greatly embarrassed thereby. Let our opinions be what they will, truth as to facts should be strictly adhered to. It was this affecting consideration that drew out the *Forester* (a perfect volunteer) to the painful task of writing three long letters, and occasioned to the public the trouble of reading them.

Having for the present closed my correspondence with Cato, I shall conclude this letter with a well meant affectionate address

#### TO THE PEOPLE

*It is not a time to trifle.* Men, who know they deserve nothing from their country, and whose hope is on the arm that has fought to enslave you, may hold out to you, as Cato has done, the false light of reconciliation. There is no such thing. 'Tis gone! 'Tis past! The grave has parted us—and death, in the persons of the slain, has cut the thread of life between Britain and America.

Conquest, and not reconciliation is the plan of Britain. But admitting even the last hope of the Tories to happen, which is, that our enemies after a long succession of losses, wearied and disabled, should despairingly throw down their arms and propose a reunion; in that case, what is to be done? Are defeated and disappointed tyrants to be considered like mistaken and converted friends? Or would it be right, to receive those for Governors, who, had they been conquerors, would have hung us up for traitors? Certainly not. Reject the offer then, and propose another; which is, *we will make peace with you as with ene-*

*mies, but we will never re-unite with you as friends.* This effected, and you secure to yourselves the pleasing prospect of an eternal peace. America, remote from all the wrangling world, may live at ease. Bounded by the ocean, and backed by the wilderness, who has she to fear, but her God?

Be not deceived. It is not a little that is at stake. Reconciliation will not now go down, even if it were offered. 'Tis a dangerous question; for the eyes of all men begin to open. There is now no secret in the matter; there ought to be none. It is a case that concerns every man, and every man ought to lay it to heart. He that *is* here and he that was *born* here are alike concerned. It is needless, too, to split the business into a thousand parts, and perplex it with endless and fruitless investigations, in the manner that a writer signed a *Common Man* hath done. This unparalleled contention of nations is not to be settled like a school-boy's task of pounds, shillings, pence and fractions. That writer, though he may mean well, is strangely below the mark: for the first and great question, and that which involves every other in it, and from which every other will flow, is *happiness*. Can this continent be happy under the government of Great Britain or not? Secondly, can she be happy under a government of our own? To live beneath the authority of those whom we cannot love, is misery, slavery, or what name you please. In that case, there will never be peace. Security will be a thing unknown, because a treacherous friend in power is the most dangerous of enemies. The answer to the second question, can America be happy under a government of her own, is short and simple, viz. As happy as she please; she hath a blank sheet to write upon. Put it not off too long.<sup>23</sup>

Painful as the task of speaking truth must sometimes be, yet I cannot avoid giving the following hint, because much, nay almost everything depends upon it; and that is, *a thorough knowledge of the persons whom we trust*. It is the duty of the public, at this time, to scrutinize closely into the conduct of their Committee Members, Members of Assembly, and Delegates in Congress; to know what they do, and their motives for so doing. Without doing this, we shall never know who to confide in; but shall constantly mistake friends for enemies, and enemies for friends, till in the confusion of persons we sacrifice the cause. I am led to this reflection by the following circumstance. That the gentleman to whom the unwise and arbitrary instructions to the delegates of this province owe their being, and who hath bestowed all

<sup>23</sup> Forget not the hapless African.—*Author*.

his power to support them, is said to be the same person who, when the ships now on the stocks were wanting timber, *refused to sell it*, and thus by preventing our strength to cry out of our insufficiency. But his hour of fame is past—he is hastening to his political exit.

THE FORESTER.

#### IV

Whoever will take the trouble of attending to the progress and changeability of times and things, and the conduct of mankind thereon, will find, that *extraordinary circumstances* do sometimes arise before us, of a species, either so purely natural or so perfectly original, that none but the man of nature can understand them. When precedents fail to spirit us, we must return to the first principles of things for information; and *think*, as if we were the *first men* that *thought*. And this is the true reason that, in the present state of affairs, the wise are become foolish, and the foolish wise. I am led to this reflection by not being able to account for the conduct of the Quakers on any other: for although they do not seem to perceive it themselves, yet it is amazing to hear with what unanswerable ignorance many of that body, wise in other matters, will discourse on the present one. Did they hold places or commissions under the king, were they governors of provinces, or had they any interest apparently distinct from us, the mystery would cease; but as they have not, their folly is best attributed to that superabundance of *worldly knowledge* which in original matters is too cunning to be wise. Back to the first plain path of nature, friends, and begin anew: for in this business your first footsteps were wrong. You have now travelled to the summit of inconsistency, and that with such accelerated rapidity as to acquire autumnal ripeness by the first of May. Now your *resting time* comes on. You have done your utmost and must abide the consequences. Yet who can reflect on such conduct without feeling concern! Who can look, unaffected, on a body of *thoughtful* men, undoing in *one rash hour* the labor of seventy years: Or what can be said in their excuse, more, than that they have arrived at their second childhood, the infancy of threescore and ten.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> *The Quakers in 1704 who then made up the whole house of assembly [in Pennsylvania] zealously guarded their own and the people's rights against the encroaching power of the Proprietor, who nevertheless submitted them by finding means to abolish the original charter and introduce another, of which they complained in the following words. "And then by a subtle contrivance and artifice 'of thine,' laid deeper than the capacities*



But my chief design, in this letter, is to set forth the inconsistency, partiality, and injustice of the *dependent faction*,<sup>25</sup> and like an honest man, who courts no favor, to show to them the dangerous ground they stand upon; in order to do which, I must refer to the *business, event* and *probable consequences* of the late election.

The business of that day was to do what? Why, to elect four burgesses to assist those already elected, in conducting the military proceedings of this province, against the power of *that crown* by whose authority they pretend to sit: and those gentlemen when elected, are according to the rules of that House (as the rest have done) to take an oath of allegiance to serve the same king against whom this province, with themselves at the head thereof, are at war: and a necessary qualification required of many voters was, that they likewise should swear allegiance to the same king against whose power the same house of assembly had just before obliged them either to fine or take up arms. Did ever national hypocrisy arise to such a pitch as this! Under the pretence of moderation we are running into the most damnable sins. It is now the duty of every man from the pulpit and from the press, in his family and in the street to cry out against it. Good God! Have we no remembrance of duty left to the King of Heaven! No conscientious awe to restrain this sacrifice of sacred things? Is this our chartered privilege? This our boasted constitution, that we can sin and feel it not? The clergy of the English church, of which I profess myself a member, complain of *their* situation, and wish relief; in short, every *thinking man* must feel distress. Yet, to the credit of the people be it spoken, the sin lies not at their door. We can trace the iniquity in this province to the fountain head, and see by what delusions it has imposed on others. The guilt centers in a few, and flows from the same source, that a few years ago avariciously suffered the frontiers of this province to be deluged in blood; and though the vengeance of heaven has slept since, it may awake too soon for their repose.

A motion was sometime ago made to elect a convention to take into consideration the state of the province. A more judicious proposal could not be thought of. Our present condition is alarming. We are worse off than other provinces, and such an inquiry is highly necessary. The

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*of some could fathom, or the circumstances of many could admit time to consider of, a way was found out to lay the first charter aside and introduce another.*—*Query. Would these men have elected the proprietary persons which you have done?*—*Author.*

<sup>25</sup> The reference is to those individuals who opposed American independence.—*Editor.*

House of Assembly in its present form is disqualified for such business, because it is a branch from that power against whom we are contending. Besides, they are in intercourse with the king's representative, and the members which compose the house have, as *members thereof* taken an oath to discover to the king of England the very business which, in that inquiry, would unavoidably come before them. Their minds too are warped and prejudiced by the provincial instructions they have arbitrarily and without right issued forth. They are again improper because the inquiry would necessarily *extend to them as a body*, to see how far it is proper to trust men with such unlimited power as they have lately assumed. In times like these, we must trace to the root and origin of things; it being the only way to become right, when we are got systematically wrong. The motion for a convention alarmed the crown and proprietary dependents,<sup>26</sup> but, to every man of reflection, it had a cordial and restorative quality. The case is, first, we are got wrong—Secondly, how shall we get right? Not by a House of Assembly; because *they* cannot sit as *judges, in a case*, where their *own existence* under their *present form and authority is to be judged of*. However, the objectors found out a way, as they thought, to supersede the necessity of a convention, by promoting a bill for augmenting the number of representatives; not perceiving at the same time that such an augmentation would *increase the necessity* of a convention; because, the more any power is augmented, which derives its authority from our enemies, the more unsafe and dangerous it becomes to us. Far be it from the writer of this to censure the individuals which compose that House; his aim being only against the chartered authority under which it acts. However, the bill passed into a law (which shows, that in Pennsylvania, as well as in England, there is *no Constitution*, but only a *temporary form of government*).<sup>27</sup> While, in order to show the inconsistency of the House in its present state, the motion for a convention was postponed, and four conscientious independent gentlemen were proposed as candidates, on the augmentation, who, had they been elected would not have taken the oaths necessary to admit a person as member of that Assembly. And in that case, the house would have had neither one kind of authority or another, while the old part remained sworn to divulge to the king what the new part thought it their duty to declare against him. Thus matters stood on the morning of election.

<sup>26</sup> The reference is to opponents of American independence.—*Editor*.

<sup>27</sup> *This distinction will be more fully explained in some future letter.*—*Author*.

On our side we had to sustain the loss of those good citizens who are now before the walls of Quebec, and other parts of the continent; while the Tories by never stirring out remain at home to take the advantage of elections; and this evil prevails more or less from the Congress down to the committees. A numerous body of Germans of property, zealots in the cause of freedom, were likewise excluded for non-allegiance. Notwithstanding which, the Tory non-conformists, that is those who are advertised as enemies to their country, were admitted to vote on the other side. A strange contradiction indeed! To which were added the testimonizing Quakers, who, after suffering themselves to be duped by the meanest of all passions, religious spleen, endeavor in a vague uncharitable manner to possess the Roman Catholics of the same disease. These parties, with such others as they could influence, were headed by the proprietary dependents to support the British and proprietary power against the public. They had pompously given out that nine-tenths of the people were on their side. A vast majority truly! But it so happened that, notwithstanding the disadvantages we laid under of having many of our votes rejected, others disqualified for non-allegiance, with the great loss sustained by absentees, the maneuver of shutting up the doors between seven and eight o'clock, and circulating the report of adjourning, and finishing the next morning, by which several were deceived,—it so happened, I say, that on casting up the tickets, the first in numbers on the dependent side, and the first on the independent side, viz. Clymer and Allen, were a tie: 923 each.<sup>28</sup>

To the description which I have already given of those who are against us, I may add, that they have neither associated nor assisted, or but very few of them; that they are a collection of different bodies blended by accident, having no natural relation to each other; that they have agreed rather out of spite than right; and that, as they met by chance, they will dissolve away again for the want of a cement.

On our side, our object was *single*, our cause was one; wherefore, we *cannot* separate, neither *will* we separate. We have stood the experiment of the election, for the sake of knowing the men who were against us. Alas, what are they? One half of them ought to be now asking public pardon for their former offences; and the other half may think themselves well off that they are let alone. When the enemy enters the country, can they defend themselves? Or *will* they defend themselves? And

<sup>28</sup> Mr. Samuel Howell, though on their ticket, was never considered by us a proprietary dependent.—Author.

if not, are they so foolish as to think that, in times like these, when it is our duty to search the corrupted wound to the bottom, that we, with ten times their strength and number (if the question were put to the people at large) will submit to be governed by cowards and Tories?

He that is wise will reflect, that the safest asylum, especially in times of general convulsion when no settled form of government prevails, is, *the love of the people*. All property is safe under their protection. Even in countries where the lowest and most licentious of them have risen into outrage they have never departed from the path of *natural* honor. Volunteers unto death in defence of the person or fortune of those who had served or defended them, division of property never entered the mind of the populace. It is incompatible with that spirit which impels them into action. An avaricious mob was never heard of; nay, even a miser pausing in the midst of them, and catching their spirit, would from that instant cease to be covetous.

I shall conclude this letter with remarking, that the English fleet and army have of late gone upon a different plan of operation to what they first set out with; for instead of going against those colonies where independence prevails *most*, they go against *those only* where they suppose it prevails *least*. They have quitted Massachusetts Bay and gone to North Carolina, supposing they had many friends there. Why are they expected at New York? But because they imagine the inhabitants are *not* generally independents (yet that province hath a large share of virtue, notwithstanding the odium which its House of Assembly brought upon it). From which I argue that the electing the king's attorney for a burgess of this city, is a fair invitation for them to come here; and in that case, will those who have invited them turn out to repulse them? I suppose not, for in their 923 votes there will not be found more than sixty armed men, perhaps not so many. Wherefore, should such an event happen, which probably will, I here give my *first vote* to levy the expense attending the expedition against them, *on the estates of those who have invited them*.

THE FORESTER.

## A DIALOGUE

BETWEEN THE GHOST OF GENERAL MONTGOMERY JUST ARRIVED  
FROM THE ELYSIAN FIELDS; AND AN AMERICAN DELEGATE,  
IN A WOOD NEAR PHILADELPHIA

In this imaginary dialogue between the ghost of Major-General Richard Montgomery, who fell before Quebec on December 31, 1775, and an American Delegate to the Continental Congress, Paine amplified the idea he had advanced in *Common Sense* that "nothing but independence, *i.e.*, a continental form of government, can keep the peace of the continent and preserve it inviolate from civil war." Paine had the dialogue printed in pamphlet form just about the time Congress appointed a Committee to draft a Declaration of Independence. It was extremely useful in answering the arguments of Tories and conservative Whigs against independence.—*Editor.*

**D**ELEGATE. Welcome to this retreat, my good friend. If I mistake not, I now see the ghost of the brave General Montgomery.

*General Montgomery.* I am glad to see you. I still love liberty and America, and the contemplation of the future greatness of this continent now forms a large share of my present happiness. I am here upon an important errand, to warn you against listening to terms of accommodation from the court of Britain.

*Del.* I shall be happy in receiving instruction from you in the present trying exigency of our public affairs. But suppose the terms you speak of should be just and honorable?

*Gen. Mont.* How can you expect these, after the king has proclaimed you rebels from the throne, and after both Houses of Parliament have resolved to support him in carrying on a war against you? No, I see no offers from Great Britain but of PARDON. The very word is an insult upon our cause. To whom is pardon offered?—to virtuous freemen. For what?—for flying arms in defence of the rights of humanity: And from whom do these offers come?—From a ROYAL CRIMINAL. You have furnished me with a new reason for triumphing in my death, for I had rather have it said that I died by his vengeance, than lived by his mercy.

*Del.* But you think nothing of the destructive consequences of war.

How many cities must be reduced to ashes! how many families must be ruined! and how many widows and orphans must be made, should the present war be continued any longer with Great Britain.

*Gen. Mont.* I think of nothing but the destructive consequences of slavery. The calamities of war are transitory and confined in their effects. But the calamities of slavery are extensive and lasting in their operation. I love mankind as well as you, and I could never restrain a tear when my love of justice has obliged me to shed the blood of a fellow creature. It is my humanity that makes me urge you against a reconciliation with Great Britain, for if this takes place, nothing can prevent the American colonies from being the seat of war as often as the king of Great Britain renews his quarrels with any of the colonies, or with any of the belligerent powers of Europe.

*Del.* I tremble at the doctrine you have advanced. I see you are for the independence of the colonies of Great Britain.

*Gen. Mont.* I am for permanent liberty, peace and security to the American colonies.

*Del.* These can only be maintained by placing the colonies in the situation they were in the year 1763.

*Gen. Mont.* And is no satisfaction to be made to the colonies for the blood and treasure they have expended in resisting the arms of Great Britain? Who can soften the prejudices of the king—the Parliament—and the nation, each of whom will be averse to maintain a peace with you in proportion to the advantages you have gained over them? Who shall make restitution to the widows—the mothers—and the children of the men who have been slain by their arms? Can no hand wield the sceptre of government in America except that which has been stained with the blood of your countrymen? For my part if I thought this continent would ever acknowledge the sovereignty of the crown of Britain again, I should forever lament the day in which I offered up my life for its salvation.

*Del.* You should distinguish between the king and his ministers.

*Gen. Mont.* I live in a world where all political superstition is done away. The king is the author of all the measures carried on against America. The influence of bad ministers is no better apology for these measures, than the influences of bad company is for a murderer, who expiates his crimes under a gallows. You all complain of the corruption of the Parliament, and of the venality of the nation, and yet you forget that the crown is the source of them both. You shun the streams, and

yet you are willing to sit down at the very fountain of corruption and venality.

*Del.* Our distance and charters will protect us from the influence of the crown.

*Gen. Mont.* Your distance will only render your danger more imminent, and your ruin more irretrievable. Charters are no restraints against the lust of power. The only reason why you have escaped so long is, because the treasure of the nation has been employed for these fifty years in buying up the virtue of Britain and Ireland. Hereafter the reduction of the representatives of the people of America will be the only aim of administration should you continue to be connected with them.

*Del.* But I foresee many evils from the independence of the colonies. Our trade will be ruined from the want of a navy to protect it. Each colony will put in its claim for superiority, and we shall have domestic wars without end.

*Gen. Mont.* As I now know that Divine Providence intends this country to be the asylum of persecuted virtue from every quarter of the globe, so I think your trade will be the vehicle that will convey it to you. Heaven has furnished you with greater resources for a navy than any nation in the world. Nothing but an ignorance of your strength could have led you to sacrifice your trade for the protection of a foreign navy. A freedom from the restraints of the acts of navigation I foresee will produce such immense additions to the wealth of this country that posterity will wonder that ever you thought your present trade worth its protection. As to the supposed contentions between sister colonies, they have no foundation in truth. But supposing they have, will delaying the independence of the colonies 50 years prevent them? No—the weakness of the colonies, which at first produced their union, will always preserve it, 'till it shall be their interest to be separated. Had the colony of Massachusetts's Bay been possessed of the military resources which it would probably have had 50 years hence, would she have held out the signal of distress to her sister colonies, upon the news of the Boston Port Bill! No—she would have withstood all the power of Britain alone, and afterwards the neutral colonies might have shared the fate of the colony of Canada. Moreover, had the connection with Great Britain been continued 50 years longer, the progress of British laws, customs and manners (now totally corrupted) would have been such that the colonies would have been prepared to welcome slavery. But had it been otherwise, they

must have asserted their independence with arms. This is nearly done already. It will be cruel to bequeath another contest to your posterity.

*Del.* But I dread all innovations in governments. They are very dangerous things.

*Gen. Mont.* The revolution, which gave a temporary stability to the liberties of Britain, was an innovation in government, and yet no ill consequences have arisen from it. Innovations are dangerous only as they shake the prejudices of a people; but there are now, I believe, but few prejudices to be found in this country, in favor of the old connection with Great Britain. I except those men only who are under the influence of their passions and offices.

*Del.* But is it not most natural for us to wish for a connection with a people who speak the same language with us, and possess the same laws, religion and forms of government with ourselves?

*Gen. Mont.* The immortal Montesquieu says, that nations should form alliances with those nations only which are as unlike to themselves as possible in religion, laws and manners, if they mean to preserve their own constitutions. Your dependence upon the crown is no advantage, but rather an injury to the people of Britain, as it increases the power and influence of the King. The people are benefited only by your trade, and this they may have after you are independent of the crown. Should you be disposed to forgive the king and the nation for attempting to enslave you, they will never forgive you for having baffled them in the attempt.

*Del.* But we have many friends in both Houses of Parliament.

*Gen. Mont.* You mean the ministry have many enemies in Parliament who connect the cause of America with their clamors at the door of administration. Lord Chatham's conciliatory bill would have ruined you more effectually than Lord North's motion. The Marquis of Rockingham was the author of the declaratory bill. Mr. Wilkes has added infamy to the weakness of your cause,<sup>29</sup> and the Duke of Grafton<sup>30</sup> and Lord Lyttleton have rendered the minority Junto, if possible, more contemptible than ever.

*Del.* But if we become independent we shall become a commonwealth.

*Gen. Mont.* I maintain that it is your interest to be independent of

<sup>29</sup> Paine is referring to John Wilkes, one of the stoutest champions of the American cause in England.—*Editor.*

<sup>30</sup> Lord Grafton was a member of the British Ministry.—*Editor.*



Great Britain, but I do not recommend any new form of government to you. I should think it strange that a people who have virtue enough to defend themselves against the most powerful nation in the world should want wisdom to contrive a perfect and free form of government. You have been kept in subjection to the crown of Britain by a miracle. Your liberties have hitherto been suspended by a thread. Your connection with Great Britain is unnatural and unnecessary. All the wheels of a government should move within itself. I would only beg leave to observe to you, that monarchy and aristocracy have in all ages been the vehicles of slavery.

*Del.* Our governments will want force and authority if we become independent of Great Britain.

*Gen. Mont.* I beg leave to contradict that assertion. No royal edicts or acts of assembly have ever been more faithfully or universally obeyed than the resolves of the Congress. I admire the virtue of the colonies, and did not some of them still hang upon the haggard breasts of Great Britain, I should think the time now come in which they had virtue enough to be happy under any form of government. Remember that it is in a commonwealth only that you can expect to find every man a patriot or a hero. Aristides, Epaminondas, Pericles, Scipio, Camillus and a thousand other illustrious Grecian and Roman heroes, would never have astonished the world with their names, had they lived under royal governments.

*Del.* Will not a Declaration of Independence lessen the number of our friends, and increase the rage of our enemies in Britain?

*Gen. Mont.* Your friends (as you call them) are too few—too divided—and too interested to help you. And as for your enemies, they have done their worst. They have called upon Russians—Hanoverians—Hessians—Canadians—savages and Negroes to assist them in burning your towns—desolating your country—and in butchering your wives and children. You have nothing further to fear from them. Go, then, and awaken the Congress to a sense of their importance; you have no time to lose. France waits for nothing but a declaration of your independence to revenge the injuries they sustained from Britain in the last war. But I forbear to reason any further with you. The decree is finally gone forth. Britain and America are now distinct empires. Your country teems with patriots—heroes—and legislators, who are impatient to burst forth into light and importance. Hereafter your achievements shall no more swell the page of British history. God will

not excite the attention of all Europe—of the whole world—nay of angels themselves to the present controversy for nothing. The inhabitants of heaven long to see the ark finished, in which all the liberty and true religion of the world are to be deposited. The day in which the colonies declare their independence will be a jubilee to Hampden—Sidney—Russell—Warren—Gardiner—Macpherson—Cheeseman, and all the other heroes who have offered themselves as sacrifices upon the altar of liberty. It was no small mortification to me when I fell upon the Plains of Abraham, to reflect that I did not expire like the brave General Wolfe, in the arms of victory. But I now no longer envy him his glory. I would rather die in *attempting* to obtain permanent freedom for a handful of people, than survive a conquest which would serve only to extend the empire of despotism. A band of heroes now beckon to me. I can only add that America is the theater where human nature will *soon* receive its greatest military, civil, and literary honors.

## RETREAT ACROSS THE DELAWARE

A few weeks after the announcement of the Declaration of Independence, Paine enlisted in the army, serving until April, 1777. During the retreat of Washington's forces from New York through New Jersey, he wrote by campfire the first sixteen pamphlets issued at each critical point in the struggle for independence. The following article, which appeared in the *Pennsylvania Journal* of January 29, 1777, makes no mention of the fact that the author's *The American Crisis*, signed "Common Sense," inspired the victory of the Continentals at Trenton. It is an excellent example of objective reporting by an early American war-correspondent.—*Editor.*

**F**ORT WASHINGTON being obliged to surrender, by a violent attack made by the whole British army, on Saturday the 16th of November, the Generals determined to evacuate Fort Lee, which being principally intended to preserve the communication with Fort Washington, was become in a manner useless. The stores were ordered to be removed and great part of them was immediately sent off. The enemy knowing the divided state of our army, and that the terms of the soldiers' enlistments would soon expire, conceived the design of

penetrating into the Jerseys, and hoped, by pushing their successes, to be completely victorious. Accordingly, on Wednesday morning, the 20th November, it was discovered that a large body of British and Hessian troops had crossed the North River, and landed about six miles above the fort. As our force was inferior to that of the enemy, the fort unfinished, and on a narrow neck of land, the garrison was ordered to march for Hackensack bridge, which, though much nearer the enemy than the fort, they quietly suffered our troops to take possession of. The principal loss suffered at Fort Lee was that of the heavy cannon, the greatest part of which was left behind. Our troops continued at Hackensack bridge and town that day and half of the next, when the inclemency of the weather, the want of quarters, and approach of the enemy, obliged them to proceed to Aquaconack, and from thence to Newark; a party being left at Aquaconack to observe the motions of the enemy. At Newark our little army was reinforced by Lord Sterling's and Colonel Hand's brigades, which had been stationed at Brunswick. Three days after our troops left Hackensack, a body of the enemy crossed the Passaic above Aquaconack, made their approaches slowly towards Newark, and seemed extremely desirous that we should leave the town without their being put to the trouble of fighting for it. The distance from Newark to Aquaconack is nine miles, and they were three days in marching that distance. From Newark our retreat was to Brunswick, and it was hoped the assistance of the Jersey Militia would enable General Washington to make the Banks of the Raritan the bounds of the enemy's progress; but on the 1st of December the army was greatly weakened, by the expiration of the terms of the enlistments of the Maryland and Jersey Flying Camp; and the militia not coming in so soon as was expected, another retreat was the necessary consequence. Our army reached Trenton on the 4th of December, continued there till the 7th, and then, on the approach of the enemy, it was thought proper to pass the Delaware.

This retreat was censured by some as pusillanimous and disgraceful; but, did they know that our army was at one time less than a thousand effective men, and never more than 4000,—that the number of the enemy was at least 8000, exclusive of their artillery and light horse,—that this handful of Americans retreated *slowly* above 80 miles without losing a dozen men—and that suffering themselves to be forced to an action, would have been their entire destruction—did they know this, they would never have censured it at all—they would have called it prudent

—posterity will call it glorious—and the names of Washington and Fabius will run parallel to eternity.<sup>31</sup>

The enemy, intoxicated with success, resolved to enjoy the fruits of their conquest. Fearless of an attack from this side the river, they cantoned in parties at a distance from each other, and spread misery and desolation wherever they went. Their rage and lust, their avarice and cruelty, knew no bounds; and murder, ravishment, plunder, and the most brutal treatment of every sex and age, were the first acts that signalized their conquest. And if such were their outrages on the partial subjection of a few villages—good God! what consummate wretchedness is in store for that state over which their power shall be fully established.

While the enemy were in this situation, their security was increased by the captivity of General Lee, who was unfortunately taken in the rear of his army, December 13th, at Baskinridge by a party of light-horse, commanded by Colonel Harcourt. The fortune of our arms was now at its lowest ebb—but the tide was beginning to turn—the militia of this city [Philadelphia] had joined General Washington—the junction of the two armies was soon after effected—and the back countries of this State, aroused by the distresses of America, poured out their yeomanry to the assistance of the continental army. General Washington began now to have a respectable force, and resolved not to be idle. On the 26th of December he crossed the Delaware, surprised three regiments of Hessians, and with little or no loss, took near a thousand prisoners.<sup>32</sup>

Soon after this maneuver, and while the enemy were collecting their scattered troops at Princeton and Brunswick, General Washington crossed the Delaware with all his army. On the 2d of January the enemy began to advance towards Trenton, which they entered in the afternoon, and there being nothing but a small creek between the two armies, a general engagement was expected next day. This it was manifestly our advantage to avoid; and by a master stroke of generalship,

<sup>31</sup> Fabius Maximus Verrucosus, named Cunctator, "the delayer," was a Roman general who practiced a delaying tactic in the second Punic War. It was Washington's patient vigilance that earned him the title of "Fabius."—*Editor*.

<sup>32</sup> At this point in the narrative, the editor of the *Pennsylvania Journal* inserted Washington's letter to the Continental Congress, December 27, 1776. Towards the end of the letter, Washington wrote: "In justice to the Officers and Men, I must add, that their Behavior upon this Occasion, reflects the highest honor upon them. The difficulty of passing the River in a very severe Night, and their march through a violent Storm of Snow and Hail, did not in the least abate their Ardour. . . ."—*Editor*.

General Washington freed himself from his disagreeable situation, and surprised a party of the enemy in Princeton, which obliged their main body to return to Brunswick.

## THE AFFAIR OF SILAS DEANE

So much was written during the controversy over the conduct of Silas Deane that most historians hesitate to delve into what has been termed "a mess." The main facts, however, are fairly simple. The chief issue centered on the question whether the supplies secretly furnished to the United States by France prior to the Franco-American alliance of 1778 through Caron de Beaumarchais, commissary agent for the king and chiefly remembered as author of "The Barber of Seville" and "The Marriage of Figaro," were to be a charge against the United States or were a gift from the French government. Silas Deane, American commissioner to France, had been connected with many of the transactions with Beaumarchais, and he stoutly maintained that they were of a distinctly commercial nature. Arthur Lee, another commissioner, opposed this view and suggested that Deane and Beaumarchais had concocted the story to line their own pockets. Paine, as Secretary of the Committee of Foreign Affairs in the Continental Congress, had come upon much information which convinced him that Lee's story was correct, and that Deane was simply trying to extort money from Congress to which he was not entitled. With the aim in mind of saving Congress money falsely claimed by Deane, he published information he had been officially trusted to keep secret. As the controversy increased in intensity, Paine revealed more and more information, but by so doing he also revealed information about France's relations with America, prior to the signing of the Treaty of Alliance, which was exceedingly embarrassing to good relations between the two allies. Hence Paine was made the scape-goat, and was compelled to resign his post as Secretary, January 9, 1779. For Paine's version of the story, see his letters, pp. 1154ff.

As the controversy continued it began to take on other aspects, for it merged with the struggle within Pennsylvania between the popular forces and the conservatives. The former championed Lee while the latter supported Deane. Articles—usually printed over pseudonyms—appeared daily in the press as Paine, Arthur Lee, Richard Henry Lee, William Lee, and Timothy Matlock, spokesmen for the popular forces, fought a verbal battle with Deane, Robert Morris, Matthew Clarkson, Robert Treat Paine, William Duer, and

Gouverneur Morris, leaders of the conservative forces. Basic issues connected with the conduct of a people's war were raised and discussed in these daily articles. Paine considered it intolerable that Robert Morris, active in Congressional affairs, should be associated with Deane in commercial as well as governmental transactions, and condemned such conduct as a great menace to victory. Speculators and monopolizers, he charged, were helping to break down the people's morale, and he suggested that the State Assemblies should investigate such activities by all former and present delegates to Congress. Pennsylvania should lead the way, he wrote. During the course of this controversy Paine was active on a popular committee to investigate and stamp out monopolistic practices, which were causing prices to rise exorbitantly. One of the first persons investigated by the committee was Robert Morris himself.

It is clear, therefore, that the Deane affair has considerable importance in relation to the internal struggle that was waging during the Revolutionary War between radicals and conservatives. But very few of Paine's articles on this aspect of the Deane affair have ever been included in any collection of his writings before. Other than the material included in pages 97-108, 111-134, 181-186, Paine's writings on the Deane affair have never appeared before in any edition of his works.

For background material on the entire subject, see E. C. Burnett, *Letters of Members of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789*, Washington, 1921-1936, vols. II-IV; "The Deane Papers . . .," *New York Historical Society Collections*, Publication Fund Series, vols. XIX-XXIII; Robert L. Brunhouse, *The Counter-Revolution in Pennsylvania, 1776-1790*, Harrisburg, 1942, pp. 154-162.—*Editor*.

### TO SILAS DEANE, ESQ'RE <sup>33</sup>

AFTER reading a few lines of your address to the public in the Pennsylvania Packet of December 6th, I can truly say, that concern got the better of curiosity, and I felt an unwillingness to go through it. Mr. Deane must very well know that I have no interest in, so likewise am I no stranger to, his negotiations and contracts in France, his difference with his colleagues, the reason of his return to America, and the matters which have occurred since. All these are to me familiar things; and while I can but be surprised at the conduct of Mr. Deane, I lament the unnecessary torture he has imprudently occasioned. That

<sup>33</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Packet*, December 15, 1778. The address to the public by Silas Deane, referred to by Paine, appeared in the *Pennsylvania Packet* of December 5, 1778 and not, as Paine states, in the issue of December 6th.—*Editor*.

disagreements will arise between individuals, even to the perplexity of a State, is nothing new, but that they should be outrageously brought forward, by one whose station abroad should have taught him a delicacy of manners and even an excess of prudence, is something strange. The mind of a *living* public is quickly alarmed and easily tormented. It not only suffers by the stroke, but is frequently fretted by the cure, and ought therefore to be tenderly dealt with, and *never ought to be trifled with*. It feels first and reasons afterwards. Its jealousy keeps vibrating between the accused and the accuser, and on a failure of proof always fixes on the latter. Had Mr. Deane's address produced no uneasiness in the body he appeals to, it would have been a sign, not of tranquillity, but death: and though it is painful to see it unnecessarily tortured, it is pleasant to contemplate the living cause. Mr. Deane is particularly circumstanced. He has advantages which seldom happen, and when they do happen, ought to be used with the nicest care and strictest honor. He has the opportunity of telling his own tale and there is none to reply to him. Two of the gentlemen he so freely censures are three thousand miles off, and the other two he so freely affronts are Members of Congress; one of them likewise, Col. R. H. Lee, is absent in Virginia; and however painful may be their feelings, they must attend the progressive conduct of the house. No Member in Congress can individually take up the matter without becoming inconsistent, and none of the public understands it sufficiently. With these advantages Mr. Deane ought to be nicely and strictly the gentleman, in his language, his assertions, his insinuations and his facts. He presents himself, as his own evidence, upon his honor, and any misrepresentation or disingenuous trifling in him will be fatal.

Mr. Deane begins his address with a general display of his services in France, and strong *insinuations* against the Hon. Arthur and William Lee, he brings his complaints down to the time of signing the treaty, and from thence to the fourth of March, when he received the following order of Congress which he inserts at large:

"In Congress, December 8, 1777. Whereas it is of the greatest importance that Congress should at this critical juncture be well informed of the state of affairs in Europe. And whereas Congress have resolved that the Honorable Silas Deane, Esq., be recalled from the Court of France, and have appointed another Commissioner to supply his place there. Ordered, that the committee for foreign correspondence, write to the Honorable Silas Deane, and direct him to embrace the first opportunity of returning to America, and upon his

arrival to repair with all possible dispatch to Congress." Mr. Deane then says "and having placed *my papers* and *yours* in *safety*, I left Paris the 30th to embark for my native country, on board that fleet which your great and generous ally sent out for your assistance, in *full confidence* that I should not be detained on the *business I was sent for*."

I am obliged to tell Mr. Deane that this arrangement is somewhat uncandid, for on the reading it, it creates an opinion and likewise carries an appearance that Mr. Deane was only *sent* for, as the necessary and proper person from whom Congress might obtain a history of their affairs, and learn the character of their foreign agents, commissioners and ambassadors, after which Mr. Deane was to return. Is Mr. Deane so little master of address as not to know that censure may be politely conveyed by an apology? For however Mr. Deane may choose to represent or misrepresent the matter, the truth is that *his* contracts and engagements in France, had so involved and embarrassed Congress, that they found it necessary and resolved to *recall* him, that is *ordered him home*, to give an account of his *own* conduct, and likewise to save him from a train of disagreeable consequences, which must have arisen to him had he continued in France. I would not be supposed to insinuate, that he might be thought *unsafe*, but *unfit*.

There is a certain and necessary association of dignity between the person and the employment which perhaps did not appear when Mr. Deane was considered the ambassador. His address to the public confirms the justness of this remark. The spirit and language of it differ exceedingly from that cool penetrating judgment and refinement of manners and expression which fits, and is absolutely necessary in, the plenipotentiary. His censures are coarse and vehement, and when he speaks of himself, he begs, nay almost weeps to be believed. It was the intricacy of Mr. Deane's *own official* affairs, his multiplied contracts in France before the arrival of Dr. Franklin or any of the other Commissioners; his assuming authorities, and entering into engagements, in the time of his commercial agency, for which he had neither commission nor instruction, and the general unsettled state of his accounts, that were among the reasons that produced the motion for recalling and superseding him. Why then does Mr. Deane endeavor to lead the attention of the public to a wrong object, and bury the real reasons under a tumult of new and perhaps unnecessary suspicions?

Mr. Deane in the beginning of his address to the public says, "What I *write* to you, I would have *said* to your representatives, *their ears have*



*been shut against me*, by an attention to matters, which my respect for them induces me to believe were of '*more importance*.'

In this paragraph Mr. Deane's excuse becomes his accuser, and his justification in his offence; for if the greater importance of other matters is supposed and given by himself as a reason, why he was not heard, it is likewise a sufficient reason, why he ought not to have complained that "*their ears were shut*," and a good reason why he ought to have waited a more convenient time. But besides the inconsistency of this charge, there is something in it that will suffer by an inquiry, and I am sorry that Mr. Deane's imprudence has obliged me to mention a circumstance which affects his honor as a gentleman, his reputation as a man. In order to be clearly understood on this head, I am obliged to go back with Mr. Deane to the time of his quitting France on account of his being recalled.

"I left Paris," says Mr. Deane, "on the 30th of March, 1778 to embark for my native country, having placed '*my papers and yours in safety*.' " Would anybody have supposed that a gentleman in the character of a commercial agent, and afterwards in that of a public minister, would return home after seeing himself both recalled and superseded, and not bring with him his papers and vouchers? And why he has done so must appear to every one exceedingly unaccountable. After Mr. Deane's arrival he had *two audiences* with Congress in August last, in neither of which did he offer the least charge against the gentleman he has so loudly upbraided in his address to the public: neither has he yet accounted for his expenditure of public money, which, as it might have been done by a written state of accounts, might for that reason have been done at any time, and was a part of the business which required an audience.

There is something curiously intricate and evasive in Mr. Deane's saying in his address, that he left France "*in full confidence* that he should not be detained on the *business he was sent for*." And the only end it can answer to him is to furnish out a present excuse for not producing his papers. Mr. Deane had no right, either from the literal or implied sense of the resolution itself, to suppose that he should return to France in his former public character, or that he was "*sent for*," as he styles it, on any other personal business than that which related to himself. Mr. Deane must be sensible, if he will but candidly reflect, that as an agent only, he greatly exceeded his line and embarrassed the Congress, the continent, the army and himself.

Mr. Deane's address to the public is dated "Nov."—but without any day of the month; and here a new scene of ungenteeled evasion opens. On the last day of that month, viz. the 30th, he addressed a letter to Congress signifying his intentions of returning to France, and pressing to have his affairs brought to some conclusion, which, I presume, on account of the absence of his papers could not well be done; therefore Mr. Deane's address to the public must be written before the 30th, and consequently before his letter to Congress, which carries an appearance of its being only a feint in order to make a confused diversion in his favor at the time his affairs should come under consideration.

What favors this opinion, is that on the next day, that is December 1st, and partly in consequence of Mr. Deane's letter to them of the 30th, the Congress entered the following resolution.

"In Congress December 1st, 1778.—*Resolved*, That after tomorrow Congress will meet two hours at least each evening, beginning at six o'clock, Saturday evening excepted, until the present state of their foreign affairs be fully considered."

As an inquiry into the state of foreign affairs naturally and effectually included all and every part of Mr. Deane's, he was thereupon regularly notified by letter to attend; and on the *fourth* he wrote again to Congress, acquainting them with his having received that notification and expressed his thanks; yet on the day following, viz. the *fifth* he published his extraordinary address in the newspapers, which, on account of its unsupported matter, the fury of its language and temper, and its inconsistency with other parts of his conduct, is incompatible with that character (which on account of the station he had been honored with, and the sense that should have impressed him in consequence thereof) he ought to have maintained.

On the appearance of Mr. Deane's address of the fifth, the public became jealously uneasy, and well they might. They were unacquainted with the train of circumstances that preceded and attended it, and were naturally led to suppose, that Mr. Deane, on account of the station he had filled, must be too much a gentleman to deceive them. It was Mr. Deane's particular fortune to grow into consequence from accident. Sent to France as a commercial agent under the appointment of a committee, he rose as a matter of convenience to the station of a Commissioner of Congress; and with what dignity he might fill out that character, the public will judge from his conduct since; and per-

haps be led to substitute convenience as an excuse for the appointment.

A delicacy of difficulties likewise arose in Congress on the appearance of the said address; for setting aside the matter, the irregular manner of it, as a proceeding, was a breach of decency; and as Mr. Deane after being notified to attend an inquiry into foreign affairs, had circumstantially withdrawn from that mode, by appealing to the public, and at the same time said "*their ears were shut against him,*" it was therefore given as a reason by some, that to take any notice of Mr. Deane in the interim would look like suppressing his public information, if he had any to give; and consequently would imply dishonor on the House,—and that as he had transferred his case to the public, before it had been rejected by the Congress, he ought therefore to be left with the public, till he had done with them and they with him; and that whether his information was true or not, it was an insult on the people, because it was making them the ladder on which he insulted their representatives by an unjust complaint of neglect. Others who might anticipate the anxiety of the public, and apprehend discontents would arise from a supposed inattention, were for adopting measures to prevent them, and of consequence inclined to a different line of conduct, and this division of sentiment on what might be supposed the honor of the House, occasioned the then *President*, Henry Laurens, Esq., who adhered to the former opinion, to resign the chair. The majority on the sentiments was a single vote. In this place I take the liberty of remarking, for the benefit of succeeding generations, that the Honorable President before mentioned, having filled that station for one year in October last, made his resignation of the presidency at the expiration of the year, lest any example taken from his continuance might have become inconvenient. I have an additional satisfaction in mentioning this useful historical anecdote, because it is done wholly unknown to the gentleman to whom it relates, or to any other gentleman in or out of Congress. He was replaced by a unanimous vote. But to return to my narration—

In the Pennsylvania Packet of December 8th, Francis Lightfoot Lee, Esq., brother to the gentleman so rudely treated in Mr. Deane's publication, and the only one now present, put in a short address to the public, requesting a suspension of their judgment till the matter could be fully investigated by those whose immediate business it became: meaning Congress. And Mr. Deane in the paper of the 10th pub-

lished another note, in which he informs, "that the Honorable Congress did, on Saturday morning the 5th instant, assign Monday evening to hear him." But why does Mr. Deane conceal the resolution of Congress of December 1st, in consequence of which he was notified to attend regularly an inquiry into the state of foreign affairs? By so doing, he endeavors to lead the public into a belief that his being heard on Monday was extorted purely in consequence of his address of the 5th, and that otherwise he should not have been heard at all. I presume Congress are anxious to hear him, and to have his accounts arranged and settled; and if this should be the case, why did Mr. Deane leave his papers in France, and now complain that his affairs are not concluded? In the same note Mr. Deane likewise says, "that Congress did on that evening, Monday, resolve, that Mr. Deane do report in writing, as soon as may be, his agency of their affairs in Europe, together with any intelligence respecting their foreign affairs which he may judge proper." But why does Mr. Deane omit giving the remaining part of the resolution, which says, "That Mr. Deane be informed, that if he has anything to communicate to Congress in the interim of *immediate importance*, that he should be heard tomorrow evening." I can see no propriety, in omitting this part, unless Mr. Deane concluded that by publishing it he might put a quick expiration to his credit by his not being able to give the wondrous information he had threatened in his address. In the conclusion of this note, Mr. Deane likewise says, "I therefore conceive that I cannot, with propriety, continue my narrative at present. In the mean time I submit it to the good sense of the public, whether I ought to take any notice of a publication signed Francis Lightfoot Lee, opposed to *stubborn and undeniable facts*."

Thus far I have compared Mr. Deane with himself, and whether he has been candid or uncandid, consistent or inconsistent, I leave to the judgment of those who read it. Mr. Deane cannot have the least right to think that I am moved by any party difference or personal antipathy. He is a gentleman with whom I never had a syllable of dispute, nor with any other person upon his account. Who are his friends, his connections, or his foes, is wholly indifferent to me, and what I have written will be a secret to everybody till it comes from the press. The convulsion which the public were thrown into by his address will, I hope, justify my taking up a matter in which I should otherwise have been perfectly silent; and whatever may be its fate my intention is a good one; besides which there was no other person who knew the affair

sufficiently, or knowing it, could confidently do it, and yet it was necessary to be done.

I shall now take a short review of what Mr. Deane calls "*stubborn and undeniable facts.*" Mr. Deane must be exceedingly unacquainted both with terms and ideas, not to distinguish even between a wandering probability and a fact; and between a forced inclination and a proof; for admitting every circumstance of information in Mr. Deane's address to be true, they are still but circumstances, and his deductions from them are hypothetical and inconclusive.

Mr. Deane has involved a gentleman in his unlimited censure, whose fidelity and personal qualities I have been well acquainted with for three years past; and in respect to an absent injured friend, Colonel Richard Henry Lee, I will venture to tell Mr. Deane, that in any style of character in which a gentleman may be spoken of, Mr. Deane would suffer by a comparison. He has one defect which perhaps Mr. Deane is acquainted with, the misfortune of having but one hand.

The charges likewise which he advances against the Honorable Arthur and William Lee are, to me, circumstantial evidences of Mr. Deane's unfitness for a public character; for it is the business of a foreign minister to learn other men's secrets and keep their own. Mr. Deane has given a short history of Mr. Arthur Lee and Dr. Berkenhout<sup>34</sup> in France, and he has brought the last mentioned person again on the stage in America. There is something in this so exceedingly weak, that I am surprised that any one who would be thought a man of sense, should risk his reputation upon such a frivolous tale; for the event of the story, if any can be produced from it, is greatly against himself.

He says that a correspondence took place in France between Dr. Berkenhout and Mr. [Arthur] Lee; that Mr. Lee showed part of the correspondence to Dr. Franklin and himself; and that in order to give the greater weight to Dr. Berkenhout's remarks he gave them to understand, that Dr. Berkenhout was in the secrets of the British Ministry. What Mr. Deane has related this for, or what he means to infer from it, I cannot understand; for the political inference ought to be, that if Mr. Lee really thought that Dr. Berkenhout was in the secrets of the British Ministry, he was therefore the very person with whom Mr. Lee

<sup>34</sup> Dr. John Berkenhout was an English medical authority who was sent in 1778 on a secret mission to America by the British Government. He was imprisoned in Philadelphia on suspicion of being a spy, and returned, after his release, to England where he was awarded a pension. In January, 1779, Berkenhout made several efforts to negotiate with Arthur Lee, then in Paris, but was unsuccessful.—*Editor.*

ought, as an ambassador, to cultivate a correspondence, and introduce to his colleagues, in order to discover what those secrets were, that they might be transmitted to America; and if Mr. Deane acted otherwise, he unwisely mistook his own character. However, this I can assure Mr. Deane, upon my own knowledge, that more and better information has come from Mr. Lee than ever came from himself; and how or where he got it, is not a subject fit for public inquiry: unless Mr. Deane means to put a stop to all future informations. I can likewise tell Mr. Deane, that Mr. Lee was particularly commissioned by a certain body, and that under every sacred promise of inviolable secrecy, to make discoveries in England, and transmit them. Surely Mr. Deane must have left his discretion with his papers, or he would see the imprudence of his present conduct.

In the course of Mr. Deane's narrative he mentions Dr. Berkenhout again. "In September last," says he, "I was informed that Dr. Berkenhout, who I have before mentioned, was in jail in this city. I confess I was surprised, considering what I have already related, that this man should have the audacity to appear in the capital of America." But why did not Mr. Deane confront Dr. Berkenhout while he was here? Why did he not give information to Congress or to the Council before whom he was examined, and by whom he was discharged and sent back for want of evidence against him? Mr. Deane was the only person that knew anything of him, and it looks very unfavorable in him that he was silent when he should have spoke, if he had anything to say, and now he has gone has a great deal to tell, and that about nothing. "I immediately," says Mr. Deane, "*set myself about* the measures which I conceived necessary *to investigate his plans and designs.*" This is indeed a trifling excuse, for it wanted no great deal of *setting about*, the whole secret as well as the means being with himself, and half an hour's information might have been sufficient. What Mr. Deane means by "*investigating his plans and designs,*" I cannot understand, unless he intended to have the Doctor's nativity cast by a conjurer. Yet this trifling roundabout story is one of Mr. Deane's "stubborn and undeniable facts." However it is thus far a fact, that Mr. Deane kept it a secret till the man was gone.

He likewise entertains us with a history of what passed at New York between Dr. Berkenhout and Governor Johnstone; but as he must naturally think that his readers must wonder how he came by such knowledge, he prudently supplies the defect by saying "that Providence

in whom we put our trust, '*unfolded it to me*'—*revealed it, I suppose.* As to what Dr. Berkenhout was, or what he came for, is a matter of very little consequence to us. He appeared to be a man of good moral character, of a studious turn of mind, and genteel behavior, and whether he had whimsically employed himself, or was employed on a foolish errand by others, is a business not worth our enquiring after; he got nothing here, and to send him back was both necessary and civil. He introduced himself to General Maxwell at Elizabethtown, as knowing Mr. Arthur Lee; the General wrote a letter of information to Colonel R. H. Lee who presented the same to Congress. But it does not appear that Mr. Deane moved in the matter till a considerable time after the Doctor was sent off, and then Mr. Deane put a series of queries in the newspaper to know why he was let go. I little thought at that time that the queries were Mr. Deane's, as they really appeared to me to be the produce of some little mind.

Mr. Deane likewise tells us that Mr. A. Lee was suspected by some of our best friends because of his acquaintance with Lord Shelburne; and perhaps some Mr. Deane in England might find out that Lord Shelburne ought to be suspected because of his acquaintance with Mr. Lee. Mr. Deane appears to me neither to understand characters nor business, or he would not mention Lord Shelburne on such an occasion whose uniform and determined opposition to the Ministry appears to be known to everybody but Mr. Deane. Mr. Deane has given us a quotation from a letter [of Arthur Lee's] which he never saw, and had it likewise from a gentleman in France who had never seen it, but who had heard it from a correspondent in England to whom it was *not sent*; and this traditionary story is another of Mr. Deane's *stubborn and undeniable facts*. But even supposing the quotation to be true, the only inference from it is naturally this, "That *the sooner England makes peace with America the better it will be for her.*" Had the intimation been given before the treaty with France was signed, it might have been justly censured, but being given after, it can have but *one* meaning, and that a *clear* one. He likewise says, that Charles Fox "declared pointedly in the House of Commons," that the treaty between France and America was signed, and as Charles Fox knows Lord Shelburne, and Lord Shelburne Mr. Lee, therefore Mr. Deane infers, "as a stubborn and undeniable fact," that Mr. Lee must tell it. Does Mr. Deane know that nothing can be long a secret in a Court, especially where the countries are but twenty miles apart, and that Charles Fox, from

his ingratiating manners, is almost universally known in France?

Mr. Deane likewise supposes that William Lee, Esquire continues an Alderman of London, and either himself or some other gentleman since, under the signature of OBSERVATOR, says that "he has *consulted*, on this *point*, the Royal Calendar or Annual Register," and finds it true. To *consult* a Calendar to find out a name must be a learned consultation indeed. An Alderman of London is neither a place at Court nor a place of profit, and if the city chooses not to expel him, it is a proof they are very good Whigs; and this is the only proved fact in Mr. Deane's Address. But there is, through the whole of it, a barbarous, unmanly and unsupported attack on absent characters, which are, perhaps, far superior to his own; an eagerness to create suspicions wherever he can catch an opportunity; an over-strained desire to be believed; and an affected air of giving importance to trifles. He accuses Mr. [Arthur] Lee of incivility to the French nation. Mr. Lee, if I can judge by his writing, is too much both of a scholar and a gentleman to deserve such a censure. He might with great justice complain of Mr. Deane's contracts with individuals; for we are fully sensible that the gentlemen which have come from France since the arrival of Dr. Franklin and Mr. Lee in that country are of a different rank to the generality of those with whom Mr. Deane contracted when alone. And this observation will, I believe, explain that charge no ways to Mr. Deane's honor.

Upon the whole, I cannot help considering this publication as one of the most irrational performances I ever met with. He seems in it to pay no regard to individual safety, nor cares who he may involve in the consequences of his quarrel. He mentions names without restraint, and stops at no discovery of persons. A public man, in Mr. Deane's former character, ought to be as silent as the grave; for who would trust a person with a secret who showed such a talent for revealing? Under the pretence of doing good he is doing mischief, and in a tumult of his own creating will expose and distress himself.

Mr. Deane's address was calculated to catch several sorts of people: The rash, because they are fond of fiery things; the curious, because they are fond of curiosities; the weak, because they easily believe; the good, because they are unsuspecting; the Tory, because it comforts his discontent; the high Whig, because he is jealous of his rights; the man of national refinement, because it obscurely hints at national dishonor. The clamor, it is true, has been a popular one, and so far as it is the sign



of a *living* principle, it is pleasant to see it; but when once understood it will amount to nothing, and with the rapidity that it rose it will descend.

COMMON SENSE.

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 14, 1778.

P.S.—The writer of this has been waited on by a gentleman, whom he supposes, by his conversation, to be a friend of Mr. Deane's, and whom Mr. Deane, but not any other person, is welcome to know whenever he pleases. The gentleman informed the writer that some persons, whom he did not mention, had threatened most extraordinary violence against him (the writer of this piece) for taking the matter up; the writer asked what, whether right or wrong? and likewise informed the gentleman, that he had done it solely with a view of putting the public right in a matter which they did not understand—that the threat served to increase the necessity, and was therefore an incitement to his doing it. The gentleman, after expressing his good opinion of, and personal respect for, the writer, withdrew.

#### TO THE PUBLIC <sup>35</sup>

In the course of a few days I shall lay before you some very interesting facts and materials, by which you will be able to distinguish between those who serve you and those who seek to deceive you. There is something more in Mr. Deane's affair than many of you are at present acquainted with, and as such persons appear to have mistaken the right side for the wrong, it is now necessary that the public should know the whole, for upon *that only* can they form a proper judgment.

If Mr. Deane and his friends are right, then I must be wrong; and if I am right, they must be wrong. Either the one or the other is deceiving you. There is a premeditated baseness lurking somewhere, and it ought to be detected. If it is on my part, you have a right to resent it as you please; and even the good I have already rendered, so far from becoming my excuse, ought to provoke you the more. I have either disturbed a viperous nest to preserve you from being bitten, or deserve to be thrown into one myself; and on *this ground only*, without looking forward or backward, I desire to stand or fall in the opinion of every man in

<sup>35</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Packet*, December 29, 1778. The reply to Paine's original open letter to Deane by "Plain Truth" was written by Dr. William Smith, the royalist clergyman of Philadelphia.—*Editor*.

America, in proportion as I am in *this affair* of Mr. Deane right or wrong, faithful or unfaithful.

As I shall reserve my principal matter for my next publication, I shall in this piece give you only a short history of what may be called the underplots, as by your first understanding those, you will be the better able to judge of the Characters of the persons concerned.

Before my piece, *signed Common Sense*, addressed to Mr. Deane, came out, I gave the Printer, Mr. Dunlap, authority to give my real name and place of residence to Mr. Deane, that he might know where and on whom to call if he found himself injured, or had any thing to resent; and I had reason to expect (by the threatenings which Mr. Deane's friend informed me of, and who came to my lodgings on purpose, having never been there before) and likewise from other intimations, that I should be called upon; and under this expectation I took care not to be out of the way, but remained constantly at home the two following days. No person came.

In the next newspaper after my piece came out, some one or more informed the public, "That *Common Sense* would be answered by a person under the signature of Plain Truth, *and that the writer's name would be left with the Printer.*" And in the piece itself signed Plain Truth, the writer says, "*his name is left with the Printer.*" By these repeated assertions the public were, no doubt, induced to believe that the author of Plain Truth was too much a man of honor and veracity to impose upon them, or to conceal himself from the author of *Common Sense*, when called upon.

As I saw my own personal character treated, in that piece, with an unjust degree of scandalous freedom, I sent my name in a written note to the printer (which note he has my leave to show to any person whatever), and desired him to give me up the author of Plain Truth. To this I received no answer. On the next day I engaged a gentleman, a friend of mine, to call on the Printer, and make the same demand, authorising him to use my name if he choose; because as one of the public he had a right to make the demand in his own person. I choose in this place to relate the exact conversation as given me in writing by that gentleman.

"Pray, Mr. Dunlap, who is the author of *Plain Truth*?" Mr. Dunlap replied, "Aye, that indeed!" The gentleman rejoined, "*Surely, I have a right to know the author; he has, he says, left his name with you for the information of those who choose to know.*" Mr. Dunlap replied,

"Sir, you shall know, but Mr. Paine has demanded his name in a letter to me, and he has a right to be first informed. *He* shall be informed in writing this evening, and you, if you please, shall know to-morrow morning." The gentleman answered, "*It is very well.*" This passed on Wednesday.

I waited the remainder of that day, and the next till five o'clock, and no name was sent to me. I then applied by a written note again to the same gentleman, to solicit his further assistance. When he came to me, I told him I had received no answer to my demand. He replied, "he had," and at the same time mentioned as his opinion, that the name then given to him was not, and could not be, the real one. Neither was it given up as the real author's name. He then produced a note written to Mr. Dunlap, which note Mr. Dunlap had just then given to him to communicate to me. The note has neither date or place. In said note, the name of "*M. Clarkson,*" who, as I am told, is an Aid de Camp to General Arnold, is given up as the person who undertakes to "*avow* the piece under the signature of Plain Truth, in the Pennsylvania Packet of December 21st."

As I consider this proceeding to be a low and pitiful evasion, both towards the public and myself personally, I shall therefore treat it as all such proceedings deserve. And if this young man, whom I do not know even by sight, has been so weak, or influenced by promises or other motives, to stand in a gap to screen an unseen incendiary, and that in a matter he has no business with, and can know scarcely anything of, he truly deserves that kind of chastisement which the law best inflicts. I shall therefore order an Attorney to prosecute him, as a party concerned in publishing a false malicious libel, tending to injure the reputation of the "Secretary for Foreign Affairs," which mode of proceeding will likewise afford him an opportunity of proving what he has, I believe, so unnecessarily made his own. And when I can discover the real author or authors, I shall serve them in the same manner, as by their skulking cowardice they deserve no other treatment.

THOMAS PAINE,

Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and Author of all the Writings under the Signature of *Common Sense*.

PHILADELPHIA, December 28, 1778.

P. S. The above was to have appeared in the paper of Saturday last, and was sent to the Printer for that purpose on Friday noon; but as the

gentleman alluded to in the above was not present to explain the conversation which passed between him and Mr. Dunlap, it was therefore found necessary to defer it.

In justice to Mr. Dunlap, I think it proper to mention that his delay in giving up the *writer's* name was because it was not left with him; and that, as far as I can learn, he was obliged to make repeated applications to get even that which is now given.

T. P.

TO THE PUBLIC ON MR. DEANE'S AFFAIR<sup>36</sup>

Hoping this to be my last on the subject of Mr. Deane's conduct and address, I shall therefore make a few remarks on what has already appeared in the papers, and furnish you with some interesting and explanatory facts; and whatever I may conceive necessary to say of myself will conclude the piece. As it is my design to make those that can scarcely read understand, shall therefore avoid every literary ornament, and put it in language as plain as the alphabet.

I desire the public to understand that this is not a personal dispute between Mr. Deane and me, but is a matter of business in which they are more interested than they seemed at first to be apprised of. I rather wonder that no person was curious enough to ask in the papers how affairs stood between Congress and Mr. Deane as to money matters. And likewise, what it was that Mr. Deane has so repeatedly applied to the Congress for without success. Perhaps those two questions, properly asked, and justly answered, would have unravelled a great part of the mystery, and explained the reason why he threw out, at such a *particular time*, such a strange address. They might likewise have asked, whether there had been any former dispute between Mr. Deane and Arthur or William Lee, and what it was about? Mr. Deane's round-about charges against the Lees are accompanied with a kind of rancor that differs exceedingly from public-spirited zeal. For my part, I have but a very slender opinion of those patriots, if they can be called such, who never appear till provoked to it by a personal quarrel, and then blaze away, the hero of their own tale, and in a whirlwind of their own raising; such men are very seldom what the populace mean by the word "staunch,"

<sup>36</sup> This open letter was published in the *Pennsylvania Packet* of December 31, 1778, and January 2, 5, 7 and 9, 1779. It was not to be Paine's "last on the subject of Mr. Deane's conduct and address."—*Editor*.

and it is only by a continuance of service that any public can become a judge of a man's principles.

When I first took up this matter, I expected at least to be abused, and I have not been disappointed. It was the last and only refuge they had and, thank God, I had nothing to dread from it. I might have escaped it if I would, either by being silent, or by joining in the tumult. A gentleman, a Member of Congress, an associate, I believe, of Mr. Deane's, and one whom I would wish had not a hand in the piece signed Plain Truth, very politely asked me, a few days before Common Sense to Mr. Deane came out, whether on that subject I was *pro* or *con*. I replied, I knew no *pro* or *con*, nor any other sides than right or wrong.

Mr. Deane had objected to my putting the signature of Common Sense to my address to him, and the gentleman who came to my lodgings urged the same objections; their reasons for so doing may, I think, be easily guessed at. The signature has, I believe, an extensive reputation, and which, I trust, will never be forfeited while in my possession. As I do not choose to comply with the proposal that was made to me for changing it, therefore Mr. Plain Truth, as he calls himself, and his connections, may endeavor to take off from the credit of the signature, by a torrent of low-toned abuse without wit, matter or sentiment.

Had Mr. Deane confined himself to his proper line of conduct, he would never have been interrupted by me, or exposed himself to suspicious criticism. But departing from this, he has thrown himself on the ocean of the public, where nothing but the firmest integrity can preserve him from becoming a wreck. A smooth and flattering tale may do for a while, but unless it can be supported with facts, and maintained by the most incontestable proof, it will fall to the ground and leave the inventor in the lurch.

On the first view of things, there is something in Mr. Deane's conduct which must appear mysterious to every disinterested man, if he will but give himself time to reflect. Mr. Deane has been arrived in America, and in this city, upwards of five months, and had he been possessed of any secrets which affected, or seemed to affect, the interest of America, or known any kind of treachery, misconduct, or neglect of duty in any of the other Commissioners, or in any other person, he ought, as an honest man, to have disclosed it immediately on his arrival, either to the Committee for Foreign Affairs, of which I have the honor to be Secretary, or to Congress. Mr. Deane has done neither, notwithstanding he has had two audiences with Congress in August last, and might at

any time have laid his written information before them, or before the Committee, through whom all his foreign concerns had passed, and in whose hands, or rather in mine, are lodged all his political correspondence, and those of other Commissioners.

From an unwillingness to expose Mr. Deane and his adherents too much, I contented myself in my first piece with showing their inconsistency rather than their intentions, and gave them room to retract by concealing their discredit. It is necessary that I should now speak a plainer language.

The public have totally mistaken this matter, and when they come to understand it rightly, they will see it in a very different light to what they at first supposed it. They seemed to conceive, and great pains have been taken to make them believe, that Mr. Deane had repeatedly applied to Congress to obtain an audience, in order to lay before them some great and important discoveries, and that the Congress had refused to hear such information. It is, gentlemen, no such thing. If Mr. Deane or any one else had told you so, they have imposed upon you.

If you attend to a part of Mr. Deane's address to you, you will find there, even from his own account, what it was that he wanted an interview with Congress for, viz. *to get some how or other through his own perplexed affairs, and obtain an audience of leave and departure that he might embark for France*, and which if he could have obtained, there is every reason to believe, he would have quitted America in silence, and that the public would never have been *favoured* with his address, nor I plagued with the trouble of putting it to rights. The part which I allude to is this "*and having placed my papers and yours in safety, I left Paris, in full confidence that I should not be detained in America,*" to which he adds this curious expression, "on the business I was sent for." To be "*detained*" at home is a new transposition of ideas, especially in a man who had been absent from it two years and a half, and serves to show that Mr. Deane was become so wonderfully foreignized that he had quite forgotten poor Connecticut.

As I shall have frequent occasions to make use of the name of Congress, I request you to suspend all kind of opinions on any supposed obligations which I am said to lie under to that body, till you hear what I have to say in the conclusion of this address, for if Mr. Deane's accounts stand as clear with them as mine do, he might very easily have brought his papers from France. I have several times repeated, and I again repeat it, that my whole design in taking this matter up, was and

is, to prevent the public being imposed upon, and the event must and will convince them of it.

I now proceed to put the affair into such a straight line that you cannot misunderstand it.

Mr. Deane wrote his address to you some time in November, and kept it by him in order to publish or not as it might suit his purpose.<sup>37</sup> On the 30th day of the same month he applied by letter to Congress, and what do you think it was for? To give them any important information? No. To "tell them what he has wrote to you?" No, it was to acquaint them *that he had missed agreeable opportunities of returning to France*; dismal misfortune indeed! And that the season (of the year) is now becoming as *pressing* as the *business* which calls him *back*, and therefore he *earnestly entreated the attention of Congress*, to what? To his great information? No, to his important discoveries? No, but to

<sup>37</sup> This is fully proved by the address itself which is dated *November*, but without any day of the month, and the same is likewise acknowledged by his blundering friend Mr. Plain Truth. His words are, "Mr. Deane, it is true, wrote his address" (dated November) "previous to his application to Congress, of the 30th of November." He certainly could not write it after, there being, unfortunately for him, but thirty days in that month; "but," continues Mr. Plain Truth, "he was determined notwithstanding some *forceable reasons*, which the *vigilant* part of the public are at no loss to *guess*, not to publish it if he could be assured of an *early* audience with Congress." Mr. Deane was in a confounded hurry, sure that he could not submit to be *detained in America* till the next day, for on that very next day, December 1st, *in consequence of his letter* the Congress, "*Resolved to spend two hours each day, beginning at six in the evening, till the state of their foreign affairs should be fully ascertained.*" This naturally included all and every part of Mr. Deane's affairs, information and everything else, and it is impossible but he (connected as he is with some late and present Members of Congress) should know immediately about it.

I should be glad to be informed what those "*forceable reasons*" are at which the *vigilant* part of the public "*guess*" and likewise how early Mr. Deane expected an audience, since the resolution of the *next day* appears to have been too late. I am suspicious that it was too soon, and that Mr. Deane and his connections were not prepared for such an *early* examination notwithstanding he had been here upwards of five months, and if the thing is to be "*guessed*" at last, and that by the *vigilant* part of the public, I think I have as great a right to *guess* as most men, and Mr. Plain Truth, if he pleases, may *guess* what I mean; but lest he should mistake I will tell him my guess, it is, that the whole affair is a juggle to amuse the people with, in order to prevent the state of foreign affairs being inquired into, and Mr. Deane's accounts, and those he is connected with in America settled as they ought to be; and were I to go on *guessing*, I should likewise *guess* that this is the reason why his accounts are left behind, though I know many people inclined to guess that he has them with him but has forgot them; for my part I don't choose to *present* to go so far. If any one can give a better guess than I have done I shall give mine up, but as the gentlemen choose to submit it to a guess, I choose therefore to take them upon their own terms, and put in for the honor of being right. It was, I think, an *injudicious* word for them to use, especially at Christmas time.—*Author.*

his own *situation and requests*. These are, I believe, his own words.

Now it only remains to know whether Mr. Deane's official affairs were in a fit position for him to be permitted to quit America or not; and I trust, that when I tell you, I have been Secretary for Foreign Affairs almost two years, you will allow that I must be some judge of the matter.

You have already heard what Mr. Deane's application to Congress was for. And as one of the public, under the well known signature of Common Sense, I humbly conceive, that the Congress have done that which as a faithful body of Representatives they ought to do, that is, they ordered an inquiry into the state of foreign affairs and accounts which Mr. Deane had been intrusted with, before they could, with justice to you, grant the request he asked. And this was the more necessary to be done, because Mr. Deane says he has left his papers and accounts behind him. Did ever any steward, when called upon, to surrender up his stewardship make such a weak and frivolous excuse? Mr. Deane saw himself not only *recalled* but *superseded* in his office by another person, and he could have no right to think he should *return*, nor any pretense to come away without the necessary credentials.

His friend and associate, and perhaps partner too, Mr. Plain Truth, says, that I have endeavored in my address, to "throw out a suggestion that Mr. Deane is considered [by] Congress as a defaulter of public money." The gentlemen seem to wince before they are touched. I have nowhere said so, but this I will say, that his accounts are not satisfactory. Mr. Plain Truth endeavors to palliate what he cannot contradict, and with a seeming triumph assures the public "that Mr. Deane not long after his arrival laid before Congress a *general* state of the receipts and expenditures of the monies which passed through his hands"; to which Mr. Plain Truth subjoins the following extraordinary apology: "It is true the account was not accompanied with all the vouchers for the particular expenditures." And why not I ask? for without those it was no account at all; it was what the sailors call a boot account, so much money gone and the Lord knows for what. Mr. Deane had secretaries and clerks, and ought to have known better than to produce such an account to Congress, especially as his colleague Arthur Lee had declared in an office letter, which is in my possession, that he had no concern in Mr. Deane's contracts.

Neither does the excuse, which his whirligig friend Mr. Plain Truth



makes for him, apply to his case; this random shot gentleman, in order to bring him as easily off as possible, says, "that any person in the least conversant with business, knows the time which is requisite for calling in manufacturers' and tradesmen's bills, and prepare accounts and vouchers for a final settlement"; and this he mentions because Mr. Deane received his order of recall the 4th of March, and left Paris the 31st: here is, however, four weeks within a day. I shall make three remarks upon this curious excuse.

First, it is contradictory. Mr. Deane could not obtain the total or general expenditure without having the particulars, therefore he must be in the possession of the particulars. He surely did not pass away money without taking receipts, and what was due upon credit, he could only know from the bills delivered in.

Secondly, Mr. Deane's contracts did not lay in the retail way, and therefore were easily collected.

Thirdly, The accounts which it was Mr. Deane's particular duty to settle were those which he contracted in the time of being only a commercial agent in 1776, before the arrival of Dr. Franklin and Arthur Lee, which separate agency of his expired upwards of fifteen months before he left France,—and surely that was time enough,—and in which period of his agency, there happened an unexplained contract of about two hundred thousand pounds sterling. But more of this when I come to remark on the ridiculous puffs with which Mr. Plain Truth has set off Mr. Deane's pretended services in France.

Mr. Deane has not only left the public papers and accounts behind him, but he has given no information to Congress, where or in whose hands they are; he says in his address to you, that he has left them in a safe place, and this is all which is known of the matter. Does this look like business? Has it an open and candid or a mysterious and suspicious appearance? Or would it have been right in Congress to have granted Mr. Deane an audience of leave and departure in this embarrassed state of his affairs? And because they have not, his ready written November address has been thrown out to abuse them and amuse you by directing you to another object; and myself, for endeavoring to unriddle confusion, have been loaded with reproach by his partisans and partners, and represented as a writer, who like an unprincipled lawyer had let himself out for pay. Charges which the propagators of them know to be false, because some, who have encouraged the report, are Members of Congress themselves, and know my situation to be directly the reverse.

But this I shall explain in the conclusion; and I give the gentlemen notice of it, that if they can make out anything against me, or prove that I ever received a single farthing, public or private, for any thing I ever wrote, they may convict me publicly, and if they do not, I hope they will be honest enough to take shame to themselves for the falsehood they have supported. And I likewise request that they would inform the public what my salary as Secretary for Foreign Affairs is, otherwise I shall be obliged to do it myself. I shall not spare them and I beg they would not spare me. But to return—

There is something in this concealment of papers that looks like an embezzlement. Mr. Deane came so privately from France, that he even concealed his departure from his colleague Arthur Lee, of which he complains by a letter in my office, and consequently the papers are not in his hands; and had he left them with Dr. Franklin he would undoubtedly have taken the Doctor's receipt for them, and left nobody to "guess," at what Mr. Deane meant by a *safe place*: A man may leave his own private affairs in the hands of a friend, but the papers of a nation are of another nature, and ought never to be trusted with any person whatever out of the direct line of business. This I conceive to be another reason which justifies Congress in not granting Mr. Deane an audience of leave and departure till they are assured where those papers are. Mr. Deane might have been taken at sea, he might have died or been cast away on his passage back from France, or he might have been settled there, as Madame D'Eon did in England, and quarrelled afterwards as she did with the power that employed him. Many accidents might have happened by which those papers and accounts might have been totally lost, the secrets got into the hands of the enemy, and the possibility of settling the expenditure of public money forever prevented. No apology can be made for Mr. Deane, as to the danger of the seas, or their being taken by the enemy, in his attempt to bring them over himself, because it ought always to be remembered that he came in a fleet of twelve sail of the line.<sup>38</sup>

I shall now quit this part of the subject to take notice of a paragraph in Mr. Plain Truth.

In my piece to Mr. Deane I said, that his address was dated in November, without any day of the month, that on the last day of that month

<sup>38</sup> For evidence that Paine was justified in this charge, see W. Bodham Donne, *The Correspondence of King George the Third with Lord North from 1768 to 1783*, London, 1867.—Editor.

he applied to Congress, that on the 1st of December the Congress resolved to investigate the state of their foreign affairs, of which Mr. Deane had notice, and that on the fourth he informed them of his receiving that notification and expressed his thanks, yet that on the fifth he published his extraordinary address.

Mr. Plain Truth, in commenting upon this arrangement of facts has helped me to a new discovery. He says, that Mr. Deane's thanks of the fourth of December were only expressed to the President, Henry Laurens Esqr: for personally informing him of the resolution and other attention to his Affairs, and *not*, as I had said, *to Congress for the resolution itself*. I give him credit for this, and believe it to be true; for my opinion of the matter is, that Mr. Deane's views were to get off without any inquiry, and that the resolution referred to was his great disappointment. By all accounts which have been given both by Mr. Deane's friends and myself, we all agree in this, that Mr. Deane knew of the resolution of Congress before he published his address, and situated as he is he could not help knowing it two or three days before his address came out. Why then did he publish it, since the very thing which he ought to have asked for, viz. an inquiry into his affairs was ordered to be immediately gone into?

I wish in this place to step for a moment from the floor of office, and press it on every State, to inquire what mercantile connections any of their *late* or present delegates have had or now have with Mr. Deane, and that a precedent might not be wanting, it is important that this State, *Pennsylvania should begin*.

The uncommon fury which has been spread to support Mr. Deane cannot be altogether for his sake. Those who were the original propagators of it, are not remarkable for gratitude. If they excel in anything it is in the contrary principle and a selfish attachment to their own interest. It would suit their plan exceedingly well to have Mr. Deane appointed Ambassador to Holland, because so situated, he would make a very convenient partner in trade or a useful factor.

In order to rest Mr. Deane on the shoulders of the public, he has been set off with the most pompous puffs—The Saviour of his Country—the Patriot of America—the True Friend of the Public—the Great Supporter of the cause in Europe,—and a thousand other full-blown bubbles, equally ridiculous and equally untrue. Never were the public more wretchedly imposed upon. An attempt was made to call a town meeting to return him thanks and to march in a body to Congress to

demand justice for Mr. Deane. And this brings me to a part in Mr. Plain Truth's address to me, in which he speaks of Mr. Deane's services in France, and defies me to disapprove them. If any late or present Member of Congress has been concerned in writing that piece, I think it necessary to tell him, that he either knows very little of the state of foreign affairs, or ought to blush in thus attempting to rob a friendly nation, France, of her honors, to bestow them on a man who so little deserves them.

Mr. Deane was sent to France in the Spring, 1776, as a Commercial Agent, under the authority of the Committee which is now styled the Committee for Foreign Affairs. He had no commission of any kind from Congress; and his instructions were to assume no other character but that of a merchant; yet in this line of action Mr. Plain Truth has the ignorance to dub him a "public Minister" and likewise says,

"that before the first of December, after his arrival he had formed and cultivated the esteem of a valuable political and commercial connection, not only in France but in other parts of Europe, laid the foundation of a public loan, procured thirty thousand stand of arms, thirty thousand suits of clothes, more than two hundred and fifty pieces of brass cannon, and a great amount of tents and military stores, provided vessels to transport them, and in spite of various and almost inconceivable obstructions great part of these articles were shipped and arrived in America before the operations of the campaign in 1777." To which Mr. Plain Truth adds, "That he has had the means of being acquainted with all these circumstances, avows them to be facts, and *defies* Common Sense or any other person to disprove them."

Poor Mr. Plain Truth, and his avower Mr. Clarkson, have most unfortunately for them challenged the wrong person, and fallen into the right hands when they fell into mine, for without stirring a step from the room I am writing in, or asking a single question of any one, I have it in my power, not only to contradict but disprove it.

It is, I confess, a nice point to touch upon, but the necessity of un-deceiving the public with respect to Mr. Deane, and the right they have to know the early friendship of the French nation towards them at the time of their greatest wants, will justify my doing it. I feel likewise the less difficulty in it, because the whole affair respecting those supplies has been in the hands of the enemy at least twelve months, and consequently the necessity for concealing it is superseded. Besides which, the two nations, viz. France and England, being now come to an open rupture makes the secret unnecessary. It was immediately on the discovery

of this affair by the enemy fifteen months ago, that the British Ministry began to change their ground and planned what they call their Conciliatory Bills. They got possession of this secret by stealing the dispatches of October, 1777, which should have come over by Captain Folger, and this likewise explains the controversy which the British Commissioners carried on with Congress, in attempting to prove that England had planned what they called her Conciliatory Bills, before France moved towards a treaty; for even admitting that assertion to be true, the case is, that they planned those bills in consequence of the knowledge they had stolen.<sup>39</sup>

The supplies here alluded to, are those which were sent from France in the *Amphitrite*, *Seine* and *Mercury* about two years ago. They had at first the appearance of a present, but whether so, or on credit, the service was nevertheless a great and friendly one, and though only part of them arrived the kindness is the same. A considerable time afterwards the same supplies appeared under the head of a charge amounting to about two hundred thousand pounds sterling, and it is the unexplained contract I alluded to when I spoke of the pompous puffs made use of to support Mr. Deane. On the appearance of this charge the Congress were exceedingly embarrassed as to what line of conduct to pursue. To be insensible of a favor, which has before now been practised between nations, would have implied a want of just conceptions; and to have refused it would have been a species of proud

<sup>39</sup> When Captain Folger arrived at Yorktown [Pa.] he delivered a packet which contained nothing but blank paper, that had been put under the cover of the dispatches which were taken out. This fraud was acted by the persons to whom they were first entrusted to be brought to America, and who afterwards absconded, having given by way of deception the blank packet to Captain Folger. The Congress were by this means left without any information of European affairs. It happened that a private letter from Dr. Franklin to myself, in which he wrote to me respecting my undertaking the history of the present revolution, and engaged to furnish me with all his materials towards the completion of that work, escaped the pilfering by not being enclosed in the packet with the dispatches. I received this letter at Lancaster through the favor of the President, Henry Laurens, Esqr., and as it was the only letter which contained any authentic intelligence of the general state of our affairs in France, I transmitted it again to him to be communicated to Congress. This likewise was the only intelligence which was received from France from May, 1777, to May 2d, 1778, when the treaty arrived; wherefore, laying aside the point controverted by the British Commissioners as to which moved first, France or England, it is evident that the resolutions of Congress of April 22d, 1778, for totally rejecting the British Bills, were grounded entirely on the determination of America to support her cause,—a circumstance which gives the highest honor to the resolutions alluded to, and at the same time gives such a character of her fortitude as heightens her value, when considered as an ally, which though it had at that time taken place, was, to her, perfectly unknown.—*Author*.

rusticity. To have asked the question was both difficult and awkward; to take no notice of it would have been insensibility itself; and to have seemed backward in payment, if they were to be paid for, would have impeached both the justice and the credit of America. In this state of difficulties such inquiries were made as were judged necessary, in order that Congress might know how to proceed. Still nothing satisfactory could be obtained. The answer which Mr. Deane signed so lately as February 16th last past (and who ought to know most of the matter, because the *shipping* the supplies was while he acted alone) is as ambiguous as the rest of his conduct. I will venture to give it, as there is no political secret in it and the matter wants explanation.

“Hear that Mr. B[eaumarchais] has sent over a person to demand a large sum of you on account of arms, ammunition, etc.,—think it will be best for you to leave that matter to be settled here (France), as there is a mixture in it of public and private concern which you cannot so well develop.”

Why did not Mr. Deane complete the contract so as it might be developed, or at least state to Congress any difficulties that had arisen? When Mr. Deane had his two audiences with Congress in August last, he objected, or his friends for him, against his answering the questions that might be asked him, and the ground upon which the objection was made, was, because *a man could not legally be compelled to answer questions that might tend to criminate himself*.—Yet this is the same Mr. Deane whose address you saw in the *Pennsylvania Packet* of December 5 signed Silas Deane.

Having thus shown the loose manner of Mr. Deane's doing business in France, which is rendered the more intricate by his leaving his papers behind, or his not producing them; I come now to inquire into what degree of merit or credit Mr. Deane is entitled to as to the procuring these supplies, either as a present or a purchase.

Mr. Plain Truth has given him the whole. Mr. Plain Truth therefore knows nothing of the matter, or something worse. If Mr. Deane or any other gentleman will procure an order from Congress to inspect an account in my office, or any of Mr. Deane's friends in Congress will take the trouble of coming themselves, I will give him or them my attendance and show them in a handwriting which Mr. Deane is well acquainted with, that the supplies, he so pompously plumes himself upon, were promised and engaged, and that as a present, before he ever *arrived* in France, and the part that fell to Mr. Deane was only to

see it done, and how he has performed that service, the public are now acquainted with. The last paragraph in the account is, "*Upon Mr. Deane's arrival in France the business went into his hands and the aids were at length embarked in the Amphitrite, Mercury and Seine.*"

What will Mr. Deane or his aide-de-camp say to this, or what excuse will they make now? If they have met with any cutting truths from me, they must thank themselves for it. My address to Mr. Deane was not only moderate but civil, and he and his adherents had much better have submitted to it quietly, than provoked more material matter to appear against them. I had at that time all the facts in my hands which I have related since, or shall yet relate in my reply. The only thing I aimed at in the address, was, to give out just as much as might prevent the public from being so grossly imposed upon by them, and yet save Mr. Deane and his adherents from appearing too wretched and despicable. My fault was a misplaced tenderness, which they must now be fully sensible of, and the misfortune to them, is, that I have not yet done.

Had Mr. Plain Truth only informed the Public that Mr. Deane had been industrious in promoting and forwarding the sending the supplies, his assertion would have passed uncontradicted by me, because I must naturally suppose that Mr. Dean would do no otherwise; but to give him the whole and sole honor of *procuring* them, and that, without yielding any part of the honor to the public spirit and good disposition of those who furnished them, and who likewise must in every shape have put up with the total loss of them had America been overpowered by her enemies, is, in my opinion, placing the reputation and affection of our allies not only in a disadvantageous, but in an unjust point of view, and concealing from the public what they ought to know.

Mr. Plain Truth declares that he knows all the circumstances, why then did he not place them in a proper line, and give the public a clear information how they arose? The proposal for sending over those supplies, appears to have been originally made by some public spirited gentleman in France, before ever Mr. Deane arrived there, or was known or heard of in that country, and to have been communicated (personally by Mr. Beaumarchais, the gentleman mentioned in the letter signed J. L. which letter is given at length by Mr. Plain Truth) to Mr. Arthur Lee while resident in London about three years ago. From Mr. B's manner of expression, Mr. Lee understood the supplies to be a present, and has signified it in that light. It is very easy to see that if America had

miscarried, they *must* have been a present, which probably adds explanation to the matter. But Mr. Deane is spoken of by Mr. Plain Truth, as having an importance of his *own*, and procuring those supplies through that importance; whereas he could only rise and fall with the country that empowered him to act, and be *in* or *out* of credit, as to money matters, from the same cause and in the same proportion; and every body must suppose, that there were greater and more original wheels at work than he was capable of setting in motion. Exclusive of the matter being begun before Mr. Deane's arrival, Mr. Plain Truth has given him the whole merit of every part of the transaction. America and France are wholly left out of the question, the former as to her growing importance and credit, from which all Mr. Deane's consequence was derived, and the latter, as to her generosity in furnishing those supplies, at a time, when the risk of losing them appears to have been as great as our want of them.

I have always understood thus much of the matter, that if we did not succeed no payment would be required, and I think myself fully entitled to believe, and to publish my belief, that whether Mr. Deane had arrived in France or not, or any other gentleman in his stead, those same supplies would have found their way to America. But as the nature of the contract has not been explained by any of Mr. Deane's letters and is left in obscurity by the account he signed the 16th of February last, which I have already quoted, therefore the full explanation must rest upon other authority.

I have been the more explicit on this subject, not so much on Mr. Deane's account, as from a principle of public justice. It shows, in the first instance, that the greatness of the American cause drew, at its first beginning, the attention of Europe, and that the justness of it was such as appeared to merit support; and in the second instance, that those who are now her allies, prefaced that alliance by an early and generous friendship; yet, that we might not attribute too much to human or auxiliary aid, so unfortunate were those supplies, that only one ship out of the three arrived. The *Mercury* and *Seine* fell into the hands of the enemy.

Mr. Deane, in his address, speaks of himself as "*sacrificed for the aggrandizement of others*" and promises to inform the public of "*what he has done and what he has suffered.*" What Mr. Deane means by being *sacrificed* the Lord knows, and what he has *suffered* is equally as mysterious. It was his good fortune to be situated in an elegant coun-



try and at a public charge, while we were driven about from pillar to post. He appears to know but little of the hardships and losses which his countrymen underwent in the period of his fortunate absence. It fell not to his lot to turn out to a winter's campaign, and sleep without tent or blanket. He returned to America when the danger was over, and has since that time suffered no personal hardship. What then are Mr. Deane's *sufferings* and what the sacrifices he complains of? Has he lost money in the public service? I believe not. Has he got any? That I cannot tell. I can assure him that I have not, and he, if he pleases, may make the same declaration.

Surely the Congress might recall Mr. Deane if they thought proper, without an insinuated charge of injustice for so doing. The authority of America must be little indeed when she cannot change a Commissioner without being insulted by him. And I conceive Mr. Deane as speaking in the most disrespectful language of the authority of America when he says in his address, that in December 1776 he was "honored with one colleague, and *saddled* with another." Was Mr. Deane to dictate who should be Commissioner, and who should not? It was time, however, to saddle him, as he calls it, with somebody, as I shall show before I conclude.

When we have elected our Representatives, either in Congress or in the Assembly, it is for our own good that we support them in the execution of that authority they derive from us. If Congress is to be abused by every one whom they may appoint or remove, there is an end to all useful delegation of power, and the public accounts in the hands of individuals will never be settled. There has, I believe, been too much of this work practised already, and it is time that the public should now make those matters a point of consideration. But who will begin the disagreeable talk?

I look on the independence of America to be as firmly established as that of any country which is at war. Length of time is no guarantee when arms are to decide the fate of a nation. Hitherto our whole anxiety has been absorbed in the means for supporting our independence, and we have paid but little attention to the expenditure of money; yet we see it daily depreciating, and how should it be otherwise when so few public accounts are settled, and new emissions continually going on?—I will venture to mention one circumstance which I hope will be sufficient to awaken the attention of the public to this subject. In October, 1777, some books of the Commercial Committee, in which, among other

things, were kept the accounts of Mr. Thomas Morris, appointed a commercial agent in France, were by Mr. Robert Morris's request taken into his possession to be settled, he having obtained from the council of this State six months' leave of absence from Congress to settle his affairs. In February following those books were called for by Congress, but not being completed were not delivered. In September, 1778 Mr. Morris returned them to Congress, in, or nearly in, the same unsettled state he took them, which, with the death of Mr. Thomas Morris, may probably involve those accounts in further embarrassment. The amount of expenditure on those books is considerably above two millions of dollars.<sup>40</sup>

I now quit this subject to take notice of a paragraph in Mr. Plain Truth, relative to myself. It never fell to my lot to have to do with a more illiberal set of men than those of Mr. Deane's advocates who were concerned in writing that piece. They have neither wit, manners nor honesty; an instance of which I shall now produce. In speaking of Mr. Deane's contracts with individuals in France I said in my address "We are all fully sensible, that the gentlemen who have come from France since the arrival of Dr. Franklin and Mr. Lee in that Country are of a different rank from *the generality of those* with whom Mr. Deane contracted when alone." These are the exact words I used in my address.

Mr. Plain Truth has misquoted the above paragraph into his piece, and that in a manner, which shows him to be a man of little reading and less principle. The method in which he has quoted it is as follows: "All are fully sensible that the gentlemen who came from France since the arrival of Dr. Franklin and Mr. Lee in that country, are of a different rank from those with whom Mr. Deane contracted when acting

<sup>40</sup> There is an article in the Constitution of this State, which, were it at this time introduced as a Continental regulation, might be of infinite service; I mean a Council of *censors* to inspect into the expenditure of public money and call defaulters to an account. It is, in my opinion, one of the best things in the Constitution, and that which the people ought never to give up, and whenever they do they will deserve to be cheated. It has not the most favorable look that those who are hoping to succeed to the government of this State, by a change in the Constitution, are so anxious to get that article abolished. Let expenses be ever so great, only let them be fair and necessary, and no good citizen will grumble.

Perhaps it may be said, Why do not the Congress do those things? To which I might, by another question reply, Why don't you support them when they attempt it? It is not quite so easy a matter to accomplish that point in Congress as perhaps many conceive; men will always find friends and connections among the body that appoints them, which will render all such inquiries difficult.—*Author.*

separately." Thus by leaving out the words "*the generality of,*" Mr. Plain Truth has altered the sense of my expression, so as to suit a most malicious purpose in his own, which could be no other, than that of embroiling me with the French gentlemen that have remained; whereas it is evident, that my mode of expression was intended to do justice to such characters as Fleury and Touzard, by making a distinction they are clearly entitled to. Mr. Plain Truth not content with unjustly subjecting me to the misconceptions of those gentlemen, with whom even explanation was difficult on account of the language, but in addition to his injustice, endeavored to provoke them to it by calling on them, and reminding them that they were the "*Guardians of their own honor.*" And I have reason to believe, that either Mr. Plain Truth or some of the party did not even stop here, but went so far as personally to excite them on. Mr. Fleury came to my lodgings and complained that I had done him great injustice, but that he was sure I did not intend it, because he was certain that I knew him better. He confessed to me that he was pointed at and told that I meant him, and he withal desired, that as I knew his services and character, that I would put the matter right in the next paper. I endeavored to explain to him that the mistake was not mine, and we parted. I do not remember that in the course of my reading I ever met with a more illiberal and malicious misquotation, and the more so when all the circumstances are taken with it. Yet this same Mr. Plain Truth, whom no body knows, has the impertinence to give himself out to be a man of "*education*" and to inform the public that "he is not a writer from *inclination* much less by *profession,*" to which he might safely have added, *still less by capacity, and least of all by principle.* As Mr. Clarkson has undertaken to avow the piece signed Plain Truth, I shall therefore consider him as legally accountable for the apparent malicious intentions of this mis-quotation, and he may get whom he pleases to speak or write a defense of him.

I conceive that the *general* distinction I referred to between those with whom Mr. Deane contracted when alone, and those who have come from France since the arrival of Dr. Franklin and Mr. Lee in that Country, is sufficiently warranted. That gallant and amiable officer and volunteer the Marquis de Lafayette, and some others whom Mr. Plain Truth mentions, did not come from France till after the arrival of the additional Commissioners, and proves my assertion to be true. My remark is confined to the many and unnecessary ones with which Mr. Deane burdened and distracted the army. If he acquired any part

of his popularity in France by this means he made the continent pay smartly for it. Many thousand pounds it cost America, and that in money totally sunk, on account of Mr. Deane's injudicious contracts, and what renders it the more unpardonable is that by the instructions he took with him, he was *restricted* from making them, and consequently by having no authority had an easy answer to give to solicitations. It was Doctor Franklin's answer as soon as he arrived and might have been Mr. Deane's. Gentlemen of science or literature or conversant with the polite or useful arts, will, I presume, always find a welcome reception in America, at least with persons of a liberal cast, and with the bulk of the people.

In speaking of Mr. Deane's contracts with foreign officers, I concealed out of pity to him a circumstance that must have sufficiently shown the necessity of recalling him, and, either his great want of judgment, or the danger of trusting him with discretionary power. It is no less than that of his throwing out a proposal, in one of his last foreign letters, for contracting with a German prince<sup>41</sup> to command the American army. For my own part I was no ways surprised when I read it, though I presume almost everybody else will be so when they hear it, and I think when he got to this length it was time to *saddle* him.

Mr. Deane was directed by the Committee which employed him to engage four able engineers in France, and beyond this he had neither authority nor commission. But disregarding his instructions (a fault criminal in a negotiator) he proceeded through the several degrees of subalterns, to captains, majors, lieutenant colonels, colonels, brigadier generals and at last to major generals; he fixed their rank, regulated their command, and on some, I believe, he bestowed a pension. At this stage, I set him down for a commander-in-chief, and his next letter proved me prophetic. Mr. Plain Truth, in the course of his numerous encomiums on Mr. Deane, says, that—

“The letter of the Count de Vergennes, written by order of his Most Christian Majesty to Congress, speaking of Mr. Deane in the most honorable manner, and the letter from that Minister in his own character, written not in the language of a courtier, but in that of a person who felt what he expressed, would be sufficient to counterbalance, not only the opinions of the writer of the address to Mr. Deane, but even of characters of more influence,

<sup>41</sup> See Donne, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 116, for a letter of George III which proves that Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, the king's brother-in-law, had actually received such a proposal.—*Editor.*

who may vainly endeavor to circulate notions of his insignificancy and unfitness for a public minister."

The supreme authority of one country, however different may be its mode, will ever pay a just regard to that of another, more especially when in alliance. But those letters can extend no further than to such parts of Mr. Deane's conduct as came under the immediate notice of the Court as a public Minister, or a political agent; and cannot be supposed to interfere with such other parts as might be disapproved in him here as a contractor or a commercial agent, and can in no place be applied as an extenuation of any imprudence of his either there or since his return; besides which, letters of this kind, are as much intended to compliment the power that employs, as the person employed; and upon the whole, I fear Mr. Deane has presumed too much upon the polite friendship of that nation, and engrossed to himself, a regard, that was partly intended to express, through him, an affection to the continent.

Mr. Deane should likewise recollect that the early appearance of any gentleman from America, was a circumstance, so agreeable to the nation, he had the honor of appearing at, that he must have managed unwisely indeed to have avoided popularity. For as the poet says,

*"Fame then was cheap, and the first comers sped."*

The last line of the couplet is not applicable

*"Which they have since preserved by being dead."*

From the pathetic manner in which Mr. Deane speaks of his "*sufferings*" and the little concern he seems to have of ours, it may not be improper to inform him, that there is kept in this city a "*Book of Sufferings*," into which, by the assistance of some of his connections, he may probably get them registered.<sup>42</sup> I have not interest enough myself to afford him any service in this particular, though I am a friend to all religions, and no personal enemy to those who may, in this place, suppose themselves alluded to.

I can likewise explain to Mr. Deane, the reason of one of his sufferings which I know he has complained of. After the Declaration of Independence was passed, Mr. Deane thought it a great hardship that he was not authorized to announce it in form to the Court of France,

<sup>42</sup> The "*Book of Sufferings*" was kept by Quakers who were punished by the Patriots for assisting the British during the Revolutionary War.—*Editor.*

and this circumstance has been mentioned as a seeming inattention in Congress. The reason of it was this, and I mention it from my own knowledge. Mr. Deane was at that time only a commercial agent, without any commission from Congress, and consequently could not appear at Court with the rank suitable to the formality of such an occasion. A new commission was therefore necessary to be issued by Congress, and that honor was purposely reserved for Doctor Franklin, whose long services in the world, and established reputation in Europe, rendered him the fittest person in America to execute such a great and original design; and it was likewise paying a just attention to the honor of France by sending so able and extraordinary a character to announce the Declaration.

Mr. Plain Truth, who sticks at nothing to carry Mr. Deane through everything thick or thin, says:

“It may not be improper to remark that when he (Mr. Deane) arrived in France, the opinion of people there, and in the different parts of Europe, not only with respect to the merits, but the probable issue of the contest, had by no means acquired that consistency which they had at the time of Dr. Franklin’s and Mr. Arthur Lee’s arrival in that kingdom.”

Mr. Plain Truth is not a bad historian. For it was the fate of Dr. Franklin and Mr. Lee to arrive in France at the very worst of times. Their first appearance there was followed by a long series of ill fortune on our side. Doctor Franklin went from America in October, 1776, at which time our affairs were taking a wrong turn. The loss on Long Island, and the evacuation of New York happened before he went, and all the succeeding retreats and misfortunes through the course of that year, till the scale was again turned by taking the Hessians at Trenton on the 26th day of December, followed day by day after him. And I have been informed by a gentleman from France, that the philosophical ease and cheerful fortitude, with which Dr. Franklin heard of or announced those tidings, contributed greatly towards lessening the real weight of them on the minds of the Europeans.

Mr. Deane speaking of himself in his address says, “*While it* was safe to be silent my lips were closed. Necessity hath opened them and necessity must excuse this effort to serve, by informing you.” After which he goes on with his address. In this paragraph there is an insinuation thrown out by Mr. Deane that some treason was on foot, which he had happily discovered, and which his duty to his country compelled him

to reveal. The public had a right to be alarmed, and the alarm was carefully kept by those who at first contrived it. Now, if after this, Mr. Deane has nothing to inform them of, he must sink into nothing. When a public man stakes his reputation in this manner he likewise stakes all his future credit on the performance of his obligation.

I am not writing to defend Mr. Arthur or Mr. William Lee, I leave their conduct to defend itself; and I would with as much freedom make an attack on either of these gentlemen, if there was a public necessity for it, as on Mr. Deane. In my address I mentioned Colonel R. H. Lee with some testimony of honorable respect, because I am personally acquainted with that gentleman's integrity and abilities as a public man, and in the circle of my acquaintance I know but few that have equalled, and none that have exceeded him, particularly in his ardor to bring foreign affairs, and more especially the present happy alliance, to an issue.

I heard it mentioned of this gentleman, that he was among those, whose impatience for victory led them into some kind of discontent at the operations of last winter. The event has, I think, fully proved those gentlemen wrong, and must convince them of it; but I can see no reason why a misgrounded opinion, produced by an overheated anxiety for success, should be mixed up with other matters it has no concern with. A man's political abilities may be exceedingly good, though at the same time he may differ, and even be wrong, in his notions of some military particulars.

Mr. Deane says that Mr. Arthur Lee was dragged into a treaty with the utmost reluctance, a charge which if he cannot support, he must expect to answer for. I am acquainted that Mr. Lee had some objection against the constructions of a particular article [12th], which, I think, shows his judgment, and whenever they can be known will do him honor; but his general opinion of that valuable transaction I shall give in his own words from a letter in my hands.

"France has done us substantial benefits, Great Britain substantial injuries. France offers to guarantee our sovereignty, and universal freedom of commerce. Great Britain *condescends* to *accept* our *submission* and to *monopolize* our commerce. France demands of us to be independent, Great Britain tributary. I do not conceive how there can be a mind so debased, or an understanding so perverted, as to balance between them.

"The journeys I have made north and south in the public service, have given me opportunities of knowing the general disposition of Europe on our

question. There never was one in which the harmony of opinion was so universal. From the prince to the peasant there is but one voice, one wish, the liberty of America and the humiliation of Great Britain."

If Mr. Deane was industrious to spread reports to the injury of these gentlemen in Europe, as he has been in America, no wonder that their real characters have been misunderstood. The peculiar talent which Mr. Deane possesses of attacking persons behind their backs has so near a resemblance to the author of Plain Truth, who after promising his name to the public has declined to give it, and some other proceedings I am not unacquainted with, *particularly an attempt to prevent my publications*, that it looks as if one spirit of private malevolence governed the whole.

Mr. Plain Truth has renewed the story of Dr. Berkenhout, to which I have but one reply to make: why did not Mr. Deane appear against him while he was here? He was the only person who knew anything of him, and his neglecting to give information, and thereby suffering a suspicious person to escape for want of proof, is a story very much against Mr. Deane; and his complaining after the man was gone corresponds with the rest of his conduct.

When little circumstances are so easily dwelt upon, it is a sign not only of the want of great ones but of weakness and ill will. The crime against Mr. William Lee is, that some years ago he was elected an alderman of one of the wards in London, and the English calendar has yet printed him with the same title. Is that any fault of his? Or can he be made accountable for what the people of London may do? Let us distinguish between whiggishness and waspishness, between patriotism and peevishness, otherwise we shall become the laughing stock of every sensible and candid mind. Suppose the Londoners should take it into their heads to elect the President of Congress or General Washington an alderman, is that a reason why we should displace them? But, Mr. Lee, say they, has not resigned. These men have no judgment, or they would not advance such positions. Mr. Lee has nothing to resign. He has vacated his aldermanship by accepting an appointment under Congress, and can know nothing further of the matter. Were he to make a formal resignation it would imply his being a subject of Great Britain; besides which, the character of being an ambassador from the States of America, is so superior to that of any alderman of London, that I conceive Mr. Deane, or Mr. Plain Truth, or any other person, as doing a great injustice to the dignity of America by attempting to put



the two in any disputable competition. Let us be honest lest we be despised, and generous lest we be laughed at.

Mr. Deane in his address of the 5th of December, says, "having thus introduced you to your great servants, I now proceed to make you acquainted with some other personages, which it may be of consequence for you to know. I am *sorry* to say, that Arthur Lee, Esq., was suspected by some of the best friends you had abroad, and those in important characters and stations." To which I reply, that I firmly believe Mr. Deane will *likewise* be sorry he has said it. Mr. Deane after thus advancing a charge endeavors to palliate it by saying, "these suspicions, *whether well or ill* founded, were frequently urged to Dr. Franklin and myself." But Mr. Deane ought to have been certain that they were *well founded*, before he made such a publication, for if they are *not* well founded he must appear with great discredit, and it is now his duty to accuse Mr. Arthur Lee legally, and support the accusation with sufficient proofs. Characters are tender and valuable things; they are more than life to a man of sensibility, and are not to be made the sport of interest, or the sacrifice of incendiary malice. Mr. Lee is an absent gentleman, I believe too, an honest one, and my motive for publishing this is not to gratify any party or any person but as an act of social duty which one man owes to another, and which, I hope, will be done to me whenever I shall be accused ungenerously behind my back.

Mr. Lee to my knowledge has far excelled Mr. Deane in the usefulness of his information, respecting the political and military designs of the Court of London. While in London he conveyed intelligence that was dangerous to his personal safety. Many will remember the instance of the rifle man who had been carried prisoner to England alone three years ago, and who afterwards returned from thence to America, and brought with him a letter concealed in a button. That letter was from this gentleman, and the public will, I believe, conclude, that the hazard Mr. Lee exposed himself to, in giving information while so situated, and by such means, deserves their regard and thanks. The detail of the number of the foreign and British troops for the campaign of 1776, came first from him, as did likewise the expedition against South Carolina and Canada, and among other accounts of his, that the English emissaries at Paris had boasted that the British Ministry had sent over half a million of guineas to corrupt the Congress. This money, should they be fools enough to send it, will be very inef-

fectually attempted or bestowed, for repeated instances have shown that the moment any man steps aside from the public interest of America, he becomes despised, and if in office, superseded.

Mr. Deane says, "that Dr. Berkenhout, when he returned to New York, ventured to assure the British Commissioners, that by the alliance with France, America was at liberty to make peace without consulting her ally, unless England declared war." What is it to us what Dr. Berkenhout said, or how came Mr. Deane to know what passed between him and the British Commissioners? But I ask Mr. Deane's pardon, he has told us how. "Providence (says he), in whom we put our trust, *unfolded* it to me." But Mr. Deane says, that Colonel R. H. Lee, pertinaciously maintained the same doctrine. The treaty of alliance will neither admit of debate nor any equivocal explanation. Had *war not broken out, or had not Great Britain, in resentment to that alliance or connection, and of the good correspondence which is the object of the said treaty, broken the peace with France, either by direct hostilities or by hindering her commerce and navigation in a manner contrary to the rights of nations, and the peace subsisting at that time, between the two Crowns,*—in this case, I likewise say, that America as a *matter of right*, could have made a peace without consulting her ally, though the civil obligations of mutual esteem and friendship would have required such a consultation. But war *has* broken out, though not declared, for the first article in the treaty of alliance is confined to the *breaking out of war, and not to its declaration*. Hostilities have been commenced; therefore the first case is superseded, and the eighth article of the treaty of alliance has its full intentional force: "*Article 8.*—Neither of the two parties shall conclude either truce or peace without the formal consent of the other first obtained, and they mutually engage not to lay down their arms until the independence of the United States, shall have been formally or tacitly assured, by the treaty or treaties that shall terminate that war."

What Mr. Deane means by this affected appearance of his, both personally and in print, I am quite at a loss to understand. He seems to conduct himself here in a style, that would more properly become the secretary to a foreign embassy, than that of an American Minister returned from his charge. He appears to be everybody's servant but ours, and for that reason can never be the proper person to execute any commission, or possess our confidence. Among the number of his "*sufferings*"

I am told that he returned burdened with forty changes of silk, velvet, and other dresses. Perhaps this was the reason he could not bring his papers.

Mr. Deane says, that William Lee, Esq., gives five per cent commission, and receives a share of it, for what was formerly done for two per cent. That matter requires to be cleared up and explained; for it is not the quantity per cent, but the purposes to which it is applied that makes it right or wrong; besides which, the whole matter, like many other of Mr. Deane's charges, may be groundless.

I here take my leave of this gentleman, wishing him more discretion, candor and generosity.

In the beginning of this address I informed the public, that "whatever I should conceive necessary to say of myself, would appear in the conclusion." I chose that mode of arrangement, lest by explaining my own situation first, the public might be induced to pay a greater regard to what I had to say against Mr. Deane, than was necessary they should; whereas it was my wish to give Mr. Deane every advantage, by letting what I had to advance come from me, while I laid under the disadvantage of having the motives of my conduct mistaken by the public. Mr. Deane and his adherents have apparently deserted the field they took possession of and seemed to triumph in. They made their appeal to you, yet have suffered me to accuse and expose them for almost three weeks past, without a denial or a reply.

I do not blame the public for censuring me while they, though wrongfully, supposed I deserved it. When they see their mistake, I have no doubt, but they will honor me with that regard of theirs which I before enjoyed. And considering how much I have been misrepresented, I hope it will not now appear ostentatious in me, if I set forth what has been my conduct, ever since the first publication of the pamphlet *Common Sense* down to this day, on which, and on account of my reply to Mr. Deane, and in order to import the liberty of the press, and my right as a freeman, I have been obliged to resign my office of Secretary for foreign affairs, which I held under Congress. But this, in order to be complete, will be published in the *Crisis* No. 8, of which notice will be given in the papers.

COMMON SENSE.

PHILADELPHIA, January 8, 1779.

N.B. The 12th article in the Treaty of Amity and Commerce is the article I alluded to in my last, and against which, Arthur Lee, Esq., had some objections.

TO THE PUBLIC ON ROBERT MORRIS'S ADDRESS <sup>43</sup>

The appearance of an address signed Robert Morris,<sup>44</sup> in Mr. Dunlap's paper of January 9, has occasioned me to renew the subject, by offering some necessary remarks on that performance.

It is customary with writers to make apologies to the public for the frequency of their publications; but I beg to have it well understood, that any such apology from me would be an affront to them. It is their cause, *not mine*, that I am and have all this while been pleading; and as I ought not to suppose any unwillingness in the public to be informed of matters which is their interest to know, so I ought not to suppose it necessary in me to apologize to them for doing an act of duty and justice.

The public will please to remember, that in Mr. Dunlap's paper of December 21, in which the piece signed Plain Truth made its illegitimate appearance, there was likewise published in the same paper, a short piece of mine, signed *Common Sense*, in which, speaking of the uproar raised to support Mr. Deane, I used these words: "*I believe the whole affair to be an inflammatory bubble, thrown among the public, to answer both a mercantile end and a private pique*"; and in the paper of the 2d instant I have likewise said, "*The uncommon fury that has been spread to support Mr. Deane is not altogether for his sake*"; and in the same paper, speaking of a supposed mercantile connection between Mr. Deane and other parties, then unknown, I again said, "*It would suit their plan exceedingly well to have Mr. Deane appointed ambassador to Holland; because so situated, he would become a convenient partner in trade, or a useful factor.*"

It must, I think, appear clear to the public, that among other objects, I have been endeavoring, by occasional allusions, for these three weeks past, to force out the very evidence that Mr. Morris has produced; and though I could have given a larger history of circumstances than that gentleman has done, or had any obligation to do, yet as the account given by him comes from a confessed private partnership between a Delegate in Congress and a servant of that house, in the character of a Commercial Agent, it is fully sufficient to all the public purposes to which I mean to apply it; and it being therefore needless for me to

<sup>43</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Packet*, January 12, 1779.—Editor.

<sup>44</sup> Robert Morris came to Deane's defense in an article which appeared in the *Pennsylvania Packet* of January 9, 1779.—Editor.

seek any farther proofs, I shall now proceed to offer my remarks thereon.

Mr. Morris acknowledges to have had three private mercantile contracts with Mr. Deane, while himself was a Delegate. Two of those contracts, he says, were made while Mr. Deane acted as Commercial Agent; the other, therefore, must be after Mr. Deane was advanced to a Commissioner. To what a degree of corruption must we sink, if our Delegates and Ambassadors are to be admitted to carry on a private partnership in trade? Why not as well go halves with every Quartermaster and Commissary in the army? No wonder if our Congress should lose its vigor, or that the remains of public spirit should struggle without effect. No wonder that Mr. Deane should be so violently supported by Members of that house, and that myself, who have been laboring to fish out and prove this partnership offence so dangerous to the common good, should, in the interim, be made the object of daily abuse. I have very little doubt but that the real Mr. Plain Truth is another of the connection in some style or degree; and that the chain is more extensive than I choose to express my belief. The displacing the honorable Arthur and William Lee would have opened a field to a still greater extension, and as that had enlarged, the circle of the public spirit must have lessened.

Mr. Morris says in his address, "That he does not conceive that the State he lives in has any *right* or *inclination* to enquire into what mercantile connections he has had, or now has, with Mr. Deane." Mr. Morris asserts this as a reply to the following, a paragraph of mine, which he has quoted from Mr. Dunlap's paper of December 31st viz.:

"I wish in this place to step a moment from the floor of office, and press it on every State to enquire what mercantile connections any of their late or present Delegates have had, or now have, with Mr. Deane, and that a precedent might not be wanting, it is important that this State, *Pennsylvania, should begin.*"

Mr. Morris seems to deny their having such a right; and I perfectly agree with him, that they *have* no such right, and can assume no such power, over Mr. Morris, Mr. Deane, or any other persons, as private gentlemen. But I hope Mr. Morris will allow, that no such connection *ought* to be formed between himself, while a Member of Congress, and Mr. Deane, while a Commercial Agent, accountable for his conduct to that Congress, of which Mr. Morris then sat as a Member; and that any such connection, as it may deeply affect the interest of the whole United States, is a proper object of enquiry to the state he represents or has

represented; for though no law is in being to make it punishable, yet the tendency of it makes it dangerous, and the inconsistency of it renders it censurable.

Mr. Morris says, "*If Mr. Deane had any commerce that was inconsistent with his public station, he must answer for it.*" So likewise must Mr. Morris; and if it was censurable in Mr. Deane to carry on such a commerce while he was Commercial Agent, it is equally as censurable in Mr. Morris to be concerned in it while a Delegate. Such a connection unfits the Delegate for his duty in Congress, by making him a partner with the servant over whose conduct he sits as one of his judges; and the losses or advantages attending such a traffic, on the part of the Agent, tempts him to an undue freedom with public money and public credit.

Is it right that Mr. Deane, a servant of Congress, should sit as a Member of that House, when his own conduct was before the House for judgment? Certainly not. But the *interest* of Mr. Deane has sat there in the person of his partner, Mr. Robert Morris, who, at the same time that he represented this State, represented likewise the partnership in trade. Only let this doctrine of Mr. Morris's take place, and the consequences will be fatal both to public interest and public honor. By the same right that one Delegate may enter into a private commercial partnership with any Agent, Commissioner, or Ambassador, every Delegate may do the same; and if only a majority of Congress should form such a company, such Agents, Commissioners, or Ambassadors, will always find support and protection in Congress, even in the abuse of their trust and office. Besides which, it is an infringement upon the general freedom of trade, as such persons or companies, by having always the public monies in their hands, and public credit to sport with and support them, will possess unfair advantages over every other private merchant and trader.

One of those advantages is, that he or they will be enabled to carry on trade without employing their own money, which, laying by that means at interest, is more than equal to an insurance in times of peace, and a great abatement of it in time of war; and consequently, the public always pays the whole of the insurance in the one case, and a great part of it in the other.

But suppose the partnership of such Delegates and Ambassadors should break, or meet with losses they cannot sustain, on whom then will the burden of bankruptcy fall?

Mr. Morris having declared what his former mercantile connections

with Mr. Deane have been, proceeds to say, that "Whether in consequence of his good opinion of Mr. Deane as a man of honor and integrity, he has been led to form any, and what new concerns with him since his arrival here, is a matter which the public are no ways interested to know."

They certainly have no right to know, on the part of Mr. Morris, as he is not now a Member of Congress (having served out the full time limited by the Constitution of this State); neither have they any right to know, on the part of Mr. Deane, while he remains a private character. But if Mr. Deane has formed a chain of mercantile connections here, it is a very good reason why he should not be appointed an Ambassador to Holland, or elsewhere; because so situated and circumstanced, the authority of America would be disgraced, and her interest endangered, by his becoming a "*partner*" with, or a "*factor*" to, the company. And this brings me to and establishes the declaration I first set out with, viz., that the uproar to support Mr. Deane was "*an inflammatory bubble thrown among the public to answer both a mercantile and a private pique.*"

One of the objections advanced against the Hon. Arthur and William Lee was, that they had two brothers in Congress. I think it a very great honor to all those gentlemen, and an instance most rarely seen, that those same four brothers have, from the first beginning, been most uniform Whigs. The principle of not investing too many honors in any one family is a very good one, and ought always to have its weight; but it is barbarous and cruel to attempt to make a crime of that which is a credit.

Brothers are but awkward advocates for each other, because the natural connection being seen and known, they speak and act under the disadvantage of being supposed to be prepossessed. The open relationship, therefore, is nothing so dangerous as a private mercantile connection between Delegates and Ambassadors, because such connections bias, or buy us, if you please, and is covered and in the dark. And the interest of the Delegate being thus tied by a secret unseen cord to the Agent, affords the former the splendid opportunity of appearing to defend the latter from principle, whereas it is from interest.

The haste with which I was obliged to conclude my last piece prevented my taking that proper leave I wished to do. In the course of my late publications I have had no other object in view than to serve the public from being misled and made fools of by Mr. Deane's specious

address of December 5. In the course of my late publications I have given them some useful information and several agreeable and interesting anecdotes; for of what use is my office to me if I can make no good use of it? The pains I have taken, and the trouble I have undergone, in this act of public duty, have been very considerable. I have met with much opposition from various quarters. Some have misunderstood me; others have misrepresented me; but the far greater part were those whose private interests or unwarrantable connections were in danger of being brought to light thereby, and I now leave the public to judge whether, or not, I have acted in behalf of their interest or against it, and with that question I take my leave.

COMMON SENSE.

PHILADELPHIA, January 11, 1779.

TO MR. DEANE <sup>45</sup>

I discovered the mistake respecting the Mercury too late to correct it; but as it was a circumstance no ways interested with the matter in question, I omitted doing it till I could get the particulars when and where she arrived, and wrote to a gentleman for that information, it being a branch that does not belong to this office. You have corrected it for me, and affixed to it the name of a "*falsehood*." As whatever is not *true* must be *false*, however immaterial, therefore you have a right to give it that name.

I was somewhat curious to see what use you would make of it; for if you picked that out from all the rest, it would show that you were very hard set, notwithstanding my reply has been extensive and my allegations numerous.

Having thus submitted to be set right by Mr. Deane, I hope he will submit to be set right by me. I have never *labored to prove* that the supplies *were* or *are* a present. On the contrary, I believe we are got too fond of buying and selling, to receive a *present* for the *public* when there is nothing to be got by it ourselves. The agent's profit is to purchase, not to receive.

That there was a disposition in the gentlemen of France to have made

<sup>45</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Packet*, January 16, 1779. Conrad Alexandre Gérard, French Minister to the United States, wrote to Vergennes on January 17, 1779 informing him that he was forwarding this article to France. It has never been found in the French archives. See John J. Meng, editor, *Despatches and Instructions of Conrad Alexandre Gérard, 1778-1780*, Baltimore, 1939, p. 471.—*Editor*.



America a very handsome present, is what I have a justifiable authority for saying; and I was unwilling these gentlemen should lose the honor of their good intentions, by Mr. Deane's monopolizing the whole merit of *procuring* these supplies to himself. Though I am certain that no man, not even an enemy, will accuse me of personal covetousness, yet I have a great deal of what may be called public covetousness, and from that motive, among others, I sincerely wish Mr. Deane had never gone to France.

Mr. Plain Truth speaks of Mr. Deane as if he had discovered a mine from whence he drew those stores, which nobody before knew of; whereas he received information of it from this city. "*We make no doubt but you have been made acquainted with the negotiations of M. H.—, and in consequence thereof we conclude that you will be at no loss.*" In short, Sir, the matter was in France before you were there, and your giving out any other story is wandering from the fact. I can trace it myself to the 21st of December, 1775, and that not as some have supposed, a national or Court affair, but a private though extensive act of friendship.

COMMON SENSE.

January 15, 1779.

TO PHILALETHERS <sup>46</sup>

The thanks of the public will, no doubt, be given to you when you shall be found to deserve them. But be you who you may, I have this to say to you, that, if you have reputation enough left to be ashamed of being detected in a falsehood, you will do yourself a service by assuring Common Sense that you will correct and amend what you have published in last Saturday's paper, or it will be done for you.

Having said this much to you particularly, I shall conclude with a story, which, I hope, will not be found applicable to Mr. Deane's affairs, or those of his partners. If it should, it will explain the reason why he or they are so stubbornly defended.

A man was taken up in Ireland, for robbing the Treasury, and sent for a Lawyer to undertake his case. The man protested his *innocence*, and the Lawyer shook his head. I hope, Sir, said the man, that you are not sorry because I am not guilty? No, Sir, replied the Lawyer, but

<sup>46</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Packet*, January 21, 1779. Philalethes' attack on Paine appeared in the *Packet* of January 19, 1779.—*Editor*.

I am very much concerned at your situation; yet, if you will attend to my advice, I can afford you some hope, for the case stands thus: If you *have* robbed the Treasury, you will not be hanged; but if you have *not* robbed it, the circumstances are so strong against you that you must expect to suffer. Sir, said the man, I have money enough to bribe the—. Oh, my dear, good friend, replied the Lawyer, shaking him by the hand, take care what you say. I understand your case exceedingly well; 'tis a very clear one, and you may depend upon being honorably acquitted.

COMMON SENSE.

PHILADELPHIA, January 20.

TO THE PEOPLE OF AMERICA <sup>47</sup>

There are not throughout the United States a set of men who have rendered more injury to the general cause, or committed more acts of injustice against the whole community, than those who are known by the name of *monopolizers*; <sup>48</sup> together with such others as have squandered away, or, as Col. R. H. Lee rightly expresses it, "have *fingered* large sums of the public money." That there are such men is neither to be doubted or to be wondered at. The numerous emissions of currency, and the few accounts that have been settled, are sufficient signs of the former, and the tempting circumstances of the times and degeneracy of moral principle make the latter too highly probable. One monopolizer confederates with another, and defaulter with defaulter, till the cause becomes a common one; yet still these men will talk of justice, and, while they profess abhorrence to the principles that govern them, they pathetically lament the evils they create. That private vice should thus put on the mask of public good, and even impudence in guilt assume the style of patriotism, are paradoxes which those can best explain who must practice them. On my own part I can safely say, and

<sup>47</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Packet*, January 23, 1779.—*Editor*.

<sup>48</sup> A few weeks before George Washington had written to Joseph Reed, president of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, on the subject of monopolizers: "It is much to be lamented that each State long ere this has not hunted them down as the pests of society, and the greatest Enemies we have to the happiness of America. I would to God that one of the most atrocious of each State was hung in Gibbets upon a gallows five times as high as the one prepared by Haman. No punishment in my opinion is too great for the Man who can build his greatness upon his Country's ruin." See Philip S. Foner, editor, *George Washington: Selections from His Writings*, New York, 1944, pp. 59-60. It is quite interesting to compare Washington's and Paine's language on the subject.—*Editor*.

challenge any one to contradict me, that I have publicly served America in the worst of times, with an unshaken fortitude and fidelity, and that without either pay or reward, save the trifling pittance of seventy dollars per month, which Congress two years ago affixed to the office of Secretary in the foreign department, and which I had too much spirit to complain of, and they too little generosity to consider. This, with about four or five hundred dollars more, make up all the expense that America has ever been put to on my account. All that I have written she has had from me as a gift, and I cannot now serve her better than in endeavoring to prevent her being imposed upon by those who have wronged her interest, abused her confidence, or invaded the rights of citizenship. The two former classes I distinguish under the names of *Monopolizers* and *Defaulters*. That these men, dreading the consequences of being exposed, should vent their venomd rage at me, is what I naturally expected, and is *one of the marks by which they may be known*.

It was a heavy task to begin, yet it was a necessary one; and the public will in time feel the benefit of it and thank me for it. It has ever been my custom to take the bull by the horns, and bring out the great offenders; which, though difficult at first, saves a world of trouble in the end. A man who is so exceedingly civil that for the sake of quietude and a peaceable name will silently see the community imposed upon, or their rights invaded, may, in his principles, be a good man, but cannot be stiled a useful one, neither does he come up to the full mark of his duty; for silence becomes a kind of crime when it operates as a cover or an encouragement to the guilty.

There is a liberty the press has in a free country, which I will sooner yield to the inconvenience of, than be the means of suppressing. I mean that of publishing under anonymous signatures. I leave the printers to be governed by decency in the choice of the pieces they may publish; yet I will ever hold that man a villain who attacks a personal reputation and dares not face what he writes; he proves the lie upon himself by his concealment, and put the printer to answer for it. He stands upon a footing with a murderer by midnight, and encreases his villainy by subjecting innocent persons to be suspected of the baseness which himself has acted. I have yet one virtue left, which is that of acting openly, and, meaning ever to do so, I leave concealment to the monopolizer, the defaulter, and criminal of every cast with those whom

they may hire or engage. Public measures may be properly examined under anonymous signatures, but civility as well as justice demands that private reputation should not be stabbed in the dark. However, it is the murderer's walk, and those who use it are welcome to it.

I give this as an introduction to a piece which will appear in the next paper. We have been sinking from one stage of public virtue to another, till the whole body seems to want a re-animation, a calling back to life. The spirit that hath long slept has at last awakened by a false alarm. Yet since it is up it may be turned to an extensive advantage, and be made the means of rooting out the evils that produced it. We are neither the same People nor the same Congress that we were two years and a half ago. The former wants invigorating, the latter purging. No time can be so proper for this work as the winter. The rest that naturally ensues from the operation of arms, gives us the advantage of doing it without inconvenience. Those who dread detection will oppose all enquiries, and stigmatize the proposal to secure themselves; while those who have nothing to fear and no other objects in pursuit than what are founded in honor, justice, and the common good of all, will act a contrary part.

COMMON SENSE.

P. S. To end all disputes relative to the supplies, I have to inform that when the present race of scribblers have done, I shall publish an original letter on that subject from a gentleman of high authority. I have shown it to several of the first character in this city. Mr. Deane and Mr. Beaumarchais, may pay to each other what compliments they please; it is but of little importance to the subject, and is somewhat laughable to those who know the whole story.

The public will please to remember, that whether the supplies were a present or not, made no part of my argument; but only that the procuring them in any case did not depend on Mr. Deane, to which I may say, nor yet on Mr. Beaumarchais.

In one of my former pieces I said that, "I believed we are got too fond of *buying* and *selling* to receive a present for the public, when there is nothing to be got by it ourselves, and that the Agent's profit was to purchase, not to receive."

If Mr. Deane takes too much pains to prove them a purchase, he will raise a suspicion that they are not a purchase, and that a present from

the gentleman of France has been smuggled. I shall make no other answer on this head till every body has done.

C. S.

ON PHILALETHERS <sup>49</sup>

I am told that the writer or assistant writer of the piece signed Philalethes is believed to be a person of the name of *Parke*, and that he is subject at times to fits of craziness. This is not mentioned as a reproach but as an excuse for him; and being the best that can be made, I therefore charitably apply his disorder as a remedy to his reputation. What credit or benefit Mr. Deane can expect to derive from the service of a crazy man I am at a loss to conceive; and as I think it quite out of character to contend with such a person (provided the report is true) I shall satisfy myself with civilly pointing out an *error* or two, and leave the public to think as they please of the rest.

In my last piece I declared that I should say nothing farther on the subject of the supplies till every other person had done. I shall keep to that declaration; but in the mean time I think it necessary that what I have already written should not be misunderstood or misrepresented.

Philalethes in his last piece has twice quoted the following expressions of mine from a publication of the 2d instant, viz. "The supplies which he (Mr. Deane) so pompously plumes himself upon were promised and engaged, and that as a present, before he even arrived in France." That I have used this expression is true, but in a quite different sense to what Philalethes has used it in; and none but a crazy man would have quoted it without quoting the whole paragraph. My declaring "that the supplies were promised and engaged, and that as a present, before Mr. Deane went to France" is *one thing*, and my declaring that I have a letter which says so, is entirely another thing. Philalethes has crazily applied the declaration to the supplies themselves, whereas in the place where I have used it, it is only applied to a *letter* which *mentions* the supplies. I shall quote the whole paragraph, word for word, from Mr. Dunlap's paper of Jan. 2d, and every man must see it in the same light, and allow that I have either a crazy or an unjust set of men to deal with. The paragraph is—

"If Mr. Deane or any other gentleman will *procure an order from Congress* to inspect an account in my office, or if any of Mr. Deane's

<sup>49</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Packet*, January 26, 1779.—*Editor*.

friends in Congress will take the trouble of coming themselves, I will give him or them my attendance, and shew them in a *hand writing* which Mr. Deane is well acquainted with, that the supplies he so pompously plumes himself upon were promised and engaged, and that as a present, before Mr. Deane even arrived in France." Philaethes ought to be obliged to me for assigning his craziness as an excuse for his crime.

Now it only remains to know whether there is such a letter or not. I again declare there is; but that neither the King of France, by any name or title whatever, nor yet the nation of France, are anywhere mentioned in that letter; and surely the gentlemen of that country might make, or offer, a present to America if they pleased, with as much propriety as the merchants and others of London did to the Corsicans when they were warring against the French; and perhaps, if we had not had a purchasing Agent, such a present might have come. Having brought the matter to this point, I shall mention as a proof of there being such a letter, that I have shown it to several Members of Congress, among whom I take the liberty of naming General Roberdeau one of the Delegates of this state; and I am confident that that gentleman will, in any company, and on any occasion, do me the justice to say that he has seen such a letter, and nothing farther is necessary.

It is evident, that so far from my asserting or laboring to prove the supplies a present, that I did not so much as form an opinion upon that matter myself. My first mention of them in the paper of Jan. 2d, in these words: "The supplies here alluded to are those which were sent from France in the Amphitrite, Seine and Mercury about two years ago. They had at first the *appearance* of a present, but whether *so* or on *credit*, the service was nevertheless a great and friendly one." And in the paper of Jan. 5th I likewise said, "That as the contract had not been explained by any of Mr. Deane's letters, and is left in obscurity by that which he signed the 16th of February last, therefore *the full explanation must rest upon other authority.*" This is the last expression of mine relating to the conditions of those supplies in any of my pieces intitled "Common Sense to the Public on Mr. Deane's affair," and it must be clear to every man whether partial or otherwise, that I even relinquished all pretensions to the forming any opinion of my own on that head, but left it to be decided by those whose business it was.

The point I really set out to prove, respecting those supplies, is effectually proved, and that not only by me, but by my opponents, viz. That we are not obliged to Mr. Deane for them. The letters which

themselves have published of Mr. Arthur Lee, of May 23d, June 14th, and 21st, all of them in the year 1776, prove that the contract was began before Mr. Deane arrived. Even Mr. Beaumarchais's letter to Congress in support of Mr. Deane, proves the same, for he says, "*Long before the arrival of Mr. Deane in France*, I had formed the project of establishing a commercial house, sufficiently powerful and spirited to hazard the risques of the sea and enemy, in carrying you stores and merchandize for your troops, of which I learned you were in great want. I spoke of this plan to Mr. Arthur Lee in London," &c.

Now taking off the honor of Mr. Deane's originally procuring those supplies, which he has no title to, and I ask, What were his services in France?

Answer. He proposed sending over a German Prince, namely: Prince Ferdinand, to command the army, and consequently to supersede General Washington. Mr. Deane will not disown this, because it is in his own hand writing. Fine patriot, indeed!

I conceive it perfectly needless to set any thing else to rights, or to do it only for diversion sake, and one of the best replies I could make to Philalethes would be to publish my pieces over again. Mr. Deane's instructions and authority from the Committee were as I concisely related them, and what Philalethes calls a "detection" is a confirmation. Mr. Deane in his publication of Dec. 5th, to the public, says, "After leaving your papers and mine in safety, I left Paris the 30th of March." Surely I might say so too, yet this crazy man has contradicted me. He likewise tells the public that the foreign papers were *all* in the hands of the Secretary of Congress, whereas the far greater part of them were in mine, and I delivered them only last Saturday seven'night to James Lovell, Esquire, member of the foreign Committee. In short, the man is most certainly crazy, for he does not even distinguish between Mr. Deane's being *directed* by Congress to *communicate* the Declaration of Independence to foreign courts, and his not being *invested with a proper public character to announce it in form*. A great number of his *detections*, as he calls them, are mere quibbles, of which the following is an instance.

"*Falsehood 16th*. Common Sense says that Mr. Deane was directed by the Committee which employed him to engage four Engineers." "Detection. Mr. Deane," says Philalethes, "had no such instruction."

This is quibblingly true, because Mr. Deane's instruction was to engage Engineers *not exceeding* four. I am really ashamed to be seen re-

plying to such ridiculous trash, which can be thrown out for no other purpose than to bewilder the public, and their own sense must see it. A good cause would scorn such wretched support, and such crazy supporters.

Leaving in this place poor Philaethes, I proceed to take notice of two real letters published in that piece, the one signed *Benjamin Franklin*, the other *James Lovell*.

That from Dr. Franklin is a civil certificate in behalf of Mr. Deane while acting in *conjunction* with the Doctor as a "*public minister*" for the space of "*fifteen months*," commencing from the time that the Doctor and Mr. Arthur Lee arrived in France, till the time of Mr. Deane's recall. In that period of *fifteen months* Mr. Deane could not go wrong; because, being "honored with one colleague and *saddled* with another," he stood safely between the two.

But the Doctor is perfectly silent with respect to the conduct of Mr. Deane during the six months prior to the Doctor's arrival, and in which six months Mr. Deane was Commercial Agent with Mr. Thomas Morris, and Political Agent into the bargain. Here the Doctor is wholly reserved; neither does he mention a word about Mr. Deane's *procur-ing* the supplies; which, as it forms so principal an object in Mr. Deane's separate agency, ought not to have been omitted; and therefore the omission is a negative evidence against Mr. Deane's importance in that transaction. In short, the silence of the letter on these heads makes more against Mr. Deane than the declarations make for him.

Now it unfortunately happens, that the objections against Mr. Deane are confined to the six months prior to the Doctor's arrival, and of consequence the letter does not reach the complaint, but leaves him just as he was. Neither could the Doctor know all the circumstances of Mr. Deane's separate agency. Mr. Deane arrived in France in June, Doctor Franklin in December; very little of Mr. Deane's correspondence had reached America before the Doctor left it, and on the Doctor's arrival in France it ceased, and the separate agency with it. That something was not agreeable may be collected from Mr. Beaumarchais's letter to Congress, for though Mr. Deane had said, *that the United States of America were under greater obligations to Mr. Beaumarchais, than to any other man in Europe*, yet Mr. Beaumarchais says in his letter "that in the affair of the supplies he transacted with no other person than Mr. Deane, the other deputies (of which Dr. Franklin was one) scarcely showing him the most distant marks of civility."



Strange indeed if all is true that Mr. Deane has told! After this Mr. Beaumarchais repays Mr. Deane with an equal lavishment of praise, and the echo concludes the letter. Yet of all these things the Doctor says not a syllable, but leaves the two gentlemen to Mr. Deane to "*justify himself.*" In my first piece, "*on Mr. Deane's affairs,*" December 31st I mentioned that the accounts which it was Mr. Deane's particular duty to settle, were those which he contracted in the time of his being only a Commercial Agent, which separate agency of his expired fifteen months before he left France. This brings it to the period on which Dr. Franklin is silent.

Every day opens something new. The dispatches of October 1777, which were said to be stolen, are now believed by some and conjectured by others not to be in the hands of the enemy. Philaethes says that they contained no such secret as I have pretended. How does he know what secret I have pretended, as I have not disclosed any nor ever will? The duplicates of those dispatches have arrived since and have been in my hands, and I can say thus much that they contain a paragraph which is I think a flat contradiction to one-half what Mr. Deane wrote while a separate Agent; and if he when in conjunction with his colleagues had to sign something that disagreed with what he had before written, and declared since, it was *fortunate for him that the dispatches were stolen*, unfortunate that the duplicates arrived.

Another circumstance is somewhat striking respecting those dispatches; they should have arrived in Yorktown last winter about the time that Mr. Beaumarchais's and Mr. Deane's contract was presented to Congress for payment, *fortunate again that they were stolen*. In short, had Mr. Deane or his friend who signs himself W. D. in Mr. Holts paper of the 11th instant half as much cause for suspicion as I have concerning the loss of those dispatches, they would ground thereon a heavy and positive charge.

I fully expected after Mr. Deane's return to America, that he would have furnished the public, at least anonymously, with the history of this extraordinary theft, instead of which the whole matter has slept in silence.

Mr. Lovell's letter I observe has been printed twice in Mr. Dunlap's paper. A curious circumstance indeed? It is a civil answer to a civil letter and that is the amount of it. But it says, that "Mr. Deane may return with renewed honor in commission to Holland." By Mr. Lovell's figurative manner of expression and turn of political sentiments, I

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should suppose that he thought Mr. Deane's *former* honors were somewhat *decayed*. I am persuaded he thinks so now, and so I believe did every member of the foreign Committee, as well as the Secretary.

It requires a greater degree of dexterity than any of my opponents are possessed of, to conduct an argument consistently that is founded upon wrong or bad principles. The chief part of my accusations are drawn from the defence which themselves have set up. They have enabled me to convert their justification into a charge, and by pressing them on one part, they have given evidence against themselves in another.

To prove something, for I scarcely know what about the supplies, they have published three letters of the Hon. A. Lee of May and June, 1776, in which the patriotism and ardor of that gentleman is so evidently displayed, that they stand as evidence against Mr. Deane's address to the public of December 5th, in which he accuses him of defaction; and likewise prove what I have before declared, viz., that the affair of the supplies was first communicated by Mr. Beaumarchais to Mr. A. Lee in London, about three years ago. And by publishing Mr. Beaumarchais's letter for the sake of a compliment in it to Mr. Deane, they have confirmed the same evidence, because that letter likewise says that "*long before Mr. Deane arrived in France the project was formed.*" As to the *present* or the *purchase* I never undertook to give even an opinion upon. It was the priority of the plan only that I sought to prove, and that being now sufficiently proved. The puffs given out to support Mr. Deane are shown to be false. The rest I leave to time and chance.

I shall conclude this paper with remarking on the shocking depravity of moral principle with which Mr. Deane and his partisans conduct their affairs. They prove nothing, but exert their whole force to blast the reputation of every one who stands in their way or makes a doubt of their designs. The heat and error produced in the public, by Mr. Deane's address of December 5th, must have long ago subsided, had it not been constantly fed from some monopolizing poisoned spring. To keep up the flame they had unjustly raised has been the studied business of that party. Every morning opened with a lie and every evening closed with another. The sun has risen and gone down upon their falsehoods in the multitude of which they have bewildered detection. Still no man appears to own them. Who will listen to a tale without a name, or give credit to inventions which themselves are ashamed to father? A report neither proved nor owned becomes a falsehood con-

tradicted. If their cause is just, if their object is honorable, if their intentions are really for the public good, why do they hide themselves from the eye of the public like Adam from the face of his Maker? Why do they skulk under the darkness of anonymous signatures; or why do they rest their hopes on the ruin of another's fame?

By cutting, mangling and curtailing they may prove treason from the law, and blasphemy from every page in the Bible, and if they can draw any comfort from serving my publications in the same manner, they have my free consent.

The public have seen Mr. Deane's address of December 5th, in which he likewise endeavors to ruin the character of two gentlemen who are absent, and in order that the hitherto fair fame of those absent persons may be effectually destroyed, without the chance of proving their innocence or replying to their accusers, a most infernal friend of his (for I will call him such) has converted all Mr. Deane's insinuations into facts, and given them with the most heated language to the inhabitants of the State of New-York in Mr. Holt's paper of January 11th; and that the public may know the barbarous and unjustifiable means by which Mr. Deane is kept up, I shall republish that letter in Mr. Dunlap's paper of Thursday next; being confident that every man in America who has the least spark of honor or honesty left will feel an abhorrence at such detestable principles and practices. No character can stand, however fair, no reputation can survive, however honorable, if men unheard and in their absence are to be anonymously destroyed.

The letter has not the least reference to me. I am perhaps intentionally left out, that the charges it contains may be supposed to be both uncontradicted and undoubted, and my design in republishing it is to expose the black principle on which it is constructed.

It is dated Orange County, December 31, and signed W. D. If any person in this city (for I dare not call him a gentleman), should find it convenient to remove suspicions of his being the author, I thus give him notice of the time of republication.

COMMON SENSE.

PHILADELPHIA, January 25, 1779.

TO SILAS DEANE, *Esquire*<sup>50</sup>

As character, like trade, is subject to bankruptcy, so nothing sooner discovers its approach than a frequent necessity of borrowing. I introduce this remark to explain, what I conceive to be, the motive that induced Mr. Deane, in his address of January 26th, in the *Pennsylvania Packet*, to blend his own affairs with those of General Washington and the President of this State. Those who have read that address, will easily perceive that the allusions are too far fetched to be natural and the design too obvious to be effectual.

Let Mr. Deane and his affairs stand on their own merits or fall, in proportion to their own defects. If he has done well, he needs no borrowed credit; if he has done ill, the attempt will only precipitate disgrace. Why should matters be involved with matter, between which there is neither affinity or correspondence? You may, it is true, confine them together in the same letter, like fluids of different weights or repulsive qualities in the same phial; and though by convulsing you may represent a compound, yet the parts having no mutual propensity to union, will separate in a state of rest.

Mr. Deane in his address before mentioned, says, that he "is fully confident that every intrigue and cabal formed against our illustrious Commander in Chief will prove as ineffectual as those formed against Dr. Franklin." This declaration comes with an ill grace from a man who not only threw out a proposal, but impliedly recommended a German Prince, Prince Ferdinand, to Congress, to take on him the command of the American army; and Mr. Deane can best explain whether the declaration he now makes is to be considered as an act of *pennance* or *consummate effrontry*.

But Prince Ferdinand is not the only one whom Mr. Deane has slyly intimated to Congress for a Commander in Chief, neither dares he either personally or in writing contradict me; he has, it is true, set

<sup>50</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Packet*, February 16, 1779. In the *Packet* of January 28, 1779, Paine wrote a brief comment on a letter from William Duer which went: "Will any man step forward and own this letter? It is, I believe, needless to go to Orange County for a knowledge of the author. The charges in it are either true or false; if true, let the writer be known that he may prove them; if not true, let him likewise be known, lest his concealment should subject innocent persons to suspicion. He who will by honest and justifiable means assist in detecting public abuses, wherever they can be found, is a useful character; but an anonymous detractor is the serpent of society." The letter was signed "COMMON SENSE," and dated Philadelphia, January 27.—*Editor*.

Philalethes to do it, but he dares not do it himself; and, I would ask, what sort of principles must that man be governed by, who will impose on the ignorance of another to advance a falsehood for him?

No belief or dependence can be placed in him, who, through the agency of another, will deny his own handwriting; and that I may not appear even to intimate a charge without a sufficient foundation, I shall furnish the public with an extract from Mr. Deane's letter to the Foreign Committee, dated Paris, December 6th, 1776.

"I submit the thought to you, whether if you could engage a great General of the highest character in Europe, such, for instance, as *Prince Ferdinand*, or M— B—, [Marshal Broglie] or *others* of equal rank, to take the *lead* of your armies, whether such a step would not be politic; as it would give a character and credit to your military, and strike perhaps a greater terror into our enemies. I only suggest the thought, and leave you to confer with B— K— [Baron De Kalb] on the subject at large."

S. DEANE.

Yet the writer of this letter is the same Mr. S. Deane, who, in his address of Jan. 26th, in the Pennsylvania Packet, says, that "he is fully confident that every intrigue and cabal formed against our illustrious Commander in Chief will prove as ineffectual as those formed against Doctor Franklin."

What Mr. Deane means by *cabals* formed against Dr. Franklin, I am wholly unacquainted with. I know of none. I have heard of none. Neither has Mr. Deane any right to blend himself with that gentleman any more than with General Washington. Mr. Deane will never be Dr. Franklin, nor Dr. Franklin Mr. Deane. They are constitutionally different both in principle and practice; and if my suspicions of Mr. Deane are true, he will, in a little time, be as strongly reprobated by his *venerable friend*<sup>51</sup> as by either of the Mr. Lees or Mr. Izard. The course of this letter will explain what I mean without either suggestion or implication.

Omitting in this place Mr. Deane's last address as a matter of very little importance, I now mean to draw his hitherto confused affairs to a closer investigation than I have ever yet done.

The continental public, who can have no other object in view than to

<sup>51</sup> Mr. Deane in his address of December 5th carefully shelters himself under Doctor Franklin by the style of his "venerable friend."—*Author*.

distinguish right from wrong, will have their minds and their ears open, and unfettered by prejudice or selfish interest, will form their judgment as matters and circumstances shall appear. Mr. Deane may interestedly inlink himself with Members of Congress, or with persons out of it, till involved with them, and they with him, they mutually become the pillows and bolsters of each other to prevent a general discovery. With such men reasoning has no effect. They seek not to be *right* but to be *triumphant*; and the same thirst of interest that induced them to the commission of one crime, will provoke them to a new one, in order to insure success and defeat detection. There are men, in all countries, in whom both vice and virtue are kept subordinate by a kind of cowardice, which often forms a great part of that natural character stiled *moderation*. But this is not the case with Mr. Deane. His conduct since his return to America has been excessive. His address to the public of Dec. 5th is marked with every feature of extraordinary violence. His inventions to support himself have been numerous, and such as honesty did not require; and having thus relinquished all pretensions to a moderate character, he must of consequence be looked for in one or other of the extremes of *good* or *bad*.

Several things however are certain in Mr. Deane. He has made a rich and prosperous voyage to France, and whether fairly or unfairly he has yet to answer for.

He has wrote and been concerned in the writing of letters which contradict each other.

He has acted a double part towards his brother Commissioners in France, Doctor Franklin and Arthur Lee, Esq., as appears by a comparison of his own letters with those of the Commissioners jointly, of which himself was one.

He has given the public no information of the loss of the dispatches of Oct. 6 and 7, 1777, nor of any circumstances attending it, notwithstanding he can but know that he lies under a strong suspicion of having embezzled them himself or of his being privy thereto, in order to prevent a discovery of his double dealings, and to promote the payment of a very large sum of money. To all those matters I shall speak as I proceed.

Mr. Deane first made choice of the public papers, and I have only followed him therein. The people sufficiently feel that something is wrong, and not knowing where it lies, they know not where to fix their confidence, and every public man undergoes a share of their suspicions.



Let it therefore come out, be it where it will, so that men and measures being properly known, trust and tranquility be again restored. It has strangely happened, that wherever Mr. Deane has been, there has been confusion. It is so in France. It is so here. The Commissioners, in that country, were as much disjointed as the Congress in this; and such being the case, let every man's conduct answer for itself.

In the Pennsylvania Packet of January 2d, I acquainted the public with the loss of the dispatches of October 6th and 7th, and gave such an account of that affair as had been related to me while at Yorktown; namely, that they were stolen by some British emissary in France, and carried over to the enemy in England. The account was far from being properly authenticated; however, I chose to give it, in order to see what notice Mr. Deane would take of it. He let it pass in silence, and I observed that I was immediately after attacked from all quarters at once, as if emboldened to it by the account I had given and appeared to believe. As their publications were of use to me, I thought it best to reserve my suspicions, excepting to a few particular friends, as well in Congress as out.

In the Pennsylvania Packet of January 26, I, for the first time in public, informed Mr. Deane of my suspicions thereon in the following words:

"Every day opens something new. The dispatches of October, 1777, which were said to be stolen, are now believed by some, and conjectured by others, *not to be in the hands of the enemy*. Philalethes (in the Pennsylvania Packet of January 23) says, that they contained no such secret as I have pretended. How does he know what secret I have pretended, as I have not disclosed any, or ever will? The duplicates of those despatches have arrived since, and have been in my hands, and I can say thus much, that they contain a paragraph, which is, I think, a flat contradiction to one-half what Mr. Deane wrote while a separate agent; and if he, when in conjunction with his colleagues, had to sign that which disagreed with what he had before written and declared since, it was *fortunate for him that the dispatches were stolen*, unfortunate that the duplicates arrived. In short, had Mr. Deane, or his friend W. D. in Mr. Holt's paper of the 11th instant (January) one-half as much cause for suspicion as I have, concerning the loss of those dispatches, they would ground thereon a heavy and positive charge."

On the appearance of this intimation, Mr. Deane and every other of my opponents unanimously deserted the newspapers, and suffered

it to pass unnoticed. I have waited three weeks to afford Mr. Deane an opportunity of removing the suspicions alluded to, and to furnish the public with what he might know on that subject. He has not done it. I shall therefore lay open the principal circumstances on which that intimation was founded.

In a country so rich, extensive and populous as France, there can be no cause to doubt either the ability or inclination of the wealthier inhabitants to furnish America with a gratuitous supply of money, arms, and ammunition. The English had supplied the Corsicans, by a subscription opened for that purpose in London, and the French might as consistently do the same by America. I, therefore, think it unnecessary to say any thing farther on this point than to inform, that in the spring 1776, a subscription was raised in France to send a present to America of two hundred thousand pounds sterling in money, arms, and ammunition. And all that the suppliers wanted to know was, through what channel it should be remitted. The place was fixed upon.

Having said thus much, I think it necessary to mention, that if Congress choose to call upon me for my proofs, which I presume they will not do, I am ready to advance them. I do not publish this in contradiction to their resolution of January 12th, because that refers to supposed presents from the crown only, which is a subject I never touched upon; and though Congress have thought proper to introduce my name therein, and perverted my expressions, to give a countenance thereto, I leave it to their own judgment, etc., to take it out again. I believe future Congresses will derive no honor from that resolution. And on my own part, I conceive that the literary services I have hitherto rendered, and that without the least profit or reward, deserved from that body a different treatment, even if I had in this instance been wrong. But the envy of some little and ungenerous wits in that House will never subside.

Soon after this offer was made, Mr. Deane was sent to France as a Commercial Agent under the authority of the Committee which was then stiled "The Committee for Secret Correspondence," and since changed to that of "The Committee for Foreign Affairs."

On Mr. Deane's arrival at Paris, the whole affair took a new ground, and he entered, according to his own account, into, what he calls, a *commercial concern*, with Mr. Beaumarchais of Paris, for the same quantity of supplies which had been before offered as a present, and that through the same person of whom Mr. Deane now says he pur-

chased them. It may not be improper in this place to mention that Mr. Beaumarchais was only an agent on the part of the suppliers, as Mr. Deane was an agent on the part of the receivers.

In December following (1776), Dr. Franklin and Arthur Lee, Esq., arrived likewise in Paris, under a new commission, appointing them, together with Silas Deane, Esq., joint Commissioners from the United States. Yet it does not appear that Mr. Deane made either of those gentlemen acquainted with the particulars of any commercial contract made between him and Mr. Beaumarchais, neither did he ever send a copy of any such to Congress or to the Committee for foreign affairs.

In September, 1777, Mr. Francy set off from France to America, as an agent from Mr. Beaumarchais, to demand and settle the mode of payment for those supplies. Yet the departure, as well as the business of this gentleman, appears to have been concealed from Dr. Franklin and Mr. A. Lee, and to have been known only to Mr. Deane; which must certainly be thought inconsistent and improper, as their powers were equal, and their authority a joint one.<sup>52</sup>

That Mr. Deane was privy to it, is proved by his sending a letter by Mr. Francy, dated Paris, Sept. 10th, 1777, recommending him as Mr. Beaumarchais's agent, and pressing the execution of the business which he came upon. And that it was unknown to Doctor Franklin and Mr. A. Lee is circumstantially evidenced by Mr. Francy bringing with him no dispatches from the Commissioners jointly, and is afterwards fully proved by their letter of the 16th of Feb. following in which they say,

<sup>52</sup> In the Pennsylvania Packet of Jan. 23, in a publication signed Philaethes, is the following Certificate, viz.: "The military and other stores shipped by Roderique Hortalez and Co., *in consequence of the contract* made by them with Silas Deane, Esq., Agent for the United States of America, were shipped on board eight vessels, &c., &c., &c.

Certified at Philadelphia, this 13th day of January, 1779.

L. de Francy,

representing the House of Roderique Hortalez & Co."

Whether this certificate was published with or without the consent of M. Francy is not very material. But as my only design is to come at the *truth of things*, I am necessarily obliged to take notice of it. And the course of the publication I now give will, I presume, furnish M. Francy with circumstances which he must before have been unacquainted with.

This certificate says, "That the supplies were shipped by Roderique Hortalez & Co., *in consequence of a contract made by them with Silas Deane, Esq.*" I know that Mr. Roderique Hortalez was employed, or appeared to be so, by some public spirited gentlemen in France to offer a present to America, and I have seen a contract for *freightage* made with Mr. Monthieu, but I know of no *contract* for the supplies themselves. If there is such a contract, Mr. Deane has concealed it; and why he has done so must appear as extraordinary as that he made it.

N.B. Mr. Beaumarchais and R. Hortalez are one and the same person.—*Author.*

"We hear Mr. Beaumarchais has sent over a person to demand a large sum of money of you on account of arms, ammunition, &c. We think it will be best for you to leave that matter to be settled here (France), as there is a mixture of public and private which you cannot so well develope." And what must appear very extraordinary to the reader, is, that, notwithstanding Mr. Deane was privy to Mr. Francy's coming, and had even by letter recommended the business he came upon, yet in this joint letter of Feb. 16, 1778, he appears to know no more of the matter than they do. I have gone a little out of the order of time to take in this circumstance so curiously explanatory of Mr. Deane's double conduct.<sup>53</sup>

Nothing material appears to have happened from the time of Mr. Francy's sailing in Sept., 1777, till the 6th and 7th of Oct., 1777, following, when the dispatches of those dates were lost, and blank white paper sent to Congress in their stead.

I must request the reader in this place to take his stand and review the part Mr. Deane had acted. He had negotiated a prof[f]ered present into a purchase; and I have quoted letters to show, that though he was privy to Mr. Francy's coming over for the money, he had, nevertheless, concealed it from his colleagues, and was consequently obliged, when acting in conjunction with them, to know nothing of the matter, and to concur with them in forming such dispatches as they might have authority to do, notwithstanding such dispatches might contradict, or tend to expose himself. He had at least the chance of the seas in his favor.

The dispatches of Oct. 6 and 7, 1777 (as appear by the duplicates which have since arrived) were of this kind; and are, as far as letters can be, positive evidence against Mr. Deane's accounts. The one is a single letter from the Hon. Arthur Lee, Esq., and the other a joint letter from B. Franklin, S. Deane and A. Lee, of Oct. 7th. That of the 6th gives a circumstantial account in what manner the present was first offered, and the latter declares, "*That for the money and military stores already given no remittance will ever be required.*" But Mr. Francy was sent off with Mr. Deane's single letter to demand the money; what then was to be done with those dispatches? Had they arrived, Congress would

<sup>53</sup> The Committee for foreign affairs in their first letter to the Commissioners after Mr. Francy's arrival, say, "We think it strange that the Commissioners did not *jointly* write by Mr. Francy, considering the very important designs of his coming over, viz., to settle the mode of payment for the past cargoes, sent by Roderique Hortalez and Co., and to make contracts for future. It is certain, that much eclaircissement (Explanation) is, at this late moment, wanting."—*Author.*

have had a line to go by—and as they did not, they had nothing but Mr. Deane's single letter, and pretended contract with Mr. Beaumarchais to govern them.

I shall now relate such circumstances as I am acquainted with concerning the loss of those dispatches, by which the reader will see that the theft could only be committed by some bosom apostate.

When the supposed dispatches were brought to Yorktown by Capt. Folger, who came with them from France, they consisted of a packet for Congress of nearly the size of a half sheet, another for Robert Morris, Esq., of about the same size, another for Mr. Barnaby Deane, brother to Silas Deane, of about the same size, a smaller one from Mr. Arthur Lee to his brother, Col. R. H. Lee, besides letters and some small parcels to different persons, private, and another packet, which I shall mention afterwards. The packet for Congress and that for Col. R. H. Lee had both been robbed of every article of their contents, and filled up with blank white paper; that for Mr. Morris and Mr. Barnaby Deane came safe with all their contents. Whoever was the thief, must know exactly what to take and what to leave; otherwise the packet for Mr. Morris and Mr. Barnaby Deane must have been equally as tempting as that to Col. Lee; or rather more so, because they were more bulky and promising. In short, the theft discovers such an intimate knowledge of the contents, that it could only be done, or directed to be done by some person originally concerned in the writing of them. None of the packets or letters that came safe contained a single article of intelligence, except a letter from Doctor Franklin to myself, dated the same day of the dispatches; in which he says, "*Our affairs, so far as they are connected with this country, are every day more promising.*" I received this letter at Lancaster through the favor of the then President, *Henry Laurens, Esq.*, and returned it again to him to be communicated to Congress; and this, as I have before mentioned, was the only article of information which Congress received from May, 1777, to May, 1778. Which may now be set down as another extraordinary circumstance.

Among the packets was likewise a large handsome one directed to Mr. Hancock, who, at the time the dispatches were written, was President of Congress, and this would undoubtedly have been a greater inducement to a British emissary than that directed to Col. R. H. Lee; yet this packet, which was only on private business, was likewise suffered to come in safety. But how, I ask, should any British emissary know that it contained no information?

There are two ways by which this theft might be committed, viz. either by changing the packets, and placing blank ones in their stead, by the assistance of a counterfeit seal (and why not as well counterfeit a seal as counterfeit *Common Sense*), or by opening them, and filling the cover up with blank paper. In the first of those cases, the person must know how to imitate, and in either of them he must know which to select.

Mr. Deane, through his advocate Philalethes, in the Pennsylvania Packet of January 23d, says, in substance, *that as neither the King of England's speech in November, 1777, nor yet any ministerial information to Parliament through the course of that session, discover any knowledge of any secret supposed to be contained in those dispatches, that it is, therefore, A PROOF THAT THEY CONTAINED NO SECRET.* But, surely, Mr. Deane will not be hardy enough to deny the contents of the dispatches which himself was concerning in forming, and is now suspected of suppressing? This would be such a refinement upon treachery, that I know of no law which provides for the case. I shall, therefore, in this place, content myself with answering to Philalethes generally, that he himself knows nothing of their contents, and that the silence of the British King and Ministry is a circumstantial evidence, that they have *not got the dispatches*, and that they were lost for some other purpose. One thing, however, we are certain of, viz. that the loss of them, in any case, answered at that time the money purpose which Mr. Deane had in view, by giving an opportunity to his single letter by Mr. Francy, and the business that gentleman came upon, to arrive at Congress, instead of the dispatches.

It is true, that the duplicates were brought over by Mr. Deane's brother, Mr. Simeon Deane, with the treaty of alliance; but it would have been too barefaced to have had them stolen out of *his* hands, and the treaty left behind. Besides which, it was reasonable to suppose that Congress had before that, resolved upon, and settled the mode of payment, and that their attention to the great object of the treaty would make them inattentive to duplicates of a prior date, which appears to have been the case.

But it was Folger's hard fate to be confined, partly in prison, and partly on parole, nearly five months, on account of those dispatches; he was at last set at liberty, because nothing could be found against him more than that he appeared to be a blundering soul, and therefore a proper person to pitch upon to bring over blank dispatches, as his prob-

able inattention might afford a wilderness to the theft committed by others.

The public have now a clear line of circumstances before them, and though Mr. Deane may deny the fact, it becomes him likewise to remove the suspicions, which I am certain he cannot do without denying the letters I have quoted.

In his address of December 5th, he set out with a falsehood, by declaring that the "*ears of the representatives* (in Congress) *were shut against him,*" and though the charge was unjust, as appears by the journals, yet, so lost are that body to the dignity of the States they represent, that they not only suffered the accusation to pass unquestioned, but invited him, at the public expense, to their next public entertainment on the 6th of February. It was the disgraceful submission of Congress to Mr. Deane's false accusation that was the real cause why the late President, *Henry Laurens, Esq.*, quitted the chair, and the same cause promoted the present President, Mr. Jay to it. The secrecy which Congress imposes upon themselves is become a cloak for their misconduct, and as I wish to see a Congress such as America might be proud to own, and the enemy afraid to trifle with, it is full time for the States to know the conduct of their members, that they may make that body such as they would wish it to be. An evil cured is better than an evil concealed and suffocated.

I shall conclude this paper with mentioning another circumstance or two, in which Mr. Deane's reputation appears to be involved.

In his address of December 5th he informed the public that, "About the time the news arrived in France of General Burgoyne's surrender Mr. Arthur Lee's Secretary went to and from London, charged with affairs which were secret to the other Commissioners," meaning himself and Doctor Franklin; and on this ground, unsupported by any kind of evidence, Mr. Deane endeavors to have the public believe that Mr. Lee gave information to the British Court of the intended Treaty.

That Mr. Lee sent his Secretary to some sea-port towns in England is very true, and that he did not acquaint Mr. Deane with the reasons or the business is as true. Mr. Deane had been a traitor to Mr. Lee, and broke open and suppressed some confidential information of Mr. Lee's to Congress some considerable time before. I do not, in this place, mean the dispatches of October 6th and 7th, 1777, but another affair; and the original letter, which I here allude to, has likewise been in my hands since the time Mr. Deane broke it open.

But it is no proof that because Mr. Deane did not know the business, that Dr. Franklin might not, or that others did not. Mr. Deane never gave a line of authentic information to Congress respecting the condition of the enemy's fleet, their strength, weakness or destination; or of their land force, or their politics. Mr. Lee has constantly done so, and been on that head the most industrious and best informant that America had in Europe, and that even before the Congress existed, of which I shall mention one instance, viz., by the *same vessel* that brought over the British King's instruction to Sir Francis Barnard, while Governor of Massachusetts, Mr. A. Lee, I say, *by that same vessel sent the people of Boston the particulars of those instructions*. Whereas Mr. Deane's letters are for the most part filled up with flattering compliments to himself and Mr. Beaumarchais.

But taking it for granted that the enemy knew of the intended treaty, the question is, who informed them?

Mr. Arthur Lee had certainly no occasion to send his Secretary over to England to do it, because a private hint given to *Lord Stormont*, who was at that time at Paris as a British Ambassador, would have been much safer and more conveniently done.

Yet that it was known in London before it was executed in Paris, is a matter of which I have no doubt.

The public, or at least some of them, may recollect a letter, that was published a considerable time since, from a gentleman in London to a relation of his in this city, in which he spoke firmly of the established Independence of America, and advised the attention of his relation to *money matters*; that letter was from one of the Mr. Whartons of London, and came accidentally to sight. I mention this as a corresponding circumstance to what I am now going to relate.

I have seen, and have in my possession, an attestation of a gentleman, which declares that he saw at Mr. Wharton's, in London, a letter from Mr. Deane's secretary, and in his (the secretary's) hand-writing, dated Paris, January 27th, informing *that the Treaty of Alliance between France and America would be signed the 5th or 6th of February following, which letter likewise recommended an attention in money matters*, by which, I presume, is meant *Stock-jobbing* in the English funds. And I have seen another account which says *that, much about the same time, Mr. Deane remitted over to London, 19,520 livres*.

I shall now conclude this long letter with declaring that from the beginning of this dispute I have had no other object in view than to



bring *truth to light*, in the prosecution of which I have gone contrary to my own personal interest. The opposition and insults I have met with have been numerous, yet, from an unwillingness to sacrifice public advantage to private resentment, I have thought it best to take as little notice of them as possible. Truth, in every case, is the most reputable victory a man can gain. And if Mr. Deane has hitherto been the Jonas of the storm, I sincerely wish he may be found out, that the vessel may have relief.

As my signature, *Common-Sense*, has been counterfeited either by Mr. Deane, or some of his adherents, in Mr. Bradford's paper of February 3d,<sup>54</sup> I shall subscribe this with my name.

THOMAS PAINE.

PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 13, 1779.

#### REPLY TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS <sup>55</sup>

A writer who signs himself *An American*, in the *Pennsylvania Packet* of last Saturday, has selected and thrown together a variety of circumstances from which no final conclusion appears to be clearly drawn. He has taken for granted that which is matter of doubt, and argued from it as from matter of fact.

The piece is written with a show of decency and candor. But is decency and candor the natural or the mask character of the writer? If it

<sup>54</sup> The article Paine refers to appeared in the *Pennsylvania Journal*, February 3, 1779, over Thomas Paine's customary signature "Common Sense," and was addressed "To the People of America." The following day, February 4, there appeared in the *Pennsylvania Packet* the following note from Paine himself:

"For the *Pennsylvania Packet*.

"There are instances in which a want of civility is want of principle; amongst those may be reckoned that illiberal, though not illegal, kind of forgery, which only men of trifling characters and capacities will be guilty of, namely that of counterfeiting anonymous signatures: and the writer of a piece in Mr. Bradford's paper of yesterday, to which is affixed the signature of 'Common Sense,' would do well to consider, that such disingenuous shifts show as much a want of genuine wit as natural honesty, and is always a sign of weakness and defeat. T. P."

In another answer in the *Pennsylvania Journal* of February 10th, Paine adds to the above: ". . . The greatest part of his ironies are truths, and nearly all his intended truths are ironies, and his signing himself *Common Sense*, is an ironical reflection upon his own want of it. I consider the piece as an artifice of some of Mr. Deane's adherents, in order to throw a doubt, in distant places, upon the reality of my publications under that signature in the *Pennsylvania Packet* respecting Mr. Deane's character and conduct. . . ."—*Editor*.

<sup>55</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Packet*, March 2, 1779.—*Editor*.

be the former, we may conclude him sincere; if the latter, artful. It is necessary, at this time, that writers as well as writings should be read; and did I know a man who pays less regard to decency than himself, I would name him. The short character I have drawn is that which he affects to be proud of, and as I would willingly please all, where I can do it consistently, I have for once paid a compliment to ambition.

As subjects for his address he has selected the three following heads: *First*, The taking of Georgia by the enemy; *Secondly*, The calumnies raised against Congress; and, *Thirdly*, The symptoms of discontent exhibited by the Executive Council of Pennsylvania. The *First* he admits to be true. And the *Second* and *Third* he endeavors to explain away.

That an enemy, after threatening the unconditional conquest of Thirteen States, should at last make their attack on the weakest and remotest of them all is such an evidence of wasted strength and despair as needs no other exposure than to be told. And with this simple remark I dismiss the first of his heads.

As to the calumnies against Congress, I know but of *one*, and that is to be found in Mr. Deane's address of Dec. 5th, viz., That "*the ears of the representatives were shut against him.*" But will the writer of the American, though a member of that House, say that he was not privy to the libel before it was published? And will he now desert the libeller as an apology for himself? Consistency has some pretensions to character; and I would recommend it to the American to stick to his friend, and his friend to him. If the one can justify his conduct to his constituents, and the other to the public, it will be well for both.

Mr. Deane now wants to get off the Continent, and has applied to Congress for leave of absence. His retreat may be as convenient to several members of that House as to himself. But should a man whose public accounts are unsettled; who has made charges against others without offering to support them, and has had charges laid against him, to which he has made no reply; who is suspected of having carried on a clandestine trade of embezzling public money and suppressing the public dispatches, be at this time permitted to depart?

The state of things does not admit of that sleepy quietude and unlimited confidence which the writer of the American *now* wishes to promote. And as it cannot be the interest of the states to be imposed upon, either by their delegates in Congress or their ambassadors abroad, I shall collect and throw into one view the substance of what has been already

published on Mr. Deane's affairs, with the letters I have written and sent into that body while the matter was depending, and their conduct thereon.

COMMON SENSE.

PHILADELPHIA, March 1, 1779.

TO MR DEANE <sup>56</sup>

SIR,—The Committee of Congress, which have been sitting near a quarter of a year on your affairs, have at last brought in their report. What that report is, is a secret to me.

You first made your appeal to the public on the fifth of December, and promised them a history of "*matters important for them to know*" (those are the words of your address) yet in a few days after, you deserted them, and left them to find those matters out.

Where you left the public I took them up, and the general belief now is, that the *matters so important for them to know are found out* without your assistance, namely, *that you negotiated a prof[f]ered present amounting to two hundred thousand pounds sterling into a purchase, and embezzled, or was privy to the embezzling, the public dispatches to promote the imposition;* and that you may have no pretence hereafter to say that you were slanderously suspected, without any person undertaking to prove the circumstances on which the suspicions were founded, I hereby give you this notice, before your affairs be finally determined on in Congress, that if you will appeal to that Honorable House in behalf of your own suffering character, and to clear up the suspicions you lay under from my publications, that I will obey any order, and meet you at the bar of that House, and submit to any examination from them or you on the points in question, provided *the doors be open*.

But if this condition should be thought too much, I am contented to yield up something to supposed convenience, and will on my own part rest satisfied that the President and Council of this state, and Members of Assembly, if they please, be present, with such Members of any other state who may be on the spot.

COMMON SENSE.

MARKET-STREET, Philadelphia, March 26, 1779.

<sup>56</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Packet*, March 27, 1779.—*Editor*.

TO MR. DEANE<sup>57</sup>

Wherever your future lot may be cast, or however you may be disposed of, the recollection of your present affairs ought to teach you this one useful lesson, that *honesty is the best policy*.

It is now eight weeks ago since I laid before the public a regular detail of circumstances, on which were grounded my suspicions of your having negotiated a prof[f]ered present, amounting to two hundred thousand pounds sterling, into a purchase, and embezzled the public dispatches to promote the payment of the money. The circumstances as I have related them, are undeniable; neither have you attempted,\* either before Congress or the public, to clear up the suspicions, and by that neglect have confirmed them into a charge. The examination of Capt. Folger, who was detained a prisoner near five months at Yorktown on account of the loss of those dispatches, would now throw some additional light on this affair; but strange as it may appear, that examination is not now to be found.

After I had laid the circumstances before the public concerning the loss of the dispatches, and explained the object for which they appear to have been lost, I informed you, in the *Pennsylvania Packet* of last month, that if you thought yourself aggrieved by any thing I had written and published, that I would attend an order of Congress, and submit to any examination on the points in question, provided the doors were open. For as I have some reasons to suspect that there are Members of that House who are privately interested with you, the success of whose projects depends in a great measure on your fate, I ought not to trust myself before them (after what has already passed) with the doors shut.

In answer to this it may be said, that there are others of that Honorable House on whose integrity and public spirit I might safely rely, without any other evidence; but when I recollect how much more industrious interest is than friendship, I am the more confirmed in the opinion, that I ought not to trust too much to probability. I once attended an order of Congress (January 6th), and was asked by the President, Mr. Jay, whether I was the author of the publications in the *Pennsylvania Packet*, entitled, "*Common Sense to the Public on Mr. Deane's affairs*"; I instantly answered, "*Yes, I am the author of all these pieces.*" No other questions were asked me, and I was ordered to withdraw. On

<sup>57</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Packet*, April 13, 1779.—*Editor*.

the next day, January 7th, I applied for a hearing, and on a motion being made for that purpose, it passed in the negative; and on the next day, January 8th, I sent in my resignation of the office of Secretary to the Committee for Foreign Affairs. Yet on the 16th, without any enquiry whether I was right or wrong, or hearing or requiring any explanation on the matter, some of Mr. Deane's party made a motion for dismissing me, on account of those publications, from the very office I had before resigned, because I was refused a hearing to explain and support them. The motion, as it happened, was lost; for though the majority for the dismissal was fourteen to thirteen, yet it being a tie upon the States, five for—five against, and two divided, it passed in the negative. And as this vote explains the cast of Congress on other parts of Mr. Deane's affairs, I shall furnish the public with the yeas and nays.

For the Dismission.

Mr. Holton,  
 Mr. Collins,  
 Mr. Jay,  
 Mr. Lewis,  
 Mr. Atlee,  
 Mr. Paca,  
 Mr. Carmichael,  
 Mr. Thomas Adams,  
 Mr. Merry Smith,  
 Mr. Penn,  
 Mr. Hill,  
 Mr. Burke,  
 Mr. Drayton,  
 Mr. Langworthy.

Against the Dismission.

Mr. Whipple,  
 Mr. S. Adams,  
 Mr. Gerry,  
 Mr. Lovel,  
 Mr. Ellery,  
 Mr. Dyer,  
 Mr. Root,  
 Mr. Roberdeau,  
 Mr. Searle,  
 Mr. Shippen,  
 Mr. M'Kean,  
 Mr. F. L. Lee,  
 Mr. Hutson.

Mr. Deane and  
 Mr. G. Morris,  
 were not in the house.

Neither were  
 Mr. Laurens,  
 Mr. Henry,  
 Mr. Floyd,  
 Mr. Frost.

New Jersey was absent.

How the gentlemen who voted for the dismission *without an hearing*, can possibly reconcile such conduct to their vote on the 9th of

January, which declares that I had no right to conclude *that I was not to be heard*, is to me, and must be to every man, and even to themselves, unaccountable; their conduct on the two days being as opposite in principle as right and wrong. But to return to Mr. Deane.

Four months ago the popular torrent ran, not only strong, but violent in your favor. Force by the daily inventions of interested adherents, it rose with the rapidity of a bubble, and discharged itself like the breaking of a bank. Before the multitude had time to reflect, they were hurried away, and, following the impulse of the first impression, felt an unwillingness to resist, an awkwardness to retract.

Whether you were then right or wrong, was of no more consequence to me than to any other individual in America. It was as much every man's duty as mine to assist you in the first, or detect you in the last; and the only difference was, that by knowing more of the matter, I had the less excuse for neglect. I had politically nothing to lose or gain distinct from the general interest, and would as freely have supported you, had I believed you to be right, as I opposed you, believing you to be wrong.

As to whatever parties (if any) were formed for or against you, in one place or another, I had not the most distinct connection with, or knowledge of. Having at that time no quarrel with you, or you with me, or with any other gentleman in or out of Congress upon your account, or upon the account of any other Commissioner or agent, I had no interested object to carry, no party or personal resentment to gratify; and not being even hinted at in your address of December 5th, I had, on my own part, nothing to defend.

Such being my situation at the time your address came out, the question is, What could induce me to take it up? so opposite to your plan, and contrary to almost every man's opinion. I stood fair with the United States, and had no occasion to run risks to establish or recover reputation. The task too was heavy, and the prospect troublesome; besides which, I had intentionally devoted the winter to more agreeable employments, and the loss of so much time on your account has thrown me unprofitably back in the plan I had laid out, which was that of making an arrangement of materials for a History of the Revolution.

Those who have no idea of stirring hand or foot without profit or reward, will assign such reasons for my conduct as influence their own; and as I can neither prevent their opinions or change their principles, I shall leave them to think as they please. But if I may be allowed to de-

clare for myself, my only motive was, that *I doubted your integrity, and had good reasons to suspect you were imposing on the country*; and as those reasons were known to no other person out of Congress than myself, therefore no other person could go through the undertaking.

I had, on former occasions, I believe, rendered essential service, and that in the very crisis of time. And I saw in this instance, that exclusive of the imposition you were acting on the public, by pretending to give them information of plots which never existed but in your own wicked imagination, that the plan was to get you off Ambassador to Holland, where you might hope to have the fingering a loan of money, and to make a new appointment of Ambassadors to other Courts of men connected with yourself. And I leave America to judge what condition our foreign affairs must shortly have been in, if such a measure had succeeded, and if what I have stated respecting your former conduct be true, which there is yet no reason to disbelieve.

But there is one circumstance which must still appear embarrassing to the public, and which I now mean to throw the best light upon in my power.

In your address of December 5th, you declared that "*the ears of the Representatives in Congress were shut against you?*" yet every day's experience has proved that the charge was untrue. Why, then, was it made, or why was it submitted to?

Any indifferent person would suppose that those against whom that charge was directed, would feel themselves relieved by the pains I have taken to detect the falsehood, for it was a falsehood, as the Journals of Congress of December the first will testify. But be that as it may, the falsehood undetected was a convenient one, because it stood as an apology to a publication calculated to make room for a new appointment of Commissioners to foreign Courts, by unjustly traducing the characters of those who were already appointed. And consequently those who hoped to succeed on a vacancy, connived at the libel, and quietly put up with their share of the disgrace.

Had the pretence not been made, the publication could not have appeared with consistency, and would have failed in its effect; for it was the gratification which the public felt at being appealed to, because it was said, Congress had "*shut their ears*" that gave zeal and vehemence to their suspicions. But the pretence being made and believed, produced an effect far beyond, if not contrary to, what the contrivers expected. The uproar against Congress was greater than against the Commissioners;

and while Mr. Deane's advocates in the House were hoping to be sent abroad as Ambassadors, the cry out of doors was a *new Congress*. By this overspun piece of craft, they undermined the ground upon which they expected to rise, and instead of succeeding to the end, their personal honor fell a sacrifice to the means. The public placed Mr. Deane at one end of the beam, and Congress at the other, and the idea struck so naturally that if what Mr. Deane said was true, it was time that Congress should be removed and changed. And, on the other hand, if what he said was not true, the support and patronage they have since given him is a dishonor to the dignity of the United States.

I shall conclude this paper with remarking, that we have hitherto confounded two distinct things together, which ought to be kept separate; I mean, *the sovereignty of the United States*, and the *delegated representation of that sovereignty in Congress*. It may happen, and perhaps does now happen, that the character of the latter falls far short of the former; or why is it that the first is rising, and the latter sinking?

Under obligations to no one state on the Continent more than to another, and not at all to any, I take my view largely over the whole, and convinced that their interest and happiness is *one*, and that that which in foreign affairs affects any must affect all, I have, through the course of this business, made no distinction of states, or ever mean to do so.

At the period we are now arrived, nothing can hurt us but want of honesty; and until Mr. Deane can clear up his character, those who have so connivingly supported him in Congress, will find it difficult to make good their own. I lay myself open to the world; I neither secret my thoughts nor disown my publications; and if there is a man in America uninfluenced and independent, I think I may justly claim that character.

COMMON SENSE.

PHILADELPHIA, April 10th, 1779.

TO WHITEHEAD HUMPHREYS.<sup>58</sup>

In the Evening Post of last Friday, July ninth, in a piece under the signature of Cato, the following queries, with their answers and in[n]uendoes, were put:

"Who was an Englishman?" "Tom P——."

"Who was a Tory?" "Tom P——."

<sup>58</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, July 16, 1779.—*Editor*.



"Who wrote the Crisis, and abused Howe?" "Tom P——."

"Who was made secretary to the committee of foreign affairs?" "Tom P——."

"Who recommended him to that office?" ". . . ."

"Who betrayed state affairs?" "Tom P——."

"For whom did he betray them?" ". . . ."

"Who has traduced the tried friends of America?" "Tom P——."

"Who has endeavored to raise suspicions against congress?" "Tom P——."

"Who was made a committee man?" "Tom P——."

"Who proposed a resolution to the committee to prevent supplies from going to the army?" "Tom P——."

"Who maintains Tom P——?" "Nobody knows."

"Who is paid by the enemy?" "Nobody knows."

"Who best deserves it?" "Tom P——."

I do not take notice of these queries, etc., from any apprehension of their being credited to my injury, but to expose the meanness of the wretch who published them.

As I take it for granted he meant me, and no other person, I sent to the printer for the name of the author, or of the person by whose authority he published them. Mr. Towne, the printer, came to me in about two hours after, and told me that "he had not liberty to give him up."

If the author chooses to submit himself to be suspected for a lying incendiary scoundrel, by advancing what he dares not own, he is, for the present, welcome; but unless he gives up his name, or the printer for him, the one or the other will probably meet with treatment different to what they expected.

If he alludes to my publications respecting Mr. Deane, I reply, let Mr. Deane answer for himself. He is on the spot, so am I. I can but consider myself, and I know I am considered, both by friends and enemies, as a principal means in rescuing this country from *imposition and a dangerous species of monopolising*; for what can be *more* dangerous to her commerce and her honor than members of Congress forming trading companies in partnership with their ambassadors? The state of Virginia, on discovering that three of their delegates were partners in this company, not only appointed others in their room, but have passed a law to prevent such practices in future; and I hope every state will, in some line or other, do the same. If the exposing this company was

revealing a state secret, or if stating the loss of the dispatches, or saying that the supplies, represented as a debt by Mr. Deane, were offered and intended as a present to the states, were revealing state secrets, I confess myself the person who revealed them; and in so doing I have done the states justice, which I should not have done had I acted otherwise. But the exact state of the case is, that I have told the truth, and *concealed* the secret.

I have lately taken up the subject of the fisheries in behalf of the right of America, yet this wretch, whoever he is, has thought proper to abuse me for it in the *Evening Post*. I have published one piece in Messrs. Hall and Seller's paper of June thirty on that subject, in answer to a piece on the same, signed *Americanus*, and I now republish it in this paper, that every man may judge for himself what sort of a being this unknown Cato must be.

If men, under the hope of being concealed by a printer, are to publish what they dare not own, the public will for ever be held in confusion. British emissaries, British prisoners, and disaffected refugees, will embarrass every measure, and endeavor to defame every character, however fair, that stands in their way; and for this reason, were it for no other, I conceive that the name of no writer, in the present state of things, ought to be concealed when demanded.

THOMAS PAINE.

THE PHILADELPHIA COMMITTEE TO ROBERT MORRIS <sup>59</sup>

Philadelphia, Saturday, July 24, 1779.

A town meeting being to be held on Monday next, the following letter sent to Robert Morris, Esq, enclosing a report, are published for the consideration of the people previous to the meeting.

Philadelphia, July 21, 1779.

SIR,—We received your favor of June 26th, inclosed in your subsequent letter of July 7th, and likewise saw the same published in Mr. Dunlap's paper of the 5th, and Mr. Bradford's paper of the 14th instant. Our reason for not waiting on you again is assigned by you, partly on account of your indisposition, and partly by the publication itself, because it was not appealing from a report, but prior to a report; and it was

<sup>59</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Packet*, July 24, 1779. The letter was composed by Paine.—*Editor.*

not any part of our intention to have published any report without first presenting you with the whole.

Enclosed is the report we shall make to the town meeting on Monday next, and which we shall publish in the paper of Saturday; and think it our duty to furnish you with a copy thereof, for your perusal, animadversion, or explanation.

In our conduct in this business we have strictly adhered to facts, and scrupulously followed candor and justice; and though the relation may in some parts appear unpleasant, we hope you will acquit us of exaggeration.

We observe, both in your conversation with us and in your letter of June 26th, and publication of the same date, that you expressed some concern that your name had been so disadvantageously mentioned at the last town meeting. It often happens that those who ought to be the first, are the last persons to hear circumstances respecting themselves.

The cargo in question had created much conversation before any town meeting was thought of. Its remaining so long in the river without any proposals for sale, and a public guard being placed over it, gave rise to many conjectures, among the rest, and which was a very general one, that it was the property of Mr. Silas Deane, and detained by Congress till he should settle his accounts; and as your connection with Mr. Deane had been known from an account published by you in February last, the Idea, without the assistance of any thing malignant, easily extended to yourself, and perhaps quickened other apprehensions, when it was first given out that you was become a purchaser of the whole; and however unwilling Mr. Morris may be to acknowledge the term engrossing or monopolizing, yet as he did not import the cargo, and did, in partnership with Mr. Solikoff, get the whole into his possession, we are at a loss to find any other name, though the expedition with which he entered on the sale abates the rigorous sense generally applied to these words.

On the part of Mr. Solikoff there is something very nearly akin to forestalling; for though the possessing himself of a promise of the whole cargo was not, as we at first apprehended, before the vessel arrived, it was on, or before, the day on which the cargo became legally merchantable, which we presume takes place as to public sale from the time she is entered with the Naval Officer, which was on the 25th of April.

You mention your having entered, or intended to enter, into treaty for a remaining part of the cargo, which is described by you as unsuited

to the season and country. As we have not seen the invoice, and cannot learn, from those who have seen it, what part thereof can properly come under that description, we leave it to Mr. Morris to give what satisfaction he may think proper, either to us or the town meeting, or by any other means he may choose.

We are persuaded that enquiries of this kind are attended with niceties and difficulties, which would be innovations on the rights and freedom of trade at any other time than this; but, embarked in a cause which has been in a great measure supported by generously surrendering individual ease and advantage, we are persuaded that Mr. Morris can but approve the principle which the public, and we by their authority, have proceeded on, and to which himself on many occasions has contributed.

As we are not authorized to condemn, so neither can we justify; and are persuaded that when Mr. Morris reflects on the uneasiness which such a mode of purchasing has occasioned, that he will take measures in future to prevent the same consequences; for though, as a merchant, he may be strictly within rules, yet when he considers the many public and honorary stations he has filled, and the times he lives in, he must feel himself somewhat out of character.

If Mr. Morris pleases to convey anything to us in answer to this and the enclosed, we shall deliver it with these at the town meeting, and do every thing in our power to remove uneasiness and restore tranquility and public friendship.

We are, sir, your obedient humble servants,

Timothy Matlack,  
David Rittenhouse,  
Thomas Paine,  
Charles Wilson Peale,  
J. B. Smith.

TO THE PUBLIC <sup>60</sup>

MR. DUNLAP,—Please to insert the following.

T. P.

Silas Deane, John Nixon, and James Wilson, Esquires, having called on Capt. Peale, and left with him a letter signed Silas Deane, dated the

<sup>60</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Packet*, July 31, 1779. Deane revealed that Charles Wilson Peale had informed some gentlemen at the Coffee House that Silas Deane had offered Paine a bribe not to write against him. In a letter to Deane, John Nixon and James Wilson, July 28, 1779, Paine wrote that he would "publish in next Saturday's paper the whole transaction respecting the offer in question." This article is his explanation.—*Editor*.

27th instant, respecting intimations used by him, Capt. Peale, at the Coffee-house, on the morning of the 26th instant, relative to some pecuniary offers made to me, and Capt. Peale having shown me that letter, which, together with my and his answer thereto, were published in the Pennsylvania Packet of Thursday last, in which answer of mine I engaged to give the information required in this day's paper.

On examining Mr. Deane's letter a second time, I see the request is for the *name* or *names* only, and not for circumstances of the affair in question. To give the one without the other might be made an ill use of, and to give both in the present situation of things, without first referring the matter to Congress, might, as far as I am able to foresee, produce considerable inconvenience.

So far as respects the three gentlemen in question, I shall give such answers as ought to suffice them, and that part which may be supposed to belong more generally to the public, I entreat them to leave to my discretion. Had there been no peculiar nicety in this affair, I undoubtedly should for my own sake have published it before now, because in any light in which it may be viewed, it will add to my reputation.

Therefore, it is sufficient on my part that I declined the offer; and it is sufficient to Mr. Nixon and Mr. Wilson that they were not the persons who made it, or, I believe, knew anything about; and on the part of Mr. Deane it is somewhat extraordinary that he should stir about *this only*, who has taken everything else so quietly. It is likewise more extraordinary that he should stir at *this* particular time, because I cannot suppose he is ignorant of a letter of mine to Congress, dated so long ago as the 23d of April, where I mentioned the same affair to which, I presume, Capt. Peale alluded; and I gave my consent that Mr. Thomson should show Mr. Deane that letter, upon condition that he does not commence a quarrel with Mr. Carmichael for dubbing him at Nantz with the title of a —.

After informing Congress that an offer had been made to me, I added "that however polite the proposal might be, or however friendly it might be designed, I thought it my duty to decline it, as it was accompanied with a condition which had a tendency to prevent the information I had since given and should still give on public affairs." The offer was made both before and after I made my resignation on the 8th of January. It was first put in general terms, afterwards in particular ones; was pressed on me with a great deal of anxiety, and amounted to more than twice my salary in Congress.

I cannot possess myself of the mind of the gentleman who proposed it, so as to declare what every intention of his might be, but I well know that the acceptance of it would at that time as effectually have prevented the publication I gave in Mr. Dunlap's paper of the 16th of February, respecting the supplies and the loss of the dispatches, as if my silence had been made the express condition of my acceptance.

Having said thus much, I think it a prudent step in me to refer the affair first to Congress. If they please to call on me for particulars, I will furnish them; and I am persuaded the honest and well wishing part of the public will rest satisfied with this, as there are matters connected with it which might, either by mistake or design, be made a very ill use of.

There is not a man in the Thirteen States, so far as his powers and abilities extend, that will go further or do more in supporting the cause of America than myself, or of any country connected with her. This every one knows who has any intimate acquaintance with me; and according to my opinion of things and principles, a man needs no pecuniary inducement to do that to which the two-fold powers of duty and disposition naturally lead him on.

Having thus far satisfied Mr. Nixon and Mr. Wilson, I take the liberty of asking Mr. Wilson if he is or was not directly or indirectly a partner in the Foreign Commercial Company, in which Mr. Deane, with several members of Congress at that time, and others were concerned.

And exclusive of all other questions to Mr. Deane, I desire him to inform the public for what purpose it was that he remitted over to Mr. Samuel Wharton of London 19,520 livres, eleven days after the Treaty of Alliance was signed. I presume he will not undertake to contradict the fact; if he does, I can prove it.

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. As to Whitehead Humphreys, I give him my full and free consent to publish whatever and whenever he pleases, and under any signature he likes best; promising on my part to make no reply thereto, if he, Whitehead Humphreys, will to each of his future pieces add at the bottom the following words, viz.:

"This is published by the same person who inserted several libellous productions under the signature of 'Cato,' in Benjamin Towne's Evening Post of July, 1779, which were so infamously false that the author or carrier of them, in order to avoid the shame and scandal of being

known, tied the Printer down to such strong obligations to conceal him, that nothing but a halter could extort it from him."

PHILADELPHIA, July 30, 1779.

TO MR. DUNLAP <sup>61</sup>

On the Saturday preceding the election of a Committee for the city and liberties, I was under an engagement to publish, in your paper of that day, an answer to Mr. Deane's application to Capt. Peale, respecting some expressions used by the latter at the Coffee-house, on the morning of the last Town Meeting.

It was unpleasant to me to find myself obliged to say less in that publication than was generally expected, and it was not till after I had made the engagement that I saw the necessity of being somewhat reserved. I am persuaded Mr. Deane is not so ignorant of the matter as he affects to be, and that he only wanted to be furnished with an opportunity to make an ill use of.

I had likewise another reason, which was, that as Mr. Deane had applied for some information to Capt. Peale, which myself only could give him a proper answer upon, I intended, by not doing it in the public papers, to improve it into an opportunity that should bring him and me face to face, as well on that as on other matters; to accomplish which, and likewise to prevent any ill use being made of the publication above mentioned, I sent the following letter to Mr. Deane the next morning.

Market-street, Sunday, August 1st, 1779.

SIR,—If you really wanted the information you applied for to Capt. Peale, I shall in this letter put you in a way to procure it. You will at the same time please to observe that I was not at the Coffee-house when the conversation passed to which you allude in your letter of the 27th ult.; neither can I learn from any person what the precise words were, some representing them more and some less. I cannot make myself a judge of that part of the business, neither will they affect one way or other the matter in question. If it should turn out (as it will not) that no offer was made to me for any purpose whatever, your affairs will stand just as they did; and if the contrary should be found, and that your affairs were some way or other connected with that offer, they will not appear the better for it.

<sup>61</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Packet*, August 10, 1779. Dunlap was editor of the paper.—*Editor.*

I believe Capt. Peale's motive for mentioning it was to silence the groundless and illiberal reflections of those who endeavored to give out that I wrote for reward, when I made my publications on your affairs. In those publications I have done honor to the generous people of France, to whom we are happily allied; I have done justice to the States, and no injustice to you; and so far, Sir, from being paid for writing them, I might have been rewarded either to have let them alone, or to have concurred in measures that might have been pointed out to me. What those measures were was not mentioned.

I had many reasons for not giving the whole in the paper of last Saturday, which I am persuaded every well wisher to his country, could he know and feel these reasons as well as I do, would honor me for. By not doing it, I submitted myself to a temporary inconvenience; yet had I done it without taking the necessary precaution to prevent misrepresentation I am well aware of the ill use would have been made of it.

I ought to have expected that on the appearance of Saturday's paper you would have requested Congress to have enquired into the matter, and desired I might have been immediately called before them. Your neglect in so doing shows, to me at least, that you are not very anxious, and that your application for a name was to answer some other end than barely to know. A name might have served a purpose, and added to the false coloring which have been industriously cast on the Committee for detaining the flour, and enquiring into the circumstances of the exportation of that article, been ungenerously and illiberally played off to suit the purpose of an election now on hand.

Sir, make your application to me in company with any three gentlemen who are or have been members of Congress, and I will meet you at any time and place to be agreed on, within the space of one week, in company with three gentlemen of the same rank, and give every particular and circumstance that you may require, or I can recollect, respecting the matter in question.

If you choose to confine your request to three Members of Connecticut, I will confine mine to three who now are or have been Members for this State. If you choose to be more general, I shall of consequence have a right to be the same. I will likewise submit myself to be asked by you any questions respecting any of my publications, or any part of my conduct, and I shall likewise claim the right of asking you any questions respecting such parts of your conduct as my publications have animadverted upon; and any questions on either side which shall be



deemed improper by the gentlemen present, shall be answered or not at the choice of the party to whom they shall be put.

You will please to favor me with your answer to this some time to day, the sooner the more agreeable.

I am, Sir, your obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

Silas Deane, Esq.

In the evening I received the following.

Turner's-Lane, Sunday afternoon, 1 o'clock.

SIR,—Your letter of this day was this moment put into my hands by Col. Mitchel. I am engaged in company and shall not return to town until evening. I shall take the first convenient opportunity to give you a proper answer.

I am, Sir, your humble servant,

SILAS DEANE.

Mr. Paine.

The next morning I received the following evasive refusal of the proposal I had made.

Philadelphia, August 2, 1779.

SIR,—I was well informed, and I firmly believe, that Mr. Peale said at the Coffee House you had been offered a bribe not to write against me. From hence it would naturally be supposed that I had directly or indirectly been concerned in that offer. I therefore called on him for the *name or names* of the parties. As to the circumstances, they can be of no consequence, for I am confident that upon an investigation of the matter, evidence must appear to exculpate me from the charge, much more satisfactory to the candid and honest part of my countrymen than any thing it is possible for you to say.

Mr. Peale's and Mr. Paine's intentions are alike indifferent—you engaged to give the information required in Saturday's paper; you have not done it. But you speak of some proposition made to you, and you could not possess yourself of the mind of the gentleman who proposed it so as to declare what every intention of his might be, but that you well know the acceptance of it would have effectually prevented your publication of the 16th of February. From hence, this one thing at least is evidently apparent, that you are far from acknowledging the offer alleged by Mr. Peale.

It is by no means my business to investigate the bargains you may have made for the use or abuse of your pen; and did I desire it, you are the last person to whom I should apply for the *real* state of *facts*. If you or any other shall affirm that I, or any person by my order, or with any knowledge, made you directly or indirectly any offer whatever, to purchase your silence with relation to me or my affairs, it will become me to require the *name* or *names*; but at present it is quite sufficient to assert the falsity of such allegations.

Since you appear solicitous to know the reasons of my silence in regard to your publications, I will give you one which your own consciousness must convince you is quite satisfactory. As Mr. Paine cannot bring any evidence whatever in support of his charges, the injustice of which he must be himself fully convinced of, it would not only be beneath the character of a faithful public servant, but an insult on the public candor, to attempt a confutation of them. You have, it seems, left the investigation of your bribe to Congress. I am content. Let them investigate it, if they think the importance of the thing merits enquiry. In the interim, you and your friend Mr. Peale may at your leisure determine whether you told him a falsehood, or he told one to the people at the Coffee-house; or whether, if some person has really bribed or offered to bribe you, it not now incumbent on Mr. Paine to mention the name as publicly as Mr. Peale mentioned the thing.

The citizens of Philadelphia may also determine whether they have not a right to insist on it. But as Mr. Paine's publication contains a sufficient disavowal of Mr. Peale's assertions, I am satisfied; and I pray you to believe that I am far from having so much respect either for the person or character of Mr. Thomas Paine, as to covet any conversation or intercourse with him which is not absolutely necessary.

I am, Sir, your humble servant,

SILAS DEANE.

To Mr. Paine.

I now think it full time to take my leave of Mr. Deane; neither can he, after declining the fair and open offer I made to him, have the least pretence to complain. If he be an honest man, and innocent of the things which he well knows I suspect him guilty of, he would have met me on the ground I proposed, glad of the opportunity of proving me wrong.

Why he should affect to be satisfied, or what right he can have to conclude "*that my publication contains a sufficient disavowal of Mr. Peale's*

*assertions*," I am quite at loss to find out. Mr. Peale has a much greater right to say that Mr. Deane admits what he asserted at the Coffee-house, by his declining to meet Mr. Paine on the subject.

I believe Mr. Deane expresses himself very sincerely when he declares how little respect he has for me. I have resigned one salary under Congress, and declined the offer of two others of more value, that I might be perfectly at liberty to do the country justice against his impositions, and it is not very natural he should express himself otherwise. I therefore pardon the affront for the sake of the truth it contains, fully believing it to be the honestest expression he has used since his return to America.

I am but at little loss to guess the quarter from whence the late abusive pieces signed Cato, and others of the same cast, really came, and the end they were designed to answer; but so much have the authors of them been mistaken, that, without the least endeavors of mine, the resentment they hoped to excite has fallen upon themselves; and they have, at the same time, added to my reputation by bringing my refusal of an advantageous offer into public notice, which otherwise might have rested in oblivion, or been very little known, it being near seven months since the affair happened.

But must it not appear very extraordinary that the man who last winter threw a whole country into the utmost confusion under the pretence of serving them, should now shrink from a genteel and honorable opportunity of vindicating himself from the heavy suspicions that have since taken place against him? If he be not guilty, the offer must have been agreeable; and if he be, he had best take care of himself. I have by me copies of several letters he has wrote to Congress complaining of my publications; but why do not his connections in that House, if they think him innocent, demand an hearing for him, or why does he not demand one for himself, or why does he not accept that which I have offered him? I have waited beyond the time of a week to give him an opportunity of acceding to it, notwithstanding his declining it in his letter to me.

Upon the whole, is it so light a matter to be suspected of defrauding the country of a very large sum of money and embezzling the public dispatches to conceal the delinquency, that Mr. Deane does not think it worth his while to vindicate himself from the suspicions? Or can he be so foolish as not to see the suspicion is become almost universal? The silence of that Congress he once so much confided in, his own silence,

and the silence of his most intimate connections, all tend to show that something is the matter.

T.P.

MESSRS. DEANE, JAY, AND GÉRARD <sup>62</sup>

In your paper of August 31st was published an extract of a letter from Paris, dated May the 21st, in which the writer, among other things, says:

"It is long since I felt in common with every other well-wisher to the cause of liberty and truth, the obligations I was under to the author of "Common Sense," for the able and unanswerable manner in which he has defended those principles. The same public motives I am persuaded induced him to address the public against Mr. Deane and his associates. The countenance and support which Deane has received is a melancholy presage of the future. Vain, assuming, avaricious and unprincipled, he will stick at no crime to cover what he has committed and continue his career. The impunity with which Deane has traduced and calumniated Congress to their face, the indulgence and even countenance he has received, the acrimonious and uncandid spirit of a letter containing Mr. Paine's publications which accompanied a resolve sent to Mr. Gérard, are matters of deep concern here to every friend to America."

By way of explaining the particular letter referred to in the above, the following note was added:

"The letter here alluded to can be no other than that signed '*John Jay*,' dated January 13th, and published in Mr. Dunlap's paper of Jan. 16th. It is very extraordinary that Mr. Jay should write such a letter, because it contains the same illiberal reflections which Congress, as a body, had rejected from their resolve of January 12, as may be seen by any one who will peruse the proceedings of January last. Congress has since declined to give countenance to Mr. Jay's letter; for though he had a public authority for writing a *letter* to Mr. Gérard, he had no authority for the reflections he used; besides which, the letter would be perfectly laughable were every circumstance known which happened at that particular time, and would likewise show how exceedingly delicate and cautious a President ought to be when he means to act officially in cases he is not sufficiently acquainted with."

<sup>62</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Packet*, September 14, 1779. Gérard, the French minister to the United States, had complained to Congress of Paine's disclosures. After Paine had resigned his secretaryship, John Jay, President of Congress, wrote Gérard a letter apologizing for Paine's conduct. Discretion and realistic diplomacy necessitated this step, even though what Paine had pointed out was essentially true.—*Editor*.

Every person will perceive that the note which explains the letter referred to, is not a part of the letter from Paris, but is added by another person; and Mr. Jay, or any other gentleman, is welcome to know that the note is in my writing, and that the original letter from Paris is now in my possession. I had sufficient authority for the expressions used in the note. Mr. Jay did not lay his letter to Mr. Gérard before Congress previous to sending it, and therefore, though he had their order, he had not their approbation. They, it is true, ordered it to be published, but there is no vote for approving it, neither have they given it a place in their Journals, nor was it published in any more than one paper in this city (Benjamin Towne's), though there were at that time two others. Some time after Mr. Jay's letter appeared in the paper, I addressed another to Congress, complaining of the unjust liberty he had taken, and desired to know whether I was to consider the expressions used in his letter as containing *their* sentiments, at the same time informing them that if they declined to prove what he had written I should consider their silence as a disapprobation of it. Congress chose to be silent; and consequently, have left Mr. Jay to father his own expressions.

I took no other notice of Mr. Jay's letter at the time it was published, being fully persuaded that when any man recollected the part I had acted, not only at the first but in the worst of times, he could but look on Mr. Jay's letter to be groundless and ungrateful, and the more so, because if America had had no better friends than himself to bring about independence, I fully believe she would never have succeeded in it, and in all probability been a ruined, conquered and tributary country.

Let any man look at the position America was in at the time I first took up the subject, and published "Common Sense," which was but a few months before the Declaration of Independence; an army of thirty thousand men coming out against her, besides those which were already here, and she without either an object or a system; fighting, she scarcely knew for what, and which, if she could have obtained, would have done her no good. She had not a day to spare in bringing about the only thing which could save her. A REVOLUTION, yet no one measure was taken to promote it, and many were used to prevent it; and had independence not been declared at the time it was, I cannot see any time in which it could have been declared, as the train of ill-successes which followed the affair of Long Island left no future opportunity.

Had I been disposed to have made money, I undoubtedly had many opportunities for it. The single pamphlet "Common Sense," would at

that time of day have produced a tolerable fortune, had I only taken the same profits from the publication which all writers had ever done, because the sale was the most rapid and extensive of any thing that was ever published in this country, or perhaps any other. Instead of which I reduced the price so low, that instead of getting, I yet stand thirty-nine pounds eleven shillings out of pocket on Mr. Bradford's books, exclusive of my time and trouble, and I have acted the same disinterested part by every publication I have made. I could have mentioned those things long ago, had I chosen, but I mention them now to make Mr. Jay feel his ingratitude.

In the *Pennsylvania Packet* of last Tuesday some person has republished Mr. Jay's letter, and Mr. Gérard's answer of the 13th and 14th January last, and though I was patiently silent upon their first publication, I now think it necessary, since they are republished, to give some circumstances which ought to go with them.

At the time the dispute arose, respecting Mr. Deane's affairs, I had a conference with Mr. Gérard at his own request, and some matters on that subject were freely talked over, which it is here unnecessary to mention. This was on the 2d of January.

On the evening of the same day, or the next, Mr. Gérard, through the mediation of another gentleman, made me a very genteel and profitable offer. I felt at once the respect due to his friendship, and the difficulties which my acceptance would subject me to. My whole credit was staked upon going through with Deane's affairs, and could I afterwards have written with the pen of an angel, on any subject whatever, it would have had no effect, had I failed in that or declined proceeding in it. Mr. Deane's name was not mentioned at the time the offer was made, but from some conversation which passed at the time of the interview, I had sufficient reason to believe that some restraint had been laid on that subject. Besides which I have a natural inflexible objection to any thing which may be construed into a private pension, because a man after that is no longer truly free.

My answer to the offer was precisely in these words—"Any service I can render to either of the countries in alliance, or to both, I ever have done and shall readily do, and Mr. Gérard's *esteem* will be the only recompense I shall desire." I particularly chose the word *esteem* because it admitted no misunderstanding.

On the fifth of January I published a continuation of my remarks on Mr. Deane's affairs, and I have ever felt the highest respect for a nation

which has in every stage of our affairs been our firm and invariable friend. I spoke of France under that general description. It is true I prosecuted the point against Mr. Deane, but what was Mr. Deane to France, or to the Minister of France?

On the appearance of this publication Mr. Gérard presented a memorial to Congress respecting some expressions used therein, and on the 6th and 7th I requested of Congress to be admitted to explain any passages which Mr. Gérard had referred to; but this request not being complied with, I, on the 8th, sent in my resignations of the office of Secretary to the Committee of Foreign Affairs.

In the evening I received an invitation to sup with a gentleman, and Mr. Gérard's offer was, by his own authority, again renewed with considerable additions of advantage. I gave the same answer as before. I was then told that Mr. Gérard was very ill, and desired to see me. I replied, "That as a matter was then depending in Congress upon a representation of Mr. Gérard against some parts of my publications, I thought it indelicate to wait on him till that was determined."

In a few days after I received a second invitation, and likewise a third, to sup at the same place, in both of which the same offer and the same invitation were renewed and the same answers on my part were given: But being repeatedly pressed to make Mr. Gérard a visit, I engaged to do it the next morning at ten o'clock: but as I considered myself standing on a nice and critical ground, and lest my reputation should be afterwards called in question, I judged it best to communicate the whole matter to an honorable friend before I went, which was on the 14th of January, the very day on which Mr. Gérard's answer to Mr. Jay's letter is dated.

While with Mr. Gérard I avoided as much as possible every occasion that might give rise to the subject. Himself once or twice hinted at the publications and added that, "he hoped no more would be said on the subject," which I immediately waived by entering on the loss of the dispatches. I knew my own resolution respecting the offer, had communicated that resolution to a friend, and did not wish to give the least pain to Mr. Gérard, by personally refusing that, which, from him might be friendship, but to me would have been the ruin of my credit. At a convenient opportunity I rose to take my leave, on which Mr. Gérard said: "Mr. Paine, I have always had a great respect for you, and should be glad of some opportunity of showing you more solid marks of my friendship."

I confess I felt myself hurt and exceedingly concerned that the injustice and indiscretion of a party in Congress should drive matters to such an extremity that one side or other must go to the bottom, and in its consequences embarrass those whom they had drawn in to support them. I am conscious that America had not in France a more strenuous friend than Mr. Gérard, and I sincerely wish he had found a way to avoid an affair which has been much trouble to him. As for Deane, I believe him to be a man who cares not whom he involves to screen himself. He has forfeited all reputation in this country, first by promising to give an "*history of matters important for the people to know*" and then not only failing to perform that promise, but neglecting to clear his own suspected reputation, though he is now on the spot and can any day demand a hearing of Congress, and call me before them for the truth of what I have published respecting him.

Two days after my visit to Mr. Gérard, Mr. Jay's letter and the answer to it was published, and I would candidly ask any man how it is possible to reconcile such letters to such offers both done at one and the same time, and whether I had not sufficient authority to say that Mr. Jay's letter would be truly laughable, were all the circumstances known which happened at the time of his writing.

Whoever published those letters in last Tuesday's paper, must be an idiot or worse. I had let them pass over without any other public notice than what was contained in the note of the preceding week, but the republishing them was putting me to defiance, and forcing me either to submit to them afresh, or to give the circumstances which accompanied them. Whoever will look back to last winter, must see I had my hands full, and that without any person giving the least assistance. It was first given out that I was paid by Congress for vindicating their reputation against Mr. Deane's charges, yet a majority in that House were every day pelting me for what I was doing. Then Mr. Gérard was unfortunately brought in, and Mr. Jay's letter to him and his answer were published to effect some purpose or other. Yet Mr. Gérard was at the same time making the warmest professions of friendship to me, and proposing to take me into his confidence with very liberal offers. In short I had but one way to get through, which was to keep close to the point and principle I set out upon, and that alone has rendered me successful. By making this my guide I have kept my ground, and I have yet ground to spare, for among other things I have authentic copies of the dispatches that were lost.



I am certain no man set out with a warmer heart or a better disposition to render public service than myself, in everything which lay in my power. My first endeavor was to put the politics of the country right, and to show the advantages as well as the necessity of independence: and until this was done, independence never could have succeeded. America did not at that time understand her own situation; and though the country was then full of writers, no one reached the mark; neither did I abate in my service, when hundreds were afterwards deserting her interest and thousands afraid to speak, for the first number of the "Crisis" was published in the blackest stage of affairs, six days before the taking the Hessians at Trenton. When this State was distracted by parties on account of her Constitution, I endeavored in the most disinterested manner to bring it to a conclusion; and when Deane's impositions broke out, and threw the whole States into confusion, I readily took up the subject, for no one else understood it, and the country now sees that I was right. And if Mr. Jay thinks he derives any credit from his letter to Mr. Gérard, he will find himself deceived, and that the ingratitude of the composition will be his reproach, not mine.

COMMON SENSE.

#### TO THE PUBLIC <sup>63</sup>

When any necessity or occasion has pointed out the convenience of addressing the public, I have never made it a consideration whether the subject was popular or unpopular, but whether it was right or wrong; for that which is right will become popular, and that which is wrong, though by mistake it may obtain the cry of fashion of the day, will soon lose the power of delusion, and sink into disesteem.

A remarkable instance of this has happened in the case of Silas Deane; and I mention this circumstance with the greatest ease, because the poison of his hypocrisy spread over the whole country, and every man, almost without exception, thought me wrong in opposing him. The best friends I then had, except Mr. Laurens, stood at a distance, and this tribute, which is due to his constancy, I pay to him with respect, and

<sup>63</sup> From the *Freeman's Journal*, March 13, 1782. This was Paine's last public statement on the Deane affair. Deane was now in the pay of the British government, and, in return for his reward, wrote several letters to prominent men in the United States in favor of reunion with Great Britain. After these letters had been published in the newspapers, Paine wrote this statement publicly branding Deane as a traitor. See Carl Van Doren, *Secret History of the American Revolution*, pp. 417-418.—Editor.

that the readier, because he is not here to hear it. If it reaches him in his imprisonment it will afford him an agreeable reflection.

“As he rose like a rocket, he would fall like the stick,” is a metaphor which I applied to Mr. Deane in the first piece which I published respecting him, and he has exactly fulfilled the description. The credit he so unjustly obtained from the public, he lost in almost as short time. The delusion perished as it fell, and he soon saw himself stripped of popular support. His more intimate acquaintances began to doubt and to desert him long before he left America, and at his departure he saw himself the object of general suspicion. When arrived in France, he endeavored to effect by treason what he had failed to accomplish by fraud. His plans, schemes, and projects, together with his expectations of being sent to Holland to negotiate a loan of money, had all miscarried. He then began traducing and accusing America of every crime which could injure her reputation: “That she was a ruined country; that she only meant to make a tool of France, to get what money she could out of her, and then to leave her, and accommodate with Britain.” Of all which, and much more, Colonel Laurens and myself, when in France, informed Dr. Franklin, who had not before heard of it. And to complete the character of a traitor, he has by letters to this country since, some of which, in his own hand writing, are now in the possession of Congress, used every expression and argument in his power to injure the reputation of France, and to advise America to renounce her alliance, and surrender up her independence.<sup>64</sup> Thus, in France he abuses America, and in his letters to America he abuses France, and is endeavoring to create disunion between the two countries, by the same arts of double dealing by which he caused dissensions among the commissioners in Paris, and distractions in America. But his life has been fraud, and his character is that of plodding, plotting, cringing, mercenary, capable of any disguise that suited his purpose. His final detection has very happily cleared up those mistakes and removed those uneasinesses which his unprincipled conduct occasioned. Every one now sees him in the same light; for towards friends or enemies he acted with the same deception and injustice, and his name, like that of

<sup>64</sup> Mr. William Marshall of this city, formerly a pilot, who had been taken at sea and carried to England, and got from thence to France, brought over letters from Mr. Deane to America, one of which was directed to “Robert Morris, Esq.” Mr. Morris sent it unopened to Congress, and advised Mr. Marshall to deliver the others there, which he did. The letters were of the same purport with those which have been already published under the signature of S. Deane, to which they had frequent reference.—*Author.*

Arnold, ought now to be forgotten among us. As this is the first time I have mentioned him since my return from France, it is my intention it shall be the last.

COMMON SENSE.

## PEACE, AND THE NEWFOUNDLAND FISHERIES

In 1779, when peace between England and the United States was being proposed, the English insisted that the United States surrender her fishing rights to the Newfoundland banks. A writer in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* under the name of "Americanus," supposed to be Gouverneur Morris, upheld the British contention and suggested that in the negotiations with the British, the Americans should not insist on the right to the fisheries. He also argued that the United States could not logically expect France to prolong the war for this insignificant point. Paine opposed the idea in three letters to the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, insisting that our fishing right was "a natural right." Rather than being an insignificant issue, he contended that without the fisheries America would not really be independent. "Without the fisheries, American independence would be a bubble," he wrote, and added: "There are but two natural sources of wealth and strength—the Earth and the Ocean—and to lose the right of either is, in our situation, to put up the other to sale." Especially interesting for today is his observation that "the seeds of almost every former war have been sown in the injudicious or defective terms of the preceding peace."—*Editor.*

(FIRST LETTER) <sup>65</sup>

MESSRS. HALL AND SELLERS

**G**ENTLEMEN: A piece of very extraordinary complexion made its appearance in your last paper, under the signature of AMERICANUS, and what is equally as extraordinary, I have not yet met with one advocate in its favor. To write under the curse of universal reprobation is hard indeed, and proves that either the writer is too honest for the world he lives in, or the world, bad as it is, too honest for him to write in.

<sup>65</sup> This letter appeared in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* of June 30, 1779.—*Editor.*

Some time last winter a worthy member of the Assembly of this State put into my hands, with some expressions of surprise, a motion which he had copied from an original shown to him by another member, who intended to move it in the House. The purport of *that*, and the doctrine of AMERICANUS, bear such strong resemblance to each other that I make no hesitation in believing them both generated from the same parents. The intended motion, however, withered without being put, and AMERICANUS, by venturing into being, has exposed himself to a less tranquil exit.

Whether AMERICANUS sits in Congress or not, may be the subject of future inquiry; at present I shall content myself with making some strictures on what he advances.

He takes it for granted that hints toward a negotiation for peace have been made to Congress, and that a debate has taken place in that House respecting the terms on which such a negotiation shall be opened.

It is reported, says he, that Congress are still debating what the terms shall be, and that some men strenuously insist on such as others *fear* will not be agreed to, and as they *apprehend* may prevent any treaty at all, and such as our ally [France], by his treaties with us, is *by no* means bound to support us in demanding.

AMERICANUS, after running through a variety of introductory matter, comes at last to the point, and intimates, or rather informs, that the particular subject of debate in Congress has been respecting the fisheries on the Banks of Newfoundland, some insisting thereon as a matter of right and urging it as a matter of absolute necessity, others doubting, or appearing to doubt whether we have any right at all, and indifferent whether the fisheries be claimed or not. Among the latter of which AMERICANUS appears to be one.

Either AMERICANUS does not know how to make a bargain, or he has already made one, and his affectation of modesty is the dress of design. How, I ask, can AMERICANUS, or any other person, know what claims or proposals will be rejected or what agreed to, till they be made, offered or demanded? To suppose a rejection is to invite it, and to publish our "*apprehensions*," as a reason for declining the claim, is encouraging the enemy to fulfil the prediction. AMERICANUS may think what he pleases, but for my own part, I hate a prophesier of ill-luck, because the pride of being thought wise often carries him to the wrong side.

That an inhabitant of America or a member of Congress should become an advocate for the exclusive right of Britain to the fisheries, and signify, as his opinion, that an American has not a right to fish in the American seas, is something very extraordinary.

It is a question, says he, whether the subjects of these states had any other right to fishing than what they *derived from their being subjects of Great Britain; and as it cannot be pretended that they were in the possession and enjoyment of the right either at the time of the Declaration of Independence or of signing the Treaties of Paris, nor that it was ever included in any one of the charters of the United States*, it cannot be surprising that many, who judge a *peace* necessary for the happiness of these states, should be *afraid* of the consequences which may follow from making this an ultimatum in a negotiation.

I should be glad to know what ideas AMERICANUS affixes to the words *peace* and *independence*; they frequently occur in his publication, but he uses them in such a neutral manner, that they have neither energy nor signification. Peace, it is true, has a pleasant sound, but he has nibbled it round, like Dr. Franklin's description of a gingerbread cake, till scarcely enough is left to guess at the composition. To be at peace certainly implies something more than barely a cessation of war. It is supposed to be accompanied with advantages adequate to the toils of obtaining it. It is a state of prosperity as well as safety, and of honor as well as rest. His independence, too, is made up of the same letters which compose the independence of other nations, but it has something so sickly and so consumptive in its constitution, so limping and lingering in its manner, that at best it is but in leading strings, and fit rather for the cradle than the cabinet. But to return to his argument:

AMERICANUS has placed all his reasons the wrong way, and drawn the contrary conclusions to what he ought to have done. He doubts the rights of the States to fish, because it is not mentioned in any of the charters. Whereas, had it been mentioned, it might have been contended that the right in America was only derivative; and been given as an argument that the original right lay in Britain. Therefore the silence of the charters, added to the undisturbed practice of fishing, admit the right to exist in America *naturally*, and not by *grant*, and in Britain only *consequentially*; for Britain did not possess the fisheries independent of America, but in consequence of her dominions in America. Her claim-

ing territory here was her title deed to the fisheries, in the same manner that Spain claims Faulkland's Island, by possessing the Spanish continent; and therefore her right to those fisheries was derived *through America*, and not the right of America through Britain. Wedded to the continent, she inherited its fortunes of islands and fisheries, but divorced therefrom, she ceases her pretensions.

What AMERICANUS means by saying, *that it cannot be pretended we were in the possession and enjoyment of the right either at the time of the Declaration of Independence, or of signing the Treaty of Paris*, I am at a loss to conceive; for the right being natural in America, and not derivative, could never cease, and though by the events of war she was at that time dispossessed of the immediate enjoyment, she could not be dispossessed of the *right*, and needed no other proofs of her title than custom and situation.

AMERICANUS has quoted the second and eleventh articles of the Treaty of Paris, by way of showing that the right to the fisheries is not one of those rights which France has undertaken to guarantee.

To which I answer, that he may say the same by any particular right, because those articles describe no particular rights, but are comprehensive of *every* right which appertains to sovereignty, of which fishing in the American seas must to us be one.

Will AMERICANUS undertake to persuade that it is not the interest of France to endeavor to secure to her ally a branch of trade which redounds to the mutual interest of both, and without which the alliance will lose half its worth? Were we to propose to surrender the right and practice of fishing to Britain, we might reasonably conclude that France would object to such a surrender on our part, because it would not only render us a less valuable ally in point of commerce as well as power, but furnish the enemy of both with a new acquisition of naval strength; the sure and natural consequence of possessing the fisheries.

AMERICANUS admits the fisheries to be an "*object of great consequence to the United States, to two or three of them more especially.*"

Whatever is of consequence to any, is so to all; for wealth like water soon spreads over the surface, let the place of entrance be ever so remote; and in like manner, any portion of strength which is lost or gained to any one or more states, is lost or gained to the whole; but this is more particularly true of naval strength, because, when on the seas it acts immediately for the benefit of all, and the ease with which it transports

itself takes in the whole coast of America, as expeditiously as the land forces of any particular state can be arranged for its own immediate defense.

But of all the States of America, New York ought to be the most anxious to secure the fisheries as a nursery for a navy;—because the particular situation of that State, on account of its deep waters, is such, that it will ever be exposed to the approaches of an enemy, unless it be defended by a navy; and if any of the delegates of that State has acted a contrary part, he or they have either designedly or ignorantly betrayed the interest of their constituents, and deserve their severest censure.

Through the whole of this curious and equivocal piece, the premises and arguments have, in themselves, a suspicious appearance of being unfairly if not unjustly stated, in order to admit of, and countenance, wrong conclusions; for taking it for granted that Congress have been debating upwards of four months what the terms shall be on which they shall open a negotiation, and that the House are divided respecting their opinion of those terms, it does not follow from thence that the “*public have been deceived*” with regard to the news said to have arrived last February; and if they are deceived, the question is who deceived them? Neither do several other conclusions follow which he has attempted to draw, of which the two I shall now quote are sufficient instances.

If, says AMERICANUS, the *insisting* on terms which neither the *Declaration of Independence* nor the *Treaties of Paris* authorized us to challenge as our rights, have caused the late, otherwise unaccountable delays, and prevented a peace, or at least a negotiation being open for one, *those who have challenged and insisted on these claims are justly responsible for the consequences.*

This I look on to be truly jesuitical; for the delay cannot be occasioned by those who *propose*, but by those who *oppose*, and therefore the construction should stand thus:

If the *objecting* to rights and claims, which are neither *inconsistent with the Declaration of Independence* or the *Treaties of Paris*, and *naturally included and understood in both*, has caused the late, otherwise unaccountable delays, and prevented a peace, or at least a negotiation for one, *those who made such objections, and thereby caused such delays and prevented such negotiations being gone into, are justly responsible for the consequences.*

His next position is of the same cast, and admits of the same reversion.

Governor Johnstone, says he, in the House of Commons freely declared he had made use, while in America, of other means to effect the purpose of his commission than those of reason and argument; *have we not*, continues AMERICANUS, *good right from present appearances to believe that in this instance he declared the truth?*

To this wonderful supposition I shall apply another, viz. That if Governor Johnstone *did* declare the truth, *whom have we most right to suspect, those who are for relinquishing the fisheries to Britain, or those who are for retaining them?*

Upon the whole, I consider the fisheries of the utmost importance to America, and her natural right thereto so clear and evident, that it does not admit of a debate, and to surrender them is a species of treason for which no punishment is too severe.

I have not stepped out of my way to fetch in either an argument or a fact, but have confined my reply to the piece, without regard to who the author is, or whether any such debates have taken place or not, or how far it may or [may] not have been carried on one side or the other.

COMMON SENSE.

PHILADELPHIA, June 26, 1779.

(SECOND LETTER) <sup>66</sup>

AMERICANUS, in your last, has favored the public with a description of himself as a preface to his piece. "I am," says he, "neither a member of Congress or of the Assembly of this State, or of any other, but a private citizen, in moderate circumstances in point of fortune, *and whose political principles have never been questioned.*" All this may be very true, and yet nothing to the purpose; neither can the declaration be admitted either as a positive or negative proof of *what his principles are*. They may be good, or they may not, and yet be so well known as not to be doubted by those who know the writer.

Joseph Galloway formerly wrote under the signature of AMERICANUS, and though every honest man condemns his principles, yet nobody pretends to question them. When a writer, and especially an anonymous one, readily means to declare his political principles as a reinforcement

<sup>66</sup> The second letter appeared in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* of July 14, 1779.—*Editor*.



to his arguments, he ought to be full, clear, and decisive, but this declaration is so ambiguously constructed and so unmeaningly applied, that it may be used by any and every person either within or without the enemy's lines, for it does not declare what his principles are, but that, be they what they may, *they are not questioned*.

Before I proceed, I cannot help taking notice of another inconsistency in his publication of last week. "In my last," says he, "I said that it was very unhappy that this question has been touched on or agitated at all at this time, to which," continues he, "I will now add, it is particularly so, *that it is become a subject of discussion in the public papers*." This is very extraordinary from the very man who first brought it into the public papers.

A short piece or two, on the importance of fisheries in general, were anonymously published some time ago; but as a matter of treaty debate in Congress, or as a matter of right in itself, with the arguments and grounds on which they proceeded, AMERICANUS is originally chargeable with the inconvenience he pretends to lament. I with some others had heard, or perhaps knew, that such a subject was in debate, and though I always laid myself out to give it a meeting in the papers whenever it should appear, I never hinted a thought that might tend to start it.

"To *permit* the public," says AMERICANUS, "to be made acquainted with what are to be the *ultimate demands* in a proposed treaty is really something new and extraordinary, if not impolitic and absurd." There is a compound of folly and arrogance in this declaration, which deserves to be severely censured. Had he said that to publish all the arguments of Congress, on which any claim in a proposed treaty is founded or objected to, might be inconvenient and in some cases impolitic, he would have been nearly right; but the *ultimate demand itself ought* to be made known, together with the rights and reasons on which that demand is founded.

But who is this gentleman who undertakes to say that to *permit* the public to be made acquainted is really impolitic and absurd? And to this question I will add that if he distinguishes Congress into one body, and the public into another, I should be glad to know in what situation he places himself, so as not to be subject to his own charge of absurdity. If he belongs to the former, he has, according to his own position, a right to know but not to tell, and if to the latter, he has neither a right to know nor to tell, and yet in some character or other he has done both.

If this gentleman's political principles were never questioned before, I think they ought to be questioned now; for a man must be a strange character indeed, whom no known character can suit.

I am the more inclined to suspect AMERICANUS, because he most illiberally, and in contradiction to everything sensible and reasonable, endeavored, in his former piece, to insinuate that Governor Johnstone had bribed a party in Congress to *insist on the right of the United States to fish on the Banks of Newfoundland*. An insinuation so impolitic and absurd, so wide and foreign to the purpose of Governor Johnstone's commission, can only be understood the contrary way; namely, that he had bribed somebody or other to *insist* that the right should *not be insisted on*.

The expression of Governor Johnstone, as printed in the English papers, is literally this. "I do not," says he, "mean to disavow I *have had* transactions, where *other means have been used* besides persuasion." Governor Johnstone was in no places in America but Philadelphia and New York, and these *other* means must have been used in one or other, or both of these places. We have had evidence of one application of his, with an offer of ten thousand guineas, which was refused, and treated with the disdain it deserved; for the offer of a bribe contains in it, to all men of spirit, the substance of an affront. But it is strange indeed, if the *one* that was refused was the *only one* that was offered. Let any person read AMERICANUS in your paper of June twenty-third, and if he can after that acquit him of all suspicion, he must be charitable indeed.

But why does not AMERICANUS declare who he is? This is no time for concealment, neither are the presses, though free, to become the vehicles of disguised poison. I have had my eye on that signature these two months past, and to what lengths the gentleman meant to go himself can best decide.

In his first piece he loosely introduced his intended politics, and put himself in a situation to make further advances. His second was a rapid progress, and his last a retreat. The difference between the second and last is visible. In the former of those two he endeavors to invalidate the right of the United States to fish on the Banks of Newfoundland, because, forsooth, it was not mentioned in any of the former charters. It is very extraordinary that these same charters, which marked out and were the instruments of our *dependence*, should now be introduced as describing the line of our *independence*.

In the same piece AMERICANUS likewise says, "it is a question whether the subjects of these states *had any other right* to that fishery, than what they derived from being the subjects of Great Britain." If this be not advocating the cause of the enemy, I know not what is. It is newspaper advice to them to insist on an exclusive right to the fisheries, by insinuating ours to be only a derivative one from them; which, had it been the case, as it is not, would have been very improper doctrine to preach at the first instance of a negotiation. If they have any right, let them find those rights out themselves. We shall have enough to do to look to our own side of the question, and ought not to admit persons among us to join force with the enemy either in arms or argument.

Whether AMERICANUS found himself approaching a stormy latitude, and fearing for the safety of his bark, thought proper to tack about in time, or whether he has changed his appetite, and become an epicure in fish, or his principles, and become an advocate for America, must be left for his own decision; but in his last week's publication he has surrendered the grounds of his former one, and changed the argument from a matter of right to a matter of supposed convenience only. He no more speaks of our right to the fisheries as derivative right from Britain, in consequence of our formerly being subjects. Not a syllable of the charters, whose silence he had produced as invalidating or negating our independent right. Neither has he endeavored to support, or offered to renew, what he had before asserted—namely, that we were not in possession of the right of fishing at the time of the Declaration of Independence, or of the signing the Treaties of Paris; but he has admitted a theorem which I had advanced in opposition to his suggestions, and which no man can contradict, viz. that our right to fish on banks of Newfoundland is a *natural right*.

Now if our right is natural, it could not be derived from subjection, and as we never can but by our own voluntary consent be put out of the possession of a natural national right, though by the temporary events of war we may be put out of the enjoyment of such a right, and as the British Fishery Act of Parliament in Seventy-six to exclude us was no act of ours, and universally denied by us, therefore, from his own admission, he has contradicted himself, and allowed that we were as fully in *possession of the right* of fishing on those banks, both at the time of the Declaration of Independence, and at the time of signing the Treaties of Paris, as at any period preceding them.

That he has admitted the natural right in his last piece, in contradic-

tion to his supposed derivative right in his former one, will appear from two or three quotations I shall make.

1st. He says, The giving up of our *right to this object* (the fisheries) and the making an *express* demand to have it guaranteed to us, or the passing it over in silence in negotiation, are distinct things.

2d. I am well assured, he says, that there is not a member in Congress any ways disposed to *give up or relinquish our right to the Newfoundland fishery*.

The "right" here admitted cannot be a right derived from subjection, because we are no longer British subjects; neither can it be a right conveyed by charters, because we not only know no charters now, but those charters we used to know are silent on the matter in question. It must therefore be a *natural right*. Neither does the situation of America and Britain admit of any other explanation, because they are, with respect to each other, in a state of nature, not being even within the law of nations; for the law of nations is the law of treaties, compounded with customary usage, and between America and Britain there is yet no treaty, nor any national custom established.

But the third quotation I shall make from his last piece will prove, from his own words, his assent to the *natural right* which I contended for in behalf of these states, and which he, in his former piece, impliedly disowned, by putting our whole right on a question, and making our former subjection the grounds on which that question stood.

I drew no conclusion, he says, to exclude these states, or bar them from the *right which by nature they are entitled to* with others, as well to the fishery on the *Banks of Newfoundland* as to those in the ocean at large.

As he now admits a *natural right*, and appears to contend for it, I ask, why then was his former piece published, and why was our right there put in the lowest terms possible? He does not in that piece even hint, or appear to think of, or suppose such a thing as a natural right, but stakes the issue on a question which does not apply to the case, and went as far as a man dared to go, in saying we had no right at all. From all this twisting and turning, this advancing and retreating, and appearing to own at last what he impliedly disowned at first, I think myself justified in drawing this conclusion, that either AMERICANUS does not know how to conduct an argument, or he intended to be a traitor if he dared.

The natural right of the United States in those fisheries is either

*whole* or in *part*. If to the whole, she can admit a participation to other nations. If to a part, she, in consequence of her natural right to partake, claims her share therein, which is for as much as she can catch and carry away. Nature, in her distribution of favors, seems to have appointed these fisheries as a property to the northern division of America, from Florida upwards, and therefore our claim of an exclusive right seems to be rationally and consistently founded; but our natural right to what we can catch is clear, absolute and positive.

Had AMERICANUS intended no more than to consider our claim, whether it should be made or not, as a matter of convenience only, which is the stage he has now brought it to, he ought by no means to have made even the slightest stroke at the right itself; because to omit making the claim in the treaty, and to assign the doubtfulness of the right as a reason for the omission, is to surrender the fisheries upon the insufficiency of the pretension, and of consequence to exclude ourselves from the *practice* by the silence of the treaty, and from the *right* by the reasons upon record.

Had I time to laugh over my *fish*, I could in this place set AMERICANUS up to a very agreeable ridicule. He has all this while been angling without a bait, and endeavoring to deceive with an empty hook, and yet this man says he understands *fishing* as well as any man in America. "Very few," says he, "and *I speak it without vanity*, are better acquainted with the fisheries than myself." If this be true, which I hope it is not, it is the best reason that can be given for relinquishing them, and if made known would, on the other hand, be a great inducement to Britain to cede the whole right, because by our being possessed of a right without knowing how to use it, she would be under no apprehensions of our thinning the ocean, and we should only go out with our vessels to buy, and not to catch.

If AMERICANUS wished to persuade the Americans to say nothing about the fisheries in a treaty with Britain, he ought, as a politician of some kind or other, to have baited his hook with a plausible something, and, instead of telling them that their right was doubtful, he should have assured them it was indisputable, that Britain never meant to question it, that it was needless to say anything about it, that all nations knew our rights, and naturally meant to acknowledge them. But he, like a wiseacre, has run against the post instead of running past it, and has, by the arguments he has used, produced a necessity for doing the very thing he was writing to prevent; and yet this man says he understands

*fishing* as well as any man in America—It must be a cod indeed that should be caught by him.

COMMON SENSE.

PHILADELPHIA, July 12, 1779.

(THIRD LETTER) <sup>67</sup>

THE *importance* of the fisheries, AMERICANUS has kept almost totally out of sight. Why he has done so, his readers will contrive to guess at; or himself may explain. A bare confession, loosely scattered here and there, and marked with the countenance of reluctance, is all he gives on the subject. Surely, the public might have expected more from a man, who declares “he can, without vanity say, that very few are better acquainted with the *nature* and *extent* of the American fisheries than himself.”

If he really possesses the knowledge he affirms, he ought to have been as prolific on the subject as the fish he was treating of: And as he has not, I am obliged to suspect either the reality of his knowledge, or the *sincerity* of his intentions. If the declaration be *not* true, there are enough to fix his *title*; and if true, it shows that a man may keep company all his life-time with cod, and be little wiser. But to the point—

There are but two natural sources of wealth and strength—the earth and the ocean—and to lose the right to either is, in our situation, to put up the other to sale. Without the fisheries, independence would be a bubble. It would not deserve the name; and however we might, in such a condition, please ourselves with the jingle of a word, the consequences that would follow would soon deprive us even of the title and the music.

I shall arrange the fisheries under the three following heads:

*First.* As an employment.

*Secondly.* As producing national supply and commerce, and a means of national wealth.

*Thirdly.* As a nursery for seamen.

As an employment, by which a living is procured, it more immediately concerns those who make it their business; and in this view, which is the least of the three, such of the states, or parts thereof, which do not follow fishing, are not so directly interested as those which do. I call it the least of the three, because as no man needs want employment

<sup>67</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 21, 1779.—Editor.

in America, so the change from one employment to another, if that be all, is but little to him, and less to anybody else. And this is the narrow, impolitic light in which some persons have understood the fisheries.

But when we view them as producing national supply and commerce, and a means of national wealth, we then consider the *fish*, not the fishermen, and regard the consequences of the employment more than the employment itself; in the same manner that I distinguish the coat that clothes me, from the man that made it. In this view, we neither inquire (unless for curiosity) who catch the fish, or whether they caught themselves—how they were caught, or where? The same supply would be produced, the same commerce occasioned, and the same wealth created, were they, by a natural impulse, to throw themselves annually on the shore, or be driven there by a periodical current or storm. And taking it in this point, it is no more to us, than it was to the Israelites whether the manna that fed them was brought there by an angel or an insect, an eastern or a western breeze, or whether it was congealed dew, or a concretion of vegetable juices. It is sufficient that they had manna, and we have fish.

I imagine myself within compass, when I suppose the fisheries to constitute a fourth part of the staple commerce of the United States, and that with this extraordinary advantage, it is a commerce which interferes with none, and promotes others. Take away a fourth from any part and the whole United States suffers, in the same manner that the blood taken from the arm is drained from the whole man; and if, by the unskilfulness of the operation, the wounded arm should lose its use, the whole body would want its service. It is to no purpose for a man to say, I am not a fisherman, an indigo planter, a rice planter, a tobacco planter, or a corn planter, any more than for the leg to say, I am not an arm; for as, in the latter instance the same blood invigorates both and all by circulation, so, in the former, each is enriched by the wealth which the other creates, and fed by the supply the other raises.

Were it proposed that no town should have a market, are none concerned therein but butchers?

And in like manner it may be asked, that if we lose the market for fish, are none affected thereby but those who catch them? He who digs the mine, or tills the earth, or fishes in the ocean, digs, tills and fishes for the world. The employment and the pittance it procures him are his; but the produce itself creates a traffic for thousands, a supply for millions.

The Eastern States by quitting agriculture for fishing become cus-

tomers to the rest, partly by exchange and partly by the wealth they import. Of the Middle States, they purchase grain and flour; of Maryland and Virginia, tobacco, the food and pastime of the fisherman; of North and South Carolina, and Georgia, rice and indigo. They may not happen to become the client of a lawyer in either of these states, but is it any reason that we are to be deprived of fish, one of the *instruments* of commerce, because it comes to him without a *case*?

The loss of the fisheries being at this time blended with other losses, which all nations at war are more or less subject to, is not particularly felt or distinguished in the general suspension: And the men who were employed therein being now called off into other departments, and supported by other means, feel not the want of the employment. War, in this view, contains a temporary relief for its own misfortunes, by creating a trade in lieu of the suspended one. But when, with the restoration of peace, trade shall open, the case will be very and widely different, and the fisherman like the farmer will expect to return to his occupation in quietude.

As my limits will not allow me to range, neither have I time if I had room, I shall close this second head, and proceed to the third, and finish with some remarks on the state the question is now said to stand in in Congress.

If as an *employment* one fourth of the United States are immediately affected, and if as a source of national supply and commerce and a means of national wealth all are deeply interested, what shall we say when we consider it as a *nursery for seamen*? Here the question seems to take almost a reversed turn, for the states which do *not fish* are herein *more concerned* than those which do. It happens, by some disposition of Providence or ourselves, that those particular states whose employment is to fish are thickly settled, and secured by their internal strength from any extensive ravages of an enemy. The states, all the way from thence to the southward, beginning at New York, are less populous, and have less of that ability in proportion to their extent. *Their* security, therefore, will hereafter be in a navy, and without a fishery there can be no navy worthy of the name.

Has nature given us timber and iron, pitch and tar, and cordage if we please, for nothing but to sell or burn? Has experience taught us the art of shipbuilding equal to any people on earth to become the workmen of other nations? Has she surrounded our coast with fisheries to create strength to our enemies, and make us the purchasers of our own



property? Has she brought those fisheries almost to our own doors, to insult us with the prospect, and at the same time that she bar us from the enjoyment to threaten us with the constant approach of an enemy? Or has she given these things for our use, and instructed us to combine them for our own protection? Who, I ask, will undertake to answer me, AMERICANUS or myself?

What would we now give for thirteen ships of the line to guard and protect the remote or weaker parts? How would Carolina feel deliverance from danger, and Georgia from despair, and assisted by such a fleet become the prison of their invaders? How would the Whigs of New York look up and smile with inward satisfaction at the display of an admiral's command, opening, like a "key," the door of their confinement? How would France solace herself at such a union of force, and reciprocally assisting and assisted traverse the ocean in safety? Yet all these, or their similar consequences, are staked upon the fisheries.

AMERICANUS may understand the "nature of fisheries," as to season, catching and curing, or their "extent" as to latitude and longitude; but as a great political question, involving with it the means and channels of commerce, and the probability of empire, he is wholly unequal to the subject, or he would not have, as he has done, limited their effects to "*two or three states especially.*" By a judgment acquired from long acquaintance, he may be able to know a cod when he sees it, or describe the inconveniences or pleasures of a fishing voyage. Or, "*born and educated*"<sup>68</sup> among them, he may entertain us with the growling memories of a Newfoundland bear, or amuse us with the history of a foggy climate or a smoky hut, with all the winter chit-chat of fatigue and hardship; and this, in his idea, may be to "*understand the fisheries.*"

I will venture to predict that America, even with the assistance of all the fisheries, will never be a *great*, much less a *dangerous* naval power, and without them she will be scarcely any. I am established in this opinion from the known cast and order of things. No country of a large extent ever yet, I believe, was powerful at sea, or ever will be. The natural reason of this appears to be that men do not, in any great numbers, turn their thoughts to the ocean, till either the country gets filled, or some peculiar advantage or necessity tempts them out. A maritime life is a kind of partial emigration, produced from a portion of the same causes with emigrations in general. The ocean becomes covered and the

<sup>68</sup> *King of England's first speech to the British Parliament.—Author.*

supply kept up from the constant swarmings of the landed hive; and as we shall never be able to fill the whole dominion of the Thirteen States, and there will ever be new land to cultivate, the necessity can never take place in America, and of course the consequences can never happen.

Paradoxical as it may appear, greatness at sea is the effect of littleness by land. Want of room and want of employ are the generating causes. Holland has the most powerful navy in the world, compared with the small extent of her crowded country. France and Spain have too much room, and the soil too luxuriant and tempting, to be quitted for the ocean. Were not this the case, and did the abilities for a navy like those for land service rise in proportion to the number of inhabitants only, France would rival more than any two powers in Europe, which is not the case.

Had not nature thrown the fisheries in our way and inflicted a degree of natural sterility on such parts of the continent as lie contiguous thereto, by way both of forcing and tempting their inhabitants to the ocean, America, considering the present cast of the world, would have wanted the means of defense, for the far greater part of our seamen, except those produced by the fisheries, are natives of other countries. And shall we unwisely trifle with what we ought to hug as a treasure, and nourish with the utmost care as a protector? And must the W. H. D. forever mean that *We Have Dunces?*

We seek not a fleet to insult the world, or range in foreign regions for conquests. We have more land than we can cultivate; more extent than we can fill. Our natural situation frees us from the distress of crowded countries, and from the thirst of ambitious ones. We covet not dominion, for we already possess a world; we want not to export our laboring poor, for where can they live better, or where can they be more useful? But we want just such a fleet as the fisheries will enable us to keep up, and without which we shall be for ever exposed, a burden to our allies, and incapable of the necessary defense. The strength of America, on account of her vast extent, cannot be collected by land; but since experience has taught us to sail, and nature has put the means in our power, we ought in time to make provision for a navy, as the cheapest, safest, best, and most effectual security we can hereafter depend on.

Having in my first and second publications endeavored to establish the right of America to the fisheries, and in this treated of their vast importance, I shall conclude with some remarks on the subject, as it is now

said to stand in Congress, or rather the form in which it is thrown out to the public.

AMERICANUS says (and I ask not how he came by his knowledge) that the question is, "Whether the insisting on an explicit acknowledgment of that right (meaning the right of fishing on the Banks of Newfoundland) is either *safe, prudent or politic.*"

Before I enter on the discussion of this point, it may not be improper to remark, that some intimations were made to Congress in February by the Minister of France, Mr. Gérard, respecting what the claims of America might be, in case any treaty of peace should be entered on with the enemy. And from this, with some account of the general disposition of the powers of Europe, the mighty buzz of peace took its rise, and several who ought to have known better, were whispering wonderful secrets at almost every tea table.

It was a matter very *early* supposed by those who had any clear judgment, that Spain would not immediately join in the war, but would lie by as a mediatorial power. If she succeeded therein, the consequence would be peace; if she failed, she would then be perfectly at liberty to fulfil her engagements with France, etc.

Now in order to enable Spain to act this part, it was necessary that the claims of Congress in behalf of America should be made known to *their own Plenipotentiary at Paris, Dr. Franklin*, with such instructions, public or private, as might be proper to give thereon. But I observe several members, either so little acquainted with political arrangements, or supposing their constituents to be so, that they treat with Mr. Gerard as if that gentleman was *our* Minister, instead of the Minister of his Most Christian Majesty, and *his* name is brought in to a variety of business to which it has no proper reference. This remark may to some appear rather severe, but it is a necessary one. It is not every member of Congress who acts as if he felt the true importance of his character, or the dignity of the country he acts for. And we seem in some instances to forget, that as France is the great ally of America, so America is the great ally of France.

It may now be necessary to mention, that no instructions are yet gone to Dr. Franklin as a line for negotiation, and the reason is because none are agreed on. The reason why they are *not* agreed on is another point. But had the gentlemen who are for leaving the fisheries out agreed to have had them put in, instructions might have been sent more than

four months ago; and if not exactly convenient, might by this time have been returned and reconsidered. On whose side then does the fault lie?

I profess myself an advocate, out of doors, for clearly, absolutely, and unequivocally ascertaining the right of the states to fish on the Banks of Newfoundland, as one of the first and most necessary articles. The right and title of the states thereto I have endeavored to show. The importance of these fisheries I have endeavored to prove. What reason then can be given why they should be omitted?

The seeds of almost every former war have been sown in the injudicious or defective terms of the preceding peace. Either the conqueror has insisted on too much, and thereby held the conquered, like an over-bent bow, in a continual struggle to snap the cord, or the latter has artfully introduced an equivocal article, to take such advantages under as the turn of future affairs might afford. We have only to consult our own feelings, and each man may from thence learn the spring of all national policy. And he, who does not this, may be fortunate enough to effect a temporary measure, but never will, unless by accident, accomplish a lasting one.

Perhaps the fittest condition any countries can be in to make a peace, calculated for duration, is when neither is conquered, and both are tired. The first of these suits England and America. I put England first in this case, because she began the war. And as she must be and *is* convinced of the impossibility of conquering America, and as America has no romantic ideas of extending her conquests to England, the object of the part of England is lost, and on the part of America is so far secure, that, unless she unwisely conquers herself, she is certain of not being conquered; and this being the case, there is no visible object to prevent the opening a negotiation. But how far England is disposed thereto is a matter wholly unknown, and much to be doubted.

A movement toward a negotiation, and a disposition to enter into it, are very distinct things. The first is often made, as an army affects to retreat, in order to throw an enemy off his guard. To prevent which, the most vigorous preparations ought to be made for war at the very instant of negotiating for a peace.

Let America make these preparations, and she may send her terms and claims whenever she pleases, without any apprehension of appearing or acting out of character. Those preparations relate now more to revenue than to force, and that being wholly and immediately within

the compass of our own abilities, requires nothing but our consent to accomplish.<sup>69</sup>

To leave the fisheries wholly out, on any pretense whatever, is to sow the seeds of another war; and I will be content to have the name of an idiot engraven for an epitaph, if it does not produce that effect. The difficulties which are now given will become a soil for those seeds to grow in, and future circumstances will quicken their vegetation. Nations are very fond of appealing to treaties when it suits their purpose, and though America might afterwards assign her *unquestioned* right as a reason for her silence, yet all must know that treaties are never to be explained by presumption, but wholly by what is put in, and never by what is left out.

There has not yet been an argument given for omitting the fisheries, but what might have been given as a stronger reason to the contrary. All which has been advanced rests only on supposition, and that failing, leaves them no foundation. They suppose Britain will not hereafter interrupt the right; but the case is, they have no right to that supposition; and it may likewise be parried by saying—suppose she should? Now the matter, as I conceive it stands thus—

If the right to the States to fish on the Banks of Newfoundland be made and consented to as an article in a treaty with Britain, it of consequence becomes expressly guaranteed by the eleventh article of the present treaty of alliance with France; but if it be left out in a treaty with the former, it is not then guaranteed in the present treaty with the latter, because the guaranteeing is limited to “the whole of their (our) possessions, as the same shall be fixed and assured to the said states at *the moment of the cessation of their present war with England.*” Art. II.

Were the states to claim, as a memorial to be recorded with themselves, an exclusive right to those fisheries, as a matter of right *only*, derived from natural situation, and to propose to their allies to guarantee to them expressly so much of that right as we may have occasion to

<sup>69</sup> A plan has been proposed, and all who are judges have approved it, for stopping the emissions [of paper money] and raising a revenue, by subscription for three years without interest, and in lieu thereof to take every subscriber's taxes out of his subscription, and the balance at the expiration of that time to be returned. If the states universally go into this measure, they will acquire a degree of strength and ability fitted either for peace or war. It is, I am clearly convinced, the best measure they can adopt, the best interest they can have, and the best security they can hold. In short, it is carrying on or providing against war without expense, because the remaining money in the country, after the subscriptions are made, will be equal in value to the whole they now hold. Boston has proposed the same measure.—*Author.*

use, and the states to guarantee to such allies such portions of the fisheries as they possessed by the last treaty of peace, there might be some pretense for not touching on the subject in a treaty with Britain; because, after the conclusion of the war, she would hardly venture to interrupt the states in a right, which, though not described in a treaty with her, should be powerfully guaranteed in a treaty with others. But to omit it wholly in one treaty, and to leave it unguaranteed in another, and to trust it entirely, as the phrase is, to the chapter of accidents, is too loose, too impolitic a mode of conducting national business.

Had nothing, says AMERICANUS, being said on the subject of the fisheries, our fishermen, on the peace, might have returned to their old stations without interruption.

Is this talking like an American politician, or a seducing emissary? Who authorized AMERICANUS to intimate such an assurance; or how came he to know what the British Ministry would or would not hereafter do; or how can he be certain they have told him truth? If it be supposition only, he has, as I before remarked, no right to make it; and if it be more than supposition, it must be the effect of secret correspondence. In the first of these cases he is foolish; in the second worse. Does he not see that the fisheries are not expressly and only conditionally guaranteed, and that if in such a situation they be omitted in a treaty with Britain, and she should afterwards interrupt our right, that the States stand single in the question, and have no right on the face of the present treaties to call on their allies for assistance? And yet this man is persuading us to say nothing about them.

AMERICANUS like some others is mightily fond of amusing his readers with "*the law of nations*," just as if there really was such a law, fixed and known like the law of the ten commandments. Whereas the law of nations is in theory the law of treaties compounded with customary usage, and in practice just what they can get and keep till it be taken from them. It is a term without any regular defined meaning, and as in some instances we have invented the thing first and given the name afterwards, so in this we have invented the name and the thing is yet to be made.

Some gentlemen say, leave the fisheries to be settled afterwards in a treaty of commerce. This is really beginning business at the wrong end. For a treaty of peace cannot *precede* the settlement of disputes, but proceeds in consequence of all controverted points respecting right and

dominion being adjusted and agreed on. There is one kind of treaty of commerce which may follow a treaty of peace, but that respects such articles only and the mode of trafficking with them as are produced within, or imported into the known and described dominions of the parties; or to the rules of exchange, or paying or recovering debts, but never to the dominion itself; and comes more properly within the province of a consul than the superior contracting powers.

With these remarks I shall, for the present, close the subject. It is a new one, and I have endeavored to give it as systematical an investigation as the short time allowed and the other business I have on hand will admit of. How the affair stands in Congress, or how the cast of the House is on the question, I have, for several reasons, not inquired into; neither have I conversed with any gentleman of that body on the subject. They have their opinion and I mine; and as I choose to think my own reasons and write my own thoughts, I feel the more free the less I consult.

Who the writer of *AMERICANUS* is I am not informed. I never said or ever believed it to be Mr. Gouverneur Morris, or replied to it upon that supposition. The manner is not his, neither do I know that the principles are, and as that gentleman has disavowed it, the assurance is sufficient. I have likewise heard it supposed that Mr. Deane is the author, and that his friend Mr. Langworthy carried it to the press. But I know not who the author is. I have replied to the piece rather than to the man; though for the sake of relief to the reader and amusement to myself, he now and then comes in for a stroke.

COMMON SENSE.

PHILADELPHIA, July 17, 1779.

## A PLAN FOR RECRUITING THE ARMY

This plan for recruiting the army has no date but probably was written in June, 1780. It was sent to Joseph Reed, president of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, and was copied from the original in the Joseph Reed Papers through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society. It has never appeared before in any collection of Paine's writings.—*Editor.*

I CONSIDER Personal service which is to be raised for the defense of a country in the same light in which I consider a Tax, and can see no reason why the proportion of service required from any Inhabitant should not be levied on his person as justly as on his Property. The end and use of pecuniary Taxes is to pay the expense of personal service; but if the personal service can be raised at once, it is greater saving to the State than to raise money by way of Tax in order to procure the service afterwards.

For instance, suppose 2600 men were to be raised and clothed by this or any State whose capable Inhabitants were 80,000. Would it not be cheaper and more expeditious to raise the men ready clothed at one operation than to levy Taxes in order to collect money to procure the recruits and to purchase clothing with because the expense of collecting the Tax for that purpose would be saved, and the present inconvenience of clothing them got over.

The difference between raising personal service and money by a Tax seems chiefly to be this: money may be levied in small parts on individuals according to their separate abilities; but personal service do not admit of being raised in parts because the least quantity which can be raised is a *whole man*. Suppose thirty men were to be assessed thirty pounds or any other sum of money: in this case, each individual could pay his share and the burden would be equally divided. But if one man were to be raised by Ballot from the whole thirty, the lot could fall on *one* only, and though each stood a fair and equal chance beforehand yet the moment the matter became determined, the difference between him on whom the lot falls and those who are totally though fortunately exempt seems to be out of all proportion. Therefore in order to make the case as even as possible in all parts of it, some method should be devised by which he on whom the lot falls may receive some kind of reciprocal assistance from those who are exempt.

Suppose the names of thirty persons nearly resident in any Town or Township be taken and entered in a book, and so on for every thirty Persons till the whole be taken. Each of these thirty is, against a limited time, to produce or furnish one man ready clothed for rendering the Service. In order to perform which, first, let three dollars be collected from each of the thirty Persons and as much more as any of them who may be able or disposed shall please to throw in as a gift, all which to be fairly entered in a book. Secondly, when the sum be collected, let it be offered as a Bounty to any one of the thirty not more than thirty



years of age nor less than 5 feet 7 inches high who shall propose himself as a volunteer. If more than one offers the majority of the members present to determine which. If none offers then one man to be drawn by ballot and entitled to the purse which if he does not choose to go will make it easy to him to procure a substitute.

## TWO PLANS FOR PROCURING THE SUPPLIES

This plan was also sent to Joseph Reed and was copied from the original in the Joseph Reed Papers through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society. It has no date but was also probably written in June, 1780. It has never appeared in any previous collection of Paine's writings.

**F**IRST, A State Lottery of Hard Money. Suppose the lottery was for 500,000 hard dollars: and deduct, as formerly fifteen per cent. The amount of the money to be paid for prizes would be 42,500 dollars, and the sum remaining in the hands of the State would be 75,000 dollars. The prizes ought to be paid as soon as the lottery is settled.

Secondly, Strike four millions of State dollars and provide funds and pass an Act to redeem the same within the space of, seven years, at the rate of twenty of these dollars for one hard dollar and as much more as Continental Money shall rise in value, the space of three years at any given time.

The effect of this second scheme, I presume, will be, that the Bills will have the full value of twenty for one, and as the legal certainty of their not being less will be aided by the chance of their being more, it is likely the bills will, upon the common practice of speculation, pass for something better than twenty for one, and likewise make it the interest of the holders of those bills to support the credit of the Continental money.

To this I beg leave to offer a few remarks.

I presume we have in this State a larger portion of the Continental money than in our Quota of the debt, and this arises from Philadelphia being the seat of emission. Should therefore the Continental money ever fail, the part which each State will lose, will not be its proper quota of the debt, but the quantity it holds. Therefore to introduce a quantity

of State money will be a means of pushing a large quantity of Continental money out by which means the balance of the loss should it ever happen will be more equal.

The situation we are in as to finances, is rather ridiculous than distressing. The real value of the present cash in circulation, if taken at the depreciation of fifty for one is no more than four millions of hard dollars for the whole Continent.

I conceive the money can be struck much sooner than a sum sufficient for the same purchase can be collected by Taxes. And I would further propose to lay by four millions of Continental dollars sealed up by the President and Speaker of the House. This I think is better than burning it, because it may be burnt at any time, and it is time enough to begin burning when the rest of the States agree in the measure.

This new emission of four million dollars will enable the public to pay their present Taxes with greater ease, and the money when collected (except the four millions which is to be laid by), will go toward the supplies of the next year. Another advantage that will likewise arise from giving out this new money is, that the persons to whom it is issued cannot speculate upon it, because if they do not procure the supplies they must not only return the *same* sum, but the *very same* bills. But I presume that were the supplies to be procured by money wholly within the power of the State to make good, that you might obtain the supplies by Contraction. People seem wearied of Continental money and want to see something in which they can place confidence, and as this money will have an effect of keeping up the credit of the Continental, by giving it a collateral support, I therefore beg leave to submit these thoughts (though very hastily drawn up) to the wisdom of the House.

## LETTER TO THE ABBÉ RAYNAL

This pamphlet was published in 1782 and bore the following title: *Letter to the Abbe Raynal, on the Affairs of North America: in which the Mistakes in the Abbes Account of the Revolution of America are Corrected and Cleared up*. Paine was defending America from the erroneous impressions contained in the Abbé Raynal's *Révolution d'Amérique* which had appeared in an English translation in London in 1781.

How important Paine regarded this work is evidenced by the fact that he sometimes identified himself in his publications thereafter as the author of *Common Sense* and the *Letter to the Abbé Raynal*. A recent student has pointed out that the pamphlet "represents the stage where Paine actually ceased to think in nationalistic terms and became a practical internationalist." (See Darrel Abel, "The Significance of the Letter to the Abbé Raynal in the Progress of Thomas Paine's Thought," in *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. LXVI, April, 1942, pp. 176-190.)

It is interesting today to note his description in 1782 of the advantages to be derived from an international federation of nations—peace; freer commercial relations bringing prosperity for all; unrestricted literary and scientific relations; relief from tax burdens necessary to support wars, and a more abundant life for all people. No doubt his belief that the time was ripe for an international federation, since men had now progressed in civilization far enough for such relations to be possible, displayed a lack of discernment of major forces operating in the world. Yet Paine must be given full credit for his vision in portraying the value of such an international organization. He was to expand this theme in the *Rights of Man*.—*Editor*.

#### INTRODUCTION

A LONDON translation of an original work in France, by the Abbé Raynal, which treats of the Revolution of North America, having been re-printed in Philadelphia and other parts of the continent, and as the distance at which the Abbé is placed from the American theater of war and politics, has occasioned him to mistake several facts, or misconceive the causes or principles by which they were produced, the following tract, therefore, is published with a view to rectify them, and prevent even accidental errors from intermixing with history, under the sanction of time and silence.

The editor of the London edition has entitled it, "The Revolution of America, by the ABBÉ RAYNAL," and the American printers have followed the example. But I have understood, and I believe my information just, that the piece, which is more properly reflections on the Revolution, was unfairly purloined from the printer whom the Abbé employed, or from the manuscript copy, and is only part of a larger work then in the press, or preparing for it. The person who procured it, appears to have been an Englishman, and though, in an advertisement prefixed to the London edition, he has endeavored to gloss over the embezzlement with professions of patriotism, and to soften it with high encomiums on the

author, yet the action in any view in which it can be placed, is illiberal and unpardonable.

In the course of his travels (says he), the translator happily succeeded in obtaining a copy of this exquisite little piece which has not made its appearance from any press. He publishes a French edition, in favor of those who feel its eloquent reasoning more forcibly in its native language, at the same time with the following translation of it: in which he has been desirous, perhaps in vain, that all the warmth, the grace, the strength, the dignity of the original, should not be lost. And he flatters himself, that the indulgence of the illustrious historian will not be wanting to a man, who, of his own motion, has taken the liberty to give this composition to the public, only from a strong persuasion, that its momentous argument will be useful in a critical conjuncture, to that country which he loves with an ardor that can be exceeded only by the nobler flame, which burns in the bosom of the philanthropic author, for the freedom and happiness of all the countries upon earth.

This plausibility of setting off a dishonorable action, may pass for patriotism and sound principles with those who do not enter into its demerits, and whose interest is not injured nor their happiness affected thereby. But it is more than probable, notwithstanding the declarations it contains, that the copy was obtained for the sake of profiting by the sale of a new and popular work, and that the professions are but a garb to the fraud.

It may with propriety be marked, that in all countries where literature is protected, and it never can flourish where it is not, the works of an author are his legal property; and to treat letters in any other light than this, is to banish them from the country, or strangle them in the birth.

The embezzlement from the Abbé Raynal, was, it is true, committed by one country upon another, and therefore shows no defect in the laws of either. But it is nevertheless a breach of civil manners and literary justice: neither can it be any apology, that because the countries are at war, literature shall be entitled to deprecation.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>70</sup> The state of literature in America must one day become a subject of legislative consideration. Hitherto it has been a disinterested volunteer in the service of the Revolution, and no man thought of profits: but when peace shall give time and opportunity for study, the country will deprive itself of the honor and service of letters and the improvement of science, unless sufficient laws are made to prevent depredations on literary property. It is well worth remarking, that Russia, who but a few years ago was scarcely known in Europe, owes a large share of her present greatness to the close attention she has paid, and the wise encouragement she has given, to every branch of science and learning: and we have almost the same instance in France, in the reign of Louis XIV.—*Author.*

But the forestalling the Abbé's publication by London editions, both in French and English, and thereby not only defrauding him and throwing an expensive publication on his hands by anticipating the sale, are only the smaller injuries which such conduct may occasion. A man's opinions, whether written or in thought, are his own, until he pleases to publish them himself; and it is adding cruelty to injustice, to make him the author of what future reflection, or better information, might occasion him to suppress or amend. There are declarations and sentiments in the Abbé's piece which, for my own part, I did not expect to find, and such as himself, on a revisal, might have seen occasion to change; but the anticipated piracy effectually prevented his having the opportunity, and precipitated him into difficulties, which, had it not been for such ungenerous fraud, might not have happened.

This mode of making an author appear before his time, will appear still more ungenerous, when we consider how very few men there are in any country, who can at once, and without the aid of reflection and revisal, combine warm passions with a cool temper, and the full expansion of the imagination with the natural and necessary gravity of judgment, so as to be rightly balanced within themselves, and to make a reader feel, fancy, and understand justly at the same time. To call three powers of the mind into action at once, in a manner that neither shall interrupt, and that each shall aid and invigorate the other, is a talent very rarely possessed.

It often happens that the weight of an argument is lost by the wit of setting it off; or the judgment disordered by an intemperate irritation of the passions: yet a certain degree of animation must be felt by the writer, and raised in the reader, in order to interest the attention; and a sufficient scope given to the imagination, to enable it to create in the mind a sight of the persons, characters and circumstances of the subject: for without these, the judgment will feel little or no excitement to office, and its determinations will be cold, sluggish, and imperfect.

But if either or both of the two former are raised too high, or heated too much, the judgment will be jostled from its seat, and the whole matter, however important in itself, will diminish into a pantomime of the mind, in which we create images that promote no other purpose than amusement.

The Abbé's writings bear evident marks of that extension and rapidness of thinking and quickness of sensation, which of all others require revisal, and the more particularly so, when applied to the living char-

acters of nations or individuals in a state of war. The least misinformation or misconception leads to some wrong conclusion, and an error believed, becomes the progenitor of others. And, as the Abbé has suffered some inconveniences in France, by mistaking certain circumstances of the war, and the characters of the parties therein, it becomes some apology for him that those errors were precipitated into the world by the avarice of an ungenerous enemy.

## LETTER TO THE ABBÉ RAYNAL

To an author of such distinguished reputation as the Abbé Raynal, it might very well become me to apologize for the present undertaking; but, as *to be right* is the first wish of philosophy, and the first principle of history, he will, I presume, accept from me a declaration of my motives, which are those of doing justice, in preference to any complimentary apology I might otherwise make. The Abbé, in the course of his work, has, in some instances, extolled without a reason, and wounded without a cause. He has given fame where it was not deserved, and withheld it where it was justly due; and appears to be so frequently in and out of temper with his subjects and parties, that few or none of them are decisively and uniformly marked.

It is yet too soon to write the history of the Revolution,<sup>71</sup> and whoever attempts it precipitately, will unavoidably mistake characters and circumstances, and involve himself in error and difficulty. Things, like men, are seldom understood rightly at first sight. But the Abbé is wrong even in the foundation of his work; that is, he has misconceived and mis-stated the causes which produced the rupture between England and her then colonies, and which led on, step by step, unstudied and uncontrived on the part of America, to a revolution, which has engaged the attention, and affected the interest of Europe.

To prove this, I shall bring forward a passage, which, though placed towards the latter part of the Abbé's work, is more intimately connected with the beginning; and in which, speaking of the original cause of the dispute, he declares himself in the following manner:

None (says he), of those energetic causes, which have produced so many revolutions upon the globe, existed in North America. Neither religion nor laws had there been outraged. The blood of martyrs or patriots had not there

<sup>71</sup> At various times, however, Paine did contemplate writing a history of the Revolution. See especially his letter to the Continental Congress, pages 1239-1241 below.—*Editor.*

streamed from scaffolds. Morals had not there been insulted. Manners, customs, habits, no object dear to nations, had there been the sport of ridicule. Arbitrary power had not there torn any inhabitant from the arms of his family and friends, to drag him to a dreary dungeon. Public order had not been there inverted. The principles of administration had not been changed there; and the maxims of government had there always remained the same. The whole question was reduced to the knowing whether the mother country had, or had not, a right to lay, directly or indirectly, a slight tax upon the colonies.

On this extraordinary passage, it may not be improper, in general terms, to remark, that none can feel like those who suffer; and that for a man to be a competent judge of the provocatives, or as the Abbé styles them, the energetic causes of the Revolution, he must have resided at the time in America.

The Abbé, in saying that the several particulars he has enumerated, did not exist in America, and neglecting to point out the particular period, in which he means they did not exist, reduces thereby his declaration to a nullity, by taking away all meaning from the passage.

They did not exist in 1763, and they all existed before 1776; consequently as there was a time when they did *not*, and another, when they *did* exist, the *time when* constitutes the essence of the fact, and not to give it is to withhold the only evidence which proves the declaration right or wrong, and on which it must stand or fall. But the declaration as it now appears, unaccompanied by time, has an effect in holding out to the world, that there was no real cause for the Revolution, because it denies the existence of all those causes, which are supposed to be justifiable, and which the Abbé styles energetic.

I confess myself exceedingly at a loss to find out the time to which the Abbé alludes; because, in another part of the work, in speaking of the Stamp Act, which was passed in 1764, he styles it "an *usurpation* of the Americans' *most precious and sacred rights*." Consequently he here admits the most energetic of all causes, that is, an *usurpation of their most precious and sacred rights*, to have existed in America twelve years before the Declaration of Independence, and ten years before the breaking out of hostilities. The time, therefore, in which the paragraph is true, must be antecedent to the Stamp Act, but as at that time there was no revolution, nor any idea of one, it consequently applies without a meaning; and as it cannot, on the Abbé's own principle, be applied to any time *after* the Stamp Act, it is therefore a wandering, solitary paragraph, connected with nothing and at variance with everything.

The Stamp Act, it is true, was repealed in two years after it was passed, but it was immediately followed by one of infinitely more mischievous magnitude; I mean the Declaratory Act, which asserted the right, as it was styled, of the British Parliament, "*to bind America in all cases whatsoever.*"

If then the Stamp Act was an usurpation of the Americans' most precious and sacred rights, the Declaratory Act left them no rights at all; and contained the full grown seeds of the most despotic government ever exercised in the world. It placed America not only in the lowest, but in the basest state of vassalage; because it demanded an unconditional submission in everything, or as the act expressed it, *in all cases whatsoever*: and what renders this act the more offensive, is, that it appears to have been passed as an act of mercy; truly then may it be said, that *the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.*

All the original charters from the Crown of England, under the faith of which the adventurers from the Old World settled in the New, were by this act displaced from their foundations; because, contrary to the nature of them, which was that of a compact, they were now made subject to repeal or alteration at the mere will of one party only. The whole condition of America was thus put into the hands of the Parliament or Ministry, without leaving to her the least right in any case whatsoever.

There is no despotism to which this iniquitous law did not extend; and though it might have been convenient in the execution of it, to have consulted manners and habits, the principle of the act made all tyranny legal. It stopped nowhere. It went to everything. It took in with it the whole life of a man, or if I may so express it, an eternity of circumstances. It is the nature of law to require obedience, but this demanded servitude; and the condition of an American, under the operation of it, was not that of a subject, but a vassal. Tyranny has often been established *without* law and sometimes *against* it, but the history of mankind does not produce another instance, in which it has been established *by* law. It is an audacious outrage upon civil government, and cannot be too much exposed, in order to be sufficiently detested.

Neither could it be said after this, that the legislature of that country any longer made laws for this, but that it gave out commands; for wherein differed an act of Parliament constructed on this principle, and operating in this manner, over an unrepresented people, from the orders of a military establishment?



The Parliament of England, with respect to America, was not septennial but *perpetual*. It appeared to the latter a body always in being. Its election or expiration were to her the same as if its members succeeded by inheritance, or went out by death, or lived forever, or were appointed to it as a matter of office. Therefore, for the people of England to have any just conception of the mind of America, respecting this extraordinary act, they must suppose all election and expiration in that country to cease forever, and the present Parliament, its heirs, etc., to be perpetual; in this case, I ask, what would the most clamorous of them think, were an act to be passed, declaring the right of *such a Parliament* to bind *them* in all cases whatsoever? For this word *whatsoever* would go as effectually to their *Magna Charta, Bill of Rights, trial by juries, etc.*, as it went to the charters and forms of government in America.

I am persuaded, that the gentleman to whom I address these remarks, will not, after the passing of this act, say, "that the *principles* of administration had not been *changed* in America, and that the maxims of government had there been *always the same*." For here is, in principle, a total overthrow of the whole; and not a subversion only, but an annihilation of the foundation of liberty and absolute domination established in its stead.

The Abbé likewise states the case exceedingly wrong and injuriously, when he says, that "*the whole* question was reduced to the knowing whether the mother country had, or had not, a right to lay, directly or indirectly, a *slight* tax upon the colonies." This was *not the whole* of the question; neither was the *quantity* of the tax the object either to the Ministry or to the Americans. It was the principle, of which the tax made but a part, and the quantity still less, that formed the ground on which America resisted.

The tax on tea, which is the tax here alluded to, was neither more nor less than an experiment to establish the practice of a declaratory law upon; modeled into the more fashionable phrase of *the universal supremacy of Parliament*. For until this time the declaratory law had lain dormant, and the framers of it had contented themselves with barely declaring an opinion.

Therefore the *whole* question with America, in the opening of the dispute, was, shall we be bound in all cases whatsoever by the British Parliament, or shall we not? For submission to the tea or tax act implied an acknowledgment of the Declaratory Act, or, in other words, of the universal supremacy of Parliament, which as they never intended

to do, it was necessary they should oppose it, in its first stage of execution.

It is probable the Abbé has been led into this mistake by perusing detached pieces in some of the American newspapers; for, in a case where all were interested, everyone had a right to give his opinion; and there were many, who, with the best intentions, did not choose the best, nor indeed the true ground, to defend their cause upon. They felt themselves right by a general impulse, without being able to separate, analyze, and arrange the parts.

I am somewhat unwilling to examine too minutely into the whole of this extraordinary passage of the Abbé, lest I should appear to treat it with severity; otherwise I could show that not a single declaration is justly founded: for instance, the reviving an obsolete act of the reign of Henry VIII and fitting it to the Americans, by authority of which they were to be seized and brought from America to England, and there imprisoned and tried for any supposed offenses, was, in the worst sense of the words, *to tear them, by the arbitrary power of Parliament, from the arms of their families and friends, and drag them not only to dreary but distant dungeons*. Yet this act was contrived some years before the breaking out of hostilities. And again, though the blood of martyrs and patriots had not streamed on the scaffolds, it streamed in the streets, in the massacre of the inhabitants of Boston, by the British soldiery in the year 1770.

Had the Abbé said that the causes which produced the Revolution in America were originally *different* from those which produced revolutions in other parts of the globe, he had been right. Here the value and quality of liberty, the nature of government, and the dignity of man, were known and understood, and the attachment of the Americans to these principles produced the Revolution, as a natural and almost unavoidable consequence. They had no particular family to set up or pull down. Nothing of personality was incorporated with their cause. They started even-handed with each other, and went no faster into the several stages of it, than they were driven by the unrelenting and imperious conduct of Britain. Nay, in the last act, the Declaration of Independence, they had nearly been too late; for had it not been declared at the exact time it was, I see no period in their affairs since, in which it could have been declared with the same effect, and probably not at all.

But the object being formed before the reverse of fortune took place, that is, before the operations of the gloomy campaign of 1776, their honor, their interest, their everything, called loudly on them to main-

tain it; and that glow of thought and energy of heart, which even a distant prospect of independence inspires, gave confidence to their hopes, and resolution to their conduct, which a state of dependence could never have reached. They looked forward to happier days and scenes of rest, and qualified the hardships of the campaign by contemplating the establishment of their new-born system.

If, on the other hand, we take a review of what part Britain has acted, we shall find everything which ought to make a nation blush—the most vulgar abuse, accompanied by that species of haughtiness which distinguishes the hero of a mob from the character of a gentleman. It was equally as much from her manners as from her injustice that she lost the colonies. By the latter she provoked their principles, by the former she wore out their temper; and it ought to be held out as an example to the world, to show how necessary it is to conduct the business of government with civility. In short, other revolutions may have originated in caprice, or generated in ambition; but here, the most unoffending humility was tortured into rage, and the infancy of existence made to weep.

A union so extensive, continued and determined, suffering with patience and never in despair, could not have been produced by common causes. It must be something capable of reaching the whole soul of man and arming it with perpetual energy. It is in vain to look for precedents among the revolutions of former ages, to find out, by comparison, the causes of this.

The spring, the progress, the object, the consequences, nay, the men, their habits of thinking, and all the circumstances of the country, are different. Those of other nations are, in general, little more than the history of their quarrels. They are marked by no important character in the annals of events; mixed in the mass of general matters, they occupy but a common page; and while the chief of the successful partisans stepped into power, the plundered multitude sat down and sorrowed. Few, very few of them are accompanied with reformation, either in government or manners; many of them with the most consummate profligacy. Triumph on the one side and misery on the other were the only events. Pains, punishments, torture, and death were made the business of mankind, until compassion, the fairest associate of the heart, was driven from its place, and the eye, accustomed to continual cruelty, could behold it without offense.

But as the principles of the present Revolution differed from those

which preceded it, so likewise did the conduct of America both in government and war. Neither the foul finger of disgrace nor the bloody hand of vengeance has hitherto put a blot upon her fame. Her victories have received lustre from a greatness of lenity; and her laws have been permitted to slumber, where they might justly be awakened to punish. War, so much the trade of the world, has here been only the business of necessity; and when the necessity shall cease, her very enemies must confess, that as she drew the sword in her just defense, she used it without cruelty, and sheathed it without revenge.

As it is not my design to extend these remarks to a history, I shall now take my leave of this passage of the Abbé, with an observation, which, until something unfolds itself to convince me otherwise, I cannot avoid believing to be true;—which is, that it was the fixed determination of the British Cabinet to quarrel with America at all events.

They (the members who composed the Cabinet) had no doubt of success, if they could once bring it to the issue of a battle, and they expected from a conquest, what they could neither propose with decency, nor hope for by negotiation. The charters and constitutions of the colonies were become to them matters of offense, and their rapid progress in property and population were disgustingly beheld as the growing and natural means of independence. They saw no way to retain them long but by reducing them in time. A conquest would at once have made them both lords and landlords; and put them in the possession both of the revenue and the rental. The whole trouble of government would have ceased in a victory, and a final end put to remonstrance and debate.

The experience of the Stamp Act had taught them how to quarrel with the advantages of cover and convenience, and they had nothing to do but to renew the scene, and put contention into motion. They hoped for a rebellion, and they made one. They expected a declaration of independence, and they were not disappointed. But after this, they looked for victory, and they obtained a defeat.

If this be taken as the generating cause of the contest, then is every part of the conduct of the British Ministry consistent from the commencement of the dispute, until the signing the Treaty of Paris, after which, conquest becoming doubtful, they retreated to negotiation, and were again defeated.

Though the Abbé possesses and displays great powers of genius, and is a master of style and language, he seems not to pay equal attention

to the office of an historian. His facts are coldly and carelessly stated. They neither inform the reader nor interest him. Many of them are erroneous, and most of them are defective and obscure. It is undoubtedly both an ornament and a useful addition to history, to accompany it with maxims and reflections. They afford likewise an agreeable change to the style, and a more diversified manner of expression; but it is absolutely necessary that the root from whence they spring, or the foundation on which they are raised, should be well attended to, which in this work is not. The Abbé hastens through his narrations as if he was glad to get from them, that he may enter the more copious field of eloquence and imagination.

The actions of Trenton and Princeton, in New Jersey, in December 1776, and January following, on which the fate of America stood for a while trembling on the point of suspense, and from which the most important consequences followed, are comprised within a single paragraph, faintly conceived, and barren of character, circumstance and description.

On the twenty-fifth of December (says the Abbé), they (the Americans) crossed the Delaware, and fell *accidentally* upon Trenton, which was occupied by fifteen hundred of the twelve thousand Hessians, sold in so base a manner by their avaricious master, to the King of Great Britain. This corps was *massacred*, taken, or dispersed. Eight days after, three English regiments were, in like manner, driven from Princeton, but after having better supported their reputation than the foreign troops in their pay.

This is all the account which is given of these interesting events. The Abbé has preceded them by two or three pages on the military operations of both armies, from the time of General Howe's arriving before New York from Halifax, and the vast reinforcements of British and foreign troops with Lord Howe from England. But in these, there is so much mistake, and so many omissions, that, to set them right, must be the business of a history and not of a letter.

The action of Long Island is but barely hinted at, and the operations at the White Plains wholly omitted; as are likewise the attack and loss of Fort Washington, with a garrison of about two thousand five hundred men, and the precipitate evacuation of Fort Lee, in consequence thereof: which losses were in a great measure the cause of the retreat through the Jerseys to Delaware, a distance of about ninety miles. Neither is the manner of the retreat described; which, from the season of the

year, the nature of the country, the nearness of the two armies (sometimes within sight and shot of each other, for such a length of way) the rear of the one employed in pulling down bridges, and the van of the other in building them up, must necessarily be accompanied with many interesting circumstances.

It was a period of distresses. A crisis rather of danger than of hope. There is no description can do it justice; and even the actors in it, looking back upon the scene, are surprised how they got through; and at a loss to account for those powers of the mind, and springs of animation, by which they withstood the force of accumulated misfortune.

It was expected, that the time for which the army was enlisted, would carry the campaign so far into the winter, that the severity of the season, and the consequent condition of the roads, would prevent any material operation of the enemy, until the new army could be raised for the next year. And I mention it, as a matter worthy of attention, by all future historians, that the movements of the American Army, until the attack of the Hessian post at Trenton, the twenty-sixth of December, are to be considered as operating to effect no other principal purpose than delay, and to wear away the campaign under all the disadvantages of an unequal force, with as little misfortune as possible.

But the loss of the garrison at Fort Washington on the sixteenth of November, and the expiration of the time of a considerable part of the army, so early as the thirtieth of the same month, and which was to be followed by almost daily expirations afterwards, made retreat the only final expedient. To these circumstances may be added the forlorn and destitute condition of the few that remained; for the garrison of Fort Lee, which composed almost the whole of the retreat, had been obliged to abandon it so instantaneously that every article of stores and baggage was left behind, and in this destitute condition, without tent or blanket, and without any other utensils to dress their provision than what they procured by the way, they performed a march of about ninety miles, and had the address and management to prolong it to the space of nineteen days.

By this unexpected or rather unthought-of turn of affairs, the country was in an instant surprised into confusion, and found an enemy within its bowels, without an army to oppose him. There were no succors to be had, but from the free-will offering of the inhabitants. All was choice, and every man reasoned for himself.

It was in this situation of affairs, equally calculated to confound or to

inspire, that the gentleman, the merchant, the farmer, the tradesman and the laborer mutually turned from all the conveniences of home, to perform the duties of private soldiers, and undergo the severities of a winter campaign. The delay so judiciously contrived on the retreat, afforded time for the volunteer reinforcements to join General Washington on the Delaware.

The Abbé is likewise wrong in saying, that the American Army fell *accidentally* on Trenton. It was the very object for which General Washington crossed the Delaware in the dead of the night and in the midst of snow, storms, and ice; and which he immediately re-crossed with his prisoners, as soon as he had accomplished his purpose. Neither was the intended enterprise a secret to the enemy, information having been sent of it by letter, from a British officer at Princeton, to Colonel Rolle, who commanded the Hessians at Trenton, which letter was afterwards found by the Americans. Nevertheless the post was completely surprised. A small circumstance, which had the appearance of mistake on the part of the Americans, led to a more capital and real mistake on the part of Rolle.

The case was this. A detachment of twenty or thirty Americans had been sent across the river, from a post a few miles above, by an officer unacquainted with the intended attack; these were met by a body of Hessians on the night to which the information pointed, which was Christmas night, and repulsed. Nothing further appearing, and the Hessians mistaking this for the advanced party, supposed the enterprise disconcerted, which at that time was not begun, and under this idea returned to their quarters; so that, what might have raised an alarm, and brought the Americans into an ambuscade, served to take off the force of an information, and promote the success of the enterprise. Soon after daylight, General Washington entered the town, and after a little opposition, made himself master of it, with upwards of nine hundred prisoners.

This combination of equivocal circumstances, falling within what the Abbé styles, "*the wide empire of chance*," would have afforded a fine field for thought, and I wish, for the sake of that elegance of reflection he is so capable of using, that he had known it.

But the action of Princeton was accompanied by a still greater embarrassment of matters, and followed by more extraordinary consequences. The Americans, by a happy stroke of generalship, in this instance, not only deranged and defeated all the plans of the British, in the intended

moment of execution, but drew from their posts the enemy they were not able to drive, and obliged them to close the campaign. As the circumstance is a curiosity in war, and not well understood in Europe, I shall, as concisely as I can, relate the principal parts; they may serve to prevent future historians from error, and recover from forgetfulness a scene of magnificent fortitude.

Immediately after the surprise of the Hessians at Trenton, General Washington re-crossed the Delaware, which at this place is about three quarters of a mile over, and reassumed his former post on the Pennsylvania side. Trenton remained unoccupied, and the enemy were posted at Princeton, twelve miles distant, on the road toward New York. The weather was now growing very severe, and as there were very few houses near the shore where General Washington had taken his station, the greatest part of his army remained out in the woods and fields. These, with some other circumstances, induced the re-crossing the Delaware and taking possession of Trenton. It was undoubtedly a bold adventure, and carried with it the appearance of defiance, especially when we consider the panic-struck condition of the enemy on the loss of the Hessian post. But in order to give a just idea of the affair, it is necessary that I should describe the place.

Trenton is situated on a rising ground, about three quarters of a mile distant from the Delaware, on the eastern or Jersey side; and is cut into two divisions by a small creek or rivulet, sufficient to turn a mill which is on it, after which it empties itself at nearly right angles into the Delaware. The upper division, which is that to the northeast, contains about seventy or eighty houses, and the lower about forty or fifty. The ground on each side this creek, and on which the houses are, is likewise rising, and the two divisions present an agreeable prospect to each other, with the creek between, on which there is a small stone bridge of one arch.

Scarcely had General Washington taken post here, and before the several parties of militia, out on detachments, or on their way, could be collected, than the British, leaving behind them a strong garrison at Princeton, marched suddenly and entered Trenton at the upper or northeast quarter. A party of the Americans skirmished with the advanced party of the British, to afford time for removing the store and baggage, and withdrawing over the bridge.

In a little time the British had possession of one half of the town, General Washington of the other; and the creek only separated the



two armies. Nothing could be a more critical situation than this, and if ever the fate of America depended upon the event of a day, it was now. The Delaware was filling fast with large sheets of driving ice, and was impassable; of course no retreat into Pennsylvania could be effected, neither is it possible, in the face of an enemy, to pass a river of such extent. The roads were broken and rugged with the frost, and the main road was occupied by the enemy.

About four o'clock a party of the British approached the bridge, with a design to gain it, but were repulsed. They made no more attempts, though the creek itself is passable anywhere between the bridge and the Delaware. It runs in a rugged, natural made ditch, over which a person may pass with little difficulty, the stream being rapid and shallow. Evening was now coming on, and the British, believing they had all the advantages they could wish for, and that they could use them when they pleased, discontinued all further operations, and held themselves prepared to make the attack next morning.

But the next morning produced a scene as elegant as it was unexpected. The British were under arms and ready to march to action, when one of their lighthorse from Princeton came furiously down the street, with an account that General Washington had that morning attacked and carried the British post at that place, and was proceeding on to seize the magazine at Brunswick; on which the British, who were then on the point of making an assault on the evacuated camp of the Americans, wheeled about, and in a fit of consternation marched for Princeton.

This retreat is one of those extraordinary circumstances, that in future ages may probably pass for fable. For it will with difficulty be believed, that two armies, on which such important consequences depended, should be crowded into so small a space as Trenton; and that the one, on the eve of an engagement, when every ear is supposed to be open, and every degree of watchfulness employed, should move completely from the ground, with all its stores, baggage and artillery, unknown and even unsuspected by the other. And so entirely were the British deceived, that when they heard the report of the cannon and small arms at Princeton, they supposed it to be thunder, though in the depth of winter.

General Washington, the better to cover and disguise his retreat from Trenton, had ordered a line of fires to be lighted up in front of his camp. These not only served to give an appearance of going to rest, and continuing that deception, but they effectually concealed from the British

whatever was acting behind them, for flame can no more be seen through than a wall, and in this situation, it may with propriety be said, they became a pillar of fire to one army, and a pillar of cloud to the other. After this, by a circuitous march of about eighteen miles, the Americans reached Princeton early in the morning.

The number of prisoners taken was between two and three hundred, with which General Washington immediately set off. The van of the British Army from Trenton entered Princeton about an hour after the Americans had left it, who, continuing their march for the remainder of the day, arrived in the evening at a convenient situation, wide of the main road to Brunswick, and about sixteen miles distant from Princeton. But so wearied and exhausted were they, with the continual and unabated service and fatigue of two days and a night, from action to action, without shelter, and almost without refreshment, that the bare and frozen ground, with no other covering than the sky, became to them a place of comfortable rest.

By these two events, and with but a little comparative force to accomplish them, the Americans closed with advantage a campaign, which, but a few days before, threatened the country with destruction. The British Army, apprehensive for the safety of their magazines at Brunswick, eighteen miles distant, marched immediately for that place, where they arrived late in the evening, and from which they made no attempts to move, for nearly five months.

Having thus stated the principal outlines of these two most interesting actions, I shall now quit them, to put the Abbé right in his mis-stated account of the debt and paper money of America, wherein, speaking of these matters, he says:

These ideal riches were rejected. The more the multiplication of them was urged by want, the greater did their depreciation grow. The Congress was indignant at the affront given to its money, and declared all those to be traitors to their country, who should not receive it as they would have received gold itself.

Did not this body know, that prepossessions are no more to be controlled than feelings are? Did it not perceive that, in the present crisis, every rational man would be afraid of exposing his fortune? Did it not see, that at the beginning of a republic, it permitted to itself the exercise of such acts of despotism as are unknown even in the countries which are molded to, and become familiar with, servitude and oppression? Could it pretend that it did not punish a want of confidence with the pains which would have been

scarcely merited by revolt and treason? Of all this was the Congress well aware. But it had no choice of means. Its despised and despicable scraps of paper were actually thirty times below their original value, when more of them were ordered to be made. On the thirteenth of September, 1779, there was of this paper among the public, to the amount of £35,544,155. The State owed moreover £8,385,356, without reckoning the particular debts of single provinces.

In the above recited passages, the Abbé speaks as if the United States had contracted a debt of upwards of forty million pounds sterling, besides the debts of the individual states. After which, speaking of foreign trade with America, he says, that “those countries in Europe, which are truly commercial ones, knowing that North America had been reduced to contract debts, at the epoch even of her greatest prosperity, wisely thought that, in her present distress, she would be able to pay but very little, for what might be carried to her.”

I know it must be extremely difficult to make foreigners understand the nature and circumstances of our paper money, because there are natives, who do not understand it themselves. But with us its fate is now determined. Common consent has consigned it to rest with that kind of regard, which the long service of inanimate things insensibly obtains from mankind. Every stone in the bridge, that has carried us over, seems to have a claim upon our esteem. But this was a corner-stone, and its usefulness cannot be forgotten. There is something in a grateful mind, which extends itself even to things that can neither be benefited by regard, nor suffer by neglect; but so it is; and almost every man is sensible of the effect.

But to return. The paper money, though issued from Congress under the name of dollars, did not come from that body always at that value. Those which were issued the first year, were equal to gold and silver. The second year less, the third still less, and so on, for nearly the space of five years: at the end of which, I imagine, that the whole value, at which Congress might pay away the several emissions, taking them together, was about ten or twelve million pounds sterling.

Now as it would have taken ten or twelve millions sterling of taxes to carry on the war for five years, and, as while this money was issuing, and likewise depreciating down to nothing, there were none, or few valuable taxes paid; consequently the event to the public was the same, whether they sunk ten or twelve millions of expended money, by depreciation, or paid ten or twelve millions by taxation; for as they did

not do both, and chose to do one, the matter which, in a general view, was indifferent. And therefore, what the Abbé supposes to be a debt, has now no existence; it having been paid, by everybody consenting to reduce, at his own expense, from the value of the bills continually passing among themselves, a sum, equal, nearly, to what the expense of the war was for five years.

Again. The paper money having now ceased, and the depreciation with it, and gold and silver supplied its place, the war will now be carried on by taxation, which will draw from the public a considerable less sum than what the depreciation drew; but as while they pay the former, they do not suffer the latter, and as when they suffered the latter, they did not pay the former, the thing will be nearly equal, with this moral advantage, that taxation occasions frugality and thought, and depreciation produces dissipation and carelessness.

And again. If a man's portion of taxes comes to less than what he lost by the depreciation, it proves that the alteration is in his favor. If it comes to more and he is justly assessed, it shows that he did not sustain his proper share of depreciation, because the one was as operatively his tax as the other.

It is true, that it never was intended, neither was it foreseen, that the debt contained in the paper currency should sink itself in this manner; but as, by the voluntary conduct of all and of everyone, it has arrived at this fate, the debt is paid by those who owed it.

Perhaps nothing was ever so universally the act of a country as this. Government had no hand in it. Every man depreciated his own money by his own consent, for such was the effect, which the raising the nominal value of goods produced. But as by such reduction he sustained a loss equal to what he must have paid to sink it by taxation, therefore the line of justice is to consider his loss by the depreciation as his tax for that time, and not to tax him when the war is over, to make that money good in any other person's hands, which became nothing in his own.

Again. The paper currency was issued for the express purpose of carrying on the war. It has performed that service, without any other material charge to the public, while it lasted. But to suppose, as some did, that, at the end of the war, it was to grow into gold or silver, or become equal thereto, was to suppose that we were to *get* two hundred millions of dollars by *going to war*, instead of *paying* the cost of carrying it on.

But if anything in the situation of America, as to her currency or her

circumstances, yet remains not understood, then let it be remembered, that this war is the public's war—the country's war. It is *their* independence that is to be supported; *their* property that is to be secured; *their* country that is to be saved. Here, Government, the army, and the people, are mutually and reciprocally one. In other wars, kings may lose their thrones, and their dominions; but here, the loss must fall on the majesty of the multitude, and the property they are contending to save. Every man being sensible of this, he goes to the field, or pays his portion of the charge, as the sovereign of his own possessions; and when he is conquered a monarch falls.

The remark, which the Abbé in the conclusion of the passage has made, respecting America's contracting debts in the time of her prosperity (by which he means, before the breaking out of hostilities), serves to show, though he has not made the application, the very great commercial difference between a dependent and an independent country. In a state of dependence, and with a fettered commerce, though with all the advantages of peace, her trade could not balance itself, and she annually run into debt. But now, in a state of independence, though involved in war, she requires no credit: her stores are full of merchandise, and gold and silver are become the currency of the country. How these things have established themselves is difficult to account for: but they are facts, and facts are more powerful than arguments.

As it is probable this letter will undergo a republication in Europe, the remarks here thrown together will serve to show the extreme folly of Britain in resting her hopes of success on the extinction of our paper currency. The expectation is at once so childish and forlorn, that it places her in the laughable condition of a famished lion watching for prey at a spider's web.

From this account of the currency, the Abbé proceeds to state the condition of America in the winter of 1777, and the spring following; and closes his observations with mentioning the Treaty of Alliance, which was signed in France, and the propositions of the British Ministry, which were rejected in America. But in the manner in which the Abbé has arranged his facts, there is a very material error, that not only he, but other European historians have fallen into; none of them having assigned the true cause why the British proposals were rejected, and all of them have assigned a wrong one.

In the winter of 1778, and spring following, Congress were assembled at Yorktown, in Pennsylvania, the British were in possession of Phila-

delphia, and General Washington with the army was encamped in huts at Valley Forge twenty-five miles distant therefrom. To all, who can remember, it was a season of hardship, but not despair; and the Abbé, speaking of this period and its inconveniences, says:

A multitude of privations, added to so many other misfortunes, might make the Americans regret their former tranquillity, and incline them to an accommodation with England. In vain had the people been bound to the new government by the sacredness of oaths and the influence of religion. In vain had endeavors been used to convince them that it was impossible to treat safely with a country, in which one Parliament might overturn what should have been established by another. In vain had they been threatened with the eternal resentment of an exasperated and vindictive enemy. It was possible that these distant troubles might not be balanced by the weight of present evils.

So thought the British Ministry, when they sent to the new world public agents, authorized to offer everything except independence to these very Americans, from whom they had two years before exacted an unconditional submission. It is not improbable but, that by this plan of conciliation, a few months sooner, some effect might have been produced. But at the period, at which it was proposed by the Court of London, it was rejected with disdain, because this measure appeared but as an argument of fear and weakness. The people were already reassured. The Congress, the generals, the troops, the bold and skilful men, in each colony had possessed themselves of the authority; every thing had recovered its first spirit. *This was the effect of a treaty of friendship and commerce between the United States and the Court of Versailles, signed the sixth of February, 1778.*

On this passage of the Abbé's I cannot help remarking, that, to unite time with circumstance, is a material nicety in history; the want of which frequently throws it into endless confusion and mistake, occasions a total separation between causes and consequences and connects them with others they are not immediately, and sometimes not at all, related to.

The Abbé, in saying that the offers of the British Ministry "were rejected with disdain," is *right*, as to the *fact*, but *wrong* as to the *time*; and this error in the time, has occasioned him to be mistaken in the cause.

The signing the Treaty of Paris the sixth of February, 1778, could have no effect on the mind or politics of America, until it was *known in America*: and therefore, when the Abbé says, that the rejection of the British offers was in consequence of the alliance, he must mean, that it

was in consequence of the alliance *being known* in America; which was not the case: and by this mistake he not only takes from her the reputation, which her unshaken fortitude in that trying situation deserves, but is likewise led very injuriously to suppose, that had she *not known* of the treaty, the offers would probably have been accepted; whereas she knew nothing of the treaty at the time of the rejection, and consequently did not reject them on that ground.

The propositions or offers above mentioned, were contained in two bills brought into the British Parliament by Lord North, on the seventeenth of February, 1778. Those bills were hurried through both houses with unusual haste, and before they had gone through all the customary forms of Parliament, copies of them were sent over to Lord Howe and General Howe, then in Philadelphia, who were likewise commissioners. General Howe ordered them to be printed in Philadelphia, and sent copies of them by a flag to General Washington, to be forwarded to Congress at Yorktown, where they arrived the twenty-first of April, 1778. Thus much for the arrival of the bills in America.

Congress, as is their usual mode, appointed a committee from their own body, to examine them and report thereon. The report was brought in the next day (the twenty-second), was read, and unanimously agreed to, entered on their journals, and published for the information of the country. Now this report must be the rejection to which the Abbé alludes, because Congress gave no other formal opinion on those bills and propositions: and on a subsequent application from the British commissioners, dated the twenty-seventh of May, and received at York Town the sixth of June, Congress immediately referred them for an answer, to their printed resolves of the twenty-second of April. Thus much for the rejection of the offers.

On the second of May, that is, eleven days after the above rejection was made, the treaty between the United States and France arrived at Yorktown; and until this moment Congress had not the least notice or idea, that such a measure was in any train of execution. But lest this declaration of mine should pass only for assertion, I shall support it by proof, for it is material to the character and principle of the Revolution to show, that no condition of America, since the Declaration of Independence, however trying and severe, ever operated to produce the most distant idea of yielding it up either by force, distress, artifice or persuasion. And this proof is the more necessary, because it was the system of the British Ministry at this time, as well as before and since, to hold

out to the European powers that America was unfixed in her resolutions and policy; hoping by this artifice to lessen her reputation in Europe, and weaken the confidence which those powers or any of them might be inclined to place in her.

At the time these matters were transacting, I was secretary in the Foreign Department of Congress. All the *political* letters from the American commissioners rested in my hands, and all that were officially written went from my office; and so far from Congress knowing anything of the signing the treaty, at the time they rejected the British offers, they had not received a line of information from their commissioners at Paris, on any subject whatever, for upwards of a twelve-month. Probably the loss of the port of Philadelphia and the navigation of the Delaware, together with the danger of the seas, covered at this time with British cruisers, contributed to the disappointment.

One packet, it is true, arrived at Yorktown in January preceding, which was about three months before the arrival of the treaty; but, strange as it may appear, every letter had been taken out, before it was put on board the vessel which brought it from France, and blank white paper put in their stead.

Having thus stated the time when the proposals from the British commissioners were first received, and likewise the time when the Treaty of Alliance arrived, and shown that the rejection of the former was eleven days prior to the arrival of the latter, and without the least knowledge of such circumstance having taken place or being about to take place; the rejection, therefore, must, and ought to be attributed to the fixed, unvaried sentiments of America respecting the enemy she is at war with, and her determination to support her independence to the last public effort, and not to any new circumstance which had taken place in her favor, which at that time she did not and could not know of.

Besides, there is a vigor of determination and spirit of defiance in the language of the rejection (which I here subjoin), which derive their greatest glory by appearing before the treaty was known; for that which is bravery in distress, becomes insult in prosperity: and the treaty placed America on such a strong foundation, that had she then known it, the answer which she gave, would have appeared rather as an air of triumph, than as the glowing serenity of fortitude.

Upon the whole, the Abbé appears to have entirely mistaken the matter; for instead of attributing the rejection of the propositions to *our knowledge* of the Treaty of Alliance; he should have attributed the



origin of them in the British Cabinet, to *their knowledge* of that event. And then the reason why they were hurried over to America in the state of bills, that is, before they were passed into acts, is easily accounted for, which is that they might have the chance of reaching America before any knowledge of the treaty should arrive, which they were lucky enough to do, and there met the fate they so richly merited.

That these bills were brought into the British Parliament after the treaty with France was signed, is proved from the dates: the treaty being on the sixth, and the bills on the seventeenth of February. And that the signing the treaty was known in Parliament, when the bills were brought in, is likewise proved by a speech of Mr. Fox, on the said seventeenth of February, who, in reply to Lord North, informed the House of the treaty being signed, and challenged the Minister's knowledge of the same fact.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>72</sup> In Congress, April 22, 1778.

The committee to whom was referred the General's letter of the eighteenth, containing a certain printed paper sent from Philadelphia, purporting to be the draft of a bill for declaring the *intentions* of the Parliament of Great Britain, as to the *exercise* of what they are pleased to term their *right* of imposing taxes within these United States: and also the draft of a bill to enable the King of Great Britain to appoint commissioners, with powers to treat, consult, and agree upon the means of quieting certain disorders within the said states, beg leave to observe:

That the said paper being industriously circulated by emissaries of the enemy, in a partial and secret manner, the same ought to be forthwith printed for the public information.

The committee cannot ascertain whether the contents of the said paper have been framed in Philadelphia, or in Great Britain, much less whether the same are really and truly intended to be brought into the Parliament of that Kingdom, or whether the said Parliament will confer thereon the usual solemnities of their laws. But are inclined to believe this will happen, for the following reasons:

1st, Because their General hath made divers feeble efforts to set on foot some kind of treaty during the last winter, though, either from a mistaken idea of his own dignity and importance, the want of information, or some other cause, he hath not made application to those who are invested with a proper authority.

2d, Because they suppose that the fallacious idea of a cessation of hostilities will render these states remiss in their preparations for war.

3d, Because believing the Americans wearied with war, they suppose we will accede to their terms for the sake of peace.

4th, Because they suppose our negotiations may be subject to a like corrupt influence with their debates.

5th, Because they expect from this step the same effects they did from what one of their ministers thought proper to call *his conciliatory motion*, viz., that it will prevent foreign powers from giving aid to these states; that it will lead their own subjects to continue a little longer the present war: and that it will detach some weak men in America, from the cause of freedom and virtue.

6th, Because their King, from his own showing, hath reason to apprehend that his

Though I am not surprised to see the Abbé mistaken in matters of history, acted at such a distance from his sphere of immediate observation, yet I am more than surprised to find him wrong (or at least what appears so to me) in the well enlightened field of philosophical reflection.

fleets and armies, instead of being employed against the territories of these states, will be necessary for the defense of his own dominions. And,

7th, Because the impracticability of subjugating this country being every day more and more manifest, it is their interest to extricate themselves from the war upon any terms.

The committee beg leave further to observe, that upon a supposition the matters contained in the said paper will really go into the British statute books, they serve to show, in a clear point of view, the weakness and wickedness of the enemy.

*Their weakness.*

1st, Because they formerly declared, not only that they had a right to bind the inhabitants of these states in all cases whatsoever, but also that the said inhabitants should *absolutely and unconditionally* submit to the exercise of that right. And this submission they have endeavored to exact by the sword. Receding from this claim, therefore, under the present circumstances, shows their inability to enforce it.

2d, Because their Prince hath heretofore rejected the humblest petitions of the representatives of America, praying to be considered as subjects, and protected in the enjoyment of peace, liberty and safety: and hath waged a most cruel war against them, and employed the savages to butcher innocent women and children. But now the same Prince pretends to treat with those very representatives, and grant to the *arms* of America what he refused to her *prayers*.

3d, Because they have uniformly labored to conquer this continent, rejecting every idea of accommodation proposed to them, from a confidence in their own strength. Wherefore it is evident, from the change in their mode of attack, that they have lost this confidence. And,

4th, Because the constant language, spoken, not only by their ministers, but by the most public and authentic acts of the nation, hath been, that it is incompatible with their dignity to treat with the Americans while they have arms in their hands. Notwithstanding which, an offer is now about to be made for treaty.

*The wickedness and insincerity* of the enemy appear from the following considerations:

1st, Either the *bills* now to be passed contain a direct or indirect cession of a part of their former claims, or they do not. If they do, then it is acknowledged that they have sacrificed many brave men in an unjust quarrel. If they do not, then they are calculated to deceive America into terms, to which neither argument before the war, nor force since, could procure her assent.

2d, The first of these *bills* appears, from the title, to be a declaration of the *intentions* of the British Parliament concerning the exercise of the *right of imposing taxes* within these states. Wherefore, should these states treat under the said bill, they would *indirectly* acknowledge that right, to obtain which acknowledgment the present war hath been avowedly undertaken and prosecuted on the part of Great Britain.

3d, Should such pretended right be so acquiesced in, then, of consequence the same right might be exercised whenever the British Parliament should find themselves in a different *temper and disposition*; since it must depend upon those, and such like contingencies, how far men will act according to their former *intentions*.

4th, The said first bill, in the body thereof, containeth no new matter, but is precisely the same with the motion beforementioned, and liable to all the objections which lay against the said motion, excepting the following particular, viz., that *by the motion* actual taxation was to be suspended, so long as America should give as much as the said Parlia-

Here the materials are his own; created by himself, and the error, therefore, is an act of the mind.

Hitherto my remarks have been confined to circumstance; the order in which they arose, and the events they produced. In these, my in-

ment might think proper: whereas, *by the proposed* bill, it is to be suspended, as long as future parliaments continue of the same mind with the present.

5th, From the second bill it appears, that the British King may, if he pleases, appoint commissioners to *treat and agree* with those, whom they please, about a variety of things therein mentioned. But such treaties and agreements are to be of no validity without the concurrence of the said Parliament, except so far as they relate to the *suspension* of hostilities, and of certain of their acts, the granting of pardons, and the appointing of governors to these sovereign, free and independent states. Wherefore, the said Parliament have reserved to themselves, in *express words*, the power of setting aside any such treaty, and taking the advantage of any circumstances which may arise to subject this continent to their usurpations.

6th, The said bill, by holding forth a tender of pardon, implies a criminality in our justifiable resistance, and consequently, to treat under it would be an implied acknowledgment that the inhabitants of these states were what Britain has declared them to be, *Rebels*.

7th, The inhabitants of these states being claimed by them as subjects, they may infer, from the nature of the negotiation now pretended to be set on foot, that the said inhabitants would of right be afterwards bound by such laws as they should make. Wherefore, any agreement entered into on such negotiation might at any future time be repealed. And,

8th, Because the said bill purports, that the commissioners therein mentioned may treat with private individuals: a measure highly derogatory to the dignity of national character.

From all which it appears evident to your committee, that the said bills are intended to operate upon the hopes and fears of the good people of these states, so as to create divisions among them, and a defection from the common cause, now by the blessing of Divine Providence drawing near to a favorable issue. That they are the sequel of that insidious plan, which from the days of the Stamp Act down to the present time, hath involved this country in contention and bloodshed. And that, as in other cases so in this, although circumstances may force them at times to recede from the unjustifiable claims, there can be no doubt but they will as heretofore, upon the first favorable occasion, again display that lust of domination, which hath rent in twain the mighty empire of Britain.

Upon the whole matter, the committee beg leave to report it as their opinion, that as the Americans united in this arduous contest upon principles of common interest, for the defense of common rights and privileges, which union hath been cemented by common calamities and by mutual good offices and affection, so the great cause for which they contend, and in which all mankind are interested, must derive its success from the continuance of that union. Wherefore, any man, or body of men, who should presume to make any separate or partial convention or agreement with commissioners under the Crown of Great Britain, or any of them, ought to be considered and treated as open and avowed enemies of the United States.

And further your committee beg leave to report it as their opinion, that these United States cannot with propriety, hold any confidence or treaty with *any* commissioners on the part of Great Britain, unless they shall, as a preliminary thereto, either withdraw their fleets and armies, or else in positive and express terms, acknowledge the independence of the said states.

And inasmuch as it appears to be the design of the enemies of these states to lull them into a fatal security—to the end that they may act with becoming weight and im-

formation being better than the Abbé's, my task was easy. How I may succeed in controverting matters of sentiment and opinion, with one whom years, experience, and long established reputation have placed in a superior line, I am less confident in; but as they fall within the scope of my observations it would be improper to pass them over.

From this part of the Abbé's work to the latter end, I find several expressions, which appear to me to start, with cynical complexion, from the path of liberal thinking, or at least they are so involved as to lose many of the beauties which distinguish other parts of the performance.

The Abbé having brought his work to the period when the Treaty of Alliance between France and the United States commenced, proceeds to make some remarks thereon.

In short (says he), philosophy, whose first sentiment is the desire to see all governments just and all people happy, in casting her eyes upon this alliance of a monarchy, with a people who are defending their liberty, *is curious to know its motive. She sees at once too clearly, that the happiness of mankind has no part in it.*

Whatever train of thinking or of temper the Abbé might be in, when he penned this expression, matters not. They will neither qualify the sentiment, nor add to its defect. If right, it needs no apology; if wrong,

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portance, it is the opinion of your committee, that the several states be called upon to use the utmost strenuous exertions to have their respective quotas of Continental troops in the field as soon as possible, and that all the militia of the said states be held in readiness, to act as occasion may require.

*The following is the answer of Congress to the second application of the commissioners:*

"SIR:

Yorktown, June 6, 1778.

"I have had the honor of laying your letter of the third instant, with the acts of the British Parliament which came inclosed, before Congress: and I am instructed to acquaint you, Sir, that they have already expressed their sentiments upon bills, not essentially different from those acts, in a publication of the twenty-second of April last.

"Be assured, Sir, when the King of Great Britain shall be seriously disposed to put an end to the unprovoked and cruel war waged against these united States, Congress will readily attend to such terms of peace, as may consist with the honor of independent nations, the interest of their constituents and the sacred regard they mean to pay to treaties. I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient, and

most humble servant.

HENRY LAURENS,

President of Congress."

His Excellency,

Sir Henry Clinton. K. B., Philadelphia.—*Author.*

it merits no excuse. It is sent into the world as an opinion of philosophy, and may be examined without regard to the author.

It seems to be a defect, connected with ingenuity, that it often employs itself more in matters of curiosity, than usefulness. Man must be the privy councillor of fate, or something is not right. He must know the springs, the whys and wherefores of everything, or he sits down unsatisfied. Whether this be a crime, or only a caprice of humanity, I am not inquiring into. I shall take the passage as I find it, and place my objections against it.

It is not so properly the *motives* which *produced* the alliance, as the *consequences* which are to be *produced from it*, that mark out the field of philosophical reflection. In the one we only penetrate into the barren cave of secrecy, where little can be known, and everything may be misconceived; in the other, the mind is presented with a wide extended prospect of vegetative good, and sees a thousand blessings budding into existence.

But the expression, even within the compass of the Abbé's meaning, sets out with an error, because it is made to declare that which no man has authority to declare. Who can say that the happiness of mankind made *no part of the motives* which produced the alliance? To be able to declare this, a man must be possessed of the mind of all the parties concerned, and know that their motives were something else.

In proportion as the independence of America became contemplated and understood, the local advantages of it to the immediate actors, and the numerous benefits it promised mankind, appeared to be every day increasing; and we saw not a temporary good for the present race only, but a continued good to all posterity; these motives, therefore, added to those which preceded them, became the motives on the part of America, which led her to propose and agree to the Treaty of Alliance, as the best effectual method of extending and securing happiness; and therefore, with respect to us, the Abbé is wrong.

France, on the other hand, was situated very differently. She was not acted upon by necessity to seek a friend, and therefore her motive in becoming one, has the strongest evidence of being good, and that which is so, must have some happiness for its object. With regard to herself, she saw a train of conveniences worthy her attention. By lessening the power of an enemy, whom at the same time she sought neither to destroy nor distress, she gained an advantage without doing an evil, and created to herself a new friend by associating with a country in misfortune.

The springs of thought that lead to actions of this kind, however political they may be, are nevertheless naturally beneficent; for in all causes, good or bad, it is necessary there should be a fitness in the mind, to enable it to act in character with the object: therefore, as a bad cause cannot be prosecuted with a good motive, so neither can a good cause be long supported by a bad one: and as no man acts without a motive, therefore in the present instance, as they cannot be bad, they must be admitted to be good. But the Abbé sets out upon such an extended scale, that he overlooks the degrees by which it is measured, and rejects the beginning of good, because the end comes not out at once.

It is true that bad motives may in some degree be brought to support a good cause or prosecute a good object; but it never continues long, which is not the case with France; for either the object will reform the mind, or the mind corrupt the object, or else not being able, either way, to get into unison, they will separate in disgust: and this natural, though unperceived progress of association or contention between the mind and the object, is the secret cause of fidelity or defection. Every object a man pursues, is, for the time, a kind of mistress to his mind: if both are good or bad, the union is natural; but if they are in reverse, and neither can seduce nor yet reform the other, the opposition grows into dislike, and a separation follows.

When the cause of America first made its appearance on the stage of the universe, there were many, who, in the style of adventurers and fortune-hunters, were dangling in its train, and making their court to it with every profession of honor and attachment. They were loud in its praise and ostentatious in its service. Every place echoed with their ardor or their anger, and they seemed like men in love. But, alas! they were fortune-hunters. Their expectations were excited, but their minds were unimpressed; and finding it not to their purpose, nor themselves reformed by its influence, they ceased their suit, and in some instances deserted and betrayed it.

There were others, who at first beheld America with indifference, and unacquainted with her character were cautious of her company. They treated her as one who, under the fair name of liberty, might conceal the hideous figure of anarchy, or the gloomy monster of tyranny. They knew not what she was. If fair, she was fair indeed. But still she was suspected and though born among us appeared to be a stranger.

Accident with some, and curiosity with others, brought on a distant acquaintance. They ventured to look at her. They felt an inclination to

speak to her. One intimacy led to another, till the suspicion wore away, and a change of sentiment gradually stole upon the mind; and having no self-interest to serve, no passion of dishonor to gratify, they became enamored of her innocence, and, unaltered by misfortune or uninfluenced by success, shared with fidelity in the varieties of her fate.

This declaration of the Abbé's respecting motives, has led me unintentionally into a train of metaphysical reasoning; but there was no other avenue by which it could properly be approached. To place presumption against presumption, assertion against assertion, is a mode of opposition that has no effect; and therefore the more eligible method was to show that the declaration does not correspond with the natural progress of the mind, and the influence it has upon our conduct. I shall now quit this part and proceed to what I have before stated, namely, that it is not so properly the motives which produced the alliance, as the consequences to be procured from it, that mark out the field of philosophical reflection.

It is an observation I have already made in some former publications, that the circle of civilization is yet incomplete. Mutual wants have formed the individuals of each country into a kind of national society, and here the progress of civilization has stopped. For it is easy to see, that nations with regard to each other (notwithstanding the ideal civil law, which every one explains as it suits him) are like individuals in a state of nature. They are regulated by no fixed principle, governed by no compulsive law, and each does independently what it pleases or what it can.

Were it possible we could have known the world when in a state of barbarism, we might have concluded that it never could be brought into the order we now see it. The untamed mind was then as hard, if not harder, to work upon in its individual state, than the national mind is in its present one. Yet we have seen the accomplishment of one, why then should we doubt that of the other?

There is a greater fitness in mankind to extend and complete the civilization of nations with each other at this day, than there was to begin it with the unconnected individuals at first; in the same manner that it is somewhat easier to put together the materials of a machine after they are formed, than it was to form them from original matter. The present condition of the world, differing so exceedingly from what it formerly was, has given a new cast to the mind of man, more than what he appears to be sensible of. The wants of the individual, which first produced the idea of society, are now augmented into the wants of

the nation, and he is obliged to seek from another country what before he sought from the next person.

Letters, the tongue of the world, have in some measure brought all mankind acquainted, and by an extension of their uses are every day promoting some new friendship. Through them distant nations became capable of conversation, and losing by degrees the awkwardness of strangers, and the moroseness of suspicion, they learn to know and understand each other. Science, the partisan of no country, but the beneficent patroness of all, has liberally opened a temple where all may meet. Her influence on the mind, like the sun on the chilled earth, has long been preparing it for higher cultivation and further improvement. The philosopher of one country sees not an enemy in the philosopher of another: he takes his seat in the temple of science, and asks not who sits beside him.

This was not the condition of the barbarian world. Then the wants of men were few and the objects within his reach. While he could acquire these, he lived in a state of individual independence; the consequence of which was, there were as many nations as persons, each contending with the other, to secure something which he had, or to obtain something which he had not. The world had then no business to follow, no studies to exercise the mind. Their time was divided between sloth and fatigue. Hunting and war were their chief occupations; sleep and food their principal enjoyments.

Now it is otherwise. A change in the mode of life has made it necessary to be busy; and man finds a thousand things to do now which before he did not. Instead of placing his ideas of greatness in the rude achievements of the savage, he studies arts, sciences, agriculture and commerce, the refinements of the gentleman, the principles of society, and the knowledge of the philosopher.

There are many things which in themselves are neither morally good nor bad, but they are productive of consequences, which are strongly marked with one or other of these characters. Thus commerce, though in itself a moral nullity, has had a considerable influence in tempering the human mind. It was the want of objects in the ancient world, which occasioned in them such a rude and perpetual turn for war. Their time hung on their hands without the means of employment. The indolence they lived in afforded leisure for mischief, and being all idle at once, and equal in their circumstances, they were easily provoked or induced to action.



But the introduction of commerce furnished the world with objects, which, in their extent, reach every man, and give him something to think about and something to do; by these his attention is mechanically drawn from the pursuits which a state of indolence and an unemployed mind occasioned, and he trades with the same countries, which in former ages, tempted by their productions, and too indolent to purchase them, he would have gone to war with.

Thus, as I have already observed, the condition of the world being materially changed by the influence of science and commerce, it is put into a fitness not only to admit of, but to desire, an extension of civilization. The principal and almost only remaining enemy, it now has to encounter, is *prejudice*; for it is evidently the interest of mankind to agree and make the best of life. The world has undergone its divisions of empire, the several boundaries of which are known and settled. The idea of conquering countries, like the Greeks and Romans, does not now exist; and experience has exploded the notion of going to war for the sake of profit.<sup>73</sup> In short, the objects for war are exceedingly diminished, and there is now left scarcely anything to quarrel about, but what arises from that demon of society, prejudice, and the consequent sullenness and untractableness of the temper.

There is something exceedingly curious in the constitution and operation of prejudice. It has the singular ability of accommodating itself to all the possible varieties of the human mind. Some passions and vices are but thinly scattered among mankind, and find only here and there a fitness of reception. But prejudice, like the spider, makes every place its home. It has neither taste nor choice of situation, and all that it requires is room. Everywhere, except in fire or water, a spider will live.

So, let the mind be as naked as the walls of an empty and forsaken tenement, gloomy as a dungeon, or ornamented with the richest abilities of thinking, let it be hot, cold, dark or light, lonely or inhabited, still prejudice, if undisturbed, will fill it with cobwebs, and live, like the spider, where there seems nothing to live on. If the one prepares her food by poisoning it to her palate and her use, the other does the same; and as several of our passions are strongly characterized by the animal world, prejudice may be denominated the spider of the mind.

Perhaps no two events ever united so intimately and forcibly to combat and expel prejudice, as the Revolution of America and the alliance with France. Their effects are felt, and their influence already extends

<sup>73</sup> Events were all too soon to disprove Paine's theory.—*Editor*.

as well to the Old World as the New. Our style and manner of thinking have undergone a revolution more extraordinary than the political revolution of the country. We see with other eyes; we hear with other ears; and think with other thoughts, than those we formerly used. We can look back on our own prejudices, as if they had been the prejudices of other people.

We now see and know they were prejudices and nothing else; and, relieved from their shackles, enjoy a freedom of mind, we felt not before. It was not all the argument, however powerful, nor the reasoning, however eloquent, that could have produced this change, so necessary to the extension of the mind, and the cordiality of the world, without the two circumstances of the Revolution and the alliance.

Had America dropped quietly from Britain, no material change in sentiment had taken place. The same notions, prejudices, and conceits would have governed in both countries, as governed them before, and, still the slaves of error and education, they would have traveled on in the beaten track of vulgar and habitual thinking. But brought about by the means it has been, both with regard to ourselves, to France and England, every corner of the mind is swept of its cobwebs, poison and dust, and made fit for the reception of generous happiness.

Perhaps there never was an alliance on a broader basis, than that between America and France, and the progress of it is worth attending to. The countries had been enemies, not properly of themselves, but through the medium of England. They originally had no quarrel with each other, nor any cause for one, but what arose from the interest of England, and her arming America against France. At the same time, the Americans at a distance from, and unacquainted with, the world, and tutored in all the prejudices which governed those who governed them, conceived it their duty to act as they were taught. In doing this, they expended their substance to make conquests, not for themselves, but for their masters, who in return treated them as slaves.

A long succession of insolent severity, and the separation finally occasioned by the commencement of hostilities at Lexington, on the nineteenth of April, 1775, naturally produced a new disposition of thinking. As the mind closed itself toward England, it opened itself toward the world, and our prejudices like our oppressions, underwent, though less observed, a mental examination; until we found the former as inconsistent with reason and benevolence, as the latter were repugnant to our civil and political rights.

While we were thus advancing by degrees into the wide field of extended humanity, the alliance with France was concluded. An alliance not formed for the mere purpose of a day, but on just and generous grounds, and with equal and mutual advantages; and the easy, affectionate manner in which the parties have since communicated has made it an alliance not of courts only, but of countries. There is now an union of mind as well as of interest; and our hearts as well as our prosperity call on us to support it.

The people of England not having experienced this change, had likewise no ideas of it. They were hugging to their bosoms the same prejudices we were trampling beneath our feet; and they expected to keep a hold upon America, by that narrowness of thinking which America disdained. What they were proud of, we despised; and this is a principal cause why all their negotiations, constructed on this ground, have failed. We are now really another people, and cannot again go back to ignorance and prejudice. The mind once enlightened cannot again become dark. There is no possibility, neither is there any term to express the supposition by, of the mind *unknowing* anything it already knows; and therefore all attempts on the part of England, fitted to the former habit of America, and on the expectation of their applying now, will be like persuading a seeing man to become blind, and a sensible one to turn an idiot. The first of which is unnatural and the other impossible.

As to the remark which the Abbé makes on the one country being a monarchy and the other a republic, it can have no essential meaning. Forms of government have nothing to do with treaties. The former are the internal police of the countries severally; the latter their external police jointly: and so long as each performs its part, we have no more right or business to know how the one or the other conducts its domestic affairs, than we have to inquire into the private concerns of a family.

But had the Abbé reflected for a moment, he would have seen, that courts, or the governing powers of all countries, be their forms what they may, are relatively republics with each other. It is the first and true principle of alliance. Antiquity may have given precedence, and power will naturally create importance, but their equal right is never disputed. It may likewise be worthy of remarking, that a monarchical country can suffer nothing in its popular happiness by an alliance with a republican one; and republican governments have never been destroyed by their external connections, but by some internal convulsion or con-

trivance. France has been in alliance with the Republic of Switzerland for more than two hundred years, and still Switzerland retains her original form of government as entire as if she had been allied with a republic like herself; therefore this remark of the Abbé should go for nothing. Besides it is best mankind should mix. There is ever something to learn, either of manners or principle; and it is by a free communication, without regard to domestic matters, that friendship is to be extended and prejudice destroyed all over the world.

But notwithstanding the Abbé's high profession in favor of liberty, he appears sometimes to forget himself, or that his theory is rather the child of his fancy than of his judgment: for in almost the same instant that he censures the alliance, as not originally or sufficiently calculated for the happiness of mankind, he, by a figure of implication, accuses France for having acted so generously and unreservedly in concluding it. "Why did they (says he, meaning the Court of France) tie themselves down by an inconsiderate treaty to conditions with the Congress, which they might themselves have held in dependence by ample and regular supplies?"

When an author undertakes to treat of public happiness he ought to be certain that he does not mistake passion for right, nor imagination for principle. Principle, like truth, needs no contrivance. It will ever tell its own tale, and tell it the same way. But where this is not the case, every page must be watched, recollected, and compared like an invented story.

I am surprised at this passage of the Abbé's. It means nothing or it means ill; and in any case it shows the great difference between speculative and practical knowledge. A treaty according to the Abbé's language would have neither duration nor affection: it might have lasted to the end of the war, and then expired with it. But France, by acting in a style superior to the little politics of narrow thinking, has established a generous fame and won the love of a country she was before a stranger to. She had to treat with a people who thought as nature taught them; and, on her own part, she wisely saw there was no present advantage to be obtained by unequal terms, which could balance the more lasting ones that might flow from a kind and generous beginning.

From this part the Abbé advances into the secret transactions of the two cabinets of Versailles and Madrid respecting the independence of America; through which I mean not to follow him. It is a circumstance sufficiently striking without being commented on, that the former

union of America with Britain produced a power which, in her hands, was becoming dangerous to the world: and there is no improbability in supposing, that had the latter known as much of the strength of the former, before she began the quarrel, as she has known since, that instead of attempting to reduce her to unconditional submission, she would have proposed to her the conquest of Mexico. But from the countries separately, Spain has nothing to apprehend, though from their union she had more to fear than any other power in Europe.

The part which I shall more particularly confine myself to, is that wherein the Abbé takes an opportunity of complimenting the British Ministry with high encomiums of admiration, on their rejecting the offered mediation of the Court of Madrid, in 1779.

It must be remembered that before Spain joined France in the war, she undertook the office of a mediator, and made proposals to the British King and Ministry so exceedingly favorable to their interest, that had they been accepted, would have become inconvenient, if not inadmissible, to America. These proposals were nevertheless rejected by the British Cabinet; on which the Abbé says—

It is in such a circumstance as this; it is in the time when noble pride elevates the soul superior to all terror; when nothing is seen more dreadful than the shame of receiving the law, and when there is no doubt or hesitation which to chose, between ruin and dishonor; it is then, that the greatness of a nation is displayed. I acknowledge, however, that men, accustomed to judge of things by the event, call great and perilous resolutions heroism or madness, according to the good or bad success with which they have been attended. If then, I should be asked, what is the name which shall in years to come be given to the firmness, which was in this moment exhibited by the English, I shall answer that I do not know. But that which it deserves I know. I know that the annals of the world hold out to us but rarely, the august and majestic spectacle of a nation, which chooses rather to renounce its duration than its glory.

In this paragraph the conception is lofty and the expression elegant, but the coloring is too high for the original, and the likeness fails through an excess of graces. To fit the powers of thinking and the turn of language to the subject, so as to bring out a clear conclusion that shall hit the point in question and nothing else, is the true criterion of writing. But the greater part of the Abbé's writings (if he will pardon me the remark) appear to me uncentral and burdened with variety. They represent a beautiful wilderness without paths; in which the eye is

diverted by everything without being particularly directed to anything; and in which it is agreeable to be lost, and difficult to find the way out.

Before I offer any other remark on the spirit and composition of the above passage, I shall compare it with the circumstance it alludes to.

The circumstance then does not deserve the encomium. The rejection was not prompted by her fortitude but her vanity. She did not view it as a case of despair or even of extreme danger, and consequently the determination to renounce her duration rather than her glory, cannot apply to the condition of her mind. She had then high expectations of subjugating America, and had no other naval force against her than France; neither was she certain that rejecting the mediation of Spain would combine that power with France. New mediations might arise more favorable than those she had refused. But if they should not, and Spain should join, she still saw that it would only bring out her naval force against France and Spain, which was not wanted and could not be employed against America, and habits of thinking had taught her to believe herself superior to both.

But in any case to which the consequence might point, there was nothing to impress her with the idea of renouncing her duration. It is not the policy of Europe to suffer the extinction of any power, but only to lop off or prevent its dangerous increase. She was likewise freed by situation from the internal and immediate horrors of invasion; was rolling in dissipation and looking for conquests; and though she suffered nothing but the expense of war, she still had a greedy eye to magnificent reimbursement.

But if the Abbé is delighted with high and striking singularities of character, he might, in America, have found ample field for encomium. Here was a people, who could not know what part the world would take for, or against them; and who were venturing on an untried scheme, in opposition to a power, against which more formidable nations had failed. They had everything to learn but the principles which supported them, and everything to procure that was necessary for their defense. They have at times seen themselves as low as distress could make them, without showing the least decrease of fortitude; and been raised again by the most unexpected events, without discovering an unmanly decomposure of joy. To hesitate or to despair are conditions equally unknown in America. Her mind was prepared for everything; because her original and final resolution of succeeding or perishing included all possible circumstances.

The rejection of the British propositions in the year 1778, circumstanced as America was at that time, is a far greater instance of unshaken fortitude than the refusal of the Spanish mediation by the Court of London: and other historians, besides the Abbé, struck with the vastness of her conduct therein, have, like himself, attributed it to a circumstance which was then unknown, the alliance with France. Their error shows their idea of its greatness; because in order to account for it, they have sought a cause suited to its magnitude, without knowing that the cause existed in the principles of the country.<sup>74</sup>

But this passionate encomium of the Abbé is deservedly subject to moral and philosophical objections. It is the effusion of wild thinking, and has a tendency to prevent that humanity of reflection which the criminal conduct of Britain enjoins on her as a duty. It is a laudandum to courtly iniquity. It keeps in intoxicated sleep the conscience of a nation; and more mischief is effected by wrapping up guilt in splendid excuse, than by directly patronizing it.

Britain is now the only country which holds the world in disturbance and war; and instead of paying compliments to the excess of her crimes, the Abbé would have appeared much more in character, had he put to her, or to her monarch, this serious question—

Are there not miseries enough in the world, too difficult to be encountered and too pointed to be borne, without studying to enlarge the list and arming it with new destruction? Is life so very long that it is necessary, nay even a duty, to shake the sand and hasten out the period of duration? Is the path so elegantly smooth, so decked on every side and carpeted with joys, that wretchedness is wanting to enrich it as a soil? Go ask thine aching heart, when sorrow from a thousand causes wounds it, go ask thy sickened self, when every medicine fails, whether this be the case or not?

Quitting my remarks on this head, I proceed to another, in which the

<sup>74</sup> Extract from "A short Review of the present Reign," in England, p. 45, in the new "Annual Register," for the year 1780.

"The commissioners, who, in consequence of Lord North's conciliatory bills, went over to America, to propose terms of peace to the colonies, were wholly unsuccessful. The concessions which formerly would have been received with the utmost gratitude, were rejected with disdain. Now was the time of American pride and haughtiness. It is probable, however, that it was not pride and haughtiness alone that dictated the resolutions of Congress, but a distrust of the sincerity of the offers of Britain, a determination not to give up their independence, and, *above all, the engagements into which they had entered by their late treaty with France.*"—*Author.*

Abbé has let loose a vein of ill-nature, and, what is still worse, of injustice.

After cavilling at the treaty, he goes on to characterize the several parties combined in the war.

Is it possible (says the Abbé), that a strict union should long subsist amongst confederates, of characters so opposite as the hasty, light, disdainful Frenchman, the jealous, haughty, sly, slow, circumspect Spaniard, and the American, who is secretly snatching a look at the mother country, and would rejoice, were they compatible with his independence, at the disasters of his allies?

To draw foolish portraits of each other, is a mode of attack and reprisal, which the greater part of mankind are fond of indulging. The serious philosopher should be above it, more especially in cases from which no good can arise, and mischief may, and where no received provocation can palliate the offense. The Abbé might have invented a difference of character for every country in the world, and they in return might find others for him, till in the war of wit all real character is lost. The pleasantry of one nation or the gravity of another may, by a little pencilling, be distorted into whimsical features, and the painter becomes so much laughed at as the painting.

But why did not the Abbé look a little deeper, and bring forth the excellencies of the several parties? Why did he not dwell with pleasure on that greatness of character, that superiority of heart, which has marked the conduct of France in her conquests, and which has forced an acknowledgment even from Britain?

There is one line, at least (and many others might be discovered), in which the confederates unite; which is, that of a rival eminence in their treatment of their enemies. Spain, in her conquest of Minorca and the Bahama Islands, confirms this remark. America has been invariable in her lenity from the beginning of the war, notwithstanding the high provocations she has experienced. It is England only who has been insolent and cruel.

But why must America be charged with a crime undeserved by her conduct, more so by her principles, and which, if a fact, would be fatal to her honor? I mean the want of attachment to her allies, or rejoicing in their disasters. She, it is true, has been assiduous in showing to the world that she was not the aggressor toward England, and that the



quarrel was not of her seeking, or, at that time, even of her wishing. But to draw inferences from her candor, and even from her justification, to stab her character by (and I see nothing else from which they can be supposed to be drawn), is unkind and unjust.

Does her rejection of the British propositions in 1778, before she knew of any alliance with France, correspond with the Abbé's description of her mind? Does a single instance of her conduct since that time justify it? But there is a still better evidence to apply to, which is, that of all the mails which, at different times, have been waylaid on the road, in divers parts of America, and taken and carried into New York, and from which the most secret and confidential private letters, as well as those from authority, have been published, not one of them, I repeat it, not a single one of them, gave countenance to such a charge.

This is not a country where men are under government restraint in speaking; and if there is any kind of restraint, it arises from a fear of popular resentment. Now if nothing in her private or public correspondence favors such a suggestion, and if the general disposition of the country is such as to make it unsafe for a man to show an appearance of joy at any disaster to her ally, on what grounds, I ask, can the accusation stand? What company the Abbé may have kept in France, we cannot know; but this we know, that the account he gives does not apply to America.

Had the Abbé been in America at the time the news arrived of the disaster of the fleet under Count de Grasse, in the West Indies, he would have seen his vast mistake. Neither do I remember any instance, except the loss of Charleston, in which the public mind suffered more severe and pungent concern, or underwent more agitations of hope and apprehension as to the truth or falsehood of the report. Had the loss been all our own, it could not have had a deeper effect; yet it was not one of those cases which reached to the independence of America.

In the geographical account which the Abbé gives of the thirteen States, he is so exceedingly erroneous, that to attempt a particular refutation, would exceed the limits I have prescribed to myself. And as it is a matter neither political, historical, nor sentimental, and which can always be contradicted by the extent and natural circumstances of the country, I shall pass it over; with this additional remark, that I never yet saw an European description of America that was true, neither can any person gain a just idea of it, but by coming to it.

Though I have already extended this letter beyond what I at first pro-

posed, I am, nevertheless, obliged to omit many observations I originally designed to have made. I wish there had been no occasion for making any. But the wrong ideas which the Abbé's work had a tendency to excite, and the prejudicial impressions they might make, must be an apology for my remarks, and the freedom with which they are made.

I observe the Abbé has made a sort of epitome of a considerable part of the pamphlet "Common Sense," and introduced it in that form into his publication. But there are other places where the Abbé has borrowed freely from the said pamphlet without acknowledging it. The difference between society and government, with which the pamphlet opens, is taken from it, and in some expressions almost literally, into the Abbé's work, as if originally his own; and through the whole of the Abbé's remarks on this head, the idea in "Common Sense" is so closely copied and pursued, that the difference is only in words, and in the arrangement of the thoughts, and not in the thoughts themselves.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>75</sup> COMMON SENSE.

"Some writers have so confounded society with government, as to leave little or no distinction between them; whereas they are not only different, but have different origins."

"Society is produced by our wants and governments by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness *positively*, by uniting our affections—the latter *negatively*, by restraining our vices."

In the following paragraphs there is less likeness in the language, but the ideas in the one are evidently copied from the other.

"In order to gain a clear and just idea of the design and end of government, let us suppose a small number of persons, meeting in some sequestered part of the earth, unconnected with the rest; they will then represent the peopling of any country or of the world. In this state of natural liberty, society will be their first thought. A thousand motives will excite them thereto. The strength of one man is so unequal to his wants, and his mind so unfitted for perpetual solitude, that he is soon obliged to seek assistance of another, who, in his turn, requires the same. Four or five united would be able to raise a tolerable dwelling in the midst of a wilderness; but *one* man might labor out the common period of life,

ABBÉ RAYNAL.

"Care must be taken not to confound together society with government. That they may be known distinctly, their origin should be considered."

"Society originates in the wants of men, government in their vices. Society tends always to good—government ought always to tend to the repression of evil."

"Man, thrown, as it were, by chance upon the globe, surrounded by all the evils of nature, obliged continually to defend and protect his life against the storms and tempests of the air, against the inundations of water, against the fire of volcanoes, against the intemperance of frigid and torrid zones, against the sterility of the earth which refuses him aliment, or its baneful fecundity, which makes poison spring up beneath his feet—in short against the teeth and claws of savage beasts, who dispute with him his habitation and his prey, and, attacking his person, seem resolved to render themselves rulers of this globe, of which he thinks himself to be the master: Man, in this state, alone and abandoned to himself, could do

But as it is time that I should come to the end of my letter, I shall forbear all future observations on the Abbé's work, and take a concise view of the state of public affairs since the time in which that performance was published.

A mind habituated to actions of meanness and injustice, commits them without reflection, or with a very partial one; for on what other ground than this, can we account for the declaration of war against the Dutch? To gain an idea of the politics which actuated the British Ministry to this measure, we must enter into the opinion which they, and the English in general, had formed of the temper of the Dutch nation; and from thence infer what their expectation of the consequences would be.

Could they have imagined that Holland would have seriously made a common cause with France, Spain and America, the British Ministry would never have dared to provoke them. It would have been a madness in politics to have done so, unless their views were to hasten on a period of such emphatic distress, as should justify the concessions which they saw they must one day or other make to the world, and for which they

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without accomplishing anything; after he has felled his timber, he could not remove it, nor erect it after it was removed—hunger, in the mean time would urge him from his work, and every different want call him a different way.

"Disease, nay, even misfortune would be death—for although neither might be immediately mortal, yet either of them would disable him from living, and reduce him to a state in which he might rather be said to perish than to die. Thus necessity, like a gravitating power, would form our newly arrived emigrants into society, the reciprocal benefits of which would supersede and render the obligations of law and government unnecessary, while they remained perfectly just to each other. But as nothing but heaven is impregnable to vice, it unavoidably happens, that in proportion as they surmount the first difficulties of emigration, which bound them together in a common cause, they will begin to relax in their duty and attachment to each other, and this remissness will point out the necessity of establishing some form of government to supply the defect of moral virtue."

nothing for his preservation. It was necessary, therefore, that he should unite himself, and associate with his like, in order to bring together their strength and intelligence in common stock.

"It is by this union that he has triumphed over so many evils, that he has fashioned this globe to his use, restrained the rivers, subjugated the seas, insured his subsistence, conquered a part of the animals in obliging them to serve him, and driven others far from his empire, to the depths of deserts or of woods, where their number diminishes from age to age. What a man alone would not have been able to effect, men have executed in concert: and altogether they preserve their work. Such is the origin, such the advantages, and the end of society. Government owes its birth to the necessity of preventing and repressing the injuries which the associated individuals had to fear from one another. It is the sentinel who watches, in order that the common laborers be not disturbed."—*Author.*

wanted an apology to themselves. There is a temper in some men which seeks a pretense for submission. Like a ship disabled in action, and unfitted to continue it, it waits the approach of a still larger one to strike to, and feels relief at the opportunity. Whether this is greatness or littleness of mind, I am not inquiring into. I should suppose it to be the latter, because it proceeds from the want of knowing how to bear misfortune in its original state.

But the subsequent conduct of the British Cabinet has shown that this was not their plan of politics, and consequently their motives must be sought for in another line.

The truth is, that the British had formed a very humble opinion of the Dutch nation. They looked on them as a people who would submit to anything; that they might insult them as they liked, plunder them as they pleased; and still the Dutch dared not to be provoked.

If this be taken as the opinion of the British Cabinet, the measure is easily accounted for; because it goes on the supposition, that when, by a declaration of hostilities, they had robbed the Dutch of some millions sterling (and to rob them was popular), they could make peace with them again whenever they pleased, and on almost any terms the British Ministry should propose. And no sooner was the plundering committed, than the accommodation was set on foot and failed.

When once the mind loses the sense of its own dignity, it loses, likewise, the ability of judging of it in another. And the American war has thrown Britain into such a variety of absurd situations, that, arguing from herself, she sees not in what conduct national dignity consists in other countries. From Holland she expected duplicity and submission, and this mistake arose from her having acted, in a number of instances during the present war, the same character herself.

To be allied to, or connected with, Britain seems to be an unsafe and impolitic situation. Holland and America are instances of the reality of this remark. Make those countries the allies of France or Spain, and Britain will court them with civility and treat them with respect; make them her own allies, and she will insult and plunder them. In the first case, she feels some apprehensions at offending them because they have support at hand; in the latter, those apprehensions do not exist. Such, however, has hitherto been her conduct.

Another measure which has taken place since the publication of the Abbé's work, and likewise since the time of my beginning this letter, is the change in the British Ministry. What line the new Cabinet will

pursue respecting America is, at this time, unknown; neither is it very material, unless they are seriously disposed to a general and honorable peace.

Repeated experience has shown, not only the impracticability of conquering America, but the still higher impossibility of conquering her mind, or recalling her back to her former condition of thinking. Since the commencement of the war, which is now approaching to eight years, thousands and tens of thousands have advanced, and are daily advancing into the first state of manhood, who know nothing of Britain but as a barbarous enemy, and to whom the independence of America appears as much the natural and established government of the country, as that of England does to an Englishman.

And, on the other hand, thousands of the aged, who had British ideas, have dropped, and are daily dropping, from the stage of business and life. The natural progress of generation and decay operates every hour to the disadvantage of Britain. Time and death, hard enemies to contend with, fight constantly against her interest; and the bills of mortality, in every part of America, are the thermometers of her decline. The children in the streets are from their cradle bred to consider her as their only foe. They hear of her cruelties; of their fathers, uncles, and kindred killed; they see the remains of burned and destroyed houses, and the common tradition of the school they go to, tells them, *those things were done by the British*.

These are circumstances which the mere English state politician, who considers man only in a state of manhood, does not attend to. He gets entangled with parties coeval or equal with himself at home, and thinks not how fast the rising generation in America is growing beyond knowledge of them, or they of him. In a few years all personal remembrances will be lost, and who is king or minister in England, will be little known and scarcely inquired after.

The new British Administration is composed of persons who have ever been against the war, and who have constantly reprobated all the violent measures of the former one. They considered the American war as destructive to themselves, and opposed it on that ground. But what are these things to America? She has nothing to do with English parties. The ins and the outs are nothing to her. It is the whole country she is at war with, or must be at peace with.

Were every minister in England a Chatham, it would now weigh

little or nothing in the scale of American politics.<sup>76</sup> Death has preserved to the memory of this statesman, *that fame*, which he, by living, would have lost. His plans and opinions, toward the latter part of his life, would have been attended with as many evil consequences, and as much reprobated here as those of Lord North; and considering him a wise man, they abound with inconsistencies amounting to absurdities.

It has apparently been the fault of many in the late minority to suppose that America would agree to certain terms with them, were they in place, which she would not even listen to, from the then Administration. This idea can answer no other purpose than to prolong the war; and Britain may, at the expense of many more millions, learn the fatality of such mistakes. If the new Ministry wisely avoid this hopeless policy, they will prove themselves better pilots and wiser men than they are conceived to be; for it is every day expected to see their bark strike upon some hidden rock and go to pieces.

But there is a line in which they may be great. A more brilliant opening needs not to present itself; and it is such an one as true magnanimity would improve, and humanity rejoice in.

A total reformation is wanted in England. She wants an expanded mind—a heart which embraces the universe. Instead of shutting herself up in an island, and quarreling with the world, she would derive more lasting happiness, and acquire more real riches, by generously mixing with it, and bravely saying, I am the enemy of none. It is not now a time for little contrivances or artful politics. The European world is too experienced to be imposed upon, and America too wise to be duped. It must be something new and masterly that can succeed. The idea of seducing America from her independence, or corrupting her from her alliance, is a thought too little for a great mind, and impossible for any honest one, to attempt. Whenever politics are applied to debauch mankind from their integrity, and dissolve the virtue of human nature, they become detestable; and to be a statesman on this plan, is to be a commissioned villain. He who aims at it, leaves a vacancy in his character, which may be filled up with the worst of epithets.

If the disposition of England should be such, as not to agree to a general and honorable peace, and the war must, at all events, continue longer, I cannot help wishing that the alliances which America has

<sup>76</sup> Paine is referring to Edmund Burke who had championed America's cause in Parliament.—*Editor*.

or may enter into, may become the only objects of the war. She wants an opportunity of showing to the world that she holds her honor as dear and sacred as her independence, and that she will in no situation forsake those whom no negotiations could induce to forsake her. Peace, to every reflecting mind, is a desirable object; but *that peace* which is accompanied with a ruined character, becomes a crime to the seducer, and a curse upon the seduced.

But where is the impossibility or even the great difficulty of England's forming a friendship with France and Spain, and making it a national virtue to renounce forever those prejudiced inveteracies it has been her custom to cherish; and which, while they serve to sink her with an increasing enormity of debt, by involving her in fruitless wars, become likewise the bane of her repose, and the destruction of her manners? We had once the fetters that she has now, but experience has shown us the mistake, and thinking justly, has set us right.

The true idea of a great nation, is that which extends and promotes the principles of universal society; whose mind rises above the atmosphere of local thoughts, and considers mankind, of whatever nation or profession they may be, as the work of one Creator. The rage for conquest has had its fashion, and its day. Why may not the amiable virtues have the same? The Alexander and Cæsars of antiquity have left behind them their monuments of destruction, and are remembered with hatred; while those more exalted characters, who first taught society and science, are blessed with the gratitude of every age and country. Of more use was *one* philosopher, though a heathen, to the world, than all the heathen conquerors that ever existed.

Should the present Revolution be distinguished by opening a new system of extended civilization, it will receive from heaven the highest evidence of approbation; and as this is a subject to which the Abbé's powers are so eminently suited, I recommend it to his attention with the affection of a friend, and the ardor of a universal citizen.

#### POSTSCRIPT

Since closing the foregoing letter, some intimations respecting a general peace have made their way to America. On what authority or foundation they stand, or how near or remote such an event may be, are circumstances I am not inquiring into. But as the subject must sooner or later become a matter of serious attention, it may not be improper,

even at this early period, candidly to investigate some points that are connected with it, or lead toward it.

The independence of America is at this moment as firmly established as that of any other country in a state of war. It is not length of time, but power that gives stability. Nations at war know nothing of each other on the score of antiquity. It is their present and immediate strength, together with their connections, that must support them. To which we may add, that a right which originated to-day, is as much a right, as if it had the sanction of a thousand years; and therefore the independence and present governments of America are in no more danger of being subverted, because they are modern, than that of England is secure, because it is ancient.

The politics of Britain, so far as respects America, were originally conceived in idiotism, and acted in madness. There is not a step which bears the smallest trace of rationality. In her management of the war, she has labored to be wretched, and studied to be hated; and in all her former propositions for accommodation, she has discovered a total ignorance of mankind, and of those natural and unalterable sensations by which they are so generally governed. How she may conduct herself in the present or future business of negotiating a peace, is yet to be proved.

He is a weak politician who does not understand human nature, and penetrate into the effect which measures of government will have upon the mind. All the miscarriages of Britain have arisen from this defect. The former Ministry acted as if they supposed mankind to be *without a mind*; and the present Ministry, as if America was *without a memory*. The one must have supposed we were incapable of feeling; and the other that we could not remember injuries.

There is likewise another line in which politicians mistake, which is, that of not rightly calculating, or rather of misjudging, the consequences which any given circumstance will produce. Nothing is more frequent, as well in common as in political life, than to hear people complain, that such or such means produced an event directly contrary to their intentions. But the fault lies in their not judging rightly what the event would be; for the means produced only its proper and natural consequences.

It is very probable that, in a treaty of peace, Britain will contend for some post or other in North America, perhaps Canada or Halifax, or both: and I infer this from the known deficiency of her politics, which



have ever yet made use of means whose natural event was against both her interest and her expectation. But the question with her ought to be, whether it is worth her while to hold them, and what will be the consequences.

Respecting Canada, one or other of the two following will take place, *viz.*: If Canada should become populous, it will revolt; and if it does not become so, it will not be worth the expense of holding. And the same may be said of Halifax, and the country round it. But Canada *never will* be populous; neither is there any occasion for contrivances on one side or the other, for nature alone will do the whole.

Britain may put herself to great expenses in sending settlers to Canada; but the descendants of those settlers will be Americans, as other descendants have been before them. They will look round and see the neighboring states sovereign and free, respected abroad and trading at large with the world; and the natural love of liberty, the advantages of commerce, the blessings of independence, and of a happier climate, and a richer soil, will draw them southward; and the effect will be, that Britain will sustain the expense, and America reap the advantage.

One would think that the experience which Britain has had of America, would entirely sicken her of all thoughts of continental colonization, and any part she might retain will only become to her a field of jealousy and thorns, of debate and contention, forever struggling for privileges, and meditating revolt. She may form new settlements, but they will be for us; they will become part of the United States of America; and that against all her contrivances to prevent it, or without any endeavors of ours to promote it. In the first place she cannot draw from them a revenue, until they are able to pay one, and when they are so they will be above subjection. Men soon become attached to the soil they live upon, and incorporated with the prosperity of the place: and it signifies but little what opinions they come over with, for time, interest, and new connections will render them obsolete, and the next generation know nothing of them.

Were Britain truly wise, she would lay hold of the present opportunity to disentangle herself from all continental embarrassments in North America, and that not only to avoid future broils and troubles, but to save expenses. To speak explicitly on the matter, I would not, were I an European power, have Canada, under the conditions that Britain must retain it, could it be given to me. It is one of those kind of do-

minions that is, and ever will be, a constant charge upon any foreign holder.

As to Halifax, it will become useless to England after the present war, and the loss of the United States. A harbor, when the dominion is gone, for the purpose of which only it was wanted, can be attended only with expense. There are, I doubt not, thousands of people in England, who suppose, that these places are a profit to the nation, whereas they are directly the contrary, and instead of producing any revenue, a considerable part of the revenue of England is annually drawn off, to support the expense of holding them.

Gibraltar is another instance of national ill-policy. A post which in time of peace is not wanted, and in time of war is of no use, must at all times be useless. Instead of affording protection to a navy, it requires the aid of one to maintain it. To suppose that Gibraltar commands the Mediterranean, or the pass into it, or the trade of it, is to suppose a detected falsehood; because though Britain holds the post she has lost the other three, and every benefit she expected from it. And to say that all this happens because it is besieged by land and water, is to say nothing, for this will always be the case in time of war, while France and Spain keep up superior fleets, and Britain holds the place. So that, though, as an impenetrable, inaccessible rock, it may be held by the one, it is always in the power of the other to render it useless and excessively chargeable.

I should suppose that one of the principal objects of Spain in besieging it, is to show to Britain, that though she may not take it, she can command it, that is she can shut it up, and prevent its being used as a harbor, though not as a garrison. But the short way to reduce Gibraltar is to attack the British fleet; for Gibraltar is as dependent on a fleet for support, as a bird is on its wings for food, and when wounded there it starves.

There is another circumstance which the people of England have not only not attended to, but seem to be utterly ignorant of, and that is, the difference between permanent power and accidental power, considered in a national sense.

By permanent power, I mean, a natural, inherent, and perpetual ability in a nation, which though always in being, may not be always in action, or not advantageously directed; and by accidental power, I mean, a fortunate or accidental disposition or exercise of national strength, in whole or in part.

There undoubtedly was a time when any one European nation, with only eight or ten ships of war, equal to the present ships of the line, could have carried terror to all others, who had not begun to build a navy, however great their natural ability might be for that purpose: but this can be considered only as accidental, and not as a standard to compare permanent power by, and could last no longer than until those powers built as many or more ships than the former. After this a larger fleet was necessary, in order to be superior; and a still larger would again supersede it. And thus mankind have gone on building fleet upon fleet, as occasion or situation dictated. And this reduces it to an original question, which is: Which power can build and man the largest number of ships? The natural answer to which is, that power which has the largest revenue and the greatest number of inhabitants, provided its situation of coast affords sufficient conveniences.

France being a nation on the continent of Europe, and Britain an island in its neighborhood, each of them derived different ideas from their different situations. The inhabitants of Britain could carry on no foreign trade, nor stir from the spot they dwelt upon, without the assistance of shipping; but this was not the case with France. The idea therefore of a navy did not arise to France from the same original and immediate necessity which produced it to England. But the question is, that when both of them turn their attention, and employ their revenues the same way, which can be superior?

The annual revenue of France is nearly double that of England, and her number of inhabitants more than twice as many. Each of them has the same length of coast on the Channel, besides which, France has several hundred miles extent on the Bay of Biscay, and an opening on the Mediterranean: and every day proves that practice and exercise make sailors, as well as soldiers, in one country as well as another.

If, then, Britain can maintain a hundred ships of the line, France can as well support a hundred and fifty, because her revenue and her population are as equal to the one, as those of England are to the other. And the only reason why she has not done it is because she has not till very lately attended to it. But when she sees, as she now does, that a navy is the first engine of power, she can easily accomplish it.

England, very falsely, and ruinously for herself, infers that because she had the advantage of France, while France had the smaller navy, that for that reason it is always to be so. Whereas it may be clearly seen

that the strength of France has never yet been tried on a navy, and that she is able to be as superior to England in the extent of a navy, as she is in the extent of her revenues and her population. And England may lament the day, when, by her insolence and injustice, she provoked in France a maritime disposition.

It is in the power of the combined fleets to conquer every island in the West Indies, and reduce all the British Navy in those places. For were France and Spain to send their whole naval force in Europe to those islands it would not be in the power of Britain to follow them with an equal force. She would still be twenty or thirty ships inferior, were she to send every vessel she had, and in the meantime all the foreign trade of England would lay exposed to the Dutch.

It is a maxim which, I am persuaded, will ever hold good, and more especially in naval operations, that a great power ought never to move in detachments, if it can possibly be avoided; but to go with its whole force to some important object, the reduction of which shall have a decisive effect upon the war. Had the whole of the French and Spanish fleets in Europe come last spring to the West Indies, every island had been their own, Rodney their prisoner, and his fleet their prize. From the United States the combined fleets can be supplied with provisions, without the necessity of drawing them from Europe, which is not the case with England.

Accident has thrown some advantages in the way of England, which, from the inferiority of her navy, she had not a right to expect. For though she had been obliged to fly before the combined fleets, yet Rodney has twice had the fortune to fall in with detached squadrons, to which he was superior in numbers: the first off Cape St. Vincent, where he had nearly two to one, and the other in the West Indies, where he had a majority of six ships. Victories of this kind almost produce themselves. They are won without honor, and suffered without disgrace: and are ascribable to the chance of meeting, not to the superiority of fighting. For the same admiral, under whom they were obtained, was unable, in three former engagements, to make the least impression on a fleet consisting of an equal number of ships with his own, and compounded for the events by declining the actions.<sup>77</sup>

To conclude: if it may be said that Britain has numerous enemies, it

<sup>77</sup> See the accounts, either English or French, of three actions, in the West Indies, between Count de Guichen and Admiral Rodney, in 1780.—*Author*.

likewise proves that she has given numerous offenses. Insolence is sure to provoke hatred, whether in a nation or an individual. That want of manners in the British Court may be seen even in its birthdays' and New Year's odes, which are calculated to infatuate the vulgar, and disgust the man of refinement: and her former overbearing rudeness, and insufferable injustice on the seas, have made every commercial nation her foe. Her fleets were employed as engines of prey, and acted on the surface of the deep the character which the shark does beneath it. On the other hand, the combined powers are taking a popular part, and will render their reputation immortal, by establishing the perfect freedom of the ocean, to which all countries have a right, and are interested in accomplishing. The sea is the world's highway; and he who arrogates a prerogative over it transgresses the right, and justly brings on himself the chastisement of nations.

Perhaps it might be of some service to the future tranquillity of mankind if an article were introduced into the next general peace that no one nation should, in time of peace, exceed a certain number of ships of war. Something of this kind seems necessary; for according to the present fashion, half of the world will get upon the water, and there appears to be no end to the extent to which navies may be carried. Another reason is that navies add nothing to the manners or morals of a people. The sequestered life which attends the service, prevents the opportunities of society, and is too apt to occasion a coarseness of ideas and of language, and that more in ships of war than in the commercial employ; because in the latter they mix more with the world, and are nearer related to it. I mention this remark as a general one: and not applied to any one country more than to another.

Britain has now had the trial of above seven years, with an expense of nearly an hundred million pounds sterling; and every month in which she delays to conclude a peace costs her another million sterling, over and above her ordinary expenses of government, which are a million more; so that her total *monthly* expense is two million pounds sterling, which is equal to the whole *yearly* expenses of America, all charges included. Judge then who is best able to continue it.

She has likewise many atonements to make to an injured world, as well in one quarter as in another. And instead of pursuing that temper of arrogance, which serves only to sink her in the esteem, and entail on her the dislike of all nations, she would do well to reform her man-

ners, retrench her expenses, live peaceably with her neighbors, and think of war no more.<sup>78</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, August 21, 1782.

THE ADDRESS OF THE CITIZENS OF PHILADELPHIA, AND OF THE LIBERTIES THEREOF,—TO HIS EXCELLENCY, THE PRESIDENT, AND CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

Written by Paine in July, 1783, this memorial urged the national legislature to return to Philadelphia. Congress had left the city in June, after having been threatened by a mutiny of Pennsylvania troops who were discontented over the failure to receive any pay for their military services. The memorial was published in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* of August 6, 1783.—*Editor*.

*Most Honorable Sirs*

From the Commencement of the late ever memorable contest for liberty and the honor and happiness of the human race, the Citizens of Philadelphia, and of the Liberties thereof, have in an especial manner distinguished themselves by every exertion which principle could inspire or fortitude support.

Neither have they been free with their lives only as Militia but with their fortunes as Citizens. As instances of these we need only appeal to facts.

The Progress of the War has fully confirmed the one and the monthly return of taxes from this State of which the City and Liberties form so great a part has not been exceeded by any and we wish they had been proportionally equaled by every State in the Union. To which we may add the establishment of the bank which has extended its usefulness to the public service, and acquired a permanency as effectual and in some instances superior to those of other nations.

<sup>78</sup> Paine sent Washington fifty copies of his *Letter to the Abbé Raynal* for the use of the army.—*Editor*.

The government of this State has, likewise, ever distinguished itself by adopting and passing and the Citizens by supporting all such laws recommended by Congress as were necessary to be passed throughout the Continent for bringing the War to a happy issue and for raising such monies as the expence of it required.

The Act for laying a duty of five Per Cent <sup>79</sup> upon imported Articles though it would have found its richest mine in the Commerce and consumption of this City and State, yet struck with the propriety and equity of raising money from the Channel in which it most circulates and impressed with the Necessity as well as the bounden duty of maintaining the justice and honor of America we cheerfully gave it our best support. And as we have ever been so we mean ever to continue to be among the foremost to establish the National Character of America as the firm basis of inviolable faith and sacred honor.

In thus expressing our minds to Congress we are likewise compelled to say, That from your residence among us We have been Witnesses to the uncommon difficulties you have had to struggle with. We have beheld them with concern and often times with heartfelt anxiety. We have participated in Your Cares and partook of your burdens.

While our chiefest consolation under them was that they did not arise from any unwillingness or backwardness in the Government of this State to adopt the proper measures for removing them or from any narrow views in the Citizens to counteract them—

We do not amuse the World with calling on Congress to do Justice to the army and to the creditors of America and yet withhold the means by which that Justice is to be fulfilled. On the contrary we freely offer ourselves to bear our share in any National measure to effect those purposes and to establish the character of America equal to her Rank.

We are now most solemnly to assure your Excellency and Congress that though we do not enter into the reasons or causes which might suggest to your Honorable Body the propriety of adjourning at the particular time you did adjourn from your long accustomed Residence in this City, Yet as a Testimony of the Affections of the Citizens to that Union which has so happily succeeded in accomplishing the freedom and independence of America, We beg leave to assure Congress that if either now or at any future time until the Residence of Congress shall be permanently established it should appear to your Honorable Body that the situation of Philadelphia is convenient for transacting therein the con-

<sup>79</sup> See below, pp. 333*ff.* for further discussion of the five per cent duty.—*Editor.*

cerns of the Nation that Congress may Repose the utmost confidence in its inhabitants, not only to prevent any Circumstance which may have a tendency to disturb their necessary deliberations but to aid in all measures to support the national honor and dignity.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>80</sup> For concrete evidence that Paine wrote this *Address*, see his letter to Benjamin Rush, June 13, 1783, p. 1219 below.—*Editor*.





NATIONAL AND STATE POLITICAL AND  
ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, 1777-1787

TO THE PEOPLE

CANDID AND CRITICAL REMARKS ON A LETTER SIGNED LUDLOW

A SERIOUS ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF PENNSYLVANIA  
ON THE PRESENT SITUATION OF THEIR AFFAIRS

PUBLIC GOOD

SIX LETTERS TO RHODE ISLAND

DISSERTATIONS ON GOVERNMENT; THE AFFAIRS OF THE BANK;  
AND PAPER MONEY

LETTERS ON THE BANK

## EDITOR'S NOTE

The idea is still too prevalent that Paine was simply a revolutionary propagandist whose usefulness was confined to that of agitating and arousing the population. The truth is, of course, that he was a keen analyst of political and economic trends, and offered, in his writings, valuable suggestions that helped shape the destiny of the American nation. Paine's discussion of political and economic issues facing the country during and after the Revolutionary war ranks highest in the literature of the era, and contains some of his most advanced writing. Since most of the material in the following section has never been included in any previous collection of Paine's writings, it was difficult hitherto to evaluate the extent of his contribution to our national development in the post-Revolutionary era. Now that this material is available, it is to be hoped that the popular misconception of Paine's role as a writer will be altered.

## TO THE PEOPLE

It has generally been assumed by most students of the Revolutionary era in American history that Thomas Paine played an important role in the writing of the progressive Pennsylvania Constitution of 1776, and in the first volume of this edition of Paine's writings (p. XV), the present writer has subscribed to this point-of-view. The following article from Paine's pen, however, establishes that this conclusion is erroneous, for he makes it quite clear that he was not in Philadelphia when the Constitutional Convention met, "held no correspondence with either party, for, or against, the present constitution, . . . had no hand in forming any part of it, nor knew any thing of its contents" until he saw the document published.

But though Paine did not participate in framing the Pennsylvania Constitution, he did defend the liberal frame of government from the attacks of those who wished to remove it and replace it with a new constitution. In the following article which appeared in the *Pennsylvania Packet* of March 18, 1777, Paine replies to a conservative writer who signed himself "Phocian," and who called, in the *Packet* of March 12, 1777, for a new convention to set up a new Constitution. Paine's article has never before been reprinted since its original publication.—*Editor.*

**T**HERE are particular periods both in public and domestic life, in which, the excellence of wisdom consists in a due government of the temper: Without this, zeal degenerates into rage, and affection into bitterness. And so necessary is this qualification, in every stage of life, that a person had better be a novice with a fund of temper than a wise man without it. The tempter is that particular string in the heart, on which the far greater part of our happiness or misery is tuned. 'Tis capable of being set to any music rough or smooth, and when strained to its highest pitch, will command the whole man.

I am led to these reflections by observing a paper signed Phocian in

the Pennsylvania Journal, and another signed Hampden in the Evening Post; who the papers came from I mean not to enquire into: If either of them be from a man whom I have ever thought or called a friend, I spare him out of pity to myself; if from an enemy, I spare him from a regard to the public peace. Were I disposed to answer either I have enough to say; but as I feel some concern at torturing a friend into a blush on one hand; so on the other, I am unwilling to take off the attention of the public from real objects by calling up their anger against a shadow.

Just at the time the Convention first met I went to camp, and continued there till a few days before Christmas. I held no correspondence with either party, for, or against, the present constitution. I had no hand in forming any part of it, nor knew any thing of its contents till I saw it published. My acquaintance, at this time, lies with persons on both sides the question. Those that are *in* or those that are *out* are alike to me, as to any dependence I have, or mean to have, on either. Thus situated and circumstanced my personal attachments are equally balanced, and all that affects me on the matter, is, that a little squabbling spirit should at this ill chosen time creep in and extinguish every thing that is civil and generous among us. The mind of man is not sufficiently capacious to attend to every thing at once, and while it suffers itself to be eaten up by narrow prejudices or fretted by personal politics, it will have neither relish nor appetite for public virtues. In proportion as we are engrossed by one object, we abate in our ardor for another; and a man may as well talk of loving a wife and a mistress, at one time, with equal felicity, as of jangling with his neighbors and yet joining with them in public defense. It matters not how we express ourselves, or how we would be believed; the thing cannot be; for the one will be the rival of the other in spite of all the assertions we can make, or the resolutions we can form. The condition of this State the latter end of last year was deplorable; Society had taken its departure; every man's hand seemed against his brother, and all this, for the want of that happy ingredient in life, good temper. The evil was more extensive than the authors apprehended. It reached the minds of men in other States, for who could hear it and not be affected? Scarce a day passed but some disagreeable information arrived at camp, and as the dependence of the army, at that time, was on the support they expected to receive from the country, it had frequently very unfavorable effects both on their hopes and their fortitude.

I shall sum up my opinion of the matter in a few words, for the case, as it appears to me, stands thus. In May last, the Congress recommended a dissolution of all the old governments and the forming new ones on the authority of the people. This State adopted the measure, and chose a Convention for that express purpose. It could not be every man's lot to be elected, and a little spirit of revenge and resentment seized very early on those who supposed themselves disappointed, for I have ever been of opinion, and still am, that the whole matter is more personal than political. The people had an undoubted right to choose whom they pleased, and those whom they chose had a delegated power to form a constitution. We *must* begin somewhere, otherwise we shall never be right. If we reject and break through every thing merely because it don't, in some points, please us, and that only upon speculation, what right have we to suppose that others will afterwards submit to what don't please them. The very example is more dangerous than any evil it is intended to cure. It is cutting the bonds of all society in sunder, and sacrificing every kind of faith and obligation to pride, passion, prejudice and party. It will be much easier to overturn a second constitution than the first, because the precedent will be before us. The fall of the third will be easier still, and so on, till all kind of security and dependence be obliterated from among us. It wants but little reflection to see those things, and before we raise the devil we ought to consider whether we can lay him again.

That the present constitution has errors and defects is not to be doubted; it would be strange indeed if it had not: But that it has some excellencies likewise, that will be the pride of ages\* to come, is equally true; and that it has nothing immediately dangerous in it, is as true. In short, 'tis sufficiently right to begin with, and I cannot think men serious in the present mighty out cry of tyranny, chains and slavery. Had the Convention formed it otherwise, with the same mode of amending or altering it, in regular stated periods, I should have thought it my duty to support and give it a fair trial, purely for the sake of discovering what ought to be retained, reformed or rejected.

I am as fond of my own liberty, and as strongly attached to public liberty, as any man living, but I confess that I cannot be made to see danger at present; and my intention is to give all the support in my power to the present constitution, till the enemy be driven from the country. I cannot help conceiving it an excess of error and ill judgment to be wrangling about constitution, till we know whether we shall have

one of our own forming, or whether the enemy shall form one for us. We disturb the peace of other States as well as our own, because the appearance of an evil, at this time, is as dangerous as a real one at another time. I have kept clear of all argument for or against the constitution, yet I have my opinion as well as others; but were the government more defective than what the objectors would have it be, I would, nevertheless, support it in the present state of things, and thank God I had it to support. I can see no end but weakness, confusion, and ill blood that can possibly arise from the proposal thrown out by Hampden. It is like recommending death as a cure for a disease; a remedy which few are fond of, and as few, I hope, have any opinion of the other.

Far be it from me to support an error knowing or believing it to be so; and in order to discover what is right or wrong in the constitution, so far as a fair and candid investigation can go, I will, in any future period, when called upon, take the matter up with any gentleman in Pennsylvania. I have given my name to the printer, and have a right to expect that whoever accepts the offer, will do the same. I may probably be as free in censuring some defects or omissions, as he may others, but this I can assure him, that I have no object in view but the restoration of order, nor any point to carry inconsistent with the public good.

COMMON SENSE.

## CANDID AND CRITICAL REMARKS ON A LETTER SIGNED LUDLOW

The following article appeared originally in the *Pennsylvania Journal* of June 4, 1777, and has never before been reprinted. Ludlow's letter appeared in the *Journal* of May 21, 1777.

Some of Paine's arguments in the article are rather vague and definitely dated, but it is interesting to observe two points he raises. He emphasizes, for example, that "a man may be religiously happy without *modes*," thus revealing a trend of thought that he was to develop fully in the *Age of Reason*. Again, he reminds the people that more important than the details of this or that clause in a constitution, was "whether we should have one of our *own* forming or of the *enemy's*. This, to say the least, was a realistic approach to the problem.—*Editor*.

EVERY subject for discussion may be treated two several ways, *generally or particularly*. In a general review exactness is not expected; but when a writer undertakes to examine and lay down the parts of his subject separately and systematically, the greatest possible degree of exactness is necessary, and a failure in this part would be fatal to him.

The writer of the letter in question has attempted the latter, and in the course of his reasonings, says, "the present Constitution is *deficient in point of perspecuity and method*." I am not considering whether he is writing *for* or *against* the Constitution, but *how far* he appears to be master of "*perspecuity and method*" himself; as, by *that only*, we can judge of his *abilities* to reform the errors of others.

Many pieces, by being distributed into parts of 1, 2, 3, etc. have much the appearance of order to the eye, but unless the matter be first justly arranged in the mind of the author, and transmitted in the same order into writing, his numbers 1, 2, 3 etc. will make no impression on the understanding of the reader; and this gentleman, whom I shall be very candid with, will, I fear, stand convicted on the same charge he has brought against the Constitution.

He sets out with giving, first, a sort of general description of "a Free Government." Secondly, a particular description of the parts thereof; each of which he has endeavored to illustrate by a simile; consequently, the same correspondence must exist between the similies as between the parts which they are supposed to represent: but if there be a want of harmony, the fault is, that either the similies are unnatural, the parts defective, or both. Thirdly, he proposes to "apply those *principles* (which ought rather to be called description) *to* the Bill of Rights, Constitution and Laws of Pennsylvania," *against*, he means, or for the purpose of detecting their imperfections.

"Every Free Government," he says, "should consist of three parts, viz. 1st, A Bill of Rights. 2dly, A Constitution. 3dly Laws."

*Remark.* As freedom depends as much on the *Execution* as on the *Constitution*, I conceive there to be something wanting to make the description complete.

"1st, The Bill of Rights should contain the *great principles* of natural and *civil* liberty. It should be to a *community* what the eternal *laws* and obligations of morality are to the conscience. It should be unalterable by any human power."

*Remark.* "The Bill of Rights should contain the *great principles* of



natural and *civil* liberty." This is a huge metaphysical expression, and I conceive an erroneous one. This gentleman frequently confounds *rights* with *principles*, and uses them synonymously. I conceive a Bill of Rights should be a plain positive declaration of the rights *themselves*: and, instead of saying it should "contain the great principles of natural and *civil* liberty," that it should *retain such natural rights* as are either consistent with, or absolutely necessary toward our happiness in a state of civil government; for were all the *great natural* rights, or principles, as this writer calls them, to be admitted, it would be impossible that any government could be formed thereon, and instead of being a Bill of Rights fitted to a state of civil government, it would be a Bill of Rights fitted to man in a state of nature without any government at all. It would be an Indian Bill of Rights.

If a Bill of Rights, as this writer says, is to contain both natural and *civil rights*, then I cannot see how his following expression can be admitted, viz. "that it shall be *unalterable* by any human power." If we will have a Bill of Rights to be *unalterable*, it must be confined to *natural* rights only, for it is impossible to say what improvements may be made on *civil* ones; and as a matter of opinion for myself, I think it would be best so to do, and to comprehend all *civil* rights in that part which we call the Constitution; because, *that* is the part in which we are supposed to emerge from a state of nature, and erect ourselves into civil community for the mutual good and support of each other.

But here a matter arises, which this gentleman, in his description of a Bill of Rights, ought particularly to have attended to, but has wholly omitted, viz. What are *natural* rights and what are *civil* ones? I answer, A *natural* right is an animal right; and the power to act it, is supposed, either fully or in part, to be mechanically contained within ourselves as individuals. *Civil* rights are derived from the assistance or agency of other persons; they form a sort of common stock, which, by the consent of all, may be occasionally used for the benefit of any. They are substituted in the room of some natural rights, either defective in power or dangerous in practice, and are contrived to fit the members of the community with greater ease to themselves and safety to others, than what the natural ones could the individual in a state of nature: for instance, a man has a *natural* right to redress himself whenever he is injured, but the full exercise of this, as a *natural* right, would be dangerous to society, because it admits him a judge in his own cause; on the other hand, he may not be able, and must either submit to the injury

or expose himself to greater: Therefore, the *civil* right of redressing himself by an appeal to public justice, which is the substitute, makes him stronger than the natural one, and less dangerous. Either party likewise, has a natural right to plead his own cause; this right is consistent with safety, therefore it is retained; but the parties may not be able, nay, they may be dumb, therefore the civil right of pleading by proxy, that is, by a council, is an appendage to the natural right and the trial by jury, is perfectly a civil right common to both parties.

I come now to the simile which this gentleman uses to illustrate his Bill of Rights by: "It should be," says he, "to a *community* what the eternal *laws* and obligations of morality are to the conscience." How "*rights*" which always imply *inherent liberty* can be *compared* with the *laws of conscience*, which always imply *inherent restraint*, I cannot conceive; they do not of their own natures admit of comparison. But this gentleman has unfortunately applied his comparison to the wrong part, for if a Bill of Rights be binding and restraining in the manner he expresses it, it is so *not* on the "*community*," because it is to them a prerogative, but on the *Legislative* and *Executive* powers, that they invade it not.

II. "A CONSTITUTION," says our author, "is the executive part of the Bill of Rights. It should contain the division and distribution of the power of the people. The modes and forms of making laws, of executing justice, and of transacting business: Also the limitation of power, as to time and jurisdiction. It is to a community what modes of worship are in religion. It should be unalterable by the legislature, and should be changed only by a representation of the people, chosen for that purpose." *The last period is fully admitted.*

*Remark.* How the "Constitution" can be called the "*Executive* part of the Bill of Rights," I am quite at a loss to conceive. The Constitution must be considered as a dead letter till *put* into execution by some external object; it has not the power of action in itself, therefore cannot be regarded as the executive of any thing. It should contain, says he, "the division and distribution of the power of the people," the modes and forms "of *transacting business*": These expressions are obscure. The Constitution does not "*contain* the division and distribution of the power of the people," but *describes* the portions of power with which the people invest the *legislative* and *executive* bodies, and the portions which they *retain* for themselves. His description, as I conceive, is partly unjust and partly perplexed; and the simile, by which he means to

illustrate it, wholly unnatural. A Constitution, says he, "is to a *community what modes of worship are in religion.*" I think it is a great deal more; a man may be religiously happy without *modes*, but he cannot be civilly happy without a *Constitution*. But taking this gentleman on his own plan it will follow, that, if a constitution "*contains the divisions and distributions of the power of the people,*" then must "*modes of worship*" *contain* the division and distribution of the *power of religion*. Again, if the Constitution be the "*executive part of the Bill of Rights,*" then must "*modes of worship*" be the *executive part of the eternal laws and obligations of morality.*"

The fault of this gentleman is, that he writes straight forward without regard to consistency.

III. "Laws are the executive part of a constitution. They cease to be binding whenever they transgress the principles of Liberty, as laid down in the Constitution and Bill of Rights. They are to a community what the practice of morality is in religion."

*Remark.* There is the same confusion of ideas in this description as in the former two. Laws should be made *consistent with* and *agreeable* to the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. They naturally cease to be binding when they oppose them, and when they vary from them, must be amended, and this is all that can be said. But to suppose "*LAWs executive*" is a false conception: And how is it possible to compare "*Laws*" which are in themselves motionless and have no capacity of action, with the *practice* of morality, which not only implies motion, but the power of continuing it, and even of generating it, is, to me, and, I believe, to all others, incomprehensible. But to take this gentleman again on his own grounds; if the "*laws*" be, as he says, "*the executive part of the Constitution,*" then must "*the practice of morality*" be the "*executive part of modes of worship,*" which no man, not even the writer of it, can give his consent to.

Having laid down these three paragraphs, he proceeds to "apply them," but what he means by applying them I cannot conceive, as all that follows might as well stand without them as with them.

Whatever faults or defects the Constitution has, and no doubt it has some (for I suppose nothing is perfect, nor ever will), it ought to be every man's wish to have them pointed out, and every man's duty to have them amended; but I see no use can arise from this loose unconnected way of writing, but the propagation of further errors.

Several very scurrilous pieces under different signatures have ap-

peared in the papers on both sides the question. In Dunlap's paper of the 18th of March is a piece signed "*Common Sense*" which is the only one that is mine since the dispute first began. The design of that piece is to keep men in temper with each other, and to show the impropriety of having our minds taken up about a form of government (which we can reconsider at any time) till we knew whether we should have one of our *own* forming or of the *enemy's*. And, as a man ought to be ashamed to publish any thing which he is ashamed to own, I have therefore put a signature to this by which I shall be known; and have likewise left my real name with the Printer, which he is welcome to give to any one that requires it.

COMMON SENSE.

## A SERIOUS ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF PENNSYLVANIA ON THE PRESENT SITUATION OF THEIR AFFAIRS

In December, 1778, Conrad Alexander Gérard, French Minister to the United States, wrote to Vergennes from Pennsylvania: "The established regime has found an able defender in Mr. Paine, author of 'A Serious Address to the People of Pennsylvania,' in the newspaper of the first of this month." (John J. Meng, editor, *Despatches and Instructions of Conrad Alexander Gérard, 1778-1780*, p. 413.)

Gérard's remark provided the present writer with a clue to the discovery of a forgotten masterpiece by Thomas Paine. Searching through the files of the *Pennsylvania Packet* for December 1778, the writer came upon a series of articles bearing the above title. Though unsigned, there could be little doubt that these articles had been written by Paine, for whole passages resemble his earlier writing in *Common Sense* and the *American Crisis* and his later writing in the *Rights of Man*. All doubt, however, was dispelled when the writer came upon an article written and signed by Paine in the *Pennsylvania Packet* of April 7, 1786 in defense of the Bank of North America. In this article Paine refers specifically to the fact that he was the author of "a number of publications, entitled 'A Serious Address to the People of Pennsylvania on the Present State of Their Affairs,'" observes that he wrote the articles at the request of the friends of the progressive Pennsylvania

Constitution of 1776, and adds that "the service was gratis." (For the entire article, see below pp. 419-425.)

The articles represent some of Paine's finest and most progressive writing, and many sentences contained in them will frequently be quoted in the future. Among them the following are outstanding: "Form a constitution with such distinctions of rights, as shall expel the poor, or cause them to draw off into other States, and the rich will soon supply their places by becoming poor themselves, for where there are none to labor, and but few to consume, land and property is not riches." Labor, in short, is the basis for the production of all wealth! Again: "Property alone cannot defend a country against invading enemies. Houses and lands cannot fight; sheep and oxen cannot be taught the musket; therefore the defence must be personal, and that which equally unites all must be something equally the property of all, viz. an equal share of freedom, independent of the varieties of wealth, and which wealth, or the want of it, can neither give nor take away. To be telling men of their rights when we want their service, and of their poverty when the service is over, is a meanness which cannot be professed by a gentleman."

The following articles appeared originally in the *Pennsylvania Packet* of December 1, 5, 10, 12, 1778, and are now for the first time reprinted. The series was never concluded, undoubtedly because Paine became involved in the Silas Deane controversy a few days after the last article appeared in the *Packet*.—*Editor*.

## I

UNWILLING as I have been to have my attention called from the great object of the Continent, I now find it necessary to pay some regard to the peace and safety of the State I live in. The harmony of the whole is composed of the harmony of its parts; and in proportion as any of them is disordered, the collective force will be weakened, and the general tranquility disturbed. I do not offer this as an apology, but as an *additional reason* for my address; because as a freeman of Pennsylvania, it is both my right and my duty to render every service in my power for its happiness. Yet that I might at no time narrow the public sphere in which I endeavored to serve the greater cause, I willingly declined the exercise of every privilege in the lesser one. I have never given a vote at any election, or on any provincial question, or attended any meeting for that purpose, since the great question of independence in seventy-six. I contented myself with making my point against the common enemy, and feel concerned that the unnecessary contentions of this State, should call me a moment from that object.

I well know that when men get into parties, and suffer their tempers to become soured by opposition, how tempted they are to assign interested reasons for other people's conduct, and to undermine the force of their reasonings by sapping the reputation of the person who makes them. Therefore, the writer of this, by way of precluding all such insinuation, thinks it proper to declare, that he can boldly look all men in the face, and challenge them to say or to hint, that he ever made profit, place or power his object. He has studied to be useful, and believing that he has been so, feel[s] all that honest kind of civil independent pride which naturally accompanies a willing disinterested mind.

Thus much by way of preface. And I now proceed to a concise and candid enquiry into the rise, reasons and consequences of the present disagreements; for as a great part of the happiness of any people depends on their good temper with each other, so whatever tends to consolidate their minds, remove any misconceived prejudice, or illustrate any controverted point, will have a tendency to establish or restore that happiness. I mean to draw all my conclusions from fair reasonings, and to rest nothing on the arrogance of opinion, or the vanity of assertion. Perfectly cool and unfretted myself, I view the matter rather than the parties, and having no interests, connection with, or personal dislike to either, shall endeavor to serve all.

The present dissensions of this State took their rise in the latter end of the year seventy-six, immediately after the breaking up of the convention which formed the constitution. A principal, if not a greater part of the militia, under the title of associators, was then out of the State. I believe I am within compass, when I say, that the number which marched into the Jerseys, first and last, at that time, was not less than fifteen or sixteen thousand men. They were young soldiers it is true, but the ardor with which they turned out, and the circumstance they turned upon, viz. *to support the DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE*, fully proves the disposition of this State to that measure, because there was then nothing compulsive, and every man marched a volunteer. They expected the whole State to be afterwards formed into a legal equal militia, and under that hope put up with the then present inconveniencies. And I cannot help in this place remarking, that the proposals which were afterwards made for continuing the association in preference to the law, however well they might be intended, wore an appearance of being impolitic and unjust; impolitic, because it was disheartening men by service unnecessarily repeated; unjust, because

it was riding a free horse to death, to rest, not a tired, but an idle one. A militia law, is neither more or less, than an undistinguished *officiation* of the whole, confirmed by legal consent and authority. There are three sorts of men in every State, the willing and able, the willing and not able, and the able and *not* willing. I extend the idea of ability as well to situation and circumstance, as to health and perfection of body. The law gave relief to the first by a rotation of service; to the second by affording him a legal equivalent, or a legal exemption, as his case might be; and compelled the third to draw in equal proportion with the former two. But to return—

The manner in which the constitution was formed, is so perfectly clear and regular, that it does not admit of an objection. A deputation from the committee of each county in the state met in Philadelphia, to agree upon the number the convention should consist of, the time they should meet, and the manner in which they should be elected. No person was excluded from voting but those who chose to exclude themselves; and in that case, they either show themselves unworthy of the privilege of an elector, or confiding in the justice and judgment of the rest signified their consent in the election. I happened to be among the latter, for I gave no vote, neither did I know the ticket for the city till it was public.

The particular form of a constitution had not then been made a matter of controversy; so that the members meet unbiased, unprejudiced, and unawed by party influence, and all the advantages of cool deliberation. They had the wisest and ablest man in the State, Dr. Franklin, for their President, whose judgment alone was sufficient to form a constitution, and whose benevolence of heart would never concur in a bad one.

Though by way of narration I have hinted at the authority by which the constitution was formed, yet that which principally concerns us is, whether it is a good one or not; whether it shall be changed, altered or confirmed; whether the defects, if any, are of sufficient importance to justify the expense and trouble of a convention extraordinary; or whether they shall remain as matters to be discussed and remedied in the manner and form which the constitution has provided: And lastly, whether the State will be more unanimous under a change than without it. I conceive that if any of these points can be made clear, that the controversy ceases, and unity takes place from a reasonable impulse.

The cry of slavery and tyranny has been loud and frequent; and the

danger ought to be great indeed, when those who never yet drew their swords against the common enemy, should see the necessity of threatening it against the constitution. The constitution has been loaded with the darkest character, and the supporters of it with the most opprobrious names. It is full time to know whether these things are true or not. If true, the multitude will see the necessity of threatening it against the constitution. If not true, it is fit they should be undeceived. In the one case the gentlemen who first promoted the opposition will be thanked; in the other, they will at least deserve the punishment of a public reprimand, for the place of a State is something too sensible to be tortured, or sacred to be trifled with.

Before I enter on the controverted parts of the constitution, I think it necessary to offer a few preliminary observations.

First, That let the constitution have been formed this way or that, objections would have been raised against it. All those who were against independence would have objected against *any* constitution, because, not daring to attack the declaration of independence itself, they would have attacked the constitution as an outpost, and fought through it under the security of a covert way. Besides which the diversity of opinions and judgments which always takes place on a new measure, the unaccountable proneness of some men to censure every thing not their own, and the fretfulness of others at not being elected, would have sifted off a party, which becoming an asylum to every future discontent, would have vented itself against any form of government that might at first have been instituted.

Secondly, It is the interest of all the States, that the constitutions of each should be somewhat diversified from each other. We are a people upon experiments, and though under one continental government, have the happy opportunity of trying variety in order to discover the best. It does not appear that any form of government yet known in the world has answered the pretences of its institution. The Greeks and Romans became slaves. All forms have failed in producing freedom and security: Therefore to object against the present constitution, because it is a *novelty*, is to give one of the best indirect reasons for trying it that has yet been given; because as all have been defective, that which shall not be so, *must be a novelty*, and that which is *not a novelty*, must be defective. By diversifying the several constitutions, we shall see which State flourish the best, and out of the many posterity may choose a model, and while the diversity lasts all men may be pleased by residing in that



which they like best. I could wish that every constitution as it is now formed might be tried for any reasonable number of years. The increase of population under each constitution will determine its goodness, for that which is most liked will be best peopled, and population is the mother of wealth. Form a constitution with such distinctions of rights, as shall expel the poor, or cause them to draw off into other States, and the rich will soon supply their places by becoming poor themselves, for where there are none to labor, and but few to consume, land and property is not riches. An aristocratical government in any of the States of America, would soon become a democratical one. The poor would quit it, and of course the aristocracy would expire in a democracy of owners. Such a State will not only become impoverished, but defenceless, a temptation to its neighbors, and a sure prize to an invader. Men who either do not, or by some fatality cannot penetrate deep enough into consequences, may please themselves with an idea of a distinction of rights in point of fortune, but it is the worst policy they can pursue. They will decay under it. The rental of their lands instead of rising will decline, and their assumed distinction of rights cease to exist, from the want of objects to exercise it over. Greatness is nothing where it is not seen, and a land of Lords would be a land of beggars. Why are the petty Lords and Princes (as they call themselves) of Germany poor, but because they have established governments with such a tyrannical distinction of rights, that the poor being poor for ever, either desert the country, or, remaining in it, can afford to pay but little for the land, and less towards the revenue. And on the contrary, there is a peculiarity in the temper of the present times, that requires to be consulted. The idea of freedom and rights is high, and men who have yet to settle will naturally choose to do it where they can have a vote in the whole government in preference to where they can only have it for a part. The true policy of constructing constitutions in a young country, is to calculate for population. The strength, the riches, the defence of a State rest upon it. We feel a scarcity of laboring hands at this time, on account of the war, and any distinction of rights which should produce the same effect, would continue the evil. I have heard it advanced, by those who have objected against the present constitution, *that it was a good one for a poor man*. I reply, that for that very reason is it the best government for a *rich* one, by producing purchasers, tenants, and laborers, to the landed interest, and consumers to the merchants besides which, to live in a country where half the people are

deprived of voting, is to live in a land of mutes from whom no honors can be received. As a rich man, I would vote for an open constitution, as the political means not only of continuing me so, but of encreasing my wealth; and as a poor man I would likewise vote for it, for the satisfaction I should enjoy from it, and the chance of rising under it. I am not pleading the cause of the one against the other in either case; for I am clearly convinced that the true interest of one is the real interest of both. Neither am I in this place considering constitutions politically as to government, but naturally as to consequences, and showing the effects that will follow, whether men think of them or not. As a political question it has been hackneyed with a repetition of arguments, but as an interested one, common to all, it has not yet been touched upon. The debaters have been chasing each other these two years like the flyers of a jack, without either enlarging the circle they moved in, or gaining ground in the pursuit.

Riches in a new country, if I may so express it, differ exceedingly from riches in an old one. In the latter it only shifts hands, without either increasing or diminishing; but in the former there is a real addition of riches by population and cultivation.

To digress a little from the point before me I would remark, that there are three distinct ways of obtaining wealth in a new country. Creating it by cultivation; acquiring it by trade; and collecting it by professional employments. The first is the fountain head; the second the streams which distribute it; and the third a kind of ponds which are supplied by drainage; in some instances they may be called pits and swamps, and when they are really useful and beautiful may be styled canals. The two former, that is, cultivation and trade, can neither be too large, too numerous, or too extensive; but the last may be all three. They may multiply till society becomes a bog, and every thing chilled with an ague. Among the latter I reckon authors and lawyers; I put authors first, because their field is larger, and their chance of doing good or hurt is more extensive. Apologizing for the expression, it would be a blessing to mankind if God would never give a genius without principle; and in like manner would be a happiness to society if none but honest men would be suffered to be lawyers. The wretch who will write on any subject for bread, or in any service for pay, and he who will plead in *any case* for a *fee*, stands equally in rank with the prostitute who lets out her person.

Thirdly, Having under the second head considered a Constitution as

a matter of interest common to all, I shall under this head consider it politically on the same scale of common good.

If we attend to the nature of freedom, we shall see the proper method of treating her; for, to use a new expression, it is the nature of freedom to be free. If the ancients ever possessed her in a civil state, it is a question well worth enquiring into, *whether they did not lose her through the bolts, bars, and checks under which they thought to keep her?* An injudicious security becomes her prison, and, disgusted with captivity, she becomes an exile. Freedom is the associate of innocence, not the companion of suspicion. She only requires to be cherished, not to be caged, and to be beloved, is, to her, to be protected. Her residence is in the undistinguished multitude of rich and poor, and a partisan to neither is the patroness of all. She connects herself with man as God made him, not as fortune altered him, and continues with him while he continues to be just and civil. To engross her is to affront her, for, liberal herself, she must be liberally dealt with. In absolute countries she is violated into the concubine of a usurper; and in the motley government of Britain she is held a prisoner of state, and once in seven years let out upon parole. At other times her image only is carried about, which the multitude, a stranger to her person, mistakes for herself.

As America is the only country in the world that has learned how to treat religion, so the same wisdom will show how to treat freedom. Never violate her and she will never desert. 'Tis her last residence, and when she quits America she quits the world. Consider her as the rich man's friend and the poor man's comforter, as that which enlivens the prosperity of the one and sweetens the hard fate of the other. And remember, that in all countries where the freedom of the poor has been taken away, in whole or in part, that the freedom of the rich lost its defence. The circle has ever continued to constrict, till lessening to a point it became absolute. Freedom must have all or none, and she must have them equally. As a matter of political interest only, I would defend the freedom of the poor out of policy to the rich. *There* is the point at which the invasion first enters, the pass which all without distinction ought to defend, and, that being well defended and made secure, all within is at rest. *First* goes the poor, next the tradesman, then the men of middling fortunes, then those of liberal fortunes, till at last some one without any fortune at all starts up, and laying hold of the popular discontents, tyrannizes over the whole, and under the pretence of relieving them.

This is the natural progress of innovation, whether began by design or mistake. I mean no personal application by these remarks, but there is a leading feature in the opposition which requires to be explained. It is objected by some of them that the Constitution *is too free*. Do the objectors mean that *they* are too free? If that is the case, the Constitution out of justice to their children will not suffer them to throw away their portions. But I deny the possibility of a Constitution being too free in point of equality of freedom. It is its equality that makes it safe, and the suspicion of danger therefrom is too illiberal a thought for any man of merit, spirit, education or fortune to avow. The fear has its origin in meanness, not in pride, for pride would scorn it. We often mistake the operation of those two distinct passions upon the mind, and call the one the other. That Constitution which should exclude the poor would be a *mean* one, and that which should exclude the rich would be a *proud* one. The former would be a private pilfering, and the latter a bold injustice; for as in either case it is a theft, the difference of the objects attacked would characterize the attempts. Set my wits against a child! *No*. If I set it at all, it should be against my match.

In a former part of this paper I have used the term *a generous Constitution*. By a generous Constitution I mean a just one; and by a just one that which considers mankind as they came from their maker's hands—a *mere man*, before it can be known what shall be his fortune or his state; and freedom being secured in this first and naked state, is forever secured through every possible change of rich or poor. This perhaps would be a *novelty*, but I will venture to pronounce it that kind of novelty which bids the fairest to secure perpetual freedom and quietude, by justly recognizing the equal right of all, and affording no provocations to a part. Rights are permanent things, fortune is not so; therefore the uncertainty and inequality of the latter cannot become a rule to the certainty and equality of the former. Freedom and fortune have no natural relation. They are as distinct things as rest and motion. To make freedom follow fortune is to suppose her the shadow of an image on a wheel—a shade of passage—an unfixable nothing.

The toleration act in England, which *granted* liberty of conscience to every man, in religion, was looked upon as the perfection of religious liberty. In America we consider the assumption of such power as a species of tyrannic arrogance, and do not *grant* liberty of conscience as a *favor* but *confirm* it as a *right*. And in so doing we have in point of justice exceeded every part of the known world. This is the case in the

present Constitution of Pennsylvania, and I believe it is nearly the same everywhere else.

The contention about religious freedom has ceased in America by being universally and equally established, and every dispute about civil freedom will likewise cease under the same sovereign cure. 'Tis the inequality of rights that keeps up contention. As in religion, so in civil rights, every man naturally stands upon the same plane, and the inequality of merit and fortune afterwards will point out the propriety of elections. Merit without fortune will be attended with inconvenience, and fortune without merit will be incapable of the duty. The best and safest choice is where they are handsomely united. There is an extent of riches, as well as an extreme of poverty, which, by narrowing the circle of a man's acquaintance, lessens his opportunities of general knowledge. The opinions of the former will be chiefly drawn from books and speculation, and those of the latter from traditionary tales. But the man who by situation is most likely to steer right, is looked for in the practical world. The knowledge necessary for raising and applying a revenue with the greatest ease, is drawn from business. It is self business. And that dignity and benevolence in the spirit of laws, which scorns to invade or be invaded, being the effect of principle refined by education, may be equally sought for in the practical or speculative circle. Two or three lawyers to assist in the technical arrangement of the laws, and prevent clashing in the parts, is highly necessary; but as their future support arises from defects, they require to be looked after, least they should introduce them. Lawyers and a Gentleman are characters but seldom in conjunction. When they meet the union is highly valuable, and the character truly respectable. But the perpetual friction of right or wrong in the common practice of the law, have a natural tendency to rub off those fine feelings which should distinguish the Gentleman.

There are some points so clear and definitive in themselves that they suffer by any attempt to prove them. He who should offer to prove the being of a God, would deserve to be turned out of company for insulting his maker. Therefore what I have or may yet offer on the equality of rights is not by way of proof but illustration.

I consider freedom as personal property. If dangerous in the hands of the poor from ignorance, it is at least equally dangerous in the hands of the rich from influence, and if taken from the former under the pretence of safety, it must be taken from the latter for the same reason,

and vested only in those which stand between the two; and the difficulty of doing this shows the dangerous injustice of meddling with it at all, and the necessity of leaving it at large. Wherever I use the words *freedom*s or *rights*, I desire to be understood to mean a perfect equality of them. Let the rich man enjoy his riches, and the poor man comfort himself in his poverty. But the floor of Freedom is as level as water. It *can* be no otherwise of itself and *will* be no otherwise till ruffled by a storm. It is this broad base, this universal foundation, that gives security to all and every part of society.

With this definition in view, I consider freedom to be inseparable from the man as a man; but it may be finally forfeited in the criminal, or the exercise of the right may cease in the servant for the time he continues so. By servitude I mean all offices or employments in or under the state, voluntarily accepted, and to which there are profits annexed. Likewise all servants in families; because their interest is in their master, and depending upon him in sickness and in health, and voluntarily withdrawing from taxation and public service of all kinds, they stand detached by choice from the common floor; but the instant they re-assume their original independent character of a man and encounter the world in their own persons, they repossess the full share of freedom appertaining to the character. The conclusion I mean to draw is, that no *involuntary* circumstance or situation in life can deprive a man of freedom. The supposition of being influenced through poverty is equally balanced by the supposition of other men being influenced through connection. We have no right to such suppositions; and having none, cannot make them a constitutional ground for division.

*N.B.* As the writer of this intends to show reasons why the Constitution ought to be *confirmed* in preference to why it ought to be *altered*; he therefore leaves every other newspaper open, to admit of any contrary arguments: And he does not intend to get involved in contention, or drawn off his ground, he means steadily to pursue his reasonings till they are concluded.

## II

By a former law of Pennsylvania, prior to the forming the Constitution, it was enjoined, that a man is required, should swear or affirm himself worth fifty pounds currency before he should be entitled to vote. The only end this answered was, that of tempting men to for-

swear themselves. Every man with a chest of tools, a few implements of husbandry, a few spare clothes, a bed and a few household utensils, a few articles for sale in a window, or almost any thing else he could call or even think his own, supposed himself within the pale of an oath, and made no hesitation of taking it; and to serve the particular purposes of an election day the money has been lent. It is disgraceful that freedom should be made the property of an oath on such *trifling* things, which, whether they are possessed or not, makes scarce any, or no difference, in the value of the man to the community. Besides which, a merchant who has his property on the seas, or seated in other people's hands, can seldom swear to *any* worth. He may suppose himself rich today, and at the same time be not equal to his debts. The present Constitution therefore wisely rejected this innovating incumbrance, and fixed on another description, which I shall explain when I come to speak to the parts of the Constitution. Property alone cannot defend a country against invading enemies. Houses and lands cannot fight; sheep and oxen cannot be taught the musket; therefore the defence must be personal, and that which equally unites all must be something equally the property of all, viz. an equal share of freedom, independent of the varieties of wealth, and which wealth, [n]or the want of it, can neither give or take away. To be telling men of their rights when we want their service, and of their poverty when the service is over, is a meanness which cannot be professed by a gentleman. I speak this to the honor of America. She cannot do it. I conclude this paragraph with a remark which requires only to be looked at in order to be understood, which is, that all the former governments on the continent, from Hampshire to Georgia, grew strong and populous in proportion as they were, compared with each other open, free and generous; from which I infer, that the future improvements under the new Constitutions, will arise in the same manner, and from the same causes. Allowance is naturally to be made for extent of territory.

There is but one effectual way to prevent corruption and party influence from operating in elections; which is, by having the number of electors too numerous to be reached, and composed, as they naturally will be, of men of all conditions, from rich to poor. The variety prevents combination, and the number excludes corruption; therefore any distinction of rights which lessens either the number or variety, has a tendency to enslave a State, and no one can tell where slavery is to end when once it begins.

I am as little fond of drawing observations from England as any man, because I know their modes of government are too wretched and ridiculous for imitation, but I would here remark, that the best representation comes from those places where the electors are most numerous and various, and their worst from the contrary places. The cry of being elected by a mob is idle and frivolous. It is a nick name which all parties give to each other. It means no *particular* class of men, but *any class* or number of men acting irregularly and against the peace, and cannot be applied in any case to a legal rightful election. I never did, nor never would encourage what may properly be called a mob, when any legal mode of redress can be had, but there are evils which civil government cannot reach, and which the dread of public resentment only can lessen or prevent. Of that kind are the present speculators. But to return to my subject—

Hitherto I have only considered an equality of rights on the scale of common good. I now proceed to examine the *inequality* of rights as a private evil. It is well worth observing, that all those principles and maxims which are unjust in public life are so in private life. Justice is one uniform attribute, which acting in the man or in the multitude, is always the same, and produce the same consequences.

The man who today proposes to regulate freedom by fortune, being rich himself, little thinks what may be his own state before he dies, or that of his children after his death. His wealth when divided among them, will lose the influence it had when united in his own person. Some of them may do well. Others most probably will be unfortunate, and sinking thereby into the excluded class, become the exiles of a father's pride. The impossibility of knowing into whose hands a distinction of rights may fall, should make men afraid to establish them, lest in the revolution of fortune, common to a trading country, they should get into the hands of those who were intended to be excluded, and severely exercised over those who were designed to inherit them. Who, fifty or sixty years ago, could have predicted who should be the rich and the poor of the present day; and who, looking forward to the same length of time, can do it now? And this reflection applied by every man to himself, will teach him this just and generous motto: *Leave Freedom free.*

Fourthly, There are two ways of governing mankind.

First, By keeping them ignorant.

Secondly, By making them wise.



The former was and is the custom of the old world. The latter of the new. All the forms of government now in being in the old world bring forward into present view the ignorance and superstition of the times in which they were erected; but the sufferers under them, by constantly looking at them, grow familiar to their absurdities, then reconciled to them, and impose a silence upon themselves which is often construed into consent. It is a decided point with me that Kings will go out of fashion in the same manner as conjurors did, and were governments to be now established in Europe, the form of them would not be monarchical. The decline of superstition, the great encrease and general diffusion of knowledge, and the frequent equalities of merit in individuals, would render it impossible to decorate any one man with the idolatrous honors which are expected to be paid to him under the name of a crowned head. To be kneeling to kiss a man's hand, wrapt up in flannels with the gout, and calling a boy of one and twenty the father of his people, could not now take place as a new custom. We see, know, and feel that those things are debasing absurdities, and could not be made to swallow them or adopt them.

I consider a King in England as something which the military keep to cheat with, in the same manner that wooden gods and conjuror's wands were kept in time of idolatry and superstition; and in proportion as knowledge is circulated through a country, and the minds of the people become cleared of ignorance and rubbish, they will find themselves restless and uneasy under any government so established. This is exactly the case with the people of England. They are not sufficiently ignorant to be governed superstitiously, nor yet wise enough to be governed rationally, so that being complete in neither, and equally defective in both, are for ever discontented and hard to be governed at all. They live in a useless twilight of political knowledge and ignorance, in which they have dawn enough to discover the darkness by, and liberty enough to feel they are not free; constantly slumbering, without an ability to sleep, and waking, without an inclination to rise.

It has been the constant practice of the old world to hold up a government to the people as a mystery, and of consequence to govern them through their ignorance. And on the contrary it is the practice of the new world, America, to make men as wise as possible, so that their knowledge being complete, they may be *rationally* governed. All the constitutions in America have professedly had this in view, and are constructed to effect this end. The provincial disputes about modes and

forms will have no ill consequence, but rather a good one if conducted with temper and supported by proper and just argument. Order and constancy is the natural result of a well informed judgment, whereas, on the other hand, there is no dependence to be put on a man whose consent to a measure is obtained by an imposition on his ignorance. He uniformly agrees with the last that spoke to him, and surrenders to the next that meets him. One thing, likewise, at last is absolutely necessary, and is the true proof of a good citizen, viz. *that the sense of the majority is the governing sense.*

I now come to the resolution of the Assembly, dated November 28, 1778, for taking the sense of the State on the question *for or against* a Convention, after which I shall proceed to the matters proposed therein for consideration.

It is to be wished that the question had been a simple one, and not involved with a personal election at the same time. It would then have stood clear and distinct, and been determined entirely on its own merits. The resolution recommends, that on the first of next April, each free-man of the State shall give in a ticket on which shall be written his opinion, those who are for a Convention shall write thereon, "*for a Convention,*" and those who are not for a Convention, shall write on theirs, "*against a Convention.*" Thus far the resolution is clear, and the business free from embarrassment. But the resolution likewise recommends, that the electors shall at the same time give in other tickets, whereon shall be written the names of persons to serve in Convention, and the reason assigned is to prevent a second trouble, if it should be the sense of the State to have a new Convention.

The first question is on the propriety of a measure; the second the choice of persons. But the connecting and involving the persons with the measure, has an indirect influence to produce the measure. Those who may be for a Convention will act naturally in voting for the persons who are to compose it, their tickets being only component parts of the same plan; but those who may be against having a Convention, must feel an awkwardness in electing one at the same time they vote against having any. Besides which, those who may think a Convention unnecessary, and would have voted so, had the question been simple, may now, from an approbation of the persons proposed as members, grow indifferent on the first question. It also admits of promoting the election of a Convention through the contrary means, because it may be said, that it is proper to have one at any rate, as well to confirm as to alter,

which is not the design of the resolution; for a negative vote on a new Convention is an affirmative one on the present Constitution. Therefore the question, as I humbly conceive, would have admitted of an easier and clearer determination had it stood single. I would likewise remark, that it may with some have an effect to prevent a Convention, as the shortest way of getting rid of an involved question, which, by a mixture of persons and measures, look full as much like the beginning of trouble as the end of it.

In my next I shall proceed to the matters proposed in the resolution for consideration.

### III

The matters proposed for consideration in the resolution of the Assembly of November 28th are arranged under the nine following heads:

Firstly, Whether the legislative power of the State shall be vested, as at present, in a single *branch*?

Secondly, If the Convention should be for a second branch of legislation, then, how the same and the Executive Powers for the administration of government shall be constructed?

Thirdly, If the Convention shall determine against a second branch of legislature, whether any provision shall be made for the revival of laws (without any negative) before they receive their final sanction?

Fourthly, Whether the appointment of Justices and Field Officers of the militia shall be vested in the Executive Powers of government?

Fifthly, Whether the Council of Censors shall be abolished?

Sixthly, Whether the President and Vice-President may not be eligible into Council so as to be capable of said offices after the expiration of three years, if their conduct shall render them worthy?

Seventhly, Whether the Judges should not be made more independent by having their salaries fixed and certain?

Eighthly, Whether, agreeable to the Articles of Confederation of the United States, the Delegates in Congress may not be eligible three years successively?

Ninthly, In case any alterations shall be made by the Convention in the above points, how the several oaths prescribed by the Constitution shall be adopted thereto?

The three first heads are parts of one and the same question. In the

*fourth*, two distinct things are blended together, viz. the appointment of civil Magistrates, and the appointment of militia Field Officers. The order in which I shall take them up is,

First, The appointment of civil Magistrates.

Secondly, The appointment of Militia Officers.

Thirdly, The proposed addition of a second Legislative House.

Fourthly, The Council of Censors.—And the rest as they follow in order in the resolution.

First, On the appointment of civil Magistrates. It is the fault of all the governments in the old world, that they GOVERN TOO MUCH; and this they are naturally enabled to do by affirming, or getting into their hands, the appointment of all officers, civil and military. By the former they engross decisions in their favor, and by the latter are enabled to enforce them; and I mention it to the honor of the gentlemen of the present Executive Council, that neither of those propositions originated with them.

We repose an unwise confidence in any government, or in any men, when we invest them officially with too much, or an unnecessary quantity of, discretionary power; for though we might clearly confide in almost any man of the present age, yet we ought ever to remember that virtue is not hereditary either in the office or in the persons. A return to commerce, and the peaceable stations in civil life, will, in a few years, abate the ardor and activity of the warmest defender of civil rights. When the enemy is gone, the visible necessity will expire, and the wind cease to blow that kindled and yet keeps up the flame. The spirit of freedom will then assume the shape of an unextinguished, and I hope, unextinguishable coal, and unfed by danger or suspicion, will rather silently burn than blaze. Our constitutions therefore, ought to be so constructed and secured, as to afford no opportunities for the future abuse of power in those times of unguarded ease and quiet. And it is far wiser and pleasanter to prevent the existence of such opportunities at first, than to have to encounter them at last, with all the ungracious manners of party and suspicion.

My opinion then, as an individual, is clearly fixed, that the method laid down in the Constitution is far the best, and that not only for the general reasons I have already advanced against surrendering too many rights into the hands of any government, but for the wisdom, precision and delicacy, which visibly appears in the constitutional mode when fairly examined.

The gentlemen of the Convention, whoever they were, seem to have studied mankind, and to have founded the constitution on that knowledge. They have considered a Magistrate as a distinct character from a Legislator, and provided accordingly. It is the office of a Legislator to construct laws for the conduct and government of all, himself being one of them. The State appears before *him* with an *undivided* interest; and the several members collected into one body from the several counties, form a *whole* acting for a *whole*, themselves being included. Therefore *his* election is simple and fixed in the first instance, viz. a majority comprehending all the national *interests* of the minority. But with the civil Magistrate it is otherwise—Individuals appear before *him* as *parties* having interests *opposed* to each other; sometimes one individual against another; sometimes the State against an individual, or an individual against the State, and it is his office to determine between the two. Therefore, the constitutional mode by which he comes into office, is so wisely varied through an ingenuity of turnings, as to make him lose sight of all official dependence on any party, and consequently to set him clear from any *personal* or *governmental* obligations, and render his judgment as free and independent as possible. I here subjoin the 13th section of the Constitution, for the electing and appointing Justices, after which I shall continue my remarks.

“Justices of the Peace shall be elected by the freeholders of each city and county respectively, that is to say, *two* or *more* persons shall be chosen for each ward, township or district, as the law shall hereafter direct: And their names shall be returned to the President in Council, who shall commissionate *one* or *more* of them for each ward, township or district, so returning for SEVEN YEARS, *removeable for misconduct by the General Assembly.*”

This is the clause, and I will venture to style it a wise and noble one. All the separate interests then can be supposed to appear before him afterwards as parties are happily blended together to produce him. He looks round and knows *no client*. He comes upon the stage of office without seeing the hand that put him there. Government and the people appear to him, as they ever *ought* to do, *one incorporated body*. Elected by the latter, and approved by the former, he is the Magistrate of both, and feeling no partial bias to either, stands free, easy, and sufficiently independent.

There is an incurable weakness in mankind, which, under the idea of something like gratitude, frequently inclines to favoritism, and it is

the operation of this direct upon the Magistrate which the Constitution has taken so much care to prevent, and so extraordinary has been their care, and so ingeniously applied, that I see no amendment or addition that can be made to it.

Had he been elected immediately into office by a majority of votes, he would then have had too close a fight of those who voted for him or against him, which he ought not to have. Therefore the Constitution provides, that *two* or more shall be elected, out of which the President *in* Council shall commissionate *one* or more; and as they may take which, and as many as, they please, the idea of personal obligation in the first election is exceedingly weakened by being removed to a second one; and is at last totally lost, or as much as possibly can be, by his being removeable afterwards for misconduct by the Assembly, with whom, having no prior connections, and as a body annually changing, he is supposed to have no party. The power of removing, as well as the power of judging of misconduct, must be placed somewhere, for until it shall please God to make man over again, which perhaps he never will, the present construction of him does not admit of unlimited confidence, for that would be *power absolute*.

I now come to consider the proposal for laying aside the constitutional mode, and vesting the appointment of Justices in the Executive Council only; and in order that my arguments may arise from a clear foundation, I take the liberty of introducing them by a few general observations.

It must be naturally supposed, that the reason which first induced men to erect themselves into civil governments, was because they found individual power insufficient to individual protection, and defective in individual convenience; for civil government necessarily implies a surrender of something into a common stock, constituting a common property, and to be used for the mutual good of all the proprietors.

Civil governments being thus consented to generally, the next point was to organize them, that is, to adjust and fit the several parts to each other. In the first stage of division, they are cast into towns, townships, districts and counties, but these being only a larger rank of individuals, and sensible of insecurity in some things, and insufficiency in others, and proceeding on a social principle natural in all men, they again incorporate under a general government of the State. In this stage, civilization would be tolerably complete if we lived in an island remote from every other part of the world. But it is our happiness to have our

minds enlarged by situation, and that which the diminutive idea of a man in England would call, *a whole*, our extended ones style only a part. The erection of States therefore, are individuals of a more gigantic growth, yet the necessity of their harmonizing for mutual advantage is equally as great as if every individual man was a giant, and this last superintending union is in Congress. This being the natural progress and graduation of civil governments, I would infer therefrom, *that the collective power in any of the parts is constituted for the sole purpose of doing THAT which the minor parts are not sufficiently competent to.* But will the gentlemen of the city or county of Philadelphia, or any other county of the State actually say, they have not sense enough to elect a Magistrate? Do they see that by dealing too much in negatives, they have put a fatal one on their own understanding? This is an humility I never looked for, and must therefore humbly beg to be left out of the confession. Perhaps this inference may appear somewhat jocular, but the proposition they have made, naturally implies it as fully and effectually as if it had been placed before it in the form of a preamble, beginning with, "WHEREAS we have not wit enough to choose Justices of the Peace; therefore, Resolved, That one gentleman from Cumberland, Northumberland, Westmoreland, and every other county in the State shall do it for us, and we, to the best of our power, will appoint theirs." The gentlemen will, I hope, excuse my turning the smile upon them, but really there is something in the proposition which both deserves and warrants it, and shows to what a degree of error and weakness even sensible men can descend when they suffer their tempers to be over-heated by trifles. I now return to a more serious part of the business.

*N.B.* The remainder of the argument on the appointment of Civil Magistrates will be in our next, as there is not room for it in this paper.

#### IV

In the former part of my argument I endeavored to show, in a short and concise manner, the wisdom of the constitutional mode, and the security arising therefrom. I now shall show the great inconvenience attending the proposed alteration, and the great danger it will produce when established.

The Executive Council is composed of one gentleman from each county in the State, and I would ask, by what means are they to become

acquainted with the qualifications of the persons they are to appoint for Justices, or to know what reputation they bear in the place for manners and morality, as well as judgment and discretion? The Council must officially and necessarily take them up upon the single recommendation of the Counsellor who represents that county; which mode will unhappily introduce an intrigue of, "*If you will serve my friends, I'll serve yours,*" and the immediate consequence will be, that one man from each county will nominate all the Justices. I think it a great honor to those who are styled whigs of the present day both in government and out, that they, though in power, are the people who most oppose the growth of it even in their own hands. An instance rarely seen and truly noble: For it is not government generally, but *civil* government which they mean to support.

If it should be said that the Council will take other means to know the qualifications on persons before they appoint them, I ask, what means? For in the matters we must proceed upon something like certainty, not upon supposition. We all know how unsafe and even treacherous private information is in personal characters, and surely *no* man, who valued the welfare of his country, would wish to see a Magistrate created by a whisper.

But if the Council are to seek other recommendation than that which the Counsellor from the county can give them, then I ask, whether any recommendation can be so *safe*, as that which comes regularly and publicly before them by a ballot of the freeholders as the Constitution has provided? The choice, as in other elections, *may* or *may not*, be the very best, but this I will venture to assert, that it will never be a *bad* one, and the mode, always the *safest* one. For in all those matters where no direct certainty can be fixed, *that* line of conduct, which has the *greatest probability* of being *right* at all times, *is the line*, which for a *standing* one, *ought* to be taken. To suppose men capable of electing Members of Assembly and Members of the Executive Council, and to know that the same people have uniformly gone through the great work of raising an original empire, and opposing an enemy at the same time, and are now daily reinforced by new adherents, and to suppose them not capable of electing two or three gentlemen, out of whom the Council is to choose one or two Magistrates is such a *feto de se*, such a self-murdering argument, that we have a right to question the rationality of those who advance it. It stands upon nothing. It has no foundation; but involves those who proposed it, and those it is proposed to, under one commoꝛ



supposition of idiotism, and to defend it is to confirm both the disgrace and the affront. I make no distinction in this place between the too hackneyed and frequently unmeaning names of whig and tory, for as the change in the mode of appointing Justices, is intended as a standing one, therefore it is designed to operate when those temporary distinctions shall cease, and consequently the censure is universally passed on all, and the public a thousand years hence are supposed to be fools. I would really be as mild as the nature of the argument required, my design being not to defeat, but to convince, yet there is a striking indecency in this paradox that even demands reproof.

Next to the danger of private insinuation, and private connection, in the new proposed mode of appointing Justices, is the still greater danger from them after they are so appointed. Magistrates created by any government, will have a fixed eye on their immediate creators, and be too apt to suppose themselves created for particular purposes, instead of equal justice, and in time be inclined to consider government as a distinct party in the State. Do the gentlemen who brought the new proposals into the Assembly (and to which proposals the constitutional part of the Assembly yielded to for quiet sake, submitting thereby the propriety of them to the sense of the public) do these gentlemen, I say, consider how many questions of right or property, in which government must necessarily appear as a party, will, on the opening of trade, naturally come before the Magistrates? Do they consider how many disputes about revenue, whether of excise, customs or other taxes, will, or may hereafter fall within the jurisdiction of a Court of Justices; and would they be so unwise as to invest the party necessarily interested with the power of appointing the Judge? Surely not. And do those gentlemen likewise see how nicely and wisely the Constitution has provided against those things by placing the Magistrate so that he shall feel at his creation no partial bias, and neither be tempted to favor licentiousness for popular applause, nor to promote an encrease of power from hopes of interest.

We are necessarily obliged to have the Judges of the Supreme Court appointed by the Executive Council, because they being Judges for the whole State, there is no other practicable method, and it is likewise one of those exercises of delegated power, for which the Representative body of Counsellors is chosen. The propriety is founded on necessity, and the right in representation. But neither of these takes place in the case of county Magistrates; for, in the first instance, there is *no* necessity; and

in the second, there is *no adequate* representation; the Council from each county being but one. Therefore to invest him or them separately or collectively, with more official discretionary power than the convenience of civil government requires, would be to transform them from Representatives into Ministers, and to bastardize a republic by the intrigues of a court. I sometimes think that the gentlemen who opposed the Constitution are not constitutionally in earnest, and feel an inclination to believe, that they started without a thought, and in the passion of the race mistook heat for judgment. That the dispute has been an unfortunate one, is without a doubt; for had half the vigor been exerted to save the city that has been spent to overturn the Constitution, the enemy, I sincerely believe, had never been in it. The people were lost in a wilderness of unserviceable passions, and having confidence in no body, felt no inclination to unite. One gentleman at least made a merit of refusing to serve his distressed country, as a General of the militia, because his fancy in the Constitution, even before the sense of the people could be known, was not immediately gratified, and the excuse afforded to many a convenient shelter from actual service. I am surprised that government struggled through so well as it did, considering how great was the desertion, and how civil the pretence. There were others, and I mention it with respect, who quitting private opinion for public good, continued, and in some instances encreased their service.

Returning from this digression, I take up again the appointment of the civil Magistrate. It is an important point, and that not as a matter of debate (for I am fully persuaded that those who proposed the alteration cannot make their ground good upon it) but it is important in itself, being the channel through which the exercise of the laws circulate upon a country; therefore, every argument which shows the importance of the office to society, proves the danger of the new proposed method of appointment. Here the proposers, and myself, draw to a close line, and they will naturally perceive that my intention is to take their ground from them, and to erect the constitutional mode on the very reasons which they advance against it. They say that the office is important, and therefore the power of selecting fit persons ought to be invested in the government. I likewise say that the office is important, and therefore ought *not to be made a government appointment*; for it is not its importance *only* but the *nature* of its importance which we are mostly to consider. It is not an office which requires a peculiarity of

genius or acquired accomplishments to fill, and which the public, considered as a public, may not be supposed to understand; that is, it is not the office of a professor of natural philosophy, or of mathematics, or of any branch of the arts or sciences, or of languages; but it is a civil office, an office of trust and honor, an office of decision, arbitration or compromise, between neighbors differing with each other, and between the claims of the State upon the individual, and the individual upon the State. It is established with a design to prevent frivolous and vexatious lawsuits, by healing disputes in the first instance; to secure property from invasion, and freedom from oppression; to give relief without the terror of expence, and administer justice from a goodness of heart: Therefore it requires those very kind qualifications in which the judgment of the public, as a public, is supposed to be the most complete, and this leads me to consider what the necessary qualifications in a magistrate are.

He ought to be neither proud, passionate [n]or given to drink; easy of access, and serenely affable in his deportment. Patient enough to hear a tale of wretchedness, and wise enough to discover invention from fact. He ought to understand the laws, not for practice like a lawyer, but for advice like a friend, or for decision like a Judge, and to be neither subtle in his refinements, nor obscure in his definitions. He ought to be a man of application as well as knowledge; and of sound, rather than of fine sense. He is to be the useful, rather the shining man, and to consider himself more like a physician to recover than the surgeon to cut off. He ought to have fortitude enough to be neither fascinated by splendor, nor womanishly affected by a melancholy tale, and is always to remember that he is to decide on cases not on persons. Now, there is nothing in this collection that is either intricate or extraordinary, but is composed of those visible materials, which the generality of men are known either to have or to want. Therefore the private character quickly becomes a public one, and is easily known. Three parts of it being made up from the good man, and the rest from the wise one.

I confess myself quite at a loss to discover by what ideas the gentlemen are led who proposed the alteration. That they are unwisely making a rod for themselves and their heirs, is, to me, as clear as light; for surely no man, unless he sought to make a trade of government, would wish to arm it with powers that might be afterwards severely exercised over him as an individual. The experience of all the world is against their policy. Every instance of the kind has proved that government

Magistrates will, in the line of their office, become government men. It is necessary that every State, for the convenience of business, should have a law officer of its own, but it would be the height of imprudence to make every Magistrate Attorney General. It is needless to say that the rotation in the Executive Council by frequent elections, makes this suspicion unnecessary. The Magistrate, so appointed, would know *no* change; the power, though not the persons that made him, would be always in being; he would officially become the humble servant of every succeeding Council, and the Council would in turn, possess him by a kind of heirship; his interest would be to please and their pleasure would become the line of his conduct. Surely no man who wished to live comfortably on his plantation, reputably on his trade, or independently on his fortune, would wish to see a Magistrate so created and so circumstanced.

If ever we cast our eyes towards England, it ought to be rather to take *warning* by, than *example*. Their county Magistrates are created in the same manner which the new method proposes, and the consequence is, that they are, in general, the bears of the country and the spaniels of the government. It is a frequent recommendation to the letting of a farm, that there is neither a Peer nor a Justice in the neighborhood, and this dislike arises from that insufferable insolence which their mode of creation gives them. The most, and almost the only, respectable Magistrate in England is the Lord Mayor of the city of London, and he comes into office very nearly in the same manner which the Constitution has provided in the case of Justices. The Livery, that is the freemen of the city of London, choose two persons, out of which the Court of Aldermen select one, who is afterwards presented to the Executive power at St. James's for approbation; and what I ask, would the Livery of London think, if any party of men should propose to have the choice of their city Magistrate taken out of their hands, and vested solely in him whom they call a King? Good heavens, what would they not think! And what would they not do to prevent it! For to do them justice, they seem to be almost the only spirited body of men in the nation.

I feel ashamed to argue this point any longer. It seems like fighting, not against the wind-mill, but a butterfly; and therefore conclude with remarking on the supposed causes which betrayed the proposers into such an unwise, and unconstitutional a proposal.

How far the present Magistracy may be compared with that under

the proprietary government, I will not undertake to be particular in, because I am not fond of investigating personal matters; otherwise I could show instances wherein the former was not only improper, but indecent and scandalous.

Perhaps some of our present Magistrates are not the best qualified, and that will ever be the case in any mode of electing or appointing either them or any other officers; yet we have this relief, that they are removable for misconduct whenever it shall be sufficiently proved. But this supposed deficiency in the choice of the man neither was, nor is, the fault of the Constitution, neither was it the fault of those who voted, but of those who did *not* vote. If men from indolence, or factiousness of temper, or a temporary fear of electing or being elected, or from any other cause, will neglect the exercise of their own rights, and persuade others into the same omission, they can have no just cause afterwards to quarrel with the consequences but with themselves. Neither do I know any deficiency in the present Magistracy equal to the weakness of judgment shown by the opposition; for admitting that the choice might have been better, yet the remedy which they have recommended is like cutting off a leg to cure a corn, and proposing to see the example themselves. This being the case, we have no right to wonder at the lameness of their judgment, or the slackness of their progress; for who that is found and in his senses, would enlist into a party where the necessary qualification is a defect. If the gentlemen choose to be cripples, and that not in the defence of liberty, but against it, they are welcome to the honor. It is perhaps a new law in heraldry, that those who invented their own arms<sup>1</sup> should have but one leg.

I here close my arguments for continuing the constitutional mode for electing and appointing Justices, in preference to the proposed scheme of investing that power in the Executive Council, and in so doing, I think it is visible, and with it to be generally understood, that I have not supported a party for the sake of a party, but a public right for a public good.

*N.B.* My next will be on the appointment of Militia Officers.

<sup>1</sup> *Coat of Arms—Author.*

## PUBLIC GOOD

In his letter to George Washington from France, Paine objected strenuously to being called an anti-Federalist by the Federalists, who claimed for themselves the honor of having been the sole supporters of a stronger central government during the so-called Critical Period following the War for Independence. There was good reason for Paine to feel indignant, for he was the first person in America to appeal publicly for a convention to remedy the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation and to establish a stronger central government. This appeal appeared in the pamphlet published by Dunlap of Philadelphia, December 30, 1780, under the title: *Public Good: Being an Examination into the Claim of Virginia to the Vacant Western Territory, and of the Right of the United States to the Same: to which is Added Proposals for Laying off a New State, to be Applied as a Fund for Carrying on the War, or Redeeming the National Debt.*

Congress adopted the Articles of Confederation on November 17, 1777, and submitted them to the states for ratification. Maryland, unable to claim any land in the west because of definite western limits included in her original charter, refused to ratify the Articles until Virginia and other states who laid claim to the land directly west of them, ceded this land to the federal government. Paine saw the need of breaking this *impasse* by examining the entire question in a public pamphlet. In *Public Good* he argues that the Western land should belong to the United States "collectively" rather than to any number of individual states. This land, he points out, had been obtained by the united effort of all the states in the war and thus should logically belong to all. Furthermore, he expresses the hope that in this territory, as it became populated, "new states shall be laid off and incorporated with the present" as equals. He recognizes, moreover, that this can not be achieved unless the weak Articles of Confederation were replaced by a stronger central government, and concludes this very significant pamphlet by calling for the election of "a Continental convention, for the purpose of forming a Continental constitution, defining and describing the powers and authority of Congress."

Since *Public Good* contained a detailed attack on the trans-Allegheny claims of Virginia, Paine aroused the anger of land speculators in that state. He was accused of having been paid by the Indiana Company for writing the pamphlet (see Frederick J. Turner, "Western State-Making in the Revolutionary Era," *American Historical Review*, vol. I, October, 1895, pp. 84-85), but as Conway points out (*Life*, vol. I, p. 165), his arguments would

have been "as fatal" to the claims of the Indiana Company "as to that of a State."

Virginia finally ceded most of her Western land to the federal government, and Maryland ratified the Articles of Confederation in March, 1781.—*Editor.*

#### PREFACE

THE following pages are on a subject hitherto little understood but highly interesting to the United States.

They contain an investigation of the claims of Virginia to the vacant western territory, and of the right of the United States to the same; with some outlines of a plan for laying out a new State, to be applied as a fund, for carrying on the war, or redeeming the national debt.

The reader, in the course of this publication, will find it studiously plain, and, as far as I can judge, perfectly candid. What materials I could get at I have endeavored to place in a clear line, and deduce such arguments therefrom as the subject required. In the prosecution of it, I have considered myself as an advocate for the right of the States, and taken no other liberty with the subject than what a counsel would, and ought to do, in behalf of a client.

I freely confess that the respect I had conceived, and still preserve, for the character of Virginia, was a constant check upon those sallies of imagination, which are fairly and advantageously indulged against an enemy, but ungenerous when against a friend.

If there is anything I have omitted or mistaken, to the injury of the intentions of Virginia or her claims, I shall gladly rectify it, or if there is anything yet to add, should the subject require it, I shall as cheerfully undertake it; being fully convinced, that to have matters fairly discussed, and properly understood, is a principal means of preserving harmony and perpetuating friendship.

THE AUTHOR.

#### PUBLIC GOOD

When we take into view the mutual happiness and united interests of the States of America, and consider the vast consequences to arise from a strict attention of each, and of all, to everything which is just, reasonable, and honorable; or the evils that will follow from an inattention to those principles; there cannot, and ought not, to remain a doubt but the governing rule of right and of mutual good must in all public cases finally preside.

The hand of providence has cast us into one common lot, and accomplished the independence of America, by the unanimous consent of the several parts, concurring at once in time, manner and circumstances. No superiority of interest, at the expense of the rest, induced the one, more than the other, into the measure. Virginia and Maryland, it is true, might foresee that their staple commodity, tobacco, by being no longer monopolized by Britain, would bring them a better price abroad: for as the tax on it in England was treble its first purchase from the planter, and they being now no longer compelled to send it under that obligation, and in the restricted manner they formerly were, it is easy to see that the article, from the alteration of the circumstances of trade, will, and daily does, turn out to them with additional advantages.

But this being a natural consequence, produced by that common freedom and independence of which all are partakers, is therefore an advantage they are entitled to, and on which the rest of the States can congratulate them without feeling a wish to lessen, but rather to extend it. To contribute to the increased prosperity of another, by the same means which occasion our own, is an agreeable reflection; and the more valuable any article of export becomes, the more riches will be introduced into and spread over the continent.

Yet this is an advantage which those two States derive from the independence of America, superior to the local circumstances of the rest; and of the two it more particularly belongs to Virginia than Maryland, because the staple commodity of a considerable part of Maryland is flour, which, as it is an article that is the growth of Europe as well as of America, cannot obtain a foreign market but by underselling, or at least by limiting it to the current price abroad. But tobacco commands its own price. It is not a plant of almost universal growth, like wheat. There are but few soils and climates that produce it to advantage, and before the cultivation of it in Virginia and Maryland, the price was from four to sixteen shillings sterling a pound in England.<sup>2</sup>

But the condition of the vacant western territory of America makes a very different case to that of the circumstances of trade in any of the States. Those very lands, formed, in contemplation, the fund by which the debt of America would in the course of years be redeemed. They were considered as the common right of all; and it is only till

<sup>2</sup> See Sir Dalby Thomas's "Historical Account of the rise and growth of the West India Colonies."—*Author*.



lately that any pretension of claim has been made to the contrary.

That difficulties and differences will arise in communities, ought always to be looked for. The opposition of interests, real or supposed, the variety of judgments, the contrariety of temper, and, in short, the whole composition of man, in his individual capacity, is tinctured with a disposition to contend; but in his social capacity there is either a right, which, being proved, terminates the dispute, or a reasonableness in the measure, where no direct right can be made out, which decides or comprises the matter.

As I shall have frequent occasion to mention the word *right*, I wish to be clearly understood in my definition of it. There are various senses in which this term is used, and custom has, in many of them, afforded it an introduction contrary to its true meaning. We are so naturally inclined to give the utmost degree of force to our own case, that we call every pretension, however founded, *a right*; and by this means the term frequently stands opposed to justice and reason.

After Theodore was elected King of Corsica, not many years ago, by the mere choice of the natives, for their own convenience in opposing the Genoese, he went over to England, run himself in debt, got himself into jail, and on his release therefrom, by the benefit of an act of insolvency, he surrendered up what he called *his* kingdom of Corsica, as a part of his personal property, for the use of his creditors; some of whom may hereafter call this a charter, or by any other name more fashionable, and ground thereon what they may term a right to the sovereignty and property of Corsica. But does not justice abhor such an action both in him and them, under the prostituted name of a *right*, and must not laughter be excited wherever it is told?

A right, to be truly so, must be right within itself: yet many things have obtained the name of rights, which are originally founded in wrong. Of this kind are all rights by mere conquest, power or violence.

In the cool moments of reflection we are obliged to allow that the mode by which such a right is obtained is not the best suited to that spirit of universal justice which ought to preside equally over all mankind. There is something in the establishment of such a right that we wish to slip over as easily as possible, and say as little about as can be. But in the case of a *right founded in right*, the mind is carried cheerfully into the subject, feels no compunction, suffers no distress, subjects its sensations to no violence, nor sees anything in its way which requires an artificial smoothing.

From this introduction I proceed to examine into the claims of Virginia; first, as to the right, secondly as to the reasonableness, and lastly, as to the consequences.

The name, *Virginia*, originally bore a different meaning to what it does now. It stood in the place of the word North America, and seems to have been a name comprehensive of all the English settlements or colonies on the continent, and not descriptive of any one as distinguished from the rest. All to the southward of the Chesapeake, as low as the Gulf of Mexico, was called South Virginia, and all to the northward, North Virginia, in a similar line of distinction, as we now call the whole continent North and South America.<sup>3</sup>

The first charter, or patent, was to Sir Walter Raleigh by Queen Elizabeth, of England, in the year 1583, and had neither name nor bounds. Upon Sir Walter's return, the name *Virginia* was given to the whole country, including the now United States. Consequently the present Virginia, either as a province or State, can set up no exclusive claim to the western territory under this patent, and that for two reasons: first, because the words of the patent run *to Sir Walter Raleigh, and such persons as he should nominate, themselves and their successors*; which is a line of succession Virginia does not pretend to stand in; and secondly, because a prior question would arise, namely, who are to be understood by Virginians under this patent? and the answer would be, all the inhabitants of America, from New England to Florida.

This patent, therefore, would destroy their exclusive claim, and invest the right collectively in the thirteen States.

But it unfortunately happened, that the settlers under this patent, partly from misconduct, the opposition of the Indians, and other calamities, discontinued the process, and the patent became extinct.

After this, James I, who, in the year 1602, succeeded Elizabeth, issued a new patent, which I come next to describe.

This patent differed from the former in this essential point, that it had limits, whereas the other had none: the former was intended to promote discoveries wherever they could be made, which accounts why no limits were affixed, and this to settle discoveries already made, which likewise assigns a reason why limits should be described.

In this patent were incorporated two companies, called the South Virginia Company, and the North Virginia Company, and sometimes the London Company, and the Plymouth Company.

<sup>3</sup> Oldmixon's History of Virginia.—*Author*.

The South Virginia or London Company was composed chiefly of London adventurers; the North Virginia or Plymouth Company was made up of adventurers from Plymouth in Devonshire and other persons of the western part of England.

Though they were not to fix together, yet they were allowed to choose their places of settlement anywhere on the coast of America, then called Virginia, between the latitudes of 34 and 45 degrees, which was a range of 760 miles: the South Company was not to go below 34 degrees, nor the North Company above 45 degrees. But the patent expressed, that as soon as they had made their choice, each was to become limited to 50 miles each way on the coast, and 100 up the country; so that the grant to each country was a square of 100 miles, and no more. The North Virginia or Plymouth Company settled to the eastward, and in the year 1614, changed the name, and called that part New England. The South Virginia or London Company settled near Cape Henry.

This then cannot be the patent of boundless extent, and that for two reasons: first, because the limits are described, namely, a square of 100 miles; and secondly, because there were two companies of equal rights included in the same patent.

Three years after this, that is, in the year 1609, the South Virginia Company applied for new powers from the crown of England, which were granted them in a new patent, and the boundaries of the grant enlarged; and this is the charter, or patent, on which some of the present Virginians ground their pretension to boundless territory.

The first reflection that presents itself on this enlargement of the grant is, that it must be supposed to bear some intended degree of reasonable comparison to that which it superseded. The former could not be greater than a square of one hundred miles; and this new one being granted in lieu of that, and that within the space of three years, and by the same person, James I., who was never famed either for profusion or generosity, cannot, on a review of the time and circumstances of the grant, be supposed a very extravagant or very extraordinary one. If a square of one hundred miles was not sufficiently large, twice that quantity was as much as could well be expected or solicited; but to suppose that he, who had caution enough to confine the first grant within moderate bounds, should, in so short a space as three years, supersede it by another grant of many million times greater extent, is on the face of the affair, a circumstantial nullity.

Whether this patent, or charter, was in existence or not at the time

the Revolution commenced, is a matter I shall hereafter speak of, and confine myself in this place to the limits which the said patent or charter lays down. The words are as follow :

Beginning at the cape or point of land called Cape or Point Comfort, thence all along the seacoast to the *NORTHWARD* 200 miles, and from the said Point or Cape Comfort, all along the seacoast to the *southward*, 200 miles; and all that space or circuit of land lying from the seacoast of the precinct aforesaid up into the land throughout, from sea to sea, *WEST* and *northwest*.

The first remark I shall offer on the words of this grant is, that they are uncertain, obscure, and unintelligible, and may be construed into such a variety of contradictory meanings as to leave at last no meaning at all.

Whether the two hundred miles each way from Cape Comfort, were to be on a *straight* line, or ascertained by following the indented *line of the coast*, that is, "*all along the seacoast*," in and out as the coast lay, cannot now be fully determined; because, as either will admit of supposition, and nothing but supposition can be produced, therefore neither can be taken as positive. Thus far may be said, that had it been intended to be a straight line, the word *straight* ought to have been inserted, which would have made the matter clear; but as no inference can be well drawn to the advantage of that which does *not appear*, against that which *does*, therefore the omission implies negatively in favor of the coast-indented line, or that the 400 miles were to be traced on the windings of the coast, that is "*all along the seacoast*."

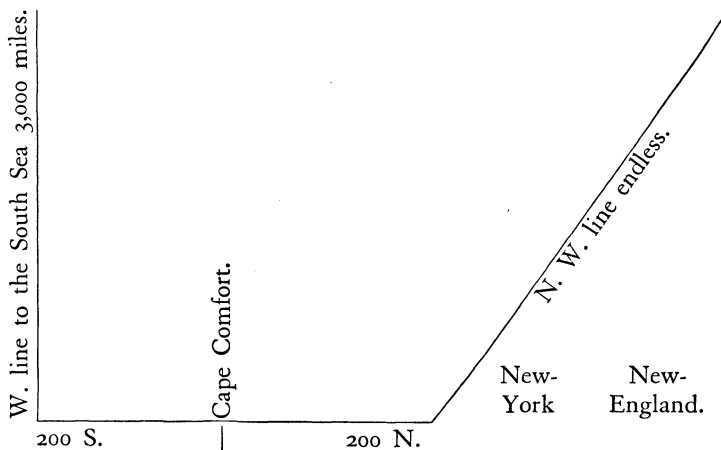
But what is meant by the words "*west and northwest*" is still more unintelligible. Whether they mean a west line and a northwest line, or whether they apply to the general lying of the land from the Atlantic, without regard to lines, cannot again be determined. But if they are supposed to mean lines to be run, then a new difficulty of more magnitude than all the rest arises; namely, from which end of the extent on the coast is the west line and the northwest line to be set off? As the difference in the contents of the grant, occasioned by transposing them, is many hundred millions of acres; and either includes or excludes a far greater quantity of land than the whole thirteen United States contain.

In short, there is not a boundary in this grant that is clear, fixed and defined. The coast line is uncertain, and that being the base on which the others are to be formed, renders the whole uncertain. But even if this line was admitted, in either shape, the other boundaries would still

be on supposition, till it might be said there is no boundary at all, and consequently no charter; for words which describe nothing can give nothing.

The advocates for the Virginia claim, laying hold of these ambiguities, have explained the grant thus:

Four hundred miles on the sea-coast, and from the south point a west line to the great South Sea, and from the north point a northwest line to the said South Sea. The figure which these lines produce will be thus:



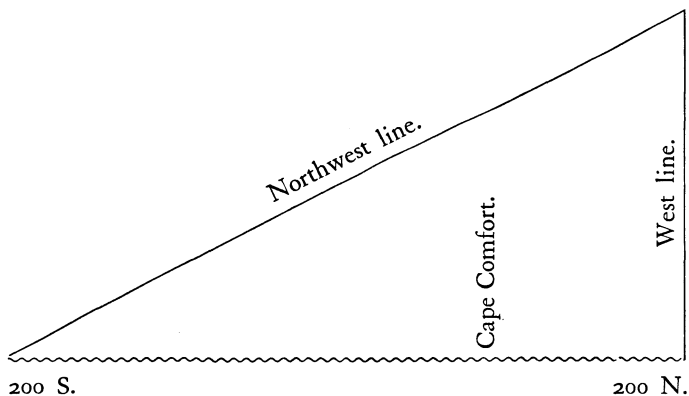
But why, I ask, must the west land line be set off from the south point, any more than the north point? The grant or patent does not say from which it shall be, neither is it clear that a line is the thing intended by the words: but admitting that it is, on what grounds do the claimants proceed in making this choice? The answer, I presume, is easily given, namely, because it is the most beneficial explanation to themselves they can possibly make; as it takes in many thousand times more extent of country than any other explanation would. But this, though it be a very good reason to them, is a very bad reason to us; and though it may do for the claimants to hope upon, will not answer to plead upon; especially to the very people, who, to confirm the partiality of the claimants' choice, must relinquish their own right and interest.

Why not set off the west land line from the north end of the coast line, and the northwest line from the south end of the same? There is some reason why this should be the construction, and none why the other should.

1st, Because if the line of two hundred miles each way from Cape Comfort, be traced by following the indented line of the coast, which seems to be the implied intention of the words, and a west line set off from the north end, and a northwest line from the south end, these lines will all unite (which the other construction never can) and form a complete triangle, the contents of which will be about twenty-nine or thirty millions of acres, or something larger than Pennsylvania; and

2d, Because this construction is following the order of the lines expressed in the grant; for the *first* mentioned *coast* line, which is to the *northward* of Cape Comfort, and the *first* mentioned *land* line, which is the *west* line, have a numerical relation, being the first mentioned of each; and implies, that the west line was to be set off from the *north* point and *not* from the south point; and consequently the *two last* mentioned of each have the same numerical relation, and again implies that the *northwest* line was to be set off from the *south* point, and not from the *north* point. But why the claimants should break through the order of the lines, and contrary to implication, join the *first* mentioned of the *one*, to the last mentioned of the other, and thereby produce a shapeless monster, for which there is no name nor any parallel in the world, either as to extent of soil and sovereignty, is a construction that cannot be supported.

The figure produced by following the order of the lines is as under.<sup>4</sup>



<sup>4</sup> N. B. If the reader will cast his eye again over the words of the patent on page 309 he will perceive the numerical relation alluded to, by observing, that the first mentioned coast line and the first mentioned land line are distinguished by CAPITALS. And the last mentioned of each by *italics*, which I have chosen to do to illustrate the explanation.—*Author.*

I presume that if 400 miles be traced by following the inflexes of any seashore, that the two extremes will not be more than 300 miles distant from each other, on a straight line. Therefore, to find the contents of a triangle, whose base is 300 miles, multiply the length of the base into half the perpendicular, which, in this case, is the west line, and the product will be the answer:

$$\begin{array}{r}
 300 \text{ miles, length of the base.} \\
 \underline{150} \text{ half the perpendicular (supposing it a right-angled triangle).} \\
 15000 \\
 \underline{300} \\
 45,000 \text{ contents of the grant in square miles.} \\
 \underline{640} \text{ acres in a square mile.} \\
 1800000 \\
 \underline{270000} \\
 28,800,000 \text{ contents in square acres.}
 \end{array}$$

Nor will anyone undertake to say that this explanation is not as fairly drawn (if not more so) from the words themselves as any other that can be offered. Because it is not only justified by the exact words of the patent, grant, or charter, or any other name by which it may be called, but by their implied meaning; and is likewise of such contents as may be supposed to have been intended; whereas the claimants' explanation is without bounds, and beyond everything that is reasonable. Yet, after all, who can say what was the precise meaning of terms and expressions so loosely formed, and capable of such a variety of contradictory interpretations?

Had the order of the lines been otherwise than they are in the patent, the reasonableness of the thing must have directed the manner in which they should be connected: but as the claim is founded in unreasonableness, and that unreasonableness endeavored to be supported by a transposition of the lines, there remains no pretense for the claim to stand on.

Perhaps those who are interested in the claimants' explanation will say that as the South Sea is spoken of, the lines must be as they explain them, in order to reach it.

To this I reply; first, that no man then knew how far it was from the Atlantic to the South Sea, as I shall presently show, but believed it to be but a short distance: and,

Secondly, that the uncertain and ambiguous manner in which the South Sea is alluded to (for it is not mentioned by name, but only "*from sea to sea*") serves to perplex the patent, and not to explain it; and as no right can be founded on an ambiguity, but on some proof cleared of ambiguity, therefore the allusive introduction of "from sea to sea" can yield no service to the claim.

There is likewise an ambiguous mention made of *two lands* in this patent, as well as of *two seas*; viz. and all that "*space or circuit of land lying from the seacoast of the precinct aforesaid up into the land throughout from sea to sea.*"

On which I remark, that the two lands here mentioned have the appearance of a major and a minor, or the greater out of which the less is to be taken: and the term from "*sea to sea*" may be said to apply descriptively to the "*land throughout* and not to the *space or circuit of land patented to the company*"; in a similar manner that a former patent described a major of 706 miles in extent, out of which the minor, or square of one hundred miles, was to be chosen.

But to suppose that because the South Sea is darkly alluded to, it must therefore (at whatever distance it might be, which then nobody knew, or for whatever purpose it might be introduced) be made a certain boundary, and that without regard to the reasonableness of the matter, or the order in which the lines are arranged, which is the only implication the patent gives for setting off the land lines, is a supposition that contradicts everything which is reasonable.

The figure produced by following the order of the lines will be complete in itself, let the distance to the South Sea be more or less; because, if the *land throughout from sea to sea* had not been sufficiently extensive to admit the west land line and the northwest line to close, the South Sea, in that case, would have eventually become a boundary; but if the extent of the *land throughout from sea to sea*, was so great that the lines closed without reaching the said South Sea, the figure was complete without it.

Wherefore, as the order of the lines, when raised on the indented coast line, produces a regular figure of reasonable dimensions, and of about the same contents, though not of the same shape, which Virginia now holds within the Allegheny Mountains; and by transposing them, another figure is produced, for which there is no name, and cannot be completed, as I shall presently explain, and of an extent greater than one half of Europe, it is needless to offer any other arguments to show that



the order of the lines must be the rule, if any rule can be drawn from the words, for ascertaining from which point the west line and north-west line were to be set off.

Neither is it possible to suppose any other rule could be followed; because a northwest line set off two hundred miles above Cape Comfort, would not only never touch the South Sea, but would form a spiral line of infinite windings round the globe, and after passing over the northern parts of America and the frozen ocean, and then into the northern parts of Asia, would, when eternity should end, and not before, terminate in the North Pole.

This is the only manner in which I can express the effect of a northwest line, set off as above; because as its direction must always be between the North and the West, it consequently can never get into the Pole nor yet come to a rest, and on the principle that matter or space is capable of being eternally divided, must proceed on forever.

But it was a prevailing opinion, at the time this patent was obtained, that the South Sea was at no great distance from the Atlantic, and therefore it was needless, under that supposition, to regard which way the lines should be run; neither need we wonder at this error in the English Government respecting America then, when we see so many and such glaring ones now, for which there is much less excuse.

Some circumstances favored this mistake. Admiral Sir Francis Drake, not long before this, had, from the top of a mountain in the Isthmus of Darien, which is the center of North and South America, seen both the South Sea and the Atlantic, the width of the part of the continent where he then was, not being above 70 miles; whereas its width opposite Chesapeake Bay is as great, if not greater, than in any other part, being from *sea to sea* about the distance it is from America to England. But this could not then be known, because only two voyages had been made across the South Sea; the one by the ship in which Magellan sailed, who died on his passage, and which was the first ship which sailed around the world, and the other by Sir Francis Drake; but as neither of these sailed into a northern latitude in that ocean, high enough to fix the longitude of the Western coast of America from the Eastern, the distance across was entirely on supposition, and the errors they then ran into appear laughable to us who now know what the distance is.

That the Company expected to come at the South Sea without much trouble or traveling, and that the great body of land which intervened, so far from being their view in obtaining the charter, became their dis-

appointment, may be collected from a circumstance mentioned in Stith's "History of Virginia."

He relates, that in the year 1608, which was at the time the Company were soliciting this patent, they fitted up in England "a barge for Captain Newport (who was afterwards one of the joint deputy governors under the very charter we are now treating of), which, for convenience of carriage, might be taken into five pieces, and with which he and his company were instructed to go up James River as far as the falls thereof, to discover the country of the Monakins, and from thence they were to proceed, *carrying their barge beyond the falls to convey them to the South Sea*; being ordered not to return without a lump of gold, or a certainty of the said sea." And Hutchinson, in his history of New England, which was called North Virginia at the time this patent was obtained, says "the geography of this part of America was less understood than at present. A line to the Spanish settlements was imagined to be much shorter than it really was. Some of Champlain's people in the beginning of the last century, who had been but a few days' march from Quebec, returned with great joy, supposing that from the top of a high mountain, they had discovered *the South Sea*."

From these matters, which are evidences on record, it appears that the adventurers had no knowledge of the distance it was to the South Sea, but supposed it to be no great way from the Atlantic; and also that great extent of territory was not their object, but a short communication with the southern ocean, by which they might get into the neighborhood of the Gold Coast, and likewise carry on a commerce with the East Indies.

Having thus shown the confused and various interpretations this charter is subject to, and that it may be made to mean anything and nothing; I proceed to show, that, let the limits of it be more or less, the present state of Virginia does not, and cannot, as a matter of right, inherit under it.

I shall open this part of the subject by putting the following case:

Either Virginia stands in succession to the London Company, to whom the charter was granted, or to the Crown of England. If to the London Company, then it becomes her, as an outset in the matter, to show who they were, and likewise that they were in possession to the commencement of the Revolution. If to the Crown, then the charter is of consequence superseded; because the Crown did not possess territories by charter, but by prerogative without charter. The notion of the Crown chartering to itself is a nullity; and in this case, the unpossessed

lands, be they little or much, are in the same condition as if they had never been chartered at all; and the sovereignty of them devolves to the sovereignty of the United States.

The charter or patent of 1609, as well as that of 1606, was to Sir Thomas Gates, Sir George Summers, the Rev. Richard Hacluit, Prebend of Westminster, and others; and the government was then proprietary. These proprietors, by virtue of the charter of 1609, chose Lord Delaware for their governor, and Sir Thomas Gates, Sir George Summers, and Captain Newport (the person who was to go with a boat to the South Sea), joint deputy governors. Was this the form of government either as to soil or constitution at the time the present Revolution commenced? If not, the charter was not *in being*; for it matters not to us how it came to be *out of being*, so long as the present Virginians, or their ancestors, neither are, nor were sufferers by the change then made.

But suppose it could not be proved to be in being, which it cannot, because *being*, in a charter, is power, it would only prove a right in behalf of the London Company of adventurers; but how that right is to be disposed of is another question. We are not defending the right of the London Company, deceased 150 years ago, but taking up the matter at the place where we found it, and so far as the authority of the Crown of England was exercised when the Revolution commenced. The charter was a contract between the Crown of England and those adventurers for their own emolument, and not between the Crown and the people of Virginia; and whatever was the occasion of the contract becoming void, or surrendered up, or superseded, makes no part of the question now.

It is sufficient that when the United States succeeded to sovereignty they found no such contract in existence, or even in litigation. They found Virginia under the authority of the Crown of England both as to soil and government, subject to quit-rents to the Crown and not to the Company, and had been so for upwards of 150 years: and that an instrument or deed of writing, of a private nature, as all proprietary contracts are, so far as land is concerned, and which is now historically known, and in which Virginia was no party, and to which no succession in any line can be proved, and has ceased for 150 years, should now be raked from oblivion and held up as a charter whereon to assume a right to boundless territory, and that by a perversion of the order of it, is something very singular and extraordinary.

If there was any innovation on the part of the Crown, the contest rested between the Crown and the proprietors, the London Company, and not between Virginia and the said Crown. It was not her charter; it was the Company's charter, and the only parties in the case were the Crown and the Company.

But why, if Virginia contends for the immutability of charters, has she selected this in preference to the two former ones? All her arguments, arising from this principle, must go to the first charter and not to the last; but by placing them to the last, instead of the first, she admits a fact against her principle; because, in order to establish the last, she proves the first to be vacated by the second in the space of twenty-three years, the second to be vacated by the third in the space of three years; and why the third should not be vacated by the fourth form of government, issuing from the same power with the former two, and which took place about twenty-five years after, and continued in being for one hundred and fifty years since, and under which all her public and private business was transacted, her purchases made, her warrants for survey and patents for land obtained, is too mysterious to account for.

Either the re-assumption of the London Company's charter into the hands of the Crown was an usurpation, or it was not. If it was, then, strictly speaking, is everything which Virginia has done under that usurpation illegal, and she may be said to have lived in the most curious species of rebellion ever known; rebellion against the London Company of adventurers. For if the charter to the Company (for it was not to the Virginians) ought to be in being now, it ought to have been in being then; and why she should admit its vacation then and reject it now, is unaccountable; or why she should esteem her purchases of land good which were *then* made contrary to this charter, and now contend for the operation of the same charter to possess new territory by, are circumstances which cannot be reconciled.

But whether the charter, as it is called, ought to be extinct or not, cannot make a question with us. All the parties concerned in it are deceased, and no successors, in any regular line of succession, appear to claim. Neither the London Company of adventurers, their heirs or assigns, were in possession of the exercise of this charter at the commencement of the Revolution; and therefore the state of Virginia does not, in point of fact, succeed to and inherit from the Company.

But, say they, we succeed to and inherit from the Crown of England,

which was the immediate possessor of the sovereignty at the time we entered, and had been so for one hundred and fifty years.

To say this, is to say there is no charter at all. A charter is an assurance from one party to another, and cannot be from the same party to itself.

But before I enter further on this case, I shall concisely state how this charter came to be re-assumed by the power which granted it, the Crown of England.

I have already stated that it was a proprietary charter, or grant, to Sir Thomas Gates and others, who were called the London Company, and sometimes the South Virginia Company, to distinguish them from those who settled to the eastward (now New England) and were then called the North Virginia or Plymouth Company.

Oldmixon's "History of Virginia" (in his account of the British Empire in America) published in the year 1708, gives a concise progress of the affair. He attributes it to the misconduct, contentions and mismanagements of the proprietors, and their innovations upon the Indians, which had so exasperated them, that they fell on the settlers, and destroyed at one time three hundred and thirty-four men, women and children.

Some time after this massacre (says he), several gentlemen in England procured grants of land from the Company, and others came over on their private accounts to make settlements; among the former was one Captain Martin, who was named to be of the council. This man raised so many differences among them, that new distractions followed, which the Indians observing, took heart, and once more fell upon the settlers on the borders, destroying, without pitying either age, sex, or condition.

These and other calamities being chiefly imputed to the mismanagement of the proprietors, whose losses had so discouraged most of their best members, that they sold their shares, and Charles I., on his accession to the throne, dissolved the Company, and took the colony into his own immediate direction. He appointed the governor and council himself, ordered all patents and processes to issue in his own name, and reserved a quit-rent of two shillings sterling for every hundred acres.

Thus far our author. Now it is impossible for us at this distance of time to say what were all the exact causes of the change; neither have we any business with it. The Company might surrender it, or they might not, or they might forfeit it by not fulfilling conditions, or they might sell it, or the Crown might, as far as we know, take it from them. But what are either of these cases to Virginia, or any other which can be

produced? She was not a party in the matter. It was not her charter, neither can she ingraft any right upon it, or suffer any injury under it.

If the charter was vacated, it must have been by the London Company; if it was surrendered, it must be by the same; and if it was sold, nobody else could sell it; and if it was taken from them, nobody else could lose it; and yet Virginia calls this her charter, which it was not within her power to hold, to sell, to vacate, or to lose.

But if she puts her right upon the ground that it never was sold, surrendered, lost, or vacated, by the London Company, she admits that if they *had* sold, surrendered, lost, or vacated it, it would have become extinct, and to her no charter at all. And in this case, the only thing to prove is the fact, which is, has this charter been the rule of government, and of purchasing or procuring unappropriated lands in Virginia, from the time it was granted to the time of the Revolution? Answer—the charter has not been the rule of government, nor of purchasing and procuring lands, neither have any lands been purchased or procured under its sanction or authority for upwards of one hundred and fifty years.

But if she goes a step further, and says that they could not vacate, surrender, sell, or lose it, by any act they could do, so neither could they vacate, surrender, sell or lose that of 1606, which was three years prior to this: and this argument, so far from establishing the charter of 1609, would destroy it; and in its stead confirm the preceding one, which limited the Company to a square of one hundred miles. And if she still goes back to that of Sir Walter Raleigh, *that* only places her in the light of Americans common with all.

The only fact that can be clearly proved is that the Crown of England exercised the power of dominion and government in Virginia, and of the disposal of the lands, and that the charter had neither been the rule of government nor purchasing land for upwards of one hundred and fifty years, and this places Virginia in succession to the Crown, and not to the Company. Consequently it proves a lapse of the charter into the hands of the Crown by some means or other.

Now to suppose that the charter could return into the hands of the Crown and yet remain in force is to suppose that a man could be bound by a bond of obligation to himself.

Its very *being* in the hands of the Crown, from which it issued, is a cessation of its existence; and an effectual unchartering all that part of the grant which was not before disposed of. And consequently the State

of Virginia, standing thus in succession to the Crown, can be entitled to no more extent of country as a State under the Union, than what it possessed as a province under the Crown. And all lands exterior to these bounds, as well of Virginia as the rest of the States, devolve, in the order of succession, to the sovereignty of the United States for the benefit of all.

And this brings the case to what were the limits of Virginia as a province under the Crown of England.

Charter it had none. Its limits then rested at the discretion of the authority to which it was subject. Maryland and Pennsylvania became its boundary to the eastward and northward, and North Carolina to the southward, therefore the boundary to the westward was the only principal line to be ascertained.

As Virginia, from a proprietary soil and government was become what then bore the name of a royal one, the extent of the province, as the order of things then stood (for something must always be admitted whereon to form a beginning) was wholly at the disposal of the Crown of England, who might enlarge or diminish, or erect new governments to the westward, by the same authoritative right that Virginia now can divide a county into two, if too large, or too inconvenient.

To say, as has been said, that Pennsylvania, Maryland and North Carolina, were taken out of Virginia, is no more than to say, they were taken out of America; because Virginia was the common name of all the country, North and South; and to say they were taken out of the chartered limits of Virginia, is likewise to say nothing; because, after the dissolution or extinction of the proprietary company, there was nobody to whom any provincial limits became chartered. The extinction of the Company was the extinction of the chartered limits. The patent could not survive the Company, because it was to them a right, which, when they expired, ceased to be anybody else's in their stead.

But to return to the western boundary of Virginia at the commencement of the Revolution.

Charters, like proclamations, were the sole act of the Crown, and if the former were adequate to fix limits to the lands which it gave away, sold, or otherwise disposed of, the latter were equally adequate to fix limits or divisions to those which it retained; and therefore, the western limits of Virginia, as the proprietary Company was extinct and consequently the patent with it, must be looked for in the line of proclamations.

I am not fond of quoting these old remains of former arrogance, but as we must begin somewhere, and as the States have agreed to regulate the right of each State to territory, by the condition each stood in with the Crown of England at the commencement of the Revolution, we have no other rule to go by; and any rule which can be agreed on is better than none.

From the proclamation then of 1763, the western limits of Virginia, as a province under the Crown of England are described so as not to extend beyond the heads of any of the rivers which empty themselves into the Atlantic, and consequently the limits did not pass over the Allegheny Mountains.

The following is an extract from the proclamation of 1763, so far as respects boundary:

And whereas, it is *just and reasonable and essential to our interest*, and the security of our colonies, that the several nations or tribes of Indians, with whom we are connected, and who live under our protection, should not be molested or disturbed in the possession of such parts of our dominions and territories, *as, not having been ceded to, or purchased by us, are reserved to them or any of them as their hunting grounds*; we do therefore, with the advice of our privy council, declare it to be our royal will and pleasure that no governor, or commander-in-chief, in any of our colonies of Quebec, East Florida, or West Florida, do presume upon any pretense whatever, to grant warrants of survey, or pass any patents for lands beyond the bounds of their respective governments, as described in their commissions: as ALSO that no governor or commander-in-chief of our colonies or plantations in America, do presume, for the present, and until our further pleasure be known, to grant warrants of survey or pass patents for any lands *beyond the heads or sources of any of the rivers which fall into the Atlantic Ocean, from the west or northwest*, or upon any lands whatever, *which not having been ceded to or purchased by us, as aforesaid, are reserved unto the said Indians, or any of them*.

And we do further declare it to be our royal will and pleasure, for the present, as aforesaid, to reserve under our sovereignty, protection, and dominion, *for the use of the said Indians, all lands and territories*, not included within the limits of our said three new governments, or within the limits of the territory granted to the Hudson's Bay Company; as also *all the lands and territories lying to the westward of the sources of the rivers, which fall into the sea from the west and northwest, as aforesaid*; and we do hereby strictly forbid on pain of our displeasure, all our loving subjects from making any purchases or settlements whatever, or taking possession of any of the



lands above reserved, without our especial leave and license for that purpose first obtained.

And we do further strictly enjoin and require all persons whatever, who have either wilfully or inadvertently seated themselves upon any lands within the countries above described, or upon any other lands, *which, not having been ceded to, or purchased by us*, are still reserved to the said Indians, as aforesaid, forthwith to remove themselves from such settlements.

It is easy for us to understand, that the frequent and plausible mention of the Indians was only a pretext to create an idea of the humanity of government. The object and intention of the proclamation was the western boundary, which is here signified not to extend beyond the heads of the rivers: and these, then, are the western limits which Virginia had as a province under the Crown of Britain.

And agreeable to the intention of this proclamation, and the limits described thereby, Lord Hillsborough, then Secretary of State in England, addressed an official letter, of the thirty-first of July, 1770, to Lord Bottetourt, at that time Governor of Virginia, which letter was laid before the Council of Virginia by Mr. President Nelson, and by him answered on the eighteenth of October, in the same year, of which the following are extracts:

On the evening of the day Your Lordship's letter to the governor was delivered to me (as it contains matters of great variety and importance) it was read in council, and, together with the several papers inclosed, it has been maturely considered, and I now trouble Your Lordship with theirs as well as my own opinion upon the subject of them.

We do not presume to say to whom our gracious sovereign shall grant the vacant lands, and with regard to the establishment of a *new colony on the back of Virginia*, it is a subject of too great political importance for me to presume to give an opinion upon; however, permit me, My Lord, to observe, that when that part of the country shall become sufficiently populated it may be a wise and prudent measure

On the death of Lord Bottetourt, Lord Dunmore was appointed to the government, and he, either from ignorance of the subject or other motives, made a grant of some lands on the Ohio to certain of his friends and favorites, which produced the following letter from Lord Dartmouth, who succeeded Lord Hillsborough as Secretary of State:

I think fit to inclose Your Lordship a copy of Lord Hillsborough's letter to Lord Bottetourt, of the thirty-first of July, 1770, the receipt of which was

acknowledged by Mr. President Nelson, a few days before Lord Bottetourt's death, and appears by his answer to it, to have been laid before the council. That board, therefore, could not be ignorant of what has passed here upon Mr. Walpole's application, nor of the King's express command, contained in Lord Hillsborough's letter, that no lands should be granted beyond the limits of the royal proclamation of 1763, until the King's further pleasure was signified; and I have only to observe, that it must have been a very extraordinary neglect in them not to have informed Your Lordship of that letter and those orders.

On these documents I shall make no remarks. They are their own evidence, and show what the limits of Virginia were while a British province; and as there was then no other authority by which they could be fixed, and as the grant to the London Company could not be a grant to any but themselves, and of consequence ceased to be when they ceased to exist, it remained a matter of choice in the Crown, on its re-assumption of the lands, to limit or divide them into separate governments, as it judged best, and from which there was not, and could not, in the order of government, be any appeal. Neither was Virginia, as a province, affected by it, because the moneys, in any case, arising from the sale of lands, did not go into her treasury; and whether to the Crown or to the proprietors was to her indifferent. And it is likewise evident, from the secretary's letter, and the president's answer, that it was in contemplation to lay out a new colony on the *back* of Virginia, between the Allegheny Mountains and the Ohio.

Having thus gone through the several charters, or grants, and their relation to each other, and shown that Virginia cannot stand in succession to a private grant, which has been extinct for upwards of one hundred and fifty years—and that the western limits of Virginia, at the commencement of the Revolution, were at the heads of the rivers emptying themselves into the Atlantic, none of which are beyond the Allegheny Mountains; I now proceed to the second part, namely,

The reasonableness of her claims.

Virginia, as a British province, stood in a different situation with the Crown of England to any of the other provinces, because she had no ascertained limits, but such as arose from laying off new provinces and the proclamation of 1763. For the same name, Virginia, as I have before mentioned, was the general name of all the country, and the dominion out of which the several governments were laid off: and, in strict propriety, conformable to the origin of names, the province of Virginia

was taken out of the dominion of Virginia. For the term, *dominion*, could not appertain to the province, which retained the name of Virginia, but the Crown, and from thence was applied to the whole country, and signified its being an appendage to the Crown of England, as they say now, "*our dominion of Wales*."

It is not possible to suppose there could exist an idea that Virginia, as a British province, was to be extended to the South Sea, at the distance of three thousand miles. The dominion, as appertaining at that time to the Crown, might be claimed to extend so far, but as a province the thought was not conceivable, nor the practice possible.

And it is more than probable, that the deception made use of to obtain the patent of 1609, by representing the South Sea to be near where the Allegheny Mountains are, was one cause of its becoming extinct; and it is worthy of remarking, that no history (at least that I have met with) mentions any dispute or litigation, between the Crown and the Company, in consequence of the extinction of the patent, and the re-assumption of the lands; and, therefore, the negative evidence corroborating with the positive, makes it as certain as such a case can possibly be, that either the Company received a compensation for the patent, or quitted it quietly, ashamed of the imposition they had practised, and their subsequent maladministration.

Men are not inclined to give up a claim where there is any ground to contend upon, and the silence in which the patent expired is a presumptive proof that its fate, from whatever cause, was just.

There is one general policy which seems to have prevailed with the English in laying off new governments, which was not to make them larger than their own country, that they might the easier hold them manageable: this was the case with everyone except Canada, the extension of whose limits was for the politic purpose of recognizing new acquisitions of territory not immediately convenient for colonization.

But, in order to give this matter a chance through all its cases, I will admit what no man can suppose, which is that there is an English charter that fixes Virginia to extend from the Atlantic to the South Sea, and contained within a due west line, set off two hundred miles below Cape Comfort, and a northwest line, set off two hundred miles above it. Her side, then, on the Atlantic (according to an explanation given in Mr. Bradford's paper of Sept. 29, 1779, by an advocate for the Virginia claims) will be four hundred miles; her side to the south three thousand; her side to the west four thousand; and her northwest line about five

thousand; and the quantity of land contained within these dimensions will be almost four thousand millions of acres, which is more than ten times the quantity contained within the present United States, and above an hundred times greater than the Kingdom of England.

To reason on a case like his is such a waste of time, and such an excess of folly, that it ought not to be reasoned upon. It is impossible to suppose that any patent to private persons could be so intentionally absurd, and the claim grounded thereon, is as wild as anything the imagination of man ever conceived.

But if, as I before mentioned, there was a charter which bore such an explanation, and Virginia stood in succession to it, what would that be to us, any more than the will of Alexander, had he taken it into his head to have bequeathed away the world? Such a charter, or grant, must have been obtained by imposition and a false representation of the country, or granted in error, or both; and in any of, or all these cases, the United States must reject the matter as something they cannot know, for the merits will not bear an argument, and the pretension of right stands upon no better ground.

Our case is an original one; and many matters attending it must be determined on their own merits and reasonableness. The territory of the rest of the states is, in general, within known bounds of moderate extent, and the quota which each state is to furnish toward the expense and service of the war, must be ascertained upon some rule of comparison. The number of inhabitants of each state formed the first rule; and it was naturally supposed that those numbers bore nearly the same proportion to each other, which the territory of each state did. Virginia on this scale, would be about one fifth larger than Pennsylvania, which would be as much dominion as any state could manage with happiness and convenience.

When I first began this subject my intention was to be extensive on the merits, and concise on the matter of the right; instead of which, I have been extensive on the matter of right, and concise on the merits of reasonableness: and this alteration in my design arose, consequentially, from the nature of the subject; for as a reasonable thing the claim can be supported by no argument, and therefore, needs none to refute it; but as there is a strange propensity in mankind to shelter themselves under the sanction of right, however unreasonable that supposed right may be, I found it most conducive to the interest of the case to show that the right stands upon no better grounds than the reason. And shall there-

fore proceed to make some observations on the consequences of the claim.

The claim being unreasonable in itself, and standing on no ground of right, but such as, if true, must, from the quarter it is drawn, be offensive, has a tendency to create disgust, and sour the minds of the rest of the States. Those lands are capable, under the management of the United States, of repaying the charges of the war, and some of them, as I shall hereafter show, may, I presume, be made an immediate advantage of.

I distinguish three different descriptions of land in America at the commencement of the Revolution. Proprietary or chartered lands, as was the case in Pennsylvania; crown lands, within the described limits of any of the Crown governments; and crown residuary lands, that were without or beyond the limits of any province; and those last were held in reserve whereon to erect new governments, and lay out new provinces; as appears to have been the design by Lord Hillsborough's letter, and the president's answer, wherein he says, "with respect to the establishment of a *new* colony on the *back* of Virginia, it is a subject of too great political importance for me to presume to give an opinion upon; however, permit me, My Lord, to observe, that when that part of the country shall become populated, it may be a wise and prudent measure."

The expression is, a "*new colony on the back of Virginia*"; and referred to lands between the heads of the rivers and the Ohio. This is a proof that those lands were not considered within, but beyond the limits of Virginia, as a colony; and the other expression in the letter is equally descriptive, namely, "*We do not presume to say, to whom our Gracious Sovereign shall grant his vacant lands.*" Certainly then, the same right, which, at that time rested in the Crown, rests now in the more supreme authority of the United States; and therefore, addressing the president's letter to the circumstances of the Revolution, it will run thus:

"We do not presume to say to whom the *sovereign United States* shall grant their vacant lands, and with respect to the settlement of a *new colony on the back of Virginia*, it is a matter of too much political importance for me to give an opinion upon; however, permit me to observe, that when that part of the country shall become populated it may be a wise and prudent measure."

It must occur to every person, on reflection, that those lands are too distant to be within the government of any of the present states; and, I may presume to suppose, that were a calculation justly made, Virginia has lost more by the decrease of taxables, than she has gained by what

lands she has made sale of; therefore, she is not only doing the rest of the states wrong in point of equity, but herself and them an injury in point of strength, service, and revenue.

It is only the United States, and not any single State, that can lay off new States, and incorporate them in the Union by representation; therefore, the situation which the settlers on those lands will be in, under the assumed right of Virginia, will be hazardous and distressing, and they will feel themselves at last like the aliens to the Commonwealth of Israel, their habitations unsafe and their title precarious.

And when men reflect on that peace, harmony, quietude, and security, which are necessary to prosperity, especially in making new settlements, and think that when the war shall be ended, their happiness and safety will depend on a union with the states, and not a scattered people, unconnected with, and politically unknown to the rest, they will feel but little inclination to put themselves in a situation, which, however solitary and reclusive it may appear at present, will then be uncertain and unsafe, and their troubles will have to begin where those of the United States shall end.

It is probable that some of the inhabitants of Virginia may be inclined to suppose that the writer of this, by taking up the subject in the manner he has done, is arguing unfriendly against their interest. To which he wishes to reply:

That the most extraordinary part of the whole is, that Virginia should countenance such a claim. For it is worthy of observing that, from the beginning of the contest with Britain, and long after, there was not a people in America who discovered, through all the variety and multiplicity of public business, a greater fund of true wisdom, fortitude, and disinterestedness than the then colony of Virginia. They were loved—they were revered. Their investigation of the assumed rights of Britain had a sagacity which was uncommon. Their reasonings were piercing, difficult to be equaled and impossible to be refuted, and their public spirit was exceeded by none. But since this unfortunate land scheme has taken place, their powers seem to be absorbed; a torpor has overshadowed them, and everyone asks, What is become of Virginia?

It seldom happens that the romantic schemes of extensive dominion are of any service to a government, and never to a people. They assuredly end at last in loss, trouble, division and disappointment. And was even the title of Virginia good, and the claim admissible, she would derive more lasting and real benefit by participating in it than by at-

tempting the management of an object so infinitely beyond her reach. Her share with the rest, under the supremacy of the United States, which is the only authority adequate to the purpose, would be worth more to her than what the whole would produce under the management of herself alone. And that for several reasons:

1st, Because her claim not being admissible nor yet manageable, she cannot make a good title to the purchasers, and consequently can get but little for the lands.

2d, Because the distance the settlers will be from her, will immediately put them out of all government and protection, so far, at least as relates to Virginia: and by this means she will render her frontiers a refuge to desperadoes, and a hiding place from justice; and the consequence will be perpetual unsafety to her own peace, and that of the neighboring States.

3d, Because her quota of expense for carrying on the war, admitting her to engross such an immensity of territory, would be greater than she can either support or supply, and could not be less, upon a reasonable rule of proportion, than nine-tenths of the whole. And,

4th, Because she must sooner or later relinquish them; therefore to see her own interest wisely at first, is preferable to the alternative of finding it out by misfortune at last.

I have now gone through my examination of the claim of Virginia, in every case which I proposed; and for several reasons, wish the lot had fallen to another person. But as this is a most important matter, in which all are interested, and the substantial good of Virginia not injured but promoted, and as few men have leisure, and still fewer have inclination, to go into intricate investigation, I have at last ventured on the subject.

The succession of the United States to the vacant western territory is a right they originally set out upon; and in the pamphlet "Common Sense," I frequently mentioned those lands as a national fund for the benefit of all; therefore, resuming the subject where I then left off, I shall conclude with concisely reducing to system what I then only hinted.

In my last piece, the "Crisis Extraordinary," I estimated the annual amount of the charge of war and the support of the several governments at two million pounds sterling, and the peace establishment at three quarters of a million, and, by a comparison of the taxes of this country with those of England, proved that the whole yearly expense to us, to defend the country, is but a third of what Britain would have drawn from us by taxes, had she succeeded in her attempt to conquer;

and our peace establishment only an eighth part; and likewise showed, that it was within the ability of the states to carry on the whole of the war by taxation, without having recourse to any other modes or funds. To have a clear idea of taxation is necessary to every country, and the more funds we can discover and organize, the less will be the hope of the enemy, and the readier their disposition to peace, which it is now *their* interest more than *ours* to promote.

I have already remarked that only the United States, and not any particular State, can lay off new states and incorporate them into the Union by representation; keeping, therefore, this idea in view, I ask, might not a substantial fund be quickly created by laying off a new state, so as to contain between twenty and thirty millions of acres, and opening a land office in all countries in Europe for hard money, and in this country for supplies in kind, at a certain price?

The tract of land that seems best adapted to answer this purpose is contained between the Allegheny Mountains and the river Ohio, as far north as the Pennsylvania line, thence extending down the said river to the falls thereof, thence due south into the latitude of the North-Carolina line, and thence east to the Allegheny Mountains aforesaid. I the more readily mention this tract, because it is fighting the enemy with their own weapons, as it includes the same ground on which a new colony would have been erected, for the emolument of the Crown of England, as appears by the letters of Lords Hillsborough and Dartmouth, had not the Revolution prevented its being carried into effect.

It is probable that there may be some spots of private property within this tract, but to incorporate them into some government will render them more profitable to the owners, and the condition of the scattered settlers more eligible and happy than at present.

If twenty millions of acres of this new State be patented and sold at twenty pounds sterling per hundred acres, they will produce four million pounds sterling, which, if applied to Continental expenses only, will support the war for three years, should Britain be so unwise as to prosecute it against her own direct interest and against the interest and policy of all Europe. The several States will then have to raise taxes for their internal government only, and the Continental taxes, as soon as the fund begins to operate, will lessen, and if sufficiently productive, will cease.

Lands are the real riches of the habitable world, and the natural funds of America. The funds of other countries are, in general, artificially



constructed; the creatures of necessity and contrivance dependent upon credit, and always exposed to hazard and uncertainty. But lands can neither be annihilated nor lose their value; on the contrary, they universally rise with population, and rapidly so, when under the security of effectual government. But this it is impossible for Virginia to give, and therefore, that which is capable of defraying the expenses of the empire, will, under the management of any single State, produce only a fugitive support to wandering individuals.

I shall now inquire into the effects which the laying out of a new State, under the authority of the United States, will have upon Virginia. It is the very circumstance she ought to, and must, wish for, when she examines the matter in all its bearings and consequences.

The present settlers beyond her reach, and her supposed authority over them remaining in herself, they will appear to her as revolters, and she to them as oppressors; and this will produce such a spirit of mutual dislike, that in a little time a total disagreement will take place, to the disadvantage of both. But under the authority of the United States the matter is manageable, and Virginia will be eased of a disagreeable consequence.

Besides this, a sale of the lands, continentally, for the purpose of supporting the expense of the war, will save her a greater share of taxes, than the small sale which she could make herself, and the small price she could get for them would produce.

She would likewise have two advantages which no other State in the Union enjoys; first, a frontier State for her defense against the incursions of the Indians; and the second is, that the laying out and peopling a new State on the back of an old one, situated as she is, is doubling the quantity of its trade.

The new State which is here proposed to be laid out, may send its exports down the Mississippi, but its imports must come through Chesapeake Bay, and consequently Virginia will become the market for the new State; because, though there is a navigation from it, there is none into it, on account of the rapidity of the Mississippi.

There are certain circumstances that will produce certain events whether men think of them or not. The events do not depend upon thinking, but are the natural consequence of acting; and according to the system which Virginia has gone upon, the issue will be, that she will get involved with the back settlers in a contention about *rights*, till they dispute with their own claims; and, soured by the contention, will

go to any other state for their commerce; both of which may be prevented, a perfect harmony established, the strength of the States increased, and the expenses of the war defrayed, by settling the matter now on the plan of a general right; and every day it is delayed, the difficulty will be increased and the advantages lessened.

But if it should happen, as it possibly may, that the war should end before the money, which the new State may produce, be expended, the remainder of the lands therein may be set apart to reimburse those whose houses have been burned by the enemy, as this is a species of suffering which it was impossible to prevent, because houses are not movable property; and it ought not to be that because we cannot do everything, that we ought not to do what we can.

Having said this much on the subject, I think it necessary to remark that the prospect of a new fund, so far from abating our endeavors in making every immediate provision for the army, ought to quicken us therein; for should the States see it expedient to go upon the measure, it will be at least a year before it can be productive. I the more freely mention this, because there is a dangerous species of popularity, which, I fear, some men are seeking from their constituents by giving them grounds to believe that if they are elected they will lighten the taxes; a measure which, in the present state of things, cannot be done without exposing the country to the ravages of the enemy by disabling the army from defending it.

Where knowledge is a duty, ignorance is a crime; and if any man, whose duty it was to know better, has encouraged such an expectation, he has either deceived himself or them: besides, no country can be defended without expense, and let any man compare his portion of temporary inconveniences arising from taxation with the real distresses of the army for want of supplies, and the difference is not only sufficient to strike him dumb, but make him thankful that worse consequences have not followed.

In advancing this doctrine, I speak with an honest freedom to the country; for as it is their good to be defended, so it is their interest to provide that defense, at least till other funds can be organized.

As the laying out new States will some time or other be the business of the country, and as it is yet a new business to us, and as the influence of the war has scarcely afforded leisure for reflecting on distant circumstances, I shall throw together a few hints for facilitating that measure whenever it may be proper for adopting it.

The United States now standing on the line of sovereignty, the vacant territory is their property collectively, but the persons by whom it may hereafter be peopled will also have an equal right with ourselves; and therefore, as new States shall be laid off and incorporated with the present, they will become partakers of the remaining territory with us who are already in possession. And this consideration ought to heighten the value of lands to new emigrants: because, in making the purchases, they not only gain an immediate property, but become initiated into the right and heirship of the States to a property in reserve, which is an additional advantage to what any purchasers under the late Government of England enjoyed.

The setting off the boundary of any new state will naturally be the first step, and as it must be supposed not to be peopled at the time it is laid off, a constitution must be formed by the United States, as the rule of government in any new state, for a certain term of years (perhaps ten) or until the state becomes peopled to a certain number of inhabitants; after which, the whole and sole right of modeling their government to rest with themselves.

A question may arise, whether a new state should immediately possess an equal right with the present ones in all cases which may come before Congress.

This, experience will best determine; but at a first view of the matter it appears thus: that it ought to be immediately incorporated into the Union on the ground of a family right, such a state standing in the line of a younger child of the same stock; but as new emigrants will have something to learn when they first come to America, and a new state requiring aid rather than capable of giving it, it might be most convenient to admit its immediate representation into Congress, there to sit, hear and debate on all questions and matters, but not to vote on any till after the expiration of seven years.

I shall in this place take the opportunity of renewing a hint which I formerly threw out in the pamphlet "Common Sense," and which the several states will, sooner or later, see the convenience if not the necessity of adopting; which is, that of electing a Continental convention, for the purpose of forming a Continental constitution, defining and describing the powers and authority of Congress.

Those of entering into treaties, and making peace, they naturally possess, in behalf of the states, for their separate as well as their united good, but the internal control and dictatorial powers of Congress are not

sufficiently defined, and appear to be too much in some cases and too little in others; and therefore, to have them marked out legally will give additional energy to the whole, and a new confidence to the several parts.

## SIX LETTERS TO RHODE ISLAND

Two years after the publication of *Public Good*, Paine rushed into print again in order to bring home to the people the need for cementing the Union, "the great Palladium of our liberty and Safety." Faced by a serious financial crisis, Congress proposed a five-per-cent duty on imported articles, the money to be applied to the payment of interest on loans to be made in Holland. Under the Articles of Confederation unanimous consent of the States was necessary before the proposal of Congress could become a law. By the fall of 1782, all the States except Georgia and Rhode Island had agreed to Congress's urgent request and adopted the impost, and Georgia had signified its willingness to do so in the very near future. The Rhode Island Assembly, however, unanimously rejected the impost.

In this situation Paine could not remain silent. He wrote six letters addressed to the citizens of Rhode Island attempting to persuade them to desist from their refusal to accept the proposal of Congress, and even "was at the trouble of a journey to Rhode Island to reason with them on the subject." These letters appeared in the *Providence Gazette* of December 21, 28, 1782, January 4, 11, 18, February 1, 1783. The first two letters also appeared in several Philadelphia papers. While the letters have been published before (see Harry H. Clark, editor, *Six New Letters of Thomas Paine*, Madison, Wisconsin, 1939), they have not been included in any previous collection of Paine's writings.

In the *Providence Gazette* of December 21, 1782 appeared the following note announcing the forthcoming publication of these letters:

"Philadelphia, November 27, 1782

"SIR,—Inclosed I send you a Philadelphia paper of this day's date, and desire you to insert the piece signed 'A Friend to Rhode Island and the Union.' I am concerned that Rhode Island should make it necessary to address a piece to her, on a subject which the rest of the States are agreed in.—Yours etc. Thomas Paine."

Paine's letters provoked a storm in Rhode Island, and the press was soon deluged with articles and letters supporting and denouncing the writer from Pennsylvania. Paine was coldly received when he arrived in the State, and was forced to leave without accomplishing much in persuading Rhode Island to grant the Federal government the right to levy the impost. But there can be little doubt that the six letters and the controversy which followed their publication, were important in paving the way for the creation of a stronger central government and a more perfect union of the states. Many citizens must have been impressed by Paine's stirring words in the third letter: "It would perhaps be quite as well were [we] to talk less about our independence, and more about our union. For if the union be justly supported, our independence is made secure. The former is the mother, the latter the infant at her breast. The nourishment of the one is drawn through the other, and to impoverish the mother is famishing her offspring."

The following articles are reprinted through the courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library.—*Editor.*

## LETTER I<sup>5</sup>

### IN ANSWER TO THE CITIZEN OF RHODE-ISLAND ON THE FIVE PER CENT. DUTY

A WRITER, under the style of "*A Citizen of Rhode-Island*," has undertaken to vindicate the said State in her yet neglecting to pass the law recommended by Congress for laying a duty of five per cent. on foreign imported goods: The monies arising therefrom to be applied towards discharging the interest and principal of the debts which are or may be contracted by the United States (of which Rhode-Island is one) for the defence of the country, and for supporting and establishing the independence thereof.

The resolution of Congress is as follows.

*"In CONGRESS, February 3, 1781.*

*"Resolved, That it be recommended to the several States, as indispensably necessary, that they vest a power in Congress to levy, for the use of the United States, a duty of five per cent. ad valorem, at the time and place of importation, upon all goods, wares and merchandise, of foreign growth and manufactures, which may be imported into any of*

<sup>5</sup> This letter appeared in the *Providence Gazette and Country Journal* of December 21, 1782, the *Pennsylvania Gazette* of November 27, 1782, and the *Pennsylvania Packet* of November 23, 1782.—*Editor.*

the said States, after the 1st day of May, 1781; except arms, ammunition, clothing, and other articles imported on account of the United States, or any of them, and except wool cards, and cotton cards, and wire for making them, and also except salt during the war: Also a duty of five per cent. on all prizes and prize goods, condemned in the Court of Admiralty of any of these States, as lawful prizes.

“That the monies arising from these duties be appropriated to the discharge of the principal and interest of the debts already contracted, or which may be contracted, on the faith of the United States, for supporting the present war.—That the said duties be continued, until the said debts shall be fully and faithfully discharged.”

On this resolution I shall remark—

First, Here is the purpose for which the money shall be raised, namely, to pay off the interest and principal of the debts, foreign and domestic, which we ourselves, the public of America, have, through our Representatives in Congress, contracted, or may contract, for our defence, and pledged our faith to discharge.

Secondly, The manner, rate, or ratio, by which the money shall be raised, viz. five pounds out of every hundred pounds worth of foreign goods, which shall be imported.

Thirdly, The time for which the said duty shall continue; that is, until the interest and principal of the debts shall be paid.

In consequence of this plan and recommendation (the justice and propriety of which appeared so evident and striking, and so “*indispensably necessary*” to our honor and reputation) twelve of the States passed the said law. Rhode-Island only remains delinquent.<sup>6</sup>

Having thus stated the outlines of the subject, I shall proceed to my remarks on the publications which have appeared, and add thereto such other observations as the case may require.

The Citizen of Rhode-Island, in objection to the five per cent. duty, begins his argument at a very remote point from the subject. He sets out with obliquely traducing the character of all government whatever. His positions are loose and general, and by endeavoring to make them apply to every thing, they apply directly to nothing. He speaks of executive power, as if it were something existing in its own right, perpetual

<sup>6</sup> It is generally said, that twelve of the States have passed the law, and the Citizen of Rhode-Island seems to admit the fact; but whether the State of Georgia, just emerging from the tyranny of the enemy, has yet had time to complete such a law, is a circumstance I am not clear in.—*Author.*

in itself, and neither constituted by, nor controllable by the people. He confounds all kinds of government together; and that without perceiving, that the same kind of reasoning, which is applicable in one case, is foreign to the purpose in another.

It is somewhat strange that the theory of government, which is exceedingly simple in itself, and in general well known by almost every farmer in America, should be so perplexed, misconceived and tortured, by those whose very business and duty it is to understand it fully, and exercise it justly.

His pieces are entitled,

*"On the five per cent. Duty, by a Citizen of Rhode-Island."*<sup>7</sup>

And his first paragraph is in these words:

"Is it expedient, says he, in any government, that the Supreme Executive Power should hold the revenue independent of the people? To have this question soberly and sensibly discussed, is a matter of some consequence, at any time and place, it taking place of right among the most important principles of civil government; but at this time is, in this country, peculiarly interesting—it applying more closely upon every individual who is capable of forming a judgment upon the effects, which a question *so radical in the constitution* may have upon us and our posterity."

When this gentleman asks, "*Whether it is expedient in any government, that the Supreme Executive Power should hold the revenue independent of the people,*" he asks a question which every man in America, without the least hesitation, can answer at once, because the whole of them will unanimously answer, no. They can answer no otherwise. It is the very being, principle, and constitution of the republic, that the people have nothing in their government independent of themselves. The question may belong to Turkey or Persia, where the government is all executive, and that executive self created, and totally independent of the people; but in a republic, like the United States, where the appointment of the Executive Power is wholly in our own hands, to make and unmake, change and alter, as we please, and where every thing which it has and does is in trust for us, who gave it, how is it possible that the same question can apply here, or with what shadow of propriety can it be put?

There are some truths so self evident and obvious, of which this is one, that they ought never to be stated in the form of a question for de-

<sup>7</sup> See below, p. 352 for further reference to this article.—*Editor*.

bate, because it is habituating the mind to think doubtfully, of what there ought to be no doubt upon. The people of America are much forwarder in their ideas of their own rights than this gentleman supposes, if he thinks that the question, on which he rests so much expectation, can be any subject for debate at all.

He must likewise be exceedingly backward in his notions of a free government, and the principles of a republic, to call that "*a radical question in the constitution,*" which the constitution knows nothing of, and which is altogether in opposition to it, and wholly repugnant to the principle on which republics are founded. A revenue held by the Supreme Executive Power, independent of the people! Was such a thing ever heard of in a republic? Was such a question ever asked in one before?

Who have we in America but the people? Members of Congress, of Assemblies, or Council, are still a part of the people. Their honors do not take them out of the aggregate body. They serve their appointed time; and are succeeded by others. They are subject to the laws they pass, and must contribute their proportion of taxes in common with the rest. There is no such thing in America as power of any kind, independent of the people. There is no other race of men in it but the people, and consequently there can be no revenue held independent of them; and therefore the question is a nullity, and to reason upon it is throwing away time and words for nothing; for we admit, nay, we contend for the fact, and reprobate the question as partaking of a slavish idea.

But whether it be admitted or rejected is a matter totally foreign to the five per cent. duty. It may be placed as a stalking horse, to keep something else out of sight: But I never can persuade myself, that the gentleman who puts it can mean anything seriously by it. He must know, nay, he does know better; for he knows that the five per cent. duty is already appropriated in the plan for raising it. He knows it is *not* of the nature of a *revenue*, to be expended as circumstances may arise, but as a *fund* to be applied to the payment of monies which we owe, and of which monies, both foreign and domestic, Rhode-Island has had her share of the benefit. He knows that it is *appropriated to the use of the creditors*, and not of the *Congress*, and that to involve it under a question of revenue, held independent of the people, is ungenerous, inconsistent, impolitic, and unjust.

He may perhaps think, that by setting out with a question of popular deception, he has erected a work tha[t] cannot easily be demolished; and



indeed he is right; for, like a breast-work of sponge, it has not substance enough in it to be knocked down. You may fire through it forever, and kill every man behind it, engineer and all, and still the work, like the question, useless in themselves, will retain their figure.

But to come closer to the point. The case with the five per cent. is simply this:

The several States, of which Rhode-Island is one, formed themselves into an union, and sent delegates to Congress, as representatives of themselves. They empowered those delegates to pledge the public faith, for the just payment of any monies they might borrow, at home or abroad, or any debts they might contract in the name and for the defense of themselves, the United States of America. Monies have been borrowed, and debts have been contracted; by virtue of this delegation and authority, and now the same people who authorized them to borrow, and who have received the benefit of it, and who likewise by their representatives pledged their faith and honor for payment, are called upon to fulfil that obligation. This is, in plain language, the long and short of the story, and therefore what is said about perpetual revenue, held independent of the people, is absurd, because it is foreign to the purpose; for this, as I have before observed, is *not a revenue*, but a *fund* for the payment of a debt, appropriated to the purpose, and limited in its duration.

When I speak of Congress, I do not mean a body of men; I mean an Assembly of States; and those States, thus assembled, have, as the most eligible and easy mode of payment, proposed a duty of five per cent. on imported goods. Twelve of the States have adopted the measure, and passed laws for that purpose. Rhode-Island alone is delinquent. Thus stands the case at present.

It is an exceeding easy thing, when men are so disposed, to exhibit any measure, however good, just or necessary it may be, in an odious and offensive light, by tacking to it a number of deformities which have no relation to it, and which are as foreign to its condition, as the filthy blanket of an Indian is to the person of a decent agreeable woman. A writer in Mr. Bradford's paper<sup>8</sup> of the 16th inst. (who is very likely the same gentleman that styles himself a citizen of Rhode-Island in another paper) has heaped ten of those odious coverings, numerically arranged, on the five per cent. duty.

The case is, that he either wishes to obscure the subject and hunt it down without the chance of being understood, or he totally misunder-

<sup>8</sup> The reference is to the *Pennsylvania Journal*.—Editor.

stands it himself. He talks of a revenue at the discretion of Congress, when the matter in question is a fund for the payment of a debt; and he speaks of it as perpetual, when the very plan for raising it limits its duration. And thus by mistaking the case he runs into heedless inconsistencies, wide and foreign from the subject.

But let us examine the naked question, unclothed either with invented deformities or needless embellishments.

Suppose that, in the present wants of the United States for money, any number of men, friendly disposed to our cause and interest, in foreign countries or at home, were to propose to lend us three or four millions of dollars at a reasonable interest, demanding at the same time to know what security the States would give for the payment of the interest and principal.

Should we not, in such a case, appear like fools in the world, unacquainted with the nature of government, of politics, of commerce, and of every thing relative to the common concerns of life, were we to say to them, *we will take your money, and pass a law to pay the interest of it for one year only, and after that we will think further about it?* Would we, I ask, place ourselves in this foolish situation, to be laughed at by every one, as men who did not understand what they were about, or did not mean to act honestly by their friends? Or would we not rather cast about to see what funds and resources we had got, and make proposals of security adequate to the offer, and put the debt in a certain train of payment at once, justly and fairly, between debtor and creditor? Now this is exactly the case with the five per cent. duty.

The common cry has been, *Why don't Congress borrow?—Why don't Congress borrow?*—But who in the name of heaven will lend, if you do not take care to pay, and fix on permanent funds for that purpose, and nicely and faithfully fulfil the obligation?

I cannot help considering the publications of both these gentlemen (if they are distinct persons) as tending to stab and wound the honor and cause of their country in the nicest and tenderest part; and am concerned that their imprudence, to give it no other harsher name, should make it necessary to bring debates and arguments into view, which ought never to have been started, because there never ought to have been any occasion for them.

Having thus opened the case, and shown how it at present stands, I shall in my next letter show that the five per cent. duty is a more eligible and productive mode of raising money, since money must be had,

than any other which can be devised, because it is the least felt, the most equal in its operation, and the easiest collected.

In my third letter, with which I mean to close the matter, I shall more particularly confine myself to the most important of all subjects, in this part of the world—the Union of the States. For under the pretence of vindicating a State, in the present instance deficient in her duty in the Union, there is a style of language encouraged in the publications of those gentlemen, which, applied to the Union, is highly reprehensible.

A FRIEND TO RHODE-ISLAND AND THE UNION.

## LETTER II<sup>9</sup>

### IN ANSWER TO THE CITIZEN OF RHODE-ISLAND ON THE FIVE PER CENT. DUTY

In my former letter I mentioned the purpose for which the five per cent. duty is levied; namely, as a fund for the payment of the interest and principal of such debts as are or may be contracted, abroad or at home, for the defence of the United States. I am now to show the convenience and equality of the mode; which I shall preface with a few occasional observations.

In this country, where every State is interested alike in the event of the war, and almost every man in it stands in the same predicament, there ought to be no occasion for persuasion; and I might as well expect that the Citizen of Rhode-Island should undertake to persuade me to my duty, as that I should endeavor to persuade him. In proportion to our different circumstances, whatever they may be, we must be proportionately affected by a five per cent. duty. I can assure him too, that I am no public creditor, and therefore can have no individual interest in what I am writing. But I have the honor, interest and happiness, of a new and infant world at heart. She has done great things, and it would be a thousand pities to diminish that greatness, by any thing that is little.

In speaking on this part of the subject, I put our foreign debt totally out of the question; because that is what we are all agreed in, and makes no part of the argument. It was contracted in hard money, and the value of it permanent. But we have a species of internal debt among us, the

<sup>9</sup> This letter appeared in the *Providence Gazette* of December 28, 1782, the *Pennsylvania Journal* of December 4, 1782, the *Pennsylvania Gazette* of December 4, 1782, and the *Pennsylvania Packet* of December 5, 1782.—*Editor*.

value of which is unfixed, and admits of injury either way, and therefore it is necessary to ascertain it as precisely as possible, and settle it, lest the fair and real creditor should involve his fate with the rapacious claimant, and thereby be exposed to suffer on the one hand, or that the public should pay more than they have a right to pay on the other.

I am sensible that I look with an equal impartiality towards both, and as I do not wish to pay too little, so neither would I pay too much. If the creditor has his interest to take care of, the debtor has his honor to preserve, and the loss to the one is full[y] as severe as to the other. The States might appoint a general committee of accounts, to meet, adjust and settle all kinds of claims, prior to the commencement of the present system of finance.

But in the mean time, let us make the necessary provision for discharging what is really due, and supporting our reputation, and not embarrass that which is right with that which is wrong. What I cannot but blame the Citizen of Rhode-Island for, is his stating the matter erroneously, and treating it both imprudently and unfairly. He has brought cases into the question which are totally foreign to it, and avoided the points which he might have spoken upon.

Two things only are necessary. The settlement of the public accounts, and the means of paying them off; and the question before us affords no other points. We did not undertake the defence of our country against a vindictive and powerful enemy, without knowing that it would be attended with many and unavoidable expences; and we have prospered in that defence equal to our utmost expectations, and far better than we many times had reason to hope for. It was by the united efforts of all America, which, like a bundle of rods, could not only not be broken, but were capable of chastising, that this happiness has been effected, and by which it is still secured; and as the case before us is of the nature of an united effort, we cannot too seriously impress ourselves with that idea and principle of union by which we rose into greatness, and are known by to the rest of the universe. It is our Magna Charta—our anchor in the world of empires.

Since then our condition and preservation require money, can there be a more equal and easier way of raising the sum required for the discharge of these accounts than a duty of five per cent. on foreign imported goods? If the duty produces an overplus, so much the better, for the soldier wants it; he likewise is a creditor. If it should not raise enough, pay it as far as it will go, by the best method that can be devised,

and let both the public and the creditors know the sums received and paid, and to whom and for what.

The duty then, I say, of five per cent. lights equally on all the States according to their several abilities. For it is not which States import the most or least, but which, from their degrees of opulence or populousness, consume the most or least, that ascertain the quantity they severally bring towards the fund. Rhode-Island will pay but a small share of the duty, because she will consume but little; and all that she imports more than she consumes, is eventually paid by some other neighboring States, and not by her.

If in America we had but one port, still the inhabitants of the State where that port was would pay no more of the five per cent. duty than in the present case; that is, they would pay only for what they consumed; and the States which had no port might pay much more duty than that which had, because they might severally consume more. In this case, every man throughout the United States would be assessed his five per cent. duty at one place; because there could be but one place of collection; and, consequently, the monies so raised upon the whole cannot be carried to the credit of the State in which it is collected; and this single observation oversets one objection which I have heard Rhode-Island has made.

It is a great convenience to a State to be situated so near the water, as to be eased of the expence of land carriage for foreign goods. This alone is far more than the duty of five per cent. and persons so conveniently circumstanced should, of all people, be the last to object.

Rhode-Island, by her situation, enjoys some superior benefits in the union. Closely connected with the sea, she derives advantages under its flag, its commissions and passports, which the inhabitants of more remote places do not; and many reasons will, upon reflection, occur to show, that her objections are not only wrongly founded, but wrongly judged of.

The Citizen of Rhode-Island has said that the duty of five per cent. will fall unequally. It is easy to say any thing. But he has not advanced a single case or argument to prove it, which he certainly would, if he could have discovered any. He has likewise said many other things; but he has only said them, and left them to shift for themselves. Now a man ought never to leave an assertion to shift for itself. It is like turning out a sickly infant to beg a home in other people's houses.

But there is one thing which this gentleman has not said; for he has

not attempted to show an easier way of raising the money, and he knows, full as well as I do, that the situation of a country at war requires money. But I can tell him the reason why he has been silent on this head; it is because he cannot devise an easier way, nor any that so well suits the circumstances of Rhode-Island; because, being considerably in the line of commerce, she can easier raise it through that medium, than through any other. And this brings me to show the convenience and lightness of the five per cent. duty, so far as respects the individuals in any or all the States.

As a tax, it will scarcely be felt. The utmost difference it can make will be a very little more than a half-penny in the shilling, and in the fluct[u]ation of trade, it will be insensibly lost; for there is scarcely a day that passes over our heads, but in which the rise or fall of prices is much greater; and it will so naturally and easily divide and circulate itself through the community, that its productiveness will arise from the universality of its operation.

It will likewise be found not only the lightest of all other modes of raising money, but the most convenient; for it operates with the ease of a tax in kind, without any of its difficulties and incumbrances. The man who might be scarce of money, has still money's worth; he comes to market, and, by such means as are most convenient to himself, disposes of it, and procures, in the lieu thereof, such imported articles as he has occasion for, and in that exchange he pays his portion of the duty, without any other trouble.

It is likewise that kind of a duty which a man may pay or not; because he may choose whether he will wear or consume foreign articles. It is a duty too which the consumer is never *called upon* to pay; because whenever it suits him he goes to buy, and not before, and there ends the matter.

It is a duty which is the most easy collected, because it is collected but in few places, and in the lump, without rambling over the world for it, and requires but few persons, and may be done at a small expence; and I am persuaded that when the States find the convenience of this mode in preference to others, they will be inclined to throw some of their present taxes into the same channel. I have observed that the last convinced is often the most effectually convinced; and notwithstanding what the gentleman, who styles himself a Citizen of Rhode-Island, has said, the State will have other opinions. Now as what this gentleman first advanced respecting a perpetual revenue in the hands of an execu-

tive power is, in our situation, as a true and pure republic, futile and perfectly unapplicable, for the reasons advanced in my former letter, and as the weight of the duty is scarcely to be mentioned, and as the method is easier than any other which can be devised, and falls equally on all the States, and on the individuals in each State, according to their several abilities, I should be glad to know what objections he has to it, or can advance, for at present he has supported none. He contented himself with stating a question at first setting out, which all America was agreed to before he put it, and consequently could be no question at all.

I observe his pieces are interspersed with confused notions on government. His meaning may be good, and I have no reason to believe it is not; but, for want of distinguishing one sort of government from another, he draws conclusions which suit neither.

He does not see the difference between a country like England, where scarcely one man in an hundred is an elector, and this country, where every man is an elector, and may likewise be elected. Nor yet between the parliament of England (one house of which, the Peers, is perpetual, and the vacancies filled up by the Crown, and the other removeable only in seven years) and our constitutional governments, the representatives under which, both legislative and executive, are annually chosen by ourselves in most instances. Nor yet between the executive power possessed by the Crown, not to be touched at all, be it in hands ever so vicious, extravagant or ignorant, and the Congress of America, which, as members, are removeable at pleasure, and must be chosen every year. In short, he does not see the difference between the one country wrapt up in the most absurd species of slavery, and the other possessing and enjoying all their natural and civil rights; and thus, by carrying the jealousies necessary in people under a monarchy into the constitutions of a republic, he degrades the virtue on which republics are founded.

But there is an observation which this gentleman throws out, and likewise a second observation under another signature, both of which have considerable weight, and on which I shall offer some remarks.

The one is a quotation from Montesquieu, which was introduced into a former declaration of Congress, and is in these words: "When the power of making laws, and the power of executing them, are united in the *same person*, or the *same body* of Magistrates, there can be no liberty; because apprehensions may arise, lest the same monarch or senate should enact tyrannical laws, to execute them in a tyrannical manner."

I shall pay all the regard to this quotation, which the Citizen of Rhode-Island wishes to be paid. Though, by the bye, it is very easy to see that Montesquieu means a power perpetually *existing* in the *same person* or *persons*, and not a power *vested* in those who are removeable at pleasure. I wish those who quote Montesquieu would strictly regard his applications. It was very properly said by Congress to Britain, whose government over us was absolute, but cannot be said by us to ourselves.

The other observation which I allude to is in Mr. Bradford's paper, of November 16th, in these words:—"No two States," says the writer, "have agreed on the measure (meaning the five per cent. duty) without particular provisos and limitations of their own, differing from the others; it is therefore impossible that a regular systematical collection of the duties should take place, unless those limitations and provisos "are first removed."

Now these two observations, taken either separately or collectively, may be of use to us. They naturally apply to something wanting, and something defective. We want some laws which Congress cannot make, and when the States attempt them they are imperfect. Certainly then the whole of our system is not yet complete.

The United States are, as Mr. Burke very justly styles them, "The greatest Commonwealth on the face of the earth."<sup>10</sup> But all Commonwealths must have some laws in common, which regulate, preserve, and protect the whole.

What would the sovereignty of any one individual State be, if left to itself, to contend with a foreign power? It is on our united sovereignty, that our greatness and safety, and the security of our foreign commerce, rest. This united sovereignty then must be something more than a name, and requires to be as completely organized for the line it is to act in as that of any individual State, and, if any thing, more so, because more depends on it.

Every man in America stands in a two-fold order of citizenship. He is a citizen of the State he lives in, and of the United States; and without justly and truly supporting his citizenship in the latter, he will inevitably sacrifice the former. By his rank in the one, he is made secure with his neighbors; by the other, with the world. The one protects his domestic safety and property from internal robbers and injustice; the other his foreign and remote property from piracy and invasion, and puts him

<sup>10</sup> See Mr. Burke's speech on the case of Mr. Laurens, Dec. 17, 1781, in the parliamentary debates, page 185.—*Author*.



on a rank with other nations. Certainly then the one, like the other, must not and cannot be trusted to pleasure and caprice, lest, in the display of local authority, we forget the great line that made us great, and must keep us so.

In introducing these remarks I have followed a thought naturally arising from the observations made by the Citizen of Rhode-Island, and I find that experience begins to suggest the idea of an inadequacy in our confederated system to several cases which must necessarily happen; what I mean is, that the confederation is not adapted to fit all the cases which the empire of the United States, in the course of her sovereignty, may experience; and the case before us shows that it is not adequate to every purpose of internal benefit and commercial regulation.

Several new and important matters have arisen since the confederation was formed. The entering into foreign alliances and treaties of commerce; the borrowing foreign loans; the cessation of the emissions of the paper currency; the raising the supplies by taxes, and several others which might be enumerated. But as nothing can happen to which we are not equal, the thing necessary is to think wisely and deliberately of them, and provide accordingly.

A FRIEND TO RHODE-ISLAND AND THE UNION.

### LETTER III <sup>11</sup>

#### IN ANSWER TO THE CITIZEN OF RHODE-ISLAND ON THE FIVE PER CENT. DUTY

When the cause of America, like a new creation, rose into existence, it had something in it which confounded and yet enraptured the world. The boldness of the attempt, and the extent of its consequences, overawed the conjectures of mankind. A five per cent. duty, levied for our support, either on land or commerce, would not then have swallowed up our attention, or produced a debate dishonorable to our patriotism. The defence of our country against an unprincipled and powerful enemy, the establishment of our natural rights, the exalting the human race to their original freedom, and guaranteeing the blessings of civil government, were the great objects of our heart, and we were a united, though a suffering people.

Why is it that so many little cares, unworthy our greatness, and in-

<sup>11</sup> From the *Providence Gazette*, January 4, 1783.—*Editor*.

jurious to our peace, have stolen upon our better thoughts? Are we tired of being successful? Is our domestic liberty of less value than formerly? or are we disposed to surrender to contention that which the enemy could never take from us by force?

It would perhaps be quite as well were [we] to talk less about our independence, and more about our union. For if the union be justly supported, our independence is made secure. The former is the mother, the latter the infant at her breast. The nourishment of the one is drawn through the other, and to impoverish the mother is famishing her offspring.

Is there a country in the world that has so many openings to happiness as this? Masters of the land, and proprietors of the government, unchained from the evils of foreign subjection, and respected by sovereign powers, we have only to deserve prosperity, and its attainment is sure.

But it ever was and probably ever will be the unfortunate disposition of some men to encumber business with difficulties. The natural cast of their mind is to contention; and whatever is not to their particular wish, or their immediate interest, is sure to be magnified with invented calamities, and exhibited in terror. Such men can see the fate of empires in the snuff of a candle, and an eternity of public ruin wrapt up in every trifling disappointment to themselves. They build their hopes of popularity on error and accident; and subsist by flattering the mistakes and bewildering the judgment of others, till unable to discover the truth, or unwilling to confess it, they run into new inconsistencies, or retreat in angry discontent.

Never was a subject, simple and easy in itself (and which needed nothing but plain and temperate argument, if it needed any) more hideously tortured, and wilfully misrepresented, than by those who have wrote against the five per cent. duty. Yet none of them have proposed a better or more eligible and practicable method of supporting public credit, and supplying the exigencies of the States. To them, I ask, can we rescue ourselves from a merciless enemy without charge? Can we defend our country or our property in it without expense? Can we borrow money without repaying it? Can we expect an army to subsist without supplies, or fight without reward? Or, in short, can we, who are to reap the benefit of independence, look for it as a mere boon from heaven, or hope to receive it at the expence of others?

We have to deal with a treacherous enemy, catching at every circumstance, and continuing the war on the hope of our mistakes. Their per-

fidiously withdrawing from the assurances they had given, in Carleton and Digby's letter, of acceding to our independence, serves to explain both their character and their politics. And another letter written by a Doctor Walters, a refugee tory in New York, to Sir William Pepperil, a refugee tory in England, and published in the London Morning Post on the 12th of last September (though false in its account of our finances) sufficiently shows that their expectations are founded solely on their hope of our neglecting to support the necessary defence. And shall we with our eyes open, and with the information of the enemy before us, encourage them in their deception, and add to the expences of the war by prolonging it? They continue in our country not from a view of conquest, but to wait the issue of our internal difficulties. Every imprudent debate, every embarrassment that is started, is to them a matter of malignant joy, and a new ground for malicious hope. In this situation, watched by our enemies, and wounded by our mistakes, it becomes us to think and act with firm but deliberate patriotism, lest in the petulance of temper, or the hurry of imprudence, we sacrifice the prospects of a seven years contest.<sup>12</sup>

It was my original design to have confined the subject of this letter to the union of the States; but as that is a matter sufficiently forcible of itself, I shall waive it for the present, and continue my remarks on the five per cent. duty, not only as it respects the States generally, but as it more locally respects the State of Rhode-Island.

That our condition, as a country engaged in a just and necessary war, requires money, needs not to be mentioned; and that the easiest way of raising it is the first subject for consideration, is equally clear. That the nature of a union requires and implies a disposition to act and draw together, and that the revenues are always within our control, are matters that require no proof. That Congress are as much the representatives of the people as the Assemblies are; that the members of it can in no instance exempt themselves from a share of the burdens necessary for the defence of the country, in common with their constituents, and that it is the duty of every legislature to support its faith, rank and reputation, in the union, are subjects which all are agreed in. That monies cannot be borrowed without funds to pay with, and that those who are

<sup>12</sup> The letter which I refer to, to Sir William Pepperil, has been seen by the Delegates of Rhode-Island, now in Congress; for it fell into my hands, and I sent it there. And those gentlemen know full as well as I do, if they will confess it, that the hope of the enemy is fed up, by every imprudent dispute and inflammatory publication of ours, respecting revenue and supplies.—*Author.*

directed to borrow must be enabled to pay, needs no argument to support it; and that those who have it to lend will expect some better security than a promise, requires no explanation.

The question therefore is not *whether* we shall raise money, but *how* we shall raise it. The five per cent. duty is part of the plan of finance adopted about a year ago, upon the failure of the paper currency. It was intently applied as a sinking fund for the discharge of the debt we had contracted, at home or abroad, or might hereafter contract, in case the present taxes should not be sufficiently productive, which is now very well known to be the case. Therefore either the direct taxes on land and personal property must be increased, in the form they now are, or a duty of five per cent. must be drawn through the medium of foreign articles, and the question is, which of the two will be the easiest, and most convenient to the community? The collected wisdom of the United States assembled in Congress has viewed a duty of five per cent. as the easiest mode, and the several individual States have thought the same.

Those who have hitherto written against the five per cent. duty have never either stated the case, or confined themselves to the subject, but have run out into extravagant language and wild imagination, and constantly endeavored to keep the country and the community at large from properly understanding the measure, the propriety, or the necessity of it.

In this place I think it necessary to remark, that the United States are successors to a large landed property, and as Rhode-Island has a share, in common with her sister States, so I hope she will never relinquish her right, or by any disagreement with them afford the least pretence for forfeiting it. But this property is not, in the present state of things, a practicable fund. To attempt to sell those lands at this time would be to give them away, neither are there purchasers for them at any price. Nay, it is our interest, at present, to prevent their being settled, because the settlement of them now, instead of enriching us, would draw off our inhabitants, and reduce both our force and our abilities.

But to return to my subject—We, I presume, are the only people in the world who have not taken in the aid of commerce, as a national fund. The landed interest, the stock and internal riches of the country, and almost every species of direct property, are subject, more or less, to some kind of taxation; while foreign imported articles, many of which are luxuries and trifles, have been suffered to pass without any tax at all,

except that kind of tax which the importer lays on the community whenever he pleases, by raising the prices.

Whether this is good or ill policy, in a new country, whose first business is to settle and improve its lands, encourage agriculture, and restrain as much as possible the importation of foreign unnecessary articles, is a matter which I leave to the impartiality and honest judgment of every class of men. I am no enemy to genteel or fashionable dress, or to the moderate enjoyment of those articles of indulgence we are furnished with from abroad; but they ought to bear their proportion of the public expence as well as the soil we live on, and not be solely consigned as a revenue to the persons who import them, or the foreigners who bring them.

It is a matter which ought to strike Britain with forcible conviction, when she learns that we have the whole fund of commerce yet untouched. We have all that to begin upon which she has already exhausted; and so far as the debate may serve to explain to her our hitherto reserved funds and resources, I am the less concerned that it began.

How we came to leave so practicable and valuable a fund so long dormant, contrary to the custom and experience of all other nations, will, I believe, be best understood by the following observation:

Our non-importation agreement had exhausted us of almost every kind of supplies, and it was then necessary to hasten and encourage importations from all countries, except England, by every possible means. The then state of our commerce, therefore, permitted those indulgences, which, in any other case, would have been nationally improper. We suffered the produce and manufactures of other countries to be sold in America without duty, whereas none of our exports from America can enjoy the same privilege there; and thus having got into the habit of doing a thing from necessity, we have continued it to an impropriety.

This part of my argument naturally brings me to offer a remark on the five per cent. duty, as a regulation of commerce.

Commerce is not the local property of any State, any more than it is the local property of any person, unless it can be proved, that such a State neither buys nor sells out of its own dominions. But as the commerce of every State is made up out of the produce and consumption of other States, as well as its own, therefore its regulation and protection can only be under the confederated patronage of all the States.

Besides, the European world, or any place we may trade to, knows us only through our national sovereignty, as UNITED STATES. Any in-

fringement on our rights of commerce must be lodged before the United States, and every redress for any such injury must come to us through that line of sovereignty; consequently the regulation of it must reside in the same power.

The United States are likewise accountable to foreign powers for all misconduct committed under their flag; and as it is their flag which privileges our commerce abroad, and on the seas, it cannot therefore be expected, that the United States should be thus accountable on the one hand, and afford protection on the other, to all the rights of commerce, without receiving an aid and assistance from it.

I come now to consider a very striking injury that would accrue to Rhode-Island, by not coming into the measure with the rest of the States.

The fidelity, patriotism, and well-affected disposition of Rhode-Island, has never been made the least question of; neither does her present dissent proceed from any source of that kind, but from a misrepresentation of it on some part, and a misconception of it on another.

In the course of the debate she has taken up an idea, warranted by the articles of confederation, that each State has a prerogative to furnish its quota by such means as best suits its conveniency, and in this she is right. But the mistake is, that the five per cent. duty is not of the nature of a quota, and that for the reason I have already mentioned, namely, that trade is not local property, but is diffused over and promiscuously drawn from all parts, beyond as well as within the State. Neither is she called upon, in the character of an individual State, for a particular thing limited like direct property, within her own jurisdiction only, but in her *united character*, to concur in a measure common to all the States, and yet the particular property of none.

But for the purpose of exemplifying this part of the argument, I will suppose her left out of the five per cent. duty, and that she furnished a supply into the treasury, by laying on some new taxes in the room of it. The consequence to her in this case as a community would be, that, to avoid the five per cent. duty, she would at least have to pay to the amount of ten per cent. For the prices of foreign articles would, by the imperceptible management of trade, get up to the same price in Rhode-Island as they would be at in Boston, or other places where the duty was paid, and consequently would come as dear to the consumer as if they had undergone the duty; and yet the same consumer would have his part to pay in the additional tax laid on in the lieu [of] the five per cent. And thus an exemption from the duty would operate as a bounty,

or an additional profit of the five per cent. to the merchant only, and a double tax to the community.

Perhaps it is a circumstance worthy of remarking, that in all cases where a union of conduct and disposition is necessary, nothing can be gained and much may be lost by disagreement. The United States constitute one extended family, one imperial Commonwealth, the greatest and most equal in its rights and government of any ever known in the world: And while its principles permit the free exercise of debate, its manners ought to restrain every licentious abuse of it.

In offering the foregoing remarks, and those contained in my former letters, I have kept strictly to the point in question, without involving it with subjects foreign to the purpose, or treating it with wild and overheated language. All that is necessary, in a case like this, is calm discussion, and a disposition to agree and be understood. That measures and subjects do not strike every mind alike—that the necessity of them is not always equally known—and that, in a situation so remote as the several parts of the United States are from each other, some misconception may arise, is a circumstance we may naturally expect; but as our interest, like our object, is a united one, there can be no measure which is to operate equally over all, in matters common to all, that can, on a just consideration, be supposed to affect one more than another.

But if such a supposition could any way take place, it would apply to the merchants of Philadelphia, because it is the greatest seat of commerce, and extends it into parts of several other States. But they, convinced of its justice, necessity and true policy, have been among the promoters of the measure; and so likewise, on a just reflection, will be those of Rhode-Island; and the country interest can adopt no other measure with equal ease.<sup>13</sup>

A FRIEND TO RHODE-ISLAND AND THE UNION.

January 1, 1783.

<sup>13</sup> The pieces to which these letters are more particularly intended as an answer, were published in one of the Philadelphia news-papers, by a gentleman from Rhode-Island, under the style of "*A Citizen of Rhode-Island*," and the last of his pieces was signed "*A Countryman*"; that is, they were begun under *one* name, and ended under *another*. In the State of Rhode-Island they were contained in one publication, under the signature of "*A Countryman*."—*Author*.

LETTER IV <sup>14</sup>

## ON THE FIVE PER CENT. DUTY

On the decline of the paper currency, either the United States must have sunk with it, or more solid revenues must have been established in its room. The wisdom and patriotism of America chose the latter.

There was at this time a debt due in Europe for money, arms, ammunition, and other military stores, and likewise considerable sums due to individuals in America; and Congress had at once two very difficult and distressing pieces of business on their hands. The one was to provide means for the current service of the year, and the support of the army—and the other was for maintaining public credit, by at least a just discharge of the interest due abroad and at home.

To have put both those burdens on the landed interest, the rental of houses, and other direct property of the country, and to have left commerce totally out of the question, would have been the height of ill policy, and the most consummate injustice.

Congress, therefore, considering the several interests of their constituents, as well as the united interest of the States, divided the burdens, and apportioned out the sum of eight million of dollars on the several States, for the current service of each year, and proposed a duty of five per cent. on imported goods for the other service, that is, for discharging the public debt, and supporting national honor and credit.

It requires nothing but plain honesty, and calm and candid thinking, to judge of the propriety and equity of those measures. But the opposition to the five per cent. duty, from whatever quarter or with whatever design it began, has a tendency to upset the justice of Congress, and to throw both of the burdens upon the landed interest, and the direct property of the community, and to draw the neck of commerce completely out from every share and portion of the public difficulty.

I have no inclination to ascribe this conduct to selfishness in the persons who support it, or to a want of feeling in them for those on whom the burden must directly fall, if put into any other channel; but it certainly has not a generous appearance, neither can it add any thing to a fair reputation. The landed interest and the rental of houses have already their share of direct taxes, but commerce has contributed nothing;

<sup>14</sup> From the *Providence Gazette*, January 11, 1783.—*Editor*.



and we are the only people in the world who have for so long acted with this flagrant partiality.

If we view this matter in a national light, it will appear with very striking marks of ill policy. For by laying no duty on foreign imports, we permit every foreign merchant or adventurer to enjoy the trade of America duty-free and at our expense—while every article of ours, sent from hence, must pay a duty to the country he comes from. And Congress, on whom the regulation of commerce devolves, and who are the guardians of its rights, would not have acted with national justice to have permitted any longer such an inequality.

But as national matters do not always strike with such immediate force as those in which men are more individually concerned, I shall proceed to examine further into the consequences which would accrue to Rhode-Island by not adopting the measure.

She must break off trade with the rest of the States, or, what is equal thereto, they must break off trade with her; for it never can be supposed that any one State is to enjoy an advantage, at the injury of the rest, or that the fair trader in other States, who has legally contributed towards discharging the public debt, is, contrary to the principle of the union, and the faith of the confederation, to have his interest undermined by those who had not. Whether it can answer the purpose of Rhode-Island, as a State, to place herself in so disagreeable a point of contention with her neighbors, she is to determine. To trade with them on such a footing of inequality, she can have neither right nor pretension to. To desire it would be ungenerous—to attempt it would be unjust. And as it could not fail to produce disagreeable consequences, it might in the end be fatal to her happiness. There may be those who wish it—it is my wish to prevent it.

The thing required of her is only to agree with the rest. They ask nothing of her, they request nothing from her, more than what they lay on themselves. She has a voice in the union equal to the most powerful State in it. She participates alike with them in every right and privilege which they enjoy; and though her service can be but small, yet that smallness ranks her equally with a greater.

But the principal error in her politics arises from her not having duly considered the case. Why do not Congress (say some of her citizens) call on us for our quota?

I have already remarked (in my third letter) that the five per cent. duty is not of the nature of a quota, because commerce is not local prop-

erty, but belongs to all the citizens of America, without distinction of place or State. The extent of the territory of any State, which sets limits to taxes raised as a quota, does not set limits to its commerce, and consequently cannot be taken as a rule to determine what its quota of taxes raised upon commerce shall be. The dominion of commerce, if I may so express it, and the dominion of jurisdiction, are distinct things; neither can the quantity of the one be made a rule to know that of the other by. The persons whom we trade with, or the places that we trade to, though they are out of the State, are nevertheless within the circle of its commerce, and of the same advantage to it as if the limits of the State extended over them.

When money is to be raised by direct taxes levied on direct property, the quota of the States may be ascertained, because the number of inhabitants and the value of that property can be known. But in cases where commerce is made the basis of a tax, the rule to quota out such a tax must be (if it be at all), according to the quantity of trade which each State carries on; and yet no more of the monies thus collected can be carried to *her* credit than what is supposed to be produced by her consumption; the remainder, be it little or much, belongs to the credit of some other States, being the produce of *their* consumption.

If any other rule than this were to be followed (except that of carrying the whole to the credit of all the States collectively) it would put it in the power of one State to tax another, and to pay its own quota out of a tax raised upon the rest. Surely Rhode-Island cannot have a thought so selfish as this, or can suppose that others will not perceive it.

There is not an idea that can occur to Rhode-Island on this business, which has not occurred to Congress and to the States severally; yet both the one and the other have seen the propriety of rejecting them, and of adopting the general principle.

There is always some respect due to experience. Could Congress have devised an easier mode, they naturally would have done it; as well for their own sakes, who must individually pay their part of the tax, as for the sake of their constituents. Their collected situation must enable them to know more than any individual State can know. They see *over* the whole, and in *behalf* of the whole. They are best acquainted with the difficulties the United States are under. They hear the cries of the army, the claims of creditors, and the demands of foreign countries for the supplies they have trusted us with, and the money they have lent us. He who sits at home, and enjoys his commerce or his possessions, or

those who have only the local concerns of any one State to rectify their minds, know but little, and feel still less, of the weight that presses those who must undergo it all. The States individually always find money enough for their civil departments, even at the injury of their public quota. But the great *one thing needful*, and that which should be their highest honor, and is the corner-stone of their happiness, seems to them like something afar off, too much neglected, and in part forgotten.

Can nothing but misfortune awaken us? Must adversity alone be the minister of exertion? Or must we forever be tossed from uncertainty to uncertainty, by trusting every thing to the moment of distress? The fairest prospects may fail, and the best calculated system of finance become unproductive of its end, if left to the caprice of temper and self-interest.

I would not wish to throw out a thought that might offend. But knowing, as I well know, what the difficult circumstances of the States are, I am justified in saying, that more injury has arisen to the United States, by the conduct of Rhode-Island in this instance, than lies in her power to repair.

It was my design in this letter to have shown that the five per cent. duty, when compared with any other mode, is not only the easiest and most convenient, but, when compared with the general good and interest of all the States, is the only one that can be adopted; but as this would extend my present letter to an inconvenient length, I shall refer this part of the subject to my next.

A FRIEND TO RHODE-ISLAND AND THE UNION.

January 9, 1783.

P. S. In the third letter, instead of "the five per cent. duty is part of the plan of finance adopted about *a year ago*," read *two years ago*. The reflection which naturally occurs from this length of time, must point out to Rhode-Island the incumbrance which has arisen to the general cause and interest, by so long a dissent from the measure.

LETTER V<sup>15</sup>

## ON THE FIVE PER CENT. DUTY

*Addressed to such of the Citizens of the State of Rhode-Island as have opposed the Measure*

Whatever mischiefs may arise to the cause, or whatever blemishes may fall on the character of America, by not carrying the five per cent. duty into practice, can never be ascribed to those who are advocates for the measure. Should the war not be prosecuted with the vigor necessary for our defence; should our credit fail in Europe to procure further supplies of money; or, should the terms of a peace fall short of the expectations of the States, let those who are opposers of the duty, and are thereby disabling Congress from performing the service expected from them, be accountable. It is my pleasure to reflect, and it will be to my reputation to have it known, that convinced as I am of the rectitude, I am likewise an advocate for the five per cent. duty. My reasons for this conviction and for this conduct are as follow:

The States, either unitedly or severally, have a moral as well as a sovereign character to support. Their reputation for punctuality and integrity ought to stand as high as their reputation for liberty. To be free is a happiness—but to be just is an honor, if that can be called an honor which is only a duty.

He who means to be punctual, will avoid even the appearance of being suspected to be otherwise: But those trifling cavils, and unfair representations, concerning the mode of paying our debts, will be interpreted into dishonor, and become productive of consequences injurious to our prosperity.

Though the cause of America is the most honorable that man ever engaged in, I am not so dazzled by it as not to perceive the faults that are twisting themselves round it, and unnaturally claiming kindred with it. The pretences which are set up for not complying with the five per cent. duty are as remote from the purpose for which the five per cent. duty is to be raised, and to which it is to be applied, as darkness is from light.

I do not, neither shall I, rest the case upon elegance of language, or forcible expression. I mean to state it with all the plainness of conversation, and put the merits of it without a gloss.

<sup>15</sup> From the *Providence Gazette*, January 18, 1783.—*Editor*.

“If we pass the act (say the objectors) Congress will have it in their “power to keep a standing army, and support a number of pensioners.” To which I reply,

That when an objection cannot be made formidable, there is some policy in trying to make it frightful; and to substitute the yell and the war-whoop, in the place of reason, argument and good order.

This objection may and naturally will have an effect to throw the whole burden of taxes upon the farmer, and upon every class of men except the merchant, and to draw the neck of commerce completely out from every share and portion of the public difficulty; but there is not a man in America, who will exercise his natural reason, that cannot see through its fallacy, or into its effects.

The five per cent. duty was proposed as a matter of aid and ease to the present mode of taxation. The monies arising from it are to be applied towards discharging the debts which America has contracted, or may contract, for her necessary defence, and which must be paid in one mode or another.

Is it right, then, or is it wrong, that commerce, which is one of the national funds in every other country in the world, should contribute nothing towards the public expenses in this; and that every supply should be drawn through, and every burden thrown upon, the direct property of the community? Or, in other words, that commerce, which is more profitable to those who are employed in it than the best farm in the State of Rhode-Island is to him who works it, should go free of every duty?

Whether the opposers to the five per cent. will say yes or no to these questions, I am not anxious to know. They may be privately desirous that *their commerce* should escape free of all taxation, but they will not be so hardy, neither will they risk their popularity, in saying so.

Let the question be asked in any mixed multitude of the people, or in any assembly of representatives—whether commerce ought to be taken in as one of the national funds towards discharging or defraying the expences of the war? and every man must, from self-conviction, answer yes.

But the objectors to the measure, not choosing to begin the question where it ought to be begun, have formed themselves into an ambuscade to attack it in disguise. And this ambuscade consists originally of about ten or a dozen merchants, who have a self-interest in the matter, and who, with a very profitable trade (occasioned by raising cent.

per cent. and in some instances a thousand per cent. and more, upon their goods) pay very little taxes in proportion thereto, when compared with other inhabitants of the State—and who likewise, by their present opposition, are drawing themselves away from the common burdens of the country, and throwing them upon the shoulders of others. And this, forsooth, they call patriotism.

I speak now with the more freedom, because there is a probability that the deception will succeed. But the instant that any other mode of paying the public debt is proposed, in the lieu of the five per cent. the people of the State of Rhode-Island will then see who have been their friends, and who have not.

To favor the opposition of those gentlemen, and to keep the public from seeing into the design, the cry, I say, has been, that if the act is passed Congress will have it in their power to keep a standing army, and support a number of pensioners.

Be ashamed, gentlemen, to put off the payment of your just debts, the payment of your suffering army, and the support of your national honor, upon such illiberal and unbelieved pretences; and be generous enough to reflect, that the consequences of your opposition tend to throw the burden on the shoulders of your neighbors, both in town and country, already more taxed in proportion than you are. Compare your situation, as merchants, with the circumstances of thousands round you; and then ask your conscience whether your conduct is right.

But I will answer all your invented fears about pensioners, etc. by an appeal to your own sagacity.

I have too high an opinion of your attachment to your own interest, and of your ideas of liberty and rights, to suppose that you ever could be so duped as to suffer it; and the instant you had any just reason to believe it, which now you have not, it would be your duty to prevent it. But at present you are only called upon to pay your just debts, and support your national faith; and until you do that you ought to be silent. Perform your own duty first, and then you will have right to make other people perform theirs.

There is one more remark respecting commerce which is well worth attending to, because it shows the superior advantages which that branch enjoys over every other interest in the country.

Commerce has not only not been taken in as one of the national funds of taxation for the support of the war, but it has got rid of the taxes which it used to pay before the war. The burdens have increased upon

land, and decreased upon trade, which is a policy not justifiable on any comparative principle. And Congress have been the poor man's friend in dividing the burden.

There used to be a duty on wines, but now the merchant drinks it duty-free; yet a man cannot drink cider without a tax, because the orchard that produces it is taxable. Neither can he eat or wear any thing, produced from the soil of America, that does not contribute something to the public expences, because the soil that produces it is taxable property. But a merchant eats or wears any thing imported from abroad, free of taxes. I wish all those who are at the head of this opposition in the State of Rhode-Island, and who are building up a false popularity, by censuring Congress, would act as honestly as Congress have done, and learn to feel for others as well as for themselves. Certainly he, who, not relishing the native liquor of his country, can indulge himself in foreign wines, or can afford to wear the fineries of foreign manufacture, is as proper an object of taxation as he who works a cider-press, or keeps a cow, or tills a few acres of land. And on these, and many other similar principles, both for the sake of the justice due to suffering creditors, and a suffering army, and for the purpose of equalizing the public expences, I am an advocate for the five per cent. duty.

I have never yet made, and I hope I never shall make, it the least point of consideration, whether a thing is *popular* or *unpopular*, but whether it is *right* or *wrong*.

That which is right will become popular, and that which is wrong will soon lose its temporary popularity, and sink into disgrace. There is one gentleman who has raised all his present fame upon his opposition to the measure, and he has trudged laboriously in the service of those who encouraged him; but I will apply to him a simile I once applied to another person, and whose fate verified my prediction—*that as he rose like a rocket, he would fall like the stick*.

Had the enemy succeeded in conquering America, the taxes upon commerce would have been an amazing deal more than five per cent. The conquered could not have expected to have been better off than the conquerors; and the most favorable terms that could have been looked for, would have been to pay no more taxes than what the people of England pay. As a specimen of what those are, I shall produce two or three instances. I have quoted them from Burn's *Justice of the Peace*, a book which is in several gentlemen's hands in this country, and likewise in Providence.

The duty on West-India coffee is one shilling and ninepence sterling a pound weight; and on Turkey coffee, two shillings and ninepence sterling a pound, which is upwards of forty per cent.

The duty on tea, over and above the custom-house duty, is one shilling sterling a pound, and five and twenty per cent. besides, which makes the duty on common bohea tea more than sixty per cent. and on fine teas upwards of forty per cent.

The duty on cocoa-nuts is ten shillings sterling a hundred weight; and when made into chocolate, is two shillings and threepence a pound weight more, which makes the duty upwards of fifty per cent.

The duty on single-brandy and rum, or spirits, is four shillings and fourpence sterling a gallon; and on double-brandy, or rum, eight shillings and eightpence sterling a gallon.

The duty on salt, either made at home or imported, is more than six times its first price.

When we seriously consider those things, and compare the present state of commerce, free of all taxes, with what must have been its fate if the enemy had succeeded, and likewise compare the situation of the merchant with the general state of the country, there is something in their opposition which is ungenerous and ungrateful. And instead of using and propagating such various arts and deceptions, to throw the five per cent. duty off, they would have appeared with more honor, and the event will prove it so, had they voluntarily proposed to have had it laid on, as an ease and aid to the present mode of taxation. And I shall conclude this piece by drawing up an address for them, which will show what they *ought to have done*, instead of what they have done, viz.

WE, the merchants of the State of Rhode-Island, taking into our serious consideration the enormous burdens which our commerce was threatened with by the enemy, and the happy deliverance it has been blest with through the noble exertions of the United States—and considering, at the same time, that no part of it is taxed, towards defraying the public expense, and that the burdens of the war fall not in sufficient proportion on us,

Do, therefore, unanimously propose and recommend to the United States assembled in Congress, that a duty, not less than five per cent. be laid on all imported articles; and that the monies arising therefrom be applied towards discharging the debts which this country has or may contract, at home or abroad, for her necessary defence.

And we do most solemnly pledge our faith and honor, and the word



and character of gentlemen, that we, disdaining and abhorring every illicit practice in trade, and detesting, as we ought to do, the mean and ruinous practice of smuggling, by which the fair trader is basely injured, and the country defrauded, will break off all dealings and connection with any person or persons, who we shall discover to be guilty of them, or any of them, as aforesaid.

Signed by unanimous consent,  
A. B. Chairman.

A proceeding of this kind, gentlemen, would have done you honor, and you may yet lament that you did not furnish the opportunity.

A FRIEND TO RHODE-ISLAND AND THE UNION.

January 16, 1783.

## LETTER VI<sup>16</sup>

### ON THE FIVE PER CENT. DUTY

He that has a turn for public business and integrity to go through it, untempted by interest, and unawed by party, must likewise sit down with the calm determination of putting up with the mistakes, petulance and prejudices of mankind.

As I am not cramped by self-interest in viewing a public measure, it naturally presents itself to me without fetters; and my judgment, such as it is, being left free, makes its determination without partiality. The merchant and the farmer are persons alike to me, and all places in America nearly the same. It is the general good, the happiness of the whole, that has ever been my object. Neither is there any Delegate that now is, or ever was in Congress, from the State of Rhode-Island, or elsewhere, who can say that the author of these letters ever sought from any man, or body of men, any place, office, recompence or reward, on any occasion, for himself. I have had the happiness of serving mankind, and the honor of doing it freely.

If, then, any of the intimations in the paper of last week, respecting "mercenary writers,"<sup>17</sup> had the least allusion to me, the author of them is most unfortunate in his application; neither is it necessary for me to

<sup>16</sup> From the *Providence Gazette*, February 1, 1783.—*Editor*.

<sup>17</sup> In an article entitled "On the Five Percent Impost" signed "A. C." which appeared in the *Providence Gazette* of January 25, 1783, Paine was attacked as a "mercenary writer."—*Editor*.

disown them, because the voice of the country will do it for me: And as it is impossible to be wounded by a wasp that never had the power of stinging, it would be folly indeed to be discomposed at the buzzing of a harmless insect.

When I mentioned the metaphor of the rocket and the stick, I left the application to be made by others; and if any gentleman has applied it to himself, it is a confession that the metaphor fits him.

But to return to the subject of the five per cent. duty:

I cannot help viewing the clamor that has been raised against this measure, as arising, in some instances, from selfishness, and, in others, from a false idea of patriotism.

The gentlemen who are at the head of the opposition in this State, are those who are in the mercantile line. To give their opposition an air of patriotism, they say, "Why do not Congress call on us for a quota?—We are willing to raise it, but we will not consent to a five per cent. duty."

All this sounds mighty fine. But do not those gentlemen know, that of the annual quota, called for last year, there has not been a quarter part of it paid in, perhaps not above a sixth or an eighth, even in this State? And yet those gentlemen are exceedingly generous in proposing to raise more money by the same mode of taxation, or any other mode, provided that their commerce goes duty-free.

We are certainly the most wise or the most foolish people in the world, not to take in commerce as one of the funds of taxation. We are now doing what no other country in the world does, and what no other country on earth can long afford to do; for we are, in the first place, giving encouragement to the commerce of foreign countries at the risk of our own; and, in the second place, we are raising all our taxes on the necessaries of life, and suffering the luxuries of it to go free.

I am strongly persuaded, that the gentlemen who are in opposition to the measure are themselves convinced that the measure is right, because in their arguments they are continually flying off from the point, like sparks from a rocket, and drawing the eye of the beholder from the ground he stands upon.

The proper point or question before the public is, whether commerce ought to be taken in as one of the national funds?

When this point or question is settled in the affirmative, the next will be, which is the most just and equitable way of doing it? And,

Thirdly, which will be the most effectual method of securing the application of the monies so raised to the purpose for which they are intended?

These are the proper, natural and political questions upon the measure, and the only ones into which it can be divided. But the opposers, instead of keeping to these points, and beginning, as they ought to have done, with the first of them, have filled the papers of this State with wild declamation, idle and frothy rhapsody, foreign to the subject, and calculated only to bewilder and perplex, and prevent the measure being understood.

A long piece in the Providence Gazette of last week, signed A. C. has not a single line in it to the purpose; but, like all the rest on the same side, is contrived to shun the debate, by fomenting an uproar.

I have now, by stating the several parts of the question, put, as I conceive, the whole matter into a clear and intelligible train of being understood; and until those points are adjusted, every other method of treating the subject is useless. To which I may justly add, that the manner in which the gentlemen of the opposition have hitherto conducted their publications, serves only to unhinge the public mind, even in their own State, from every obligation of civil and moral society, and from all the necessary duties of good government; and to promote a profligacy, that may in time think all property common, and fall, when too late to prevent it, on their own heads. The transition from disobedience to disorder is easy and rapid; and as the richest men now in the State of Rhode-Island are making tools of the poorest, I cannot help thinking but that the avarice of the former is trying a dangerous experiment: For the man who will say that he will enrich himself by smuggling, cuts asunder the laws that are to protect him, and exposes himself to a second plunder.

As I intend this to be my last publication in the State of Rhode-Island, I shall conclude it with such circumstances as may be an answer to any present or future remarks on the part I have taken.

I am not only convinced that the conduct of Rhode-Island is wrong, in her opposition to the five per cent. duty, but I am likewise persuaded that it will precipitate her into difficulties she does not at present foresee.

My design in taking the matter up was as much out of kindness to her, as to promote the general good of America. There may be those, in other States, who are privately urging her on, and putting her, in this instance, on the forlorn hope of disgrace, to avoid the reproach themselves: But

the part I have acted towards her has been open, friendly, and sincere.

In my personal acquaintance, in this State, I have scarcely met with a man, who was in the opposition to the measure, that did not confess to me, in the course of conversation, *that commerce ought to be taken in as one of the funds for defraying the expenses of the war*; and I have met with numbers who are strong advocates for it.

I have likewise heard a great deal of the angry dislike of few men, whose niggardly souls, governed only by the hope of the high price which their next or present cargoes may bring, have been throwing out intimations that my publications on this subject ought to be stopped in Rhode Island; but I have never met with any of them, or with any other person in the State, who did not pay me respect when he met me. Why any man should say one thing, and act another, or why he should endeavor to throw a blot on my reputation in the Providence newspaper, and yet show every possible civility to my face, I leave to those who can act a double part to explain.

But to show those persons that I am not, like themselves, governed by self-interest and narrow thinking, I shall, for once in my lifetime, make free with the correspondence of my friends—men whose characters the persons in opposition will never imitate, and who personally and intimately knew me in various and trying situations. Neither could I take this liberty with the dead, or with the living, or reconcile it to my feelings, were it not on a public question, wherein the interest of the country and not of myself is concerned.

The writers in the Providence paper of last week, with a view of keeping up the bubble, fraud and avarice, of the opposition, held out that I was a mercenary writer. They may call me so a thousand times over, if they please, and when they have done, they may sit down in shame and disgrace. Even Mr. Howell, who is now in Providence, must be a witness to my integrity. But I will produce much higher authorities than Mr. Howell.

For this purpose I have put into the Printer's hands two letters, the one from a dear and intimate friend of mine, and of mankind, whose greatness of soul has laid his person in the dust, Col. LAURENS, whom I accompanied to France, to procure money for America. The other from Major-General GREENE, to whom I was a volunteer aid-de-camp in the gloomy times of 1776, since which an uninterrupted friendship has subsisted between us.

The letter of Col. Laurens is in these words:

*“Carolina, April 18, 1782.*

“I received the letter wherein you mention my horse and trunk (the latter of which was left at Providence). The misery which the former has suffered at different times, by mismanagement, has greatly distressed me—he was wounded in service, and I am much attached to him—if he can be of any service to you, I entreat your acceptance of him, more especially if you will make use of him in bringing you to a country (Carolina) where you will be received with open arms, and all that affection and respect which our citizens are anxious to testify to the author of — —.

“Adieu. I wish you to regard this part of America (Carolina) as your particular home—and every thing that I can command in it, to be in common between us.”

The letter from General Greene, among many other declarations of esteem and friendship, contains the following:

*“Ashley-River (Carolina) Nov. 18, 1782.*

“Many people wish to get you into this country.

“I see you are determined to follow your genius, and not your fortune. I have always been in hopes that Congress would have made some handsome acknowledgment to you for your past services. I must confess that I think you have been shamefully neglected; and that America is indebted to few characters more than to you. But as your passion leads to fame, and not to wealth, your mortification will be the less. Your name, from your writings, will live immortal.

“At present my expenses are great; nevertheless, if you are not conveniently situated, I shall take a pride and pleasure in contributing all in my power to render your situation happy.”

It is needless for me to make any other remarks on these letters, than to say, that while I enjoy the high esteem and opinion of good and great men, I am perfectly unconcerned at the mean and snarling ingratitude of little incendiaries.

I now refer the reader to my five letters already published in the Providence Gazette, on the five per cent. duty, and more particularly to the last number.

A FRIEND TO RHODE-ISLAND AND THE UNION.

Providence, Jan. 31, 1783.

## DISSERTATIONS ON GOVERNMENT; THE AFFAIRS OF THE BANK; AND PAPER MONEY

Throughout most of the year 1785 Paine devoted himself to inventions such as an iron bridge without piers, and a smokeless candle. Early in 1786, however, he returned to the political scene and entered the bitter controversy in Pennsylvania over the Bank of North America. This institution had been founded in 1781 by Robert Morris to save the nation's finances during the blackest period of the Revolution. It was granted a charter by both the Continental Congress and the state of Pennsylvania. The battle to repeal its charter in Pennsylvania was part of the bigger struggle after the Revolutionary War between debtors and creditors, the back-country farmers and the wealthy merchants in Philadelphia. The debtor classes were bent upon increasing the amount of paper money in circulation, and feared that if the Bank of North America would refuse to accept the paper money on the same terms as specie, the legislation to increase its circulation would be valueless, since the public would have no faith in the bills. A cry therefore arose from the back-country counties for the repeal of the Bank charter. As soon as the State legislature began to consider the proposal for repeal, the supporters of the Bank rallied their forces in opposition to the legislation. Several pamphlets supporting the Bank were published, but were replete with such legal terminology that few people could understand what they were aiming to accomplish. This was the situation when on February 18, 1786 there came off the press in Philadelphia a clearly-written pamphlet, written by Thomas Paine, entitled: *Dissertations on Government; the Affairs of the Bank; and Paper Money*, attacking paper money as a device on the part of those creditors who wished to "cheat their creditors," denouncing the legislature's assumption of judicial functions, and its general "want of moderation, and prudence, of impartiality and equity, of fair and candid inquiry and investigation, and of deliberate and unbiased judgment" in dealing with the bank's charter.

The pamphlet created a great stir. The representatives of the back-country farmers denounced Paine for deserting the common people, and one publicly referred to him as "an unprincipled author, who let his pen out for hire." Paine vigorously denied the accusation, and the evidence does not in the slightest support the contention that he was bribed by the bank's officers to write the pamphlet. Nor does it uphold the argument that Paine was at this stage a conservative at heart, and that it was therefore logical for him to side

with the wealthy creditor classes. (See the introduction by Harry H. Clark to *Six New Letters of Thomas Paine* entitled "Thomas Paine the Conservative" for this contention.) Rather it would seem that Paine not only took pride in the Bank as the offspring of the institution he had helped found in 1780 and to which he contributed his own money, but genuinely believed that the Bank's services to the country were of great value in the organization of a sounder economic and political life in America. Nor should it be overlooked that Paine's views were widely shared by the city mechanics in Philadelphia who did not favor the further issuance of paper money, fearing its inflationary effects on their living standards. Throughout his career up to this point Paine had voiced the sentiments of the artisans and mechanics, and it is not surprising that he should do so again on this issue. Naturally, this meant allying himself with the very men in the State whom he had formerly opposed, but then the urban workers had also opposed these men in the past and now were allied with them in opposition to paper money and in support of a stronger central government. For evidence that many back-country farmers, members of the debtor class, also supported Paine's position, see Freeman H. Hart, *The Valley of Virginia in the American Revolution*, Chapel Hill, 1942, pp. 128-130.

For an interesting discussion of the history of the entire struggle, see Janet Wilson, "The Bank of North America and Pennsylvania Politics, 1781-1787," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. LXVI, January, 1942, pp. 3-28.—*Editor*.

#### PREFACE

HERE present the public with a new performance. Some parts of it are more particularly adapted to the State of Pennsylvania, on the present state of its affairs; but there are others which are on a larger scale. The time bestowed on this work has not been long, the whole of it being written and printed during the short recess of the Assembly.

As to parties, merely considered as such, I am attached to no particular one. There are such things as right and wrong in the world, and so far as these are parties against each other, the signature of COMMON SENSE is properly employed.

THOMAS PAINE.

PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 18, 1786.

#### DISSERTATIONS ON GOVERNMENT, ETC.

Every government, let its form be what it may, contains within itself a principle common to all, which is that of a sovereign power, or a power

over which there is no control, and which controls all others; and as it is impossible to construct a form of government in which this power does not exist, so there must of necessity be a place, if it may be so called, for it to exist in.

In despotic monarchies this power is lodged in a single person, or sovereign. His will is law; which he declares, alters or revokes as he pleases, without being accountable to any power for so doing. Therefore, the only modes of redress, in countries so governed, are by petition or insurrection. And this is the reason we so frequently hear of insurrections in despotic governments; for as there are but two modes of redress, this is one of them.

Perhaps it may be said that as the united resistance of the people is able, by force, to control the will of the sovereign, that therefore the controlling power lodges in them; but it must be understood that I am speaking of such powers only as are constituent parts of the government, not of those powers which are externally applied to resist and overturn it.

In republics, such as those established in America, the sovereign power, or the power over which there is no control, and which controls all others, remains where nature placed it—in the people; for the people in America are the fountain of power. It remains there as a matter of right, recognized in the constitutions of the country, and the exercise of it is constitutional and legal. This sovereignty is exercised in electing and deputing a certain number of persons to represent and act for the whole, and who, if they do not act right, may be displaced by the same power that placed them there, and others elected and deputed in their stead, and the wrong measures of former representatives corrected and brought right by this means. Therefore, the republican form and principle leaves no room for insurrection, because it provides and establishes a rightful means in its stead.

In countries under a despotic form of government, the exercise of this power is an assumption of sovereignty; a wresting it from the person in whose hand their form of government has placed it, and the exercise of it is there styled rebellion. Therefore the despotic form of government knows no intermediate space between being slaves and being rebels.

I shall in this place offer an observation which, though not immediately connected with my subject, is very naturally deduced from it, which is that the nature, if I may so call it, of a government over any people, may be ascertained from the modes which the people pursue to



obtain redress of grievances; for like causes will produce like effects. And therefore the government which Britain attempted to erect over America could be no other than a despotism, because it left to the Americans no other modes of redress than those which are left to people under despotic governments, petition and resistance: and the Americans, without ever attending to a comparison on the case, went into the same steps which such people go into, because no other could be pursued: and this similarity of effects leads up to, and ascertains the similarity of the causes or governments which produced them.

But to return. The repository where the sovereign power is placed is the first criterion of distinction between a country under a despotic form of government and a free country. In a country under a despotic government, the sovereign is the only free man in it. In a republic, the people, retaining the sovereignty themselves, naturally and necessarily retain their freedom with it: for wherever the sovereignty is, there must the freedom be.

As the repository where the sovereign power is lodged is the first criterion of distinction, so the second is the principles on which it is administered.

A despotic government knows no principle but *will*. Whatever the sovereign wills to do, the government admits him the inherent right, and the uncontrolled power of doing. He is restrained by no fixed rule of right and wrong, for he makes the right and wrong himself, and as he pleases. If he happens (for a miracle may happen) to be a man of consummate wisdom, justice and moderation, of a mild affectionate disposition, disposed to business, and understanding and promoting the general good, all the beneficial purposes of government will be answered under his administration, and the people so governed, may, while this is the case, be prosperous and easy.

But as there can be no security that this disposition will last, and this administration continue, and still less security that his successor shall have the same qualities and pursue the same measures; therefore, no people exercising their reason, and understanding their rights, would, of their own choice, invest any one man with such a power.

Neither is it consistent to suppose the knowledge of any one man competent to the exercise of such a power. A sovereign of this sort, is brought up in such a distant line of life; lives so remote from the people, and from a knowledge of everything which relates to their local

situations and interests, that he can know nothing from experience and observation, and all which he does know, he must be told.

Sovereign power without sovereign knowledge, that is, a full knowledge of all the matters over which that power is to be exercised, is a something which contradicts itself.

There is a species of sovereign power in a single person, which is very proper when applied to a commander-in-chief over an army, so far as relates to the military government of an army, and the condition and purpose of an army constitute the reason why it is so. In an army every man is of the same profession; that is, he is a soldier, and the commander-in-chief is a soldier too; therefore, the knowledge necessary to the exercise of the power is within himself. By understanding what a soldier is, he comprehends the local situation, interest and duty of every man within what may be called the dominion of his command; and, therefore, the condition and circumstances of an army make a fitness for the exercise of the power.

The purpose, likewise, or object of an army, is another reason: for this power in a commander-in-chief, though exercised over the army, is not exercised against it; but is exercised through or over the army against the enemy. Therefore, the enemy, and not the people, is the object it is directed to. Neither is it exercised over an army for the purpose of raising a revenue from it, but to promote its combined interest, condense its powers, and give it capacity for action.

But all these reasons cease when sovereign power is transferred from the commander of an army to the commander of a nation, and entirely loses its fitness when applied to govern subjects following occupations, as it governs soldiers following arms.

A nation is quite another element, and everything in it differs not only from each other, but all of them differ from those of an army. A nation is composed of distinct, unconnected individuals, following various trades, employments and pursuits; continually meeting, crossing, uniting, opposing and separating from each other, as accident, interest and circumstance shall direct. An army has but one occupation and but one interest.

Another very material matter in which an army and a nation differ, is that of temper. An army may be said to have but one temper; for however the *natural* temper of the persons composing the army may differ from each other, there is a second temper takes place of the first: a

temper formed by discipline, mutuality of habits, union of objects and pursuits, and the style of military manners: but this can never be the case among all the individuals of a nation. Therefore, the fitness, arising from those circumstances, which disposes an army to the command of a single person, and the fitness of a single person for that command, is not to be found either in one or the other, when we come to consider them as a sovereign and a nation.

Having already shown what a despotic government is, and how it is administered, I now come to show what the administration of a republic is.

The administration of a republic is supposed to be directed by certain fundamental principles of right and justice, from which there cannot, because there ought not to, be any deviation; and whenever any deviation appears, there is a kind of stepping out of the republican principle, and an approach toward the despotic one. This administration is executed by a select number of persons, periodically chosen by the people, who act as representatives and in behalf of the whole, and who are supposed to enact the same laws and to pursue the same line of administration, as the people would do were they all assembled together.

The *public good* is to be their object. It is therefore necessary to understand what public good is.

Public good is not a term opposed to the good of individuals; on the contrary, it is the good of every individual collected. It is the good of all, because it is the good of everyone: for as the public body is every individual collected, so the public good is the collected good of those individuals.

The foundation-principle of public good is justice, and wherever justice is impartially administered, the public good is promoted; for as it is to the good of every man that no injustice be done to him, so likewise it is to his good that the principle which secures him should not be violated in the person of another, because such a violation weakens *his* security, and leaves to chance what ought to be to him a rock to stand on.

But in order to understand more minutely, how the public good is to be promoted, and the manner in which the representatives are to act to promote it, we must have recourse to the original or first principles, on which the people formed themselves into a republic.

When a people agree to form themselves into a republic (for the word *republic* means the *public good*, or the good of the whole, in contradistinction to the despotic form, which makes the good of the sovereign,

or of one man, the only object of the government), when I say, they agree to do this, it is to be understood that they mutually resolve and pledge themselves to each other, rich and poor alike, to support and maintain this rule of equal justice among them. They therefore renounce not only the despotic form, but despotic principle, as well of governing as of being governed by mere will and power, and substitute in its place a government of justice.

By this mutual compact, the citizens of a republic put it out of their power, that is, they renounce, as detestable, the power of exercising, at any future time any species of despotism over each other, or doing a thing not right in itself, because a majority of them may have strength of numbers sufficient to accomplish it.

In this pledge and compact <sup>18</sup> lies the foundation of the republic: and

<sup>18</sup> This pledge and compact is contained in the declaration of rights prefixed to the constitution (of Pennsylvania), and is as follows:

I. That all men are born equally free and independent, and have certain natural, inherent and unalienable rights, amongst which are, the enjoying and defending life and liberty, acquiring, possessing and protecting property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety.

II. That all men have a natural and unalienable right to worship Almighty God, according to the dictates of their own consciences and understanding: and that no man ought or of right can be compelled to attend any religious worship, or erect or support any place of worship, or maintain any ministry, contrary to, or against his own free will and consent: nor can any man, who acknowledges the being of a God, be justly deprived or abridged of any civil right as a citizen, on account of his religious sentiments or peculiar mode of religious worship: and that no authority can or ought to be vested in, or assumed by, any power whatever, that shall in any case interfere with, or in any manner control, the right of conscience in the free exercise of religious worship.

III. That the people of this State have the sole, exclusive and inherent right of governing and regulating the internal police of the same.

IV. That all power being originally inherent in, and consequently derived from, the people; therefore, all officers of government, whether legislative or executive, are their trustees and servants, and at all times accountable to them.

V. That government is, or ought to be, instituted for the common benefit, protection and security of the people, nation or community; and not for the particular emolument or advantage of any single man, family, or set of men, who are a part only of that community; and that the community hath an indubitable, unalienable and indefeasible right to reform, alter or abolish government in such manner as shall be by that community judged most conducive to the public weal.

VI. That those who are employed in the legislative and executive business of the state may be restrained from oppression, the people have a right, at such periods as they may think proper to reduce their public officers to a private station, and supply the vacancies by certain and regular elections.

VII. That all elections ought to be free; and that all free men having a sufficient evident common interest with, and attachment to the community, have a right to elect officers, or to be elected into office.

VIII. That every member of society hath a right to be protected in the enjoyment

the security to the rich and the consolation to the poor is, that what each man has is his own; that no despotic sovereign can take it from him, and that the common cementing principle which holds all the parts of a republic together, secures him likewise from the despotism of numbers: for despotism may be more effectually acted by many over a few, than by one man over all.

of life, liberty and property, and therefore is bound to contribute his proportion toward the expense of that protection, and yield his personal service when necessary, or an equivalent thereto; but no part of a man's property can be justly taken from him, or applied to public uses, without his own consent, or that of his legal representatives; nor can any man who is conscientiously scrupulous of bearing arms, be justly compelled thereto, if he will pay such equivalent; nor are the people bound by any laws, but such as they have in like manner assented to, for their common good.

IX. That in all prosecutions for criminal offenses, a man hath a right to be heard by himself and his counsel, to demand the cause and nature of his accusation, to be confronted with the witnesses, to call for evidence in his favor, and a speedy public trial, by an impartial jury of the country, without the unanimous consent of which jury he cannot be found guilty; nor can he be compelled to give evidence against himself; nor can any man be justly deprived of his liberty, except by the laws of the land, or the judgment of his peers.

X. That the people have a right to hold themselves, their houses, papers, and possessions free from search and seizure; and therefore warrants without oaths or affirmations, first made, affording a sufficient foundation for them, and whereby any officer or messenger may be commanded or required to search suspected places, or to seize any person or persons, his or their property, not particularly described, are contrary to that right, and ought not to be granted.

XI. That in controversies respecting property, and in suits between man and man, the parties have a right to trial by jury, which ought to be held sacred.

XII. That the people have a right to freedom of speech, and of writing and publishing their sentiments; therefore the freedom of the press ought not to be restrained.

XIII. That the people have a right to bear arms for the defense of themselves and the state—and as standing armies, in the time of peace, are dangerous to liberty, they ought not to be kept up—and that the military should be kept under a strict subordination to, and governed by, the civil power.

XIV. That a frequent recurrence to fundamental principles, and a firm adherence to justice, moderation, temperance, industry and frugality are absolutely necessary to preserve the blessings of liberty and keep a government free—the people ought therefore to pay particular attention to these points in the choice of officers and representatives, and have a right to exact a due and constant regard to them, from their legislators and magistrates, in the making and executing such laws as are necessary for the good government of the state.

XV. That all men have a natural inherent right to emigrate from one state to another that will receive them, or to form a new state in vacant countries, or in such countries as they can purchase, whenever they think that thereby they may promote their own happiness.

XVI. That the people have a right to assemble together, to consult for their common good, to instruct their representatives, and to apply to the Legislature for redress or grievances, by address, petition, or remonstrance.—*Author.*

Therefore, in order to know how far the power of an assembly, or a house of representatives can act in administering the affairs of a republic, we must examine how far the power of the people extends under the original compact they have made with each other; for the power of the representatives is in many cases less, but never can be greater than that of the people represented; and whatever the people in their mutual, original compact have renounced the power of doing toward, or acting over each other, the representatives cannot assume the power to do, because, as I have already said, the power of the representatives cannot be greater than that of the people they represent.

In this place it naturally presents itself that the people in their original compact of equal justice or first principles of a republic, renounced as despotic, detestable and unjust, the assuming a right of breaking and violating their engagements, contracts and compacts with, or defrauding, imposing or tyrannizing over each other, and therefore the representatives cannot make an act to do it for them, and any such kind of act would be an attempt to depose not the personal sovereign, but the sovereign principle of the republic, and to introduce despotism in its stead.

It may in this place be proper to distinguish between that species of sovereignty which is claimed and exercised by despotic monarchs, and that sovereignty which the citizens of a republic inherit and retain. The sovereignty of a despotic monarch assumes the power of making wrong right, or right wrong, as he pleases or as it suits him. The sovereignty in a republic is exercised to keep right and wrong in their proper and distinct places, and never suffer the one to usurp the place of the other. A republic, properly understood, is a sovereignty of justice, in contradistinction to a sovereignty of will.

Our experience in republicanism is yet so slender, that it is much to be doubted, whether all our public laws and acts are consistent with, or can be justified on, the principles of a republican government.

We have been so much habited to act in committees at the commencement of the dispute, and during the interregnum of government, and in many cases since, and to adopt expedients warranted by necessity, and to permit to ourselves a discretionary use of power, suited to the spur and exigency of the moment, that a man transferred from a committee to a seat in the legislature, imperceptibly takes with him the ideas and habits he has been accustomed to, and continues to think like

a committee-man instead of a legislator, and to govern by the spirit rather than by the rule of the Constitution and the principles of the Republic.

Having already stated that the power of the representatives can never exceed the power of the people whom they represent, I now proceed to examine more particularly, what the power of the representatives is.

It is, in the first place, the power of acting as legislators in making laws—and in the second place, the power of acting in certain cases, as agents or negotiators for the commonwealth, for such purposes as the circumstances of the commonwealth require.

A very strange confusion of ideas, dangerous to the credit, stability, and the good and honor of the commonwealth, has arisen, by confounding those two distinct powers and things together and blending every act of the assembly, of whatever kind it may be, under one general name, of *Laws of the Commonwealth*, and thereby creating an opinion (which is truly of the despotic kind) that every succeeding assembly has an equal power over every transaction, as well as law, done by a former assembly.

All laws are acts, but all acts are not laws. Many of the acts of the assembly are acts of agency or negotiation, that is, they are acts of contract and agreement, on the part of the state, with certain persons therein mentioned, and for certain purposes therein recited. An act of this kind, after it has passed the house, is of the nature of a deed or contract, signed, sealed and delivered; and subject to the same general laws and principles of justice as all other deeds and contracts are: for in a transaction of this kind, the state stands as an individual, and can be known in no other character in a court of justice.

By "*laws*," as distinct from the agency transactions, or matters of negotiation, are to be comprehended all those public acts of the assembly or commonwealth, which have a universal operation, or apply themselves to every individual of the commonwealth. Of this kind are the laws for the distribution and administration of justice, for the preservation of the peace, for the security of property, for raising the necessary revenue by just proportions, etc.

Acts of this kind are properly *laws*, and they may be altered, amended and repealed, or others substituted in their places, as experience shall direct, for the better effecting the purpose for which they were intended: and the right and power of the assembly to do this is derived

from the right and power which the people, were they all assembled together, instead of being represented, would have to do the same thing: because, in acts or laws of this kind, there is no other party than the public.

The law, or the alteration, or the repeal, is for themselves;—and whatever the effects may be, it falls on themselves;—if for the better, they have the benefit of it—if for the worse, they suffer the inconvenience. No violence to anyone is here offered—no breach of faith is here committed. It is therefore one of those rights and powers which is within the sense, meaning and limits of the original compact of justice which they formed with each other as the foundation-principle of the republic, and being one of those rights and powers, it devolves on their representatives by delegation.

As it is not my intention (neither is it within the limits assigned to this work) to define every species of what may be called *laws* (but rather to distinguish that part in which the representatives act as agents or negotiators for the state from the legislative part) I shall pass on to distinguish and describe those acts of the assembly which are acts of agency or negotiation, and to show that as they are different in their nature, construction and operation, from legislative acts, so likewise the power and authority of the assembly over them, after they are passed, is different.

It must occur to every person on the first reflection, that the affairs and circumstances of a commonwealth require other business to be done besides that of making laws, and, consequently, that the different kinds of business cannot all be classed under one name, or be subject to one and the same rule of treatment.

But to proceed—

By agency transactions, or matters of negotiation, done by the assembly, are to be comprehended all that kind of public business, which the assembly, as representatives of the republic, transact in its behalf, with a certain person or persons, or part or parts of the republic, for purposes mentioned in the act, and which the assembly confirm and ratify on the part of the commonwealth, by affixing to it the seal of the state.

An act of this kind, differs from a law of the before-mentioned kind; because here are two parties and there but one, and the parties are bound to perform different and distinct parts: whereas, in the before-mentioned law, every man's part was the same.

These acts, therefore, though numbered among the laws, are evi-



dently distinct therefrom, and are not of the legislative kind. The former are laws for the government of the commonwealth; these are transactions of business, such as, selling and conveying an estate belonging to the public, or buying one; acts for borrowing money, and fixing with the lender the terms and modes of payment; acts of agreement and contract, with a certain person or persons, for certain purposes: and, in short, every act in which two parties, the state being one, are particularly mentioned or described, and in which the form and nature of a bargain or contract is comprehended.

These, if for custom and uniformity sake we call them by the name of *laws*, are not laws for the government of the commonwealth, but for the government of the contracting parties, as all deeds and contracts are; and are not, properly speaking, acts of the assembly, but joint acts, or acts of the assembly in behalf of the commonwealth on one part, and certain persons therein mentioned on the other part.

Acts of this kind are distinguishable into two classes:

First—Those wherein the matters inserted in the act have already been settled and adjusted between the state on one part, and the persons therein mentioned, on the other part. In this case the act is the completion and ratification of the contract or matters therein recited. It is in fact a deed signed, sealed and delivered.

Second—Those acts wherein the matters have not been already agreed upon, and wherein the act only holds forth certain propositions and terms to be accepted of and acceded to.

I shall give an instance of each of those acts. First, the state wants the loan of a sum of money; certain persons make an offer to government to lend that sum, and send in their proposals: the government accept these proposals, and all the matters of the loan and the payment are agreed on; and an act is passed according to the usual form of passing acts, ratifying and confirming this agreement. This act is final.

In the second case—the state, as in the preceding one, wants a loan of money—the assembly passes an act holding forth the terms on which it will borrow and pay: this act has no force until the propositions and terms are accepted of and acceded to by some person or persons, and when those terms are accepted of and complied with, the act is binding on the state.

But if at the meeting of the next assembly, or any other, the whole sum intended to be borrowed, should not be borrowed, that assembly may stop where they are, and discontinue proceeding with the loan, or

make new propositions and terms for the remainder; but so far as the subscriptions have been filled up, and the terms complied with, it is, as in the first case, a signed deed; and in the same manner are all acts, let the matters in them be what they may, wherein, as I have before mentioned, the state on one part, and certain individuals on the other part, are parties in the act.

If the state should become a bankrupt, the creditors, as in all cases of bankruptcy, will be sufferers; they will have but a dividend for the whole: but this is not a dissolution of the contract, but an accommodation of it, arising from necessity. And so in all cases of this kind, if an inability takes place on either side, the contract cannot be performed, and some accommodation must be gone into, or the matter falls through of itself.

It may likewise, though it ought not to, happen that in performing the matters, agreeably to the terms of the act, inconveniences, unforeseen at the time of making the act, may arise to either or both parties: in this case, those inconveniences may be removed by the mutual consent and agreement of the parties, and each finds its benefit in so doing: for in a republic it is the harmony of its parts that constitutes their several and mutual good.

But the acts themselves are legally binding, as much as if they had been made between two private individuals. The greatness of one party cannot give it a superiority or advantage over the other. The state, or its representatives, the assembly, has no more power over an act of this kind, after it has passed, than if the state was a private person. It is the glory of a republic to have it so, because it secures the individual from becoming the prey of power, and prevents *might* from overcoming *right*.

If any difference or dispute arise afterward between the state and the individuals with whom the agreement is made respecting the contract, or the meaning, or extent of any of the matters contained in the act, which may affect the property or interest of either, such difference or dispute must be judged of, and decided upon, by the laws of the land, in a court of justice and trial by jury; that is, by the laws of the land already in being at the time such act and contract was made.

No law made afterwards can apply to the case, either directly, or by construction or implication: for such a law would be a retrospective law, or a law made after the fact, and cannot even be produced in court as applying to the case before it for judgment.

That this is justice, that it is the true principle of republican govern-

ment, no man will be so hardy as to deny. If, therefore, a lawful contract or agreement, sealed and ratified, cannot be affected or altered by any act made afterwards, how much more inconsistent and irrational, despotic and unjust would it be, to think of making an act with the professed intention of breaking up a contract already signed and sealed.

That it is possible an assembly, in the heat and indiscretion of party, and meditating on power rather than on the principle by which all power in a republican government is governed, that of equal justice, may fall into the error of passing such an act, is admitted;—but it would be an actless act, an act that goes for nothing, an act which the courts of justice and the established laws of the land, could know nothing of.

Because such an act would be an act of one party only, not only without, but against the consent of the other; and therefore, cannot be produced to affect a contract made between the two. That the violation of a contract should be set up as a justification to the violator, would be the same thing as to say, that a man by breaking his promise is freed from the obligation of it, or that by transgressing the laws, he exempts himself from the punishment of them.

Besides the constitutional and legal reasons why an assembly cannot, of its own act and authority, undo or make void a contract made between the state (by a former assembly) and certain individuals, may be added what may be called the natural reasons, or those reasons which the plain rules of common sense point out to every man. Among which are the following:

The principals, or real parties in the contract, are the state and the persons contracted with. The assembly is not a party, but an agent in behalf of the state, authorized and empowered to transact its affairs.

Therefore, it is the state that is bound on one part and certain individuals on the other part, and the performance of the contract, according to the conditions of it, devolves on succeeding assemblies, not as principals, but as agents.

Therefore, for the next or any other assembly to undertake to dissolve the state from its obligation is an assumption of power of a novel and extraordinary kind. It is the servant attempting to free his master.

The election of new assemblies following each other makes no difference in the nature of things. The state is still the same state. The public is still the same body. These do not annually expire, though the time of an assembly does. These are not new-created every year, nor

can they be displaced from their original standing; but are a perpetual, permanent body, always in being and still the same.

But if we adopt the vague, inconsistent idea that every new assembly has a full and complete authority over every act done by the state in a former assembly, and confound together laws, contracts, and every species of public business, it will lead us into a wilderness of endless confusion and insurmountable difficulties. It would be declaring an assembly despotic, for the time being.

Instead of a government of established principles administered by established rules, the authority of government, by being strained so high, would, by the same rule, be reduced proportionately as low, and would be no other than that of a committee of the state, acting with discretionary powers for one year. Every new election would be a new revolution, or it would suppose the public of the former year dead and a new public in its place.

Having now endeavored to fix a precise idea to, and distinguish between legislative acts and acts of negotiation and agency, I shall proceed to apply this distinction to the case now in dispute, respecting the charter of the bank.

The charter of the bank, or what is the same thing, the act for incorporating it, is to all intents and purposes an act of negotiation and contract, entered into, and confirmed between the State on one part, and certain persons mentioned therein on the other part. The purpose for which the act was done on the part of the State is therein recited, *viz.*, the support which the finances of the country would derive therefrom. The incorporating clause is the condition or obligation on the part of the State; and the obligation on the part of the bank, is "that nothing contained in that act shall be construed to authorize the said corporation to exercise any powers in this State repugnant to the laws or constitution thereof."

Here are all the marks and evidences of a contract. The parties—the purport—and the reciprocal obligations.

That this is a contract, or a joint act, is evident from its being in the power of either of the parties to have forbidden or prevented its being done. The State could not force the stockholders of the bank to be a corporation, and therefore, as their consent was necessary to the making the act, their dissent would have prevented its being made; so, on the other hand, as the bank could not force the State to incorporate them, the consent or dissent of the State would have had the same effect to do,

or to prevent its being done; and as neither of the parties could make the act alone, for the same reason can neither of them dissolve it alone: but this is not the case with a law or act of legislation, and therefore, the difference proves it to be an act of a different kind.

The bank may forfeit the charter by delinquency, but the delinquency must be proved and established by a legal process in a court of justice and trial by jury; for the state, or the assembly, is not to be a judge in its own case, but must come to the laws of the land for judgment; for that which is law for the individual, is likewise law for the state.

Before I enter further into this affair, I shall go back to the circumstances of the country, and the condition the government was in, for some time before, as well as at the time it entered into this engagement with the bank, and this act of incorporation was passed: for the government of this State, and I suppose the same of the rest, were then in want of two of the most essential matters which governments could be destitute of—money and credit.

In looking back to those times, and bringing forward some of the circumstances attending them, I feel myself entering on unpleasant and disagreeable ground; because some of the matters which the attacks on the bank now make it necessary to state, in order to bring the affair fully before the public, will not add honor to those who have promoted that measure and carried it through the late House of Assembly; and for whom, though my own judgment and opinion on the case oblige me to differ from, I retain my esteem, and the social remembrance of times past.

But, I trust, those gentlemen will do me the justice to recollect my exceeding earnestness with them, last spring, when the attack on the bank first broke out; for it clearly appeared to me one of those overheated measures, which, neither the country at large, nor their own constituents, would justify them in, when it came to be fully understood; for however high a party measure may be carried in an assembly, the people out of doors are all the while following their several occupations and employments, minding their farms and their business, and take their own time and leisure to judge of public measures; the consequence of which is, that they often judge in a cooler spirit than their representatives act in.

It may be easily recollected that the present bank was preceded by, and rose out of a former one, called the Pennsylvania Bank which began a few months before; the occasion of which I shall briefly state.

In the spring of 1780, the Pennsylvania Assembly was composed of many of the same members, and nearly all of the same connection, which composed the late House that began the attack on the bank. I served as Clerk of the Assembly of 1780, which station I resigned at the end of the year, and accompanied a much lamented friend, the late Colonel John Laurens, on an embassy to France.

The spring of 1780 was marked with an accumulation of misfortunes. The reliance placed on the defense of Charleston failed, and exceedingly lowered or depressed the spirits of the country. The measures of government, from the want of money, means and credit, dragged on like a heavy loaded carriage without wheels, and were nearly got to what a countryman would understand by a dead pull.

The Assembly of that year met, by adjournment, at an unusual time, the tenth of May, and what particularly added to the affliction, was, that so many of the members, instead of spiriting up their constituents to the most nervous exertions, came to the Assembly furnished with petitions to be exempt from paying taxes. How the public measures were to be carried on, the country defended, and the army recruited, clothed, fed, and paid, when the only resource, and that not half sufficient, that of taxes, should be relaxed to almost nothing, was a matter too gloomy to look at.

A language very different from that of petitions ought at this time to have been the language of everyone. A declaration to have stood forth with their lives and fortunes, and a reprobation of every thought of partial indulgence would have sounded much better than petitions.

While the Assembly was sitting, a letter from the commander-in-chief was received by the executive council and transmitted to the House. The doors were shut, and it fell officially to me to read.

In this letter the naked truth of things was unfolded. Among other informations, the general said, that notwithstanding his confidence in the attachment of the army to the cause of the country, the distress of it, from the want of every necessary which men could be destitute of, had arisen to such a pitch, that the appearances of mutiny and discontent were so strongly marked on the countenance of the army, that he dreaded the event of every hour.

When the letter was read, I observed a despairing silence in the House. Nobody spoke for a considerable time. At length, a member, of whose fortitude to withstand misfortunes I had a high opinion, rose:

“If,” said he, “the account in that letter is a true state of things, and

we are in the situation there represented, it appears to me in vain to contend the matter any longer. We may as well give up at first as at last.”

The gentleman who spoke next, was (to the best of my recollection) a member of Bucks County, who, in a cheerful note, endeavored to dissipate the gloom of the House:

“Well, well,” said he, “don’t let the House despair. If things are not so well as we wish, we must endeavor to make them better.”

And on a motion for adjournment, the conversation went no further.

There was now no time to lose, and something absolutely necessary to be done, which was not within the immediate power of the House to do; for what with the depreciation of the currency, and slow operation of taxes, and the petitions to be exempted therefrom, the treasury was moneyless and the Government creditless.

If the Assembly could not give the assistance which the necessity of the case immediately required, it was very proper the matter should be known by those who either could or would endeavor to do it. To conceal the information within the House, and not provide the relief which that information required, was making no use of the knowledge, and endangering the public cause. The only thing that now remained, and was capable of reaching the case, was private credit, and the voluntary aid of individuals; and under this impression, on my return from the House, I drew out the salary due to me as clerk, enclosed \$500 to a gentleman in this city, in part of the whole, and wrote fully to him on the subject of our affairs.

The gentleman to whom this letter was addressed is Mr. Blair M’Clenaghan. I mentioned to him that, notwithstanding the current opinion that the enemy were beaten from before Charleston, there were too many reasons to believe the place was then taken and in the hands of the enemy: the consequence of which would be that a great part of the British force would return, and join at New York; that our own army required to be augmented, ten thousand men, to be able to stand against the combined force of the enemy.

I informed Mr. M’Clenaghan of General Washington’s letter, the extreme distresses he was surrounded with, and the absolute occasion there was for the citizens to exert themselves at this time, which there was no doubt they would do, if the necessity was made known to them; for that the ability of Government was exhausted. I requested Mr. M’Clenaghan to propose a voluntary subscription among his friends and added that I had enclosed five hundred dollars as my mite thereto, and

that I would increase it as far as the last ability would enable me to go.<sup>19</sup>

The next day Mr. M'Clenaghan informed me that he had communicated the contents of the letter, at a meeting of gentlemen at the coffeehouse, and that a subscription was immediately begun; that Mr. Robert Morris and himself had subscribed £200 each, in hard money, and that the subscription was going on very successfully. This subscription was intended as a donation, and to be given in bounties to promote the recruiting service. It is dated June 8, 1780. The original subscription list is now in my possession—it amounts to £400 hard money, and £101,360 Continental.

While this subscription was going forward, information of the loss of Charleston arrived,<sup>20</sup> and on a communication from several members of Congress to certain gentlemen of this city, of the increasing distresses and dangers then taking place, a meeting was held of the subscribers, and such other gentlemen who chose to attend, at the city tavern. This meeting was on the seventeenth of June, nine days after the subscriptions had begun.

At this meeting it was resolved to open a security-subscription, to the amount of £300,000, Pennsylvania currency, in real money; the subscribers to execute bonds to the amount of their subscriptions, and to form a bank thereon for supplying the army. This being resolved on and carried into execution, the plan of the first subscriptions was discontinued, and this extended one established in its stead.

By means of this bank the army was supplied through the campaign, and being at the same time recruited, was enabled to maintain its ground; and on the appointment of Mr. Morris to be superintendent of the finances the spring following, he arranged the system of the present bank, styled the Bank of North America, and many subscribers of the former bank transferred their subscriptions into this.

Toward the establishment of this bank, Congress passed an ordinance of incorporation, December twenty-first, which the government of Pennsylvania recognized by sundry matters: and afterward, on an application of the president and directors of the bank, through the mediation of the executive council, the Assembly agreed to, and passed the State Act of incorporation April 1, 1782.

<sup>19</sup> Mr. M'Clenaghan being now returned from Europe, has my consent to show this letter to any gentleman who may be inclined to see it.—*Author*.

The letter is published below, pp. 1183–1185.—*Editor*.

<sup>20</sup> Colonel Tennant, aide to General Lincoln, arrived the fourteenth of June, with despatches of the capitulation of Charleston.—*Author*.



Thus arose the bank—produced by the distresses of the times and the enterprising spirit of patriotic individuals. Those individuals furnished and risked the money, and the aid which the Government contributed was that of incorporating them.

It would have been well if the State had made all its bargains and contracts with as much true policy as it made this: for a greater service for so small a consideration, that only of an act of incorporation, has not been obtained since the Government existed.

Having now shown how the bank originated, I shall proceed with my remarks.

The sudden restoration of public and private credit, which took place on the establishment of the bank, is an event as extraordinary in itself as any domestic occurrence during the progress of the Revolution.

How far a spirit of envy might operate to produce the attack on the bank during the sitting of the late Assembly, is best known and felt by those who began or promoted the attack. The bank had rendered services which the Assembly of 1780 could not, and acquired an honor which many of its members might be unwilling to own, and wish to obscure.

But surely every government, acting on the principles of patriotism and public good, would cherish an institution capable of rendering such advantages to the community. The establishment of the bank in one of the most trying vicissitudes of the war, its zealous services in the public cause, its influence in restoring and supporting credit, and the punctuality with which all its business has been transacted, are matters, that so far from meriting the treatment it met with from the late Assembly, are an honor to the State, and what the body of her citizens may be proud to own.

But the attack on the bank, as a chartered institution, under the protection of its violators, however criminal it may be as an error of government, or impolitic as a measure of party, is not to be charged on the constituents of those who made the attack. It appears from every circumstance that has come to light, to be a measure which that Assembly contrived of itself. The members did not come charged with the affair from their constituents. There was no idea of such a thing when they were elected or when they met. The hasty and precipitate manner in which it was hurried through the House, and the refusal of the House to hear the directors of the bank in its defense, prior to the publication of the repealing bill for public consideration, operated to prevent their con-

stituents comprehending the subject: therefore, whatever may be wrong in the proceedings lies not at the door of the public. The House took the affair on its own shoulders, and whatever blame there is lies on them.

The matter must have been prejudged and predetermined by a majority of the members out of the House before it was brought into it. The whole business appears to have been fixed at once, and all reasoning or debate on the case rendered useless.

Petitions from a very inconsiderable number of persons, suddenly procured, and so privately done, as to be a secret among the few that signed them, were presented to the House and read twice in one day, and referred to a committee of the House to *inquire* and report thereon. I here subjoin the petition <sup>21</sup> and the report, and shall exercise the right

<sup>21</sup> Minutes of the Assembly, March 21, 1785. Petitions from a considerable number of the inhabitants of Chester County were read, representing that the bank established at Philadelphia has fatal effects upon the community; that whilst men are enabled, by means of the bank, to receive near three times the rate of common interest, and at the same time receive their money at very short warning, whenever they have occasion for it, it will be impossible for the husbandman or mechanic to borrow on the former terms of legal interest and distant payments of the principal; that the best security will not enable the person to borrow; that experience clearly demonstrates the mischievous consequences of this institution to the fair trader; that impostors have been enabled to support themselves in a fictitious credit, by means of a temporary punctuality at the bank, until they have drawn in their honest neighbors to trust them with their property, or to pledge their credit as sureties, and have been finally involved in ruin and distress.

That they have repeatedly seen the stopping of discounts at the bank operate on the trading part of the community, with a degree of violence scarcely inferior to that of a stagnation of the blood in the human body, hurrying the wretched merchant who hath debts to pay into the hands of griping usurers; that the directors of the bank may give such preference in trade, by advances of money, to their particular favorites, as to destroy that equality which ought to prevail in a commercial country; that paper money has often proved beneficial to the state, but the bank forbids it, and the people must acquiesce; therefore, and in order to restore public confidence and private security, they pray that a bill may be brought in and passed into a law for repealing the law for incorporating the bank.

March 28. The report of the committee, read March 25, on the petitions from the counties of Chester and Berks, and the city of Philadelphia and its vicinity, praying the act of the Assembly, whereby the bank was established at Philadelphia, may be repealed, was read the second time as follows—*viz.*

The committee to whom was referred the petitions concerning the bank established at Philadelphia, and who were instructed to inquire whether the said bank be compatible with the public safety, and that equality which ought ever to prevail between the individuals of a republic, beg leave to report, that it is the opinion of this committee that the said bank, as at present established, is in every view incompatible with the public safety—that in the present state of our trade, the said bank has a direct tendency to banish a great part of the specie from the country, so as to produce a scarcity of money,

and privilege of a citizen in examining their merits, not for the purpose of opposition, but with a design of making an intricate affair more generally and better understood.

So far as my private judgment is capable of comprehending the subject, it appears to me that the committee were unacquainted with, and have totally mistaken, the nature and business of a bank, as well as the matter committed to them, considered as a proceeding of government.

They were instructed by the house to *inquire* whether the bank established at Philadelphia was compatible with the public safety. It is scarcely possible to suppose the instructions meant no more than that

and to collect into the hands of the stockholders of the said bank, almost the whole of the money which remains amongst us.

That the accumulation of enormous wealth in the hands of a society, who claim perpetual duration, will necessarily produce a degree of influence and power, which cannot be intrusted in the hands of any set of men whatsoever, without endangering the public safety. That the said bank, in its corporate capacity, is empowered to hold estates to the amount of ten millions of dollars, and by the tenor of the present charter, is to exist forever, without being obliged to yield any emolument to the government, or to be at all dependent upon it. That the great profits of the bank which will daily increase as money grows scarcer, and which already far exceed the profits of European banks, have tempted foreigners to vest their money in this bank, and thus to draw from us large sums for interest.

That foreigners will doubtless be more and more induced to become stockholders, until the time may arrive when this enormous engine of power may become subject to foreign influence; this country may be agitated with the politics of European courts, and the good people of America reduced once more into a state of subordination, and dependence upon some one or other of the European powers. That at best, if it were even confined to the hands of Americans, it would be totally destructive of that equality which ought to prevail in a republic.

We have nothing in our free and equal government capable of balancing the influence which this bank must create—and we see nothing which in the course of a few years, can prevent the directors of the bank from governing Pennsylvania. Already we have felt its influence indirectly interfering in the measures of the legislature. Already the House of Assembly, the representatives of the people, have been threatened, that the credit of our paper currency will be blasted by the bank; and if this growing evil continues, we fear the time is not very distant, when the bank will be able to dictate to the legislature, what laws to pass and what to forbear.

Your committee therefore beg leave to further report the following resolution to be adopted by the House—*viz.*:

*Resolved*, that a committee be appointed to bring in a bill to repeal the act of Assembly passed the first day of April, 1782, entitled, "An act to incorporate the subscribers to the Bank of North America": and also to repeal one other act of Assembly, passed the eighteenth of March, 1782, entitled, "An act for preventing and punishing the counterfeiting of the common seal, bank bills and bank notes of the president, directors and company, of the Bank of North America, and for the other purposes therein mentioned."—*Author.*

they were to inquire of one another. It is certain they made no inquiry at the bank, to inform themselves of the situation of its affairs, how they were conducted, what aids it had rendered the public cause, or whether any; nor do the committee produce in their report a single fact or circumstance to show that they made any inquiry at all, or whether the rumors then circulated were true or false; but content themselves with modeling the insinuations of the petitions into a report and giving an opinion thereon.

It would appear from the report, that the committee either conceived that the House had already determined how it would act, without regard to the case, and that they were only a committee for form sake, and to give a color of inquiry without making any, or that the case was referred to them, *as law-questions are sometimes referred to law-officers for an opinion only.*

This method of doing public business serves exceedingly to mislead a country. When the constituents of an assembly hear that an inquiry into any matter is directed to be made, and a committee appointed for that purpose, they naturally conclude that the inquiry *is made*, and that the future proceedings of the House are in consequence of the matters, facts, and information obtained by means of that inquiry. But here is a committee of inquiry making no inquiry at all, and giving an opinion on a case without inquiring into the merits of it. This proceeding of the committee would justify an opinion that it was not their wish to *get*, but to *get over* information, and lest the inquiry should not suit their wishes, omitted to make any.

The subsequent conduct of the House, in resolving not to hear the directors of the bank, on their application for that purpose, prior to the publication of the bill for the consideration of the people, strongly corroborates this opinion; for why should not the House hear them, unless it was apprehensive that the bank, by such a public opportunity, would produce proofs of its services and usefulness, that would not suit the temper and views of its oppressors?

But if the House did not wish or choose to hear the defense of the bank, it was no reason that their constituents should not. The Constitution of this State, in lieu of having two branches of legislature, has substituted, that, "to the end that laws before they are enacted may be more *maturely considered*, and the inconvenience of *hasty determinations* as much as possible prevented, all bills of a public nature shall be printed

for the consideration of the people.”<sup>22</sup> The people, therefore, according to the Constitution, stand in the place of another House; or, more properly speaking, are a house in their own right. But in this instance, the Assembly arrogates the whole power to itself, and places itself as a bar to stop the necessary information spreading among the people.

The application of the bank to be heard before the bill was published for public consideration had two objects. First, to the House—and secondly, through the House to the people, who are as another house. It was as a defense in the first instance, and as an appeal in the second. But the Assembly absorbs the right of the people to judge; because, by refusing to hear the defense, they barred the appeal. Were there no other cause which the constituents of that Assembly had for censuring its conduct, than the exceeding unfairness, partiality, and arbitrariness with which its business was transacted, it would be cause sufficient.

Let the constituents of assemblies differ, as they may, respecting certain peculiarities in the *form* of the constitution, they will all agree in supporting its *principles*, and in reprobating unfair proceedings and despotic measures. Every constituent is a member of the republic, which is a station of more consequence to him than being a member of a party, and though they may differ from each other in their choice of persons to transact the public business, it is of equal importance to all parties that the business be done on right principles; otherwise our laws and acts, instead of being founded in justice, will be founded in party, and be laws and acts of retaliation; and instead of being a republic of free citizens, we shall be alternately tyrants and slaves. But to return to the report.

The report begins by stating that, “The committee to whom was referred the petitions concerning the bank established at Philadelphia, and who were instructed to *inquire* whether the said bank be compatible with the public safety, and that equality which ought ever to prevail between the individuals of a republic, beg leave to report” (not that they have made any *inquiry*, but) “that it is the *opinion* of this committee, that the said bank, as at present established, is, in every view, incompatible with the public safety.” But why is it so? Here is an opinion unfounded and unwarranted. The committee have begun their report at the wrong end; for an opinion, when given as a matter of judgment, is an action of the mind which follows a fact, but here it is put in the room of one.

<sup>22</sup> Constitution, sect. 15th.—*Author*.

The report then says, "that in the present state of our trade, the said bank has a direct tendency to banish a great part of the specie from the country, and to collect into the hands of the stockholders of the bank, almost the whole of the money which remains among us."

Here is another mere assertion, just like the former, without a single fact or circumstance to show why it is made, or whereon it is founded. Now the very reverse of what the committee asserts is the natural consequence of a bank. Specie may be called the stock in trade of the bank, it is therefore its interest to prevent it from wandering out of the country, and to keep a constant standing supply to be ready for all domestic occasions and demands.

Were it true that the bank has a direct tendency to banish the specie from the country, there would soon be an end to the bank; and, therefore, the committee have so far mistaken the matter, as to put their fears in the place of their wishes: for if it is to happen as the committee states, let the bank alone and it will cease of itself, and the repealing act need not have been passed.

It is the interest of the bank that people should keep their cash there, and all commercial countries find the exceeding great convenience of having a general depository for their cash. But so far from banishing it, there are no two classes of people in America who are so much interested in preserving hard money in the country as the bank and the merchant. Neither of them can carry on their business without it. Their opposition to the paper money of the late Assembly was because it has a direct effect, as far as it is able, to banish the specie, and that without providing any means for bringing more in.

The committee must have been aware of this, and therefore chose to spread the first alarm, and, groundless as it was, to trust to the delusion.

As the keeping the specie in the country is the interest of the bank, so it has the best opportunities of preventing its being sent away, and the earliest knowledge of such a design. While the bank is the general depository of cash, no great sums can be obtained without getting it from thence, and as it is evidently prejudicial to its interest to advance money to be sent abroad, because in this case the money cannot by circulation return again, the bank, therefore, is interested in preventing what the committee would have it suspected of promoting.

It is to prevent the exportation of cash, and to retain it in the country, that the bank has, on several occasions, stopped the discounting notes till

the danger had been passed.<sup>23</sup> The first part, therefore, of the assertion, that of banishing the specie, contains an apprehension as needless as it is groundless, and which, had the committee understood, or been the least informed of the nature of a bank, they could not have made. It is very probable that some of the opposers of the bank are those persons who have been disappointed in their attempts to obtain specie for this purpose, and now disguise their opposition under other pretenses.

I now come to the second part of the assertion, which is, that when the bank has banished a great part of the specie from the country, "it will collect into the hands of the stockholders almost the whole of the money which remains among us." But how, or by what means, the bank is to accomplish this wonderful feat, the committee have not informed us. Whether people are to give their money to the bank for nothing, or whether the bank is to charm it from them as a rattlesnake charms a squirrel from a tree, the committee have left us as much in the dark about as they were themselves.

Is it possible the committee should know so very little of the matter, as not to know that no part of the money which at any time may be in

<sup>23</sup> The petitions say, "That they have frequently seen the stopping of discounts at the bank operate on the trading part of the community, with a degree of violence scarcely inferior to that of a stagnation of the blood in the human body, hurrying the wretched merchant who hath debts to pay into the hands of griping usurers."

As the persons who say or signed this live somewhere in Chester County, they are not, from situation, certain of what they say. Those petitions have every appearance of being contrived for the purpose of bringing the matter on. The petitions and the report have strong evidence in them of being both drawn by the same person: for the report is as clearly the echo of the petitions as ever the address of the British Parliament was the echo of the King's speech.

Besides the reason I have already given for occasionally stopping discounting notes at the bank, there are other necessary reasons. It is for the purpose of settling accounts; short reckonings make long friends. The bank lends its money for short periods, and by that means assists a great many different people: and if it did not sometimes stop discounting as a means of settling with the persons it has already lent its money to, those persons would find a way to keep what they had borrowed longer than they ought, and prevent others being assisted. It is a fact, and some of the committee know it to be so, that sundry of those persons who then opposed the bank acted this part.

The stopping the discounts do not, and cannot, operate to call in the loans sooner than the time for which they were lent, and therefore the charge is false that "it hurries men into the hands of griping usurers": and the truth is that it operates to keep them from them.

If petitions are to be contrived to cover the design of a house of assembly, and give a pretense for its conduct, or if a house is to be led by the nose by the idle tale of any fifty or sixty signers to a petition, it is time for the public to look a little closer into the conduct of its representatives.—*Author.*

the bank belongs to the stockholders? Not even the original capital which they put in is any part of it their own, until every person who has a demand upon the bank is paid, and if there is not a sufficiency for this purpose, on the balance of loss and gain, the original money of the stockholders must make up the deficiency.

The money, which at any time may be in the bank, is the property of every man who holds a bank note, or deposits cash there, or who has a just demand upon it from the city of Philadelphia up to Fort Pitt, or to any part of the United States; and he can draw the money from it when he pleases. Its being in the bank, does not in the least make it the property of the stockholders, any more than the money in the state treasury is the property of the state treasurer. They are only stewards over it for those who please to put it, or let it remain there: and, therefore, this second part of the assertion is somewhat ridiculous.

The next paragraph in the report is, "that the accumulation of *enormous wealth* in the hands of a *society* who claim perpetual duration, will necessarily produce a degree of influence and power which cannot be intrusted in the hands of any set of men whatsoever" (the committee I presume excepted) "without endangering public safety." There is an air of solemn fear in this paragraph which is something like introducing a ghost in a play to keep people from laughing at the players.

I have already shown that whatever wealth there may be, at any time, in the bank, is the property of those who have demands upon the bank, and not the property of the stockholders. As a society they hold no property, and most probably never will, unless it should be a house to transact their business in, instead of hiring one. Every half year the bank settles its accounts, and each individual stockholder takes his dividend of gain or loss to himself, and the bank begins the next half year in the same manner it began the first, and so on. This being the nature of a bank, there can be no accumulation of wealth among them as a society.

For what purpose the word "*society*" is introduced into the report I do not know, unless it be to make a false impression upon people's minds. It has no connection with the subject, for the bank is not a society, but a company, and denominated so in the charter. There are several religious societies incorporated in this State, which hold property as the right of those societies, and to which no person can belong that is not of the same religious profession. But this is not the case with



the bank. The bank is a company for the promotion and convenience of commerce, which is a matter in which all the State is interested, and holds no property in the manner which those societies do.

But there is a direct contradiction in this paragraph to that which goes before it. The committee, there, accuses the bank of banishing the specie, and here, of accumulating enormous sums of it. So here are two enormous sums of specie; one enormous sum going out, and another enormous sum remaining. To reconcile this contradiction, the committee should have added to their report, *that they suspected the bank had found out the philosopher's stone, and kept it a secret.*

The next paragraph is, "that the said bank, in its corporate capacity, is empowered to hold estates to the amount of ten millions of dollars, and by the tenor of the present charter is to exist for ever, without being obliged to yield any emolument to the government, or be in the least dependent on it."

The committee have gone so vehemently into this business, and so completely shown their want of knowledge in every point of it, as to make, in the first part of this paragraph, a fear of what, the greater fear is, will never happen. Had the committee known anything of banking, they must have known, that the objection against banks has been (not that they held great estates but) that they held none; that they had no real, fixed, and visible property, and that it is the maxim and practice of banks not to hold any.

The Honorable Chancellor Livingston, late Secretary for Foreign Affairs, did me the honor of showing, and discoursing with me on a plan of a bank he had drawn up for the State of New York. In this plan it was made a condition or obligation, that whatever the capital of the bank amounted to in specie, there should be added twice as much in real estates. But the mercantile interest rejected the proposition.

It was a very good piece of policy in the Assembly which passed the charter act, to add the clause to empower the bank to purchase and hold real estates. It was as an inducement to the bank to do it, because such estates being held as the property of the bank would be so many mortgages to the public in addition to the money capital of the bank.

But the doubt is that the bank will not be induced to accept the opportunity. The bank has existed five years, and has not purchased a shilling of real property: and as such property or estates cannot be purchased by the bank but with the interest money which the stock produces, and as that is divided every half year among the stockholders, and each

stockholder chooses to have the management of his own dividend, and if he lays it out in purchasing an estate to have that estate his own private property, and under his own immediate management, there is no expectation, so far from being any fear, that the clause will be accepted.

Where knowledge is a duty, ignorance is a crime; and the committee are criminal in not understanding this subject better. Had this clause not been in the charter, the committee might have reported the want of it as a defect, in not empowering the bank to hold estates as a real security to its creditors: but as the complaint now stands, the accusation of it is, that the charter empowers the bank to *give real security* to its creditors. A complaint never made, heard of, or thought of before.

The second article in this paragraph is, "that the bank, according to the tenor of the present charter, is to exist forever." Here I agree with the committee, and am glad to find that among such a list of errors and contradictions there is one idea which is not wrong, although the committee have made a wrong use of it.

As we are not to live forever ourselves, and other generations are to follow us, we have neither the power nor the right to govern them, or to say how they shall govern themselves. It is the summit of human vanity, and shows a covetousness of power beyond the grave, to be dictating to the world to come. It is sufficient that we do that which is right in our own day, and leave them with the advantage of good examples.

As the generations of the world are every day both commencing and expiring, therefore, when any public act, of this sort, is done, it naturally supposes the age of that generation to be then beginning, and the time contained between coming of age, and the natural end of life, is the extent of time it has a right to go to, which may be about thirty years; for though many may die before, others will live beyond; and the mean time is equally fair for all generations.

If it was made an article in the Constitution, that all laws and acts should cease of themselves in thirty years, and have no legal force beyond that time, it would prevent their becoming too numerous and voluminous, and serve to keep them within view in a compact compass. Such as were proper to be continued, would be enacted again, and those which were not, would go into oblivion. There is the same propriety that a nation should fix a time for a full settlement of its affairs, and begin again from a new date, as that an individual should; and to keep within the distance of thirty years would be a convenient period.

The British, from the want of some general regulation of this kind, have a great number of obsolete laws; which, though out of use and forgotten, are not out of force, and are occasionally brought up for particular purposes, and innocent, unwary persons trepanned thereby.

To extend this idea still further—it would probably be a considerable improvement in the political system of nations, to make all treaties of peace for a limited time. It is the nature of the mind to feel uneasy under the idea of a condition perpetually existing over it, and to excite in itself apprehensions that would not take place were it not from that cause.

Were treaties of peace made for, and renewable every seven or ten years, the natural effect would be, to make peace continue longer than it does under the custom of making peace forever. If the parties felt, or apprehended, any inconveniences under the terms already made, they would look forward to the time when they should be eventually relieved therefrom, and might renew the treaty on improved conditions.

This opportunity periodically occurring, and the recollection of it always existing, would serve as a chimney to the political fabric, to carry off the smoke and fume of national fire. It would naturally abate and honorably take off the edge and occasion for fighting: and however the parties might determine to do it, when the time of the treaty should expire, it would then seem like fighting in cool blood: the fighting temper would be dissipated before the fighting time arrived, and negotiation supply its place. To know how probable this may be, a man need do no more than observe the progress of his own mind on any private circumstance similar in its nature to a public one. But to return to my subject.

To give limitation is to give duration: and though it is not a justifying reason, that because an act or contract is not to last forever, that it shall be broken or violated to-day, yet, where no time is mentioned, the omission affords an opportunity for the abuse. When we violate a contract on this pretense, we assume a right that belongs to the next generation; for though they, as a following generation, have the right of altering or setting it aside, as not being concerned in the making it, or not being done in their day, we, who made it, have not that right; and, therefore, the committee, in this part of their report, have made a wrong use of a right principle; and as this clause in the charter might have been altered by the consent of the parties, it cannot be produced to justify the violation. And were it not altered there would be no inconvenience from it.

The term "forever" is an absurdity that would have no effect. The next age will think for itself, by the same rule of right that we have done, and not admit any assumed authority of ours to encroach upon the system of their day. Our *forever* ends, where their *forever* begins.

The third article in this paragraph is, that the bank holds its charter "without being obliged to yield any emolument to the Government."

Ingratitude has a short memory. It was on the failure of the Government to support the public cause, that the bank originated. It stepped in as a support, when some of the persons then in the Government, and who now oppose the bank, were apparently on the point of abandoning the cause, not from disaffection, but from despair. While the expenses of the war were carried on by emissions of Continental money, any set of men, in government, might carry it on. The means being provided to their hands, required no great exertions of fortitude or wisdom; but when this means failed, they would have failed with it, had not a public spirit awakened itself with energy out-of-doors. It was easy times to the governments while Continental money lasted. The dream of wealth supplied the reality of it; but when the dream vanished, the government did not awake.

But what right has the government to expect any emolument from the bank? Does the committee mean to set up acts and charters for sale, or what do they mean? Because it is the practice of the British Ministry to grind a toll out of every public institution they can get a power over, is the same practice to be followed here?

The war being now ended, and the bank having rendered the service expected, or rather hoped for, from it, the principal public use of it, at this time, is for the promotion and extension of commerce. The whole community derives benefit from the operation of the bank. It facilitates the commerce of the country. It quickens the means of purchasing and paying for country produce, and hastens on the exportation of it. The emolument, therefore, being to the community, it is the office and duty of government to give protection to the bank.

Among many of the principal conveniences arising from the bank, one of them is, that it gives a kind of life to, what would otherwise be, dead money. Every merchant and person in trade, has always in his hands some quantity of cash, which constantly remains with him; that is, he is never entirely without: this remnant money, as it may be called, is of no use to him till more is collected to it. He can neither buy produce nor merchandise with it, and this being the case with every person

in trade, there will be (though not all at the same time) as many of those sums lying uselessly by, and scattered throughout the city, as there are persons in trade, besides many that are not in trade.

I should not suppose the estimate overrated, in conjecturing, that half the money in the city, at any one time, lies in this manner. By collecting those scattered sums together, which is done by means of the bank, they become capable of being used, and the quantity of circulating cash is doubled, and by the depositors alternately lending them to each other, the commercial system is invigorated: and as it is the interest of the bank to preserve this money in the country for domestic uses only, and as it has the best opportunity of doing so, the bank serves as a sentinel over the specie.

If a farmer, or a miller, comes to the city with produce, there are but few merchants that can individually purchase it with ready money of their own; and those few would command nearly the whole market for country produce; but, by means of the bank, this monopoly is prevented, and the chance of the market enlarged.

It is very extraordinary that the late Assembly should promote monopolizing; yet such would be the effect of suppressing the bank; and it is much to the honor of those merchants, who are capable by their fortunes of becoming monopolizers, that they support the bank. In this case, honor operates over interest. They were the persons who first set up the bank, and their honor is now engaged to support what it is their interest to put down.

If merchants, by this means, or farmers, by similar means, among themselves, can mutually aid and support each other, what has the government to do with it? What right has it to expect emolument from associated industry, more than from individual industry? It would be a strange sort of government, that should make it illegal for people to assist each other, or pay a tribute for doing so.

But the truth is, that the government has already derived emoluments, and very extraordinary ones. It has already received its full share, by the services of the bank during the war; and it is every day receiving benefits, because whatever promotes and facilitates commerce, serves likewise to promote and facilitate the revenue.

The last article in this paragraph is, "that the bank is not the least dependent on the government."

Have the committee so soon forgotten the principles of republican government and Constitution, or are they so little acquainted with

them, as not to know, that this article in their report partakes of the nature of treason? Do they not know, that freedom is destroyed by dependence, and the safety of the state endangered thereby? Do they not see, that to hold any part of the citizens of the state, as yearly pensioners on the favor of an assembly, is striking at the root of free elections?

If other parts of their report discover a want of knowledge on the subject of banks, this shows a want of principle in the science of government.

Only let us suppose this dangerous idea carried into practice, and then see what it leads to. If corporate bodies are, after their incorporation to be annually dependent on an assembly for the continuance of their charter, the citizens which compose those corporations, are not free. The Government holds an authority and influence over them, in a manner different from what it does over other citizens, and by this means destroys that equality of freedom, which is the bulwark of the republic and the Constitution.

By this scheme of government any party, which happens to be uppermost in a state, will command all the corporations in it, and may create more for the purpose of extending that influence. The dependent borough towns in England are the rotten parts of their government and this idea of the committee has a very near relation to it.

“If you do not do so and so,” expressing what was meant, “take care of your charter,” was a threat thrown out against the bank. But as I do not wish to enlarge on a disagreeable circumstance and hope that what is already said is sufficient to show the anti-constitutional conduct and principles of the committee, I shall pass on to the next paragraph in the report. Which is—

“That the great profits of the bank, which will daily increase as money grows scarcer, and which already far exceed the profits of European banks, have tempted foreigners to vest their money in this bank, and thus to draw from us large sums for interest.”

Had the committee understood the subject, some dependence might be put on their opinion which now cannot. Whether money will grow scarcer, and whether the profits of the bank will increase, are more than the committee know, or are judges sufficient to guess at. The committee are not so capable of taking care of commerce, as commerce is capable of taking care of itself.

The farmer understands farming, and the merchant understands

commerce; and as riches are equally the object of both, there is no occasion that either should fear that the other will seek to be poor. The more money the merchant has, so much the better for the farmer who has produce to sell; and the richer the farmer is, so much the better for the merchant, when he comes to his store.

As to the profits of the bank, the stockholders must take their chance for it. It may some years be more and others less, and upon the whole may not be so productive as many other ways that money may be employed. It is the convenience which the stockholders, as commercial men, derive from the establishment of the bank, and not the mere interest they receive, that is the inducement to them. It is the ready opportunity of borrowing alternately of each other that forms the principal object: and as they pay as well as receive a great part of the interest among themselves, it is nearly the same thing, both cases considered at once, whether it is more or less.

The stockholders are occasionally depositors and sometimes borrowers of the bank. They pay interest for what they borrow, and receive none for what they deposit; and were a stockholder to keep a nice account of the interest he pays for the one and loses on the other, he would find, at the year's end, that ten per cent on his stock would probably not be more than common interest on the whole, if so much.

As to the committee complaining "that foreigners by vesting their money in the bank will draw large sums from us for interest," it is like a miller complaining, in a dry season, that so much water runs into his dam some of it runs over.

Could those foreigners draw this interest without putting in any capital, the complaint would be well founded; but as they must first put money in before they can draw any out, as they must draw many years before they can draw even the numerical sum they put in at first, the effect for at least twenty years to come, will be directly contrary to what the committee states; because we draw *capital* from them and they only *interest* from us, and as we shall have the use of the money all the while it remains with us, the advantage will always be in our favor. In framing this part of the report, the committee must have forgotten which side of the Atlantic they were on, for the case would be as they state it if we put money into their bank instead of their putting it into ours.

I have now gone through, line by line, every objection against the bank, contained in the first half of the report; what follows may be

called, *The lamentations of the committee*, and a lamentable, pusillanimous, degrading thing it is.

It is a public affront, a reflection upon the sense and spirit of the whole country. I shall give the remainder together, as it stands in the report, and then my remarks. The lamentations are:

That foreigners will doubtless be more and more induced to become stock holders, until the time may arrive when this *enormous* engine of power may become subject to foreign influence, this country may be agitated by the politics of European courts, and the good people of America reduced once more into a state of subordination and dependence upon some one or other of the European powers. That at best, if it were even confined to the hands of Americans, it would be totally destructive of that equality which ought to prevail in a republic. We have nothing in our free and equal government capable of balancing the influence which this bank must create; and we see nothing which in the course of a few years can prevent the directors of the bank from governing Pennsylvania. Already we have felt its influence indirectly interfering in the measures of the Legislature. Already the House of Assembly, the representatives of the people, have been threatened, that the credit of our paper currency will be blasted by the bank; and if this growing evil continues, we fear the time is not very distant when the bank will be able to dictate to the Legislature, what laws to pass and what to forbear.

When the sky falls we shall all be killed. There is something so ridiculously grave, so wide of probability, and so wild, confused and inconsistent in the whole composition of this long paragraph, that I am at a loss how to begin upon it.

It is like a drowning man crying fire! fire!

This part of the report is made up of two dreadful predictions. The first is, that if foreigners purchase bank stock, we shall be all ruined;—the second is, that if the Americans keep the bank to themselves, we shall be also ruined.

A committee of fortune-tellers is a novelty in government, and the gentlemen, by giving this specimen of their art, have ingeniously saved their honor on one point, which is, that though the people may say they are not bankers, nobody can say they are not conjurers. There is, however, one consolation left, which is, that the committee do not know *exactly* how long it may be; so there is some hope that we may all be in heaven when this dreadful calamity happens upon earth.

But to be serious, if any seriousness is necessary on so laughable a sub-



ject. If the State should think there is anything improper in foreigners purchasing bank stock, or any other kind of stock or funded property (for I see no reason why bank stock should be particularly pointed at) the Legislature have authority to prohibit it. It is a mere political opinion that has nothing to do with the charter, or the charter with that; and therefore the first dreadful prediction vanishes.

It has always been a maxim in politics, founded on, and drawn from, natural causes and consequences, that the more foreign countries which any nation can interest in the prosperity of its own, so much the better. Where the treasure is, there will the heart be also; and therefore when foreigners [in]vest their money with us, they naturally invest their good wishes with it; and it is we that obtain an influence over them, not they over us. But the committee set out so very wrong at first, that the further they traveled, the more they were out of their way; and now they have got to the end of their report, they are at the utmost distance from their business.

As to the second dreadful part, that of the bank overturning the government, perhaps the committee meant that at the next general election themselves might be turned out of it, which has partly been the case; not by the influence of the bank, for it had none, not even enough to obtain the permission of a hearing from government, but by the influence of reason and the choice of the people, who most probably resent the undue and unconstitutional influence which that House and committee were assuming over the privileges of citizenship.

The committee might have been so modest as to have confined themselves to the bank, and not thrown a general odium on the whole country. Before the events can happen which the committee predict, the electors of Pennsylvania must become dupes, dunces, and cowards, and, therefore, when the committee predict the dominion of the bank they predict the disgrace of the people.

The committee having finished their report, proceed to give their advice, which is:

That a committee be appointed to bring in a bill to repeal the act of Assembly passed the first day of April, 1782, entitled, "An act to incorporate the subscribers to the Bank of North America," and also to repeal one other act of the Assembly passed the eighteenth of March, 1782, entitled, "An act for preventing and punishing the counterfeiting of the common seal, bankbills and bank notes of the president, directors and company of the Bank of North America, and for other purposes therein mentioned."

There is something in this sequel to the report that is perplexed and obscure.

Here are two acts to be repealed. One is, the incorporating act. The other, the act for preventing and punishing the counterfeiting of the common seal, bank bills, and bank notes of the president, directors and company of the Bank of North America.

It would appear from the committee's manner of arranging them (were it not for the difference of their dates) that the act for punishing the counterfeiting the common seal, etc., of the bank followed the act of incorporation, and that the common seal there referred to is a common seal which the bank held in consequence of the aforesaid incorporating act. But the case is quite otherwise. The act for punishing the counterfeiting the common seal, etc. of the bank, was passed prior to the incorporating act, and refers to the common seal which the bank held in consequence of the charter of Congress, and the style which the act expresses, of president, directors and company of the Bank of North America, is the corporate style which the bank derives under the Congress charter.

The punishing act, therefore, hath two distinct legal points. The one is, an authoritative public recognition of the charter of Congress. The second is, the punishment it inflicts on counterfeiting.

The Legislature may repeal the punishing part but it cannot undo the recognition, because no repealing act can say that the State has not recognized. The recognition is a mere matter of fact, and no law or act can undo a fact, or put it, if I may so express it, in the condition it was before it existed. The repealing act therefore does not reach the full point the committee had in view; for even admitting it to be a repeal of the state charter, it still leaves another charter recognized in its stead.

The charter of Congress, standing merely on itself, would have a doubtful authority, but recognition of it by the state gives it legal ability. The repealing act, it is true sets aside the punishment, but does not bar the operation of the charter of Congress as a charter recognized by the state, and therefore the committee did their business but by halves.

I have now gone entirely through the report of the committee, and a more irrational, inconsistent, contradictory report will scarcely be found on the journals of any legislature of America.

How the repealing act is to be applied, or in what manner it is to operate, is a matter yet to be determined. For admitting a question of law to arise, whether the charter, which that act attempts to repeal, is a law

of the land in the manner which laws of universal operation are, or of the nature of a contract made between the public and the bank (as I have already explained in this work), the repealing act does not and cannot decide the question, because it is the repealing act that makes the question, and its own fate is involved in the decision. It is a question of law and not a question of legislation, and must be decided on in a court of justice and not by a house of assembly.

But the repealing act, by being passed prior to the decision of this point, assumes the power of deciding it, and the assembly in so doing erects itself unconstitutionally into a tribunal of judicature, and absorbs the authority and right of the courts of justice into itself.

Therefore the operation of the repealing act, in its very outset, requires injustice to be done. For it is impossible on the principles of a republican government and the Constitution, to pass an act to forbid any of the citizens the right of appealing to the courts of justice on any matter in which his interest or property is affected; but the first operation of this act goes to shut up the courts of justice and holds them subservient to the Assembly. It either commands or influences them not to hear the case, or to give judgment on it on the mere will of one party only.

I wish the citizens to awaken themselves on this subject. Not because the bank is concerned, but because their own constitutional rights and privileges are involved in the event. It is a question of exceeding great magnitude; for if an assembly is to have this power, the laws of the land and the courts of justice are but of little use.

Having now finished with the report, I proceed to the third and last subject—that of paper money.

I remember a German farmer expressing as much in a few words as the whole subject requires; "*money is money, and paper is paper.*"

All the invention of man cannot make them otherwise. The alchemist may cease his labors, and the hunter after the philosopher's stone go to rest, if paper can be metamorphosed into gold and silver, or made to answer the same purpose in all cases.

Gold and silver are the emissions of nature: paper is the emission of art. The value of gold and silver is ascertained by the quantity which nature has made in the earth. We cannot make that quantity more or less than it is, and therefore the value being dependent upon the quantity, depends not on man. Man has no share in making gold or silver; all that his labors and ingenuity can accomplish is, to collect it from the

mine, refine it for use and give it an impression, or stamp it into coin.

Its being stamped into coin adds considerably to its convenience but nothing to its value. It has then no more value than it had before. Its value is not in the impression but in itself. Take away the impression and still the same value remains. Alter it as you will, or expose it to any misfortune that can happen, still the value is not diminished. It has a capacity to resist the accidents that destroy other things. It has, therefore, all the requisite qualities that money can have, and is a fit material to make money of; and nothing which has not all those properties, can be fit for the purpose of money.

Paper, considered as a material whereof to make money, has none of the requisite qualities in it. It is too plentiful, and too easily come at. It can be had anywhere, and for a trifle.

There are two ways in which I shall consider paper.

The only proper use for paper, in the room of money, is to write promissory notes and obligations of payment in specie upon. A piece of paper, thus written and signed, is worth the sum it is given for, if the person who gives it is able to pay it; because in this case, the law will oblige him. But if he is worth nothing, the paper note is worth nothing. The value, therefore, of such a note, is not in the note itself, for that is but paper and promise, but in the man who is obliged to redeem it with gold or silver.

Paper, circulating in this manner, and for this purpose, continually points to the place and person where, and of whom, the money is to be had, and at last finds its home; and, as it were, unlocks its master's chest and pays the bearer.

But when an assembly undertake to issue paper *as* money, the whole system of safety and certainty is overturned, and property set afloat. Paper notes given and taken between individuals as a promise of payment is one thing, but paper issued by an assembly *as* money is another thing. It is like putting an apparition in the place of a man; it vanishes with looking at it, and nothing remains but the air.

Money, when considered as the fruit of many years' industry, as the reward of labor, sweat and toil, as the widow's dowry and children's portion, and as the means of procuring the necessaries and alleviating the afflictions of life, and making old age a scene of rest, has something in it sacred that is not to be sported with, or trusted to the airy bubble of paper currency.

By what power or authority an assembly undertakes to make paper

money, is difficult to say. It derives none from the Constitution, for that is silent on the subject. It is one of those things which the people have not delegated, and which, were they at any time assembled together, they would not delegate. It is, therefore, an assumption of power which an assembly is not warranted in, and which may, one day or other, be the means of bringing some of them to punishment.

I shall enumerate some of the evils of paper money and conclude with offering means for preventing them.

One of the evils of paper money is; that it turns the whole country into stock jobbers. The precariousness of its value and the uncertainty of its fate continually operate, night and day, to produce this destructive effect. Having no real value in itself it depends for support upon accident, caprice and party, and as it is the interest of some to depreciate and of others to raise its value, there is a continual invention going on that destroys the morals of the country.

It was horrid to see, and hurtful to recollect, how loose the principles of justice were left, by means of the paper emissions during the war. The experience then had, should be a warning to any assembly how they venture to open such a dangerous door again.

As to the romantic, if not hypocritical, tale that a virtuous people need no gold and silver, and that paper will do as well, it requires no other contradiction than the experience we have seen. Though some well-meaning people may be inclined to view it in this light, it is certain that the sharper always talks this language.

There are a set of men who go about making purchases upon credit, and buying estates they have not wherewithal to pay for; and having done this, their next step is to fill the newspapers with paragraphs of the scarcity of money and the necessity of a paper emission, then to have a legal tender under the pretense of supporting its credit, and when out, to depreciate it as fast as they can, get a deal of it for a little price, and cheat their creditors; and this is the concise history of paper money schemes.

But why, since the universal custom of the world has established money as the most convenient medium of traffic and commerce, should paper be set up in preference to gold and silver? The productions of nature are surely as innocent as those of art; and in the case of money, are abundantly, if not infinitely, more so. The love of gold and silver may produce covetousness, but covetousness, when not connected with

dishonesty, is not properly a vice. It is frugality run to an extreme.

But the evils of paper money have no end. Its uncertain and fluctuating value is continually awakening or creating new schemes of deceit. Every principle of justice is put to the rack, and the bond of society dissolved: the suppression, therefore, of paper money might very properly have been put into the act for preventing vice and immorality.

The pretense for paper money has been, that there was not a sufficiency of gold and silver. This, so far from being a reason for paper emissions, is a reason against them.

As gold and silver are not the productions of North America, they are, therefore, articles of importation; and if we set up a paper manufactory of money it amounts, as far as it is able, to prevent the importation of hard money, or to send it out again as fast it comes in; and by following this practice we shall continually banish the specie, till we have none left, and be continually complaining of the grievance instead of remedying the cause.

Considering gold and silver as articles of importation, there will in time, unless we prevent it by paper emissions, be as much in the country as the occasions of it require, for the same reasons there are as much of other imported articles. But as every yard of cloth manufactured in the country occasions a yard the less to be imported, so it is by money, with this difference, that in the one case we manufacture the thing itself and in the other we do not. We have cloth for cloth, but we have only paper dollars for silver ones.

As to the assumed authority of any assembly in making paper money, or paper of any kind, a legal tender, or in other language, a compulsive payment, it is a most presumptuous attempt at arbitrary power. There can be no such power in a republican government: the people have no freedom, and property no security where this practice can be acted: and the committee who shall bring in a report for this purpose, or the member who moves for it, and he who seconds it merits impeachment, and sooner or later may expect it.

Of all the various sorts of base coin, paper money is the basest. It has the least intrinsic value of anything that can be put in the place of gold and silver. A hobnail or a piece of wampum far exceeds it. And there would be more propriety in making those articles a legal tender than to make paper so.

It was the issuing base coin, and establishing it as a tender, that was

one of the principal means of finally overthrowing the power of the Stuart family in Ireland. The article is worth reciting as it bears such a resemblance to the process practised in paper money.

Brass and copper of the basest kind, old cannon, broken bells, household utensils were assiduously collected; and from every pound weight of such vile materials, valued at four pence, pieces were coined and circulated to the amount of five pounds normal value. By the first proclamation they were made current in all payments to and from the King and the subjects of the realm, except in duties on the importation of foreign goods, money left in trust, or due by mortgage, bills or bonds; and James promised that when the money should be decried, he would receive it in all payments, or make full satisfaction in gold and silver. The nominal value was afterwards raised by subsequent proclamations, the original restrictions removed, and this base money was ordered to be received in all kinds of payments. As brass and copper grew scarce, it was made of still viler materials, of tin and pewter, and old debts of one thousand pounds were discharged by pieces of vile metal amounting to thirty shillings in intrinsic value.<sup>24</sup>

Had King James thought of paper, he needed not to have been at the trouble or expense of collecting brass and copper, broken bells, and household utensils.

The laws of a country ought to be the standard of equity, and calculated to impress on the minds of the people the moral as well as the legal obligations of reciprocal justice. But tender laws, of any kind, operate to destroy morality, and to dissolve, by the pretense of law, what ought to be the principle of law to support, reciprocal justice between man and man: and the punishment of a member who should move for such a law ought to be *death*.

When the recommendation of Congress, in the year 1780, for repealing the tender laws was before the Assembly of Pennsylvania, on casting up the votes, for and against bringing in a bill to repeal those laws, the numbers were equal, and the casting vote rested on the Speaker, Colonel Bayard.<sup>25</sup> "I give my vote," said he, "for the repeal, from a consciousness of justice; the tender laws operate to establish iniquity by law." But when the bill was brought in, the House rejected it, and the tender laws continued to be the means of fraud.

If anything had, or could have, a value equal to gold and silver, it

<sup>24</sup> Leland's "History of Ireland," vol. IV. p. 265.—*Author*.

<sup>25</sup> John B. Bayard, merchant and statesman, was chosen speaker of the Assembly in March 1777 and November 1778.—*Editor*.

would require no tender law: and if it had not that value it ought not to have such a law; and, therefore, all tender laws are tyrannical and unjust, and calculated to support fraud and oppression.

Most of the advocates for tender laws are those who have debts to discharge, and who take refuge in such a law, to violate their contracts and cheat their creditors. But as no law can warrant the doing an unlawful act, therefore the proper mode of proceeding, should any such laws be enacted in future, will be to impeach and execute the members who moved for and seconded such a bill, and put the debtor and the creditor in the same situation they were in, with respect to each other, before such a law was passed. Men ought to be made to tremble at the idea of such a bare-faced act of injustice. It is in vain to talk of restoring credit, or complain that money cannot be borrowed at legal interest, until every idea of tender laws is totally and publicly reprobated and extirpated from among us.

As to paper money, in any light it can be viewed, it is at best a bubble. Considered as property, it is inconsistent to suppose that the breath of an assembly, whose authority expires with the year, can give to paper the value and duration of gold. They cannot even engage that the next assembly shall receive it in taxes. And by the precedent (for authority there is none), that one assembly makes paper money, another may do the same, until confidence and credit are totally expelled, and all the evils of depreciation acted over again. The amount, therefore, of paper money is this, that it is the illegitimate offspring of assemblies, and when their year expires, they leave a vagrant on the hands of the public.

Having now gone through the three subjects proposed in the title to this work, I shall conclude with offering some thoughts on the present affairs of the state.

My idea of a single legislature was always founded on a hope, that whatever personal parties there might be in the state, they would all unite and agree in the general principles of good government—that these party differences would be dropped at the threshold of the state house, and that the public good, or the good of the whole, would be the governing principle of the legislature within it.

Party dispute, taken on this ground, would only be, who should have the honor of making the laws; not what the laws should be. But when party operates to produce party laws, a single house is a single person, and subject to the haste, rashness and passion of individual sovereignty. At least, it is an aristocracy.



The form of the present Constitution is now made to trample on its principles, and the constitutional members are anti-constitutional legislators. They are fond of supporting the form for the sake of the power, and they dethrone the principle to display the sceptre.

The attack of the late Assembly on the bank, discovers such a want of moderation and prudence, of impartiality and equity, of fair and candid inquiry and investigation, of deliberate and unbiased judgment, and such a rashness of thinking and vengeance of power, as is inconsistent with the safety of the republic. It was judging without hearing, and executing without trial.

By such rash, injudicious and violent proceedings, the interest of the state is weakened, its prosperity diminished, and its commerce and its specie banished to other places. Suppose the bank had not been in an immediate condition to have stood such a sudden attack, what a scene of instant distress would the rashness of that Assembly have brought upon this city and State. The holders of bank notes, whoever they might be, would have been thrown into the utmost confusion and difficulties. It is no apology to say the House never thought of this, for it was their duty to have thought of everything.

But by the prudent and provident management of the bank (though unsuspecting of the attack), it was enabled to stand the run upon it without stopping payment a moment, and to prevent the evils and mischiefs taking place which the rashness of the Assembly had a direct tendency to bring on; a trial that scarcely a bank in Europe, under a similar circumstance, could have withstood.

I cannot see reason sufficient to believe that the hope of the House to put down the bank was placed on the withdrawing the charter, so much as on the expectation of producing a bankruptcy of the bank, by starting a run upon it. If this was any part of their project it was a very wicked one, because hundreds might have been ruined to gratify a party spleen.

But this not being the case, what has the attack amounted to, but to expose the weakness and rashness, the want of judgment as well as justice, of those who made it, and to confirm the credit of the bank more substantially than it was before?

The attack, it is true, has had one effect, which is not in the power of the Assembly to remedy; it has banished many thousand hard dollars from the State. By means of the bank, Pennsylvania had the use of a great deal of hard money belonging to citizens of other states, and that

without any interest, for it laid here in the nature of deposit, the depositors taking bank notes in its stead. But the alarm called those notes in and the owners drew out their cash.

The banishing the specie served to make room for the paper money of the Assembly and we have now paper dollars where we might have had silver ones. So that the effect of the paper money has been to make less money in the state than there was before. Paper money is like dram-drinking, it relieves for a moment by deceitful sensation, but gradually diminishes the natural heat, and leaves the body worse than it found it. Were not this the case, and could money be made of paper at pleasure, every sovereign in Europe would be as rich as he pleased. But the truth is, that it is a bubble and the attempt vanity. Nature has provided the proper materials for money, gold and silver, and any attempt of ours to rival her is ridiculous.

But to conclude. If the public will permit the opinion of a friend who is attached to no party, and under obligation to none, nor at variance with any, and who through a long habit of acquaintance with them has never deceived them, that opinion shall be freely given.

The bank is an institution capable of being made exceedingly beneficial to the State, not only as the means of extending and facilitating its commerce, but as a means of increasing the quantity of hard money in the State. The Assembly's paper money serves directly to banish or crowd out the hard, because it is issued *as* money and put in the place of hard money. But bank notes are of a very different kind, and produce a contrary effect. They are promissory notes payable on demand, and may be taken to the bank and exchanged for gold or silver without the least ceremony or difficulty.

The bank, therefore, is obliged to keep a constant stock of hard money sufficient for this purpose; which is what the Assembly neither does, nor can do by their paper; because the quantity of hard money collected by taxes into the treasury is trifling compared with the quantity that circulates in trade and through the bank.

The method, therefore, to increase the quantity of hard money would be to combine the security of the government and the bank into one. And instead of issuing paper money that serves to banish the specie, to borrow the sum wanted of the bank in bank notes, on the condition of the bank exchanging those notes at stated periods and quantities, with hard money.

Paper issued in this manner, and directed to this end, would, instead

of banishing, work itself into gold and silver; because it will then be both the advantage and duty of the bank and of all the mercantile interests connected with it, to procure and import gold and silver from any part of the world, to give in exchange for the notes. The English Bank is restricted to the dealing in no other articles of importation than gold and silver, and we may make the same use of our bank if we proceed properly with it.

Those notes will then have a double security, that of the government and that of the bank: and they will not be issued *as* money, but as hostages to be exchanged for hard money, and will, therefore, work the contrary way to what the paper of the assembly, uncombined with the security of the bank, produces: and the interest allowed the bank will be saved to the government, by a saving of the expenses and charged attending paper emissions.

It is, as I have already observed in the course of this work, the harmony of all the parts of a republic, that constitutes their several and mutual good. A government that is constructed only to govern, is not a republican government. It is combining authority with usefulness, that in a great measure distinguishes the republican system from others.

Paper money appears, at first sight, to be a great saving, or rather that it costs nothing; but it is the dearest money there is. The ease with which it is emitted by an assembly at first, serves as a trap to catch people in at last. It operates as an anticipation of the next year's taxes. If the money depreciates, after it is out, it then, as I have already remarked, has the effect of fluctuating stock, and the people become stock-jobbers to throw the loss on each other.

If it does not depreciate, it is then to be sunk by taxes at the price of *hard money*; because the same quantity of produce, or goods, that would procure a paper dollar to pay taxes with, would procure a silver one for the same purpose. Therefore, in any case of paper money, it is dearer to the country than hard money, by all the expense which the paper, printing, signing, and other attendant charges come to, and at last goes into the fire.

Suppose one hundred thousand dollars in paper money to be emitted every year by the assembly, and the same sum to be sunk every year by taxes, there will then be no more than one hundred thousand dollars out at any one time. If the expense of paper and printing, and of persons to attend the press while the sheets are striking off, signers, etc., be five per cent., it is evident that in the course of twenty years' emissions,

the one hundred thousand dollars will cost the country two hundred thousand dollars. Because the papermaker's and printer's bills, and the expense of supervisors and signers, and other attendant charges, will in that time amount to as much as the money amounts to; for the successive emissions are but a re-coinage of the same sum.

But gold and silver require to be coined but once, and will last an hundred years, better than paper will one year, and at the end of that time be still gold and silver. Therefore, the saving to government, in combining its aid and security with that of the bank in procuring hard money, will be an advantage to both, and to the whole community.

The case to be provided against, after this, will be, that the Government do not borrow too much of the bank, nor the bank lend more notes than it can redeem; and, therefore, should anything of this kind be undertaken, the best way will be to begin with a moderate sum, and observe the effect of it. The interest given the bank operates as a bounty on the importation of hard money, and which may not be more than the money expended in making paper emissions.

But nothing of this kind, nor any other public undertaking, that requires security and duration beyond the year, can be gone upon under the present mode of conducting government. The late Assembly, by assuming a sovereign power over every act and matter done by the State in former assemblies, and thereby setting up a precedent of overhauling, and overturning, as the accident of elections shall happen or party prevail, have rendered government incompetent to all the great objects of the state. They have eventually reduced the public to an annual body like themselves; whereas the public are a standing, permanent body, holding annual elections.

There are several great improvements and undertakings, such as inland navigation, building bridges, opening roads of communication through the state, and other matters of a public benefit, that might be gone upon, but which now cannot, until this governmental error or defect is remedied. The faith of government, under the present mode of conducting it, cannot be relied on. Individuals will not venture their money in undertakings of this kind, on an act that may be made by one assembly and broken by another.

When a man can say that he cannot trust the government, the importance and dignity of the public is diminished, sapped and undermined; and, therefore, it becomes the public to restore their own honor by setting these matters to rights.

Perhaps this cannot be effectually done until the time of the next convention, when the principles, on which they are to be regulated and fixed, may be made a part of the constitution.

In the meantime the public may keep their affairs in sufficient good order, by substituting prudence in the place of authority, and electing men into the government, who will at once throw aside the narrow prejudices of party, and make the good of the whole the ruling object of their conduct. And with this hope, and a sincere wish for their prosperity, I close my book.

## LETTERS ON THE BANK

After the publication of his *Dissertations* Paine did not abandon the controversy raging over the repeal of the Bank of North America's charter. He continued to defend the bank in a series of letters in the *Pennsylvania Packet*, the *Pennsylvania Gazette* and the *Freeman's Journal*. These letters have never been reprinted and do not appear in any previous collection of Paine's writings.

The first letter in this series appeared in the *Pennsylvania Packet* of March 25, 1786, and the last one was published in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* of March 7, 1787. During this period the bank's charter had been repealed and restored. Paine's letters were extremely important in rallying popular support for the restoration of the bank's charter, and he was subjected to bitter attacks from the anti-bank forces in the legislature. He was attacked in the press as a drunkard and turn-coat. "I cannot conceive," wrote "Atticus," "in the wide extent of creation, a being more deserving of our abhorrence and contempt, than a writer, who having formerly vindicated the principles of freedom, abandons them to abet the cause of a faction, who exerts the little talent which Heaven has allotted him, . . . to vilify measures which it is his duty to respect, and . . . [devote] his pen to the ruin of his country." The city mechanics, however, supported Paine, and in the autumn elections of 1786 indicated by their vote that they agreed with him on the issues involved in the controversy.

For additional information on Paine's attitude toward the Anti-Bank forces, see his letter to Daniel Clymer, September, 1786, pp. 1254-1257 below. —*Editor*.

AS I have always considered the bank as one of the best institutions that could be devised to promote the commerce and agriculture of the country, and recover it from the ruined condition in which the war had left both the farmer and the merchant, as well as the most effectual means to banish usury and establish credit among the citizens, I have always been a friend to it.

When the opposition to the bank first began last year, there were many people inclined to think that it arose from no other motives than those of party prejudice and ignorance of the business: But there were others who hesitated not to say that a large majority of the late assembly had formed their plan for carrying their funding bill, and were speculating on the purchase and sale of certificates, and determined to destroy every thing which they supposed might not unite with that scheme.

Which of these suppositions are best founded, or whether both of them are not too true, will be sufficiently known before the next election. One thing, however, is already proved, which is, that the late assembly have created one of the greatest fields of speculation ever known in Pennsylvania. The funding acts produce an interest, in many cases, of between twenty and thirty per cent. and the country is loaded with taxes to pay the speculations. In the mean time the opposition to the bank is kept up to amuse the people.

COMMON SENSE.<sup>26</sup>

The bubble of Silas Deane and the bubble of the opposition to the bank have several circumstances in them that are alike. As an honest friend to the public I set myself to detect the one, and with the same motives of sincerity I shall pursue the other.

The leaders of this opposition having undertaken what they did not understand, are endeavoring to strengthen themselves by making it a party matter between the constitutionalists and the republicans. They find themselves losing ground and now seek to shelter their misconduct and mismanagement under this resource.

The bank as a national question has nothing to do with party. As a means of encreasing the commerce and promoting the agriculture and prosperity of the country it is supported by numbers of the constitutionalists as well as republicans.

It would be a very poor excuse for a representative of Bucks or Berks,

<sup>26</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Packet*, March 25, 1786.—*Editor*.

or any of the counties whose property depends on the ready sale and exportation of its produce, to tell their constituents, that though the attack on the bank last year had operated to reduce the market for their produce, and retard the exportation of it, yet the loss must be submitted to, for it was a party matter. A man in office may live by his party, or a man in power, and fond of displaying it, may make some sacrifices to preserve it. But what is this to the farmer; he must live by his labor and the produce of his farm.

Nothing is more certain than that if the bank was destroyed, the market for country produce would be monopolized by a few monied men, who would command the price as they pleased. And it is a matter much to the honor of some merchants in the city who by their fortunes could engross the trade to themselves that they support the bank as a public benefit to the commerce of the state.

Were there no other use of a bank than that of affording a safe convenient place where people who have spare cash by them which they do not immediately want, may lodge it until they had occasion for it; this alone, I say, were there no other use in a bank is a material advantage to the community, because it keeps the money in use and circulation that would otherwise be locked up. There are in this city nearly six hundred people who constantly send their spare cash to the bank in this manner. They receive no interest for it, and in the mean time the country has the use of the money. Take away the bank and this money returns into the chests and coffers of its owners, where it lies locked up in death and darkness, and is, in the mean time, of no more use to the community than if it was in the mine.

If there are any who suppose that I have engaged myself in this business merely on account of the bank, I wish they would state their reasons. I am ready to satisfy any man either publicly or privately on this, or any other circumstance relating to my conduct therein. I know how and where the opposition began, and the manner it has been conducted, even to the writing of the report of the committee of the late house of assembly. And the persons concerned in this opposition have for ten years past known me too well even to believe that I am governed by self-interested motives.

COMMON SENSE.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Packet*, March 28, 1786. The Constitutionalists supported the democratic constitution of 1776 in Pennsylvania, whereas the Republicans, led by Robert Morris, opposed the constitution and campaigned to bring about its revision.—*Editor*.

TO THE PRINTERS <sup>28</sup>

AS THE Press ought to be as sacred to liberty, as the privilege of Speech is to the Members of Assembly in debate, you will please to insert the following in your paper.

THOMAS PAINE.

In the Pennsylvania Packet of last Tuesday is a publication signed Common Sense which begins in the following manner.

“The bubble of Silas Deane, and the bubble of the opposition against the bank, have several circumstances in them that are alike. As an honest friend to the public I set myself to detect the one, and with the same motives of sincerity I shall pursue the other.”

“The concluding paragraph in that publication is, If there are any who suppose that I have engaged myself in this business merely on account of the bank, I wish them to state their reasons. I am ready to satisfy any man either publicly or privately on this or any other circumstance relating to my conduct therein. I know how and where the opposition began, and the manner it has been conducted, even to the writing the report of the committee of the late house of assembly. And the persons concerned in this opposition, have for ten years past known me too well to believe that I am governed by self-interested motives.”

Here is a fair and open opportunity given to any man either to charge me with it, or inform himself respecting it.

The pamphlet on the affair of the bank, under the signature of Common Sense, was published on the first day of the meeting of the present setting of the house, nearly six weeks ago. If the arguments used in that pamphlet in support of a public bank as beneficial to the state could have been refuted, or the facts or matters stated therein contradicted, it ought to have been done. It is a public question, a subject that concerns the interest of every man in the state, and any lights that could have been thrown thereon, either by those who were for, or those who were against such an institution, would have been acceptable to the public. No subject of debate that has been agitated before the legislature of Pennsylvania ever drew together such crowded audiences as attended the house during the four days the debate lasted. And it was very easy

<sup>28</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Packet*, April 4, 1786.—*Editor*.



to discover from the countenance of the people that the debate has illuminated their minds, though it has been lost upon the opposing party in the house.

But instead of answering the pamphlet, or instead of making the charge I publicly invited, or obtaining the information I offered, the member from Fayette county, who can be at no loss to know my suspicions of his integrity on this business, which I shall in my subsequent publication lay before the public, gets up in his place, impertinently introduces the pamphlet to the house, and calls the writer of it "an unprincipled author whose pen is let out for hire."

Respect to the representative body of a free people, however wrong some of them, in my opinion, may be on this subject; the decency proper to be observed in such a place, and on such an occasion, and the manners due to a numerous and respectable audience, restrained me to silence, or I should have been justified in rising and contradicting him by the most plain and unequivocal word the English language can express.

I appeal to the honor, the feelings of any person, let his opinion respecting the institution of a bank be what it may, whether there can be a greater influence of meanness, and depravity, or a greater prostitution of legislative privilege, than, for a man, sheltered under the sanctioned authority of a representative, and speaking in his place, to make use of that opportunity to abuse private characters: for though the name was not mentioned, the person alluded to was sufficiently understood.

A perfect unlimited freedom of speech must be allowed in legislative debates; and that liberty includes every other the tongue is capable of, if a man is base enough to use it. Had he charged an individual with breaking open a house, or robbing on the highway, or had he declared that the circumstances of any private man were on the point of bankruptcy and thereby ruined his credit and his family, he might be called to order by the speaker or any of the members, but this is all. The privilege of the house protects him. There is no law can lay hold of him. This, then, being the situation of a member, restrained by no checks but the sense of honor and the force of principle, none who esteemed his own character would exceed the bounds.

From conduct like this the opposition to the bank can derive no reputation; and the suspicion will naturally spread, that where such methods are used something bad must be at the bottom. But if Mr.

Smilie<sup>29</sup> chose to make such an attack, why did he not do it in the first day's debate, I could then have answered him on the last day: but he reserved himself till just before the vote was taken, and when it could not be contradicted, for reasons too obvious to be mentioned.

In the debate of Friday evening a member from the city mentioned one of the causes of the opposition to the bank, and connected it with an allusion which, probably related to Mr. Smilie. As I am acquainted with the circumstance, I shall lay it before the public, and they will then judge of Mr. Smilie's political honesty in this business, and have a better insight into the opposition than they have yet had.

Last year the vote for taking away the charter of the bank was upwards of 50 to 12. The vote last Saturday for restoring it with an additional clause, was 30 to 39. Mr. Clymer, though strongly in support of the bank, voted against it in this question, because he was against the additional clause. If his vote had been for it, the numbers would have stood 31 to 38—consequently four more votes would have re-established the bank, and restored its full usefulness again to the country.

In the present house are twenty-four members who were members of the late house, and who voted for taking away the charter; yet with this number of clogged votes, the question for re-establishing had nearly been carried. On the question for restoring the charter, without the additional clause, the majority against it was thirteen.

By this state of the business in the house, and the great change of sentiment that is spreading through both the city and country, it is visible, that the people are recovering from the delusion and bubble of the last year.

COMMON SENSE.

PHILADELPHIA, April 3.

### TO THE PRINTERS<sup>30</sup>

AS THE Press ought to be as Sacred to Liberty, as the privilege of Speech is to the Members of Assémbly in debate, you will please to insert the following in your paper.

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>29</sup> John Smilie, spokesmen for the back-country farmers, led the opposition to the bank.—*Editor*.

<sup>30</sup> This letter appeared in the *Pennsylvania Packet* of April 7, 1786 and the *Pennsylvania Gazette* of April 12, 1786.—*Editor*.

As I intend to begin and continue a series of publications on the usefulness of a public bank, to the trade, commerce and agriculture of the state, and as it is proper that a man's motives on public affairs should be known, I shall, in this publication endeavor, as concisely as I can, to bring into one view, such parts of my own conduct, as relates thereto. In doing this, certain parts of Mr. Smilie's conduct will necessarily make their appearance.

As to the improper use which that member made of the privilege of speech in the house, of styling me an unprincipled author, he is welcome to it, and I give him my consent to repeat it as often as he pleases and where ever he chooses. I shall make a few remarks on this part of the subject, and then proceed to more material matter.

While those members of the house who style themselves constitutionalists, as well as those who act as the leaders of that party, appeared to me to pursue right measures and proceed on right principles, they had what assistance it was in my power to give them.

In the winter of 1778, a very strong opposition was made to the *form* of the constitution. As the constitution was then on an experiment, and the enemy in full force in the country, the opposition was injudicious. To this may be added another reason, which is, that the constitution, by having only a single house, was the best calculated form of civil government that could be devised for carrying on the war; because the simplicity of its structure admitted of dispatch, and dispensed with deliberation. But that which was then its blessing is now its curse. Things are done too rashly.

As the opposition was becoming formidable, the persons then in office and power, or those who hoped or expected to be so, became somewhat seriously alarmed, and they applied very solicitously to me to help them. I did so, and the service was gratis; and so has been every other which they have had from me, from that day to the present hour; and they might still have had it, and on the same terms, had they purchased just and wise measures of government, and an honest system of politics. The service here alluded to is in a number of publications, entitled "A Serious Address to the People of Pennsylvania on the Present State of Their Affairs." Before the appearance of those publications, the newspapers were filled with pieces in opposition to the constitution; none appeared afterwards, it is therefore reasonable to conclude they had some effect. The constitutionalists got full possession of

the government—they enjoyed their places and offices, and here the matter ended.

When the war ceased, there were these of all parties, as well of this state as of other states, who thought it unreasonable, as well as dishonorable to the country, to suffer the service of a man who had been a volunteer in its cause for so many years, to pass off unacknowledged. The principal mover in this business was the commander in chief. The state of New York (being the place where the war ended) made the first step, and I mention it with a just sense of the generosity and gentility of their conduct.

The last time General Washington was in Philadelphia, he engaged the late president, Mr. Dickinson, to move the same matter in this state, which engagement that gentleman very honorably and friendly fulfilled, and the supreme executive council unanimously concurred with him in recommending it to the consideration of the assembly.

In this manner it came before the house, and at a time when those who style themselves constitutionalists (for they are not so in principle) were by a turn of elections reinstated in the power they had lost for two or three years before. I mean the late house of assembly.

The matter respecting myself, on the recommendation of council, was before them at the very time they began their attack on the bank. It is therefore inconsistent, and even absurd, to suppose, that I could have any self-interested motives in opposing that attack, when they were on the point of deciding on a matter that immediately concerned my interest. Therefore my opposition to their politics at that critical time must be placed to other motives.

The recommendation of council respecting me was, in one of the stages of it, brought on in the house, a short time before the attack on the bank broke out. I shall place Mr. Smilie's declaration in the house at that time, against what he said in the same house a few days ago, and the event will probably be, that people will believe neither what he then said, nor what he now says.

Mr. Smilie then said, that "excepting General Washington, there was not a more disinterested patriot in America, than Mr. Paine." He now says, that "Mr. Paine is an unprincipled author, whose pen is let out for hire." Thus you see my trumpeter can blow all sorts of tunes. And I am very sorry that such a high encomium as he has given me should stand upon such loose authority as himself. But the "balance" in this

case is, that what I suffer by his praise, is made up to me by his censure.<sup>31</sup>

But to return to my point. As it could not be interest that induced me to oppose their attack on the bank at the time here alluded to, it is proper I should declare what the motive was.

It was friendship to them. I saw very clearly they were going to destroy themselves by a rash, mad, unjust, tyrannical proceeding, and that they might not, I endeavored in the most pressing and friendly manner to remonstrate with them, to point out the consequence, and caution them against it.

For this purpose, and with this design, I had repeated conversations with Mr. Smilie on the subject, as he appeared to make himself one of the most violent in the business. Not a soul belonging to the bank, or that had the least connection with it, or any other person, knew what I was then doing. For as it was from motives of friendship that I then spoke, I kept it to myself, and it went no further than from me to them.

But Mr. Smilie is not the only one that I urged the same matters to. And I will here take the liberty (I hope I shall be pardoned in it) in mentioning the name of a gentlemen whose friendship and acquaintance I have always esteemed and wish to preserve—Colonel J. D. Smith.

As I knew he had a general acquaintance with the persons concerned in the opposition, there was scarcely a day passed, while the matter was before the house last year, that I did not go to him, and in the strongest and sincerest terms I could use, endeavor to impress him with the danger his friends were running into. That they would ruin the whole interest of the constitutional party by it. That the proceeding was so arbitrary and unjust, so despotic and tyrannical, that no body of men who went on such grounds, could support themselves or be supported in it. That the event would not only be the total overthrow of the constitutional party in the state, among whom were many that I sincerely esteemed, but that it would upset the constitution: because it could not fail to create an apprehension which would grow into a belief, that a single legislature, by having it in its power to act with such instant rashness, and without restrained, was a form of government that might be as dangerous to liberty, as a single person.

I expressed many of the same arguments to the then speaker, and it always appeared to me, from their manner of conversation on the subject, that there was something in the conduct and principles of the

<sup>31</sup> Mr. Smilie, who loves to talk about what he does not understand, is always exposing his want of knowledge, in haranguing about the balance of trade.—*Author.*

late house they did not approve, and strongly implied a wish that the matter had not been so rashly gone into.

But it is the fate of friendship, that where it is not accepted it is sure to offend. I do not apply this to the two last mentioned gentlemen; I should be unjust to them if I did. The matter, however, respecting myself in the house, went heavily on, after my sentiments on the attack on the bank were known. The acknowledgment the house made to me was not equal to the money I had relinquished to the state, exclusive of the service. The acknowledgment was connected with a proposition to renew the matter at a future day, and in this manner it now stands before the present house, there being at this time a committee on the business. Therefore I can have no interest in acting as I now do in opposition to a majority of the house, and it must be equally as clear that I am acting disinterestedly.

As the bill for abolishing the charter of the bank lay over till the last meeting of the late house, there was a probability the house would see its error, and reject what it had so rashly began. I therefore published nothing on the subject, during that time.

On my return to Philadelphia, in the winter, I found that experience had, in some measure, effected what reason and the right of things could not. Many who had been clamorous against the bank began to question the legality of the measure, and to apprehend ill effects from it.

The stockholders of the bank resolved to commence a suit; but the wound given to the faith of the state, together with the arbitrary principles on which the late house acted, were matters that concerned the people. They therefore brought their complaints before the present house from different parts of the state by memorial. Those memorials exhibit a charge of delinquency against the late house and call on the present house to redress the injury by undoing an unjust act. This is the ground the memorials go on. But it happens in this case that the matter of right is interwoven with a matter of interest. All the settled parts of Pennsylvania which carry on trade with the city and draw from thence returns of money by the sale of their produce, felt their interest hurt as well as their rights invaded. The attack on the bank operated as an attack on their pockets as well as on their principles. The city felt the same injury, and therefore they joined from a twofold motive in a demand of justice.

All this while the originating moving cause of the opposition to the bank remained a secret. Clamor filled the place of reason and argument.

Influence, monopoly and danger, were held out to the people, and the mis-led multitude caught the bait.

But notwithstanding all this cry of influence, this clamor of monopoly, it is influence and monopoly that have produced the attack on the bank. There are certain men in Philadelphia, whether friends or otherwise to the revolution matters not, they are monied men. These men view a public bank as standing in the way of their private interest. Their wealth is not of so much value to them as it would be if the bank was demolished, and therefore they say down with the bank. To accomplish this point, so agreeable to their wishes, and advantageous to their wealth, they have been working through the ignorance of the late house in matters of commerce, and the nature of banks, and on the prejudices of others as leaders of that party, to demolish the bank. It might be error in the former, but it is wilful mischief in the latter; and as mischief is not lessened by the apology of error, nor increased by the criminality of design, therefore those who sacrificed to prejudice, are, as to matters of public trust, alike the objects of public reprobation.

As one of the gentlemen who oppose the bank, as standing in the way of his private interest, has not made any great secret of his reasons, there can be no impropriety in making him and his reasons public.

The gentleman I here mean is Mr. George Emlen. However worthy or respectable a man may be in private life, yet when he from self-interested motives privately opposes a public institution, or get[s] others to do it, because it puts the credit of an honest, industrious tradesman, just and punctual in his dealings, though not so rich as himself, on a level with his wealth, it is but fair those reasons should be public.

The reasons Mr. Emlen has given for not signing the memorial lately presented to the house, and for his opposition to the bank, are, "that while the bank stands a monied man has no chance—that his money is not so valuable to him now as it would be then—that if the bank was demolished he could buy country produce for exportation cheaper." If these are just reasons for demolishing the bank, let it be demolished—if they are popular reasons let them have their effect. But at any rate let them be known that they may be judged of.

These being Mr. Emlen's reasons for demolishing the bank, can any thing be more inconsistent and suspicious than that the members of assembly who have, all this while, been holding out to their country constituents that the bank is injurious to the former and the middling sort of people, can, I say, any thing be more inconsistent than to see men

of such contrary declarations acting in concert to destroy the bank.

This is the age of negotiation, compromise and coalition: but here is one that for wisdom or folly, exceeds them all. The coalition of lord North and Charles Fox is innocent childishness compared to this. How powerfully must Mr. Emlen's reason operate on the worthy loquacious member from Fayette county. How strong must be his conviction that the bank is injurious to the farmer, when Mr. Emlen assures him that were it not for the bank he could buy the farmer's produce for less money.

When I found that this coalition had taken place, and that Mr. Emlen was the friend of Mr. Smilie, and Mr. Smilie of Mr. Emlen, and that the entertainment of his table was open to the opposing members to the bank, I could not but be struck at the strangeness of the connection, and that Mr. Smilie might not be ignorant that he was made a dupe of, or subject himself to worse suspicions, I informed a friend of his, Dr. Hutchinson, of it, and desired him to communicate Mr. Emlen's reasons for opposing the bank to Mr. Smilie. This is at least three weeks ago.

Having now stated to the public the circumstance I alluded to in my former piece, I shall reserve the continuation of the subject to a future paper.

COMMON SENSE.

PHILADELPHIA, April 6.

## TO THE PUBLIC <sup>32</sup>

### NUMBER III

AS THE debates and proceedings of the Assembly, on the report of the committee (to whom were referred the memorials of a very large and respectable number of freemen, in divers parts of the state, in behalf of the injured honor of the fame, and complaining of the improper, unconstitutional and faithless conduct of the late house, in their proceedings respecting the Bank of North-America) are advertised to be published in a pamphlet, by the person who usually attends the Assembly for the purpose of taking down debates, and as those debates, if correctly taken, will serve to set forth the unjust and arbitrary proceedings of the late house, and to show the exceeding usefulness of a

<sup>32</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Packet*, April 20, 1786. The "NUMBER III" appears in the original article, and evidently follows from the two articles on pp. 417 and 419.—*Editor*.



public Bank to the landed and commercial interest of the state, I shall, (after the present number) discontinue the remarks I have to offer on the subject, until those debates are in the hands of the public.

Having thus mentioned my intention, I shall confine my present remarks to such matters as more immediately relate to those debates. Whoever will take a review of them, cannot but perceive that the speakers in opposition to the Bank are those, who from their remote situation feel themselves very little, if at all, interested in the prosperity of the more settled and improved parts of the state. Their ideas of government, agriculture and commerce, are drawn from the limited to their own frontier habitations; and their politics seem calculated to suit their particular situations, at the expense and detriment of the rest. By attempting this, they injure themselves and the event in this instance, as in all others of narrow and contracted politics, will turn out to their own disadvantage.

If those persons could not perceive that a Bank was beneficial to the landed interest, it must be—either because they have yet no produce to sell or export, or because they have no commercial intercourse with the market where the Bank is established at. But even in this case their policy is ill calculated, and badly applied.

The time will come, when they will have produce for sale and exportation, and consequently will then want a market and a ready means of turning it into cash; and whether that produce is brought to Philadelphia market or goes to Baltimore, the consequences to themselves will be nearly the same. The quick intercourse of commercial intelligence that passes between the two markets of Philadelphia and Baltimore, immediately operates to regulate the price of the one by the other; and whenever it fails here, from whatever cause it may be, it falls there.

There are two stages or degrees into which the landed interest in Pennsylvania progressively divides itself, viz. settlers and farmers. And as a man's ideas are generally produced in him by his present situation and condition, it will naturally follow, that if you investigate his situation you will get into the channel his thoughts run in, and find out their source, direction and extent.

The frontier parts of the state are called settlements, and the improved parts farms. A settler is not yet a farmer; he is only in the way of being so. In the stage of a settler, his thoughts are engrossed and taken up in making a settlement. If he can raise produce enough for the

support of his family, it is the utmost of his present hopes. He has none to bring to market, or to sell, and therefore commerce appears nothing to him; and he cries out, that a Bank is of no use. But the case is, he is not yet in a condition to participate of its usefulness. When he is, he will think otherwise.

But the improved parts of the state, having undergone the hardship and labor attending the making new settlements, are now become farms, and the occupiers of them are farmers. The others, as I have before observed, are yet but settlements, and many of them only laid out to be such, and the occupiers of them are settlers. Therefore, when a back county member says that the Bank is of no use to the farmer, he means the settler, who has yet no produce to sell, and knows nothing about the matter. Of the twenty-eight who voted for restoring the Charter of the Bank, twenty-five are country members. Those gentlemen, by residing in the improved parts of the state, from whence the staple commodities of the country are brought, are certainly better judges of the usefulness of a public bank, than those, who, from their distance, have no commercial intercourse with the market, and never visit it but when they are sent as representatives.

As to paper money, which so frequently occurs in the speeches of the back county members, I will, in a few words, explain their motive and meaning for it.

Not one of them will take it when it is made; but all of them will borrow it of the public, under the name of a Loan Office, let the value of it be little or much, and trust the payment to the chance of depreciation, or other future events. According to the ideas which some of them threw out, they would continue striking an additional quantity every year, till the value of the first emissions was so reduced, that they would strike themselves out of debt, at the expence of all the settled and improved parts of the state.

But however paper money may suit a borrower, it is unprofitable, if not ruinous in the end, to every other person. The farmer will not take it for produce, and he is right in refusing it. The money he takes for his year's produce must last him the year round; and the experience he has had of the instability of paper money has sufficiently instructed him, that it is not worth a farmer's while to exchange the solid grain and produce of a farm for the paper of an Assembly, whose politics are changing with every new election, and who are here one year and gone another.

But the persons against whose immediate interest paper money operates the strongest, are the manufacturers and mechanics.

We all know there is no part of the continent where manufacturers and mechanics flourish so much as in the New-England states. They were famed for them before the war, and are so at this day.

But the circumstance which gave spring to those arts among them was, their banishing the use of paper money, which they effectually did many years before the war. The consequence was, that all the hard money that their export trade brought in remained among them; and as none of it could be spared to send abroad to purchase foreign manufactures necessity obliged them to manufacture for themselves. It was by banishing paper money, that they established the arts, and retained among them a sufficiency of hard money.

I know some of the persons who put themselves at the head of the opposition against the Bank last year said (for I was present), that they wished there was not a hard dollar in the country.

If this wish were, or could be, carried in practice there could then be no other than paper money; the consequence of which would be, that all the hard money which the exports of the country brought in would be immediately sent out again, to purchase foreign manufactures and trinkets.

We are frequently passing acts to encourage manufactures, but the most effectual encouragement would be, to banish the practice of paper money. We have the experience of the New England states before us, which is preferable to all the reasoning that can be offered on the subject.

An independent country and paper money is a ridiculous connection. It is a weak, flimsy, idle system of government. We have as good a chance as other nations to share in the current coin of the world, gold and silver, did those who exercise the power of government understand it.

COMMON SENSE.

April 17th.

ON THE ADVANTAGES OF A  
PUBLIC BANK <sup>33</sup>

**I**F THE experience of other countries on the science of Banking be a matter worth attending to, there can be no hesitation in pronouncing in favor of a well-regulated public Bank. I shall therefore introduce this part of the subject by taking a concise view of the conduct of other nations on this subject.

In countries under a despotic government there are no public banks, because in such countries those who have wealth think it safer to conceal than to expose it. Public banks, therefore, are the offspring only of free countries, or of those which approach the nearest thereto; and in proportion as the people share in the government, in nearly that proportion do public banks prosper and are encouraged.

In Holland and in England, where the people, by their right of election and representation, participate in the government of the country, more than in any other of the same importance in Europe, that participation protects their wealth, and they trust it to a bank with safety: by this means all the money of the country is brought into use: whereas in countries where the people have no share in the government, and live under the continual apprehension of the power exercised over them, the rich secret their money, or keep it locked up for their own use only; and the bulk of the people, from the want of its free and confidential circulation, are kept poor.

It is not so much the quantity of wealth, as the quantity that circulates, that constitutes the monied riches of a country. If we may credit history and reports, there is more money in some countries, where the generality of the people are wretched and poor, than in some others that are esteemed rich; but in the one it is hoarded, and in the other it is dispersed by circulation and gives briskness and vigor to industry and improvement. One of the best methods to increase wealth in a country is to increase the circulation of it, by inducing every part of it to be brought forth, and constantly moving. A pound hoarded for a

<sup>33</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Packet*, June 20, 1786. The letter also appeared in the *Freeman's Journal* of June 21, 1786.—*Editor*.

year, and then paid away, pays but one debt of twenty shillings in that time; but the same pound paid away every day, does the same service three hundred and sixty five times over.

Public banks, therefore, being the offspring of free countries, and of free countries only, or of such as approach the nearest thereto, and are not instituted in despotic governments, it is no reputation to the political principles of those persons, who endeavored to suppress the institution of a public bank in this state.

The superior advantages of a public bank in a country to those of private ones are very evident. Private banks can only be set up by men of large fortune, and therefore they would be a monopoly in the hands of a very few: but in a public bank divided into shares, the monopolizing system is destroyed, and the business thrown open and any man in any part of the country may be a banker by being a stockholder.

In a private bank, the true condition of it can be known only to the proprietor. This being the case, he may extend his credit too much beyond his capital. He may trade or speculate with the money deposited in his hands, and either by ill fortune in his projects, or fraudulent designs, may break. But in a public bank, there are too many people concerned to admit of secrecy; and the business is conducted by established rules, which cannot be dispensed with, or departed from. The directors are refrained from trading with the capital of the bank, or the money deposited there, and therefore the security of a public bank is greater than that of a private one. The proprietor likewise of a private bank be he ever so substantial will die; and when this happens, his affairs will be in the hands of executors, who are not always the best people to settle with: But in a public bank this never happens; its affairs never go into the hands of executors, because the directorship being filled up by election, never dies.

Had the persons who formed the scheme for opposing the bank been the institutors of it, it would then have been held out as one of the finest things imaginable. But such is the intoxicating spirit of party, and such the operation of envy, that where it cannot do the service that is wanted, it endeavors to prevent its being done. But in the instance of opposing the institution of the bank, the spirit of party carries something like a double face. Those who have been most clamorous against it, however they may conduct themselves in other places are nevertheless making use of its convenience. If they are now convinced of the

usefulness of such an institution, they ought to be candid enough to say it.

One of the clamors against the bank was, that none but persons interested in the institution were its advocates and supporters. This is very true, if rightly understood, for every man is interested in supporting an institution that is of general utility. The stockholders are but a very small part of the numerous body of the citizens of the state, who are seeking to preserve and retain so useful an institution as a public bank. All the countries that are arrived at a degree of opulence sufficient to carry on any kind of trade by means of the produce of their lands, are as much if not more, interested in the matter than a stockholder. In short, every man who has any concern with money matters, and that every one has more or less, is in some degree benefited by an institution that serves, like the heart to the body, to give circulation through the state.

Another of the clamors was, that people could not borrow money as before. For this they may in a great measure thank their representatives, who by the instability of their political conduct, and the levity they have shown in making and unmaking of laws, violating faith, and tampering with credit and paper money, have made one man afraid to trust another; and this will ever be the case while such methods are practiced.

But the most beneficial system of loaning, for the general interest of the country, is by means of a public bank. Loans for short periods serve to pay the farmer, the miller, the tradesman, the workman, etc. and hundreds are served in the course of a year to one that would be served by loans for a long period of time. The former system of loans was excellently adapted to the circumstances of the country at that time. It enabled people to make farms; but now that the farms are made, the best encouragement to the farmer is to provide means to buy and pay, in real money, for the produce he has to sell.

If the money that now compose the capital of the bank could possibly be spared by the stockholders, which it cannot, and lent to individuals in different parts of the country for a number of years, only a very few persons could be served, compared with the numbers served now, and those only who had already considerable property to give in security; and the first borrowers would exclude all others from the chance of borrowing during the time for which they had borrowed themselves. He there-

fore who puts his money in the bank, lends it to a more general good, than if he were to trust it to the use of one person only for a number of years.

I shall conclude this paper with a declaration, that in this place may not be improper, which is, That from the first establishment of the bank, to the present hour, I have been its friend and advocate; yet I have never made the least use of it, or received the least personal service or favor from it, by borrowing or discounting notes, or in any other shape or manner whatever or of any person concerned with it directly or indirectly. I have kept cash at the bank, and the bank is at this time in account to me between eight and nine hundred pounds, for money which I brought from New York, and deposited there ever since last September, and for which I do not receive a single farthing interest. This money the country has had the use of, and I think it safer under the care of the bank, until I have occasion to call for it, than in my own custody.

COMMON SENSE.

June 17th.

### ADDRESSED TO THE OPPOSERS OF THE BANK <sup>34</sup>

**E**RROR like guilt is unwilling to die. However strong the conviction, or clear the detection, it still disdains to yield, and though defeated struggles to survive. The opposers to the Bank, finding their cause as unpopular as it is unjust, are endeavoring to confound what they cannot confuse, and to recover by contrivance what they lost by misconduct. Failing in the onset, they seek to embarrass the issue, and escape undefeated in the fog of perplexity.

New devices, as frivolous as they are unjust, are couched under new

<sup>34</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 7, 1787. In the autumn elections of 1786 the pro-bank forces won out, and, with the full support of Benjamin Franklin, a move started in the State legislature to restore the bank's charter. A bill was introduced in the assembly, but the anti-bank forces resorted to parliamentary tactics to delay the vote and insisted on placing special conditions in the new charter. These tactics infuriated Paine and he wrote this letter denouncing those engaged in these activities.—*Editor*.

pretenses, and held out to divide or to deceive. A small reinforcement, by any means obtained, might serve as a prop to their consequence, or an apology to their defeat.

When men have rashly plunged themselves into a measure, the right or wrong of it is soon forgotten. Party knows no impulse but spirit, no prize but victory. It is blind to truth, and hardened against conviction. It seeks to justify error by perseverance, and denies to its own mind the operation of its own judgment. A man under the tyranny of party spirit is the greatest slave upon earth, for none but himself can deprive him of the freedom of thought.

The obscure promoters of the opposition to the Bank imagined that their consequence would be lessened, and their influence circumscribed by the growing circumstances of the country. They hated the means that should raise it above themselves, and beheld the Bank as an instrument of public prosperity. The lower was the ebb, the easier they would ascend to the surface, and the more visible they would appear. Their sphere of importance was that of a general poverty, and their hopes depended on its duration. "Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven," was the language of Lucifer, and the same motives served to instigate the opposition.

In this plan they were joined by a band of usurers, whose avarice of 50 and 60 per cent, was consequently opposed by the operation of the Bank, which discounted at the legal interest of six per cent. They were further supported by the speculators in the funding scheme, who were calculating to draw from the public an annual interest of 20 and 30 per cent, and encrease the value of the capital in their hands at least one hundred per cent. This is a caricatura which the public are truly interested in having explained. What but this could bring an assemblyman of the constitutional party and an usurer together.

Unjust measures must be supported by unjust means. No sooner was their scheme reprobated by men of integrity and independent principles, but invention was put to the rack, and truth to defiance, to weaken the credit of those who opposed the injustice of their proceedings. This man was bribed and that man was hired, and slander and falsehood, the ministering angels of malevolence, had full employment.

So far as any of their insinuations regard me, I put them to defiance, I challenge any man amongst them to come forth and made the assertion. I dare them to it; and with all the calm composure of integrity disdain their insinuations, and leave them to lick the file and bleed



away their venom. An insinuation, which a man who makes it does not believe himself, is equal to lying. It is the cowardice of lying. It unites the barest part of that vice with the meanest of all others. An open liar is a highwayman in his profession, but an insinuating liar is a thief sculking in the night.

Could the opposition to the Bank succeed in effecting its downfall, the consequence would be their own destruction as a party in the state. The attempt has already reduced their numbers and exasperated the country, and could they accomplish the end, it would be fatal to them. But they are happy in not having discernment enough to foresee the effects of their own measures. They persist because they have begun, and shun the prudence that would teach them to retreat.

Had the Bank closed its accounts as the opposition supposed it would at the passing of the repealing act, the confusion and distress in this city, and the effects that would have followed to the country, would have brought vengeance on the heads of the promoters of that measure. The quantity of cash that would have been taken away and for ever removed from this state, by the stockholders in distant parts, would have brought on a famine of money. I know one gentlemen who would have drawn out twenty-four thousand dollars, none of which would ever more have returned among us. Is there any man except a madman or an idiot, that will say we have too much money and want to have less. Can it be for the interest of this state to banish the wealth it possesses, at the very time it is complaining of the scarcity of cash.

The leaders of the opposition in this city are chiefly composed of those who live by posts and offices under the government, and if there are but taxes enough to pay their salaries, the distress would not reach their interest.

The opposition in the House of Assembly is chiefly supported by members from whom such an opposition has an indelicate appearance. It has the appearance of envy at the prosperity of all the old settled parts of the state. The commerce and traffic of the Back Country members and the parts they represent goes to Baltimore. From thence are their imports purchased and there do their exports go. They come here to legislate and go there to trade. In questions of commerce, and by commerce I mean the exports as well as the imports of a country, they are neither naturally nor politically interested with us, and the delicacy of the case when matters of this kind are agitated should have with them a greater weight. What advantage persons thus situated

can propose to themselves from a dissolution of the Bank at Philadelphia is not easy to perceive. The money drawn away by the stockholders in distant parts, though removed from this state, would not be deposited at Baltimore. It is very possible that a branch of the present Bank may extend there, and in this view they are defeating their own future interest: If one part of the state is thus to go on in opposing the other, no great good can arise to either. The principle is ungenerous and the policy injurious, and the more it is reflected upon the worse it will appear.

The cry and bubble, the falsehoods and insinuations that were raised against the Bank have sunk and wasted away as groundless clamors always will. The politics founded on such contrivances never succeed, and the event serves to involve the projectors in disgrace. A very little serious thinking was sufficient to convince any man, that the more money could be retained in the country the better, and that to break up the Bank and banish so large a capital from the state as the stockholders in distant parts have deposited with us, never more to return among us; could answer no man's purpose who had his living to work for, though it might not affect those who live by posts and offices. Would not that politician be considered as a madman in England, who should propose to break up the Bank in that nation, and send away to Holland and other countries the money which those foreigners have deposited with them: and he must be equally as vile a politician who proposes the same thing here.

So far as the part I have taken in the business has gone, it has been applied to preserve the money in the country, by supporting the Bank; and in this undertaking I am certain of the approbation of every serious thinking man who wishes to see the country in prosperous circumstances.

As for the crazy brained politicians who began and promoted the attack on the Bank, I have had experience enough of their abilities for several years past to know them sufficiently, and that a country under the management of their politics would be a perpetual scene of distraction and poverty.

I did not leave them when they were weak and distressed, but in the height of their prosperity, and in full possession of the government. I very explicitly and candidly stated to them my reasons for reprobating their conduct, and that at a time when themselves know it was against my interest to do it; and I very freely gave them my opinion (such as it

was) that those unjust and despotic proceedings would work their downfall. But they were intoxicated with power, government with power, government-mad, too blind to foresee the consequence, and too confident to be advised. They trusted to the transitory popularity obtained by delusion, and supposed that a multitude deceived was never to be convinced.

But there are certain points in this business, which ought always to be kept in view.

The Bank originated on the inability of the government to carry on the war, and at a time when some of its present opposers were on the point of abandoning the cause. I speak this because I know it. But so unhappy is the spirit of envy, that it can be just to no merit but its own. The services which the Bank rendered have been a poison to those little minds, that at once receive and hate the good that others perform.

On the fall of the continental currency a band of usurers arose, and those who wanted to borrow paid from thirty to sixty per cent for their loans. These men are among the enemies of the Bank.

On the establishment of the Bank, nearly the whole of its abilities to lend were rendered to Congress, and so pressing and necessitous were the requisitions of that body, and so devoted was the Bank to the support of the public cause, that in more instances than one the Bank ran the risk of losing its whole capital. At this time the present opposers of the Bank lay snug with what hard money they had in their pockets, and contributed none of it to supply the public exigency.

On the termination of the war, all risk and danger being over, those same persons, so quiet then, and so noisy since, formed the scheme of setting up another Bank. Not from any public principle or for any public purpose; not to expel the enemy, for he was already expelled; but merely with a view to make money and profit. They had no hard money, God help them, not they, while there was danger of losing it; but when that danger was over, they could find hard money for a new bank. To carry this plan, and draw new associates to it, they proposed revising the Test-laws, which, as their scheme of a new Bank did not succeed, they afterwards voted against.

Disappointed in their plan of setting up another Bank, they immediately struck off on the contrary tack, propagated a report that Banks were injurious and dangerous, and brought in a bill to demolish that Bank they had attempted to rival. How they should ever expect that

men who had reputations yet unlost should join or concur with them in such a contradictory and unprincipled round of projects, is a proof how little they regard reputation themselves. Their conduct is in itself a satire upon hypocrisy, and equalled only by the impudence of acting it.

When the demands of Congress on the Bank ceased with the war, it was then enabled to employ its capital in promoting the domestic prosperity of the country; and it was fortunate for Pennsylvania that she possessed such a resource as the Bank, at the close of a war which had ruined her commerce, reduced her farmers, and impoverished her monied men; when she had, as it were, the world to begin anew, and when, had it not been for the intervention of the Bank, the usurers would have devoured the land.

The Bank went on, and no complaint was heard against it. Its impartial punctuality served to collect and restore the shattered remains of credit, and replace the confidence which the war and paper currencies had destroyed.

At this time, without provocation, without cause, and without any motive that was wise, just or honorable, the Assembly, unwarranted by their constituents, and unjustified by the pretence, commenced an attack upon its charter. They fabricated the tales they wished to have believed, and set them up for the voice of the people. A few runners out of doors kept up the alarm, and the public, unacquainted with the business, and unsuspecting of the deception, were trepanned into the lure.

That they had not the support of the people, is evident from the disapprobation which the two succeeding elections show to their conduct. They dismissed from their trust the promoters of that measure, and elected others, to redress the injustice their predecessors had committed.

If the inhabitants of the back western parts of the state are not benefited by the establishment of a Bank within the state; it is because their trade and commerce is carried out of it. They neither encrease its exports nor consume its imports, nor bear a proportionate share of the public burdens. Yet were the state of Maryland, to which place their commerce is carried, to emit a paper currency, there are none of those persons but would prefer a Pennsylvania bank note at Baltimore, that could at any time be changed into hard money, to the paper currency of a state of which they are not members. Therefore, instead of opposing

the Bank on this narrow policy, they would have acted consistently with their interest to have supported it, and joined their endeavors to establish a branch of it in that state.

As to paper currencies, when we consider the fluctuating disposition of legislatures, the uncertainty of their movements, the probability of the division and separation of a state, disputes about the residence of government, and numerous other occurrences that may take place in a state, there can be no confidence placed in them. They stand on such a contingent foundation, on such a changeable connection of circumstances, and subject to such a multitude of events, not easy to foresee, and always liable to happen, that paper currencies can never be trusted to either as riches or as a medium of commerce; because a medium must in the nature of it be subject to the least possible fluctuation, or it is not a medium, and paper is subject to the greatest fluctuation of all other things, being capable of sinking to no value at all, of which this country has sufficient experience.

Pennsylvania being the center of the thirteen states, her situation, with the assistance of a Bank, enabled her to carry on a trade upon the produce of other states. Through the medium of the Bank, for Bank notes had credit in all the states, she imported their productions, exported them again, became importers for those states, and gained a profit upon the trade. By this means the riches of Pennsylvania were increased, and many industrious people furnished with employment. Of this branch was the tobacco trade.

But matters of this kind form no part of the politics of the opposition. It is more agreeable to them to keep the country low and poor, that they may govern it the easier, than to see it prosperous, and beyond the reach of their influence.

These are some of the principal outlines in tracing the subject of the Bank. As to several little matters that have been started, as well in the assembly as out of it, they are not worth wasting the public time upon.

It is of very little or no consequence to the generality of people, and a matter which they do not trouble themselves about, because it does not affect them one way or the other, in what manner the stockholders of the Bank conduct their private concerns, regulate their elections, and do many other domestic matters. Those who best know the business, best know how to manage it, and the object with the public is best answered, when that business is best performed. Those who place their money there, are the properest people to take care of it, and

the better it is taken care of, the more security there is in the Bank.

The greater quantity of money which the credit of the Bank can bring into the state, the better for the people; for it is not the money collected within the state, but the monies drawn to it from distant parts, monies which would not be here were it not for the Bank, that forms the principal capital of the Bank.

As to the domestic matters of the Bank, even the opposition is obliged to be silent. The business of it has been conducted with unimpeached faithfulness and good management. Therefore the best, and only certain line to proceed on, in restoring its legal re-establishment, is to keep as near as possible to the line of its original charter. Of this we have had an experienced security, to which innovations may be dangerous and fatal.

PHILAD. March 5, 1787.

COMMON SENSE.



THE PROSECUTION OF *RIGHTS OF MAN*

TO THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

TO MR. SECRETARY DUNDAS

LETTERS TO ONSLOW CRANLEY

TO THE SHERIFF OF THE COUNTY OF SUSSEX

TO MR. SECRETARY DUNDAS

LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE ADDRESSERS

TO THE ENGLISH ATTORNEY-GENERAL



## EDITOR'S NOTE

*Rights of Man* divided British public opinion into Burkeites and Paineites, inspired a generation of democratic reformers, and formed the programs of hundreds of popular societies which sprang up throughout Great Britain. It was inevitable, therefore, that British royalty would seek frantically to destroy the influence of the writer who had dared to defend the French Revolution and outline a social program which could win the support of all progressive forces, from upper class liberals, led by Charles James Fox, to working class democrats, directed by Thomas Hardy, the shoemaker. When the government failed to prevent the publication of Part II of the *Rights of Man*, it moved against Paine himself. On June 8, 1792, the author was charged with sedition and his trial was set for December 18. Before he could be arrested, Paine fled to France. But as soon as it was rumored that the government would prosecute him, Paine began to prepare his public replies to his accusers. These replies, answering the charges levelled against him, contain valuable elaborations of various issues raised in the *Rights of Man*.

## TO THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

On May 21, 1792 a Royal Proclamation in England was issued against "wicked seditious writings printed, published and industriously dispersed." Paine received notice that he would be prosecuted in the King's Bench for his *Rights of Man*. He came immediately to London to find Jordan, his publisher, had already been served with a summons, and was ready to compromise by agreeing to plead guilty. Paine refused to capitulate before the offensive of the British reactionaries, and wrote to Attorney-General Sir Archibald Macdonald, some time in May, informing him that he had no desire to avoid any prosecution.—*Editor*.

**T**HOUGH I have some reason for believing that you were not the original promoter or encourager of the prosecution commenced against the work entitled "Rights of Man," either as that prosecution is intended to affect the author, the publisher, or the public; yet as you appear the official person therein, I address this letter to you, not as Sir Archibald Macdonald, but as Attorney-General.

You began by a prosecution against the publisher Jordan, and the reason assigned by Mr. Secretary Dundas, in the House of Commons, in the debate on the Proclamation, May twenty-fifth, for taking that measure, was, he said, because Mr. Paine could not be found, or words to that effect. Mr. Paine, Sir, so far from secreting himself, never went a step out of his way, nor in the least instance varied from his usual conduct, to avoid any measure you might choose to adopt with respect to him. It is on the purity of his heart, and the universal utility of the principles and plans which his writings contain, that he rests the issue; and he will not dishonor it by any kind of subterfuge. The apartments which he occupied at the time of writing the work, last winter, he has continued to occupy to the present hour, and the solicitors of the prosecu-

tion knew where to find him; of which there is a proof in their own office, as far back as the twenty-first of May, and also in the office of my own attorney.<sup>1</sup>

But admitting, for the sake of the case, that the reason for proceeding against the publisher was, as Mr. Dundas stated, that Mr. Paine could not be found, that reason can now exist no longer.

The instant that I was informed that an information was preparing to be filed against me, as the author of, I believe, one of the most useful and benevolent books ever offered to mankind, I directed my attorney to put in an appearance; and as I shall meet the prosecution fully and fairly, and with a good and upright conscience, I have a right to expect that no act of littleness will be made use of on the part of the prosecution toward influencing the future issue with respect to the author. This expression may, perhaps, appear obscure to you, but I am in the possession of some matters which serve to show that the action against the publisher is not intended to be a *real* action. If, therefore, any persons concerned in the prosecution have found their cause so weak, as to make it appear convenient to them to enter into a negotiation with the publisher, whether for the purpose of his submitting to a verdict, and to make use of the verdict so obtained as a circumstance, by way of precedent, on a future trial against myself; or for any other purpose not fully made known to me; if, I say, I have cause to suspect this to be the case, I shall most certainly withdraw the defense I should otherwise have made, or promoted on his (the publisher's) behalf, and leave the negotiators to themselves, and shall reserve the whole of the defense for the *real* trial.

But, Sir, for the purpose of conducting this matter with at least the appearance of fairness and openness, that shall justify itself before the public, whose cause it really is (for it is the right of public discussion and investigation that is questioned), I have to propose to you to cease the prosecution against the publisher; and as the reason or pretext can no longer exist for continuing it against him because Mr. Paine could not be found, that you would direct the whole process against me, with whom the prosecuting party will not find it possible to enter into any private negotiation.

I will do the cause full justice, as well for the sake of the nation, as for my own reputation.

Another reason for discontinuing the process against the publisher is, because it can amount to nothing. First, because a jury in London can-

<sup>1</sup> His attorney was Thomas Erskine.—*Editor*.

not decide upon the fact of publishing beyond the limits of the jurisdiction of London, and therefore the work may be republished over and over again in every county in the nation, and every case must have a separate process; and by the time that three or four hundred prosecutions have been had, the eyes of the nation will then be fully open to see that the work in question contains a plan the best calculated to root out all the abuses of government, and to lessen the taxes of the nation upward of *six millions annually*.

Secondly, because though the gentlemen of London may be very expert in understanding their particular professions and occupations, and how to make business contracts with government beneficial to themselves as individuals, the rest of the nation may not be disposed to consider them sufficiently qualified nor authorized to determine for the whole nation on plans of reform, and on systems and principles of government. This would be in effect to erect a jury into a national convention, instead of electing a convention, and to lay a precedent for the probable tyranny of juries, under the pretense of supporting their rights.

That the possibility always exists of packing juries will not be denied; and, therefore, in all cases, where government is the prosecutor, more especially in those where the right of public discussion and investigation of principles and systems of government is attempted to be suppressed by a verdict, or in those where the object of the work that is prosecuted is the reform of abuse and the abolition of sinecure places and pensions, in all these cases the verdict of a jury will itself become a subject of discussion; and therefore, it furnishes an additional reason for discontinuing the prosecution against the publisher, more especially as it is not a secret that there has been a negotiation with him for secret purposes, and for proceeding against me only. I shall make a much stronger defense than what I believe the Treasury Solicitor's agreement with him will permit him to do.

I believe that Mr. Burke, finding himself defeated, and not being able to make any answer to the "Rights of Man," has been one of the promoters of this prosecution; and I shall return the compliment to him by showing, in a future publication, that he has been a masked pensioner at £1500 per annum for about ten years.

Thus it is that the public money is wasted, and the dread of public investigation is produced.

I am, sir,  
Your obedient humble servant,  
THOMAS PAINE.

TO MR. SECRETARY DUNDAS<sup>2</sup>

London, June 6, 1792.

AS you opened the debate in the House of Commons, May twenty-fifth, on the proclamation for suppressing publications, which that proclamation (without naming any) calls wicked and seditious: and as you applied those opprobrious epithets to the works entitled "Rights of Man," I think it unnecessary to offer any other reason for addressing this letter to you.

I begin, then, at once, by declaring, that I do not believe there are found in the writings of any author, ancient or modern, on the subject of government, a spirit of greater benignity, and a stronger inculcation of moral principles than in those which I have published. They come, Sir, from a man, who, by having lived in different countries, and under different systems of government, and who, being intimate in the construction of them, is a better judge of the subject than it is possible that you, from the want of those opportunities, can be: and besides this, they come from a heart that knows not how to beguile.

I will further say, that when that moment arrives in which the best consolation that shall be left will be looking back on some past actions, more virtuous and more meritorious than the rest, I shall then with happiness remember, among other things, I have written the "Rights of Man." As to what proclamations, or prosecutions, or place-men, and place-expectants—those who possess, or those who are gaping for office—may say of them, it will not alter their character, either with the world or with me.

Having, Sir, made this declaration, I shall proceed to remark, not particularly on your speech on that occasion, but on any one to which your motion on that day gave rise; and I shall begin with that of Mr. Adam.

This gentleman accuses me of not having done the very thing that *I have done*, and which, he says, if *I had* done, he should not have accused me.

Mr. Adam, in his speech (see the *Morning Chronicle* of May 26), says,

<sup>2</sup> Henry D. Dundas had been appointed Home Secretary in 1791.—*Editor*.

That he had well considered the subject of constitutional publications, and was by no means ready to say (but the contrary) that books of science upon government though recommending a doctrine or system different from the form of our Constitution (meaning that of England) were fit objects of prosecution; that if he did, he must condemn HARRINGTON for his "Oceana," SIR THOMAS MORE for his "Utopia," and HUME for his "Idea of a Perfect Commonwealth." But (continued Mr. Adam) the publication of Mr. PAINE was very different; for it reviled what was most sacred in the Constitution, destroyed every principle of subordination, and *established nothing in their room.*

I readily perceive that Mr. Adam has not read the second part of "Rights of Man," and I am put under the necessity, either of submitting to an erroneous charge, or of justifying myself against it; and certainly shall prefer the latter. If, then, I shall prove to Mr. Adam, that in my reasoning upon systems of government, in the second part of "Rights of Man," I have shown as clearly, I think, as words can convey ideas, a certain system of government, and that not existing in theory only, but already in full and established practise, and systematically and practically free from all the vices and defects of the English Government, and capable of producing more happiness to the people, and that also with an eightieth part of the taxes, which the present English system of government consumes; I hope he will do me the justice, when he next goes to the House, to get up and confess he had been mistaken in saying, that I had *established nothing, and that I had destroyed every principle of subordination.* Having thus opened the case, I now come to the point.

In the second part of the "Rights of Man," I have distinguished government into two classes or systems: the one the hereditary system, the other the representative system.

In the first part of "Rights of Man," I have endeavored to show, and I challenge any man to refute it, that there does not exist a right to establish hereditary government; or, in other words, hereditary governors; because hereditary government always means a government yet to come, and the case always is, that the people who are to live afterwards, have always the same right to choose a government for themselves, as the people had who lived before them.

In the second part of "Rights of Man," I have not repeated those arguments, because they are irrefutable; but have confined myself to show the defects of what is called hereditary government, or hereditary succession, that it must, from the nature of it, throw government into the

hands of men totally unworthy of it, from want of principle, or unfitted for it from want of capacity. James II is recorded as an instance of the first of these cases; and instances are to be found almost all over Europe to prove the truth of the latter.

To show the absurdity of the hereditary system still more strongly, I will now put the following case: Take any fifty men promiscuously, and it will be very extraordinary if, out of that number, one man should be found, whose principles and talents taken together (for some might have principles, and others might have talents) would render him a person truly fitted to fill any very extraordinary office of national trust. If then such a fitness of character could not be expected to be found in more than one person out of fifty, it would happen but once in a thousand years to the eldest son of any one family, admitting each, on an average, to hold the office twenty years. Mr. Adam talks of something in the Constitution which he calls *most sacred*; but I hope he does not mean hereditary succession, a thing which appears to me a violation of every order of nature, and of common sense.

When I look into history and see the multitudes of men, otherwise virtuous, who have died, and their families been ruined, in the defense of knaves and fools, and which they would not have done, had they reasoned at all upon the system; I do not know a greater good that an individual can render to mankind, than to endeavor to break the chains of political superstition. Those chains are now dissolving fast, and proclamations and persecutions will serve but to hasten that dissolution.

Having thus spoken of the hereditary system as a bad system, and subject to every possible defect, I now come to the representative system, and this Mr. Adam will find stated in the second part of "Rights of Man," not only as the best, but as the only *theory* of government under which the liberties of the people can be permanently secure.

But it is needless now to talk of more theory, since there is already a government in full practise, established upon that theory; or in other words, upon the "Rights of Man," and has been so for almost twenty years. Mr. Pitt, in a speech of his some short time since, said, "That there never did, and never could exist a government established upon those rights, and that if it began at noon, it would end at night." Mr. Pitt has not yet arrived at the degree of a schoolboy in this species of knowledge; his practise has been confined to the means of *extorting revenue*, and his boast has been—*how much!* Whereas the boast of the

system of government that I am speaking of, is not how much, but how little.

The system of government purely representative, unmixed with anything of hereditary nonsense, began in America. I will now compare the effects of that system of government with the system of government in England, both during, and since the close of the war.

So powerful is the representative system, first, by combining and consolidating all the parts of a country together, however great the extent; and, secondly, by admitting of none but men properly qualified into the government, or dismissing them if they prove to be otherwise, that America was enabled thereby totally to defeat and overthrow all the schemes and projects of the hereditary Government of England against her. As the establishment of the Revolution and Independence of America is a proof of this fact, it is needless to enlarge upon it.

I now come to the comparative effect of the two systems *since* the close of the war, and I request Mr. Adam to attend to it.

America had internally sustained the ravages of upwards of seven years of war, which England had not. England sustained only the expense of the war; whereas America sustained not only the expense, but the destruction of property committed by *both* armies. Not a house was built during that period, and many thousands were destroyed. The farms and plantations along the coast of the country, for more than a thousand miles, were laid waste. Her commerce was annihilated. Her ships were either taken, or had rotted within her own harbors. The credit of her funds had fallen upwards of ninety per cent, that is, an original hundred pounds would not sell for ten pounds. In fine, she was apparently put back a hundred years when the war closed, which was not the case with England.

But such was the event, that the same representative system of government, though since better organized, which enabled her to conquer, enabled her also to recover, and she now presents a more flourishing condition, and a more happy and harmonized society, under that system of government, than any country in the world can boast under any other. Her towns are rebuilt, much better than before; her farms and plantations are in higher improvement than ever; her commerce is spread over the world, and her funds have risen from less than ten pounds the hundred to upwards of one hundred and twenty. Mr. Pitt and his colleagues talk of the things that have happened in his boyish



administration, without knowing what greater things have happened elsewhere, and under other systems of government.

I now come to state the expense of the two systems, as they now stand in each of the countries; but it may first be proper to observe, that government in America is what it ought to be, a matter of honor and trust, and not made a trade of for the purpose of lucre.

The whole amount of the net taxes in England (exclusive of the expense of collection, of drawbacks, of seizures and condemnation, of fines and penalties, of fees of office, of litigations and informers, which are some of the blessed means of enforcing them) is seventeen millions. Of this sum, about nine millions go for the payment of the interest of the national debt, and the remainder, being about eight millions, is for the current annual expenses. This much for one side of the case. I now come to the other.

The expense of the several departments of the general Representative Government of the United States of America, extending over a space of country nearly ten times larger than England, is \$294,558, which, at 4s. 6d. per dollar, is £66,305, 11s. sterling, and is thus apportioned:

*Expense of the Executive Department.*

The Office of Presidency, for which the President receives nothing for himself .....	£ 5,625	s. 0
Vice President .....	1,125	0
Chief-justice .....	900	0
Five associate Justices .....	3,937	10
Nineteen Judges of Districts, and Attorney-General .....	6,873	15

*Legislative Department.*

Members of Congress at 6 dolls. (1l. 7s.) per day, their Secretaries, Clerks, Chaplains, Messengers, Door-keepers, etc.	25,515	0
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*Treasury Department.*

Secretary, Assistant, Comptroller, Auditor, Treasurer, Register, and Loan-Office Keeper, in each state, together with all necessary Clerks, Office Keepers, etc. ....	12,825	0
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*Department of State, including Foreign Affairs.*

Secretary, Clerks, etc., etc. ....	1,406	5
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*Department of War.*

Secretary, Clerks, Paymasters, Commissioners, etc. ....	1,462	10
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*Commissioners for settling Old Accounts.*

The whole Board, Clerks, etc. . . . . 2,598 15

*Incidental and Contingent expenses.*

For Fire-wood, Stationery, Printing, etc . . . . . 4,006 16  
 Total . . . . . 66,275 11

On account of the incursions of the Indians on the back settlements, Congress is at this time obliged to keep six thousand militia in pay, in addition to a regiment of foot, and a battalion of artillery, which it always keeps; and this increases the expense of the War Department to \$390,000 which is £87,795 sterling, but when peace shall be concluded with the Indians, the greatest part of this expense will cease, and the total amount of the expense of government, including that of the army, will not amount to £100,000 sterling, which, as has been already stated, is but an eightieth part of the expenses of the English Government.

I request Mr. Adam and Mr. Dundas, and all those who are talking of constitutions, and blessings, and kings, and lords, and the Lord knows what, to look at this statement. Here is a form and system of government that is better organized and better administered than any government in the world, and that for less than £100,000 per annum, and yet every Member of Congress receives, as a compensation for his time and attendance on public business, one pound seven shillings per day, which is at the rate of nearly £500 a year.

This is a government that has nothing to fear. It needs no proclamations to deter people from writing and reading. It needs no political superstition to support it; it was by encouraging discussion and rendering the press free upon all subjects of government, that the principles of government became understood in America, and the people are now enjoying the present blessings under it. You hear of no riots, tumults, and disorders in that country; because there exists no cause to produce them. Those things are never the effect of freedom, but of restraint, oppression, and excessive taxation.

In America there is not that class of poor and wretched people that are so numerously dispersed all over England, who are to be told by a proclamation, that they are happy; and this is in a great measure to be accounted for, not by the difference of proclamations, but by the difference of governments and the difference of taxes between that country and this. What the laboring people of that country earn, they apply to

their own use, and to the education of their children, and do not pay it away in taxes as fast as they earn it, to support court extravagance, and a long enormous list of place-men and pensioners; and besides this, they have learned the manly doctrine of reverencing themselves, and consequently of respecting each other; and they laugh at those imaginary beings called kings and lords, and all the fraudulent trumpery of court.

When place-men and pensioners, or those who expect to be such, are lavish in praise of a government, it is not a sign of its being a good one. The pension list alone in England (see Sir John Sinclair's "History of the Revenue," p. 6, of the Appendix) is £107,404, *which is more than the expenses of the whole Government of America amount to.* And I am now more convinced than before, that the offer that was made to me of a thousand pounds for the copyright of the second part of the "Rights of Man," together with the remaining copyright of the first part, was to have effected, by a quick suppression, what is now attempted to be done by a prosecution. The connection which the person, who made the offer, has with the King's printing office, may furnish part of the means of inquiring into this affair, when the Ministry shall please to bring their prosecution to issue. But to return to my subject.

I have said in the second part of the "Rights of Man," and I repeat it here, that the service of any man, whether called king, president, senator, legislator, or anything else cannot be worth more to any country in the regular routine of office, than £10,000 per annum. We have a better man in America, and more of a gentleman, than any king I ever knew of, who does not occasion half that expense; for, though the salary is fixed at £5,625 he does not accept it, and it is only the incidental expenses that are paid out of it.<sup>3</sup> The name by which a man is called is of itself but an empty thing. It is worth and character alone which can render him valuable, for without these, kings, and lords, and presidents, are but jingling names.

But without troubling myself about constitutions of government, I have shown in the second part of "Rights of Man," that an alliance may be formed between England, France, and America and that the expenses of government in England may be put back to one million and a half, viz.:

<sup>3</sup> Paine does not seem to have been aware of the fact that Washington was receiving a regular salary, having been persuaded to withdraw his original announcement that he would accept only his expenses.—*Editor.*

Civil expense of government .....	£500,000
Army .....	500,000
Navy .....	500,000
Total .....	<u>£1,500,000</u>

And even this sum is fifteen times greater than the expenses of government are in America; and it is also greater than the whole peace establishment of England amounted to about a hundred years ago. So much has the weight and oppression of taxes increased since the Revolution, and especially since the year 1714.

To show that the sum of £500,000 is sufficient to defray all civil expenses of government, I have, in that work, annexed the following estimate for any country of the same extent as England.

In the first place, three hundred representatives, fairly elected, are sufficient for all the purposes to which legislation can apply, and preferable to a larger number.

If, then, an allowance, at the rate of £500 per annum be made to every representative, deducting for non-attendance, the expense, if the whole number attended six months each year, would be £75,000.

The official departments could not possibly exceed the following number, with the salaries annexed, viz.:

Three offices	at	£10,000	each	£30,000
Ten ditto	at	5,000	“	50,000
Brought over				155,000
Twenty ditto	at	2,000	“	40,000
Forty ditto	at	1,000	“	40,000
Two hundred ditto	at	500	“	100,000
Three hundred ditto	at	200	“	60,000
Five hundred ditto	at	100	“	50,000
Seven hundred ditto	at	75	“	52,500
				<u>£495,500</u>

If a nation chose, it might deduct four per cent from all the offices, and make one of £20,000 per annum, and style the person who should fill it, king or Majesty,<sup>4</sup> or give him any other title.

Taking, however, this sum of one million and a half, as an abundant supply for all the expenses of government under any form whatever, there will remain a surplus of nearly six millions and a half out of the

<sup>4</sup> This was a punning allusion to the King's mental infirmity. Paine had been advised against using it by several of his friends.—*Editor*.

present taxes, after paying the interest of the national debt; and I have shown in the second part of the "Rights of Man," what appears to me, the best mode of applying the surplus money; for I am now speaking of expenses and savings, and not of systems of government.

I have, in the first place, estimated the poor-rates at two millions annually, and shown that the first effectual step would be to abolish the poor-rates entirely (which would be a saving of two millions to the housekeepers), and to remit four millions out of the surplus taxes to the poor, to be paid to them in money, in proportion to the number of children in each family, and the number of aged persons.

I have estimated the number of persons of both sexes in England, of fifty years of age and upwards, at 420,000, and have taken one-third of this number, viz, 140,000, to be poor people.

To save long calculations, I have taken 70,000 of them to be upwards of fifty years of age, and under sixty, and the others to be sixty years and upwards; and to allow six pounds per annum to the former class, and ten pounds per annum to the latter. The expense of which will be:

70,000 persons at	£6 per annum	.....	£420,000
70,000 persons at	£10 per annum	.....	700,000
			<u>£1,120,000</u>

There will then remain of the four millions, £2,880,000. I have stated two different methods of appropriating this money. The one is to pay it in proportion to the number of children in each family, at the rate of three or four pounds per annum for each child; the other is to apportion it according to the expense of living in different counties; but in either of these cases it would, together with the allowance to be made to the aged, completely take off taxes from one-third of all the families in England, besides relieving all the other families from the burden of poor-rates.

The whole number of families in England, allotting five souls to each family, is 1,400,000, of which I take one third, viz, 466,666, to be poor families who now pay four millions of taxes, and that the poorest pays at least four guineas a year; and that the other thirteen millions are paid by the other two-thirds.

The plan, therefore, as stated in the work, is, first, to remit or repay, as is already stated, this sum of four millions to the poor, because it is impossible to separate them from the others in the present mode of col-

lecting taxes on articles of consumption; and, secondly, to abolish the poor-rates, the house and window-light tax, and to change the commutation tax into a progressive tax on large estates, the particulars of all which are set forth in the work, to which I desire Mr. Adam to refer for particulars. I shall here content myself with saying, that to a town of the population of Manchester, it will make a difference in its favor, compared with the present state of things, of upwards of £50,000 annually, and so in proportion to all other places throughout the nation. This certainly is of more consequence than that the same sums should be collected to be afterwards spent by riotous and profligate courtiers, and in nightly revels at the Star and Garter tavern, Pall Mall.

I will conclude this part of my letter with an extract from the second part of the "Rights of Man," which Mr. Dundas (a man rolling in luxury at the expense of the nation) has branded with the epithet of "wicked."

By the operation of this plan, the poor laws, those instruments of civil torture, will be superseded, and the wasteful expense of litigation prevented. The hearts of the humane will not be shocked by ragged and hungry children, and persons of seventy and eighty years of age begging for bread. The dying poor will not be dragged from place to place to breathe their last, as a reprisal of parish upon parish. Widows will have a maintenance for their children, and not be carted away, on the death of their husbands, like culprits and criminals; and children will no longer be considered as increasing the distresses of their parents. The haunts of the wretched will be known, because it will be to their advantage; and the number of petty crimes, the offspring of poverty and distress, will be lessened. The poor as well as the rich will then be interested in the support of government, and the cause and apprehension of riots and tumults will cease. Ye who sit in ease, and solace yourselves in plenty, and such there are in Turkey and Russia, as well as in England, and who say to yourselves, *are we not well off?* have ye thought of these things? When ye do, ye will cease to speak and feel for yourselves alone.

After this remission of four millions be made, and the poor-rates and houses and window-light tax be abolished, and the commutation tax changed, there will still remain nearly one million and a half of surplus taxes; and as by an alliance between England, France and America, armies and navies will, in a great measure, be rendered unnecessary; and as men who have either been brought up in, or long habituated to those lines of life, are still citizens of a nation in common with the rest, and have a right to participate in all plans of national benefit, it is stated

in that work ("Rights of Man," Part II) to apply annually £507,000 out of the surplus taxes to this purpose, in the following manner:

To 15,000 disbanded soldiers, 3s. per week (clear of deduction)	
during life .....	£ 117,000
Additional pay to the remaining soldiers, per annum .....	19,500
To the officers of the disbanded corps, during life, the sum of ....	117,000
To 15,000 disbanded sailors, 3s. per week during life .....	117,000
Additional pay to the remaining sailors .....	19,500
To the officers of the disbanded part of the navy, during life .....	117,000
	<hr/>
	£507,000

The limits to which it is proper to confine this letter, will not admit of my entering into further particulars. I address it to Mr. Dundas because he took the lead in the debate, and he wishes, I suppose, to appear conspicuous; but the purport of it is to justify myself from the charge which Mr. Adam has made.

This gentleman, as has been observed in the beginning of this letter, considers the writings of Harrington, More and Hume, as justifiable and legal publications, because they reasoned by comparison, though in so doing they showed plans and systems of government, not only different from, but preferable to, that of England; and he accuses me of endeavoring to confuse, instead of producing a system in the room of that which I had reasoned against; whereas, the fact is, that I have not only reasoned by comparison of the representative system against the hereditary system, but I have gone further; for I have produced an instance of a government established entirely on the representative system, under which greater happiness is enjoyed, much fewer taxes required, and much higher credit is established, than under the system of government in England. The funds in England have risen since the war only from £54 to £97 and they have been down since the Proclamation to £87, whereas the funds in America rose in the meantime from £10 to £120.

His charge against me of "destroying every principle of subordination," is equally as groundless; which even a single paragraph from the work will prove, and which I shall here quote:

Formerly when divisions arose respecting governments, recourse was had to the sword, and a civil war ensued. That savage custom is exploded by the new system, and *recourse is had to a national convention*. Discussion, and the

general will, arbitrates the question, and to this private opinion yields with a good grace, and *order is preserved uninterrupted*.

That two different charges should be brought at the same time, the one by a member of the Legislature, for *not* doing a certain thing, and the other by the Attorney-general for *doing* it, is a strange jumble of contradictions. I have now justified myself, or the work rather, against the first, by stating the case in this letter, and the justification of the other will be undertaken in its proper place. But in any case the work will go on.

I shall now conclude this letter with saying, that the only objection I found against the plan and principles contained in the second part of "Rights of Man," when I had written the book, was, that they would beneficially interest at least ninety-nine persons out of every hundred throughout the nation, and therefore would not leave sufficient room for men to act from the direct and disinterested principles of honor; but the prosecution now commenced has fortunately removed that objection, and the approvers and protectors of that work now feel the immediate impulse of honor added to that of national interest.

I am, Mr. Dundas,

Not your obedient humble servant,

But the contrary,

THOMAS PAINE.

## LETTERS TO ONSLOW CRANLEY <sup>5</sup>

LORD LIEUTENANT OF THE COUNTY OF SURRY; ON THE SUBJECT OF THE  
LATE EXCELLENT *Proclamation*:—OR THE *Chairman* WHO SHALL  
PRESIDE AT THE MEETING TO BE HELD AT EPSOM, JUNE 18.

FIRST LETTER, DATED AT LONDON, JUNE 17TH, 1792.

SIR,

I HAVE seen in the public newspapers the following advertisement, to wit—

<sup>5</sup>The case brought by the English government against Paine was set down in the calendar for June 8, 1792. Paine was in the court that day, but to his disappointment the trial was postponed to December 18. Meanwhile he continued to address letters to government officials filled with irony and sarcasm.—*Editor*.



“To the Nobility, Gentry, Clergy, Freeholders, and other Inhabitants of the county of Surry.

“At the requisition and desire of several of the freeholders of the county, I am, in the absence of the Sheriff, to desire the favor of your attendance, at a meeting to be held at Epsom, on Monday, the 18th instant, at 12 o'clock at noon, to consider of an humble address to his MAJESTY, to express our grateful approbation of his MAJESTY's paternal, and well-timed attendance to the public welfare, in his late most gracious Proclamation against the enemies of our happy Constitution.

(Signed.)

ONslow CRANLEY.”

Taking it for granted, that the aforesaid advertisement, equally as obscure as the proclamation to which it refers, has nevertheless some meaning, and is intended to effect some purpose; and as a prosecution (whether wisely or unwisely, justly or unjustly) is already commenced against a work intitled RIGHTS OF MAN, of which I have the honor and happiness to be the author; I feel it necessary to address this letter to you, and to request that it may be read publicly to the gentlemen who shall meet at Epsom in consequence of the advertisement.

The work now under prosecution is, I conceive, the same work which is intended to be suppressed by the aforesaid Proclamation. Admitting this to be the case, the gentlemen of the County of Surrey are called upon by somebody to condemn a work, and they are at the same time forbidden by the Proclamation to know what that work is; and they are further called upon to give their aid and assistance to prevent other people from knowing it also. It is therefore necessary that the author, for his own justification, as well as to prevent the gentlemen who shall meet from being imposed upon by misrepresentation, should give some outlines of the principles and plans which that work contains.

The work, Sir, in question, contains, first, an investigation of general principles of government.

It also distinguishes government into two classes or systems, the one the hereditary system; the other the representative system; and it compares these two systems with each other.

It shows that what is called hereditary government cannot exist as a matter of right; because hereditary government always means a government yet to come; and the case always is, that those who are to live afterwards have always the same right to establish a government for themselves as the people who had lived before them.

It also shows the defect to which hereditary government is unavoida-

bly subject: that it must, from the nature of it, throw government into the hands of men totally unworthy of it from the want of principle, and unfitted for it from want of capacity. James II and many others are recorded in the English history as proofs of the former of those cases, and instances are to be found all over Europe to prove the truth of the latter.

It then shows that the representation system is the only true system of government; that it is also the only system under which the liberties of any people can be permanently secure; and, further, that it is the only one that can continue the same equal probability at all times of admitting of none but men properly qualified, both by principles and abilities, into government, and of excluding such as are otherwise.

The work shows also, by plans and calculations not hitherto denied nor controverted, not even by the prosecution that is commenced, that the taxes now existing may be reduced at least six millions, that taxes may be entirely taken off from the poor, who are computed at one third of the nation; and that taxes on the other two thirds may be considerably reduced; that the aged poor may be comfortably provided for, and the children of poor families properly educated; that fifteen thousand soldiers, and the same number of sailors, may be allowed three shillings per week during life out of the surplus taxes; and also that a proportionate allowance may be made to the officers, and the pay of the remaining soldiers and sailors be raised; and that it is better to apply the surplus taxes to those purposes, than to consume them on lazy and profligate placemen and pensioners; and that the revenue, said to be twenty thousand pounds per annum, raised by a tax upon coals, and given to the Duke of Richmond, is a gross imposition upon all the people of London, and ought to be instantly abolished.

This, Sir, is a concise abstract of the principles and plans contained in the work that is now prosecuted, and for the suppression of which the Proclamation appears to be intended; but as it is impossible that I can, in the compass of a letter, bring into view all the matters contained in the work, and as it is proper that the gentlemen who may compose that meeting should know what the merits or demerits of it are, before they come to any resolutions, either directly or indirectly relating thereto, I request the honor of presenting them with one hundred copies of the second part of the "Rights of Man," and also one thousand copies of my letter to Mr. Dundas, which I have directed to be sent to Epsom for that purpose; and I beg the favor of the chairman to take the trouble of

presenting them to the gentlemen who shall meet on that occasion, with my sincere wishes for their happiness, and for that of the nation in general.

Having now closed thus much of the subject of my letter, I next come to speak of what has relation to me personally. I am well aware of the delicacy that attends it, but the purpose of calling the meeting appears to me so inconsistent with that justice that is always due between man and man, that it is proper I should (as well on account of the gentlemen who may meet, as on my own account) explain myself fully and candidly thereon.

I have already informed the gentlemen, that a prosecution is commenced against a work of which I have the honor and happiness to be the author; and I have good reasons for believing that the Proclamation which the gentlemen are called to consider, and to present an address upon, is purposely calculated to give an impression to the jury before whom that matter is to come. In short, that it is dictating a verdict by proclamation; and I consider the instigators of the meeting to be held at Epsom, as aiding and abetting the same improper, and, in my opinion, illegal purpose, and that in a manner very artfully contrived, as I shall now show.

Had a meeting been called of the Freeholders of the County of Middlesex, the gentlemen who had composed that meeting would have rendered themselves objectionable as persons to serve on a jury, before whom a judicial case was afterwards to come. But by calling a meeting out of the County of Middlesex, that matter is artfully avoided, and the gentlemen of Surrey are summoned, as if it were intended thereby to give a tone to the sort of verdict which the instigators of the meeting no doubt wish should be brought in, and to give countenance to the jury in so doing.

I am, sir,

With much respect to the

Gentlemen who shall meet,

Their and your obedient and humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

SECOND LETTER, DATED AT LONDON, JUNE 21, 1792.

Sir: When I wrote you the letter which Mr. Horne Tooke did me the favor to present to you, as chairman of the meeting held at Epsom, Mon-

day, June 18, it was not with much expectation that you would do me the justice of permitting or recommending it to be publicly read. I am well aware that the signature of THOMAS PAINE has something in it dreadful to sinecure placemen and pensioners; and when you, on seeing the letter opened, informed the meeting that it was signed THOMAS PAINE, and added in a note of exclamation, "the common enemy of us all," you spoke one of the greatest truths you ever uttered, if you confine the expression to men of the same description with yourself; men living in indolence and luxury, on the spoil and labors of the public.

The letter has since appeared in the *Argus*,<sup>6</sup> and probably in other papers. It will justify itself; but if anything on that account has been wanting, your conduct at the meeting would have supplied the omission. You there sufficiently proved that I was not mistaken in supposing that the meeting was called to give an indirect aid to the prosecution commenced against a work, the reputation of which will long outlive the memory of the Pensioner I am writing to.

When meetings, Sir, are called by the partisans of the Court, to preclude the nation the right of investigating systems and principles of government, and of exposing errors and defects, under the pretense of prosecuting an individual—it furnishes an additional motive for maintaining sacred that violated right.

The principles and arguments contained in the work in question, "Rights of Man," have stood, and they now stand, and I believe ever will stand, unrefuted. They are stated in a fair and open manner to the world, and they have already received the public approbation of a greater number of men, of the best of characters, of every denomination of religion, and of every rank in life (placemen and pensioners excepted) than all the juries that shall meet in England for ten years to come, will amount to; and I have, moreover, good reasons for believing that the approvers of that work, as well private as public, are already more numerous than all the present electors throughout the nation.

Not less than forty pamphlets, intended as answers thereto, have appeared, and as suddenly disappeared; scarcely are the titles of any of them remembered, notwithstanding their endeavors have been aided by all the daily abuse which the court and ministerial newspapers, for almost a year and a half, could bestow, both upon the work and the author; and now that every attempt to refute, and every abuse has failed,

<sup>6</sup> Sampson Perry, editor of the *Argus*, was himself soon after prosecuted.—*Editor*.

the invention of calling the work a libel has been hit upon, and the discomfited party has pusillanimously retreated to prosecution and a jury, and obscure addresses.

As I well know that a long letter from me will not be agreeable to you, I will relieve your uneasiness by making it as short as I conveniently can; and will conclude it with taking up the subject at that part where Mr. Horne Tooke was interrupted from going on when at the meeting.

That gentleman was stating, that the situation you stood in rendered it improper for you to appear *actively* in a scene in which your private interest was too visible: that you were a bedchamber lord at a thousand a year, and a pensioner at three thousand pounds a year more—and here he was stopped by the little but noisy circle you had collected round. Permit me then, Sir, to add an explanation to his words, for the benefit of your neighbors, and with which, and a few observations, I shall close my letter.

When it was reported in the English newspapers, some short time since that the Empress of Russia had given to one of her minions a large tract of country and several thousands of peasants as property, it very justly provoked indignation and abhorrence in those who heard it. But if we compare the mode practised in England, with that which appears to us so abhorrent in Russia, it will be found to amount to very near the same thing;—for example—

As the whole of the revenue in England is drawn by taxes from the pockets of the people, those things called gifts and grants (of which kind are all pensions and sinecure places) are paid out of that stock. The difference, therefore, between the two modes is, that in England the money is collected by the government, and then given to the pensioner, and in Russia he is left to collect it for himself.

The smallest sum which the poorest family in a county so near London as Surrey, can be supposed to pay annually, of taxes, is not less than five pounds and as your sinecure of one thousand, and pension of three thousand per annum, are made up of taxes paid by eight hundred such poor families, it comes to the same thing as if the eight hundred families had been given to you, as in Russia, and you had collected the money on your account. Were you to say that you are not quartered particularly on the people of Surrey, but on the nation at large, the objection would amount to nothing; for as there are more pensioners than counties, every one may be considered as quartered on that in which he lives.

What honor or happiness you can derive from being the PRINCIPAL

PAUPER of the neighborhood, and occasioning a greater expense than the poor, the aged, and the infirm, for ten miles round you, I leave you to enjoy. At the same time I can see that it is no wonder you should be strenuous in suppressing a book which strikes at the root of those abuses. No wonder that you should be against reforms, against the freedom of the press, and the right of investigation. To you, and to others of your description, these are dreadful things; but you should also consider, that the motives which prompt you to *act*, ought, by reflection, to compel you to be *silent*.

Having now returned your compliment, and sufficiently tired your patience, I take my leave of you, with mentioning, that if you had not prevented my former letter from being read at the meeting, you would not have had the trouble of reading this; and also with requesting, that the next time you call me "*a common enemy*," you would add, "*of us sinecure placemen and pensioners*."

I am, Sir, etc., etc., etc.,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE SHERIFF OF THE COUNTY OF SUSSEX

OR

THE GENTLEMAN WHO SHALL PRESIDE AT THE MEETING TO BE HELD AT  
LEWES, JULY FOURTH

DATED AT LONDON, JUNE 30, 1792.

SIR: I have seen in the Lewes newspapers, of June twenty-fifth, an advertisement, signed by sundry persons, and also by the sheriff, for holding a meeting at the Town-hall of Lewes, for the purpose, as the advertisement states, of presenting an address on the late Proclamation for suppressing writings, books, etc. And as I conceive that a certain publication of mine, entitled "*Rights of Man*," in which, among other things, the enormous increase of taxes, placemen, and pensioners, is shown to be unnecessary and oppressive, *is the particular writing alluded to in the said publication*; I request the sheriff, or in his absence, whoever shall preside at the meeting, or any other person, to read this letter

publicly to the company who shall assemble in consequence of that advertisement.

GENTLEMEN—It is now upwards of eighteen years since I was a resident inhabitant of the town of Lewes. My situation among you, as an officer of the revenue, for more than six years, enabled me to see into the numerous and various distresses which the weight of taxes even at that time of day occasioned; and feeling, as I then did, and as it is natural for me to do, for the hard condition of others, it is with pleasure I can declare, and every person then under my survey, and now living, can witness, the exceeding candor, and even tenderness, with which that part of the duty that fell to my share was executed. The name of *Thomas Paine* is not to be found in the records of the Lewes' justices, in any one act of contention with, or severity of any kind whatever toward, the persons whom he surveyed, either in the town, or in the country; of this, *Mr. Fuller* and *Mr. Shelley*, who will probably attend the meeting, can, if they please, give full testimony. It is, however, not in their power to contradict it.

Having thus indulged myself in recollecting a place where I formerly had, and even now have, many friends, rich and poor, and most probably some enemies, I proceed to the more important purport of my letter.

Since my departure from Lewes, fortune or providence has thrown me into a line of action, which my first setting out into life could not possibly have suggested to me.

I have seen the fine and fertile country of America ravaged and deluged in blood, and the taxes of England enormously increased and multiplied in consequence thereof; and this, in a great measure, by the instigation of the same class of placemen, pensioners, and court dependents, who are now promoting addresses throughout England, on the present *unintelligible* Proclamation.

I have also seen a system of government rise up in that country, free from corruption, and now administered over an extent of territory ten times as large as England, *for less expense than the pensions alone in England amount to*; and under which more freedom is enjoyed, and a more happy state of society is preserved, and a more general prosperity is promoted, than under any other system of government now existing in the world. Knowing, as I do, the things I now declare, I should reproach myself with want of duty and affection to mankind, were I not

in the most undismayed manner to publish them, as it were, on the house-tops, for the good of others.

Having thus glanced at what has passed within my knowledge since my leaving Lewes, I come to the subject more immediately before the meeting now present.

Mr. Edmund Burke, who, as I shall show, in a future publication, has lived a concealed pensioner, at the expense of the public of fifteen hundred pounds per annum, for about ten years last past, published a book the winter before last, in open violation of the principles of liberty, and for which he was applauded by that class of men *who are now promoting addresses*. Soon after his book appeared, I published the first part of the work, entitled "Rights of Man," as an answer thereto, and had the happiness of receiving the public thanks of several bodies of men, and of numerous individuals of the best character, of every denomination in religion, and of every rank in life—placemen and pensioners excepted.

In February last, I published the second part of "Rights of Man," and as it met with still greater approbation from the true friends of national freedom, and went deeper into the system of government, and exposed the abuses of it, more than had been done in the first part, it consequently excited an alarm among all those, who, insensible of the burden of taxes which the general mass of the people sustain, are living in luxury and indolence, and hunting after court preferments, sinecure places, and pensions, either for themselves, or for their family connections.

I have shown in that work, that the taxes may be reduced at least *six millions*, and even then the expenses of government in England would be twenty times greater than they are in the country I have already spoken of. That taxes may be entirely taken off from the poor, by remitting to them in money at the rate of between *three and four pounds* per head per annum, for the education and bringing up of the children of the poor families, who are computed at one third of the whole nation, and *six pounds* per annum to all poor persons, decayed tradesmen, or others, from the age of fifty until sixty, and *ten pounds* per annum from after sixty. And that in consequence of this allowance, to be paid out of the surplus taxes, the poor-rates would become unnecessary, and that it is better to apply the surplus taxes to these beneficent purposes, *than to waste them on idle and profligate courtiers, placemen and pensioners*.

These, gentlemen, are a part of the plans and principles contained



in the work, which this meeting is now called upon, in an indirect manner, to vote an address against, and brand with the name of *wicked* and *seditions*.

Gentlemen; I have now stated to you such matters as appear necessary to me to offer to the consideration of the meeting. I have no other interest in what I am doing, nor in writing you this letter, than the interest of the *heart*. I consider the proposed address as calculated to give countenance to placemen, pensioners, enormous taxation and corruption. Many of you will recollect that, while I resided among you, there was not a man more firm and open in supporting the principles of liberty than myself, and I still pursue, and ever will, the same path.

I have, gentlemen, only one request to make, which is—that those who have called the meeting will speak *out*, and say, whether in the address they are going to present against publications, which the proclamation calls wicked, they mean the work entitled “Rights of Man,” or whether they do not?

I am, Gentlemen,  
With sincere wishes for your happiness,  
Your friend and servant,  
THOMAS PAINE.

## TO MR. SECRETARY DUNDAS <sup>7</sup>

CALAIS, Sept. 15, 1792.

**I** CONCEIVE it necessary to make you acquainted with the following circumstance:—The Department of Calais having elected me a member of the National Convention of France, I set off from London the thirteenth instant, in company with Mr. Frost, of Spring Garden, and Mr. Audibert, one of the municipal officers of Calais, who brought me the certificate of my being elected. We had not arrived more, I believe, than five minutes at the York Hotel, at Dover, when the train of circumstances began that I am going to relate.

<sup>7</sup> On September 13, 1792, having been elected to represent Calais in the French Convention, Paine escaped to France. Two days later he sent this letter to Secretary Dundas from Calais.—*Editor*.

We had taken our baggage out of the carriage, and put it into a room, into which we went. Mr. Frost, having occasion to go out, was stopped in the passage by a gentleman, who told him he must return into the room, which he did, and the gentleman came in with him, and shut the door. I had remained in the room; Mr. Audibert was gone to inquire when the packet was to sail. The gentleman then said that he was collector of the customs, and had an information against us, and must examine our baggage for prohibited articles. He produced his commission as collector. Mr. Frost demanded to see the information, which the collector refused to show, and continued to refuse, on every demand that we made. The collector then called in several other officers, and began first to search our pockets. He took from Mr. Audibert, who was then returned into the room, everything he found in his pocket, and laid it on the table. He then searched Mr. Frost in the same manner (who, among other things, had the keys of the trunks in his pocket), and then did the same by me.

Mr. Frost wanting to go out, mentioned it, and was going toward the door; on which the collector placed himself against the door, and said, nobody should depart the room. After the keys had been taken from Mr. Frost (for I had given him the keys of my trunks beforehand, for the purpose of his attending the baggage to the customs, if it should be necessary), the collector asked us to open the trunks, presenting us the keys for that purpose; this we declined to do, unless he would produce his information, which he again refused. The collector then opened the trunks himself, and took out every paper and letter, sealed or unsealed. On our remonstrating with him on the bad policy, as well as the illegality, of Custom House officers seizing papers and letters, which were things that did not come under their cognizance, he replied, that the *Proclamation* gave him the authority.

Among the letters which he took out of my trunk, were two sealed letters, given into my charge by the American Minister in London [Pinckney], one of which was directed to the American Minister at Paris [Gouverneur Morris], the other to a private gentleman; a letter from the President of the United States, and a letter from the Secretary of State in America, both directed to me, and which I had received from the American Minister, now in London, and were private letters of friendship; a letter from the electoral body of the Department of Calais, containing the notification of my being elected to the National Convention; and a letter from the President of the National Assem-

bly, informing me of my being also elected for the Department of the Oise.

As we found that all remonstrances with the collector, on the bad policy and illegality of seizing papers and letters, and retaining our persons by force, under the pretense of searching for prohibited articles, were vain (for he justified himself on the Proclamation, and on the information which he refused to show), we contented ourselves with assuring him, that what he was then doing, he would afterwards have to answer for, and left it to himself to do as he pleased.

It appeared to us that the collector was acting under the direction of some other person or persons, then in the hotel, but whom he did not choose we should see, or who did not choose to be seen by us; for the collector went several times out of the room for a few minutes, and was also called out several times.

When the collector had taken what papers and letters he pleased out of the trunks, he proceeded to read them. The first letter he took up for this purpose was that from the President of the United States to me. While he was doing this, I said, that it was very extraordinary that General Washington could not write a letter of private friendship to me, without its being subject to be read by a Custom House officer. Upon this Mr. Frost laid his hand over the face of the letter, and told the collector that he should not read it, and took it from him. Mr. Frost then, casting his eyes on the concluding paragraph of the letter, said, I will read this part to you, which he did; of which the following is an exact transcript—

And as no one can feel a greater interest in the happiness of mankind than I do, it is the first wish of my heart, that the enlightened policy of the present age may diffuse to all men those blessings to which they are entitled, and lay the foundation of happiness for future generations.

As all the other letters and papers lay then on the table, the collector took them up, and was going out of the room with them. During the transaction already stated, I contented myself with observing what passed, and spoke but little; but on seeing the collector going out of the room with the letters, I told him that the papers and letters then in his hand were either belonging to me, or intrusted to my charge, and that as I could not permit them to be out of my sight, I must insist on going with him.

The collector then made a list of the letters and papers, and went out

of the room, giving the letters and papers into the charge of one of the officers. He returned in a short time, and, after some trifling conversation, chiefly about the Proclamation, told us, that he saw *the Proclamation was ill-founded*, and asked if we chose to put the letters and papers into the trunks ourselves, which, as we had not taken them out, we declined doing, and he did it himself, and returned us the keys. In stating to you these matters, I make no complaint against the personal conduct of the collector, or of any of the officers. Their manner was as civil as such an extraordinary piece of business could admit of.

My chief motive in writing to you on this subject is, that you may take measures for preventing the like in future, not only as it concerns private individuals, but in order to prevent a renewal of those unpleasant consequences that have heretofore arisen between nations from circumstances equally as insignificant. I mention this only for myself; but as the interruption extended to two other gentlemen, it is probable that they, as individuals, will take some more effectual mode for redress.

I am, Sir, yours, etc.,

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. Among the papers seized was a copy of the Attorney-General's information against me for publishing the "Rights of Man" and a printed proof copy of my "Letter to the Addressers," which will soon be published.

## LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE ADDRESSERS ON THE LATE PROCLAMATION

In the postscript to his second letter to Secretary Dundas Paine wrote that the customs officer at Dover had seized "a printed copy of my *Letter to the Addressers*, which will soon be published." The pamphlet must, therefore, have been written in London during the summer of 1792 before Paine's hurried departure for France. Paine read and corrected the proof in France and sent it back to England to be published. It was published by H. D. Symonds and Thomas Clio Rickman, both of whom were subsequently prosecuted for having printed and sold the *Rights of Man*.

In this pamphlet Paine openly urged the British people to call a convention and set up a Republican form of government. To those liberals in England

who were only interested in moderate reforms, such as annual meetings of Parliament and restrictions upon the power of the king, this pamphlet was entirely too extreme and quite a few joined in denouncing Paine. Since the government was intensifying its persecution of the popular movement in England, it seemed to these liberals that this was the time to get out from under the whole democratic wave which was becoming too radical for them to accept. Some joined in the burnings of Paine's effigy, a practice carefully organized by the reactionaries. Others simply remained quiet while the offensive against the reform movements swept across the country.—*Editor.*

**C**OULD I have commanded circumstances with a wish, I know not of any that would have more generally promoted the progress of knowledge, than the late Proclamation, and the numerous rotten borough and corporation addresses thereon. They have not only served as advertisements, but they have excited a spirit of inquiry into the principles of government, and a desire to read the "Rights of Man," in places where that spirit and that work were before unknown.

The people of England, wearied and stunned with parties, and alternately deceived by each, had almost resigned the prerogative of thinking. Even curiosity had expired, and a universal languor had spread itself over the land. The opposition was visibly no other than a contest for power, whilst the mass of the nation stood torpidly by as the prize.

In this hopeless state of things, the first part of the "Rights of Man" made its appearance. It had to combat with a strange mixture of prejudice and indifference; it stood exposed to every species of newspaper abuse; and besides this, it had to remove the obstructions which Mr. Burke's rude and outrageous attack on the French Revolution had artfully raised.

But how easy does even the most illiterate reader distinguish the spontaneous sensations of the heart, from the labored productions of the brain. Truth, whenever it can fully appear, is a thing so naturally familiar to the mind, that an acquaintance commences at first sight. No artificial light, yet discovered, can display all the properties of daylight; so neither can the best invented fiction fill the mind with every conviction which truth begets.

To overthrow Mr. Burke's fallacious book was scarcely the operation of a day. Even the phalanx of placemen and pensioners, who had given the tone to the multitude by clamoring forth his political fame, became

suddenly silent; and the final event to himself has been, that as he rose like a rocket, he fell like the stick.

It seldom happens that the mind rests satisfied with the simple detection of error or imposition. Once put in motion, *that* motion soon becomes accelerated; where it had intended to stop, it discovers new reasons to proceed, and renews and continues the pursuit far beyond the limits it first prescribed to itself. Thus it has happened to the people of England. From a detection of Mr. Burke's incoherent rhapsodies, and distorted facts, they began an inquiry into the first principles of government, whilst himself like an object left far behind, became invisible and forgotten.

Much as the first part of "Rights of Man" impressed at its first appearance, the progressive mind soon discovered that it did not go far enough. It detected errors; it exposed absurdities; it shook the fabric of political superstition; it generated new ideas; but it did not produce a regular system of principles in the room of those which it displaced. And, if I may guess at the mind of the Government-party, they beheld it as an unexpected gale that would soon blow over, and they forbore, like sailors in threatening weather, to whistle, lest they should increase the wind. Everything, on their part, was profound silence.

When the second part of "Rights of Man," *combining Principle and Practise*, was preparing to appear, they affected, for a while, to act with the same policy as before; but finding their silence had no more influence in stifling the progress of the work, than it would have in stopping the progress of time, they changed their plan, and affected to treat it with clamorous contempt. The speech-making placemen and pensioners, and place-expectants, in both Houses of Parliament, the *Outs* as well as the *Ins*, represented it as a silly, insignificant performance; as a work incapable of producing any effect; as something which they were sure the good sense of the people would either despise or indignantly spurn; but such was the overstrained awkwardness with which they harangued and encouraged each other, that in the very act of declaring their confidence they betrayed their fears.

As most of the rotten borough addressers are obscured in holes and corners throughout the country, and to whom a newspaper arrives as rarely as an almanac, they most probably have not had the opportunity of knowing how far this part of the farce (the original prelude to all the addresses) has been acted. For *their* information, I will suspend a

while the more serious purpose of my letter, and entertain them with two or three speeches in the last session of Parliament, which will serve them for politics till Parliament meets again.

You must know, gentlemen, that the second part of the "Rights of Man" (the book against which you have been presenting addresses, though it is most probable that many of you did not know it), was to have come out precisely at the time that Parliament last met. It happened not to be published till a few days after. But as it was very well known that the book would shortly appear, the parliamentary orators entered into a very cordial coalition to cry the book down, and they began their attack by crying up the blessings of the Constitution.

Had it been your fate to have been there, you could not but have been moved at the heart-and-pocket-felt congratulations that passed between all the parties on this subject of *blessings*; for the *Outs* enjoy places and pensions and sinecures as well as the *Ins*, and are as devoutly attached to the firm of the House.

One of the most conspicuous of this motley group, is the Clerk of the Court of King's Bench, who calls himself Lord Stormont. He is also called Justice General of Scotland, and Keeper of Scoon (an opposition man), and he draws from the public for these nominal offices, not less, as I am informed than six thousand pounds a year, and he is, most probably, at the trouble of counting the money and signing a receipt, to show, perhaps, that he is qualified to be clerk as well as justice. He spoke as follows:<sup>8</sup>

That *we* shall *all* be unanimous in expressing *our* attachment to the Constitution of these realms, *I am confident*. It is a subject upon which there can be *no* divided opinion *in this House*. I do not pretend to be deep read in the knowledge of the Constitution, but *I take upon me* to say, that from the extent of *my* knowledge [*for I have so many thousands a year for nothing*] it appears to *me* that from the period of the Revolution, for it was by no means created then, it has been, both in *theory* and *practise*, the *wisest* system that ever was formed. I never was [he means he never was *till now*] a dealer in *political cant*. My life has not been occupied in *that way*, but the speculations of late years *seem to have taken a turn, for which I cannot account*.

When I came into public life, the political pamphlets of the time, however they might be charged with the heat and violence of parties, were agreed in extolling the radical beauties of the Constitution itself. I remember [*he means he has forgotten*] a most captivating eulogium on its *charms*, by Lord Boling-

<sup>8</sup> See his speech in the *Morning Chronicle* of February first.—*Author*.

broke, where he recommends his readers to contemplate it in all its aspects, with the assurance that it would be found more estimable the more it was *seen*. I do *not recollect* his precise words, but I wish that men who write upon these subjects would take *this for their model*, instead of the political pamphlets, which, I am told, are now in circulation [such, I suppose, as "Rights of Man"], pamphlets which I have *not read*, and whose purport I know only by *report* [he means, perhaps, by the *noise* they make].

This, however, I am sure, that pamphlets tending to unsettle the public reverence for the *Constitution*, will have very little influence. They can do very little harm—for [by the bye, he is no dealer in political cant] *the English are a sober, thinking people, and are more intelligent, more solid, more steady in their opinions, than any people I ever had the fortune to see*. [This is pretty well laid on, though, for a new beginner.] But if there should ever come a time when the propagation of those doctrines should agitate the public mind, I am *sure* for *every one* of your Lordships, that no attack will be made on the *Constitution*, from which it is *truly said* that *we* derive *all our* prosperity, without raising *every one* of your Lordships to its support. It will then be found that there is no difference among *us*, but that *we* are *all* determined to *stand or fall* together, in defense of the inestimable system [of places and pensions].

After Stormont, on the opposition side, sat down, up rose *another noble Lord*, on the ministerial side, *Grenville*. This man ought to be as strong in the back as a mule, or the *sire* of a mule, or it would crack with the weight of places and offices. He rose, however, without feeling any incumbrance, full master of his weight; and thus said *this noble Lord* to *t'other noble Lord*!

The *patriotic* and *manly* manner in which the noble Lord has declared *his* sentiments on the subject of the *Constitution*, demands *my* cordial approbation. The noble Viscount has *proved*, that however we may differ on *particular measures*, amidst all the jars and dissonance of *parties*, we are unanimous in *principle*. There is a *perfect and entire consent* [between *us*] in the love and maintenance of the *Constitution* as *happily subsisting*. It must *undoubtedly* give your Lordships *concern*, to find that the *time is come* [high ho!] when there is *propriety* in the expressions of regard to [o! o! o!] THE CONSTITUTION. And that there are men [confound—their—po-li-tics] who disseminate doctrines *hostile* to the *genuine spirit* of our *well balanced system*, [it is certainly well balanced when both sides hold places and pensions at once]. I agree with the noble Viscount that they have not [I hope] *much success*. I am convinced that there is no danger to be apprehended from their attempts: but it is *truly* important and *consolatory* [to us placemen, I suppose]



to know, that if ever there should arise a serious alarm, there is but one *spirit, one sense* [and that sense I presume is not *common sense*] and one determination in *this House* [which undoubtedly is to hold all their places and pensions as long as they can].

Both those speeches (except the parts inclosed in brackets, which are added for the purpose of *illustration*) are copied *verbatim* from the *Morning Chronicle* of the first of February last; and when the situation of the speakers is considered, the one in the Opposition, and the other in the Ministry, and both of them living at the public expense, by sinecure, or nominal places and offices, it required a very unblushing front to be able to deliver them. Can those men seriously suppose any nation to be so completely blind as not to see through them? Can Stormont imagine that the *political cant*, with which he has larded his harangue, will conceal the craft? Does he not know that there never was a cover large enough to hide *itself*? Or can Grenville believe that his credit with the public increases with his avarice for places?

But, if these orators will accept a service from me, in return for the allusions they have made to the "Rights of Man," I will make a speech for either of them to deliver, on the excellence of the Constitution, that shall be as much to the purpose as what they have spoken, or as *Bolingbroke's captivating eulogium*. Here it is:

That we shall all be unanimous in expressing our attachment to the Constitution, I am confident. It is, my Lords, incomprehensibly good: but the great wonder of all is the wisdom; for it is, my Lords, *the wisest system that ever was formed*.

With respect to us, noble Lords, though the world does not know it, it is very well known to us, that we have more wisdom than we know what to do with; and what is still better, my Lords, we have it all in stock. I defy your Lordships to prove, that a tittle of it has been used yet; and if we but go on, my Lords, with the frugality we have hitherto done, we shall leave to our heirs and successors, when we go out of the world, the whole stock of wisdom, *untouched*, that we brought in; and there is no doubt but they will follow our example. This, my Lords, is one of the blessed effects of the hereditary system; for we can never be without wisdom so long as we keep it by us, and do not use it.

But, my Lords, as all this wisdom is hereditary property, for the sole benefit of us and our heirs, and it is necessary that the people should know where to get a supply for their own use, the excellence of our Constitution has provided us a king for this very purpose, and for *no other*. But, my Lords, I perceive a

defect to which the Constitution is subject, and which I propose to remedy by bringing a bill into Parliament for that purpose.

The Constitution, my Lords, out of delicacy, I presume, has left it as a matter of *choice* to a king whether he will be wise or not. It has not, I mean, my Lords, insisted upon it as a constitutional point, which, I conceive it ought to have done; for I pledge myself to your Lordships to prove, and that with *true patriotic boldness*, that he has *no choice in the matter*. This bill, my Lords, which I shall bring in, will be to declare, that the Constitution, according to the true intent and meaning thereof, does not invest the king with this choice; our ancestors were too wise to do that; and, in order to prevent any doubts that might otherwise arise, I shall prepare, my Lords, an enacting clause, to fix the wisdom of kings by act of Parliament; and then, my Lords, our Constitution will be the wonder of the world!

Wisdom, my Lords, is the one thing needful: but that there may be no mistake in this matter, and that we may proceed consistently with the true wisdom of the Constitution, I shall propose a *certain criterion* whereby the *exact quantity of wisdom* necessary for a king may be known. [Here should be a cry of, Hear him! Hear him!]

It is recorded, my Lords, in the Statutes at Large of the Jews, a "book, my Lords, which I have not read, and whose purport I know only by report," *but perhaps the bench of Bishops can recollect something about it*, that Saul gave the most convincing proofs of royal wisdom before he was made a king, *for he was sent to seek his father's asses and he could not find them*.

Here, my Lords, we have, most happily for us, a case in point: This precedent ought to be established by act of Parliament; and every king, before he be crowned, should be sent to seek his father's asses, and if he cannot find them, he shall be declared wise enough to be king, according to the true meaning of our excellent Constitution. All, therefore, my Lords, that will be necessary to be done, by the enacting clause that I shall bring in, will be to invest the king beforehand with the quantity of wisdom necessary for this purpose, lest he should happen not to possess it; and this, my Lords, we can do without making use of any of our own.

We further read, my Lords, in the said Statutes at Large of the Jews, that Samuel, who certainly was as mad as any Man-of-Rights-Man now-a-days (hear him! hear him!), was highly displeased, and even exasperated, at the proposal of the Jews to have a king, and he warned them against it with all that assurance and impudence of which he was master. I have been, my Lords, at the trouble of going all the way to *Paternoster Row*, to procure an extract from the printed copy. I was told that I should meet with it there, or in *Amen-corner*, for I was then going, my Lords, to rummage for it among the curiosities of the *Antiquarian Society*. I will read the extracts to your Lordships, to show how little Samuel knew of the matter.

The extract, my Lords, is from 1 Sam. chap. viii.:

“And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people that asked of him a king.

“And he said, this will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: he will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots.

“And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties, and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots.

“And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers.

“And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive-yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants.

“And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers and to his servants.

“And he will take your man-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work.

“And he will take the tenth of your sheep, and ye shall be his servants.

“And ye shall cry out in that day, because of your king, which ye shall have chosen you; and the Lord will not hear you in that day.”

Now, my Lords, what can we think of this man, Samuel? Is there a word of truth, or anything like truth, in all that he has said? He pretended to be a prophet, or a wise man, but has not the event proved him to be a fool, or an incendiary? Look around, my Lords, and see if anything has happened that he pretended to foretell! Has not the most profound peace reigned throughout the world ever since kings were in fashion? Are not, for example, the present kings of Europe the most peaceable of mankind, and the Empress of Russia the very milk of human kindness? It would not be worth having kings, my Lords, if it were not that they never go to war.

If we look at home, my Lords, do we not see the same things here as are seen everywhere else? Are our young men taken to be horsemen, or foot soldiers, any more than in Germany or in Prussia, or in Hanover or in Hesse? Are not our sailors as safe at land as at sea? Are they ever dragged from their homes, like oxen to the slaughter-house, to serve on board ships of war? When they return from the perils of a long voyage with the merchandise of distant countries, does not every man sit down under his own vine and his own fig-tree, in perfect security? Is the tenth of our seed taken by tax-gatherers, or is any part of it given to the King's servants? In short, *is not everything as free from taxes as the light from Heaven!*

Ah! my Lords, do we not see the blessed effect of having kings in everything we look at? Is not the G.R., or the broad R., stamped upon everything? Even the shoes, the gloves, and the hats that we wear, are enriched with the impression, and all our candles blaze a burnt-offering.

Besides these blessings, my Lords, that cover us from the sole of the foot to

the crown of the head, do we not see a race of youths growing up to be kings, who are the very paragons of virtue? There is not one of them, my Lords, but might be trusted with untold gold, as safely as the other. Are they not "*more sober, more intelligent, more solid, more steady,*" and withal, more learned, more wise, more everything, than any youths we "*ever had the fortune to see?*" Ah! my Lords, they are a *hopeful family*.

The blessed prospect of succession, which the nation has at this moment before its eyes, is a most undeniable proof of the excellence of our Constitution, and of the blessed hereditary system; for nothing, my Lords, but a constitution founded on the truest and purest wisdom could admit such heaven-born and heaven-taught characters into the government. Permit me now, my Lords, to recall your attention to the libellous chapter I have just read about kings. I mention this, my Lords, because it is my intention to move for a bill to be brought into Parliament to expunge that chapter from the Bible, and that the Lord Chancellor, with the assistance of the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, and the Duke of Clarence, be requested to write a chapter in the room of it; and that Mr. Burke do see that it be truly canonical, and faithfully inserted.—*Finis*.

If the clerk of the Court of King's Bench should choose to be the orator of this luminous encomium on the Constitution, I hope he will get it well by heart before he attempts to deliver it, and not have to apologize to Parliament, as he did in the case of Bolingbroke's encomium, for forgetting his lesson; and, with this admonition I leave him.

Having thus informed the Addressers of what passed at the meeting of Parliament, I return to take up the subject at the part where I broke off in order to introduce the preceding speeches.

I was then stating, that the first policy of the Government party was silence, and the next, clamorous contempt; but as people generally choose to read and judge for themselves, the work still went on, and the affectation of contempt, like the silence that preceded it, passed for nothing.

Thus foiled in their second scheme, their evil genius, like a will-with-a-wisp, led them to a third; when all at once, as if it had been unfolded to them by a fortune-teller, or Mr. Dundas had discovered it by second sight, this once harmless, insignificant book, without undergoing the alteration of a single letter, became a most wicked and dangerous libel. The whole Cabinet, like a ship's crew, became alarmed; all hands were piped upon deck, as if a conspiracy of elements was forming around them, and out came the Proclamation and the Prosecution; and addresses supplied the place of prayers.

Ye silly swains, thought I to myself, why do you torment yourselves thus? The "Rights of Man" is a book calmly and rationally written; why then are you so disturbed? Did you see how little or how suspicious such conduct makes you appear, even cunning alone, had you no other faculty, would hush you into prudence. The plans, principles, and arguments, contained in that work, are placed before the eyes of the nation, and of the world, in a fair, open, and manly manner, and nothing more is necessary than to refute them. Do this, and the whole is done; but if ye cannot, so neither can ye suppress the reading, nor convict the author; for the law, in the opinion of all good men, would convict itself, that should condemn what cannot be refuted.

Having now shown the Addressers the several stages of the business, prior to their being called upon, like Cæsar in the Tiber, crying to Cassius, "*help, Cassius, or I sink!*" I next come to remark on the policy of the Government, in promoting addresses; on the consequences naturally resulting therefrom; and on the conduct of the persons concerned.

With respect to the policy, it evidently carries with it every mark and feature of disguised fear. And it will hereafter be placed in the history of extraordinary things, that a pamphlet should be produced by an individual, unconnected with any sect or party, and not seeking to make any, and almost a stranger in the land, that should completely frighten a whole government, and that in the midst of its most triumphant security. Such a circumstance cannot fail to prove that either the pamphlet has irresistible powers, or the Government very extraordinary defects, or both. The nation exhibits no signs of fear at the "Rights of Man"; why then should the Government, unless the interests of the two are really opposite to each other, and the secret is beginning to be known? That there are two distinct classes of men in the nation, those who pay taxes, and those who receive and live upon the taxes, is evident at first sight; and when taxation is carried to excess, it cannot fail to disunite those two, and something of this kind is now beginning to appear.

It is also curious to observe, amidst all the fume and bustle about proclamations and addresses, kept up by a few noisy and interested men, how little the mass of the nation seem to care about either. They appear to me, by the indifference they show, not to believe a word the Proclamation contains; and as to the addresses, they travel to London with the silence of a funeral, and having announced their arrival in the

*Gazette*, are deposited with the ashes of their predecessors, and Mr. Dundas writes their *hic jacet*.

One of the best effects which the Proclamation and its echo the addresses have had, has been that of exciting and spreading curiosity; and it requires only a single reflection to discover that the object of all curiosity is knowledge. When the mass of the nation saw that placemen, pensioners, and borough-mongers, were the persons that stood forward to promote addresses, it could not fail to create suspicions that the public good was not their object; that the character of the books, or writings, to which such persons obscurely alluded, not daring to mention them, was directly contrary to what they described them to be, and that it was necessary that every man, for his own satisfaction, should exercise his proper right, and read and judge for himself.

But how will the persons who have been induced to read the "Rights of Man," by the clamor that has been raised against it, be surprised to find, that, instead of a wicked, inflammatory work, instead of a licentious and profligate performance, it abounds with principles of government that are uncontrovertible—with arguments which every reader will feel, are unanswerable—with plans for the increase of commerce and manufactures—for the extinction of war—for the education of the children of the poor—for the comfortable support of the aged and decayed persons of both sexes—for the relief of the army and navy, and, in short, for the promotion of everything that can benefit the moral, civil, and political condition of man.

Why, then, some calm observer will ask, why is the work prosecuted, if these be the goodly matters it contains? I will tell thee, friend; it contains also a plan for the reduction of taxes, for lessening the immense expenses of government, for abolishing sinecure places and pensions; and it proposes applying the redundant taxes, that shall be saved by these reforms, to the purposes mentioned in the former paragraph, instead of applying them to the support of idle and profligate placemen and pensioners.

Is it, then, any wonder that placemen and pensioners, and the whole train of court expectants, should become the promoters of addresses, proclamations, and prosecutions? or, is it any wonder that corporations and rotten boroughs, which are attacked and exposed, both in the first and second parts of "Rights of Man," as unjust monopolies and public nuisances, should join in the cavalcade? Yet these are the sources from which addresses have sprung. Had not such persons come forward to

oppose the "Rights of Man," I should have doubted the efficacy of my own writings: but those opposers have now proved to me that the blow was well directed, and they have done it justice by confessing the smart.

The principal deception in this business of addresses has been that the promoters of them have not come forward in their proper characters. They have assumed to pass themselves upon the public as a part of the public, bearing a share of the burden of taxes, and acting for the public good; whereas, they are in general that part of it that adds to the public burden, by living on the produce of the public taxes. They are to the public what the locusts are to the tree: the burden would be less, and the prosperity would be greater, if they were shaken off.

"I do not come here," said Onslow, at the Surrey County meeting, "as the Lord Lieutenant and *Custos Rotulorum* of the county, but I come here as a plain country gentleman." The fact is, that he came as what he was, and as no other, and consequently he came as one of the beings I have been describing. If it be the character of a gentleman to be fed by the public, as a pauper is by the parish, Onslow has a fair claim to the title; and the same description will suit the Duke of Richmond, who led the address at the Sussex meeting. He also may set up for a gentleman.

As to the meeting in the next adjoining county (Kent), it was a scene of disgrace. About two hundred persons met, when a small part of them drew privately away from the rest, and voted an address: the consequence of which was that they got together by the ears, and produced a riot in the very act of producing an address to prevent riots.

That the Proclamation and the addresses have failed of their intended effect, may be collected from the silence which the Government party itself observes. The number of addresses has been weekly retailed in the *Gazette*; but the number of addressers has been concealed. Several of the addresses have been voted by not more than ten or twelve persons; and a considerable number of them by not more than thirty. The whole number of addresses presented at the time of writing this letter is three hundred and twenty (rotten boroughs and corporations included), and even admitting, on an average, one hundred addressers to each address, the whole number of addressers would be but thirty-two thousand, and nearly three months have been taken up in procuring this number.

That the success of the Proclamation has been less than the success of the work it was intended to discourage, is a matter within my own

knowledge; for a greater number of the cheap edition of the first and second parts of the "Rights of Man" has been sold in the space only of one month, than the whole number of addressers (admitting them to be thirty-two thousand) have amounted to in three months.

It is a dangerous attempt in any government to say to a nation, "*thou shalt not read.*" This is now done in Spain, and was formerly done under the old government of France; but it served to procure the downfall of the latter, and is subverting that of the former; and it will have the same tendency in all countries; because *thought* by some means or other, is got abroad in the world, and cannot be restrained, though reading may.

If "Rights of Man" were a book that deserved the vile description which promoters of the addresses have given of it, why did not these men prove their charge, and satisfy the people, by producing it, and reading it publicly? This most certainly ought to have been done, and would also have been done, had they believed it would have answered their purpose. But the fact is, that the book contains truths which those timeservers dreaded to hear, and dreaded that the people should know; and it is now following up the addresses in every part of the nation, and convicting them of falsehoods.

Among the unwarrantable proceedings to which the Proclamation has given rise, the meetings of the justices in several of the towns and counties ought to be noticed. Those men have assumed to re-act the farce of general warrants, and to suppress, by their own authority, whatever publications they please. This is an attempt at power equaled only by the conduct of the minor despots of the most despotic governments in Europe, and yet those justices affect to call England a free country. But even this, perhaps, like the scheme for garrisoning the country by building military barracks, is necessary to awaken the country to a sense of its rights, and, as such, it will have a good effect.

Another part of the conduct of such justices has been, that of threatening to take away the licenses from taverns and public-houses, where the inhabitants of the neighborhood associated to read and discuss the principles of government, and to inform each other thereon. This, again, is similar to what is doing in Spain and Russia; and the reflection which it cannot fail to suggest is, that the principles and conduct of any government must be bad, when that government dreads and startles at discussion, and seeks security by a prevention of knowledge.

If the Government, or the Constitution, or by whatever name it be



called, be that miracle of perfection which the Proclamation and the addresses have trumpeted it forth to be, it ought to have defied discussion and investigation, instead of dreading it. Whereas, every attempt it makes, either by proclamation, prosecution, or address, to suppress investigation, is a confession that it feels itself unable to bear it. It is error only, and not truth, that shrinks from inquiry. All the numerous pamphlets, and all the newspaper falsehood and abuse, that have been published against the "Rights of Man," have fallen before it like pointless arrows; and, in like manner would any work have fallen before the Constitution, had the Constitution, as it is called, been founded on as good political principles as those on which the "Rights of Man" is written.

It is a good constitution for courtiers, placemen, pensioners, borough-holders, and the leaders of parties, and these are the men that have been the active leaders of addresses; but it is a bad constitution for at least ninety-nine parts of the nation out of an hundred, and this truth is every day making its way.

It is bad, first, because it entails upon the nation the unnecessary expense of supporting three forms and systems of government at once, namely, the monarchical, the aristocratical, and the democratical.

Secondly, because it is impossible to unite such a discordant composition by any other means than perpetual corruption; and therefore the corruption so loudly and so universally complained of, is no other than the natural consequence of such an unnatural compound of governments; and in this consists that excellence which the numerous herd of placemen and pensioners so loudly extol, and which at the same time occasions that enormous load of taxes under which the rest of the nation groans.

Among the mass of national delusions calculated to amuse and impose upon the multitude, the standing one has been that of flattering them into taxes, by calling the Government (or as they please to express it, the English Constitution) "*the envy and the admiration of the world.*" Scarcely an address has been voted in which some of the speakers have not uttered this hackneyed, nonsensical falsehood.

Two revolutions have taken place, those of America and France; and both of them have rejected the unnatural compounded system of the English Government. America has declared against all hereditary government, and established the representative system of government only. France has entirely rejected the aristocratical part, and is now discovering

the absurdity of the monarchical, and is approaching fast to the representative system. On what ground then, do these men continue a declaration, respecting what they call the *envy and admiration of other nations*, which the voluntary practise of such nations, as have had the opportunity of establishing government, contradicts and falsifies? Will such men never confine themselves to truth? Will they be for ever the deceivers of the people?

But I will go further, and show, that were government now to begin in England, the people could not be brought to establish the same system they now submit to.

In speaking on this subject (or on any other) *on the pure ground of principle*, antiquity and precedent cease to be authority, and hoary-headed error loses its effect. The reasonableness and propriety of things must be examined abstractedly from custom and usage; and, in this point of view, the right which grows into practise today is as much a right, and as old in principle and theory, as if it had the customary sanction of a thousand ages. Principles have no connection with time, nor characters with names.

To say that the Government of this country is composed of Kings, Lords, and Commons, is the mere phraseology of custom. It is composed of men; and whoever the men be to whom the government of any country be intrusted, they ought to be the best and wisest that can be found, and if they are not so, they are not fit for the station. A man derives no more excellence from the change of a name, or calling him king, or calling him lord, than I should do by changing my name from Thomas to George, or from Paine to Guelph. I should not be a whit more able to write a book because my name was altered; neither would any man, now called a king or a lord, have a whit more sense than he now has, were he to call himself Thomas Paine.

As to the word "Commons," applied as it is in England, it is a term of degradation and reproach, and ought to be abolished. It is a term unknown in free countries.

But to the point. Let us suppose that government was now to begin in England, and that the plan of government, offered to the nation for its approbation or rejection, consisted of the following parts:

First—That some one individual should be taken from all the rest of the nation, and to whom all the rest should swear obedience, and never be permitted to sit down in his presence, and that they should give to him one million sterling a year. That the nation should never after

have power or authority to make laws but with his express consent; and that his sons and his sons' sons, whether wise or foolish, good men or bad, fit or unfit, should have the same power, and also the same money annually paid to them for ever.

Secondly—That there should be two houses of legislators to assist in making laws, one of which should, in the first instance, be entirely appointed by the aforesaid person, and that their sons and their sons' sons, whether wise or foolish, good men or bad, fit or unfit, should for ever after be hereditary legislators.

Thirdly—That the other house should be chosen in the same manner as the house now called the House of Commons is chosen, and should be subject to the control of the two aforesaid hereditary powers in all things.

It would be impossible to cram such a farrago of imposition and absurdity down the throat of this or any other nation that was capable of reasoning upon its rights and its interest.

They would ask, in the first place, on what ground of right, or on what principle, such irrational and preposterous distinctions could, or ought to be made; and what pretensions any man could have, or what services he could render, to entitle him to a million a year? They would go further, and revolt at the idea of consigning their children, and their children's children, to the domination of persons hereafter to be born, who might, for anything they could foresee, turn out to be knaves or fools; and they would finally discover, that the project of hereditary governors and legislators *was a treasonable usurpation over the rights of posterity*. Not only the calm dictates of reason, and the force of natural affection, but the integrity of manly pride, would impel men to spurn such proposals.

From the grosser absurdities of such a scheme, they would extend their examination to the practical defects—They would soon see that it would end in tyranny accomplished by fraud. That in the operation of it, it would be two to one against them, because the two parts that were to be made hereditary would form a common interest, and stick to each other; and that themselves and representatives would become no better than hewers of wood and drawers of water for the other parts of the government. Yet call one of those powers King, the other Lords, and the third the Commons, and it gives the model of what is called the English Government.

I have asserted, and have shown, both in the first and second parts of

"Rights of Man," that there is not such a thing as an English Constitution, and that the people have yet a constitution to form. *A constitution is a thing antecedent to a government; it is the act of a people creating a government and giving it powers, and defining the limits and exercise of the powers so given.* But whenever did the people of England, acting in their original, constituent character, by a delegation elected for that express purpose, declare and say, "*We, the people of this land, do constitute and appoint this to be our system and form of government?*" The government has assumed to constitute itself, but it never was constituted by the people, in whom alone the right of constituting resides.

I will here recite the preamble to the Federal Constitution of the United States of America. I have shown in the second part of "Rights of Man," the manner by which the Constitution was formed and afterwards ratified; and to which I refer the reader. The preamble is in the following words:

WE, THE PEOPLE, of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, DO ORDAIN AND ESTABLISH THIS CONSTITUTION for the United States of America.

Then follow the several articles which appoint the manner in which the several component parts of the government, legislative and executive, shall be elected, and the period of their duration, and the powers they shall have: also, the manner by which future additions, alterations, or amendments, shall be made to the Constitution. Consequently, every improvement that can be made in the science of government, follows in that country as a matter of order. It is only in governments founded on assumption and false principles, that reasoning upon, and investigating systems and principles of government, and showing their several excellencies and defects, are termed libellous and seditious. These terms were made part of the charge brought against Locke, Hampden, and Sydney, and will continue to be brought against all good men, so long as bad government shall continue.

The Government of this country has been ostentatiously giving challenges for more than a hundred years past, upon what is called its own excellence and perfection. Scarcely a king's speech, or a parliamentary speech, has been uttered, in which this glove has not been thrown, till the world has been insulted with their challenges. But it now appears

that all this was vapor and vain boasting, or that it was intended to conceal abuses and defects, and hush the people into taxes.

I have taken the challenge up, and in behalf of the public, have shown, in a fair, open, and candid manner, both the radical and practical defects of the system; when lo! those champions of the civil list have fled away, and sent the Attorney-general to deny the challenge, by turning the acceptance of it into an attack, and defending their places and pensions by a prosecution.

I will here drop this part of the subject, and state a few particulars respecting the prosecution now pending, by which the Addressers will see that they have been used as tools to the prosecuting party and their dependents. The case is as follows:

The original edition of the first and second bill in the first part of the "Rights of Man"; expensively printed (in the modern style of printing pamphlets, that they might be bound up with Mr. Burke's "Reflections on the French Revolution"), the high price precluded the generality of people from purchasing; and many applications were made to me from various parts of the country to print the work in a cheaper manner. The people of Sheffield requested leave to print two thousand copies for themselves, with which request I immediately complied.

The same request came to me from Rotherham, from Leicester, from Chester, from several towns in Scotland; and Mr. James Mackintosh, author of "Vindiciæ Gallicæ," brought me a request from Warwickshire, for leave to print ten thousand copies in that county. I had already sent a cheap edition to Scotland; and finding the applications increase, I concluded that the best method of complying therewith, would be to print a very numerous edition in London, under my own direction, by which means the work would be more perfect, and the price be reduced lower than it could be by *printing* small editions in the country, of only a few thousands each.

The cheap edition of the first part was begun about the first of last April, and from that moment, and not before, I expected a prosecution, and the event has proved that I was not mistaken. I had then occasion to write to Mr. Thomas Walker of Manchester, and after informing him of my intention of giving up the work for the purpose of general information, I informed him of what I apprehended would be the consequence; that while the work was at a price that precluded an extensive circulation, the Government party, not able to controvert the plans, ar-

guments, and principles it contained, had chosen to remain silent; but that I expected they would make an attempt to deprive the mass of the nation, and especially the poor, of the right of reading, by the pretense of prosecuting either the author or the publisher, or both. They chose to begin with the publisher.

Nearly a month, however, passed, before I had any information given me of their intentions. I was then at Bromley, in Kent, upon which I came immediately to town (May 14), and went to Mr. Jordan, the publisher of the original edition. He had that evening been served with a summons to appear at the Court of King's Bench, on the Monday following, but for what purpose was not stated. Supposing it to be on account of the work, I appointed a meeting with him on the next morning, which was accordingly had, when I provided an attorney, and took the expense of the defense on myself. But finding afterwards that he absented himself from the attorney employed, and had engaged another, and that he had been closeted with the solicitors of the Treasury, I left him to follow his own choice, and he chose to plead guilty.

This he might do if he pleased; and I make no objection against him for it. I believe that his idea by the word *guilty*, was no other than declaring himself to be the publisher, without any regard to the merits or demerits of the work; for were it to be construed otherwise, it would amount to the absurdity of converting a publisher into a jury, and his confession into a verdict upon the work itself. This would be the highest possible refinement upon packing of juries.

On the twenty-first of May, they commenced their prosecution against me, as the author, by leaving a summons at my lodgings in town, to appear at the Court of King's Bench on the eighth of June following; and on the same day (May 21), *they issued also their Proclamation*. Thus the Court of St. James and the Court of King's Bench, were playing into each other's hands at the same instant of time, and the farce of addresses brought up the rear; and this mode of proceeding is called by the prostituted name of law. Such a thundering rapidity, after a ministerial dormancy of almost eighteen months, can be attributed to no other cause than their having gained information of the forwardness of the cheap edition, and the dread they felt at the progressive increase of political knowledge.

I was strongly advised by several gentlemen, as well those in the practise of the law, as others, to prefer a bill of indictment against the pub-

lisher of the Proclamation, as a publication tending to influence, or rather to dictate the verdict of a jury on the issue of a matter then pending; but it appeared to me much better to avail myself of the opportunity which such a precedent justified me in using, by meeting the Proclamation and the Addressers on their own ground, and publicly defending the work which had been thus unwarrantably attacked and traduced. And conscious as I now am, that the work entitled "Rights of Man" so far from being, as has been maliciously or erroneously represented, a false, wicked, and seditious libel, is a work abounding with unanswerable truths, with principles of the purest morality and benevolence, and with arguments not to be controverted— Conscious, I say, of these things, and having no object in view but the happiness of mankind, I have now put the matter to the best proof in my power, by giving to the public a cheap edition of the first and second parts of that work.

Let every man read and judge for himself, not only of the merits and demerits of the work, but of the matters therein contained, which relate to his own interest and happiness.

If, to expose the fraud and imposition of monarchy, and every species of hereditary government—to lessen the oppression of taxes—to propose plans for the education of helpless infancy, and the comfortable support of the aged and distressed—to endeavor to conciliate nations to each other—to extirpate the horrid practise of war—to promote universal peace, civilization, and commerce—and to break the chains of political superstition, and raise degraded man to his proper rank;—if these things be libellous, let me live the life of a libeller, and let the name of LIBELLER be engraved on my tomb.

Of all the weak and ill-judged measures which fear, ignorance, or arrogance could suggest, the Proclamation, and the project for addresses, are two of the worst. They served to advertise the work which the promoters of those measures wished to keep unknown; and in doing this they offered violence to the judgment of the people, by calling on them to condemn what they forbade them to know, and put the strength of their party to that hazardous issue that prudence would have avoided.— The county meeting for Middlesex was attended by only one hundred and eighteen Addressers. They, no doubt, expected that thousands would flock to their standard, and clamor against the "Rights of Man." But the case most probably is, that men in all countries, are not so blind to their rights and their interest as governments believe.

Having thus shown the extraordinary manner in which the Govern-

ment party commenced their attack, I proceed to offer a few observations on the prosecution, and on the mode of trial by special jury.

In the first place, I have written a book; and if it cannot be refuted, it cannot be condemned. But I do not consider the prosecution as particularly leveled against me, but against the general right, or the right of every man, of investigating systems and principles of government, and showing their several excellencies or defects. If the press be free only to flatter Government, as Mr. Burke has done, and to cry up and extol what certain Court sycophants are pleased to call a "glorious Constitution," and not free to examine into its errors or abuses, or whether a Constitution really exist or not, such freedom is no other than that of Spain, Turkey, or Russia; and a jury in this case, would not be a jury to try, but an inquisition to condemn.

I have asserted, and by fair and open argument maintained, the right of every nation at all times to establish such a system and form of government for itself as best accords with its disposition, interest, and happiness; and to change and alter it as it sees occasion. Will any jury deny to the nation this right? If they do, they are traitors, and their verdict would be null and void. And if they admit the right, the means must be admitted also; for it would be the highest absurdity to say, that the right existed, but the means did not. The question then is, What are the means by which the possession and exercise of this national right are to be secured? The answer will be, that of maintaining, inviolably, the right of free investigation; for investigation always serves to detect error, and to bring forth truth.

I have, as an individual, given my opinion upon what I believe to be not only the best, but the true system of government, which is the representative system, and I have given reasons for that opinion.

First, Because in the representative system, no office of very extraordinary power, or extravagant pay, is attached to any individual; and consequently there is nothing to excite those national contentions and civil wars with which countries under monarchical governments are frequently convulsed, and of which the history of England exhibits such numerous instances.

Secondly, Because the representative is a system of government always in maturity; whereas monarchical government fluctuates through all the stages, from nonage to dotage.

Thirdly, Because the representative system admits of none but men properly qualified into the government, or removes them if they prove



to be otherwise. Whereas, in the hereditary system, a nation may be encumbered with a knave or an idiot for a whole lifetime, and not be benefited by a successor.

Fourthly, Because there does not exist a right to establish hereditary government, or, in other words, hereditary successors, because hereditary government always means a government yet to come, and the case always is, that those who are to live afterwards have the same right to establish government for themselves, as the people had who lived before them; and, therefore, all laws attempting to establish hereditary government, are founded on assumption and political fiction.

If these positions be truths, and I challenge any man to prove the contrary; if they tend to instruct and enlighten mankind, and to free them from error, oppression, and political superstition, which are the objects I have in view in publishing them, that jury would commit an act of injustice to their country, and to me, if not an act of perjury, that should call them *false*, *wicked*, and *malicious*.

Dragonetti, in his treatise "On Virtues and Rewards," has a paragraph worthy of being recorded in every country in the world—"The science (says he), of the politician, consists, in fixing the true point of happiness and freedom. Those men deserve the gratitude of ages who should discover a mode of government that contained the greatest sum of *individual happiness* with the least *national expense*." But if juries are to be made use of to prohibit inquiry, to suppress truth, and to stop the progress of knowledge, this boasted palladium of liberty becomes the most successful instrument of tyranny.

Among the arts practised at the bar, and from the bench, to impose upon the understanding of a jury, and to obtain a verdict where the consciences of men could not otherwise consent, one of the most successful has been that of calling *truth a libel*, and of insinuating that the words "*falsely, wickedly, and maliciously*," though they are made the formidable and high sounding part of the charge, are not matters of consideration with a jury. For what purpose, then, are they retained, unless it be for that of imposition and wilful defamation?

I cannot conceive a greater violation of order, nor a more abominable insult upon morality, and upon human understanding, than to see a man sitting in the judgment seat, affecting by an antiquated foppery of dress to impress the audience with awe; then causing witnesses and jury to be sworn to truth and justice, himself having officially sworn the same; then causing to be read a prosecution against a man charging him with

having *wickedly and maliciously written and published a certain false, wicked, and seditious book*; and having gone through all this with a show of solemnity, as if he saw the eye of the Almighty darting through the roof of the building like a ray of light, turn, in an instant, the whole into a farce, and, in order to obtain a verdict that could not be otherwise obtained, tell the jury that the charge of *falsely, wickedly, and seditiously*, meant nothing; that *truth* was out of the question; and that whether the person accused spoke truth or falsehood, or intended *virtuously or wickedly*, was the same thing; and finally conclude the wretched inquisitorial scene, by stating some antiquated precedent, equally as abominable as that which is then acting, or giving some opinion of his own, and *falsely calling the one and the other—Law*. It was, most probably, to such a judge as this, that the most solemn of all reproofs was given—“*The Lord will smite thee, thou whitened wall.*” (Paul to Ananias. Acts xxiii. 2.)

I now proceed to offer some remarks on what is called a special jury. As to what is called a special verdict, I shall make no other remark upon it, than that it is in reality *not* a verdict. It is an attempt on the part of the jury to delegate, or of the bench to obtain, the exercise of that right, which is committed to the jury only.

With respect to the special juries, I shall state such matters as I have been able to collect, for I do not find any uniform opinion concerning the mode of appointing them.

In the first place, this mode of trial is but of modern invention, and the origin of it, as I am told, is as follows:

Formerly, when disputes arose between merchants, and were brought before a court, the case was that the nature of their commerce, and the method of keeping merchants' accounts not being sufficiently understood by persons out of their own line, it became necessary to depart from the common mode of appointing juries, and to select such persons for a jury whose *practical knowledge* would enable them to decide upon the case. From this introduction, special juries became more general; but some doubts having arisen as to their legality, an act was passed in the 3d of George II to establish them as legal, and also to extend them to all cases, not only between individuals, but in cases where *the Government itself should be the prosecutor*. This most probably gave rise to the suspicion so generally entertained of packing a jury; because, by this act, when the crown, as it is called, is the prosecutor, the master of the crown-office, who holds his office under the crown, is the person who

either wholly nominates, or has great power in nominating the jury, and therefore it has greatly the appearance of the prosecuting party selecting a jury.

The process is as follows:

On motion being made in court, by either the plaintiff or defendant, for a special jury, the court grants it or not, at its own discretion.

If it be granted, the solicitor of the party that applied for the special jury, gives notice to the solicitor of the adverse party, and a day and hour are appointed for them to meet at the office of the master of the crown-office. The master of the crown-office sends to the sheriff or his deputy, who attends with the sheriff's book of freeholders. From this book, forty-eight names are taken, and a copy thereof given to each of the parties; and, on a future day, notice is again given, and the solicitors meet a second time, and each strikes out twelve names. The list being thus reduced from forty-eight to twenty-four, the first twelve that appear in court, and answer to their names, is the special jury for that cause. The first operation, that of taking the forty-eight names, is called nominating the jury; and the reducing them to twenty-four is called striking the jury.

Having thus stated the general process, I come to particulars, and the first question will be, how are the forty-eight names, out of which the jury is to be struck, obtained from the sheriff's book? For herein lies the principal ground of suspicion, with respect to what is understood by packing of juries.

Either they must be taken by some rule agreed upon between the parties, or by some common rule known and established beforehand, or at the discretion of some person, who in such a case, ought to be perfectly disinterested in the issue, as well officially as otherwise.

In the case of merchants, and in all cases between individuals, the master of the office called the crown-office, is officially an indifferent person, and as such may be a proper person to act between the parties, and present them with a list of forty-eight names, out of which each party is to strike twelve. But the case assumes an entire difference of character, when the government itself is the prosecutor. The master of the crown-office is then an officer holding his office under the prosecutor; and it is therefore no wonder that the suspicion of packing juries should, in such cases, have been so prevalent.

This will apply with additional force, when the prosecution is commenced against the author or publisher of such works as treat of re-

forms, and of the abolition of superfluous places and offices, etc., because in such cases every person holding an office, subject to that suspicion, becomes interested as a party; and the office, called the crown-office, may, upon examination, be found to be of this description.

I have heard it asserted, that the master of the crown-office is to open the sheriff's book as it were per hazard, and take thereout forty-eight *following* names, to which the word merchant or esquire is affixed. The former of these are certainly proper, when the case is between merchants, and it has a reference to the origin of the custom, and to nothing else. As to the word esquire, every man is an esquire who pleases to call himself esquire; and the sensible part of mankind are leaving it off. But the matter for inquiry is, whether there be any existing law to direct the mode by which the forty-eight names shall be taken, or whether the mode be merely that of custom which the office has created; or whether the selection of the forty-eight names be wholly at the discretion and choice of the master of the crown-office? One or other of the two latter appears to be the case, because the act already mentioned, of the 3d of George II lays down no rule or mode, nor refers to any preceding law—but says only, that special juries shall hereafter be struck, "*in such manner as special juries have been and are usually struck.*"

This act appears to have been what is generally understood by a "*deep take in.*" It was fitted to the spur of the moment in which it was passed, 3d of George II when parties ran high, and it served to throw into the hands of Walpole, who was then Minister, the management of juries in crown prosecutions, by making the nomination of the forty-eight persons, from whom the jury was to be struck, follow the precedent established by custom between individuals, and by this means slipped into practise with less suspicion. Now, the manner of obtaining special juries through the medium of an officer of the Government, such, for instance, as a master of the crown-office, may be impartial in the case of merchants or other individuals, but it becomes highly improper and suspicious in cases where the Government itself is one of the parties. And it must, upon the whole, appear a strange inconsistency, that a government should keep one officer to commence prosecutions, and another officer to nominate the forty-eight persons from whom the jury is to be struck, both of whom are *officers of the civil list*, and yet continue to call this by the pompous name of *the glorious Right of trial by Jury!*

In the case of the King against Jordan, for publishing the "Rights of Man," the Attorney-general moved for the appointment of a special jury,

and the master of the crown-office nominated the forty-eight persons himself, and took them from such part of the sheriff's book as he pleased.

The trial did not come on, occasioned by Jordan withdrawing his plea; but if it had, it might have afforded an opportunity of discussing the subject of special juries; for though such discussion might have had no effect in the Court of King's Bench, it would, in the present disposition for inquiry, have had a considerable effect upon the country; and, in all national reforms, this is the proper point to begin at. Put a country right, and it will soon put government right.

Among the improper things acted by the Government in the case of special juries, on their own motion, one has been that of treating the jury with a dinner, and afterwards giving each jurymen two guineas, if a verdict be found for the prosecution, and only one if otherwise; and it has been long observed, that, in London and Westminster, there are persons who appear to make a trade of serving, by being so frequently seen upon special juries.

Thus much for special juries. As to what is called a *common jury*, upon any Government prosecution against the author or publisher of "Rights of Man," during the time of the *present Sheriffry*, I have one question to offer, which is, *whether the present sheriffs of London, having publicly prejudged the case, by the part they have taken in procuring an address from the County of Middlesex (however diminutive and insignificant the number of Addressers were, being only one hundred and eighteen), are eligible or proper persons to be intrusted with the power of returning a jury to try the issue of any such prosecution?*

But the whole matter appears, at least to me, to be worthy of a more extensive consideration than what relates to any jury, whether special or common; for the case is, whether any part of a whole nation, locally selected as a jury of twelve men always is, be competent to judge and determine for the whole nation, on any matter that relates to systems and principles of government, and whether it be not applying the institution of juries to purposes for which such institutions were not intended? For example,

I have asserted in the work, "Rights of Man," that as every man in the nation pays taxes, so has every man a right to a share in government, and consequently that the people of Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Leeds, Halifax, etc., have the same right as those of London. Shall, then, twelve men, picked out between Templebar and Whitechapel, because

the book happened to be first published there, decide upon the rights of the inhabitants of those towns, or of any other town or village in the nation?

Having thus spoken of juries, I come next to offer a few observations on the matter contained in the information or prosecution.

The work, "Rights of Man," consists of part the first, and part the second. The first part the prosecutor has thought it most proper to let alone; and from the second part he has selected a few short paragraphs, making in the whole not quite two pages of the same printing as in the cheap edition. Those paragraphs relate chiefly to certain facts, such as the Revolution of 1688, and the coming of George I, commonly called the House of Hanover, or the House of Brunswick, or some such House. The arguments, plans and principles contained in the work, the prosecutor has not ventured to attack. They are beyond his reach.

The act which the prosecutor appears to rest most upon for the support of the prosecution is the act entitled, "An Act, declaring the rights and liberties of the subject, and settling the succession of the Crown," passed in the first year of William and Mary, and more commonly known by the name of the "Bill of Rights."

I have called this bill "*A Bill of wrongs and of insult.*" My reasons, and also my proofs, are as follow:

The method and principle which this bill takes for declaring rights and liberties, are in direct contradiction to rights and liberties; it is an assumed attempt to take them wholly from posterity—for the declaration in the said bill is as follows:

"The Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, do, *in the name of all the people*, most humbly and faithfully *submit themselves, their heirs, and posterity for ever*"; that is, to William and Mary his wife, their heirs and successors. This is a strange way of declaring rights and liberties. But the Parliament who made this declaration in the name, and on the part, of the people, had no authority from them for so doing; and with respect to *posterity for ever*, they had no right or authority whatever in the case. It was assumption and usurpation. I have reasoned very extensively against the principle of this bill the first part of the "Rights of Man"; the prosecutor has silently admitted that reasoning, and he now commences a prosecution on the authority of the bill, after admitting the reasoning against it.

It is also to be observed, that the declaration in this bill, abject and irrational as it is, had no other intentional operation than against the fam-

ily of the Stuarts, and their abettors. The idea did not then exist, that in the space of an hundred years, posterity might discover a different and much better system of government, and that every species of hereditary government might fall, as popes and monks had fallen before. This I say, was not then thought of, and therefore the application of the bill, in the present case, is a new, erroneous, and illegal application, and is the same as creating a new bill *ex post facto*.

It has ever been the craft of courtiers, for the purpose of keeping up an expensive and enormous civil list, and a mummerly of useless and antiquated places and offices at the public expense, to be continually hanging England upon some individual or other, called *King*, though the man might not have capacity to be a parish constable. The folly and absurdity of this is appearing more and more every day; and still those men continue to act as if no alteration in the public opinion had taken place. They hear each other's nonsense, and suppose the whole nation talks the same gibberish.

Let such men cry up the House of Orange, or the House of Brunswick, if they please. They would cry up any other house if it suited their purpose, and give as good reasons for it. But what is this house, or that house, or any other house to a nation? "*For a nation to be free, it is sufficient that she wills it.*" Her freedom depends wholly upon herself, and not on any house, nor on any individual. I ask not in what light this cargo of foreign houses appears to others, but I will say in what light it appears to me—it was like the trees of the forest, saying unto the bramble, come thou and reign over us.

Thus much for both their houses. I now come to speak of two other houses, which are also put into the information, and those are the House of Lords, and the House of Commons. Here, I suppose, the Attorney-general intends to prove me guilty of speaking either truth or falsehood; for according to the modern interpretation of libels, it does not signify which, and the only improvement necessary to show the complete absurdity of such doctrine, would be, to prosecute a man for uttering a most *false and wicked truth*.

I will quote the part I am going to give, from the office copy, with the Attorney-general's innuendoes, enclosed in parentheses as they stand in the information, and I hope that civil list officer will caution the court not to laugh when he reads them, and also to take care not to laugh himself.

The information states, that *Thomas Paine, being a wicked, mali-*

*cius, seditious, and evil-disposed person, hath, with force and arms, and most wicked cunning, written and published a certain false, scandalous, malicious, and seditious libel; in one part thereof, to the tenor and effect following, that is to say—*

With respect to the two Houses, of which the English Parliament (*meaning the Parliament of this Kingdom*) is composed, they appear to be effectually influenced into one, and, as a Legislature, to have no temper of its own. The Minister (*meaning the Minister employed by the King of this Realm, in the administration of the Government thereof*), whoever he at any time may be, touches IT (*meaning the two Houses of Parliament of this Kingdom*) as with an opium wand, and IT (*meaning the two Houses of Parliament of this Kingdom*) sleeps obedience.

As I am not malicious enough to disturb their repose, though it be time they should awake, I leave the two Houses and the Attorney-general, to the enjoyment of their dreams, and proceed to a new subject.

The gentlemen, to whom I shall next address myself, are those who have styled themselves "*Friends of the people,*" holding their meetings at the Freemasons' Tavern, London.

One of the principal members of this Society is Mr. Grey, who, I believe, is also one of the most independent members in Parliament. I collect this opinion from what Mr. Burke formerly mentioned to me, rather than from any knowledge of my own. The occasion was as follows:

I was in England at the time the bubble broke forth about Nootka Sound:<sup>9</sup> and the day after the King's Message, as it is called, was sent to Parliament, I wrote a note to Mr. Burke, that upon the condition the French Revolution should not be a subject (for he was then writing the book I have since answered) I would call upon him the next day, and mention some matters I was acquainted with, respecting the affair; for it appeared to me extraordinary that any body of men, calling themselves representatives, should commit themselves so precipitately, or "sleep obedience," as Parliament was then doing, and run a nation into expense, and perhaps a war, without so much as inquiring into the case, or the subject, of both of which I had some knowledge.

When I saw Mr. Burke, and mentioned the circumstances to him, he

<sup>9</sup> The Nootka Sound controversy arose from conflicting British and Spanish claims to the northwest coast of North America. After war between the two countries threatened, a convention was signed in October 28, 1790, in which Spain conceded most of Britain's demands. For Paine's views on the issues involved, see his letters to William Short pp. 1306-1314 below.—*Editor.*



particularly spoke of Mr. Grey, as the fittest member to bring such matters forward; "for," said Mr. Burke, "*I am not the proper person to do it, as I am in a treaty with Mr. Pitt about Mr. Hastings's trial.*" I hope the Attorney-general will allow, that Mr. Burke was then *sleeping his obedience*.—But to return to the Society—

I cannot bring myself to believe, that the general motive of this Society is anything more than that by which every former parliamentary opposition has been governed, and by which the present is sufficiently known. Failing in their pursuit of power and place within doors, they have now (and that in not a very mannerly manner) endeavored to possess themselves of that ground out of doors, which, had it not been made by others, would not have been made by them. They appear to me to have watched, with more cunning than candor, the progress of a certain publication, and when they saw it had excited a spirit of inquiry, and was rapidly spreading, they stepped forward to profit by the opportunity, and Mr. Fox *then* called it a libel.

In saying this, he libelled himself. Politicians of this cast, such, I mean, as those who trim between parties and lie by for events, are to be found in every country, and it never yet happened that they did not do more harm than good. They embarrass business, fritter it to nothing, perplex the people, and the event to themselves generally is, that they go just far enough to make enemies of the few, without going far enough to make friends of the many.

Whoever will read the declarations of this Society, of the twenty-fifth of April and fifth of May, will find a studied reserve upon all the points that are real abuses. They speak not once of the extravagance of government, of the abominable list of unnecessary and sinecure places and pensions, of the enormity of the civil list, of the excess of taxes, nor of any one matter that substantially affects the nation; and from some conversation that has passed in that Society, it does not appear to me that it is any part of their plan to carry this class of reforms into practise. No Opposition party ever did, when it gained possession.

In making these free observations, I mean not to enter into contention with this Society; their incivility toward me is what I should expect from place-hunting reformers. They are welcome, however, to the ground they have advanced upon, and I wish that every individual among them may act in the same upright, uninfluenced, and public-spirited manner that I have done. Whatever reforms may be obtained, and by whatever means, they will be for the benefit of others and not of

me. I have no other interest in the cause than the interest of my heart. The part I have acted has been wholly that of a volunteer, unconnected with party; and when I quit, it shall be as honorably as I began.

I consider the reform of Parliament, by an application to Parliament, as proposed by the Society, to be a worn-out, hackneyed subject, about which the nation is tired, and the parties are deceiving each other. It is not a subject that is cognizable before Parliament, because no government has a right to alter itself, either in whole or in part. The right, and the exercise of that right, appertains to the nation only, and the proper means is by a national convention, elected for the purpose, by all the people. By this, the will of the nation, whether to reform or not, or what the reform shall be, or how far it shall extend, will be known, and it cannot be known by any other means. Partial addresses, or separate associations, are not testimonies of the general will.

It is, however, certain that the opinions of men, with respect to systems and principles of government, are changing fast in all countries. The alteration in England, within the space of a little more than a year, is far greater than could have been believed, and it is daily and hourly increasing. It moves along the country with the silence of thought. The enormous expense of government has provoked men to think, by making them feel; and the Proclamation has served to increase jealousy and disgust. To prevent, therefore, those commotions which too often and too suddenly arise from suffocated discontents, it is best that the general WILL should have the full and free opportunity of being publicly ascertained and known.

Wretched as the state of representation is in England, it is every day becoming worse, because the unrepresented parts of the nation are increasing in population and property, and the represented parts are decreasing. It is, therefore, no ill-grounded estimation to say that as not one person in seven is represented, at least fourteen millions of taxes out of the seventeen millions, are paid by the unrepresented part; for although copyholds and leaseholds are assessed to the land-tax the holders are unrepresented. Should then a general demur take place as to the obligation of paying taxes, on the ground of not being represented, it is not the representatives of rotten boroughs, nor special juries, that can decide the question. This is one of the possible cases that ought to be foreseen, in order to prevent the inconveniences that might arise to numerous individuals, by provoking it.

I confess I have no idea of petitioning for rights. Whatever the rights

of people are, they have a right to them, and none have a right either to withhold them, or to grant them. Government ought to be established on such principles of justice as to exclude the occasion of all such applications, for wherever they appear they are virtually accusations.

I wish that Mr. Grey, since he has embarked in the business, would take the whole of it into consideration. He will then see that the right of reforming the state of the representation does not reside in Parliament, and that the only motion he could consistently make would be, that Parliament should *recommend* the election of a convention of the people, because all pay taxes. But whether Parliament recommended it or not, the right of the nation would neither be lessened nor increased thereby.

As to petitions from the unrepresented part, they ought not to be looked for. As well might it be expected that Manchester, Sheffield, etc., should petition the rotten boroughs, as that they should petition the representatives of those boroughs. Those two towns alone pay far more taxes than all the rotten boroughs put together, and it is scarcely to be expected they should pay their court either to the boroughs, or the borough-mongers.

It ought also to be observed, that what is called Parliament, is composed of two Houses that have always declared against the right of each other to interfere in any matter that related to the circumstances of either, particularly that of election. A reform, therefore, in the representation cannot, on the ground they have individually taken, become the subject of an act of Parliament, because such a mode would include the interference, against which the Commons on their part have protested; but must, as well on the ground of formality, as on that of right, proceed from a national convention.

Let Mr. Grey, or any other man, sit down and endeavor to put his thoughts together, for the purpose of drawing up an application to Parliament for a reform of Parliament, and he will soon convince himself of the folly of the attempt. He will find that he cannot get on; that he cannot make his thoughts join, so as to produce any effect; for, whatever formality of words he may use, they will unavoidably include two ideas directly opposed to each other; the one in setting forth the reasons, the other in praying for relief, and the two, when placed together, would stand thus: "*The representation in Parliament is so very corrupt, that we can no longer confide in it,—and, therefore, confiding in the justice and wisdom of Parliament, we pray,*" etc., etc.

The heavy manner in which every former proposed application to

Parliament has dragged, sufficiently shows, that though the nation might not exactly see the awkwardness of the measure, it could not clearly see its way, by those means. To this also may be added another remark, which is, that the worse Parliament is, the less will be the inclination to petition it. This indifference, viewed as it ought to be, is one of the strongest censures the public express. It is as if they were to say to them, "Ye are not worth reforming."

Let any man examine the Court-calendar of placemen in both houses, and the manner in which the civil list operates, and he will be at no loss to account for this indifference and want of confidence on one side, nor of the opposition to reforms on the other.

Who would have supposed that Mr. Burke, holding forth as he formerly did against secret influence, and corrupt majorities, should become a concealed pensioner? I will now state the case, not for the little purpose of exposing Mr. Burke, but to show the inconsistency of any application to a body of men, more than half of whom, as far as the nation can at present know, may be in the same case with himself.

Toward the end of Lord North's administration, Mr. Burke brought a bill into Parliament, generally known as Mr. Burke's Reform Bill; in which, among other things, it is enacted, "That no pension exceeding the sum of three hundred pounds a year, shall be granted to any one person, and that the whole amount of the pensions granted in one year shall not exceed six hundred pounds; a list of which, together with the *names of the persons* to whom the same are granted, shall be laid before Parliament in twenty days after the beginning of each session, until the whole pension list shall be reduced to ninety thousand pounds." A provisory clause is afterwards added, "That it shall be lawful for the First Commissioner of the Treasury, to return into the Exchequer any pension or annuity, *without a name*, on his making oath that such pension or annuity is not directly or indirectly for the benefit, use, or behoof of any member of the House of Commons."

But soon after that administration ended, and the party Mr. Burke acted with came into power, it appears from the circumstances I am going to relate, that Mr. Burke became himself a pensioner in disguise; in a similar manner as if a pension had been granted in the name of John Nokes, to be privately paid to and enjoyed by Tom Stiles. The name of Edmund Burke does not appear in the original transaction: but after the pension was obtained, Mr. Burke wanted to make the most of it at once, by selling or mortgaging it; and the gentleman in whose

name the pension stands, applied to one of the public offices for that purpose. This unfortunately brought forth the name of *Edmund Burke*, as the real pensioner of £1,500 per annum.<sup>10</sup> When men trumpet forth what they call the blessings of the Constitution, it ought to be known what sort of blessings they allude to.

As to the civil list of a million a year, it is not to be supposed that any one man can eat, drink, or consume the whole upon himself. The case is, that above half the sum is annually apportioned among courtiers, and court members, of both houses, in places and offices, altogether insignificant and perfectly useless as to every purpose of civil, rational, and manly government. For instance:

Of what use in the science and system of government is what is called a lord chamberlain, a master and mistress of the robes, a master of the horse, a master of the hawks, and one hundred other such things? Laws derive no additional force, nor additional excellence from such mummery.

In the disbursements of the civil list for the year 1786 (which may be seen in Sir John Sinclair's "History of the Revenue"), are four separate charges for this mummery office of chamberlain:

1st, .....	38,778 <i>l.</i>	17 <i>s.</i>	—
2d, .....	3,000	—	—
3d, .....	24,069	19	—
4th, .....	10,000	18	3 <i>d.</i>
	<hr/>		
	75,849 <i>l.</i>	14 <i>s.</i>	3 <i>d.</i>

Besides £1,119 charged for alms.

From this sample the rest may be guessed at. As to the master of the hawks (there are no hawks kept, and if there were, it is no reason the people should pay the expense of feeding them, many of whom are put to it to get bread for their children), his salary is £1,372 10*s.*

And besides a list of items of this kind, sufficient to fill a quire of paper, the pension lists alone are £107,404 13*s.* 4*d.* which is a greater sum than all the expenses of the Federal Government of America.

Among the items, there are two I had no expectation of finding, and which, in this day of inquiry after civil list influence, ought to be exposed. The one is an annual payment of one thousand seven hundred

<sup>10</sup> For careful studies of Edmund Burke's finances, see Dixon Wecter, "Edward Burke and His Kinsmen," *University of Colorado Studies in Humanities*, vol. I, February, 1939, Chapter II, and Philip Magnus, "Finances of Edmund Burke," *The Times Literary Supplement*, May 6, 1939, p. 272.—*Editor*.

pounds to the dissenting ministers in England, and the other, eight hundred pounds to those of Ireland.

This is the fact; and the distribution, *as I am informed*, is as follows:

The whole sum of £1,700 is paid to one person, a dissenting minister in London, who divides it among eight others, and those eight among such others as they please. The lay-body of the dissenters, and many of their principal ministers, have long considered it as dishonorable, and have endeavored to prevent it, but still it continues to be secretly paid; and as the world has sometimes seen very fulsome addresses from parts of that body, it may naturally be supposed that the receivers, like bishops and other court-clergy, are not idle in promoting them. How the money is distributed in Ireland, I know not.

To recount all the secret history of the civil list, is not the intention of this publication. It is sufficient, in this place, to expose its general character, and the mass of influence it keeps alive. It will necessarily become one of the objects of reform; and therefore enough is said to show that, under its operation, no application to Parliament can be expected to succeed, nor can consistently be made.

Such reforms will not be promoted by the party that is in possession of those places, nor by the opposition who are waiting for them; and as to a *mere reform*, in the state of the representation, the idea that another Parliament, differently elected from the present, but still a third component part of the same system, and subject to the control of the other two parts, will abolish those abuses, is altogether delusion; because it is not only impracticable on the ground of formality, but is unwisely exposing another set of men to the same corruptions that have tainted the present.

Were all the objects that require reform accomplishable by a mere reform in the state of representation, the persons who compose the present Parliament might, with rather more propriety, be asked to abolish all the abuses themselves, than be applied to as the mere instruments of doing it by a future Parliament. If the virtue be wanting to abolish the abuse, it is also wanting to act as the means, and the nation must, from necessity, proceed by some other plan.

Having thus endeavored to show what the abject condition of Parliament is, and the impropriety of going a second time over the same ground that has before miscarried, I come to the remaining part of the subject.

There ought to be, in the constitution of every country, a mode of re-

ferring back, on any extraordinary occasion, to the sovereign and original constituent power, which is the nation itself. The right of altering any part of a government, cannot, as already observed, reside in the government, or that government might make itself what it pleased.

It ought also to be taken for granted, that though a nation may feel inconveniences, either in the excess of taxation, or in the mode of expenditure, or in anything else, it may not at first be sufficiently assured in what part of its government the defect lies, or where the evil originates. It may be supposed to be in one part, and on inquiry be found to be in another; or partly in all. This obscurity is naturally interwoven with what are called mixed governments.

Be, however, the reform to be accomplished whatever it may, it can only follow in consequence of obtaining a full knowledge of all the causes that have rendered such reform necessary, and everything short of this is guess-work or frivolous cunning. In this case, it cannot be supposed that any application to Parliament can bring forward this knowledge. That body is itself the supposed cause, or one of the supposed causes, of the abuses in question; and cannot be expected, and ought not to be asked, to give evidence against itself. The inquiry, therefore, which is of necessity the first step in the business, cannot be trusted to Parliament, but must be undertaken by a distinct body of men, separated from every suspicion of corruption or influence.

Instead, then, of referring to rotten boroughs and absurd corporations for addresses, or hawking them about the country to be signed by a few dependent tenants, the real and effectual mode would be to come at once to the point, and ascertain the sense of the nation by electing a national convention. By this method, as already observed, the general WILL, whether to reform or not, or what the reform shall be, or how far it shall extend, will be known, and it cannot be known by any other means.

Such a body, empowered and supported by the nation, will have authority to demand information upon all matters necessary to be inquired into; and no minister, nor any person, will dare to refuse it. It will then be seen whether seventeen millions of taxes are necessary, and for what purposes they are expended. The concealed pensioners will then be obliged to unmask; and the source of influence and corruption, if any such there be, will be laid open to the nation, not for the purpose of revenge, but of redress.

By taking this public and national ground, all objections against

partial addresses on the one side, or private associations on the other, will be done away; THE NATION WILL DECLARE ITS OWN REFORMS; and the clamor about party and faction, or ins or outs, will become ridiculous.

The plan and organization of a convention is easy in practise.

In the first place, the number of inhabitants in every county can be sufficiently ascertained from the number of houses assessed to the house and window-light tax in each county. This will give the rule for apportioning the number of members to be elected to the national convention in each of the counties.

If the total number of inhabitants in England be seven millions and the total number of members to be elected to the convention be one thousand, the number of members to be elected in a county containing one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants will be *twenty-one*, and in like proportion for any other county.

As the election of a convention must, in order to ascertain the general sense of the nation, go on grounds different from that of parliamentary elections, the mode that best promises this end will have no difficulties to combat with from absurd customs and pretended rights. The right of every man will be the same, whether he lives in a city, a town, or a village. The custom of attaching rights to *place*, or in other words, to inanimate matter, instead of to the *person*, independently of place, is too absurd to make any part of a rational argument.

As every man in the nation, of the age of twenty-one years, pays taxes, either out of the property he possesses, or out of the product of his labor, which is property to him; and is amenable in his own person to every law of the land; so has everyone the same equal right to vote, and no one part of the nation, nor any individual, has a right to dispute the right of another. The man who should do this ought to forfeit the exercise of his *own* right, for a term of years. This would render the punishment consistent with the crime.

When a qualification to vote is regulated by years, it is placed on the firmest possible ground; because the qualification is such, as nothing but dying before the time can take away; and the equality of rights, as a principle, is recognized in the act of regulating the exercise. But when rights are placed upon, or made dependent upon property, they are on the most precarious of all tenures. "Riches make themselves wings, and fly away," and the rights fly with them; and thus they become lost to the man when they would be of most value.

It is from a strange mixture of tyranny and cowardice, that exclusions



have been set up and continued. The boldness to do wrong at first, changes afterwards into cowardly craft, and at last into fear. The representatives in England appear now to act as if they were afraid to do right, even in part, lest it should awaken the nation to a sense of all the wrongs it has endured. This case serves to show that the same conduct that best constitutes the safety of an individual, namely, a strict adherence to principle, constitutes also the safety of a government, and that without it safety is but an empty name. When the rich plunder the poor of his rights, it becomes an example to the poor to plunder the rich of his property; for the rights of the one are as much property to him, as wealth is property to the other, and the *little all* is as dear as the *much*. It is only by setting out on just principles that men are trained to be just to each other; and it will always be found, that when the rich protect the rights of the poor, the poor will protect the property of the rich. But the guarantee, to be effectual, must be parliamenterally reciprocal.

Exclusions are not only unjust, but they frequently operate as injuriously to the party who monopolizes, as to those who are excluded. When men seek to exclude others from participating in the exercise of any right, they should at least, be assured, that they can effectually perform the whole of the business they undertake; for, unless they do this, themselves will be losers by the monopoly. This has been the case with respect to the monopolized right of election. The monopolizing party has not been able to keep the Parliamentary representation, to whom the power of taxation was intrusted, in the state it ought to have been, and have thereby multiplied taxes upon themselves equally with those who were excluded.

A great deal has been, and will continue to be said, about disqualifications, arising from the commission of offenses; but were this subject urged to its full extent, it would disqualify a great number of the present electors, together with their representatives; for, of all offenses, none are more destructive to the morals of society than bribery and corruption. It is, therefore, civility to such persons to pass this subject over, and give them a fair opportunity of recovering, or rather of creating character.

Everything, in the present mode of electioneering in England, is the reverse of what it ought to be, and the vulgarity that attends elections is no other than the natural consequence of inverting the order of the system.

In the first place, the candidate seeks the elector, instead of the elector seeking for a representative; and the electors are advertised as being in the interest of the candidate, instead of the candidate being in the interest of the electors. The candidate pays the elector for his vote, instead of the nation paying the representative for his time and attendance on public business. The complaint for an undue election is brought by the candidate, as if he, and not the electors, were the party aggrieved; and he takes on himself, at any period of the election, to break it up, by declining, as if the election was in his right and not in theirs.

The compact that was entered into at the last Westminster election between two of the candidates (Mr. Fox and Lord Hood), was an indecent violation of the principles of election. The candidates assumed, in their own persons, the rights of the electors; for, it was only in the body of the electors, and not at all in the candidates, that the right of making such compact, or compromise, could exist. But the principle of election and representation is so completely done away in every stage thereof, that inconsistency has no longer the power of surprising.

Neither from elections thus conducted, nor from rotten borough addressers, nor from county-meetings, promoted by placemen and pensioners, can the sense of the nation be known. It is still corruption appealing to itself. But a convention of a thousand persons, fairly elected, would bring every matter to a decided issue.

As to county-meetings, it is only persons of leisure, or those who live near to the place of meeting, that can attend, and the number on such occasions is but like a drop in the bucket compared with the whole. The only consistent service which such meetings could render, would be that of apportioning the county into convenient districts, and when this is done, each district might, according to its number of inhabitants, elect its quota of county members to the national convention; and the vote of each elector might be taken in the parish where he resided, either by ballot or by voice, as he should choose to give it.

A national convention thus formed, would bring together the sense and opinions of every part of the nation, fairly taken. The science of government, and the interest of the public, and of the several parts thereof, would then undergo an ample and rational discussion, freed from the language of parliamentary disguise.

But in all deliberations of this kind, though men have a right to reason with, and endeavor to convince each other, upon any matter that

respects their common good, yet, in point of practise, the majority of opinions, when known, forms a rule for the whole, and to this rule every good citizen practically conforms.

Mr. Burke, as if he knew (for every concealed pensioner has the opportunity of knowing), that the abuses acted under the present system, are too flagrant to be palliated, and that the majority of opinions, whenever such abuses should be made public, would be for a general and effectual reform, has endeavored to preclude the event, by sturdily denying the right of a majority of a nation to act as a whole. Let us bestow a thought upon this case.

When any matter is proposed as a subject for consultation, it necessarily implies some mode of decision. Common consent, arising from absolute necessity, has placed this in a majority of opinions; because, without it, there can be no decision, and consequently no order. It is, perhaps, the only case in which mankind, however various in their ideas upon other matters, can consistently be unanimous; because it is a mode of decision derived from the primary original right of every individual concerned; *that* right being first individually exercised in giving an opinion, and whether that opinion shall arrange with the minority or the majority, is a subsequent accidental thing that neither increases nor diminishes the individual, original right itself. Prior to any debate, inquiry, or investigation, it is not supposed to be known on which side the majority of opinions will fall, and therefore, while this mode of decision secures to everyone the right of giving an opinion, it admits to everyone an equal chance in the ultimate event.

Among the matters that will present themselves to the consideration of a national convention, there is one, wholly of a domestic nature, but so marvellously loaded with confusion, as to appear at first sight, almost impossible to be reformed. I mean the condition of what is called law.

But, if we examine into the cause from whence this confusion, now so much the subject of universal complaint, is produced, not only the remedy will immediately present itself, but, with it, the means of preventing the like case hereafter.

In the first place, the confusion has generated itself from the absurdity of every Parliament assuming to be eternal in power, and the laws partake in a similar manner, of this assumption. They have no period of legal or natural expiration; and, however absurd in principle, or inconsistent in practise many of them have become, they still are, if not especially repealed, considered as making a part of the general mass. By this

means the body of what is called law, is spread over a space of *several hundred years*, comprehending laws obsolete, laws repugnant, laws ridiculous, and every other kind of laws forgotten or remembered; and what renders the case still worse, is, that the confusion multiplies with the progress of time.<sup>11</sup>

To bring this misshapen monster into form, and to prevent its lapsing again into a wilderness state, only two things, and those very simple, are necessary.

The first is, to review the whole mass of laws, and to bring forward such only as are worth retaining, and let all the rest drop; and to give to the laws so brought forward a new era, commencing from the time of such reform.

Secondly; that at the expiration of every twenty-one years (or any other stated period) a like review shall again be taken, and the laws, found proper to be retained, be again carried forward, commencing with that date, and the useless laws dropped and discontinued.

By this means there can be no obsolete laws, and scarcely such a thing as laws standing in direct or equivocal contradiction to each other, and every person will know the period of time to which he is to look back for all the laws in being.

It is worth remarking, that while every other branch of science is brought within some commodious system, and the study of it simplified by easy methods, the laws take the contrary course, and become every year more complicated, entangled, confused, and obscure.

Among the paragraphs which the Attorney-general has taken from the "Rights of Man," and put into his information, one is, that where I have said, "that with respect to regular law, there is *scarcely such a thing*."

As I do not know whether the Attorney-general means to show this expression to be libellous, because it is TRUE, or because it is FALSE, I shall make no other reply to him in this place, than by remarking, that if almanac-makers had not been more judicious than law-makers, the study of almanacs would by this time have become as abstruse as the study of law, and we should hear of a library of almanacs as we now do of statutes; but by the simple operation of letting the obsolete matter drop,

<sup>11</sup> In the time of Henry IV a law was passed making it felony "to multiply gold or silver, or to make use of the craft of multiplication," and this law remained two hundred and eighty-six years upon the statute books. It was then repealed as being ridiculous and injurious.—*Author*.

and carrying forward that only which is proper to be retained, all that is necessary to be known is found within the space of a year, and laws also admit of being kept within some given period.

I shall here close this letter, so far as it respects the addresses, the Proclamation, and the prosecution; and shall offer a few observations to the Society, styling itself "THE FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE."

That the science of government is beginning to be better understood than in former times, and that the age of fiction and political superstition, and of craft and mystery, is passing away, are matters which the experience of every day proves to be true, as well in England as in other countries.

As therefore it is impossible to calculate the silent progress of opinion, and also impossible to govern a nation after it has changed its habits of thinking, by the craft or policy that it was governed by before, the only true method to prevent popular discontents and commotions is, to throw, by every fair and rational argument, all the light upon the subject that can possibly be thrown; and at the same time, to open the means of collecting the general sense of the nation; and this cannot, as already observed, be done by any plan so effectually as a national convention. Here individual opinion will quiet itself by having a center to rest upon.

The Society already mentioned (which is made of men of various descriptions, but chiefly of those called Foxites), appears to me, either to have taken wrong grounds from want of judgment, or to have acted with cunning reserve. It is now amusing the people with a new phrase, namely, that of "a temperate and moderate reform," the interpretation of which is, *a continuance of the abuses as long as possible. If we cannot hold all let us hold some.*

Who are those that are frightened at reforms? Are the public afraid that their taxes should be lessened too much? Are they afraid that sinecure places and pensions should be abolished too fast? Are the poor afraid that their condition should be rendered too comfortable? Is the worn-out mechanic, or the aged and decayed tradesman, frightened at the prospect of receiving ten pounds a year out of the surplus taxes? Is the soldier frightened at the thoughts of his discharge, and three shillings per week during life? Is the sailor afraid that press-warrants will be abolished? The Society mistakes the fears of borough mongers, placemen, and pensioners, for the fears of the people; and the *temperate and*

*moderate reform* it talks of is calculated to suit the condition of the former.

Those words, "temperate and moderate," are words either of political cowardice, or of cunning, or seduction. A thing, moderately good, is not so good as it ought to be. Moderation in temper is always a virtue; but moderation in principle, is a species of vice. But who is to be the judge of what is a temperate and moderate reform? The Society is the representative of nobody; neither can the unrepresented part of the nation commit this power to those in Parliament, in whose election they had no choice; and, therefore, even, upon the ground the Society has taken, recourse must be had to a national convention.

The objection which Mr. Fox made to Mr. Grey's proposed motion for a parliamentary reform was, that it contained no plan.—It certainly did not. But the plan very easily presents itself; and while it is fair for all parties, it prevents the dangers that might otherwise arise from private or popular discontent.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE ENGLISH ATTORNEY-GENERAL, ON THE PROSECUTION AGAINST THE SECOND PART OF *RIGHTS OF MAN*<sup>12</sup>

SIR:—As there can be no personal resentment between two strangers, I write this letter to you, as to a man against whom I have no animosity.

You have, as Attorney-General, commenced a prosecution against me as the author of "Rights of Man." Had not my duty, in consequence of my being elected a member of the National Convention of France, called me from England, I should have stayed to have contested the injustice of that prosecution; not upon my own account, for I cared not about the prosecution, but to have defended the principles I had advanced in the work.

<sup>12</sup> Paine wrote this letter in Paris, November 11, 1792, to Sir Archibald Macdonald, who represented the British government in the prosecution of the author of the *Rights of Man* for libel. Macdonald read the letter to the jury at the trial which resulted in Paine's being outlawed from England.—*Editor*.

The duty I am now engaged in is of too much importance to permit me to trouble myself about your prosecution: when I have leisure, I shall have no objection to meet you on that ground; but, as I now stand, whether you go on with the prosecution, or whether you do not, or whether you obtain a verdict, or not, is a matter of the most perfect indifference to me as an individual. If you obtain one (which you are welcome to if you can get it), it cannot affect me either in person, property, or reputation, otherwise than to increase the latter; and with respect to yourself, it is as consistent that you obtain a verdict against the Man in the Moon as against me; neither do I see how you can continue the prosecution against me as you would have done against one of *your own people*, who had absented himself because he was prosecuted; what passed at Dover proves that my departure from England was no secret.

My necessary absence from your country affords the opportunity of knowing whether the prosecution was intended against Thomas Paine, or against the right of the people of England to investigate systems and principles of government; for as I cannot now be the object of the prosecution, the going on with the prosecution will show that something else was the object, and that something else can be no other than the people of England, for it is against *their rights*, and not against me, that a verdict or sentence can operate, if it can operate at all. Be then so candid as to tell the jury (if you choose to continue the process), whom it is you are prosecuting, and on whom it is that the verdict is to fall.<sup>13</sup>

But I have other reasons than those I have mentioned for writing you this letter; and, however you may choose to interpret them, they proceed from a good heart. The time, Sir, is becoming too serious to play with court prosecutions, and sport with national rights. The terrible examples that have taken place here, upon men who, less than a year ago, thought themselves as secure as any prosecuting judge, jury, or attorney-general, now can in England, ought to have some weight with men in your situation.

That the Government of England is as great, if not the greatest, perfection of fraud and corruption that ever took place since governments began, is what you cannot be a stranger to, unless the constant habit of seeing it has blinded your senses; but though you may not choose to see

<sup>13</sup> When he read the letter to the court the Attorney-General added at this point: "Gentlemen, I certainly will comply with this request. I am prosecuting both him and his work; and if I succeed in this prosecution, he shall never return to this country otherwise than *in vinculis*, for I will outlaw him."—*Editor*.

it, the people are seeing it very fast, and the progress is beyond what you may choose to believe. Is it possible that you or I can believe, or that reason can make any other man believe, that the capacity of such a man as Mr. Guelph, or any of his profligate sons, is necessary to the government of a nation? I speak to you as one man ought to speak to another; and I know also that I speak what other people are beginning to think.

That you cannot obtain a verdict (and if you do, it will signify nothing) without *packing a jury* (and we *both* know that such tricks are practised), is what I have very good reason to believe. I have gone into coffee-houses, and places where I was unknown, on purpose to learn the currency of opinion, and I never yet saw any company of twelve men that condemned the book; but I have often found a greater number than twelve approving it, and this I think is *a fair way of collecting the natural currency of opinion*.

Do not then, Sir, be the instrument of drawing twelve men into a situation that may be *injurious* to them afterwards. I do not speak this from policy, but from benevolence; but if you choose to go on with the process, I make it my request to you that you will read this letter in court, after which the judge and the jury may do as they please. As I do not consider myself the object of the prosecution, neither can I be affected by the issue, one way or the other, I shall, though a foreigner in your country, subscribe as much money as any other man toward supporting the right of the nation against the prosecution; and it is for this purpose only that I shall do it.

THOMAS PAINE.

As I have not time to copy letters, you will excuse the corrections.

P. S.—I intended, had I stayed in England, to have published the information, with my remarks upon it, before the trial came on; but as I am otherwise engaged, I reserve myself till the trial is over when I shall reply fully to everything you shall advance.





# THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

A REPUBLICAN MANIFESTO

TO THE ABBÉ SIEYÈS

ANSWER TO FOUR QUESTIONS ON THE LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE POWERS

ADDRESS AND DECLARATION AT A SELECT MEETING  
OF THE FRIENDS OF UNIVERSAL PEACE AND LIBERTY

ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF FRANCE

AN ESSAY FOR THE USE OF NEW REPUBLICANS  
IN THEIR OPPOSITION TO MONARCHY

ON THE PROPRIETY OF BRINGING LOUIS XVI TO TRIAL

REASONS FOR PRESERVING THE LIFE OF LOUIS CAPET

SHALL LOUIS XVI BE RESPITED?

PLAN OF A DECLARATION OF THE NATURAL,  
CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS OF MAN

A CITIZEN OF AMERICA TO THE CITIZENS OF EUROPE

OBSERVATIONS ON THE SITUATION OF THE POWERS JOINED AGAINST FRANCE

OBSERVATIONS ON JAY'S TREATY

DISSERTATION ON FIRST PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT

THE CONSTITUTION OF 1795

THE EIGHTEENTH FRUCTIDOR

THE RECALL OF MONROE

REMARKS ON THE POLITICAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS OF EUROPE

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Paine's writings on the French Revolution fall into two categories: replies to those who stigmatized the revolutionists as monsters determined to overthrow religion, family and all that was decent in established society, and appeals to the French people for the purpose of advancing the revolutionary cause. Even though Paine opposed the execution of Louis XVI, his writings denouncing the king and monarchy and proclaiming the need for establishing a republic, contributed vastly to the anti-monarchical feeling which swept France after the king's flight. Again, although Paine was opposed to the Jacobins, his observations on constitutional reforms, expressed vividly in *Dissertations on First Principles of Government* and *The Constitution of 1795*, reveal that he was no tool of the conservative upper-class groups. Had Paine associated more with the common people in France, his writings would have been even more influential. Nevertheless, the essays and articles contained in this section will always rank high in collections of the literature of democracy.

## A REPUBLICAN MANIFESTO

On June 20, 1791 Louis XVI, disguised as a valet, fled to join the counter-revolutionary armies threatening France. He was recognized and stopped at Varennes. On his departure he had published a manifesto condemning the work of the National Convention, and calling upon his faithful adherents for assistance. The king's flight and his manifesto enraged the French people and pro-Republican sentiments rapidly increased. This was the setting for Paine's "A Republican Manifesto" which denounced the king and monarchy and boldly proclaimed that the time had come to establish a republic. On July 1, 1791, Paine and Achille Duchâtelet placarded the streets of Paris with the manifesto, and had it nailed to the door of the Assembly.—*Editor.*

**B**ROTHERS AND FELLOW-CITIZENS: Did we require the most indubitable evidence that the presence of a king is rather a bane than a blessing, that as an element of the political system he is without force or value, and that he is an onerous affliction whose weight crushes the people, we should discover it in the calm attitude of the people during the King's flight, and the air of unconcern with which they have viewed his reappearance.

Do not allow fallacies to delude you; the whole question may be resolved into four simple propositions:

His flight is equivalent to abdication; for, in abandoning his throne, he has abandoned his office; the brevity of the period during which he was absent counts for nothing; in the present case it is the attempt to escape that counts for everything. Never again can the nation trust a ruler who has proved derelict to his duties; has broken his oath, entered into a secret conspiracy to escape from his post, hidden the Royalty of France under the mask of a menial, made his way to a frontier full of

traitors and deserters, and then intrigued for his return at the head of an army that would enable him to act as a tyrant.<sup>1</sup>

Is he responsible for his departure or should we only regard as responsible those who were the companions of his flight? Was his project of escape his own voluntary act, or was it suggested by others? It really does not matter in the least what answer is given to these questions. The facts show that, if he is not a hypocrite or traitor, he must be a madman or an imbecile, and, in any case, entirely unfitted to discharge the function confided to him by the people.

Therefore, mutual obligations which may have existed between him and us are dissolved, no matter from what standpoint we view the subject. He is no longer invested with authority. He has no claim on our allegiance. There is no distinction between him and other individuals; to us he is simply Louis Capet.

The history of France is chiefly concerned with the misfortunes of the nation, and we find that the vices of kings have been the root and origin of these misfortunes; we have always been the miserable victims of monarchical oppression, sometimes being ruined by our own devotion to royalty, sometimes crushed to the earth by its tyranny. Now that treason is added to the long series of cruelties and crimes which France has had to endure at the hands of kings, the long catalogue of their awful offenses is finished; there are no more crimes left for them to commit, therefore their claim to rule is a thing of the past.

An office that may be filled by a person without talent or experience, an office that does not require virtue or wisdom, for its due exercise, an office which is the reward of birth, and which may consequently devolve on a madman, an imbecile or a tyrant, is, in the very nature of things, an absurdity, and, whatever its ostentation, has no real utility. France, which has now attained the age of reason, should no longer be deceived by mere words, and should also reflect on another aspect of the case; namely, on the peril to which the government of a king subjects a people, even when he happens to be in himself a very paltry and despicable individual.

It takes thirty millions of francs to keep the coarse state and grandeur with which the King surrounds himself. Supposing this amount were applied to the diminution of taxation, what a relief it would be to the overburdened nation, while at the same time an important source of political corruption would be eradicated. The greatness of a people is

<sup>1</sup> General Bouillé's army was supposed to save the king, but arrived too late.—*Editor.*

not, as monarchs claim, based on the magnificence of a king, but in the people's sense of its own dignity and on its contempt for the brutal follies and crimes which have, under the leadership of kings, desolated the whole of Europe.

There need be no alarm as to the safety of Louis Capet's person. France will not step down from her lofty position in order to retaliate her wrongs on a miserable creature who is conscious of his own dishonor. The tranquillity which exists everywhere is evidence of the fact that self-respect is the attribute of a free nation, and that, when the cause which it upholds is just and glorious, it will never allow that cause to be degraded.

## TO THE ABBÉ SIEYÈS

In the same month, July, 1791, in which he wrote "A Republican Manifesto," Paine published in *Le Republican*, which he and Condorcet had founded, an attack on the monarchy. Abbé Sieyès, the spokesman of the French middle classes, who had framed a constitution in which the monarchy was retained, wrote a reply to Paine's article, arguing that "one is freer under a monarchy than under a republic." Paine expanded his attack on the monarchy in this letter to the Abbé which appeared in the *Moniteur* for July 16, 1791.—*Editor*.

AT the moment of my departure from England, I read in the *Moniteur* of Tuesday last, your letter, in which you give the challenge, on the subject of government, and offer to defend what is called the *monarchical opinion* against the republican system.

I accept of your challenge with pleasure; and I place such confidence in the superiority of the republican system over that nullity of a system, called *monarchy*, that I engage not to exceed the extent of fifty pages, and to leave you the liberty of taking as much latitude as you may think proper.

The respect which I bear your moral and literary reputation, will be your security for my candor in the course of this discussion; but, notwithstanding that I shall treat the subject seriously and sincerely, let me promise, that I consider myself at liberty to ridicule, as they deserve,

monarchical absurdities, whensoever the occasion shall present itself.

By republicanism, I do not understand what the name signifies in Holland, and in some parts of Italy. I understand simply a government by representation—a government founded upon the principles of the Declaration of Rights; principles to which several parts of the French Constitution arise in contradiction. The Declaration of Rights of France and America are but one and the same thing in principles, and almost in expressions; and this is the republicanism which I undertake to defend against what is called *monarchy* and *aristocracy*.

I see with pleasure, that in respect to one point we are already agreed; and *that is, the extreme danger of a civil list of thirty millions*. I can discover no reason why one of the parts of the government should be supported with so extravagant a profusion, while the other scarcely receives what is sufficient for its common wants.

This dangerous and dishonorable disproportion at once supplies the one with the means of corrupting, and throws the other into the predicament of being corrupted. In America there is but little difference, with regard to this point, between the legislative and the executive part of our government; but the first is much better attended to than it is in France.<sup>2</sup>

In whatsoever manner, Sir, I may treat the subject of which you have proposed the investigation, I hope that you will not doubt my entertaining for you the highest esteem. I must also add, that I am not the personal enemy of kings. Quite the contrary.

No man more heartily wishes than myself to see them all in the happy and honorable state of private individuals; but I am the avowed, open, and intrepid enemy of what is called monarchy; and I am such by principles which nothing can either alter or corrupt—by my attachment to humanity; by the anxiety which I feel within myself, for the dignity and the honor of the human race; by the disgust which I experience, when I observe men directed by children, and governed by brutes; by the horror which all the evils that monarchy has spread over the earth excite within my breast; and by those sentiments which make me shudder at the calamities, the exactions, the wars, and the massacres with which monarchy has crushed mankind: in short, it is against all the hell of monarchy that I have declared war.

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>2</sup> "A deputy to the Congress receives about a guinea and a half daily and provisions are cheaper in America than in France."—*Author*.

## ANSWER TO FOUR QUESTIONS ON THE LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE POWERS

It is impossible to determine the exact date of the composition of this document, but it is very likely that it was started in the spring of 1791 and completed some time during the following summer. It was later translated by Condorcet and published in the *Chronique du Mois* for June and July, 1792. The questions to which Paine replies were probably put to him by Condorcet, and related to the Constitution submitted by the French National Assembly.—*Editor*.

THE four questions to which you do me the honor of requesting an answer have been sent to me in a letter by my friend M—. Laying aside the usual complimentary preliminaries, I purpose replying to them at once: for a man who regards the whole human race as his own family has little time for compliments or excuses.

It is obvious that the person who has laid these four propositions before Thomas Paine has done so with the expectation, or, at least, with the hope, that they may receive an affirmative reply. Indeed, this conclusion is easily gathered from the language he uses, which clearly implies that that austere Republican *must* give an affirmative reply if he is to hope for that grateful approval which is merited by every task that helps along the progress of human freedom.

Well, then, I, too, can truly assert that I am keenly interested in the felicity of humanity among all peoples and in all lands, and, therefore, as a fraternal and sympathetic worker, associated with you and with everyone who holds similar opinions, I will, with all possible brevity, reply to your questions, and also submit certain considerations which they have prompted. In the meantime, however, you must not for a moment imagine that I have any intention of discussing the agreement or non-agreement of our opinions in all cases; but, as we are both aiming at the same goal, I shall confine myself to the task of simply discussing with you the best means of reaching that goal.

After acknowledging that the foundation upon which the French Constitution rests is excellent, you point out its deficiencies in many particulars, and then you demand:



1. As there is a want of equilibrium between the legislative and executive powers, is not the latter exposed to the danger of being overbalanced by the former?

2. Is not the executive power too feeble to be able to force the people to obey the law and also too feeble to obtain the respect and confidence necessary to a stable government?

3. Is not a legislative body composed of a single chamber likely to be the victim of its own rash impulsiveness and unrestrained impetuosity?

4. Is not the administrative system organized in such an intricate fashion as to lead to anarchy of a permanent character?

I shall first consider these questions individually, and afterwards deal with them collectively. On the other hand, while I do not care to enter at present into any debate as to their supposed amelioration or curtailment, I intend to bring to your notice a scheme for their modification in such a way as not to interfere with the orderly course of government, should such modification be deemed essential.

As to your assertion that *the foundation upon which the French Constitution rests is excellent*, there can be no difference of opinion between us, for as that foundation is the rights of man, the principle is too obvious to admit of argument. The man who should venture to gainsay it would thereby establish his kinship to the fool who said in his heart there is no God.

#### FIRST QUESTION

“As there is a want of equilibrium between the legislative and executive powers, is not the latter exposed to the danger of being overbalanced by the former?”

If the legislative and executive powers be regarded as springing from the same source, the *nation*, and as having as their object the nation's weal by such a distribution of its authority, it will be difficult to foresee any contingency in which one power could derive advantage from overbalancing the other, even if it were successful in doing so. If, on the other hand, these two powers be considered as *not* springing from the same source, and as, in fact, mutually hostile, the one contending for the rights of the nation, the other for the privileges of a class, then surely your question assumes an entirely different aspect: in that case, what we should have to dread would not be the imminence of a single calamity, but the ruin of the entire people.

It is impossible to judge from your words which of these views you adopt, and, in any case it would be far from easy to solve a problem whose solution depends on another problem, and, for that reason, I shall avail myself fully of the freedom which the indefinite nature of your question permits and shall make such observations as may naturally occur to me. Thus, while I may not solve the problem, I shall offer some suggestions which, perhaps, will conduce to its solution.

The baleful custom of misgovernment is so universal and the consequent sufferings of nations throughout the centuries have been so dreadful that the soul of man, helpless and blinded, has almost lost the faculty of vision; the result is that even at the present day his power of drawing a distinction between prismatic shades can hardly be said to be fully developed.

When we begin to use only such words as are fitted to express ideas simply and naturally, we see plainly that the powers of which governments are composed fall into two primary divisions: the law-making power and the executive or administrative power. There is nothing in government which really transcends these divisions.

There is, I fancy, a more exact comprehension among people generally of the character of legislative power than there is of that of executive power. By the former is understood the delegated power of enacting laws that are *consistent with the foundation and principles of the constitution*. Otherwise, the legislative power would be pure despotism, call it by what name you will.

But the meaning ordinarily assigned to the term, executive power, is indefinite, and, consequently, our conception of it is by no means so exact and plain as when we speak of legislative power. It is associated, some way or other, in our minds with the idea of arbitrary power, and thus a feeling of suspicion rather than of confidence is aroused. You see, then, the absolute necessity of an exact definition of these two powers and the difficulty of dealing with the questions they involve in the absence of such definition.

Now, if we suppose it possible for one of these powers to encroach on the province of the other, then, of course, we must also suppose that the ability to do so is as great on one side as on the other. In that case, it is my opinion that the nation will be safer when an *elected* legislature controls the executive than when a *non-elected* executive attempts to usurp the function of legislation.

But, putting aside these considerations, I confess my inability to per-

ceive the correctness of the comparison of a government to a pair of scales. In what does it consist? The idea which a pair of scales calls up is that of opposition. The metaphor, I imagine, originated in England at a period when, owing to certain circumstances, it had a certain fitness. After the Norman Conquest, that nation, despairing of ridding itself of its oppressors, devoted itself for centuries to the task of finding a sort of counterpoise against their tyranny. For, with the advent of that conquest, arrived aristocracy, and the calamities with which the people had to contend were innumerable. Hence the *nation threw its whole weight in the balance against royalty and aristocracy. This afterwards came to be called the balance of the nation poised against the balance of the court.*

In a country, however, in which all the powers of the government spring from the same source, such a metaphor has no meaning. In such circumstances we cannot even conceive the possibility of two hostile governmental forces in opposition; instead of such a conception, there looms up before us one single edifice in which all is united and harmonious.

#### SECOND QUESTION

And now I come to the second question: "Is not the executive power too feeble to be able to force the people to obey the laws, and also too feeble to obtain the respect and confidence necessary to a stable government?"

If a first proposition is fundamentally wrong, all the propositions dependent on it must necessarily be also fallacious. In this connection, therefore, the question that naturally suggests itself is: What is meant by executive power? Should the answer be: the *power of enforcing the laws*, then the phrase relates to every court of justice bound to carry out the laws whenever their enforcement is resisted. It must always be the special object of the legislature to defend the executive under this aspect; for if respect for the law is enfeebled, the laws and those who enacted them will also be treated with contempt. Should, however, the opinion prevail that the executive has not power to compel obedience to the laws and that it cannot win respect and submission from the people, another question arises: Why has it been unable to do so?

Such a question involves the consideration of the executive power under another aspect, namely as the medium through which the laws are executed rather than as the executor. When the subject is regarded

from this point of view, we are forced to dwell on that part of the Constitution styled *the monarchy*.

The primary significance of the term "*monarch*" implies the absolute power of a single individual. In fact the word is capable of no other interpretation. However sublime the principles of the Constitution may be, we must perceive here an evident contradiction between words and ideas. Now, such a contradiction always gives rise to suspicion, and, therefore, it will be well to consider how far such suspicion tends to hinder the proper execution of the laws.

Should the recollection of the characteristics of the power of monarchy in the past, and the ideas which that recollection suggests, be in any way connected with the present executive, all plans intended to invigorate the latter will serve only to augment suspicion and diminish confidence.

If it were a law of nature, or if God had issued a decree and revealed it to mankind, that, in accordance with His will, every successive custodian of authority should possess the same heart, a heart, too, incapable of guile, all suspicion and dread would vanish at once. But when we perceive that, from the mode in which nature acts, it is her apparent intention to reject the monarchical system, inasmuch as the monarchs on whom she bestows existence are sure to differ from one another both in person and disposition, one being wicked, another stupid, another insane, and another at once wicked, stupid and insane, it must surely be impossible for any reasonable person to believe any longer in such an absurdity as hereditary monarchy.

Should the French be as impervious to common sense as the English have been, such drowsy unconcern might be regarded as a state of felicity, and their thoughtlessness might be considered confidence; but confidence, to be permanent, must be based on reason.

### THIRD QUESTION

We have now reached the third question: "Is not a legislative body composed of a single chamber likely to be the victim of its own rash impulsiveness and unrestrained impetuosity?"

This question can scarcely receive a positive answer at present because of its complexity and of the questions involved in its discussion. Still, I shall endeavor to communicate to you the thoughts that it suggests.

When a constitution determines the limitations of authority and the

principle to which the legislative body must yield obedience, it has already secured a most potent and effective check upon all abuses of authority.

Suppose, for example, a bill were introduced in one of the American legislatures, like the one which became law in an English Parliament under George I, lengthening the duration of that legislature, it never could be enacted as a law, because such a law would be a violation of the Constitution, which limits the power of the legislature.

Still, notwithstanding the limitations that restrain power in its several departments provided by the Constitution, much will always depend on the wisdom and discretion exhibited by the various legislatures themselves.

However skilfully a constitution may be framed, it is impossible to decide previously, when there are two chambers, how far they will act as a check upon each other. They may come to an agreement not to avail themselves of this power of mutual restraint, either for good or evil; still, if the Constitution makes provision for such restraint, the result is sure to be advantageous.

In my opinion, for which I shall adduce reasons, it would be well to separate the legislature into two bodies before the discussion of any subject commences. Such an arrangement is preferable to the formation of one body always, or to the establishment of two divided chambers.

With reference to the sort of separation suggested, more consideration should be given to human passions than even to reason. Because the object is conviction or persuasion, the influence exercised by such passions is of considerable importance, and a legislature composed of a single chamber is always exposed to the peril of deciding with precipitation; when it is divided, there will always be room for judicious reflection. The utility of discussion is obvious, and occasionally a man of superior attainments will derive profit from the ideas of a person who is his inferior intellectually; if it be his purpose to put in practise some of the ideas to which he has listened, he should, as far as possible, avoid speaking himself.

My plan would be to divide a legislature, consisting, say, of a hundred representatives, into two equal sections. The first section would discuss some question, while the second section listened. Then the second section would take up the same question. Then, after each section had heard the arguments of the other, the debate would be closed, and the subject finally submitted to the decision of the entire legislature. At

least, some plan should, in my judgment, be adopted that would obviate the inconveniences which at present hamper the proceedings of a single chamber, and that would yet not entail the evils inherent in the existence of two chambers. Some of those evils I now propose to lay before you.

First, it is contrary to common sense for one part of the legislature to have it in its power to decide a question while that question is being debated in another body, and while fresh light is being thrown on the discussion.

In the second place, it often occurs that when a question is voted on in these separate chambers, the majority is controlled by the minority in a manner that is as repulsive as it is absurd.

Let it be assumed, for example, that each of the chambers has 50 members. Now we can easily imagine a case in which the members of one assembly are unanimous, while those of the other are divided on the question in the proportion of 26 to 24. Here we have 26 outweighing 24, or, in other words, three-fourths of the legislators compelled to submit to one-fourth.

On the other hand, if the legislature be divided in the way I have suggested, you gain all the advantages derived from separate debate without the evils which accompany the establishment of two chambers.

The two chambers which form the English Parliament need not be discussed here. As legislative bodies, they have no really distinctive individual character. Their ideas are entirely molded and colored by those of the Prime Minister in power. He waves over them his sleep-compelling wand, and they are at once plunged in the slumber of servitude.

Should we turn our eyes on the members of one of those chambers, profanely styled the House of Lords,<sup>3</sup> a designation that insults nature, we discover that nature has avenged herself by bereaving them of talent and virtue. The entire representation of England is indeed calculated to arouse compassion; still, when contrasted with the Lords, the Commons are comparatively respectable. So slight is the regard paid to that childish body that the people never make any inquiries as to its proceedings.

As an instance of its subjection to ministerial influence, I will mention that it gave the minister a majority of 90 after the debate on the war with Russia, whereas the House of Commons, which has double its number, gave him a majority of only 63. It has been well styled by

<sup>3</sup> Lord means master.—*Author*.

Chesterfield, one of its members who was thoroughly acquainted with its composition, "the hospital for incurables."

I am not at all in favor of two chambers which have each an arbitrary veto on the action of the other. There is nothing to prove that one body will exhibit more sagacity than the other, and to confide power to a body that lacks wisdom is to incur a peril rather than to provide a safeguard. As all human institutions have grown better with the progress of time, we have every reason to believe that with time also the representative system will grow better. This belief is strengthened by the fact that, just as it has encountered the greatest opposition, so it stands the best chance of at last attaining perfection.

#### FOURTH QUESTION

We have now reached the fourth question: "Is not the administrative system organized in such an intricate fashion as to lead to anarchy of a permanent character?"

There has been great progress in the science of government, and particularly where the state has a wide extension. This consists in allowing the several parts of a country to manage its own domestic affairs. In this fashion not only can public and private affairs be carried on with greater ease, but the loss of time and the expense incident to centralization are avoided, as well as the errors entailed by such a legislative system.

From a general standpoint, I think the usefulness of the institution to which I have alluded is unquestionable; still, I must confess that I have not any special knowledge of its work in practise, for it has always been my object to endeavor to throw light upon general principles rather than on their application to particular cases; because if the former be sound, the latter will be sound also. But, as the science of government is so far only in its childhood, I can but hope that, whatever system may be adopted, it will permit us to take advantage of the lessons of experience.

Although much study has been devoted to the science of government in all its manifestations, one subject closely connected with it has never received the full consideration it deserves; namely, *how small is the measure of government that is actually required by man?*

This question is fully discussed in a work I am now writing; and, moreover, to deal adequately with it at present would transcend my limits.

But I am strongly inclined to believe that very little government is necessary, and that the need of government above measure is one of those ideas from which it would be well to free ourselves as early as possible.

When I inquire of a person how much government does he require, the answer I get is that he requires very little. But let me ask the same individual what amount of government he judges to be required by others, and he replies: "Oh, a very large amount, indeed!" If I continue my inquiries, I receive pretty much the same answers, and so I infer that the amount actually needed lies between these two extremes: the lesser amount each considers required for himself and the larger amount he regards as needful for his neighbor. Government beyond measure has the effect of giving encouragement and birth to crimes that otherwise might never have come into being.

The governments of the past managed to stimulate enmity and suspicion in every direction between nations as well as between individuals, and in this fashion to perpetuate their miserable domination. The success of such a system is calculated to uproot the very foundations of society, and we still feel the effects of its corrupt putrescence. It follows that the moral nature of man must inevitably change, and that, when he is subjected to sounder principles of government, he will no longer be the suspicious creature he could not help being under the old systems. Now that nations seem to incline more and more toward the principles of civilized government, they would appear also to have gained the possession of a new faculty.

The relations between the French and English nations have assumed quite a different character during the last couple of years, and we may hopefully look forward to a similar change between the individuals of these two nations. Still, the moral changes that affect nations or individuals produce their consequences far more rapidly when their tendency is evil than when it is beneficial. Suspicion may be spread without any trouble; it cannot be uprooted with anything like the same facility. If you try to eradicate it forcibly, you fail; but if you succeed in quietly undermining it, it will gradually pass away silently and noiselessly.

When we contemplate the condition of France under the old régime, we behold a government that depends for its existence upon suspicion, upon spies and detectives employed by the police authorities. There could be no confidence in social circles, where everyone was in the habit of suspecting his neighbors; the master was suspicious of his servants,



neighbors of one another, the Government of everyone, and everyone of the Government. It is natural, then, that the present Government should also be suspected. This suspicion is a relic from the past, a past which it would be fortunate if the nation could forget altogether.

I shall now treat of the *best methods for the improvement of the Constitution, whenever experience shows the necessity of such improvement, without disturbing the orderly course of government*. The best method would be to add a clause to the Constitution determining the manner of such improvements. There are very different ideas upon this subject, and, for that reason, I propose discussing it in a special fashion. Until the present moment, France has had no constitution; she is now about to form one and to choose a legislature. In these circumstances it is absolutely indispensable to draw a distinction between the position of the people in the act of delegating its power to those who will establish a constitution, and its subsequent position after delegating its power to a legislature elected in virtue of that constitution. Now, the Constitution and the laws are altogether different from the power of enacting laws to suit particular contingencies, conformable to the principles of the aforesaid Constitution. If the original power to establish a constitution were vested in successive legislatures as a hereditary possession, a constitution could have no real existence; the legislature would be endowed with despotic authority, and could, as in England, establish whatever kind of government it chose.

The present National Assembly, or, to be strictly accurate, the *National Assembly of the Convention*, has been compelled by circumstances to undertake legislative functions at the very time it was establishing a constitution. Thus, owing to the enormous amount of business it had to transact in uprooting some institutions, and constructing others, and making provision for absolute necessities, its attention was being constantly distracted. Apart from the particular business to which its energies were devoted, its work in the establishment of a constitution embraces two special objects: *the one destructive, the other constructive*. In regard to the first point it could not err: the ancient structure was based on an evil principle; in other words, on usurpation.

Having reduced the subject to its elements, I shall now consider the second question, which relates to construction.

The sound basis upon which the new edifice is founded fully compensates the nation for all it has endured. But have the builders of the new edifice been too frugal or too liberal in the use they have made of

the old materials? Are all its part equally symmetrical? Has experience proved that it is less or more symmetrical than was needful?

These are questions which experience alone can answer. All that wisdom can do at present is to see that no future improvement shall be obstructed.

However, there are two subjects upon which everyone has the same opinion: the boldness of the enterprise and the perseverance that has marked its achievement. It was to be expected that passionate ardor and the dread of falling back under bad government should have led the framers of the Constitution to be content with a relative excellence in their fear of retrogression. In view of the fact, however, that a final settlement precludes amelioration, this determination would seem of rather dubious value. Political questions are being so vastly illumined by the light of reason that the dread of man ever again plunging back into the foul night of ignorance is a dread which should be energetically discarded.

In every land throughout the universe the tendency of the interest of the greatest number is in the direction of good rather than of evil, and the inevitable result must be to elevate the science of government to a height of perfection of which we have now no conception. To fetter ourselves would be folly; to fetter posterity would be usurpation; we must do nothing that impedes progress. If man had any rights over posterity, our rights would have been ruined long ago. If, instead of regarding the future, we turn our eyes on the past, we see clearly that we should have been reduced to a very low condition indeed, if our ancestors had succeeded in laying that yoke upon our shoulders which we would fain lay upon our posterity. Had they done so, we should never have accomplished what we are now engaged in accomplishing. The enjoyment of his rights does not suffice for man; he should also be secured in their exercise by the principles of social order.

If we wish to benefit our posterity politically, let us leave them liberty as a bequest, and, along with it, the encouragement of good example. Everything that deserves imitation is sure to be imitated. If our institutions are intrinsically admirable, posterity will assimilate them, and there will be no necessity for us to try to exercise our authority over our descendants.

When an inheritance is bequeathed, it never contains a clause enjoining its acceptance on the heirs, for such a clause would be altogether ineffective. The heirs will accept it if they deem it worth accepting,

reject it if they believe the contrary. The same is the case with regard to government. The rights of man belong as much to our descendants as they do to us. We should not, in our zeal for their prosperity, begin by slighting their abilities. Perhaps, their wisdom will be more profound than ours. It would be folly in us to assert a privilege to which we have not the slightest claim.

The power of self-amendment forms a very marked feature of the Constitution. Very probably, no constitution could be established in which defects would not appear in the course of time. The best way of dealing with such defects is to provide a method of correcting them as they arise. No constitution which has not such a corrective can be permanent. The Convention which established the Pennsylvanian Constitution, in 1776, under the presidency of Benjamin Franklin, had a clause decreeing that the Constitution should be revised every seven years by a convention, and that such additions and retrenchments as public opinion demanded should be discussed. The amendments proposed were, however, to be laid before the people for a considerable period before they were voted upon. Another convention changed this clause into another, embodying the *right of the nation to alter or perfect the Constitution whenever she should deem it necessary*.

I should prefer to such a general declaration as the above the exercise of power which would not weaken the absolute right, while, by its frequent use, it would compel the Government to avoid overstepping the principles of the Constitution.

The Federal Government of the United States, established in 1787 by the Convention over which General Washington presided, has in its Constitution a clause that calls for every improvement needed in the future. But such improvement must be effected by the authority of the people and by the same agencies that established the Constitution. It is not enough to constitute a good government; it is equally indispensable to adopt such methods as may assure the permanency of a good government.

Indeed, no constitution that does not make provision for this purpose can be considered complete. We are taught by experience that it is exceedingly hard to effect reforms, and, therefore, we benefit posterity when we adopt such contrivances now as will insure their success.

Provided the general principles of a constitution are sound, it will always be so easy to achieve such lesser reforms as are required by experience that the nation will never be persuaded to permit abuses to be

piled upon abuses. In my judgment, it would be well to begin the revision of the Constitution in seven years from the present date, for during that period sufficient time will be afforded to make the people acquainted with its faults and virtues. It is worthy of notice that a few of the most important articles of the Constitution are due to particular circumstances rather than to reflection.

As an instance, I shall mention the decree concerning the right of peace and war. The two years which the Assembly spent in establishing the Constitution were assuredly not sufficiently long a period for the discussion of all the important subjects naturally connected with it. For this reason, the time for the first revision should not be put off too long, as we can easily see that certain additions and amendments will be absolutely needed. For that matter, it is by no means unlikely that before then all the European systems of government will experience a change, and that quarrels among nations will be terminated by pacific methods and not by the ferocious horrors of war.

The revolution which is influencing governments at present from West to East is quicker in its effects than the movement which once spread from East to West. I fondly hope that the National Assembly may have the courage to call for a convention of the representatives of the various nations of Europe, which would adopt measures for the general welfare. The felicity which liberty insures us is transformed into virtue when we communicate its enjoyment to others.

I should have completed this letter, which I began five weeks ago, sooner but for a journey which I had to make. Since then, the progress of events in France has been rapid, because of the flight and arrest of Louis XVI. All these events stimulate the reasoning faculty. Man advances from idea to idea, from thought to thought, and all the time he is unaware of his marvelous progress. Those who fancy that the goal of its political knowledge has been attained by France will soon discover their mistake, and will be quickly outstripped unless they quicken their own paces. Not a day passes unaccompanied by a novelty. The human mind, long accustomed to struggle with kings as individuals, must now regard them as forming part of a system of government, and must conclude that monarchy is only a base political superstition which should not exist among an enlightened people. It is mental servitude that has rendered it sacred.

Suppose we draw a circle around a man, and address him thus: "You cannot step beyond this boundary, for, if you did, you would be swal-

lowed up in an abyss." As long as the terror with which these words have inspired him continues, he will stay where he is. But if, by some lucky accident, he places one foot beyond the line, the other will come after it.

THOMAS PAINE.

## ADDRESS AND DECLARATION

AT A SELECT MEETING OF THE FRIENDS OF UNIVERSAL PEACE AND LIBERTY, HELD AT THE THATCHED HOUSE TAVERN, ST. JAMES' STREET, AUGUST 20, 1791, THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS AND DECLARATION TO OUR FELLOW CITIZENS WAS AGREED ON AND ORDERED TO BE PUBLISHED

Paine returned to England on July 13, 1791. A month later he issued the following *Address and Declaration of the Friends of Universal Peace and Liberty*, in which he defended the French Revolution to England. This manifesto, revealing Paine's advanced revolutionary sentiments, was originally signed by J. Horne Tooke, as chairman of the London meeting. Later Paine acknowledged its authorship (See Volume I, p. 455*n.*)—*Editor*.

**F**RIENDS AND FELLOW CITIZENS: At a moment like the present, when wilful misrepresentations are industriously spread by the partisans of arbitrary power, and the advocates of passive obedience and court government, we think it incumbent on us to declare to the world our principles, and the motives of our conduct.

We rejoice at the glorious event of the *French Revolution*.

If it be asked: What is the French Revolution to us? We answer (as it has been already answered in another place<sup>4</sup>) *It is much* to us as men: much to us as Englishmen.

As men we rejoice in the freedom of twenty-five millions of our fellow men. We rejoice in the prospect which such a magnificent example opens to the world. We congratulate the French nation for having laid the axe to the root of tyranny, and for erecting government on the sacred *hereditary rights of man*—rights which appertain to ALL, and not to any one more than to another. We know of no human authority superior to

<sup>4</sup> Declaration of the Volunteers of Belfast.—*Author*.

that of a whole nation; and we profess and proclaim it as our principle that every nation has at all times an inherent indefeasible right to constitute and establish such government for itself as best accords with its disposition, interest, and happiness.

As Englishmen we also rejoice, because we are *immediately* interested in the French Revolution.

Without inquiring into the justice on either side of the reproachful charges of intrigue and ambition, which the English and French courts have constantly made on each other, we confine ourselves to this observation: That if the Court of France only was in fault, and the numerous wars which have distressed both countries are chargeable to her alone, that Court now exists no longer; and the cause and the consequence must cease together. The French, therefore, by the revolution they have made, have conquered for us as well as for themselves; if it be true that their Court only was in fault, and ours never.

On this state of the case, the French Revolution concerns us *immediately*. We are oppressed with a heavy national debt, a burden of taxes, and an expensive administration of government, beyond those of any people in the world. We have also a very numerous poor; and we hold that the moral obligation of providing for old age, helpless infancy, and poverty, is far superior to that of supplying the invented wants of courtly extravagance, ambition and intrigue.

We believe there is no instance to be produced but in England, of *seven* million inhabitants, which make but little more than *one* million of families, paying yearly SEVENTEEN MILLIONS of taxes.

As it has always been held out by all administrations that the restless ambition of the Court of France rendered this expense necessary to us for our own defense, we consequently rejoice as men deeply interested in the French Revolution, for that Court, as we have already said, exists no longer; and consequently the same enormous expenses need not continue to us.

Thus rejoicing, as we sincerely do, both as men and Englishmen, as lovers of universal peace and freedom, and as friends to our own national prosperity, and a reduction of our public expenses, we cannot but express our astonishment that any part, or any members of our own government, should reprobate the extinction of that very power in France, or wish to see it restored, to whose influence they formerly attributed (while they appeared to lament) the enormous increase of our own burdens and taxes.

What, then, are they sorry that the pretense for new and oppressive taxes, and the occasion for continuing many of the old taxes, will be at an end? If so, and if it is the policy of courts and of court governments, to prefer enemies to friends, and a system of war to that of peace, as affording more pretenses for places, offices, pensions, revenue and taxation, it is high time for the people of every nation to look with circumspection to their own interests.

Those who *pay* the expense, and *not* those who *participate* in the emoluments arising from it, are the persons immediately interested in inquiries of this kind. We are a part of that national body on whom this annual expense of seventeen millions falls; and we consider the present opportunity of the French Revolution as a most happy one for lessening the enormous load under which this nation groans. If this be not done we shall then have reason to conclude that the cry of intrigue and ambition against *other* courts is no more than the common cant of *all* courts.

We think it also necessary to express our astonishment that a government, desirous of being called *FREE*, should prefer connection with the most despotic and arbitrary powers in Europe. We know of none more deserving this description than those of Turkey and Prussia, and the whole combination of German despots. Separated, as we happily are by nature, from the tumults of the Continent, we reprobate all systems and intrigues which sacrifice (and that, too, at a great expense), the blessings of our natural situation. Such systems cannot have a national origin.

If we are asked, what government is? We hold it to be nothing more than a *NATIONAL ASSOCIATION*, and we hold that to be the best which secures to every man his rights, and promotes the greatest quantity of happiness with the *least expense*.

We live to improve, or we live in vain; and therefore we admit of no maxims of government or policy on the mere score of antiquity, or other men's authority, the *old Whigs* or the *new*.

We will exercise the reason with which we are endued, or we possess it unworthily. As reason is given at all times, it is for the purpose of being used at all times.

Among the blessings which the French Revolution has produced to that nation, we enumerate the abolition of the feudal system of injustice and tyranny on the fourth of August, 1789.<sup>5</sup> Beneath the feudal

<sup>5</sup> For evidence that Paine presents a somewhat exaggerated picture of the effects of the August 4th decrees, see Albert Mathiez, *The French Revolution*, New York, 1928, pp. 55 ff.

system all Europe has long groaned, and from it England is not yet free. Game laws, borough tenures, and tyrannical monopolies of numerous kinds, still remain among us; but rejoicing as we sincerely do, in the freedom of others, till we shall happily accomplish our own, we intended to commemorate this prelude to the universal extirpation of the feudal system, by meeting on the anniversary of that day (the fourth of August) at the Crown and Anchor.

From this meeting we were prevented by the interference of certain *unnamed* and *skulking* persons with the master of the tavern, who informed us, that on *their* representations he could not receive us. Let those who live by, or countenance feudal oppressions, take the reproach of this ineffectual meanness and cowardice to themselves. They cannot stifle the public declaration of our honest, open, and avowed opinions.

These are our principles, and these our sentiments. They embrace the interest and happiness of the great body of the nation of which we are a part. As to riots and tumults, let those answer for them, who, by wilful misrepresentations, endeavor to excite and promote them; or who seek to *stun* the sense of the nation, and to lose the great cause of public good in the outrages of a misinformed mob. We take our ground on principles that require no such riotous aid. We have nothing to apprehend from the poor; for we are pleading their cause. And we fear not proud oppression, for we have truth on our side.

We say, and we repeat it, that the French Revolution opens to the world an opportunity in which all good citizens must rejoice—that of promoting the general happiness of man. And that it moreover offers to this country in particular, an opportunity of reducing our enormous taxes.

These are our objects, and we will pursue them.

J. HORNE TOOKE,  
Chairman.

## ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF FRANCE

At the same time that British royalty was persecuting Paine for having dared to expose the inequalities in English society as well as for his fervent defense of the French Revolution, the French nation hailed him as their



champion and claimed him for herself. On August 26, 1792, the French National Assembly voted the title of citizen to Paine, and during the first week of September he was elected to represent Calais, Oise, Somme, and Puy de Dôme in the National Assembly. The following *Address*, in acknowledgment of the honor of being made a citizen of France, was written by Paine on September 25, 1792.—*Editor*.

FELLOW CITIZENS, I receive, with affectionate gratitude, the honor which the late National Assembly has conferred upon me, by adopting me a citizen of France: and the additional honor of being elected by my fellow citizens a member of the National Convention. Happily impressed, as I am, by those testimonies of respect shown toward me as an individual, I feel my felicity increased by seeing the barrier broken down that divided patriotism by spots of earth, and limited citizenship to the soil, like vegetation. Had those honors been conferred in an hour of national tranquillity, they would have afforded no other means of showing my affection, than to have accepted and enjoyed them; but they come accompanied with circumstances that give me the honorable opportunity of commencing my citizenship in the stormy hour of difficulties. I come not to enjoy repose. Convinced that the cause of France is the cause of all mankind, and that liberty cannot be purchased by a wish, I gladly share with you the dangers and honors necessary to success.

I am well aware that the moment of any great change, such as that accomplished on the tenth of August,<sup>6</sup> is unavoidably the moment of terror and confusion. The mind, highly agitated by hope, suspicion and apprehension, continues without rest till the change be accomplished. But let us now look calmly and confidently forward, and success is certain. It is no longer the paltry cause of kings, or of this, or of that individual, that calls France and her armies into action. It is the great cause of ALL. It is the establishment of a new era, that shall blot despotism from the earth, and fix, on the lasting principles of peace and citizenship, the great Republic of Man.

It has been my fate to have borne a share in the commencement and complete establishment of one revolution (I mean the Revolution of America). The success and events of that revolution are encouraging to us. The prosperity and happiness that have since flowed to that coun-

<sup>6</sup> Paine is referring to the fact that on August 10, 1792 the Revolutionary Commune of Paris invaded the Tuileries and made the King prisoner.—*Editor*.

try, have amply rewarded her for all the hardships she endured and for all the dangers she encountered.

The principles on which that Revolution began, have extended themselves to Europe; and an overruling Providence is regenerating the old world by the principles of the new. The distance of America from all the other parts of the globe, did not admit of her carrying those principles beyond her own situation. It is to the peculiar honor of France, that she now raises the standard of liberty for all nations; and in fighting her own battles, contends for the rights of all mankind.

The same spirit of fortitude that insured success to America will insure it to France, for it is impossible to conquer a nation determined to be free! The military circumstances that now unite themselves to France are such as the despots of the earth know nothing of, and can form no calculation upon. They know not what it is to fight against a nation; they have only been accustomed to make war upon each other, and they know, from system and practise, how to calculate the probable success of despot against despot; and here their knowledge and their experience end.

But in a contest like the present a new and boundless variety of circumstances arise, that derange all such customary calculations. When a whole nation acts as an army, the despot knows not the extent of the power against which he contends. New armies arise against him with the necessity of the moment. It is then that the difficulties of an invading enemy multiply, as in the former case they diminished; and he finds them at their height when he expected them to end.

The only war that has any similarity of circumstances with the present, is the late Revolution War in America. On her part, as it now is in France, it was a war of the whole nation:—there it was that the enemy, by beginning to conquer, put himself in a condition of being conquered. His first victories prepared him for defeat. He advanced till he could not retreat, and found himself in the midst of a nation of armies.

Were it now to be proposed to the Austrians and Prussians, to escort them into the middle of France, and there leave them to make the most of such a situation, they would see too much into the dangers of it to accept the offer, and the same dangers would attend them, could they arrive there by any other means. Where, then, is the military policy of their attempting to obtain, by force, that which they would refuse by choice? But to reason with despots is throwing reason away. The best of arguments is a vigorous preparation.

Man is ever a stranger to the ways by which Providence regulates the order of things. The interference of foreign despots may serve to introduce into their own enslaved countries the principles they come to oppose. Liberty and equality are blessings too great to be the inheritance of France alone. It is an honor to her to be their first champion; and she may now say to her enemies, with a mighty voice, "O! ye Austrians, ye Prussians! ye who now turn your bayonets against us, it is for you, it is for all Europe, it is for all mankind, and not for France alone, that she raises the standard of Liberty and Equality!"

The public cause has hitherto suffered from the contradictions contained in the Constitution of the Constituent Assembly. Those contradictions have served to divide the opinions of individuals at home, and to obscure the great principles of the Revolution in other countries. But when those contradictions shall be removed, and the Constitution be made conformable to the Declaration of Rights; when the bagatelles of monarchy, royalty, regency and hereditary succession, shall be exposed, with all their absurdities, a new ray of light will be thrown over the world, and the Revolution will derive new strength by being universally understood.

The scene that now opens itself to France extends far beyond the boundaries of her own dominions. Every nation is becoming her colleague, and every court is become her enemy. It is now the cause of all nations, against the cause of all courts. The terror that despotism felt, clandestinely begot a confederation of despots; and their attack upon France was produced by their fears at home.

In entering on this great scene, greater than any nation has yet been called to act in let us say to the agitated mind, be calm. Let us punish by instructing, rather than by revenge. Let us begin the new era by a greatness of friendship, and hail the approach of union and success.

Your fellow-citizen,

THOMAS PAINE.

## AN ESSAY FOR THE USE OF NEW REPUBLICANS IN THEIR OPPOSITION TO MONARCHY

The following *Essay* was first published in *Le Patriote Francois* of October 20, 1792. The setting in France at the time Paine wrote this article was extremely exciting. On September 20, 1792, at Valmy, the French army was able to stop the invading enemies and force them to retreat. On that same day, the National Convention met in Paris and, a day later, royalty was abolished in France. The next day it was decreed that September 22 should be regarded as the beginning of the First Year of the French Republic.

A few days after this address was published, Paine was delegated to congratulate the Convention on the steps taken after September 20th. His statement went: "Citizen President: In behalf of my fellow-deputies and of the General Council of the Commune of Calais I have the honor of congratulating the Convention on the abolition of Royalty. At the same time, I must, in the midst of the popular rejoicing, express my regret that the folly of our ancestors should compel us to treat with such solemnity the laying of a phantom."—*Editor*.

**T**HE attainment of any important possession that we have long been ardently coveting is at once a source of subsequent self-congratulation. Indeed, the feeling that we have triumphed so absorbs us that we immediately lose the sense of the cause of our success. But, after dwelling awhile on our new happiness, we verify all the incidents that have produced it, and the examination of each of them separately still further enhances our satisfaction. It is our present purpose to develop fully the reasons why our readers should participate in our enjoyment.

All French citizens have joined in celebrating the downfall of Royalty and the creation of a Republic, yet, among those who applaud, there are some persons who have not an entirely clear comprehension of their former situation or of that upon which they are now entering.

All Frenchmen have shuddered at the perjuries of the King, the plots of his Court and the profligacy of his brothers; so that the race of Louis was deposed from the throne of their hearts long before it was deposed by legislative decree. We do not effect much, however, if we merely dethrone an idol; we must also break to pieces the pedestal upon which

it rested. It is the office of royalty rather than the holder of the office that is fatal in its consequences. But everyone has not a vivid conception of this fact.

Yet all Frenchmen should be able in the present conjuncture to prove the absurdity of Royalty and the reasonableness of a Republic, whenever these forms of government are discussed; because if you now enjoy freedom and happiness, you should be conscious of the reasons for your contentment.

As a distinction is drawn frequently between Royalty and Monarchy, we had better examine into the question of the pertinency of this distinction.

The system of Royalty has begun in the same fashion in all countries and among all peoples. A band of robbers, gathered together under a leader, throw themselves on a country and make slaves of its people; then they elect their leader king. Next comes another robber chief, who conquers and kills the first, and makes himself king in his stead. After a time, the recollection of all this violence is obliterated, and the successors of the robber are held to reign quite legitimately. They are shrewd enough to confer a few benefits now and then on their subjects; they corrupt those about them, and, to give an air of sanctity to their origin, they devise pedigrees that are purely fictitious; afterward, they are aided by the dishonesty of the priests, and religion befriends their usurped power, which will henceforth be regarded as their hereditary possession.

The consequences that flow from Royalty are such as might be expected from its source. The annals of monarchy abound in such hideous wickedness, such horrible cruelties that only by reading them can we form any idea of the baseness of which human nature is capable. The pictures that we there behold of kings and their ministers and courtiers are so horrifying that humanity is forced to turn away from them with a shudder.

And yet what else could be expected? Kings are monsters in the natural order, and what can we expect from monsters but miseries and crimes? Now, what is Monarchy? Whatever effort may have been made to conceal its true nature and to familiarize the people with that hateful term, its real meaning cannot be disguised: it signifies *absolute power vested in a single person*, although that person be a fool, a traitor or a tyrant. Do we not outrage national honor when we suggest the possibility of any people being ruled by such a person as I have denoted?

But, apart from the defects of the individual, government by a single person is vicious in itself. A prince is too small a person himself to be capable of governing even the smallest state. What an absurdity it is, then, to believe in his capacity for the government of a great nation!

However, you will say, there have been kings who were men of genius. Granted: but such intelligent rulers have been a greater curse to nations than those who were intellectually deficient. Kings of that class have always been ambitious, and have compelled their subjects to pay dearly for the conquests and *Te-deums* that were celebrated over the land while its inhabitants were dying of hunger. We have only to turn to the career of Louis XIV and of other sovereigns in proof of the truth of this statement.

What, however, of those rulers who have no claim to ability, and who substitute for it the vices that seem inherent in Royalty? We have the following description of them in the *Contrat Social* of J. J. Rousseau: "The men who take the foremost place in monarchies are often simply base marplots, ordinary rogues, mean intriguers. The trivial intellectual qualities that have raised these people to high positions in courts but serve to make more apparent to the public their real insignificance." In a word, the story of all monarchies supplies proof that, while monarchs do nothing, their ministers do nothing but evil.

While Royalty is harmful from its very nature, hereditary Royalty is, in addition, absurd and disgusting. Just think of it! Yonder is a man who claims that he has a hereditary right to rule me! Where did he get it? From his ancestors, he says, and from mine. But how could they give him a right they did not possess? No man has power over posterity. I can no more be the slave of those who went before me than I can of those who now exist. If we returned to life, we could not rob ourselves of the rights acquired in a second existence; still less could we rob posterity of their rights.

A hereditary crown! A throne to be handed over to a successor! Why, it is to treat our posterity as a herd of cattle who are entirely destitute of either rights or will. No more infamous and indecent illusion ever disgraced humanity than that the people is a herd which may be transmitted from one king to another.

From one point of view, we should not, perhaps, censure kings for their savage cruelty, their brutality and their oppressions; it is not they who are in fault; it is hereditary succession: a swamp breeds serpents; hereditary succession breeds oppressors.

The following is the system of logic upon which are founded the claims of Royalty: "I," says the hereditary prince, "owe my authority to my birth; I owe my birth to God; therefore, I owe nothing to men." When he has a subservient minister, he then proceeds to commit all the crimes of which tyranny is capable, and he never has any idea that he is acting wrongfully. We have plenty of evidence of this fact in the history of all countries.

You must also see clearly that there must be an entire absence of sympathy between ruler and people. What renders us kind and humane? Is it not sympathy, the power which I have of putting myself in my neighbor's place? How can a monarch have sympathy? He can never put himself in anybody's place, for the simple reason that he can never be in any place but his own.

A monarch is naturally and preëminently an egotist. We have innumerable proofs which show that such a person is altogether separated from humanity. When Charles II was asked to punish Lauderdale for his cruelty to the Scots, his reply was: "Lauderdale may have oppressed the Scots, but he has always supported my interests." A frequent expression of Louis XIV was: "If I were to comply with the will of my people, I should not be King." He lost his temper when anyone spoke of the "safety of the State," or "the calamities of the State."

We might not object to the hereditary succession of kings, if we could always be certain that the throne should be occupied by a wise and virtuous prince. If, however, we but consider the character of those who sit on the thrones of Europe at the present hour, what do we discover? We find that the men who fill them are either fools or tyrants or traitors or libertines, and that in some of them are combined all imaginable vices. It would thus seem that nature and destiny have agreed in the present age to supply us with tangible evidence of the atrocious wickedness and folly of Royalty.

Yet, after all, there is nothing distinctive about the present age in this relation. Hereditary succession is so essentially vicious that it is impossible for the people to hope for the advent of a virtuous prince. A person educated in the belief that he has a right to command others is inevitably bound by his surroundings to lose all sense of reason and justice.

In fact, were not this notion of hereditary kings a serious matter, we might feel inclined to laugh at the absurdity of such an institution. We have to imagine that, as in the case of racehorses, a prince has certain

peculiar characteristics that destine him for the throne, just as the courser has certain physical qualities which destine him for the race-track. But in the case of the noble race of Andalusian steeds, certain precautions are taken to insure its genuineness. Surely, in the case of princes, except similar precautions are adopted, no matter how much they violate the laws of decency, it is impossible to discover whether the offspring of a queen is a legitimate prince or a bastard.

Everything connected with hereditary Royalty bears the mark of infamy or folly. Just consider: a person cannot be a mere workman without some sort of ability; to be a king all that a man requires is to be born. The story told by Montaigne of the dog Barkouf who was appointed governor of a province by an Asiatic monarch, excites our amusement. We laugh at the folly of the Egyptians, who set up a pebble on a throne and acknowledged it as their King. But a pebble or a dog would be less harmful to the people who bowed before them than are kings to the nations that pay them servile homage.

An irrational animal or a piece of lifeless rock is less dangerous to a nation than a human idol. Hardly a single example can be adduced where a man of genius has left behind him children worthy of their parentage. And yet the authority vested in a sovereign, must descend to his son! It is like saying that a wise father always has a wise son! A good governor by inheritance is as likely as a good author by inheritance.

Common sense, therefore, is as much outraged by the idea of Royalty as common right is. Still, it is more than an absurdity; it is a plague, because a nation that prostrates itself in presences of an absurdity is degraded. Can that people which reveres equally vice and virtue, ignorance and wisdom, ever have the capacity for managing important affairs? For this reason, it will be noticed that the inhabitants of a monarchical country are often intellectually degenerate and are distinguished for their servile disposition.

Another consequence of this baleful institution is that it destroys equality and introduces what is called "Nobility." Evil a thing as Nobility is, it is less so than government by inheritance. All that the noble asks of me is that I recognize his superiority because of his birth, while the King requires my submission: I am amused by the noble; I feel like setting my foot upon the King.

It was thought that when the Convention voted the abolition of Royalty, someone would speak in its favor. In this relation, a certain philosopher, who believed that no decree should be issued without a



preliminary discussion of the question, moved for the appointment of an orator who should bring forward all the arguments that could be adduced in favor of Royalty, so that everything that could be said in its justification should be made clear to the world. It was on the principle that counsel is assigned to the defense, no matter how strong is the evidence of the prisoner's guilt. In the Republic of Venice there was an official whose function it was to assail all testimony, however indisputable. Royalty, however, has plenty of defenders. It is only fitting that we should examine the cogency of their arguments.

1. *The people need a King to protect them from the tyranny of the powerful.*

Let the Rights of Man be established, Equality enthroned, a sound Constitution drafted, with its powers clearly defined; let all privileges, distinctions of birth and monopolies be annulled; establish liberty of trade and industry, the freedom of the press, equal division of family inheritances, publicity of all government measures, and you will be certain to have excellent laws, and may dispel from your mind the dread of the powerful; for, whether they like it or not, all citizens will then be subject to the law.

2. *A King will prevent the Legislature from usurping authority.*

If representatives, who cannot act as administrators or judges, are often renewed, if their functions are determined by law, if the people can summon at any moment their national conventions and primary assemblies, the tyranny of a legislature would have only a very short existence, especially among a people capable of self-defense, who can read, and have newspapers, guns and pikes. Why assume an evil solely for the purpose of providing a remedy?

3. *To strengthen the executive power, we should have a King.*

Such a proposition might have a certain force when we had nobles, priests, parliaments, and other privileged classes. Now, however, the law is all powerful, and as it is the expression of the general will, it is the interest of everyone to see that it is executed. On the contrary, the presence of a hereditary king tends to weaken the executive power, as was clearly demonstrated recently when we attempted to unite Royalty and Liberty in marriage bonds.

For that matter, those who hold this opinion are persons who identify the king with the Executive Power. My readers, I fancy, entertain more enlightened sentiments.

The following is another not uncommon fallacy: "We must have

either an hereditary chief or an elective chief. If we have an elective chief, the citizens will quarrel about the candidates, and every election will be followed by a civil war." In the first place, such civil wars as have arisen in England and France were the result, not of election, but of hereditary succession; and, in addition, the scourge of foreign war has, for a score of times, devastated these kingdoms, because of the claims asserted by certain royal families. In fine, all the disturbances that occurred during the Regency had their source in hereditary succession.

The great point, however, to be considered is this: an elective chief will not be followed by a train of courtiers, will not be surrounded with royal pageantry, will not be puffed up with servile adulation, and will not have an income of thirty millions; and besides, his fellow-citizens will not elect him to an office of several years' duration without limiting his authority and keeping his income within due bounds.

Moreover, the presence of a king entails the presence of an aristocracy and of taxation reaching thirty millions. This is doubtless why Franklin styled Royalism *a crime as bad as poisoning*.

The sole reason why Royalty, with all its visionary splendor, its assumed necessity, the superstitious idolatry that follows in its train, was created was for the purpose of exacting from its victims excessive taxation and willing submission.

Royalty and Popery have had the same goal to attain and have been supported by the same deceptions; they are now falling into the same decay under the rays of the same Light.

## ON THE PROPRIETY OF BRINGING LOUIS XVI TO TRIAL

After France was proclaimed a Republic, the question what was to be done with the former king arose. Most Girondins opposed bringing the king to trial, fearing that during its course secrets revealing their own treacherous role would be made public. Although he was losing favor with the Jacobins at this time because of his association with the Girondins, Paine did not join with his associates in seeking to avoid the trial and opposed their maneuvers to adjourn it. He urged that "Louis Capet" be tried for his role in the conspiracy of the "crowned brigands" against liberty. It was finally decided to try the former monarch on a charge of treason.

Paine wrote this address in English on November 20, 1792 and, on the following day, had it translated and read to the French National Convention, to which he was a delegate.—*Editor.*

AS I do not know precisely what day the Convention will resume the discussion on the trial of Louis XVI, and, on account of my inability to express myself in French, I cannot speak at the tribune, I request permission to deposit in your hands the inclosed paper, which contains my opinion on that subject. I make this demand with so much eagerness, because circumstances will prove how much it imports to France, that Louis XVI should continue to enjoy good health. I should be happy if the Convention would have the goodness to hear this paper read this morning, as I propose sending a copy of it to London, to be printed in the English journals.

THOMAS PAINE.

*A secretary read the opinion of Thomas Paine.*

I think it necessary that Louis XVI should be tried; not that this advice is suggested by a spirit of vengeance, but because this measure appears to me just, lawful, and conformable to sound policy. If Louis is innocent, let us put him to prove his innocence; if he is guilty, let the national will determine whether he shall be pardoned or punished.

But besides the motives personal to Louis XVI, there are others which make his trial necessary. I am about to develop these motives, in the language which I think expresses them, and no other. I forbid myself the use of equivocal expression or of mere ceremony.

There was formed among the crowned brigands of Europe a conspiracy which threatened not only French liberty, but likewise that of all nations. Everything tends to the belief that Louis XVI was the partner of this horde of conspirators. You have this man in your power, and he is at present the only one of the band of whom you can make sure. I consider Louis XVI in the same point of view as the two first robbers taken up in the affair of the Store Room; their trial led to discovery of the gang to which they belonged.

We have seen the unhappy soldiers of Austria, of Prussia, and the other powers which declared themselves our enemies, torn from their fire-sides, and drawn to butchery like wretched animals, to sustain, at the cost of their blood, the common cause of these crowned brigands. They loaded the inhabitants of those regions with taxes to support the expenses of the war. All this was not done solely for Louis XVI. Some

of the conspirators have acted openly: but there is reason to presume that this conspiracy is composed of two classes of brigands; those who have taken up arms, and those who have lent to their cause secret encouragement and clandestine assistance. Now it is indispensable to let France and the whole world know all these accomplices.

A little time after the National Convention was constituted, the Minister for Foreign Affairs presented the picture of all the governments of Europe—those whose hostilities were public, and those that acted with a mysterious circumspection. This picture supplied grounds for just suspicions of the part the latter were disposed to take, and since then various circumstances have occurred to confirm those suspicions.

We have already penetrated into some part of the conduct of Mr. Guelph, Elector of Hanover, and strong presumptions involve the same man, his Court and ministers, in quality of King of England. M. Calonne has constantly been favored with a friendly reception at that Court. The arrival of Mr. Smith, secretary to Mr. Pitt, at Coblenz, when the emigrants were assembling there; the recall of the English Ambassador; the extravagant joy manifested by the Court of St. James's at the false report of the defeat of Dumouriez, when it was communicated by Lord Elgin, then Minister of Great Britain at Brussels—all these circumstances render him [George III] extremely suspicious; the trial of Louis XVI will probably furnish more decisive proofs.<sup>7</sup>

The long subsisting fear of a revolution in England, would alone, I believe, prevent that court from manifesting as much publicity in its operations as Austria and Prussia. Another reason could be added to this: The inevitable decrease of credit, by means of which alone all the old governments could obtain fresh loans, in proportion as the probability of revolutions increased. Whoever invests in the new loans of such governments must expect to lose his stock.

Everybody knows that the Landgrave of Hesse fights only as far as he is paid. He has been for many years in the pay of the Court of London. If the trial of Louis XVI could bring it to light that this detestable dealer in human flesh has been paid with the produce of the taxes imposed on the English people, it would be justice to that nation to disclose that fact. It would at the same time give to France an exact knowledge of the character of that court, which has not ceased to be the most intriguing in Europe, ever since its connection with Germany.

Louis XVI considered as an individual, is an object beneath the notice

<sup>7</sup> Paine seems unaware of the fears of the Girondins over these revelations.—*Editor*.

of the Republic; but when he is looked upon as a part of that band of conspirators, as an accused man whose trial may lead all nations in the world to know and detest the disastrous system of monarchy, and the plots and intrigues of their own courts, he ought to be tried.

If the crimes for which Louis XVI is arraigned were absolutely personal to him, without reference to general conspiracies, and confined to the affairs of France, the plea of inviolability, that folly of the moment, might have been urged in his behalf with some appearance of reason; but he is arraigned not only for treasons against France, but for having conspired against all Europe, and if France is to be just to all Europe we ought to use every means in our power to discover the whole extent of that conspiracy.

France is now a Republic; she has completed her revolution; but she cannot earn all its advantages so long as she is surrounded with despotic governments. Their armies and their marine oblige her also to keep troops and ships in readiness. It is therefore her immediate interest that all nations shall be as free as herself; that revolutions shall be universal; and since the trial of Louis XVI can serve to prove to the world the flagitiousness of governments in general, and the necessity of revolutions, she ought not to let slip so precious an opportunity.

The despots of Europe have formed alliances to preserve their respective authority, and to perpetuate the oppression of peoples. This is the end they proposed to themselves in their invasion of French territory. They dread the effect of the French Revolution in the bosom of their own countries; and in hopes of preventing it, they are come to attempt the destruction of this revolution before it should attain its perfect maturity. Their attempt has not been attended with success. France has already vanquished their armies; but it remains for her to sound the particulars of the conspiracy, to discover, to expose to the eyes of the world, those despots who had the infamy to take part in it; and the world expects from her that act of justice.

These are my motives for demanding that Louis XVI be judged; and it is in this sole point of view that his trial appears to me of sufficient importance to receive the attention of the Republic.

As to "inviolability," I would not have such a word mentioned. If, seeing in Louis XVI only a weak and narrow-minded man, badly reared, like all his kind, given, as it is said, to frequent excesses of drunkenness—a man whom the National Assembly imprudently raised again on a throne for which he was not made—he is shown hereafter some compas-

sion, it shall be the result of the national magnanimity, and not the burlesque notion of a pretended "inviolability."

THOMAS PAINE.

## REASONS FOR PRESERVING THE LIFE OF LOUIS CAPET

After it was revealed during his trial that the king had been conspiring with the French émigrés and the courts of Europe to wage war upon the people of France, the Jacobins demanded the death of the king. Having failed to avoid the trial, the Girondins now sought to soften the verdict on the king, advocating that he be banished or interned. Paine supported this position, not because of any deference on his part to Royalty but because he feared that the execution of the king would give England a useful pretext for declaring war against France, and because he still could not forget that the king had once aided America gain her independence. In this address, a French translation of which was read to the National Convention on January 15, 1793, Paine pleaded with the delegates that they should not give "the tyrant of England the triumph of seeing the man perish on the scaffold who had aided my much-beloved America to break his chains."—*Editor*.

**CITIZEN PRESIDENT:** My hatred and abhorrence of monarchy are sufficiently known: they originate in principles of reason and conviction, nor, except with life, can they ever be extirpated; but my compassion for the unfortunate, whether friend or enemy, is equally lively and sincere.

I voted that Louis should be tried, because it was necessary to afford proofs to the world of the perfidy, corruption and abomination of the monarchical system. The infinity of evidence that has been produced exposes them in the most glaring and hideous colors; thence it results that monarchy, whatever form it may assume, arbitrary or otherwise, becomes necessarily a center round which are united every species of corruption, and the kingly trade is no less destructive of all morality in the human breast, than the trade of an executioner is destructive of its sensibility. I remember, during my residence in another country, that I was exceedingly struck with a sentence of M. Autheine at the Jacobins

[Club], which corresponds exactly with my own idea—"Make me a king to-day," said he, "and I shall be a robber to-morrow."

Nevertheless, I am inclined to believe that if Louis Capet had been born in obscure condition, had he lived within the circle of an amiable and respectable neighborhood, at liberty to practise the duties of domestic life, had he been thus situated, I cannot believe that he would have shown himself destitute of social virtues; we are, in a moment of fermentation like this, naturally little indulgent to his vices, or rather to those of his government; we regard them with additional horror and indignation; not that they are more heinous than those of his predecessors, but because our eyes are now open, and the veil of delusion at length withdrawn; yet the lamentable, degraded state to which he is actually reduced, is surely far less imputable to him than to the Constituent Assembly, which, of its own authority, without consent or advice of the people, restored him to the throne.

I was in Paris at the time of the flight, or abdication of Louis XVI, and when he was taken and brought back. The proposal of restoring him to supreme power struck me with amazement; and although at that time I was not a French citizen, yet as a citizen of the world I employed all the efforts that depended on me to prevent it.

A small society, composed only of five persons, two of whom are now members of the Convention, took at that time the name of the Republican Club (*Société Républicaine*). This society opposed the restoration of Louis, not so much on account of his personal offenses, as in order to overthrow the monarchy, and to erect on its ruins the republican system and an equal representation.

With this design, I traced out in the English language certain propositions, which were translated with some trifling alterations, and signed by Achille Duchâtelet, now Lieutenant-General in the army of the French Republic, and at that time one of the five members which composed our little party: the law requiring the signature of a citizen at the bottom of each printed paper.

The paper was indignantly torn by Malouet;<sup>8</sup> and brought forth in this very room as an article of accusation against the person who had signed it, the author and their adherents; but such is the revolution of events, that this paper is now received and brought forth for a very op-

<sup>8</sup> Pierre-Victor Malouet, former intendant of the French fleet, was originally a member of the Patriot party. Fear of the French masses swept him into the monarchist club.—*Editor*.

posite purpose—to remind the nation of the errors of that unfortunate day, that fatal error of not having then banished Louis XVI from its bosom, and to plead this day in favor of his exile, preferable to his death. The paper in question was conceived in the following terms: [See “A Republican Manifesto,” pp. 517–519 above.]

Having thus explained the principles and the exertions of the republicans at that fatal period, when Louis was reinstated in full possession of the executive power which by his flight had been suspended, I return to the subject, and to the deplorable situation in which the man is now actually involved.

What was neglected at the time of which I have been speaking, has been since brought about by the force of necessity. The wilful, treacherous defects in the former Constitution have been brought to light; the continual alarm of treason and conspiracy aroused the nation, and produced eventually a second revolution. The people have beat down royalty, never, never to rise again; they have brought Louis Capet to the bar, and demonstrated in the face of the whole world, the intrigues, the cabals, the falsehood, corruption, and rooted depravity, the inevitable effects of monarchical government. There remains then only one question to be considered, what is to be done with this man?

For myself I seriously confess, that when I reflect on the unaccountable folly that restored the executive power to his hands, all covered as he was with perjuries and treason, I am far more ready to condemn the Constituent Assembly than the unfortunate prisoner Louis Capet.

But abstracted from every other consideration, there is one circumstance in his life which ought to cover or at least to palliate a great number of his transgressions, and this very circumstance affords to the French nation a blessed occasion of extricating itself from the yoke of kings, without defiling itself in the impurities of their blood.

It is to France alone, I know, that the United States of America owe that support which enabled them to shake off the unjust and tyrannical yoke of Britain. The ardor and zeal which she displayed to provide both men and money, were the natural consequence of a thirst for liberty. But as the nation at that time, restrained by the shackles of her own government, could only act by the means of a monarchical organ, this organ—whatever in other respects the object might be—certainly performed a good, a great action.

Let then those United States be the safeguard and asylum of Louis



Capet. There, hereafter, far removed from the miseries and crimes of loyalty, he may learn, from the constant aspect of public prosperity, that the true system of government consists not in kings, but in fair, equal and honorable representation.

In relating this circumstance, and in submitting this proposition, I consider myself as a citizen of both countries. I submit it as a citizen of America, who feels the debt of gratitude which he owes to every Frenchman. I submit it also as a man, who, although the enemy of kings, cannot forget that they are subject to human frailties. I support my proposition as a citizen of the French Republic, because it appears to me the best, the most politic measure that can be adopted.

As far as my experience in public life extends, I have ever observed, that the great mass of the people are invariably just, both in their intentions and in their objects; but the true method of accomplishing an effect does not always show itself in the first instance. For example; the English nation had groaned under the despotism of the Stuarts. Hence Charles I lost his life; yet Charles II was restored to all the plenitude of power, which his father had lost. Forty years had not expired when the same family strove to re-establish their ancient oppression; so the nation then banished from its territories the whole race. The remedy was effectual. The Stuart family sank into obscurity, confounded itself with the multitude, and is at length extinct.

The French nation has carried her measures of government to a greater length. France is not satisfied with exposing the guilt of the monarch. She has penetrated into the vices and horrors of the monarchy. She has shown them clear as daylight, and forever crushed that system; and he, whoever he may be, that should ever dare to reclaim those rights would be regarded not as a pretender, but punished as a traitor.

Two brothers of Louis Capet have banished themselves from the country; but they are obliged to comply with the spirit and etiquette of the courts where they reside. They can advance no pretensions on their own account, so long as Louis Capet shall live.

Monarchy, in France, was a system pregnant with crime and murders, cancelling all natural ties, even those by which brothers are united. We know how often they have assassinated each other to pave a way to power. As those hopes which the emigrants had reposed in Louis XVI, are fled, the last that remains rests upon his death, and their situation inclines them to desire this catastrophe, that they may once again rally around a more active chief, and try one further effort under the fortune

of the ci-devant Monsieur and D' Artois.<sup>9</sup> That such an enterprise would precipitate them into a new abyss of calamity and disgrace, it is not difficult to foresee; yet it might be attended with mutual loss, and it is our duty as legislators not to spill a drop of blood when our purpose may be effectually accomplished without it.

It has already been proposed to abolish the punishment of death, and it is with infinite satisfaction that I recollect the humane and excellent oration pronounced by Robespierre on that subject in the Constituent Assembly.<sup>10</sup> This cause must find its advocates in every corner where enlightened politicians and lovers of humanity exist, and it ought above all to find them in this assembly.

Monarchical governments have trained the human race, and inured it to the sanguinary arts and refinements of punishment; and it is exactly the same punishment which has so long shocked the sight and tormented the patience of the people, that now, in their turn, they practise in revenge upon their oppressors. But it becomes us to be strictly on our guard against the abomination and perversity of monarchical examples: as France has been the first of European nations to abolish royalty, let her also be the first to abolish the punishment of death, and to find out a milder and more effectual substitute.

In the particular case now under consideration, I submit the following propositions: 1st, That the National Convention shall pronounce sentence of banishment on Louis and his family, 2d, That Louis Capet shall be detained in prison till the end of the war, and at that epoch the sentence of banishment to be executed.

## SHALL LOUIS XVI BE RESPITED?

Paine refused to support the Girondin proposal calling for a popular referendum to decide the king's fate. At the same time, however, while voting the king guilty of treason, he refused to vote for the death penalty. He had this address translated and read to the French National Convention on

<sup>9</sup> Count of Artois, royalist leader in France, had published a manifesto on August 17, 1790 threatening that he would not lay down arms till the king was restored to the throne.—*Editor*.

<sup>10</sup> Robespierre, however, favored the execution of the king.—*Editor*.

January 19, 1793 by Bancal, a Girondist delegate. Marat, the great Jacobin leader, interrupted the speaker to charge that the translation was incorrect and that the sentiments could not be those of Paine. The incident revealed that troubled times were in store for Paine.—*Editor.*

**T**HE decision come to in the Convention yesterday in favor of death has filled me with genuine sorrow—

*Marat (interrupting)*—I deny the right of Thomas Paine to vote on such a subject; as he is a Quaker, of course his religious views run counter to the infliction of capital punishment. (*There is considerable disorder, which, however, is allayed by shouts for "free speech."* Then Bancal continues the reading of the translation.)

I may lay claim to the possession of a certain amount of experience; I have taken no inconsiderable part in the struggle for freedom during the Revolution of the United States of America: it is a cause to which I have devoted almost twenty years of my existence. Liberty and humanity have ever been the words that best expressed my thoughts, and it is my conviction that the union of these two principles, in all cases, tends more than anything also to insure the grandeur of a nation. I am aware of the excitement and anger aroused by the perils to which France, and especially Paris, have been subjected; and yet, if we could only catch a glimpse of the future, long after all this excitement and anger have passed away, it is not unlikely that the action which you have sanctioned today will assume the aspect of having been performed from a spirit of revenge rather than from a spirit of justice. (*Murmurs.*) My solicitude for the welfare of France has now been transformed into concern for her honor.

Should I, after returning to America, spend my leisure in writing a history of the French Revolution, it would give me greater satisfaction to be able to set down a multitude of mistakes prompted by a feeling of compassion rather than to record a single deed prompted by even a just severity. I voted against the resolution that the Convention should submit its judgment to the decision of the people; I did so, however, in the expectation that it would not decide in favor of death, but rather in favor of a penalty for which I believe the nation would have voted; namely, imprisonment during the war and exile afterward. Such a punishment, embracing as it would the whole family, would be more effective than any other that can be imagined.

I have not altered my views as to the undesirability of leaving the pun-

ishment to the decision of the primary assemblies, for I consider that there is a better method of dealing with the matter. The Convention has been chosen in order that it may establish a constitution, which constitution must be subsequently ratified by the primary assemblies. As a necessary consequence, another assembly must then be elected. Now, it is not probable that the Convention now sitting can continue for more than five or six months.

The selection that shall be made of the new deputies will voice the opinion of the people as strongly on the justice of your sentence as would the result of an appeal to the primary assemblies. As then, our functions must soon terminate, we should be careful to pay due regard to the welfare of those who shall succeed us. We should not, by adopting measures calculated to enlarge the number of our enemies or to reduce that of our friends—especially when our financial position may be worse than it is to-day—place difficulties in the path of the latter. Let us not, therefore, decide any question hastily or rashly.

France's sole ally is the United States of America. It is the only nation upon which France can depend for a supply of naval stores, because all the kingdoms of northern Europe are either now waging war against her, or shortly will be. Now, it is an unfortunate circumstance that the individual whose fate we are at present determining has always been regarded by the people of the United States as a friend to their own revolution. Should you come, then, to the resolution of putting Louis to death, you will excite the heartfelt sorrow of your ally. If I were able to speak the French language, I would appear in person at your bar, and, in the name of the American people, ask that Louis be respited—

*Thuriot*—The words you are reading are not those of Thomas Paine.

*Marat*—I denounce the translator. Such opinions are not Thomas Paine's. The translation is incorrect.

*Garran*—It is a correct translation of the original, which I have read.

(*Great confusion, Paine ascends the tribune and, standing beside Bancal, declares that the opinions just delivered are his own.*)

*Bancal continues to read the translation:*

It is my fondest desire that when an ambassador has been sent by your executive committee to Philadelphia, he may carry with him the tidings from France of the respite granted by the National Convention to Louis, solely because of its friendship for America. In the name of the citizens of that Republic, I beg that you delay the execution. Do not,

I beseech you, bestow upon the English tyrant the satisfaction of learning that the man who helped America, the land of my love, to burst her fetters, has died on the scaffold.

*Marat (rushing into the middle of the chamber)*—Paine's reason for voting against the death penalty is that he is a Quaker.

*Paine*—I have been influenced in my vote by public policy as well as by moral reasons.

## PLAN OF A DECLARATION

### OF THE NATURAL, CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS OF MAN

In October, 1792 Paine served on a committee of nine members appointed by the National Convention to draw up a Constitution for France. He collaborated with Danton, Brissot, Condorcet, Sieyès and four others in drafting the new frame of government, but it was never adopted. This *Plan* was probably drawn up by Paine in collaboration with Condorcet in January, 1793.—*Editor*.

**T**HE aim of men gathered together in society being the maintenance of their natural, civil and political rights, these rights are the basis of the social compact, and their recognition and their declaration should precede the constitution which assures their guarantee.

1. The natural, civil and political rights of man are liberty, equality, security, property, social guarantees, and resistance to oppression.

2. Liberty is the power to do everything that does not interfere with the rights of others: thus, the exercise of the natural rights of every individual has no limits save those that assure to other members of society the enjoyment of the same rights.

3. The preservation of liberty depends on obedience to the law, which is the expression of the general will. Anything that is not prohibited by the law cannot be forbidden, and no one can be constrained to do that which the law does not ordain.

4. Every man is free to publish his thoughts and opinions.

5. The freedom of the press, and of every other medium for the expression of thought, cannot be interdicted, suspended or limited.

6. Every man is free in the exercise of his religion.

7. Equality consists in the enjoyment of the same rights by each.

8. The law should be equal for all, whether it rewards or punishes, whether it protects or restrains.

9. All citizens have the right of admission to all public positions, employments and functions. The only motives of preference known to a free people are talents and virtues.

10. Security consists in the protection granted by society to every citizen for the preservation of his person, his possessions and his rights.

11. No one should be summoned before a court, arrested, accused or imprisoned except in cases determined by law, and according to the forms which it prescribes. All other acts directed against a citizen are arbitrary and null.

12. Those who solicit, assist, sign, execute or cause to be executed such acts, are criminals and should be punished.

13. Citizens exposed to such acts have the right to repel force by force; but every citizen, summoned or arrested by the authority of the law, and according to the forms prescribed by the law, should at once submit: he is culpable if he resist.

14. As every man is presumed to be innocent until he is proved to be guilty, all rigor that is not needed for the security of his person should be severely checked by the law, in case of his arrest.

15. No one should be punished save by a law enacted and promulgated anteriorly to the crime, and legally applied.

16. A law that punishes crimes committed before its existence, is an act of despotism, because a retroactive effect given to a law is in itself a crime.

17. The law should not decree any penalties that are not strictly and evidently necessary for the general safety. The punishment should fit the crime and be useful to society.

18. The right of property consists in the liberty of every man to make such a disposition of his possessions, capital, income and industry as he chooses.

19. No citizen can be prevented from engaging in any kind of labor, commerce or agriculture; he can manufacture, sell and transport every species of production.

20. Every man can pledge his services and his time; but he cannot sell himself: his person is not an alienable property.

21. No one can be deprived of the smallest portion of his property without his own consent, except when a public need, legally established,

plainly requires it, and then only on condition of a just, preliminary indemnity.

22. No tax can be exacted save for the general utility and for the purpose of relieving the public necessities. All citizens have the right of assenting, either in person or by the representatives, to the imposition of taxes.

23. Education is the right of everyone, and society owes it to all its members equally.

24. To aid the needy is a sacred debt of society; and it is for the law to determine its extent and application.

25. The social guarantee of the rights of man is based upon the national sovereignty.

26. The national sovereignty is one, indivisible, imprescriptible and inalienable.

27. It resides essentially in the entire people, and each citizen has an equal right to concur in its exercise.

28. No partial assembly of citizens and no individual, can be invested with this sovereignty, or can exercise any authority or fulfil any public function without the formal delegation of the law.

29. The social guarantee cannot exist if the limits of public functions are not clearly determined by the law, and if the responsibility of all public functionaries is not assured.

30. All citizens are bound to concur in this guarantee, and to assist the law, when they are summoned in its name.

31. Men, gathered together in society, should have the legal means of resisting oppression.

32. There is oppression when a law violates the natural, civil or political rights which it ought to guarantee. There is oppression when the law is violated by public functionaries in its application to individual acts. There is oppression when arbitrary acts, opposed to the expression, of the law, violate the rights of citizens. In every free government, the method of resistance to these various acts of oppression should be regulated by the constitution.

33. A people has always the right to review, reform and change its constitution. One generation has not the right to subject future generations to its laws; and all heredity in public employments is absurd and tyrannical.

## A CITIZEN OF AMERICA TO THE CITIZENS OF EUROPE

In the collections of the French Archives, marked "Etats-Unis, vol. 38, Part II, July, 1793—October," is a document entitled "A Citizen of America to the Citizens of Europe." The name of Paine is pencilled on the document, and it is said to have been written in America, and is dated "Philadelphia, July 28, 1793; 18th Year of Independence." The document was undoubtedly written by Paine when he was still in Paris, but it is not clear who was responsible for placing its origin in Philadelphia.

The copy printed below is from a photostat of the original in the French Archives, and is published through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.  
—*Editor.*

**U**NDERSTANDING that a proposal is intended to be made at the ensuing meeting of the Congress of the United States of America "to send commissioners to Europe to confer with the ministers of all the neutral powers for the purpose of negotiating preliminaries of peace," I address this letter to you on that subject, and on the several matters connected therewith.

In order to discuss this subject through all its circumstances, it will be necessary to take a review of the state of Europe, prior to the French Revolution. It will from thence appear, that the powers leagued against France are fighting to attain an object, which, were it possible to be attained, would be injurious to themselves.

This is not an uncommon error in the history of wars and governments, of which the conduct of the English Government in the war against America is a striking instance. She commenced that war for the avowed purpose of subjugating America; and after wasting upwards of one hundred millions sterling, and then abandoning the object, she discovered, in the course of three or four years, that the prosperity of England was increased instead of being diminished by the independence of America. In short, every circumstance is pregnant with some natural effect, upon which intentions and opinions have no influence; and the political error lies in misjudging what the effect will be. England misjudged it in the American War, and the reasons I shall now offer will



show, that she misjudges it in the present war. In discussing this subject, I leave out of the question everything respecting forms and systems of government; for as all the governments of Europe differ from each other, there is no reason that the Government of France should not differ from the rest.

#### OF THE STATE OF EUROPE PRIOR TO THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

The clamors continually raised in all the countries of Europe were, that the family of the Bourbons was become too powerful; that the intrigues of the Court of France endangered the peace of Europe. Austria saw with a jealous eye the connection of France with Prussia; and Prussia, in her turn became jealous of the connection of France with Austria; England had wasted millions unsuccessfully in attempting to prevent the family compact with Spain; Russia disliked the alliance between France and Turkey; and Turkey became apprehensive of the inclination of France toward an alliance with Russia. Sometimes the Quadruple Alliance alarmed some of the powers, and at other times a contrary system alarmed others, and in all those cases the charge was always made against the intrigues of the Bourbons.

Admitting those matters to be true, the only thing that could have quieted the apprehensions of all those powers with respect to the interference of France, would have been her entire NEUTRALITY in Europe; but this was impossible to be obtained, or if obtained was impossible to be secured, because the genius of her government was repugnant to all such restrictions.

It now happens that by entirely changing the genius of her government, which France has done for herself, this neutrality, which neither wars could accomplish nor treaties secure, arises naturally of itself and becomes the ground upon which the war should terminate. It is the thing that approaches the nearest of all others to what ought to be the political views of all the European powers; and there is nothing that can so effectually secure this neutrality as that the genius of the French Government should be different from the rest of Europe.

But if their object is to restore the Bourbons and monarchy together, they will unavoidably restore with it all the evils of which they have complained; and the first question of discord will be whose ally is that monarchy to be?

Will England agree to the restoration of the family compact against

which she has been fighting and scheming ever since it existed? Will Prussia agree to restore the alliance between France and Austria, or will Austria agree to restore the former connection between France and Prussia, formed on purpose to oppose herself; or will Spain or Russia, or any of the maritime powers, agree that France and her navy should be allied to England? In fine, will any of the powers agree to strengthen the hands of the other against itself? Yet all these cases involve themselves in the original question of the restoration of the Bourbons; and, on the other hand, all of them disappear by the neutrality of France.

If their object is not to restore the Bourbons it must be the impracticable project of a partition of the country. The Bourbons will then be out of the question, or, more properly speaking, they will be put in a worse condition; for as the preservation of the Bourbons made a part of the first object, the extirpation of them makes a part of the second. Their pretended friends will then become interested in their destruction, because it is favorable to the purpose of partition that none of the nominal claimants should be left in existence.

But however the project of a partition may at first blind the eyes of the Confederacy, or however each of them may hope to outwit the other in the progress or in the end, the embarrassments that will arise are insurmountable. But even were the object attainable, it would not be of such general advantage to the parties as the neutrality of France, which costs them nothing, and to obtain which they would formerly have gone to war.

#### OF THE PRESENT STATE OF EUROPE, AND THE CONFEDERACY

In the first place the Confederacy is not of that kind that forms itself originally by concert and consent. It has been forced together by chance—a heterogeneous mass, held only by the accident of the moment; and the instant that accident ceases to operate, the parties will retire to their former rivalships.

I will now, independently of the impracticability of a partition project, trace out some of the embarrassments which will arise among the confederated parties; for it is contrary to the interest of a majority of them that such a project should succeed.

To understand this part of the subject it is necessary, in the first place, to cast an eye over the map of Europe and observe the geographical situation of the several parts of the Confederacy; for however strongly the

passionate politics of the moment may operate, the politics that arise from geographical situation are the most certain and will in all cases finally prevail.

The world has been long amused with what is called the "*balance of power*." But it is not upon armies only that this balance depends. Armies have but a small circle of action. Their progress is slow and limited. But when we take maritime power into the calculation, the scale extends universally. It comprehends all the interests connected with commerce.

The two great maritime powers are England and France. Destroy either of those and the balance of naval power is destroyed. The whole world of commerce that passes on the ocean would then lie at the mercy of the other, and the ports of any nation in Europe might be blocked up.

The geographical situation of those two maritime powers comes next under consideration. Each of them occupies one entire side of the channel from the straits of Dover and Calais to the opening into the Atlantic. The commerce of all the Northern nations, from Holland to Russia, must pass the straits of Dover and Calais and along the channel, to arrive at the Atlantic.

This being the case, the systematical politics of all the nations, northward of the straits of Dover and Calais, can be ascertained from their geographical situation; for it is necessary to the safety of their commerce that the two sides of the Channel, either in whole or in part, should not be in the possession either of England or France. While one nation possesses the whole of one side and the other nation the other side, the northern nations cannot help seeing that in any situation of things their commerce will always find protection on one side or the other. It may sometimes be that of England and sometimes that of France.

Again, while the English Navy continues in its present condition it is necessary that another navy should exist to control the universal sway the former would otherwise have over the commerce of all nations. France is the only nation in Europe where this balance can be placed. The navies of the North, were they sufficiently powerful, could not be sufficiently operative. They are blocked up by the ice six months in the year. Spain lies too remote; besides which it is only for the sake of her American mines that she keeps up her navy.

Applying these cases to the project of a partition of France, it will appear, that the project involves with it a DESTRUCTION OF THE BALANCE OF MARITIME POWER; because it is only by keeping France entire and indivisible that the balance can be kept up. This is a case that at first

sight lies remote and almost hidden. But it interests all the maritime and commercial nations in Europe in as great a degree as any case that has ever come before them. In short, it is with war as it is with law. In law, the first merits of the case become lost in the multitude of arguments; and in war they become lost in the variety of events. New objects arise that take the lead of all that went before, and everything assumes a new aspect. This was the case in the last great confederacy in what is called the Succession War, and most probably will be the case in the present.

I have now thrown together such thoughts as occurred to me on the several subjects connected with the confederacy against France, and interwoven with the interest of the neutral powers. Should a conference of the neutral powers take place, these observations will, at least, serve to generate others. The whole matter will then undergo a more extensive investigation than it is in my power to give; and the evils attending upon either of the projects, that of restoring the Bourbons, or of attempting a partition of France, will have the calm opportunity of being fully discussed.

On the part of England, it is very extraordinary that she should have engaged in a former confederacy, and a long expensive war, to *prevent* the family compact, and now engage in another confederacy to *preserve* it. And on the part of the other powers, it is as inconsistent that they should engage in a partition project, which, could it be executed, would immediately destroy the balance of maritime power in Europe, and would probably produce a second war to remedy the political errors of the first.

A CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

## OBSERVATIONS ON THE SITUATION OF THE POWERS JOINED AGAINST FRANCE

This paper appears in the French State Archives, and is endorsed "January 1793. Thomas Payne. Copie." The date is erroneous, for the reference to the defeat of the Duke of York at Dunkirk indicates that it was written during the late summer or early fall of 1793. The Duke of York set out to capture Dunkirk in the late spring of 1793.

The paper is printed from a photostatic copy of the French manuscript through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor.*

IT is always useful to know the position and the designs of one's enemies. It is much easier to do so by combining and comparing the events, and by examining the consequences which result from them, than by forming one's judgment by letters found or intercepted. These letters could be fabricated with the intention of deceiving, but events or circumstances have a character which is proper to them. If in the course of our political operations we mistake the designs of our enemy, it leads us to do precisely that which he desired we should do, and it happens, by the fact, but against our intentions, that we work for him.

It appears at first sight that the coalition against France is not of the nature of those which form themselves by a treaty. It has been the work of circumstances. It is a heterogeneous mass, the parts of which dash against each other, and often neutralize themselves. They have but one single point of reunion, the re-establishment of the monarchical government in France. Two means can conduct them to the execution of this plan. The first is, to re-establish the Bourbons, and with them the Monarchy; the second, to make a division similar to that which they have made in Poland, and to reign themselves in France. The political questions to be solved are, then, to know on which of these two plans it is most probable, the united Powers will act; and which are the points of these plans on which they will agree or disagree.

Supposing their aim to be the re-establishment of the Bourbons, the difficulty which will present itself, will be, to know who will be their Allies?

Will England consent to the re-establishment of the compact of family in the person of the Bourbons, against whom she has machinated and fought since her existence? Will Prussia consent to re-establish the alliance which subsisted between France and Austria, or will Austria wish to re-establish the ancient alliance between France and Prussia, which was directed against her? Will Spain, or any other maritime Power, allow France and her Marine to ally themselves to England? In fine, will any of these Powers consent to furnish forces which could be directed against herself? However, all these cases present themselves in the hypothesis of the restoration of the Bourbons.

If we suppose that their plan be the dismemberment of France, difficulties will present themselves under another form, but not of the same nature. It will no longer be a question, in this case, of the Bourbons, as their position will be worse; for if their preservation is a part of their first plan, their destruction ought to enter in the second; because it is

necessary for the success of the dismembering that not a single pretendant to the Crown of France should exist.

As one must think of all the probabilities in political calculations, it is not unlikely that some of the united Powers, having in view the first of these plans, and others the second,—that this may be one of the causes of their disagreement. It is to be remembered that Russia recognized a Regency from the beginning of Spring; not one of the other Powers followed her example. The distance of Russia from France, and the different countries by which she is separated from her, leave no doubt as to her dispositions with regard to the plan of division; and as much as one can form an opinion on the circumstances, it is not her scheme.

The coalition directed against France, is composed of two kinds of Powers. The Maritime Powers, not having the same interest as the others, will be divided, as to the execution of the project of division.

I do not hesitate to believe that the politic of the English Government is to foment the scheme of dismembering, and the entire destruction of the Bourbon family.

The difficulty which must arise, in this last hypothesis, between the united Maritime Powers proceeds from their views being entirely opposed.

The trading vessels of the Northern Nations, from Holland to Russia, must pass through the narrow Channel, which lies between Dunkirk and the coasts of England; and consequently not one of them, will allow this latter Power to have forts on both sides of this Strait. The audacity with which she has seized the neutral vessels ought to demonstrate to all Nations how much her schemes increase their danger, and menace the security of their present and future commerce.

Supposing then that the other Nations oppose the plans of England, she will be forced to cease the war with us; or, if she continues it, the Northern Nations will become interested in the safety of France.

There are three distinct parties in England at this moment: the Government party, the Revolutionary party, and an intermedial party, which is only opposed to the war on account of the expense it entails, and the harm it does commerce and manufacture. I am speaking of the People, and not of the Parliament. The latter is divided into two parties: the Ministerial and the Anti-Ministerial. The Revolutionary party, the intermedial party and the Anti-Ministerial party will all rejoice, publicly or privately, at the defeat of the Duke of York's army at Dunkirk. The intermedial party, because they hope that this defeat will finish the

war. The Anti-Ministerial party, because they hope it will overthrow the Ministry. And all the three because they hate the Duke of York. Such is the state of the different parties in England.

THOMAS PAINE.

## OBSERVATIONS ON JAY'S TREATY

After he was released from prison Paine stayed as a guest for eighteen months at the house of James Monroe. It was there, in Paris, early in 1795, that he penned these observations on Jay's Treaty with Great Britain. This agreement was signed in London in November, 1794, and it is not clear just how Paine knew of its terms before they were made public. At any rate, his criticism of the treaty was echoed by many people in America after its text was published in the Philadelphia *Aurora* of July 2, 1795. For the agreement obtained no assurance that the British would stop the seizure of American ships or the impressment of American seamen. In return for Britain's agreement to give up the Northwestern posts and for permission for American vessels to enter the British West Indies, Jay agreed to the prohibition of export from the United States, in American vessels, of sugar, coffee, cocoa and cotton. He also agreed to permit British creditors to collect private debts from southern planters in America. Washington signed the treaty reluctantly, and only because he was led to believe that the only alternative was a war with England. But his action alienated many people including his fellow-planters in the South. The criticism of the President, heretofore subdued, was now openly expressed.—*Editor*.

THE United States of America are negotiating with Spain respecting the free navigation of the Mississippi,<sup>11</sup> and the territorial limits of this large river, in conformity with the treaty of peace, with England dated thirtieth November, 1782. As the brilliant successes of the French Republic have forced England to grant us what was in all justice our due, so the continuation of the prosperity of the Republic, will force Spain to make a treaty with us on the points in controversy.

Since it is certain that all that we shall obtain from Spain will be due to the victories of France, and as the inhabitants of the western part of

<sup>11</sup> The negotiations resulted in Pinckney's Treaty under which citizens of the United States were granted, for a few years, the right to navigate the Mississippi and the right to deposit in New Orleans.—*Editor*.

the United States (which part contains or covers more than half the United States), have decided to claim their rights to the free navigation of the Mississippi,<sup>12</sup> would it not be a wiser policy for the Republican Government (who have only to command to obtain) to arrogate all the merit, by making our demands to Spain one of the conditions of France, to consent to restore peace to the Castilians?

They have only to declare they will not make peace, or that they will support with all their might, the just reclamations of their allies against these Powers—against England for the surrender of the frontier posts, and for the indemnities due through their depredations on our trade, and against Spain for our territorial limits, and the free navigation of the Mississippi. This declaration would certainly not prolong the war a single day more, nor cost the Republic an obole, while it would assure all the merit of success to France, and besides produce all the good effects mentioned above.

It may perhaps be observed that the negotiation is already finished with England, and perhaps in a manner which will not be approved of by France. That may be (though the terms of this arrangement may not be known); but as to Spain, the negotiation is still pending, and it is evident that if France makes the above *Declaration* as to this Power (which declaration would be a demonstrative proof of what she would have done in the other case if circumstances had required it), she would receive the same credit as if the Declaration had been made relatively to the two Powers.

In fact, the decree or resolution (and perhaps this last would be preferable) can be worded in terms which would declare that in case the arrangement with England were not satisfactory, France will nevertheless, maintain the just demands of America against that Power. A like declaration, in case Mr. Jay should do anything reprehensible, and which might even be approved of in America, would certainly raise the reputation of the French Republic to the most eminent degree of splendor, and lower in proportion that of her enemies.

It is very certain that France cannot better favor the views of the British party in America,<sup>13</sup> and wound in a most sensible manner the Republican Government of this country, than by adopting a strict and oppressive policy with regard to us. Everyone knows that the injustices

<sup>12</sup> For background material on this subject, see Eugene P. Link, *Democratic-Republican Societies, 1790-1800*, pp. 66-67.

<sup>13</sup> The reference is to the Federalists.—*Editor*.



committed by the privateers and other ships belonging to the French Republic against our navigation were causes of exultation and joy to this party, even when their own properties were subjected to these depredations, while the friends of France and the Revolution were vexed and most confused about it.

It follows then that a generous policy would produce quite opposite effects—it would acquire for France the merit that is her due; it would discourage the hopes of her adversaries, and furnish the friends of humanity and liberty with the means of acting against the intrigues of England, and cement the Union, and contribute toward the true interests of the two Republics.

So sublime and generous a manner of acting, which would not cost anything to France, would cement in a stronger way the ties between the two Republics. The effect of such an event, would confound and annihilate in an irrevocable manner all the partisans for the British in America.

There are nineteen-twentieths of our nation attached through inclination and gratitude to France, and the small number who seek uselessly all sorts of pretexts to magnify these small occasions of complaint which might have subsisted previously will find itself reduced to silence, or have to join their expressions of gratitude to ours.

The results of this event cannot be doubted, though not reckoned on: All the American hearts will be French, and England will be afflicted.

AN AMERICAN.

## DISSERTATION ON FIRST PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT

In 1795 Paine was readmitted to the French National Convention, and again he began to use his pen to clarify certain basic political issues arising in Europe. This pamphlet, published in Paris early in July, 1795, was originally written for distribution in Holland where Paine's *Rights of Man* was not very well known. But it was also used in France in connection with the discussion in the French National Convention on the Constitution of 1795. Paine objected to several features in the proposed Constitution, especially its restrictions on universal manhood suffrage. He makes his position clear in

this pamphlet when he writes: "The right of voting for representatives is the primary right by which other rights are protected. To take away this right is to reduce a man to slavery, for slavery consists in being subject to the will of another, and he that has not a vote in the election of representatives is in this case." Paine also lays stress in this pamphlet on his belief that the "moral principle of revolutions is to instruct, not to destroy."—*Editor.*

**T**HERE is no subject more interesting to every man than the subject of government. His security, be he rich or poor, and in a great measure his prosperity, are connected therewith; it is therefore his interest as well as his duty to make himself acquainted with its principles, and what the practise ought to be.

Every art and science, however imperfectly known at first, has been studied, improved and brought to what we call perfection by the progressive labors of succeeding generations; but the science of government has stood still. No improvement has been made in the principle and scarcely any in the practise till the American Revolution began. In all the countries of Europe (except in France) the same forms and systems that were erected in the remote ages of ignorance still continue, and their antiquity is put in the place of principle; it is forbidden to investigate their origin, or by what right they exist. If it be asked how has this happened, the answer is easy: they are established on a principle that is false, and they employ their power to prevent detection.

Notwithstanding the mystery with which the science of government has been enveloped, for the purpose of enslaving, plundering and imposing upon mankind, it is of all things the least mysterious and the most easy to be understood. The meanest capacity cannot be at a loss, if it begins its inquiries at the right point. Every art and science has some point, or alphabet, at which the study of that art or science begins, and by the assistance of which the progress is facilitated. The same method ought to be observed with respect to the science of government.

Instead then of embarrassing the subject in the outset with the numerous subdivisions under which different forms of government have been classed, such as aristocracy, democracy, oligarchy, monarchy, etc., the better method will be to begin with what may be called primary divisions, or those under which all the several subdivisions will be comprehended.

The primary divisions are but two:

First, government by election and representation.

Secondly, government by hereditary succession.

All the several forms and systems of government, however numerous or diversified, class themselves under one or other of those primary divisions; for either they are on the system of representation, or on that of hereditary succession. As to that equivocal thing called mixed government, such as the late Government of Holland, and the present Government of England, it does not make an exception to the general rule, because the parts separately considered are either representative or hereditary.

Beginning then our inquiries at this point, we have first to examine into the nature of those two primary divisions. If they are equally right in principle, it is mere matter of opinion which we prefer. If the one be demonstratively better than the other that difference directs our choice; but if one of them should be so absolutely false as not to have a right of existence the matter settles itself at once; because a negative proved on one thing, where two only are offered, and one must be accepted, amounts to an affirmative on the other.

The revolutions that are now spreading themselves in the world have their origin in this state of the case, and the present war is a conflict between the representative system founded on the rights of the people, and the hereditary system founded in usurpation. As to what are called monarchy, royalty and aristocracy, they do not, either as things or as terms, sufficiently describe the hereditary system; they are but secondary things or signs of the hereditary system, and which fall of themselves if that system has not a right to exist.

Were there no such terms as monarchy, royalty and aristocracy, or were other terms substituted in their place, the hereditary system, if it continued, would not be altered thereby. It would be the same system under any other titulary name as it is now.

The character therefore of the revolutions of the present day distinguishes itself most definitely by grounding itself on the system of representative government, in opposition to the hereditary. No other distinction reaches the whole of the principle.

Having thus opened the case generally, I proceed, in the first place, to examine the hereditary system because it has the priority in point of time. The representative system is the invention of the modern world; and, that no doubt may arise as to my own opinion, I declare it beforehand, which is, *that there is not a problem in Euclid more mathematically true than that hereditary government has not a right to exist. When therefore we take from any man the exercise of hereditary power*

*we take away that which he never had the right to possess, and which no law or custom could, or ever can, give him a title to.*

The arguments that have hitherto been employed against the hereditary system have been chiefly founded upon the absurdity of it, and its incompetency to the purpose of good government. Nothing can present to our judgment, or to our imagination, a figure of greater absurdity, than that of seeing the government of a nation fall, as it frequently does, into the hands of a lad necessarily destitute of experience, and often little better than a fool. It is an insult to every man of years, of character, and of talents, in a country.

The moment we begin to reason upon the hereditary system, it falls into derision; let but a single idea begin and a thousand will soon follow. Insignificance, imbecility, childhood, dotage, want of moral character; in fine, every defect, serious or laughable, unite to hold up the hereditary system as a figure of ridicule. Leaving, however, the ridiculousness of the thing to the reflections of the reader, I proceed to the more important part of the question, namely, whether such a system has a right to exist.

To be satisfied of the right of a thing to exist, we must be satisfied that it had a right to begin. If it had not a right to begin, it has not the right to continue. By what right then did the hereditary system begin? Let a man but ask himself this question, and he will find that he cannot satisfy himself with an answer.

The right which any man or any family had to set itself up at first to govern a nation, and to establish itself hereditarily, was no other than the right which Robespierre had to do the same thing in France. If he had none, they had none. If they had any, he had as much; for it is impossible to discover superiority of right in any family, by virtue of which hereditary government could begin. The Capets, the Guelphs, the Robespierres, the Marats, are all on the same standing as to the question of right. It belongs exclusively to none.

It is one step toward liberty to perceive that hereditary government could not begin as an exclusive right in any family. The next point will be whether, having once begun, it could grow into a right by the influence of time.

This would be supposing an absurdity; for either it is putting time in the place of principle, or making it superior to principle; whereas time has no more connection with, or influence upon principle, than principle has upon time. The wrong which began a thousand years ago

is as much a wrong as if it began to-day; and the right which originates to-day is as much a right as if it had the sanction of a thousand years.

Time with respect to principles is an eternal now: it has no operation upon them: it changes nothing of their nature and qualities. But what have we to do with a thousand years? Our lifetime is but a short portion of that period, and if we find the wrong in existence as soon as we begin to live, that is the point of time at which it begins to us; and our right to resist it is the same as if it never existed before.

As hereditary government could not begin as a natural right in any family, nor derive after its commencement any right from time, we have only to examine whether there exist in a nation a right to set it up, and establish it by what is called law, as has been done in England. I answer no; and that any law or any constitution made for that purpose is an act of treason against the right of every minor in the nation, at the time it is made, and against the rights of all succeeding generations.

I shall speak upon each of those cases. First, of the minor at the time such law is made. Secondly, of the generations that are to follow.

A nation, in a collective sense, comprehends all the individuals of whatever age, from just born to just dying. Of these, one part will be minors and the other aged. The average of life is not exactly the same in every climate and country, but in general the minority in years are the majority in numbers; that is, the number of persons under twenty-one years, is greater than the number of persons above that age.

This difference in number is not necessary to the establishment of the principle I mean to lay down, but it serves to show the justice of it more strongly. The principle would be equally as good if the majority in years were also the majority in numbers.

The rights of minors are as sacred as the rights of the aged. The difference is altogether in the different age of the two parties, and nothing in the nature of the rights; the rights are the same rights; and are to be preserved inviolate for the inheritance of the minors when they shall come of age. During the minority of minors their rights are under the sacred guardianship of the aged.

The minor cannot surrender them; the guardian cannot dispossess him; consequently, the aged part of a nation, who are the law-makers for the *time being*, and who, in the march of life are but a few years ahead of those who are yet minors, and to whom they must shortly give place, have not and cannot have the right to make a law to set up and establish hereditary government, or, to speak more distinctly, *an hered-*

*itary succession of governors*; because it is an attempt to deprive every minor in the nation, at the time such a law is made, of his inheritance of rights when he shall come of age, and to subjugate him to a system of government to which, during his minority, he could neither consent nor object.

If a person who is a minor at the time such a law is proposed, had happened to have been born a few years sooner, so as to be of the age of twenty-one years at the time of proposing it, his right to have objected against it, to have exposed the injustice and tyrannical principles of it and to have voted against it, will be admitted on all sides.

If, therefore, the law operates to prevent his exercising the same rights after he comes of age as he would have had a right to exercise had he been of age at the time, it is undeniably a law to take away and annul the rights of every person in the nation who shall be a minor at the time of making such a law, and consequently the right to make it cannot exist.

I come now to speak of government by hereditary succession, as it applies to succeeding generations; and to show that in this case, as in the case of minors, there does not exist in a nation a right to set it up.

A nation, though continually existing, is continually in a state of renewal and succession. It is never stationary. Every day produces new births, carries minors forward to maturity, and old persons from the stage. In this ever running flood of generations there is no part superior in authority to another. Could we conceive an idea of superiority in any, at what point of time, or in what century of the world, are we to fix it? To what cause are we to ascribe it? By what evidence are we to prove it? By what criterion are we to know it?

A single reflection will teach us that our ancestors, like ourselves, were but tenants for life in the great freehold of rights. The fee-absolute was not in them, it is not in us, it belongs to the whole family of man through all ages. If we think otherwise than this we think either as slaves or as tyrants. As slaves, if we think that any former generation had a right to bind us; as tyrants, if we think that we have authority to bind the generations that are to follow.

It may not be inapplicable to the subject, to endeavor to define what is to be understood by a generation in the sense the word is here used.

As a natural term its meaning is sufficiently clear. The father, the son, the grandson, are so many distinct generations. But when we speak of a generation as describing the persons in whom legal authority resides,

as distinct from another generation of the same description who are to succeed them, it comprehends all those who are above the age of twenty-one years, at the time that we count from; and a generation of this kind will continue in authority between fourteen and twenty-one years, that is, until the number of minors, who shall have arrived at age, shall be greater than the number of persons remaining of the former stock.

For example: If France, at this or any other moment, contains twenty-four millions of souls, twelve millions will be males, and twelve females. Of the twelve millions of males, six millions will be of the age of twenty-one years, and six will be under, and the authority to govern will reside in the first six.

But every day will make some alteration, and in twenty-one years every one of those minors who survives will have arrived at age, and the greater part of the former stock will be gone: the majority of persons then living, in whom the legal authority resides, will be composed of those who, twenty-one years before, had no legal existence. Those will be fathers and grandfathers in their turn, and, in the next twenty-one years (or less) another race of minors, arrived at age, will succeed them, and so on.

As this is ever the case, and as every generation is equal in rights to another, it consequently follows, that there cannot be a right in any to establish government by hereditary succession, because it would be supposing itself possessed of a right superior to the rest, namely, that of commanding by its own authority how the world shall be hereafter governed, and who shall govern it.

Every age and generation is, and must be (as a matter of right), as free to act for itself in all cases, as the age and generation that preceded it. The vanity and presumption of governing beyond the grave is the most ridiculous and insolent of all tyrannies. Man has no property in man, neither has one generation a property in the generations that are to follow.

In the first part of the "Rights of Man" I have spoken of government by hereditary succession; and I will here close the subject with an extract from that work, which states it under the two following heads.<sup>14</sup>

The history of the English Parliament furnishes an example of this kind; and which merits to be recorded as being the greatest instance of

<sup>14</sup> The omitted quotation will be found in vol. I, p. 323 of the present edition of Paine's writings, beginning with the words "First, The right of a particular family," down to the paragraph on p. 325, ending "Good Lord deliver the world."—*Editor*.

legislative ignorance and want of principle that is to be found in any country. The case is as follows:

The English Parliament of 1688, imported a man and his wife from Holland, *William* and *Mary*, and made them King and Queen of England. Having done this, the said Parliament made a law to convey the government of the country to the heirs of William and Mary, in the following words: "We, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, do, in the name of the people of England, most humbly and faithfully submit *ourselves, our heirs and posterities*, to William and Mary, *their heirs and posterities*, forever." And in a subsequent law, as quoted by Edmund Burke, the said Parliament, in the name of the people of England then living, *binds the said people, their heirs and posterities, to William and Mary, their heirs and posterities, to the end of time.*

It is not sufficient that we laugh at the ignorance of such law-makers; it is necessary that we reprobate their want of principle. The Constituent Assembly of France, 1789, fell into the same vice as the Parliament of England had done, and assumed to establish an hereditary succession in the family of the Capets as an act of the Constitution of that year.

That every nation, *for the time being*, has a right to govern itself as it pleases, must always be admitted; but government by hereditary succession is government for another race of people, and not for itself; and as those on whom it is to operate are not yet in existence, or are minors, so neither is the right in existence to set it up for them, and to assume such a right is treason against the right of posterity.

I here close the arguments on the first head, that of government by hereditary succession; and proceed to the second, that of government by election and representation; or, as it may be concisely expressed, *representative government*, in contradistinction to *hereditary government*.

Reasoning by exclusion, if *hereditary government* has not a right to exist, and that it has not is provable, *representative government* is admitted of course.

In contemplating government by election and representation, we amuse not ourselves in inquiring when or how, or by what right, it began. Its origin is ever in view. Man is himself the origin and the evidence of the right. It appertains to him in right of his existence, and his person is the title deed.

The true and only true basis of representative government is equality of rights. Every man has a right to one vote, and no more in the choice of



representatives. The rich have no more right to exclude the poor from the right of voting, or of electing and being elected, than the poor have to exclude the rich; and wherever it is attempted, or proposed, on either side, it is a question of force and not of right. Who is he that would exclude another? That other has a right to exclude him.

That which is now called aristocracy implies an inequality of rights; but who are the persons that have a right to establish this inequality? Will the rich exclude themselves? No. Will the poor exclude themselves? No. By what right then can any be excluded? It would be a question, if any man or class of men have a right to exclude themselves; but, be this as it may, they cannot have the right to exclude another. The poor will not delegate such a right to the rich, nor the rich to the poor, and to assume it is not only to assume arbitrary power, but to assume a right to commit robbery.

Personal rights, of which the right of voting for representatives is one, are a species of property of the most sacred kind: and he that would employ his pecuniary property, or presume upon the influence it gives him, to dispossess or rob another of his property or rights, uses that pecuniary property as he would use fire-arms, and merits to have it taken from him.

Inequality of rights is created by a combination in one part of the community to exclude another part from its rights. Whenever it be made an article of a constitution, or a law, that the right of voting, or of electing and being elected, shall appertain exclusively to persons possessing a certain quantity of property, be it little or much, it is a combination of the persons possessing that quantity to exclude those who do not possess the same quantity. It is investing themselves with powers as a self-created part of society, to the exclusion of the rest.

It is always to be taken for granted, that those who oppose an equality of rights never mean the exclusion should take place on themselves; and in this view of the case, pardoning the vanity of the thing, aristocracy is a subject of laughter. This self-soothing vanity is encouraged by another idea not less selfish, which is that the opposers conceive they are playing a safe game, in which there is a chance to gain and none to lose; that at any rate the doctrine of equality includes *them*, and that if they cannot get more rights than those whom they oppose and would exclude they shall not have less.

This opinion has already been fatal to thousands, who, not contented

with *equal rights*, have sought more till they lost all, and experienced in themselves the degrading *inequality* they endeavored to fix upon others.

In any view of the case it is dangerous and impolitic, sometimes ridiculous, and always unjust to make property the criterion of the right of voting. If the sum or value of the property upon which the right is to take place be considerable it will exclude a majority of the people and unite them in a common interest against the government and against those who support it; and as the power is always with the majority, they can overturn such a government and its supporters whenever they please.

If, in order to avoid this danger, a small quantity of property be fixed, as the criterion of the right, it exhibits liberty in disgrace, by putting it in competition with accident and insignificance. When a broodmare shall fortunately produce a foal or a mule that, by being worth the sum in question, shall convey to its owner the right of voting, or by its death take it from him, in whom does the origin of such a right exist? Is it in the man, or in the mule? When we consider how many ways property may be acquired without merit, and lost without crime, we ought to spurn the idea of making it a criterion of rights.

But the offensive part of the case is that this exclusion from the right of voting implies a stigma on the moral character of the persons excluded; and this is what no part of the community has a right to pronounce upon another part. No external circumstance can justify it: wealth is no proof of moral character; nor poverty of the want of it.

On the contrary, wealth is often the presumptive evidence of dishonesty; and poverty the negative evidence of innocence. If therefore property, whether little or much, be made a criterion, the means by which that property has been acquired ought to be made a criterion also.

The only ground upon which exclusion from the right of voting is consistent with justice would be to inflict it as a punishment for a certain time upon those who should propose to take away that right from others. The right of voting for representatives is the primary right by which other rights are protected.

To take away this right is to reduce a man to slavery, for slavery consists in being subject to the will of another, and he that has not a vote in the election of representatives is in this case. The proposal therefore to disfranchise any class of men is as criminal as the proposal to take away property.

When we speak of right we ought always to unite with it the idea of

duties: rights become duties by reciprocity. The right which I enjoy becomes my duty to guarantee it to another, and he to me; and those who violate the duty justly incur a forfeiture of the right.

In a political view of the case, the strength and permanent security of government is in proportion to the number of people interested in supporting it. The true policy therefore is to interest the whole by an equality of rights, for the danger arises from exclusions. It is possible to exclude men from the right of voting, but it is impossible to exclude them from the right of rebelling against that exclusion; and when all other rights are taken away the right of rebellion is made perfect.

While men could be persuaded they had no rights, or that rights appertained only to a certain class of men, or that government was a thing existing in right of itself, it was not difficult to govern them authoritatively. The ignorance in which they were held, and the superstition in which they were instructed, furnished the means of doing it.

But when the ignorance is gone, and the superstition with it; when they perceive the imposition that has been acted upon them; when they reflect that the cultivator and the manufacturer are the primary means of all the wealth that exists in the world, beyond what nature spontaneously produces; when they begin to feel their consequences by their usefulness, and their right as members of society, it is then no longer possible to govern them as before. The fraud once detected cannot be re-acted. To attempt it is to provoke derision, or invite destruction.

That property will ever be unequal is certain. Industry, superiority of talents, dexterity of management, extreme frugality, fortunate opportunities, or the opposite, or the means of those things, will ever produce that effect, without having recourse to the harsh, ill-sounding names of avarice and oppression; and besides this there are some men who, though they do not despise wealth, will not stoop to the drudgery or the means of acquiring it, nor will be troubled with it beyond their wants or their independence; while in others there is an avidity to obtain it by every means not punishable; it makes the sole business of their lives, and they follow it as a religion. All that is required with respect to property is to obtain it honestly, and not employ it criminally; but it is always criminally employed when it is made a criterion for exclusive rights.

In institutions that are purely pecuniary, such as that of a bank or a commercial company, the rights of the members composing that company are wholly created by the property they invest therein; and no other rights are represented in the government of that company than what

arise out of that property; neither has that government cognizance of *anything but property*.

But the case is totally different with respect to the institution of civil government, organized on the system of representation. Such a government has cognizance of *everything*, and of *every man* as a member of the national society, whether he has property or not; and, therefore, the principle requires that *every man*, and *every kind of right*, be represented, of which the right to acquire and to hold property is but one, and that not of the most essential kind.

The protection of a man's person is more sacred than the protection of property; and besides this, the faculty of performing any kind of work or services by which he acquires a livelihood, or maintaining his family, is of the nature of property. It is property to him; he has acquired it; and it is as much the object of his protection as exterior property, possessed without that faculty, can be the object of protection in another person.

I have always believed that the best security for property, be it much or little, is to remove from every part of the community, as far as can possibly be done, every cause of complaint, and every motive to violence; and this can only be done by an equality of rights. When rights are secure, property is secure in consequence. But when property is made a pretense for unequal or exclusive rights, it weakens the right to hold the property, and provokes indignation and tumult; for it is unnatural to believe that property can be secure under the guarantee of a society injured in its rights by the influence of that property.

Next to the injustice and ill-policy of making property a pretense for exclusive rights, is the unaccountable absurdity of giving to mere *sound* the idea of property, and annexing to it certain rights; for what else is a *title* but sound? Nature is often giving to the world some extraordinary men who arrive at fame by merit and universal consent, such as Aristotle, Socrates, Plato, etc. They were truly great or noble. But when government sets up a manufactory of nobles, it is as absurd as if she undertook to manufacture wise men. Her nobles are all counterfeits.

This wax-work order has assumed the name of aristocracy; and the disgrace of it would be lessened if it could be considered only as childish imbecility. We pardon foppery because of its insignificance, and on the same ground we might pardon the foppery of titles. But the origin of aristocracy was worse than foppery. It was robbery. The first aristocrats in all countries were brigands. Those of later times, sycophants.

It is very well known that in England (and the same will be found in other countries), the great landed estates now held in descent were plundered from the quiet inhabitants at the Conquest. The possibility did not exist of acquiring such estates honestly. If it be asked how they could have been acquired, no answer but that of robbery can be given. That they were not acquired by trade, by commerce, by manufactures, by agriculture, or by any reputable employment, is certain.

How then were they acquired? Blush, aristocracy, to hear your origin, for your progenitors were thieves. They were the Robespierres and the Jacobins of that day. When they had committed the robbery, they endeavored to lose the disgrace of it by sinking their real names under fictitious ones, which they called titles. It is ever the practise of felons to act in this manner. They never pass by their real names.

As property, honestly obtained, is best secured by an equality of rights, so ill-gotten property depends for protection on a monopoly of rights. He who has robbed another of his property, will next endeavor to disarm him of his rights, to secure that property; for when the robber becomes the legislator he believes himself secure. That part of the Government of England that is called the House of Lords, was originally composed of persons who had committed the robberies of which I have been speaking. It was an association for the protection of the property they had stolen.

But besides the criminality of the origin of aristocracy, it has an injurious effect on the moral and physical character of man. Like slavery it debilitates the human faculties; for as the mind bowed down by slavery loses in silence its elastic powers, so, in the contrary extreme, when it is buoyed up by folly, it becomes incapable of exerting them, and dwindles into imbecility. It is impossible that a mind employed upon ribands and titles can ever be great. The childishness of the objects consumes the man.

It is at all times necessary, and more particularly so during the progress of a revolution, and until right ideas confirm themselves by habit, that we frequently refresh our patriotism by reference to first principles. It is by tracing things to their origin that we learn to understand them: and it is by keeping that line and that origin always in view that we never forget them.

An inquiry into the origin of rights will demonstrate to us that *rights* are not *gifts* from one man to another, nor from one class of men to an-

other; for who is he who could be the first giver, or by what principle, or on what authority, could he possess the right of giving?

A declaration of rights is not a creation of them, nor a donation of them. It is a manifest of the principle by which they exist, followed by a detail of what the rights are; for every civil right has a natural right for its foundation, and it includes the principle of a reciprocal guarantee of those rights from man to man. As, therefore, it is impossible to discover any origin of rights otherwise than in the origin of man, it consequently follows, that rights appertain to man in right of his existence only, and must therefore be equal to every man.

The principle of an *equality of rights* is clear and simple. Every man can understand it, and it is by understanding his rights that he learns his duties; for where the rights of men are equal, every man must finally see the necessity of protecting the rights of others as the most effectual security for his own.

But if, in the formation of a constitution, we depart from the principle of equal rights, or attempt any modification of it, we plunge into a labyrinth of difficulties from which there is no way out but by retreating. Where are we to stop? Or by what principle are we to find out the point to stop at, that shall discriminate between men of the same country, part of whom shall be free, and the rest not?

If property is to be made the criterion, it is a total departure from every moral principle of liberty, because it is attaching rights to mere matter, and making man the agent of that matter. It is, moreover, holding up property as an apple of discord, and not only exciting but justifying war against it; for I maintain the principle, that when property is used as an instrument to take away the rights of those who may happen not to possess property, it is used to an unlawful purpose, as fire-arms would be in a similar case.

In a state of nature all men are equal in rights, but they are not equal in power; the weak cannot protect themselves against the strong. This being the case, the institution of civil society is for the purpose of making an equalization of powers that shall be parallel to, and a guarantee of, the equality of rights. The laws of a country, when properly constructed, apply to this purpose.

Every man takes the arm of the law for his protection as more effectual than his own; and therefore every man has an equal right in the formation of the government, and of the laws by which he is to be

governed and judged. In extensive countries and societies, such as America and France, this right in the individual can only be exercised by delegation, that is, by election and representation; and hence it is that the institution of representative government arises.

Hitherto, I have confined myself to matters of principle only. First, that hereditary government has not a right to exist; that it cannot be established on any principle of right; and that it is a violation of all principle. Secondly, that government by election and representation has its origin in the natural and eternal rights of man; for whether a man be his own lawgiver, as he would be in a state of nature; or whether he exercises his portion of legislative sovereignty in his own person, as might be the case in small democracies where all could assemble for the formation of the laws by which they were to be governed; or whether he exercises it in the choice of persons to represent him in a national assembly of representatives, the origin of the right is the same in all cases. The first, as is before observed, is defective in power; the second, is practicable only in democracies of small extent; the third, is the greatest scale upon which human government can be instituted.

Next to matters of *principle* are matters of *opinion*, and it is necessary to distinguish between the two. Whether the rights of men shall be equal is not a matter of opinion but of right, and consequently of principle; for men do not hold their rights as grants from each other, but each one in right of himself. Society is the guardian but not the giver. And as in extensive societies, such as America and France, the right of the individual in matters of government cannot be exercised but by election and representation, it consequently follows that the only system of government consistent with principle, where simple democracy is impracticable, is the representative system.

But as to the organical part, or the manner in which the several parts of government shall be arranged and composed, it is altogether *matter of opinion*. It is necessary that all the parts be conformable with the *principle of equal rights*; and so long as this principle be religiously adhered to, no very material error can take place, neither can any error continue long in that part which falls within the province of opinion.

In all matters of opinion, the social compact, or the principle by which society is held together, requires that the majority of opinions becomes the rule for the whole, and that the minority yields practical obedience thereto. This is perfectly conformable to the principle of equal rights: for, in the first place, every man has *a right to give an opinion* but no

man has a right that his opinion should *govern the rest*. In the second place, it is not supposed to be known beforehand on which side of any question, whether for or against, any man's opinion will fall. He may happen to be in a majority upon some questions, and in a minority upon others; and by the same rule that he expects obedience in the one case, he must yield it in the other.

All the disorders that have arisen in France during the progress of the Revolution have had their origin, not in the *principle of equal rights*, but in the violation of that principle. The principle of equal rights has been repeatedly violated, and that not by the majority but by the minority, and *that minority has been composed of men possessing property, as well as of men without property; property, therefore, even upon the experience already had, is no more a criterion of character than it is of rights*.

It will sometimes happen that the minority are right, and the majority are wrong, but as soon as experience proves this to be the case, the minority will increase to a majority, and the error will reform itself by the tranquil operation of freedom of opinion and equality of rights. Nothing, therefore, can justify an insurrection, neither can it ever be necessary where rights are equal and opinions free.

Taking then the principle of equal rights as the foundation of the Revolution, and consequently of the Constitution, the organical part, or the manner in which the several parts of the Government shall be arranged in the Constitution, will, as is already said, fall within the province of opinion.

Various methods will present themselves upon a question of this kind, and though experience is yet wanting to determine which is the best, it has, I think, sufficiently decided which is the worst. That is the worst, which in its deliberations and decisions is subject to the precipitancy and passion of an individual; and when the whole legislature is crowded into one body it is an individual in mass. In all cases of deliberation it is necessary to have a corps of reserve, and it would be better to divide the representation by lot into two parts, and let them revise and correct each other, than that the whole should sit together, and debate at once.

Representative government is not necessarily confined to any one particular form. The principle is the same in all the forms under which it can be arranged. The equal rights of the people is the root from which the whole springs, and the branches may be arranged as present opinion



or future experience shall best direct. As to that *hospital of incurables* (as Chesterfield calls it), the British House of Peers, it is an excrescence growing out of corruption; and there is no more affinity or resemblance between any of the branches of a legislative body originating from the right of the people, and the aforesaid House of Peers, than between a regular member of the human body and an ulcerated wen.

As to that part of government that is called the *executive*, it is necessary in the first place to fix a precise meaning to the word.

There are but two divisions into which power can be arranged. First, that of willing or decreeing the laws; secondly, that of executing or putting them in practise. The former corresponds to the intellectual faculties of the human mind which reasons and determines what shall be done; the second, to the mechanical powers of the human body that puts that determination into practise.

If the former decides, and the latter does not perform, it is a state of imbecility; and if the latter acts without the predetermination of the former, it is a state of lunacy. The executive department therefore is official, and is subordinate to the legislative, as the body is to the mind in a state of health; for it is impossible to conceive the idea of two sovereignties, a sovereignty to *will* and a sovereignty to *act*.

The executive is not invested with the power of deliberating whether it shall act or not; it has no discretionary authority in the case; for it can *act no other thing* than what the laws decree, and it is *obliged* to act conformably thereto; and in this view of the case the executive is made up of all the official departments that execute the laws, of which that which is called the judiciary is the chief.

But mankind have conceived an idea that *some kind of authority* is necessary to *superintend* the execution of the laws and to see that they are faithfully performed; and it is by confounding this superintending authority with the official execution that we get embarrassed about the term *executive power*. All the parts in the governments of the United States of America that are called THE EXECUTIVE, are no other than authorities to superintend the execution of the laws; and they are so far independent of the legislative that they know the legislative only through the laws, and cannot be controlled or directed by it through any other medium.

In what manner this superintending authority shall be appointed, or composed, is a matter that falls within the province of opinion. Some may prefer one method and some another; and in all cases, where

opinion only and not principle is concerned, the majority of opinions forms the rule for all.

There are however some things deducible from reason, and evidenced by experience, that serve to guide our decision upon the case. The one is never to invest any individual with extraordinary power; for besides his being tempted to misuse it, it will excite contention and commotion in the nation for the office. Secondly, never to invest power long in the hands of any number of individuals. The inconveniences that may be supposed to accompany frequent changes are less to be feared than the danger that arises from long continuance.

I shall conclude this discourse with offering some observations on the means of *preserving liberty*; for it is not only necessary that we establish it, but that we preserve it.

It is, in the first place, necessary that we distinguish between the means made use of to overthrow despotism, in order to prepare the way for the establishment of liberty, and the means to be used after the despotism is overthrown.

The means made use of in the first case are justified by necessity. Those means are, in general, insurrections; for while the established government of despotism continues in any country it is scarcely possible that any other means can be used. It is also certain that in the commencement of a revolution, the revolutionary party permit to themselves a *discretionary exercise of power* regulated more by circumstances than by principle, which, were they to practise to continue, liberty would never be established, or if established would soon be overthrown. It is never to be expected in a revolution that every man is to change his opinion at the same moment.

There never yet was any truth or any principle so irresistibly obvious that all men believed it at once. Time and reason must coöperate with each other to the final establishment of any principle; and therefore those who may happen to be first convinced have not a right to persecute others, on whom conviction operates more slowly. The moral principle of revolutions is to instruct, not to destroy.

Had a constitution been established two years ago (as ought to have been done), the violences that have since desolated France and injured the character of the Revolution, would, in my opinion, have been prevented. The nation would then have had a bond of union, and every individual would have known the line of conduct he was to follow. But, instead of this, a revolutionary government, a thing without either

principle or authority, was substituted in its place; virtue and crime depended upon accident; and that which was patriotism one day became treason the next.

All these things have followed from the want of a constitution; for it is the nature and intention of a constitution to *prevent governing by party*, by establishing a common principle that shall limit and control the power and impulse of party, and that says to all parties, *thus far shalt thou go and no further*. But in the absence of a constitution, men look entirely to party; and instead of principle governing party, party governs principle.

An avidity to punish is always dangerous to liberty. It leads men to stretch, to misinterpret, and to misapply even the best of laws. He that would make his own liberty secure must guard even his enemy from oppression; for if he violates this duty he establishes a precedent that will reach to himself.

THOMAS PAINE.

PARIS, July, 1795.

## THE CONSTITUTION OF 1795

SPEECH IN THE FRENCH NATIONAL CONVENTION, JULY 7, 1795

On the 19th of *Messidor* of the year III, Paine had read from the tribune in the French National Convention the translation of this speech, which he had written in English, pointing sharply to the contradictions between the principles of 1789 and the property requirements for suffrage in the proposed Constitution of 1795. The Convention, dominated by the wealthy bourgeoisie who were determined to keep political power in their own hands, listened impatiently to Paine's fervent call for universal suffrage. No one arose to speak in support of Paine, and the Convention went on to adopt the conservative Constitution on September 23, 1795.

Paine never appeared again in the Convention after the reading of the speech.—*Editor*.

ON the motion of Lanthenas, "That permission be granted to Thomas Paine, to deliver his sentiments on the Declaration of Rights and the Constitution," Thomas Paine ascended the tribune; and no opposition being made to the motion, one of the secretaries, who

stood by Mr. Paine, read his speech, of which the following is a literal translation:

CITIZENS:

The effects of a malignant fever with which I was afflicted during a rigorous confinement in the Luxembourg, have thus long prevented me from attending at my post in the bosom of the Convention, and the magnitude of the subject under discussion, and no other consideration on earth, could induce me now to repair to my station.

A recurrence to the vicissitudes I have experienced, and the critical situations in which I have been placed in consequence of the French Revolution, will throw upon what I now propose to submit to the Convention the most unequivocal proofs of my integrity, and the rectitude of those principles which have uniformly influenced my conduct.

In England I was proscribed for having vindicated the French Revolution, and I have suffered a rigorous imprisonment in France for having pursued a similar mode of conduct. During the reign of terrorism, I was a close prisoner for eight long months, and remained so above three months after the era of the tenth Thermidor. I ought, however, to state, that I was not persecuted by the *people* either of England or France. The proceedings in both countries were the effects of the despotism existing in their respective governments. But, even if my persecution had originated in the people at large, my principles and conduct would still have remained the same. Principles which are influenced and subject to the control of tyranny have not their foundation in the heart.

A few days ago I transmitted to you by the ordinary mode of distribution a short treatise entitled "Dissertation on the First Principles of Government." This little work I did intend to have dedicated to the people of Holland, who, about the time I began to write it, were determined to accomplish a revolution in their government, rather than to the people of France, who had long before effected that glorious object. But there are, in the Constitution which is about to be ratified by the Convention, certain articles, and in the report which preceded it certain points so repugnant to reason and incompatible with the true principles of liberty as to render this treatise, drawn up for another purpose, applicable to the present occasion, and under this impression I presumed to submit it to your consideration.

If there be faults in the Constitution, it were better to expunge them now than to abide the event of their mischievous tendency; for certain

it is that the plan of the Constitution which has been presented to you is not consistent with the grand object of the Revolution, nor congenial to the sentiments of the individuals who accomplished it.

To deprive half the people in a nation of their rights as citizens is an easy matter in theory or on paper; but it is a most dangerous experiment, and rarely practicable in the execution.

I shall now proceed to the observations I have to offer on this important subject; and I pledge myself that they shall be neither numerous nor diffusive.

In my apprehension, a constitution embraces two distinct parts or objects, the *Principle* and the *Practise*; and it is not only an essential but an indispensable provision that the practise should emanate from, and accord with, the principle. Now I maintain, that the reverse of this proposition is the case in the plan of the Constitution under discussion. The first article, for instance, of the *political state* of citizens (v. Title ii. of the Constitution), says:

“Every man born and resident in France, who, being twenty-one years of age, has inscribed his name on the civic register of his canton, and who has lived afterwards one year on the territory of the Republic, and who pays any direct contribution whatever, real or personal, is a French citizen.”

I might here ask, if those only who come under the above description are to be considered as citizens, what designation do you mean to give the rest of the people? I allude to that portion of the people on whom the principal part of the labor falls, and on whom the weight of indirect taxation will in the event chiefly press. In the structure of the social fabric this class of people are infinitely superior to that privileged order whose only qualification is their wealth or territorial possessions. For what is trade without merchants? What is land without cultivation? And what is the produce of the land without manufactures? But to return to the subject.

In the first place, this article is incompatible with the three first articles of the Declaration of Rights which precede the Constitutional Act.

The first article of the Declaration of Rights says:

“The end of society is the public good; and the institution of government is to secure to every individual the enjoyment of his rights.”

But the article of the Constitution to which I have just adverted proposes as the object of society, not the public good, or in other words, the good of *all*, but a partial good; or the good only of a *few*; and the Con-

stitution provides solely for the rights of this few, to the exclusion of the many.

The second article of the Declaration of Rights says:

“The rights of man in society are liberty, equality, security of his person and property.”

But the article alluded to in the Constitution has a direct tendency to establish the reverse of this position, inasmuch as the persons excluded by this *inequality* can neither be said to possess liberty, nor security against oppression. They are consigned totally to the caprice and tyranny of the rest.

The third article of the Declaration of Rights says:

“Liberty consists in such acts of volition as are not injurious to others.”

But the article of the Constitution, on which I have observed, breaks down this barrier. It enables the liberty of one part of society to destroy the freedom of the other.

Having thus pointed out the inconsistency of this article to the Declaration of Rights, I shall proceed to comment on that of the same article which makes a direct contribution a necessary qualification to the right of citizenship.

A modern refinement on the object of public revenue has divided the taxes, or contributions, into two classes, the *direct* and the *indirect*, without being able to define precisely the distinction or difference between them, because the effect of both is the same.

Those are designated indirect taxes which fall upon the consumers of certain articles on which the tax is imposed because, the tax being included in the price, the consumer pays it without taking notice of it.

The same observation is applicable to the territorial tax. The land proprietors, in order to reimburse themselves, will rack-rent their tenants: the farmer, of course, will transfer the obligation to the miller by enhancing the price of grain; the miller to the baker by increasing the price of flour; and the baker to the consumer by raising the price of bread. The territorial tax, therefore, though called *direct*, is, in its consequences, *indirect*.

To this tax the land proprietor contributes only in proportion to the quantity of bread and other provisions that are consumed in his own family. The deficit is furnished by the great mass of the community, which comprehends every individual of the nation.

From the logical distinction between the direct and indirect taxation some emolument may result, I allow, to auditors of public accounts, etc.,

but to the people at large I deny that such a distinction (which by the by is without a difference) can be productive of any practical benefit. It ought not, therefore, to be admitted as a principle in the Constitution.

Besides this objection the provision in question does not affect to define, secure, or establish the right of citizenship. It consigns to the caprice or discretion of the legislature the power of pronouncing who shall, or shall not, exercise the functions of a citizen; and this may be done effectually, either by the imposition of a *direct* or *indirect* tax, according to the selfish views of the legislators, or by the mode of collecting the taxes so imposed.

Neither a tenant who occupies an extensive farm, nor a merchant or manufacturer who may have embarked a large capital in their respective pursuits, can ever, according to this system, attain the preëmption of a citizen.

On the other hand, any upstart, who has, by succession or management, got possession of a few acres of land or a miserable tenement, may exultingly exercise the functions of a citizen, although perhaps neither possesses a hundredth part of the worth or property of a simple mechanic, nor contributes in any proportion to the exigencies of the state.

The contempt in which the old Government held mercantile pursuits, and the obloquy that attached on merchants and manufacturers, contributed not a little to its embarrassments and its eventual subversion; and, strange to tell, though the mischiefs arising from this mode of conduct are so obvious, yet an article is proposed for your adoption which has a manifest tendency to restore a defect inherent in the monarchy.

I shall now proceed to the second article of the same title, with which I shall conclude my remarks.

The second article says, "Every French soldier, who shall have served one or more campaigns in the cause of liberty, is deemed a citizen of the Republic, without any respect or reference to other qualifications."<sup>15</sup>

It would seem that in this article the Committee were desirous of extricating themselves from a dilemma into which they had been plunged by the preceding article. When men depart from an established principle they are compelled to resort to trick and subterfuge, always shifting their means to preserve the unity of their objects; and as it rarely happens that the first expedient makes amends for the prostitution of principle they

<sup>15</sup> Later this article was changed to read: "All Frenchmen who shall have made one or more campaigns for the establishment of the Republic, are citizens, without condition as to taxes."—*Editor*

must call in aid a second, of a more flagrant nature, to supply the deficiency of the former.

In this manner legislators go on accumulating error upon error, and artifice upon artifice, until the mass becomes so bulky and incongruous, and their embarrassment so desperate, that they are compelled, as their last expedient, to resort to the very principle they had violated. The Committee were precisely in this predicament when they framed this article; and to me, I confess, their conduct appears specious rather than efficacious.<sup>16</sup>

It was not for himself alone, but for his family, that the French citizen, at the dawn of the Revolution (for then indeed every man was considered a citizen), marched soldier-like to the frontiers, and repelled a foreign invasion. He had it not in his contemplation, that he should enjoy liberty for the residue of his earthly career, and by his own act preclude his offspring from that inestimable blessing. No! He wished to leave it as an inheritance to his children, and that they might hand it down to their latest posterity.

If a Frenchman, who united in his person the character of a soldier and a citizen, was now to return from the army to his peaceful habitation, he must address his small family in this manner: "Sorry I am, that I cannot leave to you a small portion of what I have acquired by exposing my person to the ferocity of our enemies and defeating their machinations. I have established the Republic, and, painful the reflection, all the laurels which I have won in the field are blasted, and all the privileges to which my exertions have entitled me extend not beyond the period of my own existence!" Thus the measure that has been adopted by way of subterfuge falls short of what the framers of it speculated upon; for in conciliating the affections of the *soldier*, they have subjected the *father* to the most pungent sensations, by obliging him to adopt a generation of slaves.

Citizens, a great deal has been urged respecting insurrections. I am confident that no man has a greater abhorrence of them than myself, and I am sorry that any insinuations should have been thrown out upon me as a promoter of violence of any kind. The whole tenor of my life and conversation gives the lie to those calumnies, and proves me to be a friend to order, truth and justice.

<sup>16</sup> It is significant to note that the Committee was headed by the Abbé Sieyès, who had attacked Republican principles and defended the monarchy earlier in the Revolution.—*Editor.*



I hope you will attribute this effusion of my sentiments to my anxiety for the honor and success of the Revolution. I have no interest distinct from that which has a tendency to meliorate the situation of mankind. The Revolution, as far as it respects myself, has been productive of more loss and persecution than it is possible for me to describe or for you to indemnify. But with respect to the subject under consideration, I could not refrain from declaring my sentiments.

In my opinion, if you subvert the basis of the Revolution, if you dispense with principles, and substitute expedients, you will extinguish that enthusiasm and energy which have hitherto been the life and soul of the Revolution; and you will substitute in its place nothing but a cold indifference and self-interest, which will again degenerate into intrigue, cunning and effeminacy.

But to discard all considerations of a personal and subordinate nature, it is essential to the well-being of the Republic that the practical or organic part of the Constitution should correspond with its principles; and as this does not appear to be the case in the plan that has been presented to you, it is absolutely necessary that it should be submitted to the revision of a committee, who should be instructed to compare it with the Declaration of Rights in order to ascertain the difference between the two, and to make such alterations as shall render them perfectly consistent and compatible with each other.

## THE EIGHTEENTH FRUCTIDOR

### TO THE PEOPLE OF FRANCE AND THE FRENCH ARMIES

On the Seventeenth Fructidor, September 3, 1797, the leaders of the majority in the Council of Five Hundred decided to vote the impeachment on the following day of Barras, Reubell, and La Reveillère, members of the French Directory. In case of resistance on the part of these three Directors, Pichegru, a member of the Five Hundred and in negotiation with English agents, and Willot, would march upon the Luxembourg with the Guard of the Legislative corps and the old insurgents of the counter-revolutionary *Vendemiaire*. But the royalist *coup* was frustrated on the 18th Fructidor, Year V (September 4, 1797), when Augereau, acting on the orders of Barras, Reubell, and La Reveillère, took command of all the troops in Paris, surrounded the Tuileries and purged it of a number of its more conservative

members. Pichegru was condemned to deportation and was shipped to Guiana. Later, however, he escaped and again joined a royalist conspiracy. He was again arrested and hanged himself in prison.

Whether the story of the royalist *coup* was completely founded or not, the fact remained that it was by a military coup d'état that the first Directory maintained itself in power. The events of the 18th Fructidor did, however, prove that the overwhelming sentiment of the army was opposed to the restoration of the monarchy to power through the placing of Louis XVIII on the throne.

Paine's pamphlet was written some time between September 4 and November 12, 1797.—*Editor.*

WHEN an extraordinary measure, not warranted by established constitutional rules and justifiable only on the supreme law of absolute necessity, bursts suddenly upon us, we must, in order to form a true judgment thereon, carry our researches back to the times that preceded and occasioned it. Taking up then the subject with respect to the event of the eighteenth of Fructidor on this ground, I go to examine the state of things prior to that period. I begin with the establishment of the Constitution of the year 3 of the French Republic. A better *organized* Constitution has never yet been devised by human wisdom. It is, in its organization, free from all the vices and defects to which other forms of government are more or less subject. I will speak first of the legislative body, because the legislature is, in the natural order of things, the first power; the executive is the first magistrate.

By arranging the legislative body into two divisions, as is done in the French Constitution, the one (the Council of Five Hundred), whose part it is to conceive and propose laws; the other, a Council of Ancients, to review, approve, or reject the laws proposed; all the security is given that can arise from coolness of reflection acting upon, or correcting the precipitancy or enthusiasm of conception and imagination. It is seldom that our first thought, even upon any subject, is sufficiently just.

The policy of renewing the legislature by a third part each year, though not entirely new, either in theory or in practise, is nevertheless one of the modern improvements in the science of government. It prevents, on the one hand, that convulsion and precipitate change of measures into which a nation might be surprised by the going out of the whole legislature at the same time, and the instantaneous election of a new one; on the other hand, it excludes that common interest from taking place that might tempt a whole legislature, whose term of dura-

tion expired at once, to usurp the right of continuance. I go now to speak of the executive.

It is a principle uncontrovertible by reason, that each of the parts by which government is composed, should be so constructed as to be in perpetual maturity. We should laugh at the idea of a council of five hundred, or a council of ancients, or a parliament, or any national assembly, who should be all children in leading strings and in the cradle, or be all sick, insane, deaf, dumb, lame or blind, at the same time, or be all upon crutches, tottering with age or infirmities.

Any form of government that was so constructed as to admit the possibility of such cases happening to a whole legislature would justly be the ridicule of the world; and on a parity of reasoning, it is equally as ridiculous that the same cases should happen in that part of government which is called the executive; yet this is the contemptible condition to which an executive is always subject, and which is often happening, when it is placed in an hereditary individual called a king.

When that individual is in either of the cases before mentioned, the whole executive is in the same case; for himself is the whole. He is then (as an executive) the ridiculous picture of what a legislature would be if all its members were in the same case. The one is a whole made up of parts, the other a whole without parts; and anything happening to the one (as a part or section of the government) is parallel to the same thing happening to the other.

As, therefore, an hereditary executive called a king is a perfect absurdity in itself, any attachment to it is equally as absurd. It is neither instinct [n]or reason; and if this attachment is what is called royalism in France, then is a royalist inferior in character to every species of the animal world; for what can that being be who acts neither by instinct nor by reason?

Such a being merits rather our derision than our pity; and it is only when it assumes to act its folly that it becomes capable of provoking republican indignation. In every other case it is too contemptible to excite anger. For my own part, when I contemplate the self-evident absurdity of the thing, I can scarcely permit myself to believe that there exists in the highminded nation of France such a mean and silly animal as a royalist.

As it requires but a single glance of thought to see (as is before said) that all the parts of which government is composed must be at all times in a state of full maturity, it was not possible that men acting under the

influence of reason, could, in forming a constitution, admit an hereditary executive, any more than an hereditary legislature. I go therefore to examine the other cases.

In the first place (rejecting the hereditary system), shall the executive by election be an *individual* or a *plurality*?

An individual by election is almost as bad as the hereditary system, except that there is always a better chance of not having an idiot. But he will never be anything more than a chief of a party, and none but those of that party will have access to him. He will have no person to consult with of a standing equal with himself, and consequently be deprived of the advantages arising from equal discussion.

Those whom he admits in consultation will be ministers of his own appointment, who, if they displease by their advice, must expect to be dismissed. The authority also is too great, and the business too complicated, to be intrusted to the ambition or the judgment of an individual; and besides these cases, the sudden change of measures that might follow by the going out of an individual executive, and the election of a new one, would hold the affairs of a nation in a state of perpetual uncertainty. We come then to the case of a plural executive.

It must be sufficiently plural, to give opportunity to discuss all the various subjects that in the course of national business may come before it; and yet not so numerous as to endanger the necessary secrecy that certain cases, such as those of war, require.

Establishing, then, plurality as a principle, the only question is, What shall be the number of that plurality?

Three are too few either for the variety or the quantity of business. The Constitution has adopted *five*; and experience has shown, from the commencement of the Constitution to the time of the election of the new legislative third, that this number of directors, when well chosen, is sufficient for all national executive purposes; and therefore a greater number would be only an unnecessary expense.

That the measures of the Directory during that period were well concerted is proved by their success; and their being well concerted shows they were well discussed; and, therefore, that *five* is a sufficient number with respect to discussion; and, on the other hand, the secret, whenever there was one (as in the case of the expedition to Ireland), was well kept, and therefore the number is not too great to endanger the necessary secrecy.

The reason why the two Councils are numerous is not from the neces-

sity of their being so, on account of business, but because that every part of the Republic shall find and feel itself in the national representation.

Next to the general principle of government by representation, the excellence of the French Constitution consists in providing means to prevent that abuse of power that might arise by letting it remain too long in the same hands. This wise precaution pervades every part of the Constitution. Not only the Legislature is renewable by a third every year, but the president of each of the Councils is renewable every month; and of the Directory, one member each year, and its president every three months.

Those who formed the Constitution cannot be accused of having contrived for themselves. The Constitution, in this respect, is as impartially constructed as if those who framed it were to die as soon as they had finished their work.

The only defect in the Constitution is that of having narrowed the right of suffrage; and it is in a great measure due to this narrowing the right, that the last elections have not generally been good. My former colleagues will, I presume, pardon my saying this to-day, when they recollect my arguments against this defect, at the time the Constitution was discussed in the Convention.

I will close this part of the subject by remarking on one of the most vulgar and absurd *sayings* or dogmas that ever yet imposed itself upon the world, which is, "*that a Republic is fit only for a small country, and a Monarchy for a large one.*" Ask those who say this their reasons why it is so, and they can give none.

Let us then examine the case. If the quantity of knowledge in a government ought to be proportioned to the extent of a country, and the magnitude and variety of its affairs, it follows, as an undeniable result, that this absurd dogma is false, and that the reverse of it is true. As to what is called monarchy, if it be adaptable to any country it can only be so to a small one, whose concerns are few, little complicated, and all within the comprehension of an individual.

But when we come to a country of large extent, vast population, and whose affairs are great, numerous and various, it is the representative republican system only, that can collect into the government the quantity of knowledge necessary to govern to the best national advantage. Montesquieu, who was strongly inclined to republican government, sheltered himself under this absurd dogma; for he had always the Bas-

tile before his eyes when he was speaking of republics, and therefore *pretended* not to write for France.

Condorcet governed himself by the same caution, but it was caution only, for no sooner had he the opportunity of speaking fully out than he did it. When I say this of Condorcet, I know it as a fact. In a paper published in Paris, July, 1791, entitled, "The Republican or the Defender of Representative Government," is a piece signed THOMAS PAINE. That piece was concerted between Condorcet and myself. I wrote the original in English, and Condorcet translated it. The object of it was to expose the absurdity and falsehood of the above mentioned dogma.

Having thus concisely glanced at the excellencies of the Constitution, and the superiority of the representative system of government over every other system (if any other can be called a system), I come to speak of the circumstances that have intervened between the time the Constitution was established and the event that took place on the eighteenth of Fructidor of the present year.

Almost as suddenly as the morning light dissipates darkness, did the establishment of the Constitution change the face of affairs in France. Security succeeded to terror, prosperity to distress, plenty to famine, and confidence increased as the days multiplied, until the coming of the new third. A series of victories unequaled in the world, followed each other, almost too rapidly to be counted, and too numerous to be remembered.

The Coalition, everywhere defeated and confounded, crumbled away like a ball of dust in the hand of a giant. Everything, during that period, was acted on such a mighty scale that reality appeared a dream, and truth outstripped romance. It may figuratively be said, that the Rhine and the Rubicon (Germany and Italy) replied in triumphs to each other, and the echoing Alps prolonged the shout. I will not here dishonor a great description by noticing too much the English Government. It is sufficient to say paradoxically, that in the magnitude of its littleness it cringed, it intrigued, and sought protection in corruption.

Though the achievements of these days might give trophies to a nation and laurels to its heroes, they derive their full radiance of glory from the principle they inspired and the object they accomplished. Desolation, chains and slavery had marked the progress of former wars, but to conquer for liberty had never been thought of.

To receive the degrading submission of a distressed and subjugated people, and insultingly permit them to live, made the chief triumph of

former conquerors; but to receive them with fraternity, to break their chains, to tell them they are free, and teach them to be so, make a new volume in the history of man.

Amidst those national honors, and when only two enemies remained, both of whom had solicited peace, and one of them had signed preliminaries, the election of the new third commenced. Everything was made easy to them. All difficulties had been conquered before they arrived at the government. They came in the olive days of the Revolution, and all they had to do was not to do mischief.

It was, however, not difficult to foresee that the elections would not be generally good. The horrid days of Robespierre were still remembered, and the gratitude due to those who had put an end to them was forgotten.

Thousands who, by passive approbation during that tremendous scene, had experienced no suffering, assumed the merit of being the loudest against it. Their cowardice in not opposing it became courage when it was over. They exclaimed against terrorism as if they had been the heroes that overthrew it, and rendered themselves ridiculous by fantastically overacting moderation.

The most noisy of this class that I have met with are those who suffered nothing. They became all things, at all times, to all men; till at last they laughed at principle. It was the real republicans who suffered most during the time of Robespierre. The persecution began upon them on the thirty-first of May [1793] and ceased only by the exertions of the remnant that survived.

In such a confused state of things as preceded the late elections the public mind was put into a condition of being easily deceived; and it was almost natural that the hypocrite would stand the best chance of being elected into the new third. Had those who, since their election, have thrown the public affairs into confusion by counter-revolutionary measures, declared themselves beforehand, they would have been denounced instead of being chosen. Deception was necessary to their success.

The Constitution obtained a full establishment; the Revolution was considered as complete; and the war on the eve of termination. In such a situation, the mass of the people, fatigued by a long revolution, sought repose; and in their elections they looked out for quiet men. They unfortunately found hypocrites.

Would any of the primary assemblies have voted for a civil war?

Certainly they would not. But the electoral assemblies of some departments have chosen men whose measures, since their election, tended to no other end but to provoke it. Either those electors have deceived their constituents of the primary assemblies, or they have been themselves deceived in the choice they made of deputies.

That there were some direct but secret conspirators in the new third can scarcely admit of a doubt; but it is most reasonable to suppose that a great part were seduced by the vanity of thinking they could do better than those whom they succeeded. Instead of trusting to experience, they attempted experiments. This counter-disposition prepared them to fall in with any measures contrary to former measures, and that without seeing, and probably without suspecting, the end to which they led.

No sooner were the members of the new third arrived at the seat of government than expectation was excited to see how they would act. Their motions were watched by all parties, and it was impossible for them to steal a march unobserved. They had it in their power to do great good, or great mischief. A firm and manly conduct on their part, uniting with that of the Directory and their colleagues, would have terminated the war. But the moment before them was not the moment of hesitation. He that hesitates in such situation is lost.

The first public act of the Council of Five Hundred was the election of Pichegru to the presidency of that Council. He arrived at it by a very large majority, and the public voice was in his favor. I among the rest was one who rejoiced at it. But if the defection of Pichegru was at that time known to Condé, and consequently to Pitt, it unveils the cause that retarded all negotiations for peace.<sup>17</sup>

They interpreted that election into a signal of a counter-revolution, and were waiting for it; and they mistook the respect shown to Pichegru, founded on the supposition of his integrity, as a symptom of national revolt. Judging of things by their own foolish ideas of government, they ascribed appearances to causes between which there was no connection. Everything on their part has been a comedy of errors, and the actors have been chased from the stage.

Two or three decades of the new sessions passed away without anything very material taking place; but matters soon began to explain

<sup>17</sup> The Prince of Condé, Louis Joseph de Bourbon, had been one of the émigrés in England who worked to restore the king to the throne in France. He had organized the French émigrés on the Rhine into an army supposedly Austrian, but financed by England.  
—*Editor.*



themselves. The first thing that struck the public mind was that no more was heard of negotiations for peace, and that public business stood still. It was not the object of the conspirators that there should be peace; but as it was necessary to conceal their object, the Constitution was ransacked to find pretenses for delays.

In vain did the Directory explain to them the state of the finances and the wants of the army. The committee, charged with that business, trifled away its time by a series of unproductive reports, and continued to sit only to produce more. Everything necessary to be done was neglected, and everything improper was attempted. Pichegru occupied himself about forming a national guard for the Councils—the suspicious signal of war—Camille Jordan about priests and bells, and the emigrants, with whom he had associated during the two years he was in England.

Willot and Delarue attacked the Directory: their object was to displace some one of the directors, to get in another of their own. Their motives with respect to the age of Barras (who is as old as he wishes to be, and has been a little too old for them) were too obvious not to be seen through.

In this suspensive state of things, the public mind, filled with apprehensions, became agitated, and without knowing what it might be, looked for some extraordinary event. It saw, for it could not avoid seeing, that things could not remain long in the state they were in, but it dreaded a convulsion.

That spirit of triflingness which it had indulged too freely when in a state of security, and which it is probable the new agents had interpreted into indifference about the success of the Republic, assumed a serious aspect that afforded to conspiracy no hope of aid; but still it went on. It plunged itself into new measures with the same ill success, and the further it went the further the public mind retired. The conspiracy saw nothing around it to give it encouragement.

The obstinacy, however, with which it persevered in its repeated attacks upon the Directory, in framing laws in favor of emigrants and refractory priests, and in everything inconsistent with the immediate safety of the Republic, and which served to encourage the enemy to prolong the war, admitted of no other direct interpretation than that something was rotten in the Council of Five Hundred. The evidence of circumstances became every day too visible not to be seen, and too strong to be explained away. Even as errors (to say no worse of them), they

are not entitled to apology; for where knowledge is a duty, ignorance is a crime.

The more serious republicans, who had better opportunities than the generality had, of knowing the state of politics, began to take the alarm, and formed themselves into a society, by the name of the Constitutional Club. It is the only society of which I have been a member in France; and I went to this because it was become necessary that the friends of the Republic should rally round the standard of the Constitution. I met there several of the original patriots of the Revolution; I do not mean of the last order of Jacobins, but of the first of that name.

The faction in the Council of Five Hundred, who, finding no counsel from the public, began to be frightened at appearances, fortified itself against the dread of this society, by passing a law to dissolve it. The constitutionality of the law was at least doubtful: but the society, that it might not give the example of exasperating matters already too much inflamed, suspended its meetings.

A matter, however, of much greater moment soon after presented itself. It was the march of four regiments, some of whom, in the line of their route, had to pass within about twelve leagues of Paris, which is the boundary the Constitution had fixed as the distance of any armed force from the legislative body.

In another state of things, such a circumstance would not have been noticed. But conspiracy is quick of suspicion, and the fear which the faction in the Council of Five Hundred manifested upon this occasion could not have suggested itself to innocent men; neither would innocent men have expostulated with the Directory upon the case in the manner these men did.

The question they urged went to extort from the Directory, and to make known to the enemy, what the destination of the troops was. The leaders of the faction conceived that the troops were marching against them; and the conduct they adopted in consequence of it was sufficient to justify the measure, even if it had been so. From what other motive than the consciousness of their own designs could they have fear?

The troops, in every instance, had been the gallant defenders of the Republic, and the openly declared friends of the Constitution; the Directory had been the same, and if the faction were not of a different description neither fear nor suspicion could have had place among them.

All those maneuvers in the Council were acted under the most professional attachment to the Constitution; and this as necessarily served

to enfeeble their projects. It is exceedingly difficult, and next to impossible, to conduct a conspiracy, and still more so to give it success, in a popular government.

The disguised and feigned pretenses which men in such cases are obliged to act in the face of the public, suppress the action of the faculties, and give even to natural courage the features of timidity. They are not half the men they would be where no disguise is necessary. It is impossible to be a hypocrite and to be brave at the same instant.

The faction, by the imprudence of its measures, upon the march of the troops, and upon the declarations of the officers and soldiers to support the Republic and the Constitution against all open or concealed attempts to overturn them, had gotten itself involved with the army, and in effect declared itself a party against it.

On the one hand, laws were proposed to admit emigrants and refractory priests as free citizens; and on the other hand to exclude the troops from Paris, and to punish the soldiers who had declared to support the Republic. In the meantime all negotiations for peace went backward; and the enemy, still recruiting its forces, rested to take advantage of circumstances. Excepting the absence of hostilities, it was a state worse than war.

If all this was not a conspiracy, it had at least the features of one, and was pregnant with the same mischiefs. The eyes of the faction could not avoid being open to the dangers to which it obstinately exposed the Republic; yet still it persisted. During this scene, the journals devoted to the faction were repeatedly announcing the near approach of peace with Austria and with England, and often asserting that it was concluded. This falsehood could be intended for no other purpose than to keep the eyes of the people shut against the dangers to which they were exposed.

Taking all circumstances together, it was impossible that such a state of things could continue long; and at length it was resolved to bring it to an issue. There is good reason to believe that the affair of the eighteenth Fructidor (September fourth) was intended to have taken place two days before; but on recollecting that it was the second of September, a day mournful in the annals of the Revolution, it was postponed. When the issue arrived, the faction found to its cost it had no party among the public. It had sought its own disasters, and was left to suffer the consequences.

Foreign enemies, as well as those of the interior, if any such there be, ought to see in the event of this day that all expectation of aid from

any part of the public in support of a counter revolution is delusion. In a state of security the thoughtless, who trembled at terror, may laugh at principles of liberty (for they have laughed), but it is one thing to indulge a foolish laugh, quite another thing to surrender liberty.

Considering the event of the eighteenth Fructidor in a political light, it is one of those that are justifiable only on the supreme law of absolute necessity, and it is the necessity abstracted from the event that is to be deplored. The event itself is matter of joy. Whether the maneuvers in the Council of Five Hundred were the conspiracy of a few, aided by the perverseness of many, or whether it had a deeper root, the dangers were the same.

It was impossible to go on. Everything was at stake, and all national business at a stand. The case reduced itself to a simple alternative—shall the Republic be destroyed by the darksome maneuvers of a faction, or shall it be preserved by an exceptional act?

During the American Revolution, and that after the state constitutions were established, particular cases arose that rendered it necessary to act in a manner that would have been treasonable in a state of peace.

At one time Congress invested General Washington with dictatorial power. At another time the government of Pennsylvania suspended itself and declared martial law. It was the necessity of the times only that made the apology of those extraordinary measures. But who was it that produced the necessity of an extraordinary measure in France? A faction, and that in the face of prosperity and success. Its conduct is without apology; and it is on the faction only that the exceptional measure has fallen. The public has suffered no inconvenience.

If there are some men more disposed than others not to act severely, I have a right to place myself in that class; the whole of my political life invariably proves it; yet I cannot see, taking all parts of the case together, what else, or what better, could have been done, than has been done. It was a great stroke, applied in a great crisis, that crushed in an instant, and without the loss of a life, all the hopes of the enemy, and restored tranquillity to the interior.

The event was ushered in by the discharge of two cannon at four in the morning, and was the only noise that was heard throughout the day. It naturally excited a movement among the Parisians to inquire the cause. They soon learned it, and the countenance they carried was easy to be interpreted.

It was that of a people who, for some time past, had been oppressed

with apprehensions of some direful event, and who felt themselves suddenly relieved, by finding what it was. Everyone went about his business, or followed his curiosity in quietude. It resembled the cheerful tranquillity of the day when Louis XVI absconded in 1791, and like that day it served to open the eyes of the nation.

If we take a review of the various events, as well conspiracies as commotions, that have succeeded each other in this Revolution, we shall see how the former have wasted consumptively away, and the consequences of the latter have softened. The thirty-first May and its consequences were terrible. That of the ninth and tenth Thermidor, though glorious for the Republic, as it overthrew one of the most horrid and cruel despotisms that ever raged, was nevertheless marked with many circumstances of severe and continued retaliation.

The commotions of Germinal and Prairial of the year 3,<sup>18</sup> and of Vendémiaire of the year 4, were many degrees below those that preceded them, and affected but a small part of the public. This of Pichegru and his associates has been crushed in an instant, without the stain of blood, and without involving the public in the least inconvenience.

These events taken in a series mark the progress of the Republic from disorder to stability. The contrary of this is the case in all parts of the British dominions. There, commotions are on an ascending scale; everyone is higher than the former. That of the sailors had nearly been the overthrow of the Government. But the most potent of all is the invisible commotion in the Bank. It works with the silence of time, and the certainty of death. Everything happening in France is curable; but this is beyond the reach of nature or invention.

Leaving the event of the eighteenth Fructidor to justify itself by the necessity that occasioned it, and glorify itself by the happiness of its consequences, I come to cast a *coup-d'œil* on the present state of affairs.

We have seen by the lingering condition of the negotiations for peace, that nothing was to be expected from them, in the situation that things stood prior to the eighteenth Fructidor. The armies had done wonders, but those wonders were rendered unproductive by the wretched maneuvers of a faction.

New exertions are now necessary to repair the mischiefs which that

<sup>18</sup> The uprisings of the 12th Germinal and the 1st Prairial, 1795, represented efforts of the masses in Paris to halt the counter-revolution that set in after the overthrow of Robespierre. Paine confuses these movements with reactionary uprisings for the purpose of restoring the monarchy. This is another indication that Paine did not fully understand the conflicting forces and class issues in the revolutionary movement.—Editor.

faction has done. The electoral bodies, in some departments, who by an injudicious choice, or a corrupt influence, have sent improper deputies to the Legislature, have some atonement to make to their country. The evil originated with them, and the least they can do is to be among the foremost to repair it.

It is, however, in vain to lament an evil that is past. There is neither manhood nor policy in grief; and it often happens that an error in politics, like an error in war, admits of being turned to greater advantage than if it had not occurred. The enemy, encouraged by that error, presumes too much, and becomes doubly foiled by the reaction.

England, unable to conquer, has stooped to corrupt; and defeated in the last, as in the first, she is in a worse condition than before. Continually increasing her crimes, she increases the measure of her atonement, and multiplies the sacrifices she must make to obtain peace. Nothing but the most obstinate stupidity could have induced her to let slip the opportunity when it was within her reach. In addition to the prospect of new expenses, she is now, to use Mr. Pitt's own figurative expression against France, *not only on the brink, but in the gulf of bankruptcy*. There is no longer any mystery in paper money. Call it assignats, mandates, exchequer bills, or bank notes, it is still the same. Time has solved the problem, and experience has fixed its fate.

The Government of that unfortunate country discovers its faithlessness so much that peace on any terms with her is scarcely worth obtaining. Of what use is peace with a government that will employ that peace for no other purpose than to repair, as far as it is possible, her shattered finances and broken credit, and then go to war again?

Four times within the last ten years, from the time the American War closed, has the Anglo-Germanic Government of England been meditating fresh war. First with France on account of Holland, in 1787; afterwards with Russia; then with Spain, on account of Nootka Sound; and a second time against France, to overthrow her Revolution. Sometimes that Government employs Prussia against Austria; at another time Austria against Prussia; and always one or the other, or both against France. Peace with such a government is only a treacherous cessation of hostilities.

The frequency of wars on the part of England, within the last century, more than before, must have had some cause that did not exist prior to that epoch. It is not difficult to discover what that cause is. It is the mischievous compound of an elector of the Germanic body and a

king of England; and which necessarily must, at some day or other, become an object of attention to France.

That one nation has not a right to interfere in the *internal* government of another nation, is admitted; and in this point of view, France has no right to dictate to England what its form of government shall be. If it choose to have a thing called a king, or whether that king shall be a man or an ass, is a matter with which France has no business. But whether an elector of the Germanic body shall be king of England, is an *external* case, with which France and every other nation who suffers inconvenience and injury in consequence of it has a right to interfere.

It is from this mischievous compound of elector and king that originates a great part of the troubles that vex the Continent of Europe; and with respect to England, it has been the cause of her immense national debt, the ruin of her finances, and the insolvency of her bank. All intrigues on the Continent, in which England is a party, or becomes involved, are generated by, and act through, the medium of this Anglo-Germanic compound. It will be necessary to dissolve it. Let the elector retire to his electorate, and the world will have peace.

England herself has given the examples of interference in matters of this kind, that in cases where injury was only apprehended. She engaged in a long and expensive war against France (called the Succession War) to prevent a grandson of Louis XIV being King of Spain; because, said she, *it will be injurious* to me; and she has been fighting and intriguing against what was called the family-compact ever since.

In 1787 she threatened France with war to prevent a connection between France and Holland; and in all her propositions of peace to-day she is dictating separations. But if she look at the Anglo-Germanic compact at home, called the Hanover Succession, she cannot avoid seeing that France necessarily must, some day or other, take up that subject and make the return of the elector to his electorate one of the conditions of peace. There will be no lasting peace between the two countries till this be done, and the sooner it be done the better will it be for both.

I have not been in any company where this matter has been a topic, that did not see it in the light it is here stated. Even Barthélemy,<sup>19</sup> when he first came to the Directory (and Barthélemy was never famous for patriotism) acknowledged in my hearing, and in company with Derché,

<sup>19</sup> Marquis François de Barthélemy, a royalist member of the Directory, was banished with Pichegru.—*Editor*.

secretary to the legation at Lille, the connection of an elector of Germany and a king of England to be injurious to France. I do not, however, mention it from a wish to embarrass the negotiation for peace. The Directory has fixed its *ultimatum*; but if that ultimatum be rejected, the obligation to adhere to it is discharged, and a new one may be assumed.

So wretchedly has Pitt managed his opportunities that every succeeding negotiation has ended in terms more against him than the former. If the Directory had bribed him, he could not serve his interest better than he does. He serves it as Lord North served that of America, which finished in the discharge of his master.<sup>20</sup>

Thus far I had written when the negotiation at Lille became suspended, in consequence of which I delayed the publication, that the ideas suggested in this letter might not intrude themselves during the interval. The *ultimatum* offered by the Directory, as the terms of peace, was more moderate than the Government of England had a right to expect. That Government, though the provoker of the war, and the first that committed hostilities by sending away the Ambassador Chauvelin,<sup>21</sup> had formerly talked of demanding from France, *indemnification for the past and security for the future*.

France, in her turn, might have retorted, and demanded the same from England; but she did not. As it was England that, in consequence of her bankruptcy, solicited peace, France offered it to her on the simple condition of her restoring the islands she had taken. The *ultimatum* has been rejected, and the negotiation broken off. The spirited part of France will say, *tant mieux*, so much the better.

<sup>20</sup> The father of Pitt, when a member of the House of Commons, exclaiming one day, during a former war, against the enormous and ruinous expense of German connections, as the offspring of the Hanover Succession, and borrowing a metaphor from the story of Prometheus, cried out: "*Thus, like Prometheus, is Britain chained to the barren rock of Hanover, whilst the imperial eagle preys upon her vitals.*"—*Author*.

<sup>21</sup> It was stipulated in the treaty of commerce between France and England, concluded at Paris, that the sending away an ambassador by either party, should be taken as an act of hostility by the other party. The declaration of war (February [1], 1793) by the Convention, of which I was then a member and know well the case, was made in exact conformity to this article in the treaty; for it was not a declaration of war against England, but a declaration that the French Republic is *in* war with England; the first act of hostility having been committed by England. The declaration was made immediately on Chauvelin's return to France, and in consequence of it. Mr. Pitt should inform himself of things better than he does, before he prates so much about them, or of the sending away of Malmesbury, who was only on a visit of permission.—*Author*.



How the people of England feel on the breaking up of the negotiation, which was entirely the act of their own Government, is best known to themselves; but from what I know of the two nations, France ought to hold herself perfectly indifferent about a peace with the Government of England. Every day adds new strength to France and new embarrassments to her enemy. The resources of the one increase, as those of the other become exhausted.

England is now reduced to the same system of paper money from which France has emerged, and we all know the inevitable fate of that system. It is not a victory over a few ships, like that on the coast of Holland, that gives the least support or relief to a paper system. On the news of this victory arriving in England, the funds did not rise a farthing. The Government rejoiced, but its creditors were silent.

It is difficult to find a motive, except in folly and madness, for the conduct of the English Government. Every calculation and prediction of Mr. Pitt has turned out directly the contrary; yet still he predicts. He predicted, with all the solemn assurance of a magician, that France would be bankrupt in a few months. He was right as to the thing, but wrong as to the place, for the bankruptcy happened in England while the words were yet warm upon his lips. To find out what will happen, it is only necessary to know what Mr. Pitt predicts. He is a true prophet if taken in the reverse.

Such is the ruinous condition that England is now in, that great as the difficulties of war are to the people, the difficulties that would accompany peace are equally as great to the Government. While the war continues, Mr. Pitt has a pretense for shutting up the Bank. But as that pretense could last no longer than the war lasted, he dreads the peace that would expose the absolute bankruptcy of the Government, and unveil to a deceived nation the ruinous effect of his measures. Peace would be a day of accounts to him, and he shuns it as an insolvent debtor shuns a meeting of his creditors. War furnishes him with many pretenses; peace would furnish him with none, and he stands alarmed at its consequences.

His conduct in the negotiation at Lille can be easily interpreted. It is not for the sake of the nation that he asks to retain some of the taken islands; for what are islands to a nation that has already too many for her own good, or what are they in comparison to the expense of another campaign in the present depreciating state of the English funds? (And even then those islands must be restored.)

No, it is not for the sake of the nation that he asks. It is for the sake

of himself. It is as if he said to France, Give me some pretense, cover me from disgrace when my day of reckoning comes!

Any person acquainted with the English Government knows that every minister has some dread of what is called in England the winding up of accounts at the end of a war; that is, the final settlement of all expenses incurred by the war; and no minister had ever so great cause of dread as Mr. Pitt. A burnt child dreads the fire, and Pitt has had some experience upon this case.

The winding up of accounts at the end of the American War was so great that, though he was not the cause of it, and came into the Ministry with great popularity, he lost it all by undertaking, what was impossible for him to avoid, the voluminous business of the winding up. If such was the case in settling the accounts of his predecessor, how much more has he to apprehend when the accounts to be settled are his own? All men in bad circumstances hate the settlement of accounts, and Pitt, as a minister, is of that description.

But let us take a view of things on a larger ground than the case of a minister. It will then be found that England, on a comparison of strength with France, when both nations are disposed to exert their utmost, has no possible chance of success. The efforts that England made within the last century were not generated on the ground of *natural ability*, but of *artificial anticipations*. She ran posterity into debt, and swallowed up in one generation the resources of several generations yet to come, till the project can be pursued no longer.

It is otherwise in France. The vastness of her territory and her population render the burden easy that would make a bankrupt of a country like England.

It is not the weight of a thing, but the numbers who are to bear that weight, that makes it feel light or heavy to the shoulders of those who bear it. A land-tax of half as much in the pound as the land-tax is in England, will raise nearly four times as much revenue in France as is raised in England. This is a scale easily understood, by which all the other sections of productive revenue can be measured. Judge then of the difference of natural ability.

England is strong in a navy; but that navy costs about eight millions sterling a year, and is one of the causes that has hastened her bankruptcy. The history of navy bills sufficiently proves this. But strong as England is in this case, the fate of navies must finally be decided by the natural ability of each country to carry its navy to the greatest extent;

and France is able to support a navy twice as large as that of England, with less than half the expense per head on the people, which the present navy of England costs.

We all know that a navy cannot be raised as expeditiously as an army. But as the average duration of a navy, taking the decay of time, storms and all circumstances and accidents together, is less than twenty years, every navy must be renewed within that time; and France at the end of a few years, can create and support a navy of double the extent of that of England; and the conduct of the English Government will provoke her to it.

But of what use are navies otherwise than to make or prevent invasions? Commercially considered, they are losses. They scarcely give any protection to the commerce of the countries which have them, compared with the expense of maintaining them, and they insult the commerce of the nations that are neutral.

During the American War, the plan of the armed neutrality was formed and put in execution; but it was inconvenient, expensive, and ineffectual. This being the case, the problem is, does not commerce contain within itself, the means of its own protection? It certainly does, if the neutral nations will employ that means properly.

Instead then of an *armed neutrality*, the plan should be directly the contrary. It should be an *unarmed neutrality*. In the first place, the rights of neutral nations are easily defined. They are such as are exercised by nations in their intercourse with each other in time of peace, and which ought not, and cannot of right, be interrupted in consequence of war breaking out between any two or more of them.

Taking this as a principle, the next thing is to give it effect. The plan of the armed neutrality was to effect it by threatening war; but an unarmed neutrality can effect it by much easier and more powerful means.

Were the neutral nations to associate, under an honorable injunction of fidelity to each other, and publicly declare to the world that if any belligerent power shall seize or molest any ship or vessel belonging to the citizens or subjects of any of the powers composing that association, that the whole association will shut its ports against the flag of the offending nation, and will not permit any goods, wares or merchandise, produced or manufactured in the offending nation, or appertaining thereto, to be imported into any of the ports included in the association, until reparation be made to the injured party—the reparation to be three times the value of the vessel and cargo—and moreover that all remittances on

money, goods and bills of exchange, do cease to be made to the offending nation, until the said reparation be made: were the neutral nations only to do this, which it is their direct interest to do, England, as a nation depending on the commerce of neutral nations in time of war, dare not molest them, and France would not.

But while, from the want of a common system, they individually permit England to do it, because individually they cannot resist it, they put France under the necessity of doing the same thing. The supreme of all laws, in all cases, is that of self-preservation.

As the commerce of neutral nations would thus be protected by the means that commerce naturally contains within itself, all the naval operations of France and England would be confined within the circle of acting against each other; and in that case it needs no spirit of prophecy to discover that France must finally prevail. The sooner this be done, the better will it be for both nations, and for all the world.

THOMAS PAINE.

## THE RECALL OF MONROE

Monroe was recalled from France on August 22, 1796 by President Washington who had been influenced by Gouverneur Morris, still in Europe, to believe that the American Minister to France had attacked the American chief executive and was organizing an anti-Washington conspiracy among Frenchmen. On his return to the United States, in 1797, Monroe sought in vain to discover the reason for his removal.

Paine's letter, dated September 27, 1797, was addressed to the editors of the *Bien-informé*.—*Editor*.

**CITIZENS:** In your nineteenth number of the complimentary fifth, you gave an analysis of the letters of James Monroe to Timothy Pickering. The newspapers of Paris and the departments have copied this correspondence between the Ambassador of the United States and the Secretary of State. I notice, however, that a few of them have omitted some important facts, while indulging in comments of such an extraordinary nature that it is clear they know neither Monroe's integrity nor the intrigues of Pitt in this affair. The recall of Monroe is connected with circumstances so important to the interests of France and the United

States that we must be careful not to confound it with the recall of an ordinary individual. The Washington faction had affected to spread it abroad that James Monroe was the cause of rupture between the two Republics.

This accusation is a perfidious and calumnious one; since the main point in this affair is not so much the recall of a worthy, enlightened and Republican Minister, as the ingratitude and clandestine maneuvering of the Government of Washington, who caused the misunderstanding by signing a treaty injurious to the French Republic.

James Monroe, in his letters, does not deny the right of government to withdraw its confidence from any one of its delegates, representatives or agents. He has hinted, it is true, that caprice and temper are not in accordance with the spirit of paternal rule, and that whenever a representative government punishes or rewards good faith, integrity and justice should replace *the good pleasure of kings*.

In the present case they have done more than recall an agent. Had they confined themselves to depriving him of his appointment, James Monroe would have kept silence; but he has been accused of lighting the torch of discord in both Republics. The refutation of this absurd and infamous reproach is the chief object of his correspondence. If he did not immediately complain of these slanders in his letters of the sixth and eighth [July], it is because he wished to use at first a certain degree of caution, and, if it were possible, to stifle intestine troubles at their birth. He wished to reopen the way to peaceful negotiations to be conducted with good faith and justice.

The arguments of the Secretary of State on the rights of the supreme administration of the United States are peremptory; but the observations of Monroe on the hidden causes of his recall are touching; they come from the heart; they are characteristic of an excellent citizen.

If he does more than complain of his unjust recall as a man of feeling would; if he proudly asks for proofs of a grave accusation, it is after he has tried in vain every honest and straightforward means. He will not suffer that a government, sold to the enemies of freedom, should discharge upon him its shame, its crimes, its ingratitude, and all the odium of its unjust dealings.

Were Monroe to find himself an object of public hatred, the Republican party in the United States, that party which is the sincere ally of France, would be annihilated, and this is the aim of the English Government.

Imagine the triumph of Pitt, if Monroe and the other friends of freedom in America, should be unjustly attacked in France!

Monroe does not lay his cause before the Senate since the Senate itself ratified the unconstitutional treaty; he appeals to the House of Representatives, and at the same time lays his cause before the upright tribunal of the American nation.

## REMARKS ON THE POLITICAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS OF EUROPE

This article appeared in the Jeffersonian press of New York and Philadelphia in December, 1806, and was reprinted in *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays on Various Subjects by Thomas Paine*, London, 1819, pp. 205-217.—*Editor.*

THE battles which decided the fate of the King of Prussia and his Government, began on the 9th of October, and ended on the 14th of that month; but the final event, that of the total overthrow of the Russian army of one hundred and fifty thousand men on the 14th, was not known in England till the 26th or 27th of October. The first public notice of it is in a London paper of the 27th. (See the Mercantile Advertiser of Tuesday, Dec. 9th, and American Citizen, Dec. 10th.) The article in the London paper of the 27th, which announces this event, begins as follows:

“London, Oct. 27.—*It is with very great concern that we are obliged to check the pleasing expectations that were entertained YESTERDAY of the success of the Prussian army.*”

The manifesto and declaration of the English Government on the failure of the negotiation for peace with France, and which throws all the blame of that failure on the French Government, was published in the London Gazette (the official paper of the English Government) on the 21st of October, five or six days before that Government knew of the overthrow of the Prussians. Query.—Would the English Government have published that manifesto had it been kept back till after the overthrow of the Prussians were known? I think not, unless it be true which fanatics have formerly said, that “*those whom God intends to destroy he first renders mad.*”

It is a saying often verified by experience, that *one story is good till another is told*. In a little time we shall have the manifesto of the French Government, and then, by comparing the two with each other, and with *such circumstances as are known*, which is the only true way of interpreting manifestoes, we shall be enabled to form some judgment of the whole.

But as far as circumstances are already known, Bonaparte has done exactly what I would have done myself, with respect I mean to the present war, had I been in his place, which, thank God, I am not. Why are coalitions continually formed and forming against him, against the French nation, and the French Government? Or why does the Government of England oppress and impoverish the people it governs by loading them with the burdensome expence of paying those coalitions? It is they who pay all, and I pity them sincerely.

The opposers of Bonaparte say, "*he is a usurper.*" The case is, that all the kings in Europe are usurpers, and as to hereditary Government, it is a succession of usurpers. The present hereditary Government of England is derived from the usurper, William of Normandy, who conquered England and usurped the Government. If there is any man amongst them all that is less a usurper than the rest, it is Bonaparte; for he was elected by the French nation to the rank and title he now holds. The others assumed it by the sword, or succeeded in consequence of the first usurpation.

As to the coalitions against France, it is impossible in the nature of things they can succeed while the French Government conducts itself with the energy and activity it now does. The English Government may amuse itself with forming coalitions as long and as often as it pleases, but they will all come to the same fatal end. For, in the first place, there is no single power on the Continent of Europe that is able to stand against France until a coalition army, coming in detachments from different and distant parts of Europe, can be collected and formed. And, in the second place, those distant detachments of an intended coalition army cannot be put in motion for the purpose of assembling somewhere in Germany without its being known by the French Government. The case, therefore, will always be, that as soon as the French Government knows that those distant parts are in motion, the French army, with Bonaparte at its head, will march and attack the first part of the coalition army he can come up with, and overthrow it. Last year that part was Austria. This year it is Prussia. The English

Government may *vote* coalition armies in the cabinet, but Bonaparte can always prevent them in the field. This is a matter so very obvious to any man who knows the scene of Europe, and can calculate the probability of events, that a Cabinet must be sunk in total ignorance and stupidity not to see it; and thus it is that the lives of unoffending men are sported away.

As to the late negotiation for peace between England and France, I view it as a *trick of war* on both sides, and the contest was which could outwit the other. The British manifesto says, "*The negotiation originated in an offer made by the French Government of treating for peace on the basis of actual possession.*" Well! be it so; it makes the matter neither better nor worse; for the fact is, though the British manifesto says nothing about it, that the British Cabinet had planned, and was forming this coalition army of Prussians, Russians, and Swedes, several months before that offer was made, and the French Government had knowledge of it, for it is impossible to keep such things a dead secret. The French Government, therefore, having at least, what may be called *suspicious* knowledge of this coalition intrigue, made the offer to find out the whole of that intrigue, that it might be prepared against it. And on the other hand, the British Cabinet closed with the offer, and went into the negotiation to give time to the Russians and Swedes to march and join the Prussians, while the comedy of negotiation was going on.

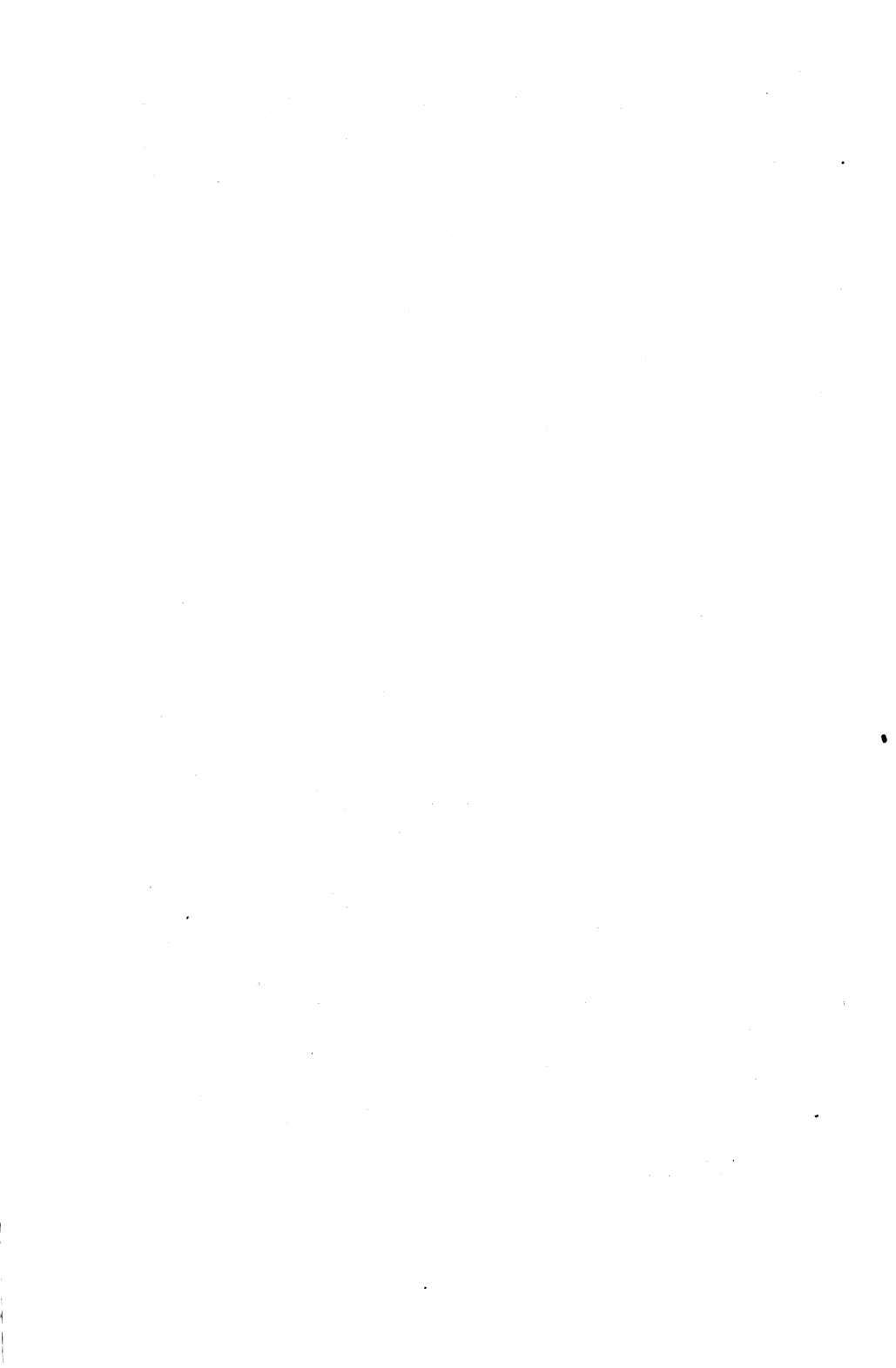
But the Corsican usurper, as they call him, has been too quick for them. He has outwitted the coalition intriguers, and outgeneralled the coalition usurpers. The fallen King of Prussia has to deplore his fate, and the British Cabinet to dread the consequence.

In speaking of these circumstances, it ought always to be remembered that the British Government began this war. It had concluded a treaty of peace with France called the Treaty of Amiens, and soon after, declared war again to avoid fulfilling the conditions of that treaty. It will not be able to conclude another treaty so good as the treaty it has broken, and most probably no treaty at all. That Government must now abide by its fate, for it can raise no more coalitions. There does not remain powers on the Continent of Europe to form another. The last that could be raised has been tried and has perished.

THOMAS PAINE.

New York, Dec. 14, 1806.





FIVE ESSAYS ON ENGLISH AFFAIRS,  
1787-1807

• PROSPECTS ON THE RUBICON  
THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ENGLISH SYSTEM OF FINANCE  
TO THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND ON THE INVASION OF ENGLAND  
REMARKS ON ENGLISH AFFAIRS  
OF THE ENGLISH NAVY

## EDITOR'S NOTE

No matter where he was, Paine never forgot that the victory of the Revolutionary cause depended considerably upon the turn of events in England. Conservatives everywhere regarded England as the strongest bulwark against the wave of reform sweeping the world. To weaken the influence of the English propertied classes thus became a major task for Paine. In the essays contained in this section, Paine continues his analysis of English society, exposes the conservative campaign to crush the French Revolution, and calls upon the people of England to establish thorough-going democratic reforms ending in the elimination of hereditary monarchy and domination of their country by the landed aristocracy and the bourgeoisie. Smuggled into England and widely reprinted, these articles won popularity and diffused political knowledge among the common people. Reaction triumphed in England, but the writings of Paine were not forgotten. They had made an indelible imprint on the British working class, and their influence was to be felt in all subsequent movements for democratic reform in England.

## PROSPECTS ON THE RUBICON:

OR AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES  
OF THE POLITICS TO BE AGITATED AT THE  
NEXT MEETING OF PARLIAMENT

Paine dates this pamphlet London, August 20, 1787, but since he did not arrive in the English city before September 3, it is probable that he wrote the first draft while he was in Paris at the behest of Condorcet, Lafayette and Cardinal De Brienne. Indeed, his mission to London was connected with his desire to cement friendly relations between England and France, and it was with this purpose in mind that he published this pamphlet. The French were in close alliance with the Dutch republican party, but the Prussians intervened to support the Stadtholder, who represented the opposite politics. William Pitt made a secret treaty with the king of Prussia, and was prepared to support him in a war with France. Paine's pamphlet is directed against Pitt's scheme, and insists chiefly upon the incapacity of England to stand another war against France. "I defend the cause of the poor," he writes, "of the manufacturers, of the tradesmen, of the farmers, and of all those on whom the real burden of taxes falls—but above all, I defend the cause of humanity." He reminds the English people that those who want a war did so because they profited from wars. "It will always happen," he observes, "that any rumor of war will be popular among a great number of people in London. There are thousands who live by it; it is their harvest; and the clamor which those people keep up in newspapers and conversations passes unsuspectingly for the voice of the people, and it is not till after the mischief is done, that the deception is discovered." Thus Paine, who was the first to champion a people's war for a progressive cause, was just as ready to denounce a war from which only the wealthy and powerful stood to gain.

Pitt succeeded in his scheme to aid the Stadtholder, but Paine's predictions were not quickly forgotten in England. The prefatory note to the 1793 Eng-

lish edition of Paine's pamphlet points out: "The person who has the authority to bring forward this pamphlet in its present shape thinks his doing so a duty which he owes both to Mr. P—— and the people of England, in order that the latter may judge what credit is due to (what a great judge calls) the wild theories of Mr. Paine."—*Editor*.

#### PREFACE

**A**N EXPRESSION in the British Parliament respecting the American war, alluding to Julius Cæsar having passed the Rubicon, has on several occasions introduced that river as the figurative river of war.

Fortunately for England, she is yet on the peaceable side of the Rubicon; but as the flames once kindled are not always easily extinguished, the hopes of peace are not so clear as before the late mysterious dispute began.

But while the calm lasts, it may answer a very good purpose to take a view of the prospects, consistent with the maxim, that he that goes to war should first sit down and count the cost.

The nation has a young and ambitious Minister at its head, fond of himself, and deficient in experience: and instances have often shown that judgment is a different thing from genius, and that the affairs of a nation are but unsafely trusted where the benefit of experience is wanting.

Illustrations have been drawn from the circumstances of the war before last to decorate the character of the present Minister, and, perhaps, they may have been greatly overdrawn; for the management must have been bad to have done less than what was then done, when we impartially consider the means, the force, and the money employed.

It was then Great Britain and America against France singly, for Spain did not join till near the end of the war. The great number of troops which the American colonies then raised and paid themselves were sufficient to turn the scale, if all other parts had been equal. France had not at that time attended to naval affairs so much as she has done since; and the capture of French sailors before any declaration of war was made, which, however it may be justified upon policy, will always be ranked among the clandestine arts of war, assured a certain, but unfair advantage against her, because it was like a man administering a disabling dose over night to the person whom he intends to challenge in the morning.

THE AUTHOR.

## PROSPECTS ON THE RUBICON

**R**IGHT by chance and wrong by system are things so frequently seen in the political world, that it becomes a proof of prudence neither to censure nor applaud too soon.

"The Rubicon is passed," was once given as a reason for prosecuting the most expensive war that England ever knew. Sore with the event, and groaning beneath a galling yoke of taxes, she has again been led ministerially on to the shore of the same delusive and fatal river, without being permitted to know the object or the reason why.

Expensive preparations have been gone into; fears, alarms, dangers, apprehensions, have been mystically held forth, as if the existence of the nation was at stake, and at last the mountain has brought forth a Dutch mouse.

Whoever will candidly review the present national characters of England and France, cannot but be struck with surprise at the change that is taking place. The people of France are beginning to think for themselves, and the people of England are resigning up the privilege of thinking.

The affairs of Holland have been the bubble of the day; and a tax is to be laid on shoes and boots (so say the newspapers) for the service of the Stadtholder of Holland. This will undoubtedly do honor to the nation, by verifying the old English proverb, "Over shoes, over boots."

But though Democritus could scarcely have forborne laughing at the folly, yet, as serious argument and sound reasoning are preferable to ridicule, it will be best to quit the vein of unprofitable humor, and give the cause a fair investigation. But before we do this it may not be improper to take a general review of sundry political matters that will naturally lead to a better understanding of the subject.

What has been the event of all the wars of England but an amazing accumulation of debt, and an unparalleled burden of taxes? Sometimes the pretense has been to support one outlandish cause, and sometimes another. At one time Austria, at another time Prussia, another to oppose Russia, and so on; but the consequence has always been TAXES. A few men have enriched themselves by jobs and contracts, and the groaning

multitude bore the burden. What has England gained by war since the year 1738, only fifty years ago, to recompense her for TWO HUNDRED MILLIONS sterling, incurred as a debt within that time, and under the annual interest of which, besides what was incurred before, she is now groaning? Nothing at all.

The glare of fancied glory has often been held up, and the shadowy recompense imposed itself upon the senses. Wars that might have been prevented have been madly gone into, and the end has been debt and discontent. A sort of something which man cannot account for is mixed in his composition, and renders him the subject of deception by the very means he takes not to be deceived.

That jealousy which individuals of every nation feel at the supposed design of foreign powers, fits them to be the prey of ministers, and of those among themselves whose trade is war, or whose livelihood is jobs and contracts. "Confusion to the politics of Europe, and may every nation be at war in six months," was a toast given in my hearing not long since. The man was in court to the Ministry for a job.

Ye gentle Graces, if any such there be who preside over human actions, how must ye weep at the viciousness of man!

When we consider, for the feelings of nature cannot be dismissed, the calamities of war and the miseries it inflicts upon the human species, the thousands and tens of thousands of every age and sex who are rendered wretched by the event, surely there is something in the heart of man that calls upon him to think! Surely there is some tender chord tuned by the hand of its Creator, that struggles to emit in the hearing of the soul a note of sorrowing sympathy. Let it then be heard, and let man learn to feel, that the true greatness of a nation is founded on the principles of humanity; and that to avoid a war when our own existence is not endangered, and wherein the happiness of man must be wantonly sacrificed, is a higher principle of true honor than madly to engage in it.

But independent of all civil and moral considerations, there is no possible event that a war could produce benefits to England or France, on the present occasion, that could in the most distant proportion recompense to either the expense she must be at. War involves in its progress such a train of unforeseen and unsuspected circumstances, such a combination of foreign matters, that no human wisdom can calculate the end. It has but one thing certain, and that is increase of TAXES. The policy of European courts is now so cast, and their interests so interwoven with each other, that however easy it may be to begin a

war, the weight and influence of interfering nations compel even the conqueror to unprofitable conditions of peace.

Commerce and maritime strength are now becoming the fashion, or rather the rage of Europe, and this naturally excites in them a combined wish to prevent either England or France increasing its comparative strength by destroying, or even relatively weakening, the other, and therefore whatever views each may have at the commencement of a war, new enemies will arise as either gains the advantage, and continued obstacles ensue to embarrass success.

The greatness of Louis XIV made Europe his enemy, and the same cause will produce the same consequence to any other European power. That nation, therefore, is only truly wise, who, contenting herself with the means of defense, creates to herself no unnecessary enemies by seeking to be greater than the system of Europe admits. The monarch or the minister who exceeds this line, knows but little of his business. It is what the poet on another occasion calls—

The point where sense and nonsense join.

Perhaps there is not a greater instance of the folly of calculating upon events, than are to be found in the treaties of alliance. As soon as they have answered the immediate purpose of either of the parties they are but little regarded. Pretenses afterward are never wanting to explain them away, nor reasons to render them abortive. And if half the money which nations lavish on speculative alliances were reserved for their own immediate purpose, whenever the occasion shall arrive, it would be more productively and advantageously employed.

Monarchs and ministers, from ambition or resentment, often contemplate to themselves schemes of future greatness, and set out with what appears to them the fairest prospect. In the meanwhile, the great wheel of time and fate revolves unobserved, and something never dreamed of turns up and blasts the whole. A few fancied or unprofitable laurels supply the absence of success, and the exhausted nation is HUZZA'D INTO NEW TAXES.

The politics and interests of European courts are so frequently varying with regard to each other, that there is no fixing even the probability of their future conduct. But the great principle of allying seems to be but little understood, or little cultivated in courts, perhaps the least of all, in that of England. No alliance can be operative that



does not embrace within itself, not only the attachment of the sovereigns, but the real interest of the nations.

The alliance between France and Spain, however it may be spoken of as a mere family compact, derives its greatest strength from national interest. The mines of Peru and Mexico are the soul of this alliance. Were those mines extinct, the family compact would most probably dissolve.

There exists not a doubt in the mind of Spain, what part England would act, respecting those mines, could she demolish the maritime power of France; and therefore the interest of Spain feels itself continually united with France. Spain has high ideas of honor, but has not the same ideas of English honor. They consider England as wholly governed by principles of interest, and that whatever she thinks it her interest to do, and supposes she has the power of doing, she makes very little ceremony of attempting.

But this is not all—there is not a nation in Europe but what is more satisfied that those mines should be in the possession of Spain, than in that of any other European nation; because the wealth of those mines, sufficient to ruin Europe in the hands of some of its powers, is innocently employed with respect to Europe, and better and more peaceably distributed among them all, through the medium of Spain, than it would be through that of any other nation. This is one of the secret causes that combine so large a part of Europe in the interest of France, because they cannot but consider her as a standing barrier to secure to them the free and equal distribution of this wealth throughout all the dominions of Europe.

This alliance of interest is likewise one of the unseen cements that prevents Spain and Portugal, two nations not very friendly to each other, proceeding to hostilities. They are both in the same situation, and, whatever their dislikes may be, they cannot fail to consider that by giving way to resentment that would weaken and exhaust themselves, each would be exposed a prey to some stronger power.

In short, this alliance of national interest is the only one that can be trusted, and the only one that can be operative. All other alliances formed on the mere will and caprice of sovereigns, of family connections, uncombined with national interests, are but the quagmire of politics, and never fail to become a loss to that nation who wastes its present substance on the expectancy of distant returns.

With regard to Holland, a man must know very little of the matter,

not to know that there exists a stronger principle of rivalry between Holland and England in point of commerce, than prevails between England and France in point of power: and, therefore, whenever a Stadtholder of Holland shall see it his interest to unite with the principle of his country, and act in concert with the sentiments of the very people who pay him for his services, the means now taken by England to render him formidable, will operate contrary to the political expectations of the present day.

Circumstances will produce their own natural effects, and no other, let the hopes or expectations of man be what they may. It is not our doing a thing with a design that it shall answer such or such an end, that will cause it to produce that end; the means taken must have a natural ability and tendency within themselves to produce no other, for it is this, and not our wishes of policy, that governs the event.

The English Navigation Act was leveled against the interest of the Dutch as a whole nation, and therefore it is not to be supposed that the catching at the accidental circumstances of one man, as in the case of the present Stadtholder, can combine the interest of that country with this. A few years, perhaps a less time, may remove him to the place where all things are forgotten, and his successor, contemplating his father's troubles, will be naturally led to reprobate the means that produced them, and to repose himself on the interests of his country, in preference to the accidental and tumultuous assistance of exterior power.

England herself exhibits at this day a species of this kind of policy. The present reign, by embracing the Scotch, has tranquillized and conciliated the spirit that disturbed the two former reigns. Accusations were not wanting at that time to reprobate the policy as tainted with ingratitude toward those who were the immediate means of the Hanover Succession. The brilliant pen of JUNIUS was drawn forth, but in vain. It enraptured without convincing; and though in the plenitude of its rage it might be said to give elegance to bitterness, yet the policy survived the blast.

What then will be the natural consequence of this expense, on account of the Stadtholder, or of a war entered into from that cause? Search the various windings and caverns of the human heart, and draw from thence the most probable conclusion, for this is more to be depended upon than the projects or declarations of ministers.

It may do very well for a paragraph in a miserable common newspaper, or the wild effusions of romantic politicians, or the mercenary

views of those who wish for war on any occasion, merely for the sake of jobs and contracts, to talk of French finesse or French intrigue; but the Dutch are not a people to be impressed by the finesse or intrigue of France or England, or any other nation. If there has been any finesse in the case, it has been between the Electorate of Hanover, the King of Prussia, and the Stadtholder, in which it is most probable the people of England will be finessed out of a sum of money.

The Dutch, as is already observed, are not a people open to the impression of finesse. It is lost upon them. They are impressed by their commercial interest. It is the political soul of their country, the spring of their actions, and when this principle coincides with their ideas of freedom, it has all the impulse a Dutchman is capable of feeling.

The Opposition in Holland were the enemies of the Stadtholder, upon a conviction that he was not the friend of their national interests. They wanted no other impulse but this. Whether this defect in him proceeded from foreign attachment, from bribery or corruption, or from the well known defects of his understanding is not the point of inquiry. It was the effect rather than the cause that irritated the Hollanders.

If the Stadtholder made use of the power he held in the government to expose and endanger the interests and property of the very people who supported him, what other incentive does any man in any country require? If the Hollanders conceived the conduct of the Stadtholder injurious to their national interest, they had the same right to expel him which England had to expel the Stuarts; and the interference of England to re-establish him serves only to confirm in the Hollanders the same hatred against England which the attempt of Louis XIV to re-establish the Stuarts caused in England against France; therefore if the present policy is intended to attach Holland to England, it goes on a principle exceedingly erroneous.

Let us now consider the situation of the Stadtholder, as making another part of the question.

He must place the cause of his troubles to some secret influence which governed his conduct during the late war, or, in other words, that he was suspected of being the tool of the then British Administration. Therefore, as every part of an argument ought to have its weight, instead of charging the French with intriguing with the Hollanders, the charge more consistently lies against the British Ministry for intriguing with the Stadtholder, and endangering the nation in a war without

a sufficient object. That which the Ministry are now doing confirms the suspicion, and explains to the Hollanders that collusion of the Stadtholder, against their national interests, which he must wish to have concealed, and the explanation does him more hurt than the unnecessary parade of service has done him good.

Nothing but necessity should have operated with England to appear openly in a case that must put the Stadtholder on still worse terms with his countrymen. Had France made any disposition for war, had she armed, had she made any one hostile preparation, there might then have been some pretense for England taking a step that cannot fail to expose to the world that the suspicions of the Hollanders against the Stadtholder were well founded, and that their cause was just, however unsuccessful has been the event.

As to the consequence of Holland in the scale of Europe (the great stake, say some of the newspapers, for which England is contending), that is naturally pointed out by her condition: As merchants for other nations her interest dictates to her to be a neutral power, and this she always will be unless she is made war upon, as was the case in the last war; and any expectation beyond what is the line of her interest, that is, beyond neutrality, either in England or France, will prove abortive. It therefore cannot be policy to go to war to effect that at a great expense, which will naturally happen of itself, and beyond which there is nothing to expect.

Let Holland be allied with England or with France, or with neither, or with both, her national conduct, consequently arising out of her circumstances, will be nearly the same, that is, she will be neutral. Alliances have such a natural tendency to sink into harmless, unoperative things, that to make them a cause for going to war, either to prevent their being formed, or to break any already formed, is the silliest speculation that war can be made upon, or wealth wasted to accomplish. It would scarcely be worth the attempt, if war could be carried on without expense, because almost the whole that can be hoped at the risk and expense of a war, is effected by their natural tendency to inactivity.

However pompous the declarations of an alliance may be, the object of many of them is no other than good-will, and reciprocally securing, as far as such security can go, that neither shall join the enemies of the other in any war that may happen. But the national circumstances of Holland, operate to insure this tranquillity on her part as effectually to the power she is not allied with, as the engagement itself does to the

power with whom she is allied; therefore the security from circumstances is as good as the security from engagement.

As to a cordial union of interest between Holland and England, it is as unnatural to happen as between two individual rivals in the same trade. And if there is any step that England could take to put it at a still greater distance, it is the part she is now acting. She has increased the animosity of Holland on the speculative politics of interesting the Stadtholder, whose future repose depends upon uniting with the Opposition in Holland, as the present reign did with the Scotch. How foolish then has been the policy, how needless the expense, of engaging in a war on account of the affairs of Holland.

A cordiality between England and France is less improbable than between England and Holland. It is not how an Englishman feels but how a Dutchman feels, that decides this question. Between England and France there is no real rivalry of interest; it is more the effect of temper, disposition, and the jealousy of confiding in each other, than any substantial cause, that keeps up the animosity. But on the part of Holland toward England, there is over and above the spirit of animosity, the more powerful motives of interested commercial rivalry, and the galling remembrance of past injuries.

The making war upon them under Lord North's administration, when they were taking no part in the hostilities, but merely acting the business of merchants, is a circumstance that will not easily be forgotten by them. On these reasons, therefore, which are naturally deduced from the operative feelings of mankind, any expectation of attaching Holland to England as a friendly power is vague and futile. Nature has her own way of working in the heart, and all plans of politics not founded thereon will disappoint themselves.

Anyone who will review the history of English politics for several years past must perceive they have been directed without system. To establish this it is only necessary to examine one circumstance, fresh in the mind of every man.

The American war was prosecuted at a very great expense, on the publicly declared opinion that the retaining America was necessary to the existence of England; but America being now separated from England, the present politics are that she is better off without her than with her. Both these cannot be true, and their contradiction to each other shows want of system. If the latter is true, it amounts to an impeach-

ment of the political judgment of government, because the discovery ought to have been made before the expense was gone into.

This single circumstance, yet fresh in every man's mind, is sufficient to create a suspicion, whether the present measures are more wisely founded than the former ones; and whether experience may not prove, that going to war for the sake of the Stadtholder, or for the hope of retaining a partial interest in Holland, who under any connection, can from circumstances be no more than a neutral power, is not as weak policy as going to war to retain America.

If England is powerful enough to maintain her own ground and consequence in the world as an independent nation, she needs no foreign connection. If she is not, the fact contradicts the popular opinion that she is. Therefore, either her politics are wrong, or her true condition is not what she supposes it to be. Either she must give up her opinion to justify her politics, or renounce her politics to vindicate her opinion.

If some kind of connection with Holland is supposed to be an object worthy some expense to obtain, it may be asked why was that connection broken by making war upon her in the last war? If it was not then worth preserving without expense, is it now worth re-obtaining at a vast expense? If the Hollanders do not like the English, can they be made to like them against their wills? If it shall be said that under the former connection they were unfriendly, will they be more friendly under any other?

They were then in as free a situation to choose as any future circumstances can make them, and, therefore, the national governing sentiment of the country can be easily discovered; for it signifies not what or who a Stadtholder may be, that which governs Holland is, and always must be, a commercial principle, and it will follow this line in spite of politics. Interest is as predominant and as silent in its operations as love; it resists all the attempts of force, and countermines all the stratagem of control.

The most able English statesmen and politicians have always held it as a principle, that foreign connections served only to embarrass and exhaust England. That, surrounded by the ocean, she could not be invaded, as countries are on the Continent of Europe, and that her insular situation dictated to her a different system of politics to what those countries required, and that to be enleaguued with them was

sacrificing the advantages of situation to a capricious system of politics. That though she might serve them they could not much serve her, and that as the service must at all times be paid for, it could always be procured when it was wanted; and that it would be better to take it up in this line than to embarrass herself with speculative alliances that served rather to draw her into a continental war on their account, than extricate her from a war undertaken on her own account.

From this discussion of the affairs of Holland, and of the inadequacy of Holland as an object of war, we will proceed to show that neither England nor France is in a condition to go to war, and that there is no present object to the one or the other to recompense the expense that each must be at, or atone to the subjects of either for the additional burdens that must be brought upon them. I defend the cause of the poor, of the manufacturers, of the tradesmen, of the farmers, and of all those on whom the real burden of taxes falls—but above all, I defend the cause of humanity.

It will always happen, that any rumor of war will be popular among a great number of people in London. There are thousands who live by it; it is their harvest; and the clamor which those people keep up in newspapers and conversations passes unsuspectingly for the voice of the people, and it is not till after the mischief is done, that the deception is discovered.

Such people are continually holding up, in very magnified terms, the wealth of the nation, and the depressed condition of France, as reasons for commencing a war, without knowing anything of either of these subjects.

But admitting them to be as true as they are false, as will be hereafter shown, it certainly indicates a vileness in the national disposition of any country that will make the accidental, internal difficulties to which all nations are subject, and sometimes encumbered with, a reason for making war upon them. The amazing increase and magnitude of the paper currency now floating in all parts of England, exposes her to a shock as much more tremendous than the shock occasioned by the bankruptcy of the South Sea funds, as the quantity of credit and paper currency is now greater than they were at that time.

Whenever such a circumstance shall happen, and the wisest men in the nation are, and cannot avoid being, impressed with the danger, it would be looked upon as baseness in France to make the distress and misfortune of England a cause and opportunity for making war upon

her, yet this hideous infidelity is publicly avowed in England. The bankruptcy of 1719 was precipitated by the great credit which the funds then had, and the confidence which people placed in them. Is not credit making infinitely greater strides now than it made then? Is not confidence equally as blind now as at that day? The people then supposed themselves as wise as they do now, yet they were miserably deceived, and the deception that has once happened will happen again from the same causes.

Credit is not money, and therefore it is not pay, neither can it be put in the place of money in the end. It is only the means of getting into debt, not the means of getting out, otherwise the national debt could not accumulate; and the delusion which nations are under respecting the extension of credit is exactly like that which every man feels respecting life, the end is always nearer than was expected; and we become bankrupts in time by the same delusion that nations become bankrupts in property.

The little which nations know, or are sometimes willing to know, of each other, serves to precipitate them into wars which neither would have undertaken, had they fully known the extent of the power and circumstances of each other; it may therefore be of some use to place the circumstances of England and France in a comparative point of view.

In order to do this the accidental circumstances of a nation must be thrown out of the account. By accidental circumstances is meant those temporary disjointings and derangements of its internal system which every nation in the world is subject to, and which, like accidental fits of sickness in the human body, prevent in the interim the full exertion and exercise of its natural powers.

The substantial basis of the power of a nation arises out of its population, its wealth and its revenues. To these may be added the disposition of the people. Each of these will be spoken of as we proceed.

Instances are not wanting to show that a nation confiding too much on its natural strength, is less inclined to be active in its operations than one of less natural powers who is obliged to supply that deficiency by increasing its exertions. This has often been the case between England and France. The activity of England, arising from its fears, has sometimes exceeded the exertions of France, reposing on its confidence.

But as this depends on the accidental disposition of a people, it will not always be the same. It is a matter well known to every man who



has lately been in France, that a very extraordinary change is working itself in the minds of the people of that nation. A spirit that will render France exceedingly formidable whenever its government shall embrace the fortunate opportunity of doubling its strength by allying, if it may be so expressed (for it is difficult to express a new idea by old terms), the majesty of the sovereign with the majesty of the nation; for of all alliances, that is infinitely the strongest and the safest to be trusted to, because the interest so formed, and operating against external enemies, can never be divided.

It may be taken as a certain rule, that a subject of any country attached to the government on the principles above mentioned, is of twice the value he was before. Freedom in the subject is not a diminution, as was formerly believed, of the power of government, but an increase of it. Yet the progress by which changes of this kind are affected, requires to be nicely attended to.

Were governments to offer freedom to the people, or to show an anxiety for that purpose, the offer most probably would be rejected. The purpose for which it was offered might be mistrusted. Therefore the desire must originate with, and proceed from the mass of the people, and when the impression becomes universal, and not before, is the important moment for the most effectual consolidation of national strength and greatness that can take place.

While this change is working, there will appear a kind of chaos in the nation; but the creation we enjoy arose out of chaos, and our greatest blessings appear to have a confused beginning.

Therefore we may take it for granted, that what has at this moment the appearance of disorder in France, is no more than one of the links in that great chain of circumstances by which nations acquire the summit of their greatness. The provincial assemblies already begun in France, are as full, or rather a fuller representation of the people than the Parliaments of England are.

The French, or, as they were formerly called, the Franks (from whence came the English words frank and free), were once the freest people in Europe; and as nations appear to have their periodical revolutions, it is very probable they will be so again. The change is already begun. The people of France, as it was before observed, are beginning to think for themselves, and the people of England resigning up the prerogative of thinking.

We shall now proceed to compare the present condition of England and France as to population, revenues and wealth, and show that neither is in a condition of going to war, and that war can end in nothing but loss, and, most probably, a temporary ruin to both nations.

To establish this point so necessary for both nations to be impressed with, a free investigation of all matters connected with it is indispensable. If, therefore, anything herein advanced shall be disagreeable, it must be justified on the ground that it is better to be known in order to prevent ruin, than to be concealed, when such concealment serves only to hasten the ruin on.

**POPULATION.**—The population of France, being upwards of twenty-four millions, is more than double that of Great Britain and Ireland; besides which France recruits more soldiers in Switzerland than England does in Scotland and Ireland. To this may likewise be added, that England and Ireland are not on the best terms. The suspicion that England governs Ireland for the purpose of keeping her low, to prevent her becoming her rival in trade and manufactures, will always operate to hold Ireland in a state of sentimental hostility with England.

**REVENUES.**—The revenues of France are twenty-four millions sterling. The revenues of England fifteen millions and a half. The taxes per head in France are twenty shillings sterling; the taxes per head in England are two pounds four shillings and two pence. The national debt of France, including the life annuities (which are two-fifths of the whole debt, and are annually expiring) at eleven years purchase, is one hundred and forty-two millions sterling. The national debt of England, the whole of which is on perpetual interest, is two hundred and forty-five millions.

The national debt of France contains a power of annihilating itself without any new taxes for that purpose; because it needs no more than to apply the life annuities, as they expire, to the purchase of the other three-fifths, which are on perpetual interest. But the national debt of England has not this advantage, and therefore the million a year that is to be applied toward the reducing it is so much additional tax upon the people, over and above the current service.

**WEALTH.**—This is an important investigation: it ought therefore to be heard with patience, and judged of without prejudice.

Nothing is more common than for people to mistake one thing for another. Do not those who are crying up the wealth of the nation

mistake paper currency for riches? To ascertain this point may be one of the means of preventing that ruin which cannot fail to follow by persisting in the mistake.

The highest estimation that is made of the quantity of gold and silver in Britain at this present day is twenty millions: and those who are most conversant with money transactions, believe it to be considerably below that sum. Yet this is no more money than what the nation possessed twenty years ago, and therefore, whatever her trade may be, it has produced to her no profit. Certainly no man can be so unwise as to suppose that increasing the quantity of bank notes, which is done with as little trouble as printing of newspapers, is national wealth.

The quantity of money in the nation was very well ascertained in the years 1773, '74, and '76, by calling in the light gold coin.

There were upwards of fifteen millions and a half of gold coin then called in, which, with upwards of two millions of heavy guineas that remained out, and the silver coin, made above twenty millions, which is more than there is at this day. There is an amazing increase in the circulation of bank paper, which is no more national wealth than newspapers are; because an increase of promissory notes, the capital remaining unincreasing, or not increasing in the same proportion, is no increase of wealth. It serves to raise false ideas which the judicious soon discover, and the ignorant experience to their cost.

Out of twenty millions sterling, the present quantity of real money in the nation, it would be too great an allowance to say that one-fourth of that sum, which is five millions, was in London. But even admitting this to be the case, it would require no very superior powers to ascertain pretty nearly what proportion of that sum of five millions could be in the bank. It would be ridiculous to suppose it could be less than half a million, and extravagant to suppose it could be two millions.

It likewise requires no very extraordinary discernment to ascertain how immense the quantity of bank notes, compared to the capital in the bank must be, when it is considered that the national taxes are paid in bank notes, that all great transactions are done in bank notes, and that were a loan for twenty millions to be opened at the meeting of Parliament, it would most probably be subscribed in a few days. Yet all men must know the loan could not be paid in money, because it is at least four times greater than all the money in London, including the bankers and the bank amount, too. In short, everything shows, that the rage that overran America, for paper money or paper currency, has

reached to England under another name. There it was called continental money, and here it is called bank notes. But it signifies not what name it bears, if the capital is not equal to the redemption.

There is likewise another circumstance that cannot fail to strike with some force when it is mentioned, because every man that has anything to do with money transactions will feel the truth of it, though he may not before have reflected upon it. It is the embarrassed condition into which the gold coin is thrown by the necessity of weighing it, and by refusing guineas that are even standing weight, and there appears to be but few heavy ones. Whether this is intended to force the paper currency into circulation, is not here attempted to be asserted, but it certainly has that effect to a very great degree, because people, rather than submit to the trouble and hazard of weighing, will take paper in preference to money. This was once the case in America.

The natural effect of increasing and continuing to increase paper currencies is that of banishing the real money. The shadow takes place of the substance till the country is left with only shadows in its hands.

A trade that does not increase the quantity of real money in a country cannot be styled a profitable trade; yet this is certainly the case with England: and as to credit, of which so much has been said, it may be founded on ignorance or a false belief, as well as on real ability.

In Amsterdam, the money deposited in the bank is never taken out again. The depositors, when they have debts to pay, transfer their right to the persons to whom they are indebted and those again proceed by the same practice, and the transfer of the right goes for payment; now could all the money deposited in the Bank of Amsterdam be privately removed away, and the matter be kept a secret, the ignorance, or the belief that the money was still there, would give the same credit as if it had not been removed. In short, credit is often no more than an opinion, and the difference between credit and money is that money requires no opinion to support it.

All the countries in Europe annually increase in their quantity of gold and silver except England. By the registers kept at Lisbon and Cadiz, the two ports into which the gold and silver from South America are imported, it appears that above eighty millions sterling have been imported within twenty years.<sup>1</sup> This has spread itself over Europe,

<sup>1</sup> From 1763 to 1777, a period of fifteen years of peace, the registered importation of gold and silver into Lisbon and Cadiz, was seventy millions sterling, besides what was privately landed.—*Author*.

and increased the quantity in all the countries on the Continent; yet twenty years ago there was as much gold and silver in England as there is at this time.

The value of the silver imported into Europe exceeds that of the gold, yet everyone can see there is no increase of silver coin in England; very little silver coin appearing except what are called Birmingham shillings, which have a faint impression of King William on one side, and are smooth on the other.

In what is the profit of trade to show itself but by increasing the quantity of that which is the object of trade, money? An increase of paper is not an increase of national money, and the confounding paper and money together, or not attending to the distinction, is a rock that the nation will one day split upon.

Whether the payment of interest to foreigners, or the trade to the East Indies, or the nation embroiling itself in foreign wars, or whether the amount of all the trade which England carries on with different parts of the world, collectively taken, balances itself without profit; whether one or all of these is the cause, why the quantity of money does not increase in England, is not, in this place the object of inquiry. It is the fact and not the cause that is the matter here treated of.

Men immersed in trade and the concerns of a counting-house are not the most speculative in national affairs, or always the best judges of them. Accustomed to run risks in trade, they are habitually prepared to run risks with government, and though they are the first to suffer, they are often the last to foresee an evil.

Let us now cast a look toward the manufactures. A great deal has been said of their flourishing condition, and perhaps a great deal too much, for it may again be asked, where is the profit if there is no increase of money?

The woolen manufacture is the staple manufacture of England, and this is evidently on the decline, in some, if not in all its branches. The city of Norwich, one of the most populous cities in England, and wholly dependent on the woolen manufacture, is at this day, in a very impoverished condition owing to the decline of its trade.

But not to rest the matter on a general assertion, or embarrass it with numerous statements, we will produce a circumstance by which the whole progress of the trade may be ascertained.

So long as thirty years ago the price paid to the spinners of wool was one shilling for twenty-four skeins, each skein containing 560 yards.

This, according to the term of the trade, was called giving a shilling for a shilling. A good hand would spin twelve skeins, which was six pence a day.

According to the increase of taxes, and the increased price of all the articles of life, they certainly ought now to get at least fifteen pence, for what thirty years ago they got a shilling for. But such is the decline of the trade that the case is directly the contrary. They now get but nine pence for the shilling, that is, they get but nine pence for what thirty years ago they got a shilling for. Can these people cry out for war when they are already half ruined by the decline of trade, and half devoured by the increase of taxes?

But this is not the whole of the misfortunes which that part of the country suffers, and which will extend to others. The Norfolk farmers were the first who went into the practice of manuring their land with marl; but time has shown that though it gave a vigor to the land for some years, it operated in the end to exhaust its stamina; that the lands in many parts are worse than before they began to marl, and that it will not answer to marl a second time.

The manufacturers of Manchester, Birmingham and Sheffield have had of late a considerable spring, but this appears to be rather on speculation than certainty. The speculations on the American market have failed, and that on Russia is becoming very precarious. Experience likewise was wanting to ascertain the quantity which the treaty of commerce with France would give sale to, and it is most probable the estimations have been too high, more especially as English goods will now become unpopular in France, which was not the case before the present injudicious rupture.

But in the best state which manufactures can be in, they are very unstable sources of national wealth. The reasons are, that they seldom continue long in one state. The market for them depends upon the caprice of fashions, and sometimes of politics in foreign countries, and they are at all times exposed to rivalry as well as to change. The Americans have already several manufactures among them, which they prefer to the English, such as axes, scythes, sickles, ploughs, planes, nails, etc. Window glass, which was once a considerable article of export from England to America, the Americans now procure from other countries, nearly as good as the English crown glass, and but little dearer than the common green window glass.

It is somewhat remarkable that so many pens have been displayed

to show what is called the increase of the commerce of England, and yet all of them have stopped short of the grand point, that is, they have gone no further than to show that a larger proportion of shipping, and a greater quantity of tonnage have been employed of late years than formerly. But this is no more than what is happening in other parts of Europe. The present fashion of the world is commerce, and the quantity increases in France as well as in England.

But the object of all trade is profit, and profit shows itself, not by an increase of paper currency, for that may be nationally had without the trouble of trade, but by an increase of real money: therefore the estimation should have ended, not in the comparative quantity of shipping and tonnage, but in the comparative quantity of gold and silver.

Had the quantity of gold and silver increased in England, the ministerial writers would not have stopped short at shipping and tonnage; but if they know anything of the matter they must know that it does not increase, and that the deception is occasioned by the increase of paper instead of money, and that as paper continues to increase, gold and silver will diminish. Poorer in wealth and richer in delusion.

Something is radically wrong, and time will discover it to be putting paper in the room of money.

Out of one hundred millions sterling of gold and silver, which must have been imported into Europe from South America since the commencement of the peace before last, it does not appear that England has derived or retains any portion of it.

M. Necker states the annual increase of gold and silver in France, that is, the proportion which France draws of the annual importation into Europe, to be upwards of one million sterling. But England, in the space of twenty years, does not appear to have increased in anything but paper currency.

Credulity is wealth while credulity lasts, and credit is, in a thousand instances, the child of credulity. It requires no more faith to believe paper to be money, than to believe a man could go into a quart bottle; and the nation whose credulity can be imposed upon by bottle conjuring, can, for a time, be imposed upon by paper conjuring.

From these matters we pass on to make some observations on the national debt, which is another species of paper currency.

In short, to whatever point the eye is directed, whether to the money, the paper, the manufactures, the taxes, or the debt, the inability of supporting a war is evident, unless it is intended to carry it on by fleecing

the skin over people's ears by taxes; and therefore the endangering the nation in a war for the sake of the Stadtholder of Holland, or the King of Prussia, or any other foreign affairs, from which England can derive no possible advantage, is an absurd and ruinous system of politics.

France, perhaps, is not in a better situation, and therefore, a war where both must lose, and wherein they could only act the part of seconds, must historically have been denominated a boyish, foolish, unnecessary quarrel.

But before we enter on the subject of the national debt, it will be proper to make a general review of the different manner of carrying on war since the Revolution to what was the practice before.

Before the Revolution the intervals of peace and war always found means to pay off the expense, and leave the nation clear of incumbrance at the commencement of any succeeding war; and even for some years after the Revolution this practice was continued.

From the year 1688 (the era of the Revolution) to the year 1702, a period of fourteen years, the sums borrowed by Government at different times, amounted to forty-four millions; yet this sum was paid off almost as fast as it was borrowed; thirty-four millions being paid off, at the commencement of the year 1702. This was a greater exertion than the nation has ever made since, for exertion is not in borrowing but in paying.

From that time wars have been carried on by borrowing and funding the capital on a perpetual interest, instead of paying it off, and thereby continually carrying forward and accumulating the weight and expense of every war into the next. By this means that which was light at first becomes immensely heavy at last. The nation has now on its shoulders the weight of all the wars from the time of Queen Anne. This practice is exactly like that of loading a horse with a feather at a time till you break his back.

The national debt exhibits at this day a striking novelty. It has traveled on in a circular progression till the amount of the annual interest has exactly overtaken, or become equal to, the first capital of the national debt, NINE MILLIONS. Here begins the evidence of the predictions so long foretold by the ablest calculators in the nation. The interest will in succession overtake all the succeeding capitals, and that with the proportioned rapidity with which those capitals accumulated; because by continuing the practice, not only higher and higher premiums must be given for loans, but the money, or rather the paper, will not go



so far as it formerly did, and therefore the debt will increase with a continually increasing velocity.

The expense of every war, since the national debt began, has, upon an average, been double the expense of the war preceding it; the expense therefore of the next war will be at least two hundred millions, which will increase the annual interest to at least seventeen millions, and consequently the taxes in the same proportion; the following war will increase the interest to thirty-three millions, and a third war will mount up the interest to sixty-five millions.

This is not going on in the spirit of prediction, but taking what has already been as a rule for what will yet be, and therefore the nation has but a miserable prospect to look at. The weight of accumulating interest is not much felt till after many years have passed over; but when it begins to be heavy, as it does now, the burden increases like that of purchasing a horse with a farthing for the first nail of the shoe and doubling it.

As to Mr. Pitt's scheme of reducing the national debt by a million a year, applied to the purchase of stock, it will turn out, to say the least of it, a ridiculous and frivolous project. For if a minister has not experience enough to distinguish a feather in the air, and such there always will be, from the God of War, nor the clamors and interest of those who are seeking for jobs and contracts from the voice and interests of the people, he will soon precipitate the nation into some unnecessary war; and therefore any scheme of redemption of the debt, founded on the supposed continuance of peace, will, with such conduct, be no more than a balloon.

That the funding system contains within itself the seeds of its own destruction, is as certain as that the human body contains within itself the seeds of death. The event is as fixed as fate, unless it can be taken as a proof that because we are not dead we are not to die.

The consequence of the funding scheme, even if no other event takes place, will be to create two violent parties in the nation. The one, goaded by taxes continually increasing to pay the interest, the other reaping a benefit from the taxes by receiving the interest. This is very strongly shadowed forth, like the handwriting on the wall, by the ingenious author of the "Commercial Atlas," in his observations on the national debt.

The slumber that for several years has overshadowed the nation in all matters of public finance, cannot be supposed to last forever. The

people have not yet awakened to the subject, and it is taken for granted that they never will. But, if a supposed unnecessary expenditure of between five and six millions sterling in the finances of France (for the writer undertakes not to judge of the fact) has awakened that whole nation, a people supposed to be perfectly docile in all national matters, surely the people of England will not be less attentive to their rights and properties. If this should not be the case, the inference will be fairly drawn that England is losing the spirit that France is taking up, and that it is an ingenious device in the Ministry to compose the nation to unpopular and unnecessary taxes, by shamming a victory when there was no enemy at hand.

In short, every war serves to increase every kind of paper currency in the nation, and to diminish the quantity of gold and silver, by sending it to Prussia and other foreign countries.

It will not be denied that credulity is a strong trait in the English character; and this has in no instance shown itself more than in mistaking paper for money, except it be in the unaccountable ignorance of mistaking the debt of the nation for riches. But the suspicion is beginning to awake.

We will close this article with observing, that a new kind of paper currency has arisen within a few years, which is that of country bank notes; almost every town now has its bank, its paper mint, and the coinage of paper is become universal. In the meantime the melting down the light guineas, and recoinage them, passes, with those who know no better, for an increase of money; because every new guinea they see, and which is but seldom, they naturally suppose to be a guinea more, when it is really nothing else than an old guinea new cast.

From this account of the money, paper, and national debt of England, we proceed to compare it with the money, paper and national debt of France.

It is very well known that paper has not the same credit in France which it has in England, and that, consequently, there is much less of it. This has naturally operated to increase the quantity of gold and silver in France and prevent the increase of paper.

The highest estimation of the quantity of gold and silver in England, as already stated, is twenty millions sterling, and the quantity of paper grafted thereon immense.

The quantity of gold and silver in France is ninety millions sterling, and the quantity of paper grafted thereon trifling. France, therefore,

has a long run of credit yet in reserve, which England has already expended; and it will naturally follow, that when the Government of France and the nation shall adjust their differences by an amicable embrace of each other, that this reserved credit will be brought forth, and the power of France will be doubly increased.

The adjustment of these differences is but the business of a day, whenever its government shall see the proper moment for doing it; and nothing would precipitate this event more than a war. The cry of war from the injudicious provocations given by the British Ministry, and the disadvantageous effect of the Commercial Treaty, is becoming popular in France.

The near situation of France to Spain and Portugal, the two countries which import gold and silver, and her manufactures being better adapted to the warm climate of those countries than the manufactures of England, give her superior opportunities of drawing money into the nation; and as she has but little trade to the East Indies, the money so drawn in is not drawn out again, as in England.

Another advantage is that, from the greatness of her dominions, she has no occasion to waste her wealth in hiring foreign troops, as is the practice with England; and a third advantage is, that the money which England squanders in Prussia and other countries on the Continent serves to increase the wealth of France, because a considerable part of it centers there through the medium of her commerce.

Admitting Great Britain and Ireland to contain ten millions of inhabitants, the quantity of money per head is forty shillings; the money per head in France is three pounds fifteen shillings, which is nearly double.

The national debt of England, compared to the whole amount of money in the nation, is as twelve to one, that is, the debt is twelve times greater than all the money amounts to.

The national debt of France, compared to the whole amount of her money, is considerably less than as two is to one; that is, her debt is not so much as twice the amount of her money. France, therefore, as already stated, has an immense credit in reserve whenever the settlement of her present internal differences shall furnish her with the means of employing it; and that period, so much to be dreaded by England, is hastening on.

The annual interest of the national debt of England and France is nearly equal, being NINE MILLIONS sterling; but with this difference,

that above three millions and a half of the annual interest of France are only life annuities. The interest, therefore, of her debt lessens every year, and she will have a surplus to the amount of three millions and a half, to apply to the purchase of that part of the debt which is on perpetual interest; therefore, without any new taxes for that purpose, she can discharge her whole debt in less than a third of the time in which it can be done in England, according to Mr. Pitt's plan, with his additional tax of a million a year.

But let the event of Mr. Pitt's plan be what it may, as to reducing the debt, there is one circumstance that cannot fail to accompany it, which is, that of making it the interest of Government, in executing this plan, to undermine the interest of its creditors, or the value of the funds, for the purpose of purchasing at a cheaper rate.

The plan is founded on the presumption of a long, uninterrupted peace, and that future loans would not be wanted, which cannot now be expected, for France in her turn is getting into a temper for war. The plan naturally strikes at the credit of Government, in contracting further debts; for were a loan to be opened to-morrow, the subscribers, naturally perceiving that it was the interest of Government to undermine them as soon as they became creditors, would consequently seek to secure themselves by demanding higher premiums at first. It is a question whether a premium of thirty per cent is now as good as ten was before, and therefore the plan, in case of a war, instead of lessening the debt, serves to push it more rapidly on.

The Minister certainly never understood the natural operation of his plan, or he would not have acted as he has done. The plan has two edges, while he has supposed it to have only one. It strikes at the debt in peace, and at the credit in war.

The gentleman who originally furnished the Minister with this plan, now gives it totally up. He knew its operation both in peace and war, but the Minister appears not to have comprehended it. But if he has made a mistake, his youth and inexperience must be his apology.

The plan, unless it should be altered, that is given out for providing for the expense of the late armaments, is in reality no other than the American plan of paper money, and it is very probable that the Minister has received it from some American refugee.

The plan given out is that the Minister is to borrow the MONEY of the bank. Here is the delusion. The name of MONEY covers the deception. For the case is that the bank does not lend the real money, but it issues

out an emission of bank-paper, and the presumption is that there will be no run upon the bank in consequence of such an extraordinary emission; but if there should, no man can be at a loss in foreseeing the issue.

There are those who remember that on a former run the bank was obliged to prolong the time of paying shillings and sixpences, and it is universally credited that a quantity of silver is now preserved in the bank for the same purpose; but the device, to every person of reflection, shows that the capital is not equal to the demands, and that the Chapter of Accidents is part of the Bible of Bank.

It may be asked, why does not the Government issue the paper instead of the bank? The answer is that it is exactly the same thing in the end, only with this difference in the mode, that were the Government to do it, it would be too visible a system of paper currency, and that a disguise is necessary.

Having recourse to the bank is a kind of playing the bank off against the funds, fighting one kind of paper against another, and in the combat both will be sufferers.

In short, the delusion of paper riches is working as rapidly in England as it did in America. A young and inexperienced Minister, like a young and inexperienced Congress, may suppose that he sees mines of wealth in a printing press, and that a nation cannot be exhausted while there is paper and ink enough to print paper money. Every new emission, until the delusion bursts, will appear to the nation an increase of wealth. Every merchant's coffers will appear a treasury, and he will swell with paper riches till he becomes a bankrupt.

When a bank makes too free with its paper, it exposes itself in much the same manner which a government does that makes too free with its power; too much credit is as bad as too little; and there is such a thing as governing too much, as well in a bank, as in a government. But nothing exposes a bank more than being under the influence instead of the protection of government, and whenever either the property or the credit of a bank, can be commanded or influenced by a government, or a minister, its destruction is not far off.

We have now stated the comparative condition of England and France as to money matters. But there yet remain some things necessary to be touched upon.

It is an error very frequently committed in the world to mistake disposition for condition.

France, with a much better permanent condition for war than Eng-

land, is in a less disposition to enter into one, and this want of disposition in her is mistaken in England for want of condition; and on the other hand, the apparent disposition in England for war is mistaken by her for a condition to undertake and carry one on.

There appears a uniformity in all the works of nature, from individual animals up to nations. The smaller animals are always the most fretful, passionate and insulting. They mistake temper for strength, and often fall a sacrifice to vexatious impetuosity, while larger ones go calmly on, and require repeated provocations to incense them. France may yet be aggravated into war, and very probably will. Where the condition exists, the disposition may at any time take place. We may create temper, but we cannot create strength.

While the literature of England preserves an honorable rank among the nations of Europe, her national character is most miserably suffering in the world through her newspapers. The most barefaced perfidiously, the most abandoned principles are daily propagated. A total disregard to all the obligations of national faith and honor are publicly professed. Instead of that true greatness of heart, that calm grandeur of sentiment, that generous disdain of vulgar littleness that ought always to accompany the disputes of nations, scarcely anything is to be seen but mean abuse and low scurrility. This is not the case in any other country in the world but England.

We will now proceed to conclude with a few additional observations on the state of politics.

For several weeks the nation was amused with the daily rumors of some great Cabinet secret, and admiring how profoundly the secret was kept, when the only secret was that there was no secret to divulge.

But this opinion of a secret very well shows that the opinion of the nation was opposed to the opinion of the Minister, or the supposition of some great secret would not have taken place, as the affairs of the Stadtholder were then publicly known. It shows that the nation did not think the Stadtholder of Holland a sufficient reason for laying new taxes on England, and running into the risk and expense of a war, and great was the surprise when the declaration and counter-declaration, like twin mice, peeped from the Cabinet.

But there is one secret that requires to be investigated, which is, whether the Minister did not know that France would not engage in a war, and whether the preparations were not an idle parade, founded on that knowledge.

Whether it was not meanly putting England under the banners of Prussia, and taking thereby a dishonorable advantage of the internal perplexity which France was then in, and which in its turn may happen to England, to assume the air of a challenge, which it must be known would not be accepted because there was nothing to make the acceptance necessary.

Whether this conduct in the Minister does not mischievously operate to destroy the harmony that appeared to be growing up between the two nations; to lessen, if not totally destroy, the advantages of the Commercial Treaty, and to lay the seeds of future wars when there was a prospect of a long and uninterrupted peace.

When there are two ways of accomplishing the same object it almost always happens that the one is better than the other; and whether the minister has not chosen the worst, a few observations will elucidate.

It signifies not what airy schemes, projects, or even treaties may be formed, especially if done under the point of the bayonet, for all that can be expected of Holland is neutrality. Her trade is with all nations, and it is from her neutrality that this trade has arisen. Destroy this neutrality and Holland is destroyed. Therefore it matters not what sentiments party men may be of in Holland as to the Stadtholdership, because there is still a superior banner under which all will unite.

Holland will not expose her trade to the devastations of England by joining France in a war, neither will she expose it to France by joining England. It may very well be asked, what are England or France to Holland, that she should join with either in a war, unless she is compelled to it by one or the other making war upon her, as was the case in the last war?

Events may soon happen in Europe to make all the force that Prussia can raise necessary to her own defense, and Holland must be wise enough to see that by joining England she not only exposes her trade to France, but likewise her dominions, because France can invade her in a quarter in which England cannot defend her, provided her generals prove true, for Holland lies open to France by land.

It is, therefore, more immediately the interest of Holland to keep on good terms with France; neither can England give her any equivalent to balance this circumstance. How foolish then are the politics which are directed to unnatural and impossible objects! Surely the experience of a century past is sufficient to show to any man, except one of yesterday, what the conduct of Holland in all cases must be.

But there is another circumstance that does not fail to impress foreigners, and especially Holland; which is, that the immensity of the national debt of England, the prospect of its still increasing, and the exorbitancy of her paper currencies, render her too insecure in herself to be much confided in by foreign nations for any length of time. Because that which must happen may soon happen.

Concerning the rescript delivered by the French Minister, there is one certain explanation to be put upon it, which is, that if France had been disposed for war, she would not have made that communication. The very making it goes to a full explanation of the parts; and as soon as Mr. Pitt obtained this knowledge, it appeared to him a safe moment to gird on his sword; and when he found that France was as well weaponed as himself, to propose to take it off again. This is in a few words the whole history of the campaign. A war Minister in peace, and a peace Minister in war. Brave where there is no danger, and prudent when there is.

The rescript could be nothing else than an explanation, on the part of France, of the situation she conceived herself to be subject to, and the probable consequences that might follow from it. This she was not obliged to make, and therefore her making it was a matter of civil communication toward a power she was at peace with, and which in return entitled her to a similar communication on the part of the British Cabinet. All this might have been done without either the expense, the tumult, the provocations or the ill blood that has been created.

The alliance between France and the Dutch was formed while the Stadtholder was a part of the Government, therefore France could not, from that alliance, take a part either for or against him. She could only act when the whole interest of the Republic was exposed to a foreign enemy, and it was not certain that this might not be the case.

The rescript, therefore, instead of being taken as a ground for war, was in itself a ground for peace, because it tended to bring on a discussion of all the circumstances of France and England relative to Holland, which would not have failed to place Holland in a state of neutrality, and that only will be the final event now; because, independent of all parties, no other is consistent with the whole national interest of that republic.

But this is not being done, it is now left to the Dutch to do it for themselves.

An alliance with England, at the same time there is one existing



with France, will secure this neutrality, so necessary to the Dutch Republic. By this stroke of politics she will be free from all obligations to join with either in a war, and be guaranteed by both. Her alliance with England will debar England from molesting her trade by sea, and that with France will debar France from the same thing, and likewise from invading her by land in all future cases. There are so many probable circumstances to arise on the Continent of Europe, that the situation of Holland requires this safeguard, more especially from France, on account of her land connection.

The rising greatness of the Russian Empire, the probable union of this empire with those of Germany and France, and consequently with Spain, whose interests cannot be separated, and the probability of a rupture between the Emperor and the King of Prussia, are matters that cannot fail to impress the Dutch with the necessity of securing themselves by land as well as by sea, and to prevent their being drawn into the quarrels either of England or France.

Upon the whole, as there was a civil as well as an uncivil line of politics to be pursued, every man of humane and generous sentiments must lament it was not chosen.

A disposition for peace was growing up in every part of France, and there appeared at the same time a mutual one rising in England. A silent wish on both sides was universally expanding itself, that wars, so fatal to the true interest and burdensome by taxes to the subjects of both countries, might exist no more, and that a long and lasting peace might take place.

But instead of cultivating this happy opportunity, the pettish vanity of a young and inexperienced Minister, who balanced himself between peace and war to take his choice of circumstances, instead of principles, and who went into an expensive armament when there was none to contend with, and not till after the affairs of Holland might be said to be terminated, has destroyed those seeds of harmony that might have been rendered of more value to both nations than their fleets and armies.

He has permitted the nation to run mad under the universal influence of a groundless belief of vast hostile armaments in the East and West Indies, and the supposition of a secret that never existed. By this means the sparks of ill will are kindled up afresh between the nations, the fair prospects of lasting peace are vanished, and a train of future evils fills up the scene, and that at a time when the internal affairs of

France, however confused they at present appear, are naturally approaching to a great and harmonious increase of its power.

THOMAS PAINE.

YORK STREET, ST. JAMES' SQUARE,  
August 20th, 1787.

## THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ENGLISH SYSTEM OF FINANCE

“On the verge, nay even in the gulf of bankruptcy.”  
*Debates in Parliament.*

This pamphlet was written in Paris, and completed April 8, 1796. It was published simultaneously in France, England and America, and soon circulated all over Europe. So important did the English government regard the pamphlet, that it commissioned two pamphleteers, Ralph Broome and George Chalmers, to write a reply. The French government ordered 1,000 copies of the pamphlet nineteen days after it was first published. For other effects of this pamphlet, see below pp. 1387-1388.

Paine's purpose in writing the pamphlet is clearly set forth in a letter he sent to the French government. He writes:

“CITIZENS: I present you with a small work entitled *The Decline and Fall of the English System of Finance*, in which I have explained and exposed the finances of your principal enemy, the government of England. If I have any capacity in judging of circumstances, and from thence of probable events, the fall of that government is very nearly at hand.

“The condition in which that government finds itself at this moment is curious and critical, and different to anything it ever experienced before. It is now pressed by two internal and formidable opponents that never appeared during any former war. The one is, the great and progressive change of opinion that is spreading itself throughout England with respect to the hereditary system of government. That system has fallen more in the opinion of the people of that country within the last four years preceding the French revolution. The other is, that the funding system of finance, on which the government of England depends for pecuniary aid, is now explaining itself to be no other than a governmental fraud.

“In former wars the government of England was supported by the superstition of the country with respect to a nominal non-existing thing which is called a *constitution*; and by the credulity of the country as to the funding

system of finance. It was from these two popular delusions that the government of England derived all its strength, and they are now deserting her standard. When this monster of national fraud and maritime oppression, the government of England, shall be overthrown, the world will be freed from a common enemy, and the two nations may count upon fraternity and a lasting peace.

“THOMAS PAINE.”

This letter was first published in *The Nation* of June 18, 1896, pp. 471-472.—*Editor.*

NOTHING, they say, is more certain than death, and nothing more uncertain than the time of dying; yet we can always fix a period beyond which man cannot live, and within some moment of which he will die. We are enabled to do this, not by any spirit of prophecy or foresight into the event, but by observation of what has happened in all cases of human or animal existence.

If then any other subject, such, for instance, as a system of finance, exhibits in its progress a series of symptoms indicating decay, its final dissolution is certain, and the period of it can be calculated from the symptoms it exhibits.

Those who have hitherto written on the English system of finance (the funding system) have been uniformly impressed with the idea that its downfall would happen *some time or other*. They took, however, no data for their opinion, but expressed it predictively, or merely as opinion, from a conviction that the perpetual duration of such a system was a natural impossibility. It is in this manner that Dr. Price has spoken of it; and [Adam] Smith, in his “Wealth of Nations” has spoken in the same manner; that is, merely as opinion without data.

“The progress,” says Smith, “of the enormous debts, which at present oppress, and will in the long run *most probably ruin*, all the great nations of Europe [he should have said *governments*] has been pretty uniform.” But this general manner of speaking, though it might make some impression, carried with it no conviction.

It is not my intention to predict anything; but I will show from data already known, from symptoms and facts which the English funding system has already exhibited publicly, that it will not continue to the end of Mr. Pitt’s life, supposing him to live the usual age of a man. How much sooner it may fall I leave to others to predict.

Let financiers diversify systems of credit as they will, it is nevertheless true, that every system of credit is a system of paper money. Two

experiments have already been had upon paper money; the one in America, the other in France.

In both those cases the whole capital was emitted, and that whole capital, which in America was called Continental money, and in France assignats, appeared in circulation; the consequence of which was, that the quantity became so enormous, and so disproportioned to the quantity of population, and to the quantity of objects upon which it could be employed, that the market, if I may so express it, was glutted with it and the value of it fell.

Between five and six years determined the fate of those experiments. The same fate would have happened to gold and silver, could gold and silver have been issued in the same abundant manner that paper had been, and confined within the country as paper money always is, by having no circulation out of it; or, to speak on a larger scale, the same thing would happen in the world, could the world be glutted with gold and silver, as America and France have been with paper.

The English system differs from that of America and France in this one particular, that its capital is kept out of sight; that is, it does not appear in circulation. Were the whole capital of the national debt, which at the time I write is almost one hundred million pounds sterling, to be emitted in assignats, or bills, and that whole quantity put into circulation, as was done in America and in France, those English assignats, or bills, would soon sink in value as those of America and France have done; and that in a greater degree, because the quantity of them would be more disproportioned to the quantity of population in England, than was the case in either of the other two countries. A nominal pound sterling in such bills would not be worth one penny.

But though the English system, by thus keeping the capital out of sight, is preserved from hasty destruction, as in the case of America and France, it nevertheless approaches the same fate, and will arrive at it with the same certainty, though by a slower progress.

The difference is altogether in the degree of speed by which the two systems approach their fate, which, to speak in round numbers, is as twenty is to one; that is, the English system, that of finding the capital instead of issuing it, contained within itself a capacity of enduring twenty times longer than the systems adopted by America and France; and at the end of that time it would arrive at the same common grave, the potter's field of paper money.

The datum I take for this proportion of twenty to one, is the differ-

ence between a capital and the interest at five per cent. Twenty times the interest is equal to the capital. The accumulation of paper money in England is in proportion to the accumulation of the interest upon every new loan; and therefore the progress to the dissolution is twenty times slower than if the capital were to be emitted and put into circulation immediately. Every twenty years in the English system is equal to one year in the French and American systems.

Having thus stated the duration of the two systems, that of funding upon interest, and that of emitting the whole capital without funding, to be as twenty to one, I come to examine the symptoms of decay, approaching to dissolution, that the English system has already exhibited, and to compare them with similar systems in the French and American systems.

The English funding system began one hundred years ago; in which time there have been six wars, including the war that ended in 1697.

1. The war that ended, as I have just said, in 1697.
2. The war that began in 1702.
3. The war that began in 1739.
4. The war that began in 1756.
5. The American war, that began in 1775.
6. The present war, that began in 1793.

The national debt, at the conclusion of the war which ended in 1697, was twenty-one millions and an half. (See Smith's "Wealth of Nations," chapter on Public Debts.) We now see it approaching fast to four hundred millions. If between these two extremes of twenty-one millions and four hundred millions, embracing the several expenses of all the including wars, there exist some common ratio that will ascertain arithmetically the amount of the debts at the end of each war, as certainly as the fact is known to be, that ratio will in like manner determine what the amount of the debt will be in all future wars, and will ascertain the period within which the funding system will expire in a bankruptcy of the Government; for the ratio I allude to, is the ratio which the nature of the thing has established for itself.

Hitherto no idea has been entertained that any such ratio existed, or could exist, that would determine a problem of this kind; that is, that would ascertain, without having any knowledge of the fact, what the expense of any former war had been, or what the expense of any future war would be; but it is nevertheless true that such a ratio does exist, as I shall show, and also the mode of applying it.

The ratio I allude to is not in arithmetical progression like the numbers 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9; nor yet in geometrical progression, like the numbers 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256; but it is in the series of one half upon each preceding number; like the numbers 8, 12, 18, 27, 40, 60, 90, 135.

Any person can perceive that the second number, 12, is produced by the preceding number 8, and half 8; and that the third number, 18, is in like manner produced by the preceding number, 12, and half 12; and so on for the rest. They can also see how rapidly the sums increase as the ratio proceeds. The difference between the two first numbers is but four; but the difference between the two last is forty-five; and from thence they may see with what immense rapidity the national debt has increased, and will continue to increase, till it exceeds the ordinary powers of calculation, and loses itself in ciphers.

I come now to apply the ratio as a rule to determine in all cases.

I began with the war that ended in 1697, which was the war in which the funding system began. The expense of that war was twenty-one millions and an half. In order to ascertain the expense of the next war, I add to twenty-one millions and a half, the half thereof (ten millions and three quarters) which makes thirty-two millions and a quarter for the expense of that war. This thirty-two millions and a quarter, added to the former debt of twenty-one millions and an half, carries the national debt to fifty-three millions and three quarters. Smith, in his chapter on Public Debts, says, that the national debt was at this time fifty-three millions.

I proceed to ascertain the expense of the next war, that of 1739, by adding, as in the former case, one-half to the expense of the preceding war. The expense of the preceding war was thirty-two millions and a quarter; for the sake of even numbers, say thirty-two millions; the half of which (16) makes forty-eight millions for the expense of that war.

I proceed to ascertain the expense of the War of 1756, by adding, according to the ratio, one-half to the expense of the preceding war. The expense of the preceding was taken at forty-eight millions, the half of which (24) makes seventy-two millions for the expense of that war. Smith (chapter on Public Debts) says the expense of the war of 1756 was seventy-two millions and a quarter.

I proceed to ascertain the expense of the American war, of 1775, by adding, as in the former cases, one-half to the expense of the preceding

war. The expense of the preceding war was seventy-two millions, the half of which (36) makes 108 millions for the expense of that war. In the last edition of Smith (chapter on Public Debts), he says, the expense of the American war was *more than an hundred millions*.

I come now to ascertain the expense of the present war, supposing it to continue as long as former wars have done, and the funding system not to break up before that period. The expense of the preceding war was 108 millions, the half of which (54) makes 162 millions for the expense of the present war. It gives symptoms of going beyond this sum, supposing the funding system not to break up; for the loans of the last year and of the present year are twenty-two millions each, which exceeds the ratio compared with the loans of the preceding war.

It will not be from the inability of procuring loans that the system will break up. On the contrary, it is the facility with which loans can be procured that hastens that event. The loans are altogether paper transactions; and it is the excess of them that brings on, with accelerating speed, that progressive depreciation of funded paper money that will dissolve the funding system.

I proceed to ascertain the expense of future wars, and I do this merely to show the impossibility of the continuance of the funding system, and the certainty of its dissolution.

The expense of the next war after the present war, according to the ratio that has ascertained the preceding cases, will be:

	243 millions.
Expense of the second war .....	364 "
" " " third war .....	546 "
" " " fourth war .....	819 "
" " " fifth war .....	1228 "
	<hr/>
	£ 3200 millions

which, at only four per cent will require taxes to the nominal amount of 128 millions to pay the annual interest, besides the interest of the present debt, and the expenses of government, which are not included in this account. Is there a man so mad, so stupid, as to suppose this system can continue?

When I first conceived the idea of seeking for some common ratio that should apply as a rule of measurement to all the cases of the funding system, so far as to ascertain the several stages of its approach to dis-

solution, I had no expectation that any ratio could be found that would apply with so much exactness as this does.

I was led to the idea merely by observing that the funding system was a thing in continual progression, and that whatever was in a state of progression might be supposed to admit of, at least, some general ratio of measurement, that would apply without any very great variation.

But who could have supposed that falling systems, or falling opinions, admitted of a ratio apparently as true as the descent of falling bodies? I have not *made* the ratio any more than Newton made the ratio of gravitation. I have only discovered it, and explained the mode of applying it.

To show at one view the rapid progression of the funding system to destruction, and to expose the folly of those who blindly believe in its continuance, and who artfully endeavor to impose that belief upon others, I exhibit in the annexed table, the expense of each of the six wars since the funding system began, as ascertained by ratio, and the expense of the six wars yet to come, ascertained by the same ratio.

FIRST SIX WARS.		SECOND SIX WARS.	
1. ....	21 millions	1. ....	243 millions
2. ....	33 "	2. ....	364 "
3. ....	48 "	3. ....	546 "
4. ....	72 " <sup>2</sup>	4. ....	819 "
5. ....	108 "	5. ....	1228 "
6. ....	162 "	6. ....	1842 "
	Total <u>£444</u> "		Total <u>£5042</u> "

Those who are acquainted with the power with which even a small ratio, acting in progression, multiplies in a long series, will see nothing

<sup>2</sup> The actual expense of the War of 1739 did not come up to the sum ascertained by the ratio. But as that which is the natural disposition of a thing, as it is the natural disposition of a stream of water to descend, will, if impeded in its course, overcome by a new effort what it had lost by that impediment, so it was with respect to this war and the next (1756) taken collectively; for the expense of the War of 1756 restored the equilibrium of the ratio, as fully as if it had not been impeded. A circumstance that serves to prove the truth of the ratio more fully than if the interruption had not taken place. The War of 1739 was languid; the efforts were below the value of money at that time; for the ratio is the measure of the depreciation of money in consequence of the funding system; or what comes to the same end, it is the measure of the increase of paper. Every additional quantity of it, whether in bank notes or otherwise, diminishes the *real*, though not the *nominal* value of the former quantity.—*Author*.



to wonder at in this table. Those who are not acquainted with that subject, and not knowing what else to say, may be inclined to deny it. But it is not their opinion one way, nor mine the other, that can influence the event. The table exhibits the natural march of the funding system to its irredeemable dissolution.

Supposing the present Government of England to continue, and to go on as it has gone on since the funding system began, I would not give twenty shillings for one hundred pounds in the funds to be paid twenty years hence. I do not speak this predictively; I produce the data upon which that belief is founded; and which data it is everybody's interest to know, who have anything to do with the funds, or who are going to bequeath property to their descendants to be paid at a future day.

Perhaps it may be asked that as governments or ministers proceeded by no ratio in making loans or incurring debts, and nobody intended any ratio or thought of any, how does it happen that there is one? I answer that the ratio is founded in necessity; and I now go on to explain what that necessity is.

It will always happen, that the price of labor, or of the produce of labor, be that produce what it may, will be in proportion to the quantity of money in a country, admitting things to take their natural course. Before the invention of the funding system, there was no other money than gold and silver; and as nature gives out those metals with a sparing hand, and in regular annual quantities from the mines, the several prices of things were proportioned to the quantity of money at that time, and so nearly stationary as to vary but little in any fifty or sixty years of that period.

When the funding system began, a substitute for gold and silver began also. That substitute was paper; and the quantity increased as the quantity of interest increased upon accumulated loans. This appearance of a new and additional species of money in the nation soon began to break the relative value which money and the things it will purchase bore to each other before.

Everything rose in price; but the rise at first was little and slow, like the difference in units between the two first numbers, 8 and 12, compared with the two last numbers, 90 and 135, in the table. It was, however, sufficient to make itself considerably felt in a large transaction. When therefore Government, by engaging in a new war, required a new loan, it was obliged to make a higher loan than the former loan, to

balance the increased price to which things had risen; and as that new loan increased the quantity of paper in proportion to the new quantity of interest, it carried the price of things still higher than before.

The next loan was again higher, to balance that further increased price; and all this in the same manner, though not in the same degree, that every new emission of Continental money in America, or of assignats in France, was greater than the preceding emission, to make head against the advance of prices, till the combat could be maintained no longer.

Herein is founded the necessity of which I have just spoken. That necessity proceeds with accelerating velocity, and the ratio I have laid down is the measure of that acceleration; or, to speak the technical language of the subject, it is the measure of the increasing depreciation of funded paper money, which it is impossible to prevent while the quantity of that money and of bank notes continues to multiply. What else but this can account for the difference between one war costing twenty-one millions, and another war costing one hundred and sixty millions?

The difference cannot be accounted for on the score of extraordinary efforts or extraordinary achievements. The war that cost twenty-one millions was the War of the Confederates, historically called the Grand Alliance, consisting of England, Austria and Holland in the time of William III, against Louis XIV, and in which the confederates were victorious.

The present is a war of a much greater confederacy—a confederacy of England, Austria, Prussia, the German Empire, Spain, Holland, Naples and Sardinia, eight Powers, against the French Republic singly, and the Republic has beaten the whole Confederacy. But to return to my subject.

It is said in England, that the value of paper keeps equal with the value of gold and silver. But the case is not rightly stated; for the fact is, that the paper has *pulled down* the value of gold and silver to a level with itself. Gold and silver will not purchase so much of any purchasable article at this day as if no paper had appeared, nor so much as it will in any country in Europe where there is no paper. How long this hanging together of money and paper will continue, makes a new case; because it daily exposes the system to sudden death, independent of the natural death it would otherwise suffer.

I consider the funding system as being now advanced into the last

twenty years of its existence. The single circumstance, were there no other, that a war should now cost *nominally* one hundred and sixty millions, which when the system began cost but twenty-one millions, or that the loan for one year only (including the loan to the Emperor) should now be *nominally* greater than the whole expense of that war, shows the state of depreciation to which the funding system has arrived.

Its depreciation is in the proportion of eight for one, compared with the value of its money when the system began; which is the state the French assignats stood a year ago (March, 1795) compared with gold and silver. It is therefore that I say that the English funding system has entered on the last twenty years of its existence, comparing each twenty years of the English system with every single year of the American and French systems, as before stated.

Again, supposing the present war to close as former wars have done, and without producing either revolution or reform in England, another war at least must be looked for in the space of the twenty years I allude to; for it has never yet happened that twenty years have passed off without a war, and that more especially since the English Government has dabbled in German politics, and shown a disposition to insult the world, and the world of commerce, with her navy.

The next war will carry the national debt to very nearly seven hundred millions, the interest of which, at four per cent will be twenty-eight millions besides the taxes for the (then) expenses of government, which will increase in the same proportion, and which will carry the taxes to at least forty millions; and if another war only begins, it will quickly carry them to above fifty; for it is in the last twenty years of the funding system, as in the last year of the American and French systems without funding, that all the great shocks begin to operate.

I have just mentioned that paper in England has *pulled down* the value of gold and silver to a level with itself; and that this *pulling down* of gold and silver money has created the appearance of paper money keeping up. The same thing, and the same mistake, took place in America and in France, and continued for a considerable time after the commencement of their system of paper; and the actual depreciation of money was hidden under that mistake.

It was said in America, at that time, that everything was becoming *dear*; but gold and silver could then buy those dear articles no cheaper than paper could; and therefore it was not called depreciation. The idea of *dearness* established itself for the idea of depreciation. The same

was the case in France. Though everything rose in price soon after assignats appeared, yet those dear articles could be purchased no cheaper with gold and silver, than with paper, and it was only said that things were *dear*.

The same is still the language in England. They call it *deariness*. But they will soon find that it is an actual depreciation, and that this depreciation is the effect of the funding system; which, by crowding such a continually increasing mass of paper into circulation, carries down the value of gold and silver with it. But gold and silver will, in the long run, revolt against depreciation and separate from the value of paper; for the progress of all such systems appears to be that the paper will take the command in the beginning, and gold and silver in the end.

But this succession in the command of gold and silver over paper makes a crisis far more eventful to the funding system than to any other system upon which paper can be issued; for, strictly speaking, it is not a crisis of danger but a symptom of death. It is a death-stroke to the funding system. It is a revolution in the whole of its affairs.

If paper be issued without being funded upon interest, emissions of it can be continued after the value of it separates from gold and silver, as we have seen in the two cases of America and France. But the funding system rests altogether upon the value of paper being equal to gold and silver; which will be as long as the paper can continue carrying down the value of gold and silver to the same level to which itself descends, and no longer.

But even in this state, that of descending equally together, the minister, whoever he may be, will find himself beset with accumulating difficulties; because the loans and taxes voted for the service of each ensuing year will wither in his hands before the year expires, or before they can be applied. This will force him to have recourse to emissions of what are called exchequer and navy bills, which, by still increasing the mass of paper in circulation, will drive on the depreciation still more rapidly.

It ought to be known that taxes in England are not paid in gold and silver, but in paper (bank notes). Every person who pays any considerable quantity of taxes, such as maltsters, brewers, distillers (I appeal for the truth of it, to any of the collectors of excise in England, or to Mr. Whitebread),<sup>3</sup> knows this to be the case.

<sup>3</sup> Paine is referring to a member of Parliament who was an authority on English finance.  
—*Editor*.

There is not gold and silver enough in the nation to pay the taxes in coin, as I shall show; and consequently there is not money enough in the bank to pay the notes. The interest of the national funded debt is paid at the bank in the same kind of paper in which the taxes are collected.

When people find, as they will find, a reservedness among each other in giving gold and silver for bank notes, or the least preference for the former over the latter, they will go for payment to the bank, where they have a right to go. They will do this as a measure of prudence, each one for himself, and the truth or delusion of the funding system will then be proved.

I have said in the foregoing paragraph that there is not gold and silver enough in the nation to pay the taxes in coin, and consequently that there cannot be enough in the bank to pay the notes. As I do not choose to rest anything upon assertion, I appeal for the truth of this to the publications of Mr. Eden (now called Lord Auckland) and George Chalmers, secretary to the Board of Trade and Plantation, of which Jenkinson (now Lord Hawkesbury) is president. (These sort of folks change their names so often that it is as difficult to know them as it is to know a thief.)

Chalmers gives the quantity of gold and silver coin from the returns of coinage at the mint; and after deducting for the light gold recoined, says that the amount of gold and silver coined is *about twenty millions*. He had better not have proved this, especially if he had reflected that *public credit is suspicion asleep*. The quantity is much too little.

Of this twenty millions (which is not a fourth part of the quantity of gold and silver there is in France, as is shown in Mr. Necker's treatise on the "Administration of the Finances") three millions at least must be supposed to be in Ireland, some in Scotland, and in the West Indies, Newfoundland, etc. The quantity therefore in England cannot be more than sixteen millions, which is four millions less than the amount of the taxes. But admitting that there are sixteen millions, not more than a fourth part thereof (four millions) can be in London, when it is considered that every city, town, village and farmhouse in the nation must have a part of it, and that all the great manufactories, which most require cash, are out of London. Of this four millions in London, every banker, merchant, tradesman, in short every individual, must have some. He must be a poor shopkeeper indeed, who has not a few guineas in his till.

The quantity of cash therefore in the bank can never, on the evidence of circumstances, be so much as two millions; most probably not more than one million; and on this slender twig, always liable to be broken, hangs the whole funding system of four hundred millions, besides many millions in bank notes.

The sum in the bank is not sufficient to pay one-fourth of only one year's interest of the national debt, were the creditors to demand payment in cash, or demand cash for the bank notes in which the interest is paid, a circumstance always liable to happen.

One of the amusements that has kept up the farce of the funding system is that the interest is regularly paid. But as the interest is always paid in bank notes, and as bank notes can always be coined for the purpose, this mode of payment proves nothing. The point of proof is, can the bank give cash for the bank notes with which the interest is paid? If it cannot, and it is evident it cannot, some millions of bank notes must go without payment, and those holders of bank notes who apply last will be worst off.

When the present quantity of cash in the bank is paid away, it is next to impossible to see how any new quantity is to arrive. None will arrive from taxes, for the taxes will all be paid in bank notes; and should the Government refuse bank notes in payment of taxes, the credit of bank notes will be gone at once. No cash will arise from the business of discounting merchants' bills; for every merchant will pay off those bills in bank notes, and not in cash. There is therefore no means left for the bank to obtain a new supply of cash, after the present quantity is paid away.

But besides the impossibility of paying the interest of the funded debt in cash, there are many thousand persons in London and in the country who are holders of bank notes that came into their hands in the fair way of trade, and who are not stockholders in the funds; and as such persons have had no hand in increasing the demand upon the bank, as those have had who for their own private interest, like Boyd and others, are contracting or pretending to contract for new loans, they will conceive they have a just right that their bank notes should be first paid. Boyd has been very sly in France, in changing his paper into cash. He will be just as sly in doing the same thing in London, for he has learned to calculate; and then it is probable he will set off for America.

A stoppage of payment at the bank is not a new thing. Smith in his

"Wealth of Nations," book ii. chap. 2, says, that in the year 1696, exchequer bills fell forty, fifty and sixty per cent; bank notes twenty per cent; and the bank stopped payment. That which happened in 1696 may happen again in 1796.

The period in which it happened was the last year of the War of King William. It necessarily put a stop to the further emissions of exchequer and navy bills and to the raising of new loans; and the peace which took place the next year was probably hurried on by this circumstance, and saved the bank from bankruptcy. Smith in speaking from the circumstances of the bank, upon another occasion, says (book ii. chap. 2), "This great company had been reduced to the necessity of paying in sixpences." When a bank adopts the expedient of paying in sixpences, it is a confession of insolvency.

It is worthy of observation that every case of failure in finances, since the system of paper began, has produced a revolution in governments, either total or partial. A failure in the finances of France produced the French Revolution. A failure in the finance of the assignats broke up the revolutionary government, and produced the present French Constitution. A failure in the finances of the Old Congress of America and the embarrassments it brought upon commerce, broke up the system of the old confederation, and produced the Federal Constitution. If, then, we admit of reasoning by comparison of causes and events, the failure of the English finances will produce some change in the government of that country.

As to Mr. Pitt's project of paying off the national debt by applying a million a year for that purpose, while he continues adding more than twenty millions a year to it, it is like setting a man with a wooden leg to run after a hare. The longer he runs the farther he is off.

When I said that the funding system had entered the last twenty years of its existence, I certainly did not mean that it would continue twenty years, and then expire as a lease would do. I meant to describe that age of decrepitude in which death is every day to be expected, and life cannot continue long. But the death of credit, or that state that is called bankruptcy, is not always marked by those progressive stages of visible decline that marked the decline of natural life.

In the progression of natural life age cannot counterfeit youth, nor conceal the departure of juvenile abilities. But it is otherwise with respect to the death of credit; for though all the approaches to bankruptcy

may actually exist in circumstances, they admit of being concealed by appearances.

Nothing is more common than to see the bankrupt of to-day a man in credit but the day before; yet no sooner is the real state of his affairs known than everybody can see he had been insolvent long before. In London, the greatest theater of bankruptcy in Europe, this part of the subject will be well and feelingly understood.

Mr. Pitt continually talks of credit, and the national resources. These are two of the feigned appearances by which the approaches to bankruptcy are concealed. That which he calls credit may exist, as I have just shown, in a state of insolvency, and is always what I have before described it to be, *suspicion asleep*.

As to national resources, Mr. Pitt, like all English financiers that preceded him since the funding system began, has uniformly mistaken the nature of a resource; that is, they have mistaken it consistently with the delusion of the funding system; but time is explaining the delusion. That which he calls, and which they call, a resource, is not a resource, but is the *anticipation* of a resource. They have anticipated what *would have been* a resource in another generation had not the use of it been so anticipated.

The funding system is a system of anticipation. Those who established it an hundred years ago anticipated the resources of those who were to live an hundred years after; for the people of the present day have to pay the interest of the debts contracted at that time, and all debts contracted since. But it is the last feather that breaks the horse's back.

Had the system begun an hundred years before, the amount of taxes at this time to pay the annual interest at four per cent (could we suppose such a system of insanity could have continued) would be two hundred and twenty millions annually; for the capital of the debt would be five thousand four hundred and eighty-six millions, according to the ratio that ascertains the expense of the wars of the hundred years that are past.

But long before it could have reached this period, the value of bank notes, from the immense quantity of them (for it is in paper only that such a nominal revenue could be collected), would have been so low or lower than Continental paper has been in America, or assignats in France; and as to the idea of exchanging them for gold and silver, it is too absurd to be contradicted.



Do we not see that nature, in all her operations, disowns the visionary basis upon which the funding system is built? She acts always by renewed successions, and never by accumulating additions perpetually progressing. Animals and vegetables, men and trees, have existed since the world began; but that existence has been carried on by succession of generations, and not by continuing the same men and the same trees in existence that existed first; and to make room for the new she removes the old.

Every natural idiot can see this; it is the stock-jobbing idiot only that mistakes. He has conceived that art can do what nature cannot. He is teaching her a new system—that there is no occasion for man to die—that the scheme of creation can be carried on upon the plan of the funding system—that it can proceed by continual additions of new beings, like new loans, and all live together in eternal youth. Go, count the graves, thou idiot, and learn the folly of thy arithmetic!

But besides these things there is something visibly farcical in the whole operation of loaning. It is scarcely more than four years ago that such a lot of bankruptcy spread itself over London that the whole commercial fabric tottered; trade and credit were at a stand; and such was the state of things that, to prevent or suspend a general bankruptcy, the Government lent the merchants six millions in *Government* paper, and now the merchants lend the Government twenty-two millions in *their* paper; and two parties, Boyd and Morgan, men but little known, contend who shall be the lenders.

What a farce is this! It reduces the operation of loaning to accommodation paper, in which the competitors contend, not who shall lend, but who shall sign, because there is something to be got for signing.

Every English stock-jobber and minister boasts of the credit of England. Its credit, say they, is greater than that of any country in Europe. There is a good reason for this: for there is not another country in Europe that could be made the dupe of such a delusion. The English funding system will remain a monument of wonder, not so much on account of the extent to which it has been carried, as of the folly of believing in it.

Those who had formerly predicted that the funding system would break up when the debt should amount to one hundred or one hundred and fifty millions, erred only in not distinguishing between insolvency and actual bankruptcy; for the insolvency commenced as soon as the Government became unable to pay the interest in cash, or to give cash

for the bank notes in which the interest was paid, whether that inability was known or not, or whether it was suspected or not.

Insolvency always takes place before bankruptcy; for bankruptcy is nothing more than the publication of that insolvency. In the affairs of an individual, it often happens that insolvency exists several years before bankruptcy, and that the insolvency is concealed and carried on till the individual is not able to pay one shilling in the pound.

A government can ward off bankruptcy longer than an individual: but insolvency will inevitably produce bankruptcy, whether in an individual or in a government. If then the quantity of bank notes payable on demand, which the bank has issued, is greater than the bank can pay off, the bank is insolvent: and when that insolvency is declared, it is bankruptcy.<sup>4</sup>

I come now to show the several ways by which bank notes get into circulation: I shall afterwards offer an estimate on the total quantity or amount of bank notes existing at this moment.

<sup>4</sup> Among the delusions that have been imposed upon the nation by ministers to give a false coloring to its affairs, and by none more than by Mr. Pitt, is a motley, amphibious-characterized thing called the *balance of trade*. This balance of trade, as it is called, is taken from the custom-house books, in which entries are made of all cargoes exported, and also of all cargoes imported, in each year; and when the value of the exports, according to the price set upon them by the exporter or by the custom-house, is greater than the value of the imports, estimated in the same manner, they say the balance of trade is much in their favor.

The custom-house books prove regularly enough that so many cargoes have been exported, and so many imported; but this is all that they prove, or were intended to prove. They have nothing to do with the balance of profit or loss; and it is ignorance to appeal to them upon that account; for the case is, that the greater the loss is in any one year, the higher will this thing called the balance of trade appear to be according to the custom-house books.

For example, nearly the whole of the Mediterranean convoy has been taken by the French this year; consequently those cargoes will not appear as imports on the custom-house books, and therefore the balance of trade, by which they mean the profits of it, will appear to be so much the greater as the loss amounts to; and, on the other hand, had the loss not happened, the profits would have appeared to have been so much the less. All the losses happening at sea to returning cargoes, by accidents, by the elements, or by capture, make the balance appear the higher on the side of the exports; and were they all lost at sea, it would appear to be all profit on the custom-house books.

Also every cargo of exports that is lost that occasions another to be sent, adds in like manner to the side of the exports, and appears as profit. This year the balance of trade will appear high, because the losses have been great by capture and by storms. The ignorance of the British Parliament in listening to this hackneyed imposition of ministers about the balance of trade is astonishing. It shows how little they know of national affairs—and Mr. Grey may as well talk Greek to them, as to make motions about the state of the nation. They understand only fox-hunting and the game laws.—*Author.*

The bank acts in three capacities. As a bank of discount; as a bank of deposit; and as a banker for the Government.

First, as a bank of discount. The bank discounts merchants' bills of exchange for two months. When a merchant has a bill that will become due at the end of two months, and wants payment before that time, the bank advances that payment to him, deducting therefrom at the rate of five per cent per annum. The bill of exchange remains at the bank as a pledge or pawn, and at the end of two months it must be redeemed.

This transaction is done altogether in paper; for the profits of the bank, as a bank of discount, arise entirely from its making use of paper as money. The bank gives bank notes to the merchant in discounting the bill of exchange, and the redeemer of the bill pays bank notes to the bank in redeeming it. It very seldom happens that any real money passes between them.

If the profits of a bank be, for example, £200,000 a year (a great sum to be made merely by exchanging one sort of paper for another, and which shows also that the merchants of that place are pressed for money for payments, instead of having money to spare to lend to government), it proves that the bank discounts to the amount of four millions annually, or £666,666 every two months; and as there never remain in the bank more than two months' pledges, of the value of £666,666, at any one time, the amount of bank notes in circulation at any one time should not be more than to that amount.

This is sufficient to show that the present immense quantity of bank notes, which are distributed through every city, town, village, and farmhouse in England, cannot be accounted for on the score of discounting.

Secondly, as a bank of deposit. To deposit money at the bank means to lodge it there for the sake of convenience, and to be drawn out at any moment the depositor pleases, or to be paid away to his order. When the business of discounting is great, that of depositing is necessarily small. No man deposits and applies for discounts at the same time; for it would be like paying interest for lending money, instead of for borrowing it.

The deposits that are now made at the bank are almost entirely in bank notes, and consequently they add nothing to the ability of the bank to pay off the bank notes that may be presented for payment; and besides this, the deposits are no more the property of the bank than the cash or bank notes in a merchant's counting house are the property of his bookkeeper. No great increase therefore of bank notes, beyond

what the discounting business admits, can be accounted for on the score of deposits.

Thirdly, the bank acts as banker for the Government. This is the connection that threatens to ruin every public bank. It is through this connection that the credit of a bank is forced far beyond what it ought to be, and still further beyond its ability to pay. It is through this connection that such an immense redundant quantity of bank notes have gotten into circulation; and which, instead of being issued because there was property in the bank, have been issued because there was none.

When the treasury is empty, which happens in almost every year of every war, its coffers at the bank are empty also. It is in this condition of emptiness that the minister has recourse to emissions of what are called exchequer and navy bills which continually generates a new increase of bank notes, and which are sported upon the public, without there being property in the bank to pay them.

These exchequer and navy bills (being, as I have said, emitted because the treasury and its coffers at the bank are empty, and cannot pay the demands that come in) are no other than an acknowledgment that the bearer is entitled to receive so much money. They may be compared to the settlement of an account, in which the debtor acknowledges the balance he owes, and for which he gives a note of hand; or to a note of hand given to raise money upon it.

Sometimes the bank discounts those bills as it would discount merchants' bills of exchange; sometimes it purchases them of the holders at the current price; and sometimes it agrees with the ministers to pay an interest upon them to the holders, and keep them in circulation. In everyone of these cases an additional quantity of bank notes gets into circulation, and are sported, as I have said, upon the public, without there being property in the bank, as banker for the Government, to pay them; and besides this, the bank has now no money of its own; for the money that was originally subscribed to begin the credit of the bank with, at its first establishment, has been lent to government and wasted long ago.

"The bank" says Smith (book ii. chap. 2), "acts not only as an ordinary bank, but as a great engine of state; it receives and pays a greater part of the annuities which are due to the creditors of the *public*." (It is worth observing, that the *public*, or the *nation*, is always put for the Government, in speaking of debts.) "It circulates" says Smith, "exchequer bills, and it advances to government the annual amount of the

land and malt taxes, which are frequently not paid till several years afterwards." (This advancement is also done in bank notes, for which there is not property in the bank.) "In those different operations" says Smith, "*its duty to the public* may sometimes have obliged it, without any fault of its directors, *to overstock the circulation with paper money*" —bank notes.

How *its duty to the public* can induce it *to overstock that public* with promissory bank notes which it *cannot pay*, and thereby expose the individuals of that public to ruin, is too paradoxical to be explained; for it is on the credit which individuals *give to the bank*, by receiving and circulating its notes, and not upon its *own credit* or its *own* property, for it has none, that the bank sports.

If, however, it be the duty of the bank to expose the public to this hazard, it is at least equally the duty of the individuals of that public to get their money and take care of themselves; and leave it to placemen, pensioners, government contractors, Reeves's Association, and the members of both Houses of Parliament, who have voted away the money at the nod of the minister, to continue the credit if they can, and for which their estates individually and collectively ought to answer, as far as they will go.

There has always existed, and still exists, a mysterious, suspicious connection, between the minister and the directors of the bank, and which explains itself no other ways than by a continual increase in bank notes. Without, therefore, entering into any further details of the various contrivances by which bank notes are issued, and thrown upon the public, I proceed, as I before mentioned, to offer an estimate on the total quantity of bank notes in circulation.

However disposed governments may be to wring money by taxes from the people, there is a limit to the practice established by the nature of things. That limit is the proportion between the quantity of money in a nation, be that quantity what it may, and the greatest quantity of taxes that can be raised upon it.

People have other uses for money besides paying taxes; and it is only a proportional part of the money they can spare for taxes, as it is only a proportional part they can spare for house-rent, for clothing, or for any other particular use. These proportions find out and establish themselves; and that with such exactness, that if any one part exceeds its proportion, all the other parts feel it.

Before the invention of paper money (bank notes), there was no other money in the nation than gold and silver, and the greatest quantity of money that was ever raised in taxes during that period never exceeded a fourth part of the quantity of money in the nation. It was high taxing when it came to this point. The taxes in the time of William III never reached to four millions before the invention of paper, and the quantity of money in the nation at that time was estimated to be about sixteen millions.

The same proportions established themselves in France. There was no paper money in France before the present Revolution, and the taxes were collected in gold and silver money. The highest quantity of taxes never exceeded twenty-two millions sterling; and the quantity of gold and silver money in the nation at the same time, as stated by M. Necker, from returns of coinage at the mint, in his treatise on the "Administration of the Finances," was about ninety millions sterling. To go beyond this limit of a fourth part, in England, they were obliged to introduce paper money; and the attempt to go beyond it in France, where paper could not be introduced, broke up the Government. This proportion, therefore, of a fourth part, is the limit which the thing establishes for itself, be the quantity of money in a nation more or less.

The amount of taxes in England at this time is full twenty millions; and therefore the quantity of gold and silver, and of bank notes, taken together, amounts to eighty millions. The quantity of gold and silver, as stated by Lord Hawkesbury's secretary, George Chalmers, as I have before shown, is twenty millions; and, therefore, the total amount of bank notes in circulation, all made payable on demand, is sixty millions. This enormous sum will astonish the most stupid stock-jobber, and overpower the credulity of the most thoughtless Englishman: but were it only a third part of that sum, the bank cannot pay half a crown in the pound.

There is something curious in the movements of this modern complicated machine, the funding system; and it is only now that it is beginning to unfold the full extent of its movements. In the first part of its movements it gives great powers into the hands of government, and in the last part it takes them completely away.

The funding system set out with raising revenues under the name of loans, by means of which government became both prodigal and powerful. The loaners assumed the name of creditors, and though it was soon

discovered that loaning was government-jobbing, those pretended loaners, or the persons who purchased into the funds afterwards, conceived themselves not only to be creditors, but to be the *only* creditors.

But such has been the operation of this complicated machine, the funding system, that it has produced, unperceived, a second generation of creditors, more numerous and far more formidable and withal more real than the first generation; for every holder of a bank note is a creditor, and a real creditor, and the debt due to him is made payable on demand. The debt therefore which the government owes to individuals is composed of two parts; the one about four hundred millions bearing interest, the other about sixty millions payable on demand. The one is called the funded debt, the other is the debt due in bank notes.

The second debt (that contained in the bank notes) has, in a great measure, been incurred to pay the interest of the first debt; so that in fact little or no real interest has been paid by Government. The whole has been delusion and fraud. Government first contracted a debt, in the form of loans, with one class of people, and then ran clandestinely into debt with another class, by means of bank notes, to pay the interest. Government acted of itself in contracting the first debt, and made a machine of the bank to contract the second.

It is this second debt that changes the seat of power and the order of things; for it puts it in the power of even a small part of the holders of bank notes (had they no other motives than disgust at Pitt and Grenville's sedition bills), to control any measure of government they found to be injurious to their interest; and that not by popular meetings, or popular societies, but by the simple and easy operation of withholding their credit from that government; that is, by individually demanding payment at the bank for every bank note that comes into their hands.

Why should Pitt and Grenville expect that the very men whom they insult and injure should, at the same time, continue to support the measures of Pitt and Grenville by giving credit to their promissory notes of payment? No new emissions of bank notes could go on while payment was demanding on the old, and the cash in the bank wasting daily away; nor any new advances be made to Government, or to the Emperor, to carry on the war; nor any new emission be made on exchequer bills.

"*The bank,*" says Smith (book ii. chap. 2), "*is a great engine of State.*" And in the same paragraph he says, "*The stability of the bank is*

*equal to that of the British Government*"; which is the same as to say that the stability of the Government is equal to that of the bank, and no more. If then the bank cannot pay, the *arch-treasurer of the Holy Roman Empire* (S. R. I. A.)<sup>5</sup> is a bankrupt. When folly invented titles, she did not attend to their application; for ever since the Government of England has been in the hands of *arch-treasurers*, it has been running into bankruptcy; and as to the *arch-treasurer apparent*, he has been a bankrupt long ago. What a miserable prospect has England before its eyes!

Before the War of 1755 there were no bank notes lower than £20. During that war, bank notes of £15 and of £10 were coined; and now, since the commencement of the present war, they are coined as low as £5. These £5 notes will circulate chiefly among little shop-keepers, butchers, bakers, market-people, renters of small houses, lodgers, etc.

All the high departments of commerce and the affluent stations of life were already *overstocked*, as Smith expresses it, with the bank notes. No place remained open wherein to crowd an additional quantity of bank notes but among the class of people I have just mentioned, and the means of doing this could be best effected by coining £5 notes. This conduct has the appearance of that of an unprincipled insolvent, who, when on the verge of bankruptcy to the amount of many thousands, will borrow as low as £5 of the servants in his house, and break the next day.

But whatever momentary relief or aid the minister and his bank might expect from this low contrivance of £5 notes, it will increase the inability of the bank to pay the higher notes, and hasten the destruction of all; for even the small taxes that used to be paid in money will now be paid in those notes, and the bank will soon find itself with scarcely any other money than what the hair-powder guinea-tax brings in.

The bank notes make the most serious part of the business of finance: what is called the national funded debt is but a trifle when put in comparison with it; yet the case of the bank notes has never been touched upon. But it certainly ought to be known upon what authority, whether that of the minister or of the directors, and upon what foundation, such immense quantities are issued. I have stated the amount of them at sixty millions; I have produced data for that estimation; and besides this, the apparent quantity of them, far beyond that of gold and silver in the nation, corroborates the statement. But were there but a third

<sup>5</sup> Part of the inscription on an English guinea.—*Author*.



part of sixty millions, the bank cannot pay half a crown in the pound; for no new supply of money, as before said, can arrive at the bank, as all the taxes will be paid in paper.

When the funding system began it was not doubted that the loans that had been borrowed would be repaid. Government not only propagated that belief, but it began paying them off. In time this profession came to be abandoned: and it is not difficult to see that bank notes will march the same way; for the amount of them is only another debt under another name; and the probability is that Mr. Pitt will at last propose funding them. In that case bank notes will not be so valuable as French assignats.

The assignats have a solid property in reserve, in the national domains; bank notes have none; and, besides this, the English revenue must then sink down to what the amount of it was before the funding system began—between three and four millions; one of which the *arch-treasurer* would require for himself, and the arch-treasurer *apparent* would require three-quarters of a million more to pay his debts. "*In France,*" says Sterne, "*they order these things better.*"

I have now exposed the English system of finance to the eyes of all nations; for this work will be published in all languages. In doing this, I have done an act of justice to those numerous citizens of neutral nations who have been imposed upon by that fraudulent system, and who have property at stake upon the event.

As an individual citizen of America, and as far as an individual can go, I have revenged (if I may use the expression without any immoral meaning) the piratical depredations committed on American commerce by the English Government. I have retaliated for France on the subject of finance: and I conclude with retorting on Mr. Pitt the expression he used against France, and say, that the English system of finance "IS ON THE VERGE, NAY EVEN IN THE GULF OF BANKRUPTCY."

THOMAS PAINE.

Paris, nineteenth Germinal, fourth year of the Republic, April 8, 1796.

TO THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND ON THE  
INVASION OF ENGLAND

Along with many other progressives at this time, Paine regarded England as the bulwark of reaction in the western world. Britain's defeat in war, Paine was convinced, would end the rule of the English aristocracy, and make possible the establishment of a democratic republic in England which, in alliance with the United States and France, would guarantee the spread of republicanism throughout the world and international peace. Hence he submitted a plan to the French Directory in 1798 for a military expedition against England, whose purpose would be to overthrow the monarchy and assist the people proclaim a democratic republic. Napoleon received Paine's proposal enthusiastically and even visited the writer to discuss the plan. Paine contributed funds towards the expedition (see his letter to the Council of Five Hundred, January 28, 1798, p. 1403 below), but it never materialized. Later, in 1804 when this was written, Paine welcomed the report of Napoleon's plan to invade England and pledged it full support.

This essay was originally published in William Duane's *Philadelphia Aurora* of March 6, 1804. In his letter to the editor of the *Aurora*, Paine wrote: "As the good sense of the people in their elections have now put the affairs of the Union in a prosperous condition at home and abroad, there is nothing immediately important for the subject of a letter. I therefore send you a piece on another subject."—*Editor*.

IN casting my eye over England and America, and comparing them together, the difference is very striking. The two countries were created by the same power, and peopled from the same stock. What then has caused the difference? Have those who emigrated to America improved, or those whom they left behind degenerated? There are as many degrees of difference in the political morality of the two people as there are of longitude between the two countries.

In the science of cause and effect everything that enters into the composition of either must be allowed its proportion of influence. Investigating, therefore, into the cause of this difference we must take into the calculation the difference of the two systems of government, the *hereditary* and the *representative*.

Under the hereditary system it is the government that forms and

fashions the political character of the people. In the representative system it is the people that form the character of the government. Their own happiness as citizens forms the basis of their conduct, and the guide of their choice. Now, is it more probable that a hereditary government should become corrupt, and corrupt the people by its example, or that a whole people should become corrupt, and produce a corrupt government? For the point where the corruption begins becomes the source from whence it afterwards spreads.

While men remained in Europe as subjects of some hereditary potentate they had ideas conformable to that condition; but when they arrived in America they found themselves in possession of a new character, the character of sovereignty; and, like converts to a new religion, they became inspired with new principles. Elevated above their former rank, they considered government and public affairs as part of their own concern, for they were to pay the expense and they watched them with circumspection.

They soon found that government was not that complicated thing, enshrined in mystery, which Church and State, to play into each other's hands, had represented; and that to conduct it with proper effect was to conduct it justly. Common sense, common honesty and civil manners qualify a man for government and, besides this, put man in a situation that requires new thinking, and the mind will grow up to it, for, like the body, it improves by exercise. Man is but a learner all his lifetime.

But whatever be the cause of the difference of character between the government and people of England and those of America, the effect arising from that difference is as distinguishable as the sun from the moon. We see America flourishing in peace, cultivating friendship with all nations, and reducing her public debt and taxes, incurred by the Revolution. On the contrary, we see England almost perpetually in war, or warlike disputes, and her debt and taxes continually increasing.

Could we suppose a stranger, who knew nothing of the origin of the two countries, he would from observation conclude that America was the *old* country, experienced and sage, and England the *new*, eccentric and wild.

Scarcely had England drawn home her troops from America, after the Revolutionary War, than she was on the point of plunging herself into a war with Holland, on account of the Stadtholder; then with Russia; then with Spain, on the account of Nootka *catskins*; and actually with

France to prevent her Revolution. Scarcely had she made peace with France, and before she had fulfilled her own part of the treaty, then she declared war again to avoid fulfilling the treaty.

In her treaty of peace with America, she engaged to evacuate the Western posts within six months, but having obtained peace she refused to fulfil the conditions, and kept possession of the posts and embroiled us in an Indian war. In her treaty of peace with France, she engaged to evacuate Malta within three months, but having obtained peace she refused to evacuate Malta, and began a new war.

All these matters pass before the eyes of the world, who form their own opinion thereon, regardless of what England newspapers may say of France, or French papers say of England. The non-fulfilment of a treaty is a case that everybody can understand. They reason upon it as they would on a contract between two individuals, and in so doing they reason from a right foundation. The affected pomp and mystification of courts make no alteration in the principle.

Had France declared war to compel England to fulfil the treaty, as a man would commence a civil action to compel a delinquent party to fulfil a contract, she would have stood acquitted in the opinion of nations. But that England still holding Malta, should go to war for Malta, is a paradox not easily solved, unless it be supposed that the peace was insidious from the beginning, that it was concluded with the expectation that the military ardor of France would cool, or a new order of things arise, or a national discontent prevail, that would favor a non-execution of the treaty and leave England arbiter of the fate of Malta.

Something like this, which was like a vision in the clouds, must have been the calculation of the British Ministry; for certainly they did not expect the war would take the turn it has. Could they have foreseen, and they ought to have foreseen, that a declaration of war was the same as sending a challenge to Bonaparte to invade England and make it the seat of war, they hardly would have done it unless they were mad; for in any event such a war might produce, in a military view, it is England would be the sufferer unless it terminated in a wise revolution.

One of the causes assigned for this declaration of war by the British Ministry was that Bonaparte had cramped their commerce. If by cramping their commerce is to be understood that of encouraging and extending the commerce of France, he had a right, and it was his duty to do it. The prerogative of monopoly belongs to no nation. But to make this one of the causes of war, considering their commerce in consequence of that

declaration is now cramped ten times more, is like the case of a foolish man who, after losing an eye in fight, renews the combat to revenge the injury, and loses the other eye.

Those who never experienced an invasion, by suffering it, which the English people have not, can have but little idea of it. Between the two armies the country will be desolated, wherever the armies are, and that as much by their own army as by the enemy. The farmers on the coast will be the first sufferers; for, whether their stock of cattle, corn, etc., be seized by the invading army, or driven off, or burnt, by orders of their own Government, the effect will be the same to them.

As to the revenue, which has been collected altogether in paper, since the bank stopped payment, it will go to destruction the instant an invading army lands; and as to effective government, there can be but little where the two armies are contending for victory in a country small as England is.

With respect to the general politics of Europe, the British Ministry could not have committed a greater error than to make Malta the ostensible cause of the war; for though Malta is an unproductive rock, and will be an expense to any nation that possesses it, there is not a power in Europe will consent that England should have it. It is a situation capable of annoying and controlling the commerce of other nations in the Mediterranean; and the conduct of England on the seas and in the Baltic has shown the danger of her possessing Malta. Bonaparte, by opposing her claim, has all Europe with him: England, by asserting it, loses all.

Had the English Ministry studied for an object that would put them at variance with all nations, from the North of Europe to the South, they could not have done it more effectually.

But what is Malta to the people of England, compared with the evils and dangers they already suffer in consequence of it? It is their own government that has brought this upon them. Were Burke now living, he would be deprived of his exclamation, that "*the age of chivalry is gone*"; for this declaration of war is like a challenge sent from one knight of the sword to another knight of the sword to fight him on the challenger's ground, and England is staked as the prize.

But though the British Ministry began this war for the sake of Malta, they are now artful enough to keep Malta out of sight. Not a word is now said about Malta in any of their Parliamentary speeches and messages. The King's speech is silent upon the subject, and the invasion is

put in its place, as if the invasion was the cause of the war and not the consequence of it. This policy is easily seen through. The case is, they went to war *without counting the cost*, or calculating upon events, and they are now obliged to shift the scenes to conceal the disgrace.

If they were disposed to try experiments upon France, they chose for it the worst possible time, as well as the worst possible object. France has now for its chief the most enterprising and fortunate man, either for deep project or daring execution, the world has known for many ages. Compared with him, there is not a man in the British Government, or under its authority, has any chance with him. That he is ambitious, the world knows, and he always was so; but he knew where to stop.

He had reached the highest point of probable expectation, and having reduced all his enemies to peace, had set himself down to the improvement of agriculture, manufactures and commerce at home; and his conversation with the English Ambassador, Whitworth, showed he wished to continue so. In this view of his situation could anything be worse policy than to give to satisfied ambition a new object and provoke it into action? Yet this the British Ministry have done.

The plan of a descent upon England by gun-boats began after the first peace with Austria, and the acquisition of Belgium by France. Before that acquisition, France had no territory on the North Sea, and it is there the descent will be carried on. Dunkirk was then her northern limit.

The English coast opposite to France, on the Channel, from the straits between Dover and Calais to the Land's End, about three hundred miles, is high, bold, and rocky, to the height, in many places, perpendicular of three, four or five hundred feet, and it is only where there are breaks in the rocks, as at Portsmouth, Plymouth, etc., that a landing can be made; and as those places could be easily protected, because England was mistress of the Channel, France had no opportunity of making an invasion, unless she could first defeat the English fleet. But the union of Belgium to France makes a new order of things.

The English coast on the North Sea, including the counties of Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk and Lincolnshire, is as level as a bowling green, and approachable in every part for more than two hundred miles. The shore is a clean, firm sand, where a flat-bottomed boat may row dry aground. The country people use it as a raceground, and for other sports, when the tide is out. It is the weak and defenseless part of England, and it is impossible to make it otherwise: and besides this, there is not a port or

harbor in it where ships of the line or large frigates can rendezvous for its protection.

The Belgic coast, and that of Holland, which joins it, are directly opposite this defenseless part, and opens a new passage for invasion. The Dutch fishermen knew this coast better than the English themselves, except those who live upon it; and the Dutch smugglers know every creek and corner in it.

The original plan, formed in the time of the Directory (but now much more extensive), was to build one thousand boats, each 60 feet long, 16 feet broad, to draw about two feet water, to carry a 24 or 36 pounder in the head, and a field-piece in the stern, to be run out as soon as they touched ground. Each boat was to carry an hundred men, making in the whole one hundred thousand, and to row with twenty or twenty-five oars on a side. Bonaparte was appointed to the command, and by an agreement between him and me, I was to accompany him, as the intention of the expedition was to give the people of England an opportunity of forming a government for themselves, and thereby bring about peace.

I have no reason to suppose this part of the plan is altered, because there is nothing better Bonaparte can do. As to the clamor spread by some of the English newspapers that he comes for plunder, it is absurd. Bonaparte is too good a general to undiscipline and dissolute his army by plundering, and too good a politician, as well as too much accustomed to great achievements, to make plunder his object. He goes against the Government that has declared war against him.

As the expedition could choose its time of setting off, either after a storm, when the English would be blown off, or in a calm, or in a fog; and as thirty-six hours' rowing would be able to carry it over, the probability is it would arrive, and when arrived no ship of the line or large frigate could approach it, on account of the shoalness of the coast; and besides this, the boats would form a floating battery, close in with the shore, of a thousand pieces of heavy artillery; and the attempt of Nelson against the gun-boats at Boulogne shows the insufficiency of ships in such situations. About two hundred and fifty gun-boats were built, when the expedition was abandoned for that of Egypt, to which the preparations had served as a feint.

The present impolitic war by the English Government has now renewed the plan, and that with much greater energy than before, and with national unanimity. All France is alive to chastise the English Government for recommencing the war, and all Europe stands still to

behold it. The preparations for the invasion have already demonstrated to France what England ought never to have suffered her to know, which is, that she can hold the English Government in terror, and the whole country in alarm, whenever she pleases, and as long as she pleases, and that without employing a single ship of the line, and more effectually than if she had an hundred sail. The boasted navy of England is outdone by gun-boats! It is a revolution in naval tactics; but we live in an age of revolution.

The preparations in England for defense are also great, but they are marked with an ominous trait of character. There is something sullen on the face of affairs in England. Not an address had been presented to the King by any county, city, town or corporation since the declaration of war. The people unite for the protection of themselves and property against whatever events may happen, but they are *not pleased*, and their silence is the expression of their discontent.

Another circumstance, curious and awkward, was the conduct of the House of Commons with respect to their address to the King, in consequence of the King's speech at the opening of the Parliament. The address, which is always an echo of the speech, was voted without opposition, and this equivocal silence passed for unanimity. The next thing was to present it, and it was made the order for the next day that the House should go up in a body to the King, with the speaker at their head, for that purpose.

The time fixed was half after three, and it was expected the procession would be numerous, three or four hundred at least, in order to show their zeal and their loyalty and their thanks to the King for his intention of taking the field. But when half after three arrived, only thirty members were present, and without forty (the number that makes a House) the address could not be presented. The serjeant was then sent out, with the authority of a press-warrant, to search for members, and by four o'clock he returned with just enough to make up forty, and the procession set off with the slowness of a funeral; for it was remarked it went slower than usual.

Such a circumstance in such a critical juncture of affairs, and on such an occasion, shows at least a great indifference toward the Government. It was like saying, you have brought us into a great deal of trouble, and we have no *personal* thanks to make to you. We have voted the address, as a customary matter of form, and we leave it to find its way to you as well as it can.



If the invasion succeed, I hope Bonaparte will remember that this war has not been provoked by the people. It is altogether the act of the Government, without their consent or knowledge; and though the late peace appears to have been insidious from the first, on the part of the Government, it was received by the people with a sincerity of joy.

There is yet, perhaps, one way, if it be not too late, to put an end to this burdensome state of things, and which threatens to be worse; which is, for the people, now they are embodied for their own protection, to instruct their representatives in Parliament to move for the fulfilment of the treaty of Amiens, for a treaty ought to be fulfilled. The present is an uncommon case, accompanied with uncommon circumstances, and it must be got over by means suited to the occasion.

What is Malta to them? The possession of it might serve to extend the patronage and influence of the Crown, on the appointment to new offices, and the part that would fall to the people would be to pay the expense. The more acquisitions the Government makes abroad, the more taxes the people have to pay at home. This has always been the case in England.

The non-fulfilment of a treaty ruins the honor of a government and spreads a reproach over the character of a nation. But when a treaty of peace is made with the concealed design of not fulfilling it, and war is declared for avowed purpose of avoiding it, the case is still worse. The representative system does not put it in the power of an individual to declare war of his own will. It must be the act of the body of the representatives, for it is their constituents who are to pay the expense.

The state which the people of England are now in shows the extreme danger of trusting this power to the caprice of an individual, whatever title he may bear. In that country this power is assumed by what is called the Crown, for it is not constituted by any legal authority. It is a branch from the trunk of monarchical despotism.

By this impolitic declaration of war the Government of England has put everything to issue; and no wise general would commence an action he might avoid, where nothing is to be gained by gaining a battle, and everything is to be lost by losing it. An invasion and a revolution, which consequently includes that of Ireland, stand now on the same ground, What part the people may finally take in a contest pregnant with such an issue is yet to be known.

By the experiment of raising the country *in mass* the Government has puts arms into the hands of men whom they would have sent to

Botany Bay but a few months before, had they found a pike in their possession. The honor of this project, which is copied from France, is claimed by Mr. Pitt; and no project of his has yet succeeded, in the end, except that of raising the taxes and ruining the Bank. All his schemes in the Revolutionary War of France failed of success, and finished in discredit.

If Bonaparte is remarkable for an unexampled series of good fortune, Mr. Pitt is remarkable for a contrary fate, and his want of popularity with the people, whom he deserted and betrayed on the question of a reform of Parliament, sheds no beams of glory round his projects.

If the present eventful crisis, for an eventful one it is, should end in a revolution, the people of England have, within their glance, the benefit of experience both in theory and fact. This was not the case at first. The American Revolution began on untried ground. The representative system of government was then unknown in practise, and but little thought of in theory. The idea that man must be governed by effigy and show, and that superstitious reverence was necessary to establish authority, had so benumbed the reasoning faculties of men that some bold exertion was necessary to shock them into reflection. But the experiment has now been made. The practise of almost thirty years, the last twenty of which have been of peace, notwithstanding the wrong-headed, tumultuous Administration of John Adams, has proved the excellence of the representative system, and the NEW WORLD is now the preceptor of the OLD. The children are become the fathers of their progenitors.

With respect to the French Revolution, it was begun by good men and on good principles, and I have always believed it would have gone on so had not the provocative interference of foreign powers, of which Pitt was the principal and vindictive agent, distracted it into madness and sown jealousies among the leaders.

The people of England have now two revolutions before them. The one as an example; the other as a warning. Their own wisdom will direct them what to choose and what to avoid, and in everything which regards their happiness, combined with the common good of mankind, I wish them honor and success.

THOMAS PAINE.

NEW YORK, May, 1804.

## REMARKS ON ENGLISH AFFAIRS

This interesting article on English affairs appeared in the *Baltimore Evening Post* of July 8, 1805, and has never before been reprinted or even mentioned in any discussion of Paine's writings. It was preceded by an introductory comment by the editor of the *Post* which went: "The following excellent remarks upon English affairs, though the first we have received from our friend, we trust will not be the last. We feel highly gratified in having an opportunity to adorn our pages with an original from his pen, and beg that the Evening Post may be occasionally privileged with his lucubrations."

For concrete evidence that Paine wrote this article, see his letter to John Fellows, July 9, 1805, pp. 1468-1469 below.—*Editor*.

THE imaginary importance of the government of England, draws to a close. In the two last wars, that with America, and the other with France, she was defeated and disgraced in all her projects; and the present war, as far as it has gone, gives symptoms of a similar fate. There is evidently a madness in her councils (besides the royal madness) that has no foresight, and cannot calculate events.

One would suppose, that when a government goes to war of its own choice, and is the first to declare it (which was the case with the English government in the present war with France), that it had arranged all its plans, and had everything in readiness to put these plans in operation the instant it declared war. But this was not the case with the English government; for as it has put no plan in execution, the inference is, that either it had none, or those it had were too imperfectly formed to be executed. Take which of the inferences you will, and it shows the incompetency of the English government to the condition into which it has plunged itself.

It was laughable enough to see how the British parliament passed away its time in debating whether there was *cause* for war or not when they declared it. A ministerial victory in parliament does not decide a battle in the field. Philosophers and naturalists have to do with causes, and politicians with consequences. For example, it would have been madness in America to have declared independence, if she had not possessed the means of obtaining it, and the same may be said of every hostile declaration.

As far as inferences can be drawn from circumstances, the British government went to war from internal craft, and not from external policy. After the publication in England of a small work of Thomas Paine in the year '96, entitled *Decline and fall of the English system of Finance*, there was so great a run upon the Bank of England, that the bank could not stand it. The directors of the bank made their condition known to Mr. Pitt, who undoubtedly knew it before, but *farce* was become necessary. Pitt, in order to ward off the blow that threatened destruction to the bank, and also to the government, brought a bill into parliament to *restrain* the bank (for that was the term used) from paying its notes in specie; whereas the case with the bank was, that it could not pay—it had not wherewithal. This act, at first was only for a few months, but it was afterwards renewed, and continued to be renewed in every session from year to year. By the last renewal, the *restraint* (as it was called) was to continue till some time after the end of the war then going on. But when that time came, the bank could not pay any more than it could before; and therefore the government, after it had made peace, declared war again, and this was made a pretence for again shutting up the bank. That bank will never open for payment. Its ruin is as fixed as fate.

The same farce about *cause* instead of *consequence* was again acted with respect to the declaration of war against Spain. Pitt made a long and wordy speech of three hours, to show, in his way, there was *cause* of war, whereas it was the *consequence* only that should have governed him.

In a treaty between France and Spain, when the last war ended, it was stipulated that in case either should be attacked, the other should, as an auxiliary, assist her with a certain number of ships and land forces. This was commuted for in money, <sup>and</sup> instead of ships and forces, France agreed to take three millions sterling annually. The case therefore with Pitt ought to have been, not any thing about the *cause*, but about the *consequence*; that is, whether it was not better to let Spain fulfil her engagement in this manner quietly by commutation, than to force her, by a declaration of war, to join France with her whole force by sea and land. It is Bonaparte that is the gainer by this conduct of Pitt, who, by thus increasing the force of his enemy, has made that of England comparatively less.

When the family of the Bourbons reigned in France, the natural powers and resources of that country, which are greater than those of

any country in the world, were never effectually called forth. Voluptuousness, effeminacy and intrigue were then the deities of the court, and the nation was governed by mistresses and the favorites of mistresses. The case *now* is the reverse of what it was *then*. France, at this time, has for its chief the most enterprizing man in Europe, and the greatest general in the world; and besides these virtues or vices (call them what you please, for they may be either), he is a deep and consummate politician in every thing which relates to the success of his measures. He knows both how to plan and how to execute. This is a talent that Pitt is defective in, for all his measures fail in execution. His forte lies in making long speeches, and in planning intrigues that evaporate in disappointment and disgrace.

England, at this time, is in the most critical situation she ever was put in by France, and there is no foreseeing when or how it is to end. According to appearances, France may hold England in constant alarm and insupportable expence as long as she pleases, and that without any new expence or suffering any alarms herself; and by drawing off the English fleet from the defence of its coast at home, by sending her own on distant expeditions, she encreases the chance of a descent by gunboats. France could not do this till Pitt, by his ill policy, joined the navy of Spain to France.

The discovery that has been made of the embezzlement of money in the treasury by *Dundas* alias *Lord Melville*, will go a great way towards breaking up the present ministry. That Pitt was privy to this embezzlement, there can scarcely be a doubt; for as he held the offices of first lord of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer, and was, in consequence thereof, the person who brings in the budget, that is, the annual statement of expences, he cannot be supposed to be ignorant of it, and if he was, it shows he kept a bad look out, and is not fit for the office of treasurer and chancellor. The answer also of their king, involves suspicion. It implies a knowledge of the transaction, for it says, that, "notwithstanding the clamor that had been raised against that nobleman (*Melville*), he trusted his *faithful commons* would soon see reason to express an opinion that his lordship had acquitted himself with the utmost anxiety for the welfare and salvation of the British empire." But neither his *faithful commons* as he calls them, nor his loyal subjects, as he sometimes calls the people, appear to believe a word of what he says, for they are pushing the matter still further on. *Melville* was first lord of the admiralty, and treasurer of the navy; and had the offi-

cial direction of naval expeditions. The ill news from the West-Indies, would arrive in England about the time of the discovery of this embezzlement, and will in their consequences affect the whole of the present ministry.

C.S.

## OF THE ENGLISH NAVY

This article appeared in the Jeffersonian press of New York and Philadelphia in January, 1807, and was reprinted in *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays on Various Subjects by Thomas Paine*, London, 1819, pp. 208-209. —*Editor.*

THE boasted navy of England has been the ruin of England. This may appear strange to a set of stupid Feds, who have no more foresight than a mole under ground, or they would not abuse France as they do; but strange as it may appear, it is nevertheless true, and a little reflection on the case will show it.

The expense of that navy is greater than the nation can bear; and the deficiency is continually supplied by anticipation of revenue under the name of loans, till the national debt, which is the sum total of these anticipations, has amounted, according to the report of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the English Parliament, the 28th of last March, to the enormous sum of £.603,924,000 sterling; and the interest of the debt at that time was £.24,900,000 sterling.

What are called loans, are no other than creating a new quantity of stock and sending it to market to be sold, and then laying on new taxes to pay the interest of that new stock. The persons called loaners, or subscribers for the loan, contract with the minister for large wholesale quantities of this new stock at as low a price as they can get it, and all they can make by retailing it is their profit. This ruinous system, for it is certain ruin in the end, began in the time of William the Third, one hundred and eighteen years ago.

The expense of the English navy this year, as given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, last March, is £.15,281,000 sterling, above sixty-eight million dollars. The enormous expense of this navy, taken on an average

of peace and war, has run the nation into debt upwards of five millions sterling every year for the one hundred and eighteen years since the system of what are called loans began. And it is this annual accumulation of more than five millions sterling every year, for one hundred and eighteen years, that has carried the English national debt to this enormous sum of £.603,924,000 sterling, which was the amount of the debt, in March last. If it be asked, what has this mighty navy done to balance this expense? it may be answered, that, comparatively speaking, it has done nothing. It has obtained some victories at sea, where nothing was to be gained but blows and broken bones, and it has plundered the unarmed vessels of neutral nations; and this makes the short history of its services.

That the English Government does not depend upon the navy to prevent Bonaparte making a descent upon England, is demonstrated by the expensive preparations that Government puts itself to by land to repel it. And that the navy contributes nothing to the protection of commerce is proved by the fact, that all the ports on the Continent of Europe are shut by land against the commerce of England. Of what use, then, is the navy that has incurred such an enormous debt, and which costs more than sixty-eight millions of dollars annually to keep it up, which is three times more than all the gold and silver that the mines of Peru and Mexico annually produce. Such a navy will always keep a nation poor. No wonder, then, that every seventh person in England is a pauper, which is the fact. The number of paupers now is 1,200,000.

Another evil to England attending this navy, besides the debt it has incurred, is that it drains the nation of specie. More than half the materials that go into the construction of a navy in England are procured from Russia and Sweden; and as the exports of English manufactures to those places are but small, the balance must be paid in specie. If Bonaparte succeed[s] in all his plans, I hope he will put an end to navies for the good of the world.

COMMON SENSE.

Jan. 7, 1807.

LETTER TO GEORGE WASHINGTON



## EDITOR'S NOTE

The background which led to the sending of this celebrated *Letter to Washington* must constantly be kept in mind in reading the document. For ten months, from December 28, 1793, until November 4, 1794, Paine remained in the Luxembourg prison, living in daily fear of being executed. To every appeal for his release he received the reply that he was considered an Englishman, not an American citizen, by the French officials, and that the government of the United States refused to regard him as citizen and authorize his release. Unaware of the role Gouverneur Morris was playing in conspiring to keep him in prison and at the same time leading the government of the United States to believe that he had done everything possible to help him, Paine grew more and more bitter toward Washington and interpreted the American President's silence as the most brutal type of ingratitude. He had ample time, moreover, to recall his past services to Washington, and especially remembered that in the fifth *Crisis* he had leaped to the defense of the commander-in-chief of the Continental army when he was attacked by enemies in Congress and was in danger of losing his command. The more he brooded on the subject, the more Paine was determined to expose Washington. James Monroe urged Paine not to write the letters, and dissuaded him from sending the one dated February 22, 1795. But on July 30, 1796, Paine sent the document to America.

The publication of the *Letter to Washington* aroused a storm in America. The Federalists seized upon it as one further proof of the determination of the French revolutionists to overthrow American institutions by using Paine to undermine popular respect for the "father of the country." Furthermore, the fact that the *Letter* had been written at the home of James Monroe, a leading Jeffersonian, was proof positive, they cried, that the radical forces in America were involved in this gigantic conspiracy. Finally, all who were intent upon destroying the popular influence exerted by Paine's *Age of Reason* pointed to the *Letter* as an illustration of Paine's warped mind.

The extremes to which the Federalists went in denouncing Paine roused popular support for the man who had rendered America great services during her darkest hours and whose writings were widely read in this country. Moreover, many people felt that Paine was justified in charging Washington with ingratitude, and excused the bitterness of his language by pointing to his physical suffering while in prison and his precarious state of health. In Joel Barlow's notebook in the Harvard University Library is a quatrain entitled "Thomas Paine's direction to the Sculptor who should make the statue of Washington," which reads:

"Take from the mine the coldest, hardest stone  
It needs no fashion, it is Washington;  
But if you chisel, let your strokes be rude  
And on his breast engrave *Ingratitude!*"

## LETTER TO GEORGE WASHINGTON

DATED PARIS, JULY 30, 1796

AS censure is but awkwardly softened by apology, I shall offer to you no apology for this letter. The eventful crisis to which your double politics have conducted the affairs of your country, requires an investigation uncramped by ceremony.

There was a time when the fame of America, moral and political, stood fair and high in the world. The lustre of her Revolution extended itself to every individual; and to be a citizen of America gave a title to respect in Europe. Neither meanness nor ingratitude had been mingled in the composition of her character. Her resistance to the attempted tyranny of England left her unsuspected of the one, and her open acknowledgment of the aid she received from France precluded all suspicion of the other. The Washington of politics had not then appeared.

At the time I left America (April, 1787) the Continental Convention, that formed the Federal Constitution was on the point of meeting. Since that time new schemes of politics, and new distinctions of parties, have arisen. The term *Anti-federalist* has been applied to all those who combated the defects of that Constitution, or opposed the measures of your administration.

It was only to the absolute necessity of establishing some Federal authority, extending equally over all the States, that an instrument so inconsistent as the present Federal Constitution is, obtained a suffrage. I would have voted for it myself, had I been in America, or even for a worse, rather than have had none, provided it contained the means of remedying its defects by the same appeal to the people by which it was to be established. It is always better policy to leave removable errors to expose themselves than to hazard too much in contending against them theoretically.

I have introduced these observations, not only to mark the general

difference between Anti-federalist and Anti-constitutionalist, but to preclude the effect, and even the application, of the former of these terms to myself.

I declare myself opposed to several matters in the Constitution, particularly to the manner in which what is called the Executive is formed, and to the long duration of the Senate; and if I live to return to America, I will use all my endeavors to have them altered.<sup>1</sup> I also declare myself opposed to almost the whole of your administration; for I know it to have been deceitful, if not perfidious, as I shall show in the course of this letter.

But as to the point of consolidating the States into a Federal Government, it so happens, that the proposition for that purpose came originally from myself. I proposed it in a letter to Chancellor Livingston in the spring of 1782, while that gentleman was Minister for Foreign Affairs.<sup>2</sup> The five per cent. duty recommended by Congress had then fallen through, having been adopted by some of the States, altered by others, rejected by Rhode Island, and repealed by Virginia after it had been consented to.

The proposal in the letter I allude to, was to get over the whole difficulty at once, by annexing a Continental legislative body to Congress; for in order to have any law of the Union uniform, the case could only be that either Congress, as it then stood, must frame the law, and the States severally adopt it without alteration, or the States must erect a Continental legislature for the purpose.

Chancellor Livingston, Robert Morris, Gouverneur Morris and myself had a meeting at the house of Robert Morris on the subject of that letter. There was no diversity of opinion on the proposition for a Continental legislature: the only difficulty was on the manner of bringing the proposition forward. For my own part, as I considered it as a remedy in reserve, that could be applied at any time *when the states saw themselves wrong enough to be put right* (which did not appear to be the case at that time), I did not see the propriety of urging it precipitately, and declined being the publisher of it myself.

<sup>1</sup> I have always been opposed to the mode of refining government up to an individual, or what is called a single executive. Such a man will always be the chief of a party. A plurality is far better: It combines the mass of a nation better together: And besides this, it is necessary to the manly mind of a republic that it loses the debasing idea of obeying an individual.—*Author.*

<sup>2</sup> The letter cannot be located, but it was undoubtedly similar to the letter Paine sent to Robert Morris about the same time. See below pp. 1213–1215.—*Editor.*

After this account of a fact, the leaders of your party will scarcely have the hardiness to apply to me the term of Anti-federalist. But I can go to a date and to a fact beyond this; for the proposition for electing a Continental convention to form the Continental Government is one of the subjects treated of in the pamphlet "Common Sense."

Having thus cleared away a little of the rubbish that might otherwise have lain in my way, I return to the point of time at which the present Federal Constitution and your administration began.

It was very well said by an anonymous writer in Philadelphia, about a year before that period, that "*thirteen staves and ne'er a hoop will not make a barrel,*"<sup>3</sup> and as any kind of hooping the barrel, however defectively executed, would be better than none, it was scarcely possible but that considerable advantages must arise from the Federal hooping of the States. It was with pleasure that every sincere friend of America beheld, as the natural effect of union, her rising prosperity; and it was with grief they saw that prosperity mixed, even in the blossom, with the germ of corruption.

Monopolies of every kind marked your administration almost in the moment of its commencement. The lands obtained by the Revolution were lavished upon partisans; the interest of the disbanded soldier was sold to the speculator; injustice was acted under the pretense of faith; and the chief of the army became the patron of the fraud. From such a beginning what else could be expected than what has happened? A mean and servile submission to the insults of one nation; treachery and ingratitude to another.

Some vices make their approach with such a splendid appearance that we scarcely know to what class of moral distinctions they belong. They are rather virtues corrupted than vices, originally. But meanness and ingratitude have nothing equivocal in their character. There is not a trait in them that renders them doubtful. They are so originally vice that they are generated in the dung of other vices, and crawl into existence with the filth upon their back. The fugitives have found protection in you, and the levee-room is their place of rendezvous.

As the Federal Constitution is a copy, though not quite so base as the original, of the form of the British Government, an imitation of its vices was naturally to be expected. So intimate is the connection between *form* and *practice*, that to adopt the one is to invite the other. Imitation

<sup>3</sup> The writer was Peletiah Webster, a Philadelphia merchant and political economist.—*Editor.*

is naturally progressive and is rapidly so in matters that are vicious.

Soon after the Federal Constitution arrived in England, I received a letter from a female literary correspondent (a native of New York), very well mixed with friendship, sentiment and politics. In my answer to that letter, I permitted myself to ramble into the wilderness of imagination, and to anticipate what might hereafter be the condition of America. I had no idea that the picture I then drew was realizing so fast, and still less that Mr. Washington was hurrying it on. As the extract I allude to is congenial with the subject I am upon, I here transcribe it:

You touch me on a very tender point when you say that my friends on your side the water cannot be reconciled to the idea of my abandoning America. They are right. I had rather see my horse Button eating the grass of Bordentown or Morrisania than see all the pomp and show of Europe.

A thousand years hence (for I must indulge a few thoughts), perhaps in less, America may be what Europe now is. The innocence of her character, that won the hearts of all nations in her favor, may sound like a romance and her inimitable virtue as if it had never been. The ruin of that liberty which thousands bled for or struggled to obtain may just furnish materials for a village tale or extort a sigh from rustic sensibility, whilst the fashionable of that day, enveloped in dissipation, shall deride the principle and deny the fact.

When we contemplate the fall of empires and the extinction of the nations of the Ancient World, we see but little to excite our regret than the mouldering ruins of pompous palaces, magnificent museums, lofty pyramids and walls and towers of the most costly workmanship; but when the empire of America shall fall, the subject for contemplative sorrow will be infinitely greater than crumbling brass and marble can inspire. It will not then be said, here stood a temple of vast antiquity; here rose a babel of invisible height; or there a palace of sumptuous extravagance; but here, Ah, painful thought! the noblest work of human wisdom, the grandest scene of human glory, the fair cause of Freedom rose and fell. Read this, and then ask if I forget America.

Impressed, as I was, with apprehensions of this kind, I had America constantly in my mind in all the publications I afterwards made. The first and still more the second part of the "Rights of Man" bear evident marks of this watchfulness; and the "Dissertation on First Principles of Government" goes more directly to the point than either of the former. I now pass on to other subjects.

It will be supposed by those into whose hands this letter may fall that I have some personal resentment against you; I will therefore settle this point before I proceed further.

If I have any resentment you must acknowledge that I have not been hasty in declaring it; neither would it now be declared (for what are private resentments to the public) if the cause of it did not unite itself as well with your public as with your private character, and with the motives of your political conduct.

The part I acted in the American Revolution is well known; I shall not here repeat it.<sup>4</sup> I know also that had it not been for the aid received from France, in men, money and ships, that your cold and unmilitary conduct (as I shall show in the course of this letter) would in all probability have lost America; at least she would not have been the independent nation she now is. You slept away your time in the field, till the finances of the country were completely exhausted, and you have but little share in the glory of the final event. It is time, Sir, to speak the undisguised language of historical truth.

Elevated to the chair of the Presidency, you assumed the merit of everything to yourself, and the natural ingratitude of your constitution began to appear. You commenced your Presidential career by encouraging and swallowing the grossest adulation, and you traveled America from one end to the other to put yourself in the way of receiving it.<sup>5</sup> You have as many addresses in your chest as James II. As to what were your views, for, if you are not great enough to have ambition, you are little enough to have vanity, they cannot be directly inferred from expressions of your own; but the partisans of your politics have divulged the secret.

John Adams has said (and John it is known was always a speller after places and offices, and never thought his little services were highly enough paid) John has said, that as Mr. Washington had no child, the Presidency should be made hereditary in the family of Lund Washington. John might then have counted upon some sinecure himself, and a provision for his descendants. He did not go so far as to say, also, that the Vice-Presidency should be hereditary in the family of John Adams.

<sup>4</sup> For a detailed account by Paine of his services during the American Revolution, see his letter to a committee of the Continental Congress, printed below pp. 1226-1242.—*Editor*.

<sup>5</sup> Paine's criticisms of Washington in this respect is hardly justified, for the President sought, through this tour, to unify the country and arouse the widest support for the new government set up by the Federal Convention.—*Editor*.

He prudently left that to stand on the ground that one good turn deserves another.<sup>6</sup>

John Adams is one of those men who never contemplated the origin of government, or comprehended anything of first principles. If he had, he might have seen that the right to set up and establish hereditary government never did, and never can, exist in any generation at any time whatever; that it is of the nature of treason; because it is an attempt to take away the rights of all the minors living at that time, and of all succeeding generations. It is of a degree beyond common treason. It is a sin against nature. The equal right of every generation is a right fixed in the nature of things. It belongs to the son when of age, as it belonged to the father before him.

John Adams would himself deny the right that any former deceased generation could have to decree authoritatively a succession of governors over him, or over his children; and yet he assumes the pretended right, reasonable as it is, of acting it himself. His ignorance is his best excuse.

John Jay has said (and this John was always the sycophant of everything in power, from Mr. Gerard in America, to Grenville in England),—John Jay has said that the Senate should have been appointed for life. He would then have been sure of never wanting a lucrative appointment for himself, and have had no fears about impeachment. These are the disguised traitors that call themselves Federalists.<sup>7</sup>

Could I have known to what degree of corruption and perfidy the administrative part of the Government of America had descended, I could have been at no loss to have understood the reservedness of Mr. Washington toward me, during my imprisonment in the Luxembourg. There are cases in which silence is a loud language. I will here explain the cause of that imprisonment, and return to Mr. Washington afterwards.

In the course of that rage, terror and suspicion which the brutal letter of the Duke of Brunswick<sup>8</sup> first started into existence in France, it happened that almost every man who was opposed to violence, or who

<sup>6</sup> Two persons to whom John Adams said this, told me of it. The secretary of Mr. Jay was present when it was told to me.—*Author.*

<sup>7</sup> If Mr. John Jay desires to know on what authority I say this, I will give that authority publicly when he chooses to call for it.—*Author.*

<sup>8</sup> In July, 1792, the Duke of Brunswick, commander of the Prussian forces attacking France, issued a manifesto warning the French people that if in the future any further violence were to be committed against the royal family, Paris would be turned over to "military execution and total annihilation." The manifesto enraged the people of Paris, and stimulated the outpouring of French citizens to resist the invaders.—*Editor.*

was not violent himself, became suspected. I had constantly been opposed to everything which was of the nature or of the appearance of violence; but as I had always done it in a manner that showed it to be a principle founded in my heart, and not a political maneuver, it precluded the pretense of accusing me. I was reached, however, under another pretense.

A decree was passed to imprison all persons born in England; but as I was a member of the convention, and had been complimented with the honorary style of Citizen of France, as Mr. Washington and some other Americans had been, this decree fell short of reaching me. A motion was afterwards made and carried, supported chiefly by Bourdon de l'Oise, for expelling foreigners from the Convention. My expulsion being thus effected, the two committees of Public Safety and of General Surety, of which Robespierre was the dictator, put me in arrestation under the former decree for imprisoning persons born in England. Having thus shown under what pretense the imprisonment was effected, I come to speak of such parts of the case as apply between me and Mr. Washington, either as a President or as an individual.

I have always considered that a foreigner, such as I was in fact, with respect to France, might be a member of a convention for framing a constitution, without affecting his right of citizenship in the country to which he belongs, but not a member of a government after a constitution is formed; and I have uniformly acted upon this distinction. To be a member of a government requires that a person be in allegiance to that government and to the country locally. But a constitution, being a thing of principle, and not of action, and which, after it is formed, is to be referred to the people for their approbation or rejection, does not require allegiance in the persons forming and proposing it; and besides this, it is only to the thing after it be formed and established, and to the country after its governmental character is fixed by the adoption of a constitution, that the allegiance can be given.

No oath of allegiance or of citizenship was required of the members who composed the Convention: there was nothing existing in form to swear allegiance to. If any such condition had been required, I could not, as citizen of America in fact, though citizen of France by compliment, have accepted a seat in the Convention.

As my citizenship in America was not altered or diminished by anything I had done in Europe (on the contrary, it ought to be considered as strengthened, for it was the American principle of government that I was endeavoring to spread in Europe), and as it is the duty of every



government to charge itself with the care of any of its citizens who may happen to fall under an arbitrary persecution abroad, and is also one of the reasons for which ambassadors or ministers are appointed—it was the duty of the Executive Department in America, to have made (at least) some inquiries about me, as soon as it heard of my imprisonment.

But if this had not been the case, that government owed it to me on every ground and principle of honor and gratitude. Mr. Washington owed it to me on every score of private acquaintance, I will not now say, friendship; for it has some time been known by those who know him, that he has no friendships; that he is incapable of forming any; he can serve or desert a man, or a cause, with constitutional indifference; and it is this cold, hermaphrodite faculty that imposed itself upon the world and was credited for a while, by enemies as by friends, for prudence, moderation and impartiality.

Soon after I was put into arrestation and imprisonment in the Luxembourg, the Americans who were then in Paris went in a body to the bar of the Convention to reclaim me. They were answered by the then President Vadier, who has since absconded, that *I was born in England*, and it was signified to them by some of the Committee of General Surety to whom they were referred (I have been told it was Billaud Varennes) that their reclamation of me was only the act of individuals, without any authority from the American Government.

A few days after this, all communication from persons imprisoned to any person without the prison was cut off by an order of the police. I neither saw, nor heard from, anybody for six months; and the only hope that remained to me was that a new Minister would arrive from America to supersede Morris, and that he would be authorized to inquire into the cause of my imprisonment. But even this hope, in the state to which matters were daily arriving, was too remote to have any consolatory effect, and I contented myself with the thought that I might be remembered when it would be too late.

There is perhaps no condition from which a man conscious of his own uprightness cannot derive consolation; for it is in itself a consolation for him to find that he can bear that condition with calmness and fortitude.

From about the middle of March (1794) to the fall of Robespierre July twenty-ninth (9th of Thermidor), the state of things in the prisons was a continued scene of horror. No man could count upon life for

twenty-four hours. To such a pitch of rage and suspicion were Robespierre and his committee arrived, that it seemed as if they feared to leave a man living. Scarcely a night passed in which ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty or more were not taken out of the prison, carried before a pretended tribunal in the morning and guillotined before night.

One hundred and sixty-nine were taken out of the Luxembourg one night, in the month of July, and one hundred and sixty of them guillotined. A list of two hundred more, according to the report in the prison, was preparing a few days before Robespierre fell. In this last list I have good reason to believe I was included. A memorandum in the hand-writing of Robespierre was afterwards produced in the Convention, by the committee to whom the papers of Robespierre were referred, in these words:

<p>Demander que Thomas Payne soit décrété d'accusation pour les intérêts de l'Amérique, autant que de la France.</p>	<p>Demand that Thomas Paine be decreed of accusation for the interests of America as well as of France.</p>
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I had then been imprisoned seven months, and the silence of the Executive part of the Government of America (Mr. Washington) upon the case, and upon everything respecting me, was explanation enough to Robespierre that he might proceed to extremities.

A violent fever which had nearly terminated my existence, was, I believe, the circumstance that preserved it. I was not in a condition to be removed, or to know of what was passing, or of what had passed, for more than a month. It makes a blank in my remembrance of life. The first thing I was informed of was the fall of Robespierre.

About a week after this, Mr. Monroe arrived to supersede Gouverneur Morris, and as soon as I was able to write a note legible enough to be read, I found a way to convey one to him by means of the man who lighted the lamps in the prison; and whose unabated friendship to me, from whom he had never received any service, and with difficulty accepted any recompense, puts the character of Mr. Washington to shame.

In a few days I received a message from Mr. Monroe, conveyed to me in a note from an intermediate person, with assurance of his friendship, and expressing a desire that I would rest the case in his hands. After a fortnight or more had passed, and hearing nothing further, I wrote to a friend who was then in Paris, a citizen of Philadelphia, requesting him

to inform me what was the true situation of things with respect to me. I was sure that something was the matter; I began to have hard thoughts of Mr. Washington, but I was unwilling to encourage them.

In about ten days I received an answer to my letter, in which the writer says, "Mr. Monroe has told me that he has no order [meaning from the President, Mr. Washington] respecting you, but that he (Mr. Monroe) will do everything in his power to liberate you; but, from what I learn from the Americans lately arrived in Paris, you are not considered, either by the American Government, or by the individuals, as an American citizen."

I was now at no loss to understand Mr. Washington and his new fangled faction, and that their policy was silently to leave me to fall in France. They were rushing as fast as they could venture, without awakening the jealousy of America, into all the vices and corruptions of the British Government; and it was no more consistent with the policy of Mr. Washington, and those who immediately surrounded him, than it was with that of Robespierre or of Pitt, that I should survive. They have, however, missed the mark, and the reaction is upon themselves.

Upon the receipt of the letter just alluded to, I sent a memorial to Mr. Monroe, which the reader will find in the appendix [see pp. 1345*ff.*], and I received from him the following answer. It is dated the eighteenth of September, but did not come to hand till about the fourth of October. I was then falling into a relapse, the weather was becoming damp and cold, fuel was not to be had, and the abscess in my side (the consequence of these things and of the want of air and exercise), was beginning to form, and which has continued immovable ever since. Here follows Mr. Monroe's letter:

PARIS, September 18, 1794.

DEAR SIR:

I was favored soon after my arrival here with several letters from you, and more latterly with one in the character of a Memorial upon the subject of your confinement; and should have answered them at the times they were respectively written had I not concluded you would have calculated with certainty upon the deep interest I take in your welfare, and the pleasure with which I shall embrace every opportunity in my power to serve you. I should still pursue the same course, and for reasons which must obviously occur, if I did not find that you are disquieted with apprehensions upon interesting points, and which justice to you and our country equally forbid you should entertain.

You mention that you have been informed you are not considered as an American citizen by the Americans, and that you have likewise heard that I had no instructions respecting you by the Government. I doubt not the person who gave you the information meant well, but I suspect he did not even convey accurately his own ideas on the first point: for I presume the most he could say is that you had likewise become a French citizen, and which by no means deprived you of being an American one.

Even this, however, may be doubted, I mean the acquisition of citizenship in France, and I confess you have said much to show that it has not been made. I really suspect that this was all that the gentleman who wrote to you, and those Americans he heard speak upon the subject meant. It becomes my duty, however, to declare to you, that I consider you as an American citizen, and that you are considered universally in that character by the people of America. As such you are entitled to my attention; and so far as it can be given consistently with those obligations which are mutual between every government and even a transient passenger, you shall receive it.

The Congress have never decided upon the subject of citizenship in a manner to regard the present case. By being with us through the Revolution you are of our country as absolutely as if you had been born there, and you are no more of England than every native American is. This is the true doctrine in the present case, so far as it becomes complicated with any other consideration. I have mentioned it to make you easy upon the only point which could give you any disquietude.

Is it necessary for me to tell you how much all your countrymen, I speak of the great mass of people, are interested in your welfare? They have not forgotten the history of their own Revolution and the difficult scenes through which they passed; nor do they review its several stages without reviving in their bosoms a due sensibility of the merits of those who served them in that great and arduous conflict. The crime of ingratitude has not yet stained, and I trust never will stain, our national character. You are considered by them as not only having rendered important service in our own Revolution, but as being, on a more extensive scale, the friend of human rights, and a distinguished and able advocate in favor of public liberty. To the welfare of Thomas Paine, the Americans are not, nor can they be, indifferent.

Of the sense which the President has always entertained of your merits, and of his friendly disposition toward you, you are too well assured to require any declaration of it from me. That I forward his wishes in seeking your safety is what I well know, and this will form an additional obligation on me to perform what I should otherwise consider as a duty.

You are, in my opinion, at present menaced by no kind of danger. To liberate you, will be an object of my endeavors, and as soon as possible. But you must, until that event shall be accomplished, bear your situation with

patience and fortitude. You will likewise have the justice to recollect, that I am placed here upon a difficult theater,<sup>9</sup> many important objects to attend to, with few to consult. It becomes me in pursuit of those to regulate my conduct in respect to each, as to the manner and the time, as will, in my judgment, be best calculated to accomplish the whole.

With great esteem and respect consider me personally your friend,

JAMES MONROE.

The part in Mr. Monroe's letter, in which he speaks of the President (Mr. Washington), is put in soft language. Mr. Monroe knew what Mr. Washington had said formerly, and he was willing to keep that in view. But the fact is, not only that Mr. Washington had given no orders to Mr. Monroe, as the letter [of Whiteside] stated, but he did not so much as say to him, inquire if Mr. Paine be dead or alive, in prison or out, or see if there be any assistance we can give him.

While these matters were passing, the liberations from the prisons were numerous; from twenty to forty in the course of almost every twenty-four hours. The continuance of my imprisonment after a new Minister had arrived immediately from America, which was now more than two months, was a matter so obviously strange, that I found the character of the American Government spoken of in very unqualified terms of reproach; not only by those who still remained in prison, but by those who were liberated, and by persons who had access to the prison from without. Under these circumstances I wrote again to Mr. Monroe, and found occasion, among other things, to say: "It will not add to the popularity of Mr. Washington to have it believed in America, as it is believed here, that he connives at my imprisonment."

The case, so far as it respected Mr. Monroe, was, that having to get over the difficulties, which the strange conduct of Gouverneur Morris had thrown in the way of a successor, and having no authority from the American Government to speak officially upon anything relating to me, he found himself obliged to proceed by unofficial means with individual members; for though Robespierre was overthrown, the Robespierrian members of the Committee of Public Safety still remained in considerable force, and had they found out that Mr. Monroe had no official authority upon the case, they would have paid little or no regard to his reclamation of me. In the meantime my health was suffering exceed-

<sup>9</sup> This I presume alludes to the embarrassments which the strange conduct of Gouverneur Morris had occasioned, and which, I well know, had created suspicions of the sincerity of Mr. Washington.—*Author*.

ingly, the dreary prospect of winter was coming on, and imprisonment was still a thing of danger.

After the Robespierrian members of the Committee were removed by the expiration of their time of serving, Mr. Monroe reclaimed me, and I was liberated the fourth of November. Mr. Monroe arrived in Paris the beginning of August before. All that period of my imprisonment, at least, I owe not to Robespierre, but to his colleague in projects, George Washington.

Immediately upon my liberation, Mr. Monroe invited me to his house, where I remained more than a year and a half; and I speak of his aid and friendship, as an open-hearted man will always do in such a case, with respect and gratitude.

Soon after my liberation, the Convention passed an unanimous vote to invite me to return to my seat among them. The times were still unsettled and dangerous, as well from without as within, for the coalition was unbroken, and the Constitution not settled. I chose, however, to accept the invitation; for as I undertake nothing but what I believe to be right, I abandon nothing that I undertake; and I was willing also to show that, as I was not of a cast of mind to be deterred by prospects or retrospects of danger, so neither were my principles to be weakened by misfortune or perverted by disgust.

Being now once more abroad in the world, I began to find that I was not the only one who had conceived an unfavorable opinion of Mr. Washington; it was evident that his character was on the decline as well among Americans as among foreigners of different nations. From being the chief of the government, he had made himself the chief of a party; and his integrity was questioned, for his politics had a doubtful appearance. The mission of Mr. Jay to London, notwithstanding there was an American Minister there already, had then taken place, and was beginning to be talked of. It appeared to others, as it did to me, to be enveloped in mystery, which every day served either to increase or to explain into matter of suspicion.

In the year 1790, or about that time, Mr. Washington, as President, had sent Gouverneur Morris to London, as his secret agent to have some communication with the British Ministry. To cover the agency of Morris it was given out, I know not by whom, that he went as an agent from Robert Morris to borrow money in Europe, and the report was permitted to pass uncontradicted. The event of Morris's negotiation was, that Mr. Hammond was sent Minister from England to America,

Pinckney from America to England, and himself Minister to France.

If, while Morris was Minister in France, he was not an emissary of the British Ministry and the coalesced powers, he gave strong reasons to suspect him of it. No one who saw his conduct, and heard his conversation, could doubt his being in their interest; and had he not got off the time he did, after his recall, he would have been in arrestation. Some letters of his had fallen into the hands of the Committee of Public Safety, and inquiry was making after him.

A great bustle had been made by Mr. Washington about the conduct of Genêt in America, while that of his own Minister, Morris, in France, was infinitely more reproachable.<sup>10</sup> If Genêt was imprudent or rash, he was not treacherous; but Morris was all three. He was the enemy of the French Revolution, in every stage of it. But notwithstanding this conduct on the part of Morris, and the known profligacy of his character, Mr. Washington in a letter he wrote to him at the time of recalling him on the complaint and request of the Committee of Public Safety, assures him, that though he had complied with that request, he still retained the same esteem and friendship for him as before.

This letter Morris was foolish enough to tell of; and, as his own character and conduct were notorious, the telling of it could have but one effect, which was that of implicating the character of the writer.<sup>11</sup> Morris still loiters in Europe, chiefly in England; and Mr. Washington is still in correspondence with him. Mr. Washington ought, therefore, to expect, especially since his conduct in the affairs of Jay's Treaty, that France must consider Morris and Washington as men of the same description. The chief difference, however, between the two is (for in politics there is none), that the one is profligate enough to profess an indifference about *moral* principles, and the other is prudent enough to conceal the want of them.

<sup>10</sup> Genêt, whose appointment as France's American representative Paine had encouraged, was received enthusiastically by the American people when he landed in Charleston, but by his indiscreet and insolent conduct, he soon turned opinion against him. He did not even bother to be received officially before he proceeded to organize expeditions on American soil against Spanish Louisiana and British Florida. And when he was sharply rebuked by the administration for violating the neutrality policy of the American government, the French minister threatened an "appeal to the people" over Washington's head. Eventually he was removed from his post.—*Editor*.

<sup>11</sup> Washington wrote to Morris, June 19, 1794, that "my confidence in, and friendship and regard for you, remains undiminished. To time, and your own observations, if you should return immediately to this country, I commit the rest. . . ." John C. Fitzpatrick, editor, *George Washington. Writings from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1775-1799*, Washington, 1931-40, vol. XXXIII, pp. 409-410.—*Editor*.

About three months after I was at liberty, the official note of Jay to Grenville on the subject of the capture of American vessels by the British cruisers appeared in the American papers that arrived at Paris. Everything was of a-piece. Everything was mean. The same kind of character went to all circumstances public or private. Disgusted at this national degradation, as well as at the particular conduct of Mr. Washington to me, I wrote to him (Mr. Washington) on the twenty-second of February (1795) under cover to the then Secretary of State (Mr. Randolph), and intrusted the letter to Mr. Letombe, who was appointed French Consul to Philadelphia, and was on the point of taking his departure. When I supposed Mr. Letombe had sailed, I mentioned the letter to Mr. Monroe, and as I was then in his house, I showed it to him. He expressed a wish that I would recall it, which he supposed might be done, as he had learned that Mr. Letombe had not then sailed. I agreed to do so, and it was returned by Mr. Letombe under cover to Mr. Monroe.

The letter, however, will now reach Mr. Washington publicly in the course of this work.

About the month of September following, I had a severe relapse which gave occasion to the report of my death. I had felt it coming on a considerable time before, which occasioned me to hasten the work I had then in hand, the second part of the "Age of Reason." When I had finished that work, I bestowed another letter on Mr. Washington, which I sent under cover to Mr. Benjamin Franklin Bache of Philadelphia. The letter is as follows:

PARIS, September 20, 1795.

SIR:

I had written you a letter by Mr. Letombe, French Consul, but, at the request of Mr. Monroe, I withdrew it, and the letter is still by me. I was the more easily prevailed upon to do this, as it was then my intention to have returned to America the latter end of the present year, 1795; but the illness I now suffer prevents me. In case I had come, I should have applied to you for such parts of your official letters (and of your private ones, if you had chosen to give them) as contained any instructions or directions either to Mr. Monroe, or to Mr. Morris, or to any other person respecting me; for after you were informed of my imprisonment in France, it was incumbent on you to have made some inquiry into the cause, as you might very well conclude that I had not the opportunity of informing you of it.

I cannot understand your silence upon this subject upon any other ground, than as *connivance* at my imprisonment; and this is the manner it is understood here, and will be understood in America, unless you give me authority



for contradicting it. I therefore write you this letter, to propose to you to send me copies of any letters you have written that may remove that suspicion. In the preface to the second part of the "Age of Reason," I have given a memorandum from the handwriting of Robespierre, in which he proposed a decree of accusation against me, "*for the interests of America as well as of France.*" He could have no cause for putting America in the case, but by interpreting the silence of the American Government into connivance and consent.

I was imprisoned on the ground of being born in England; and your silence in not inquiring into the cause of that imprisonment, and reclaiming me against it, was tacitly giving me up. I ought not to have suspected you of treachery; but whether I recover from the illness I now suffer or not, I shall continue to think you treacherous, till you give me cause to think otherwise. I am sure you would have found yourself more at your ease had you acted by me as you ought; for whether your desertion of me was intended to gratify the English Government, or to let me fall into destruction in France that you might exclaim the louder against the French Revolution, or whether you hoped by my extinction to meet with less opposition in mounting up the American Government—either of these will involve you in reproach you will not easily shake off.

THOMAS PAINE.

Here follows the letter above alluded to, which I had stopped in complaisance to Mr. Monroe:

PARIS, February 22, 1795.

SIR:

As it is always painful to reproach those one would wish to respect, it is not without some difficulty that I have taken the resolution to write to you. The dangers to which I have been exposed cannot have been unknown to you, and the guarded silence you have observed upon that circumstance is what I ought not to have expected from you, either as a friend or as President of the United States.

You knew enough of my character to be assured that I could not have deserved imprisonment in France; and, without knowing anything more than this, you had sufficient ground to have taken some interest for my safety. Every motive arising from recollection of times past ought to have suggested to you the propriety of such a measure. But I cannot find that you have so much as directed any inquiry to be made whether I was in prison or at liberty, dead or alive; what the cause of that imprisonment was, or whether there was any service or assistance you could render. Is this what I ought to have expected from America, after the part I had acted toward her, or will it redound to her honor or to yours, that I tell the story?

I do not hesitate to say that you have not served America with more disinterestedness, or greater zeal, or more fidelity, than myself, and I know not if with better effect. After the Revolution of America was established I ventured into the new scenes of difficulties to extend the principles which that Revolution had produced, and you rested at home to partake of the advantages. In the progress of events, you beheld yourself a President in America, and me a prisoner in France. You folded your arms, forgot your friend and became silent.

As everything I have been doing in Europe was connected with my wishes for the prosperity of America, I ought to be the more surprised at this conduct on the part of her Government. It leaves me but one mode of explanation, which is *that everything is not as it ought to be amongst you*, and that the presence of a man who might disapprove, and who had credit enough with the country to be heard and believed, was not wished for. This was the operating motive with the despotic faction that imprisoned me in France (though the pretense was, that I was a foreigner), and those that have been silent and inactive toward me in America, appear to me to have acted from the same motive. It is impossible for me to discover any other.

After the part I have taken in the Revolution of America, it is natural that I feel interested in whatever relates to her character and prosperity. Though I am not on the spot to see what is immediately acting there, I see some part of what she is acting in Europe. For your own sake, as well as for that of America, I was both surprised and concerned at the appointment of Gouverneur Morris to be Minister to France. His conduct has proved that the opinion I had formed of that appointment was well founded. I wrote that opinion to Mr. Jefferson at the time, and I was frank enough to say the same thing to Morris—*that it was an unfortunate appointment*. His prating, insignificant pomposity rendered him at once offensive, suspected and ridiculous; and his total neglect of all business had so disgusted the Americans that they proposed drawing up a protest against him.

He carried this neglect to such an extreme that it was necessary to inform him of it; and I asked him one day if he did not feel himself ashamed to take the money of the country, and do nothing for it? But Morris is so fond of profit and voluptuousness that he cares nothing about character. Had he not been removed at the time he was, I think his conduct would have precipitated the two countries into a rupture; and in this case, hated *systematically* as America is and ever will be by the British Government, and at the same time suspected by France, the commerce of America would have fallen a prey to both countries.

If the inconsistent conduct of Morris exposed the interest of America to some hazard in France, the pusillanimous conduct of Mr. Jay in England has rendered the American Government contemptible in Europe. Is it possible that any man who has contributed to the independence of America, and to

free her from tyranny and injustice of the British Government, can read without shame and indignation the note of Jay to Grenville? It is a satire upon the Declaration of Independence, and an encouragement to the British Government to treat America with contempt. At the time this Minister of petitions was acting this miserable part he had every means in his hands to enable him to have done his business as he ought. The success or failure of his mission depended upon the success or failure of the French arms.

Had France failed, Mr. Jay might have put his humble petition in his pocket and gone home. The case happened to be otherwise, and he has sacrificed the honor and perhaps all the advantages of it by turning petitioner. I take it for granted that he was sent over to demand indemnification for the captured property; and, in this case, if he thought he wanted a preamble to his demand, he might have said, "That, though the Government of England might suppose itself under the necessity of seizing American property bound to France, yet that supposed necessity could not preclude indemnification to the proprietors, who, acting under the authority of their own government, were not accountable to any other." But Mr. Jay sets out with an implied recognition of the right of the British Government to seize and condemn: for he enters his complaint against the *irregularity* of the seizures and the condemnation, as if they were reprehensible only by not being *conformable* to the *terms* of the proclamation under which they were seized.

Instead of being the envoy of a government, he goes over like a lawyer to demand a new trial. I can hardly help thinking that Grenville wrote that note himself and Jay signed it; for the style of it is domestic and not diplomatic. The term, *His Majesty*, used without any descriptive epithet, always signifies the King, whom the Minister that speaks represents. If this sinking of the demand into a petition was a juggle between Grenville and Jay, to cover the indemnification, I think it will end in another juggle, that of never paying the money, and be made use of afterwards to preclude the right of demanding it: for Mr. Jay has virtually disowned the right *by appealing to the magnanimity of His Majesty against the capturers*. He has made this magnanimous majesty the umpire in the case, and the Government of the United States must abide by the decision. If, Sir, I turn some part of this business into ridicule, it is to avoid the unpleasant sensation of serious indignation.

Among other things which I confess I do not understand, is the proclamation of neutrality. This has always appeared to me as an assumption on the part of the executive not warranted by the Constitution. But passing this over, as a disputable case, and considering it only as political, the consequence has been that of sustaining the losses of war without the balance of reprisals. When the profession of neutrality, on the part of America, was answered by hostilities on the part of Britain, the object and intention of that neutrality existed no longer; and to maintain it after this, was not only to encourage further insults and depredations, but was an informal breach of neutrality toward France, by passively contributing to the aid of her enemy. That the

Government of England considered the American Government as pusillanimous, is evident from the increasing insolence of the conduct of the former toward the latter, till the affair of General Wayne. She then saw that it might be possible to kick a government into some degree of spirit.

So far as the proclamation of neutrality was intended to prevent a dissolute spirit of privateering in America under foreign colors, it was undoubtedly laudable; but to continue it as a government neutrality, after the commerce of America was made war upon, was submission and not neutrality. I have heard so much about this thing called neutrality that I know not if the ungenerous and dishonorable silence (for I must call it such) that has been observed by your part of the Government toward me, during my imprisonment, has not in some measure arisen from that policy.

Though I have written you this letter, you ought not to suppose it has been an agreeable undertaking to me. On the contrary, I assure you, it has caused me some disquietude. I am sorry you have given me cause to do it; for, as I have always remembered your former friendship with pleasure, I suffer a loss by your depriving me of that sentiment.

THOMAS PAINE.

That this letter was not written in very good temper, is very evident; but it was just such a letter as his conduct appeared to me to merit, and everything on his part since has served to confirm that opinion. Had I wanted a commentary on his silence, with respect to my imprisonment in France, some of his faction have furnished me with it. What I here allude to is a publication in a Philadelphia paper, copied afterwards into a New York paper, both under the patronage of the Washington faction, in which the writer, still supposing me in prison in France, wonders at my lengthy respite from the scaffold; and he marks his politics still further, by saying:

It appears, moreover, that the people of England did not relish his (Thomas Paine's) opinions quite so well as he expected, and that for one of his last pieces, as destructive to the peace and happiness of their country (meaning, I suppose, the "Rights of Man"), they threatened our knight-errant with such serious vengeance, that, to avoid a trip to Botany Bay, he fled over to France, as a less dangerous voyage.

I am not refuting or contradicting the falsehood of this publication, for it is sufficiently notorious; neither am I censuring the writer: on the contrary, I thank him for the explanation he has incautiously given of the principles of the Washington faction. Insignificant, however, as the piece is, it was capable of having some ill effects had it arrived in France during my imprisonment, and in the time of Robespierre; and

I am not uncharitable in supposing that this was one of the intentions of the writer.<sup>12</sup>

I have now done with Mr. Washington on the score of private affairs. It would have been far more agreeable to me had his conduct been such as not to have merited these reproaches. Errors or caprices of the temper can be pardoned and forgotten; but a cold deliberate crime of the heart, such as Mr. Washington is capable of acting, is not to be washed away. I now proceed to other matter.

After Jay's note to Grenville arrived in Paris from America, the character of everything that was to follow might be easily foreseen; and it was upon this anticipation that my letter of February the twenty-second was founded. The event has proved that I was not mistaken, except that it has been much worse than I expected.

It would naturally occur to Mr. Washington, that the secrecy of Jay's mission to England, where there was already an American Minister, could not but create some suspicion in the French Government; especially as the conduct of Morris had been notorious, and the intimacy of Mr. Washington with Morris was known.

The character which Mr. Washington has attempted to act in the world is a sort of nondescribable, chameleon-colored thing called *prudence*. It is, in many cases, a substitute for principle, and is so nearly allied to hypocrisy that it easily slides into it. His genius for prudence furnished him in this instance with an expedient that served, as is the natural and general character of all expedients, to diminish the embarrassments of the moment and multiply them afterwards; for he authorized it to be made known to the French Government, as a confidential matter (Mr. Washington should recollect that I was a member of the Convention, and had the means of knowing what I here state), he authorized it, I say, to be announced, and that for the purpose of preventing any uneasiness to France on the score of Mr. Jay's mission to England, that the object of that mission, and of Mr. Jay's authority, was restricted to that of demanding the surrender of the western posts, and indemnification for the cargoes captured in American vessels.

Mr. Washington knows that this was untrue; and knowing this, he had good reason to himself for refusing to furnish the House of Representatives with copies of the instructions given to Jay, as he might sus-

<sup>12</sup> I know not who the writer of the piece is, but some of the Americans say it is Phineas Bond, an American refugee, but now a British consul; and that he writes under the signature of Peter Skunk or Peter Porcupine, or some such signature.—*Author*.

pect, among other things, that he should also be called upon for copies of instructions given to other Ministers, and that, in the contradiction of instructions, his want of integrity would be detected. Mr. Washington may now, perhaps, learn, when it is too late to be of any use to him, that a man will pass better through the world with a thousand open errors upon his back than in being detected in *one* sly falsehood. When one is detected, a thousand are suspected.

The first account that arrived in Paris of a treaty being negotiated by Mr. Jay (for nobody suspected any), came in an English newspaper, which announced that a treaty *offensive* and *defensive* had been concluded between the United States of America and England. This was immediately denied by every American in Paris as an impossible thing; and though it was disbelieved by the French, it imprinted a suspicion that some underhand business was going forward.<sup>13</sup> At length the treaty itself arrived, and every well-affected American blushed with shame.

It is curious to observe how the appearance of characters will change, while the root that produces them remains the same. The Washington faction having waded through the slough of negotiation, and while it amused France with professions of friendship contrived to injure her, immediately throws off the hypocrite, and assumes the swaggering air of a bravado. The party papers of that imbecile administration were on this occasion filled with paragraphs about *Sovereignty*. A poltroon may boast of his sovereign right to let another kick him, and this is the only kind of sovereignty shown in the treaty with England. But those daring

<sup>13</sup> It was the embarrassment into which the affairs and credit of America were thrown at this instant by the report above alluded to, that made it necessary to contradict it, and that by every means arising from opinion or founded upon authority. The Committee of Public Safety, existing at that time, had agreed to the full execution, on their part, of the treaty between America and France notwithstanding some equivocal conduct on the part of the American Government not very consistent with the good faith of an ally; but they were not in a disposition to be imposed upon by a counter-treaty. That Jay had no instructions beyond the points above stated, or none that could possibly be construed to extend to the length the British treaty goes, was a matter believed in America, in England and in France; and without going to any other source it followed naturally from the message of the President to Congress, when he nominated Jay upon that mission. The secretary of Mr. Jay came to Paris soon after the treaty with England had been concluded, and brought with him a copy of Mr. Jay's instructions, which he offered to show to me as a *justification of Jay*. I advised him, as a friend, not to show them to anybody, and did not permit him to show them to me. "Who is it," said I to him, "that you intend to implicate as censurable by showing those instructions? Perhaps that implication may fall upon your own government." Though I did not see the instructions, I could not be at a loss to understand that the American Administration had been playing a double game.—  
*Author.*

paragraphs, as Timothy Pickering [Secretary of State] well knows, were intended for France; without whose assistance, in men, money, and ships, Mr. Washington would have cut but a poor figure in the American war. But of his military talents I shall speak hereafter.

I mean not to enter into any discussion of any article of Jay's Treaty; I shall speak only upon the whole of it. It is attempted to be justified on the ground of its not being a violation of any article or articles of the treaty preëxisting with France. But the sovereign right of explanation does not lie with George Washington and his man Timothy; France, on her part, has, at least, an equal right: and when nations dispute, it is not so much about words as about things.

A man, such as the world calls a sharper, and versed as Jay must be supposed to be in the quibbles of the law, may find a way to enter into engagements, and make bargains, in such a manner as to cheat some other party, without that party being able, as the phrase is, *to take the law of him*. This often happens in the cabalistical circle of what is called law. But when this is attempted to be acted on the national circle of treaties, it is too despicable to be defended, or to be permitted to exist. Yet this is the trick upon which Jay's Treaty is founded, so far as it has relation to the treaty preëxisting with France. It is a counter-treaty to that treaty and perverts all the great articles of that treaty to the injury of France, and makes them operate as a bounty to England, with whom France is at war.

The Washington Administration shows great desire that the treaty between France and the United States be preserved. Nobody can doubt their sincerity upon this matter. There is not a British minister, a British merchant, or a British agent or sailor in America, that does not anxiously wish the same thing. The treaty with France serves now as a passport to supply England with naval stores and other articles of American produce, while the same articles, when coming to France, are made contraband or seizable by Jay's Treaty with England. The treaty with France says that neutral ships make neutral property, and thereby gives protection to English property on board American ships; and Jay's Treaty delivers up French property on board American ships to be seized by the English. It is too paltry to talk of faith, of national honor, and of the preservation of treaties, while such a barefaced treachery as this stares the world in the face.

The Washington Administration may save itself the trouble of proving to the French Government its *most faithful* intentions of preserving

the treaty with France; for France has now no desire that it should be preserved. She had nominated an envoy extraordinary to America, to make Mr. Washington and his Government a present of the treaty, and to have no more to do with *that*, or with *him*. It was at the same time officially declared to the American Minister at Paris, *that the French Republic had rather have the American Government for an open enemy than a treacherous friend*. This, Sir, together with the internal distractions caused in America, and the loss of character in the world, is the *eventful crisis*, alluded to in the beginning of this letter, to which your double politics have brought the affairs of your country. It is time that the eyes of America be opened upon you.

How France would have conducted herself toward America and American commerce, after all treaty stipulations had ceased, and under the sense of services rendered and injuries received, I know not. It is, however, an unpleasant reflection, that in all national quarrels, the innocent and even the friendly part of the community become involved with the culpable and the unfriendly; and as the accounts that arrived from America continued to manifest an invariable attachment in the general mass of the people to their original ally, in opposition to the new-fangled Washington faction—the resolutions that had been taken in France were suspended. It happened also, fortunately enough, that Gouverneur Morris was not minister at this time.

There is, however, one point that still remains an embryo, and which, among other things, serves to show the ignorance of Washington treaty-makers, and their inattention to præexisting treaties, when they were employing themselves in framing or ratifying the new treaty with England.

The second article of the treaty of commerce between the United States and France says:

The most Christian King and the United States engage mutually, not to grant any particular favor to other nations in respect of commerce and navigation that shall not immediately become common to the other party, who shall enjoy the same favor freely, if the concession was freely made, or on allowing the same compensation if the concession was conditional.

All the concessions, therefore, made to England by Jay's Treaty are, through the medium of this second article in the præexisting treaty, made to France, and become ingrafted into the treaty with France, and can be exercised by her as a matter of right, the same as by England.



Jay's Treaty makes a concession to England, and that unconditionally, of seizing naval stores in American ships, and condemning them as contraband. It makes also a concession to England to seize provisions and *other articles* in American ships. *Other articles* are *all other articles*, and none but an ignoramus, or something worse, would have put such a phrase into a treaty. The condition annexed in this case is that the provisions and other articles so seized are to be paid for at a price to be agreed upon.

Mr. Washington, as President, ratified this treaty after he knew the British Government had recommended an indiscriminate seizure of provisions and all other articles in American ships; and it is now known that those seizures were made to fit out the expedition going to Quiberon Bay, and it was known beforehand that they would be made.

The evidence goes also a good way to prove that Jay and Grenville understood each other upon that subject. Mr. Pinckney [U. S. Minister to England], when he passed through France on his way to Spain, spoke of the recommencement of the seizures as a thing that would take place. The French Government had by some means received information from London to the same purpose, with the addition that the recommencement of the seizures would cause no misunderstanding between the British and American Governments.

Grenville, in defending himself against the opposition in Parliament, on account of the scarcity of corn, said (see his speech at the opening of the Parliament that met October 29, 1795) that *the supplies for the Quiberon expedition were furnished out of the American ships*, and all the accounts received at that time from England stated that those seizures were made under the treaty.

After the supplies for the Quiberon expedition had been procured, and the expected success had failed, the seizures were countermanded; and had the French seized provision vessels going to England, it is probable that the Quiberon expedition could not have been attempted.

In one point of view, the treaty with England operates as a loan to the English Government. It gives permission to that Government to take American property at sea, to any amount, and pay for it when it suits her; and besides this, the treaty is in every point of view a surrender of the rights of American commerce and navigation, and a refusal to France of the rights of neutrality. The American flag is not now a neutral flag to France; Jay's Treaty of surrender gives a monopoly of it to England.

On the contrary, the treaty of commerce between America and France was formed on the most liberal principles, and calculated to give the greatest encouragement to the infant commerce of America. France was neither a carrier nor exporter of naval stores or of provisions. Those articles belonged wholly to America, and they had all the protection in that treaty which a treaty could give. But so much has that treaty been perverted that the liberality of it on the part of France has served to encourage Jay to form a counter-treaty with England; for he must have supposed the hands of France tied up by her treaty with America, when he was making such large concessions in favor of England.

The injury which Mr. Washington's Administration has done to the character as well as to the commerce of America is too great to be repaired by him. Foreign nations will be shy of making treaties with a government that has given the faithless example of perverting the liberality of a former treaty to the injury of the party with whom it was made.

In what a fraudulent light must Mr. Washington's character appear in the world, when his declarations and his conduct are compared together! Here follows the letter he wrote to the Committee of Public Safety, while Jay was negotiating in profound secrecy this treacherous treaty:

George Washington, President of the United States of America, to the Representatives of the French people, members of the Committee of Public Safety of *the French Republic, the great and good friend and ally of the United States.*

On the intimation of the wish of the French Republic that a new Minister should be sent from the United States, I resolved to manifest my sense of the readiness with which *my* request was fulfilled [that of recalling Genet], by immediately fulfilling the request of your Government [that of recalling Morris].

It was some time before a character could be obtained, worthy of the high office of expressing the attachment of the United States to the happiness of our allies, *and drawing closer the bonds of our friendship.* I have now made choice of James Monroe, one of our distinguished citizens, to reside near the French Republic, in quality of Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States of America.

He is instructed to bear to you our *sincere solicitude for your welfare, and to cultivate with zeal the cordiality so happily subsisting between us.* From a knowledge of his fidelity, probity, and good conduct, I have entire confidence that he will render himself acceptable to you, and give effect to your desire

of preserving and *advancing, on all occasions, the interest and connection of the two nations*. I beseech you, therefore, to give full credence to whatever he shall say to you on the part of the United States, and *most of all, when he shall assure you that your prosperity is an object of our affection*. And I pray God to have the French Republic in His holy keeping.

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Was it by entering into a treaty with England to surrender French property on board American ships to be seized by the English, while English property on board American ships was declared by the French treaty not to be seizable, *that the bonds of friendship between America and France were to be drawn the closer?*

Was it by declaring naval stores contraband when coming to France, while by the French treaty they were not contraband when going to England, that the *connection between France and America was to be advanced?*

Was it by opening the American ports to the British navy in the present war, from which ports the same navy had been expelled by the aid solicited from France in the American war (and that aid gratuitously given) that the gratitude of America was to be shown, and the *solicitude* spoken of in the letter demonstrated?

As the letter was addressed to the Committee of Public Safety, Mr. Washington did not expect it would get abroad in the world, or be seen by any other eye than that of Robespierre, or be heard by any other ear than that of the Committee; that it would pass as a whisper across the Atlantic, from one dark chamber to the other, and there terminate. It was calculated to remove from the mind of the Committee all suspicion upon Jay's mission to England, and, in this point of view, it was suited to the circumstances of the movement then passing; but as the event of that mission has proved the letter to be hypocritical, it serves no other purpose of the present moment than to show that the writer is not to be credited.

Two circumstances serve to make the reading of the letter necessary in the Convention. The one was that they who succeeded on the fall of Robespierre found it most proper to act with publicity; the other, to extinguish the suspicions which the strange conduct of Morris had occasioned in France.

When the British treaty, and the ratification of it by Mr. Washington, was known in France, all further declarations from him of his good disposition as an ally and friend passed for so many ciphers; but still it

appeared necessary to him to keep up the farce of declarations. It is stipulated in the British treaty that commissioners are to report at the end of two years on the case of *neutral ships making neutral property*. In the meantime, neutral ships do *not* make neutral property, according to the British treaty, and they *do* according to the French treaty.

The preservation, therefore, of the French treaty became of great importance to England, as by that means she can employ American ships as carriers, while the same advantage is denied to France. Whether the French treaty could exist as a matter of right after this clandestine perversion of it could not but give some apprehensions to the partisans of the British treaty, and it became necessary to them to make up, by fine words, what was wanting in good actions.

An opportunity offered to that purpose. The Convention, on the public reception of Mr. Monroe, ordered the American flag and the French flags to be displayed unitedly in the hall of the Convention. Mr. Monroe made a present of an American flag for the purpose. The Convention returned this compliment by sending a French flag to America, to be presented by their Minister, Mr. Adet, to the American Government. This resolution passed long before Jay's Treaty was known or suspected: it passed in the days of confidence; but the flag was not presented by Mr. Adet till several months after the treaty had been ratified. Mr. Washington made this the occasion of saying some fine things to the French Minister; and the better to get himself into tune to do this he began by saying the finest things of himself.

Born, Sir (said he), in a land of liberty; *having* early learned its value; *having* engaged in a perilous conflict to defend it; *having*, in a word, devoted the best years of my life to secure its permanent establishment in my own country; *my* anxious recollections, *my* sympathetic feelings, and *my* best wishes are irresistibly excited, whenever, in any country, I see an oppressed people unfurl the banner of freedom.

Mr. Washington, having expended so many fine phrases upon himself, was obliged to invent a new one for the French, and he calls them "wonderful people!" The coalesced powers acknowledged as much.

It is laughable to hear Mr. Washington talk of his *sympathetic feelings*, who has always been remarked, even among his friends, for not having any. He has, however, given no proofs of any to me. As to the pompous encomiums he so liberally pays to himself, on the score of the American Revolution, the reality of them may be questioned; and since

he has forced them so much into notice, it is fair to examine his pretensions.

A stranger might be led to suppose, from the egotism with which Mr. Washington speaks, that himself, and himself only, had generated, conducted, completed, and established the Revolution: in fine, that it was all his own doing.

In the first place, as to the political part, he had no share in it; and, therefore, the whole of *that* is out of the question with respect to him. There remains, then, only the military part; and it would have been prudent in Mr. Washington not to have awakened inquiry upon that subject. Fame then was cheap; he enjoyed it cheaply; and nobody was disposed to take away the laurels that, whether they were *acquired* or not, had been *given*.

Mr. Washington's merit consisted in constancy. But constancy was the common virtue of the Revolution. Who was there that was inconstant? I know but of one military defection, that of Arnold; and I know of no political defection among those who made themselves eminent when the Revolution was formed by the Declaration of Independence. Even Silas Deane, though he attempted to defraud, did not betray.

But when we speak of military character, something more is to be understood than constancy; and something more *ought* to be understood than the Fabian system of *doing nothing*. The *nothing* part can be done by anybody. Old Mrs. Thompson, the housekeeper of headquarters (who threatened to make the sun and the *wind* shine through Rivington<sup>14</sup> of New York), could not have done it as well as Mr. Washington. Deborah would have been as good as Barak.

Mr. Washington had the nominal rank of Commander-in-Chief, but he was not so in fact. He had, in reality, only a separate command. He had no control over, or direction of, the army to the northward under Gates, that captured Burgoyne; nor of that to the South under [Nathanael] Greene, that recovered the Southern States.<sup>15</sup> The nominal rank, however, of Commander-in-Chief served to throw upon him the lustre of those actions, and to make him appear as the soul and center of all military operations in America.

He commenced his command June, 1775, during the time the Massachusetts army lay before Boston, and after the affair of Bunker Hill.

<sup>14</sup> The reference is to James Rivington, a New York Tory publisher, whose printing plant was attacked and ruined by a party of the Sons of Liberty from Connecticut.—*Editor*.

<sup>15</sup> See Mr. Winterbotham's valuable *History of America* lately published.—*Author*.

The commencement of his command was the commencement of inactivity. Nothing was afterwards done, or attempted to be done, during the nine months he remained before Boston.

If we may judge from the resistance made at Concord, and afterwards at Bunker Hill, there was a spirit of enterprise at that time, which the presence of Mr. Washington chilled into cold defense. By the advantage of a good exterior he attracts respect, which his habitual silence tends to preserve; but he has not the talent of inspiring ardor in an army. The enemy removed from Boston in March, 1776, to wait for reinforcements from Europe, and to take a more advantageous position at New York.

The inactivity of the campaign of 1775, on the part of General Washington, when the enemy had a less force than in any other future period of the war, and the injudicious choice of positions taken by him in the campaign of 1776, when the enemy had its greatest force, necessarily produced the losses and misfortunes that marked that gloomy campaign. The positions taken were either islands or necks of land. In the former, the enemy, by the aid of their ships, could bring their whole force against a part of General Washington's, as in the affair of Long Island; and in the latter, he might be shut up as in the bottom of a bag.

This had nearly been the case at New York; and it was so in part; it was actually the case at Fort Washington; and it would have been the case at Fort Lee, if General Greene had not moved precipitately off, leaving everything behind, and by gaining Hackensack bridge, got out of the bag of Bergen Neck.

How far Mr. Washington, as general, is blamable for these matters, I am not undertaking to determine; but they are evidently defects in military geography. The successful skirmishes at the close of that campaign (matters that would scarcely be noticed in a better state of things) make the brilliant exploits of General Washington's seven campaigns. No wonder we see so much pusillanimity in the *President*, when we see so little enterprise in the *General!*

The campaign of 1777 became famous, not by anything on the part of General Washington, but by the capture of General Burgoyne, and the army under his command, by the Northern Army at Saratoga, under General Gates. So totally distinct and unconnected were the two armies of Washington and Gates, and so independent was the latter of the authority of the nominal Commander-in-Chief, that the two generals did not so much as correspond, and it was only by a letter of General (since

Governor) Clinton, that General Washington was informed of that event. The British took possession of Philadelphia this year, which they evacuated the next, just time enough to save their heavy baggage and fleet of transports from capture by the French Admiral d'Estaing, who arrived at the mouth of the Delaware soon after.

The capture of Burgoyne gave an éclat in Europe to the American arms, and facilitated the alliance with France. The éclat, however, was not kept up by anything on the part of General Washington. The same unfortunate languor that marked his entrance into the field, continued always. Discontent began to prevail strongly against him, and a party was formed in Congress, while sitting at York Town, in Pennsylvania, for removing him from the command of the army. The hope, however, of better times, the news of the alliance with France, and the unwillingness of showing discontent, dissipated the matter.

Nothing was done in the campaigns of 1778, 1779, 1780, in the part where General Washington commanded, except the taking of Stony Point by General Wayne. The Southern States in the meantime were over-run by the enemy. They were afterwards recovered by General Greene, who had in a very great measure created the army that accomplished that recovery.

In all this General Washington had no share. The Fabian system of war, followed by him, began now to unfold itself with all its evils; but what is Fabian war without Fabian means to support it? The finances of Congress, depending wholly on emissions of paper money, were exhausted. Its credit was gone. The Continental Treasury was not able to pay the expense of a brigade of wagons to transport the necessary stores to the army, and yet the sole object, the establishment of the Revolution, was a thing of remote distance. The time I am now speaking of is in the latter end of the year 1780.

In this situation of things it was found not only expedient, but absolutely necessary, for Congress to state the whole case to its ally. I knew more of this matter (before it came into Congress or was known to General Washington), of its progress, and its issue, than I choose to state in this letter. Colonel John Laurens was sent to France as an envoy extraordinary on this occasion, and by a private agreement between him and me I accompanied him. We sailed from Boston in the *Alliance* frigate, February 11, 1781. France had already done much in accepting and paying bills drawn by Congress. She was now called upon to do more.

The event of Colonel Laurens's mission, with the aid of the venerable Minister, Franklin, was that France gave in money, as a present, six millions of livres, and ten millions more as a loan, and agreed to send a fleet of not less than thirty sail of the line, at her own expense, as an aid to America. Colonel Laurens and myself returned from Brest the first of June following, taking with us two millions and a half of livres (upwards of one hundred thousand pounds sterling) of the money given, and convoying two ships with stores.

We arrived at Boston the twenty-fifth of August following. De Grasse arrived with the French fleet in the Chesapeake at the same time, and was afterwards joined by that of Barras, making thirty-one sail of the line. The money was transported in wagons from Boston to the bank at Philadelphia, of which Mr. Thomas Willing, who has since put himself at the head of the list of petitioners in favor of the British treaty, was then president. And it was by the aid of this money, and this fleet, and of Rochambeau's army, that Cornwallis was taken; the laurels of which have been unjustly given to Mr. Washington. His merit in that affair was no more than that of any other American officer.

I have had, and still have, as much pride in the American Revolution as any man, or as Mr. Washington has a right to have; but that pride has never made me forgetful whence the great aid came that completed the business. Foreign aid (that of France) was calculated upon at the commencement of the Revolution. It is one of the subjects treated of in the pamphlet "Common Sense," but as a matter that could not be hoped for, unless independence was declared. The aid, however, was greater than could have been expected.

It is as well the ingratitude as the pusillanimity of Mr. Washington, and the Washington faction, that has brought upon America the loss of character she now suffers in the world, and the numerous evils her commerce has undergone, and to which it is yet exposed. The British Ministry soon found out what sort of men they had to deal with, and they dealt with them accordingly; and if further explanation was wanting, it has been fully given since, in the snivelling address of the New York Chamber of Commerce to the President, and in that of sundry merchants of Philadelphia which was not much better.

When the Revolution of America was finally established by the termination of the war, the world gave her credit for great character; and she had nothing to do but to stand firm upon that ground. The British Ministry had their hands too full of trouble to have provoked a rupture



with her, had she shown a proper resolution to defend her rights. But encouraged as they were by the submissive character of the American Administration, they proceeded from insult to insult, till none more were left to be offered. The proposals made by Sweden and Denmark to the American Administration were disregarded. I know not if so much as an answer has been returned to them.

The Minister *penitentiary* (as some of the British prints called him), Mr. Jay, was sent on a pilgrimage to London to make up all by penance and petition. In the meantime the lengthy and drowsy writer of the pieces signed CAMILLUS held himself in reserve to vindicate everything; and to sound in America the tocsin of terror upon the inexhaustible resources of England. Her resources, says he, are greater than those of all the other powers. This man is so intoxicated with fear and finance that he knows not the difference between *plus* and *minus*—between a hundred pounds in hand and a hundred pounds worse than nothing.

The commerce of America, so far as it had been established by all the treaties that had been formed prior to that by Jay, was free, and the principles upon which it was established were good. That ground ought never to have been departed from. It was the justifiable ground of right, and no temporary difficulties ought to have induced an abandonment of it. The case is now otherwise. The ground, the scene, the pretensions, the everything, are changed. The commerce of America is, by Jay's Treaty, put under foreign dominion. The sea is not free for her. Her right to navigate it is reduced to the right of escaping; that is, until some ship of England or France stops her vessels, and carries them into port. Every article of American produce, whether from the sea or the sand, fish, flesh, vegetable, or manufacture, is, by Jay's Treaty, made either contraband or seizable. Nothing is exempt.

In all other treaties of commerce, the article which enumerates the contraband articles, such as firearms, gunpowder, etc., is followed by another article which enumerates the articles not contraband: but it is not so in Jay's Treaty. There is no exempting article. Its place is supplied by the article for seizing and carrying into port; and the sweeping phrase of "provisions and *other articles*" includes everything. There never was such a base and servile treaty of surrender since treaties began to exist.

This is the ground upon which America now stands. All her rights of commerce and navigation are to begin anew, and that with loss of character to begin with. If there is sense enough left in the heart to call a blush into the cheek, the Washington Administration must be ashamed

to appear. And as to you, Sir, treacherous in private friendship (for so you have been to me, and that in the day of danger) and a hypocrite in public life, the world will be puzzled to decide whether you are an apostate or an impostor; whether you have abandoned good principles, or whether you ever had any.

THOMAS PAINE.



# THEOLOGICAL DISSERTATIONS

PROSECUTION OF THE AGE OF REASON

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

WORSHIP AND CHURCH BELLS

EXTRACTS FROM A REPLY TO THE BISHOP OF LLANDAFF

PROSPECT PAPERS

ORIGIN OF FREEMASONRY

AN ESSAY ON DREAM

EXAMINATION OF THE PROPHECIES

MY PRIVATE THOUGHTS ON A FUTURE STATE

PREDESTINATION

## EDITOR'S NOTE

In these theological writings, Paine expanded many of the themes he had touched upon in *The Age of Reason*. Some of these essays were written to clear himself of unjustified charges; others to lend support to the popular deistic societies in the United States. Although the essays are somewhat repetitious and dated, it must be remembered that they were significant in their day as part of the struggle against the reactionary clergy, a struggle essential for the further progress of democracy in Europe and in the United States. It also should be remembered that once men and women were severely punished because they had the courage to publish some of these articles. For publishing Paine's *Examination of the Prophecies*, Daniel Isaac Eaton was sentenced in 1811 by an English jury to eighteen months' imprisonment, and condemned to stand in the pillory for one hour in each month. For publishing Paine's *Theological Works*, the English publisher, Richard Carlile, was fined £1,500 and sentenced to three years' imprisonment in 1819. A year later his wife, Mary Ann Carlile, was fined £500 and imprisoned for two years for the same offense.

## PROSECUTION OF *THE AGE OF REASON*

The letter which follows the introduction was addressed to Thomas Erskine who had defended Paine in the government suit conducted in 1792 to suppress *Rights of Man*, but in 1797 conducted the prosecution of Thomas Williams, a London publisher and bookseller, accused by the Society for the Suppression of Vice and Immorality with printing a copy of *The Age of Reason*. Williams was convicted and sentenced to three years in prison. His sentence was later reduced to one year.

The pamphlet was published in Paris in September 1797.—*Editor*.

### INTRODUCTION

**I**T is a matter of surprise to some people to see Mr. Erskine act as counsel for a crown prosecution commenced against the rights of opinion. I confess it is none to me, notwithstanding all that Mr. Erskine has said before; for it is difficult to know when a lawyer is to be believed: I have always observed that Mr. Erskine, when contending as counsel for the right of political opinion, frequently took occasions, and those often dragged in head and shoulders, to lard what he called the British Constitution with a great deal of praise.

Yet the same Mr. Erskine said to me in conversation, “were government to begin *de novo* in England, they never would establish such a damned absurdity [it was exactly his expression] as this is.” Ought I then to be surprised at Mr. Erskine for inconsistency?

In this prosecution, Mr. Erskine admits the right of controversy; but says that the Christian religion is not to be abused. This is somewhat sophistical, because, while he admits the right of controversy, he reserves the right of calling the controversy abuse; and thus, lawyer-like, undoes by one word what he says in the other.

I will however in this letter keep within the limits he prescribes; he will find here nothing about the Christian religion; he will find only a statement of a few cases which show the necessity of examining the books handed to us from the Jews, in order to discover if we have not been imposed upon; together with some observations on the manner in which the trial of Williams has been conducted. If Mr. Erskine denies the right of examining those books, he had better profess himself at once an advocate for the establishment of an inquisition and the re-establishment of the Star-chamber.

THOMAS PAINE.

### A LETTER TO MR. ERSKINE

OF all the tyrannies that afflict mankind, tyranny in religion is the worst. Every other species of tyranny is limited to the world we live in, but this attempts a stride beyond the grave and seeks to pursue us into eternity. It is there and not here, it is to God and not to man, it is to a heavenly and not an earthly tribunal, that we are to account for our belief.

If then we believe falsely and dishonorably of the Creator, and that belief is forced upon us, as far as force can operate by human laws and human tribunals, on whom is the criminality of that belief to fall; on those who impose it, or on those on whom it is imposed?

A bookseller of the name of Williams has been prosecuted in London on a charge of blasphemy for publishing a book entitled "The Age of Reason." Blasphemy is a word of vast sound, but of equivocal and almost of indefinite signification, unless we confine it to the simple idea of hurting or injuring the reputation of any one, which was its original meaning. As a word, it existed before Christianity existed, being a Greek word, or Greek anglicized, as all the etymological dictionaries will show.

But behold how various and contradictory has been the signification and application of this equivocal word: Socrates, who lived more than four hundred years before the Christian era, was convicted of blasphemy for preaching against the belief of a plurality of gods, and for preaching the belief of one god, and was condemned to suffer death by poison: Jesus Christ was convicted of blasphemy under the Jewish law, and was crucified.

Calling Mahomet an impostor would be blasphemy in Turkey; and denying the infallibility of the Pope and the Church would be blasphemy

at Rome. What then is to be understood by this word blasphemy? We see that in the case of Socrates truth was condemned as blasphemy. Are we sure that truth is not blasphemy in the present day? Woe however be to those who make it so, whoever they may be.

A book called the Bible has been voted by men, and decreed by human laws, to be the Word of God, and the disbelief of this is called blasphemy. But if the Bible be not the Word of God, it is the laws and the execution of them that is blasphemy, and not the disbelief. Strange stories are told of the Creator in that book. He is represented as acting under the influence of every human passion, even of the most malignant kind.

If these stories are false we err in believing them to be true, and ought not to believe them. It is therefore a duty which every man owes to himself, and reverentially to his Maker, to ascertain by every possible inquiry whether there be a sufficient evidence to believe them or not.

My own opinion is, decidedly, that the evidence does not warrant the belief, and that we sin in forcing that belief upon ourselves and upon others. In saying this I have no other object in view than truth. But that I may not be accused of resting upon bare assertion, with respect to the equivocal state of the Bible, I will produce an example, and I will not pick and cull the Bible for the purpose.

I will go fairly to the case. I will take the first two chapters of Genesis as they stand, and show from thence the truth of what I say, that is, that the evidence does not warrant the belief that the Bible is the Word of God.

*[In the original pamphlet the first two chapters of Genesis are here quoted in full.]*

These two chapters are called the Mosaic account of the Creation; and we are told, nobody knows by whom, that Moses was instructed by God to write that account.

It has happened that every nation of people has been world-makers; and each makes the world to begin his own way, as if they had all been brought up, as Hudibras says, to the trade. There are hundreds of different opinions and traditions how the world began. My business, however, in this place, is only with those two chapters.

I begin then by saying, that those two chapters, instead of containing, as has been believed, one continued account of the Creation, written by Moses, contain two different and contradictory stories of a creation, made by two different persons, and written in two different styles of expression. The evidence that shows this is so clear, when attended to



without prejudice, that did we meet with the same evidence in any Arabic or Chinese account of a creation, we should not hesitate in pronouncing it a forgery.

I proceed to distinguish the two stories from each other.

The first story begins at the first verse of the first chapter and ends at the end of the third verse of the second chapter; for the adverbial conjunction, THUS, with which the second chapter begins (as the reader will see) connects itself to the last verses of the first chapter, and those three verses belong to, and make the conclusion of, the first story.

The second story begins at the fourth verse of the second chapter, and ends with that chapter. Those two stories have been confused into one, by cutting off the last three verses of the first story, and throwing them to the second chapter.

I go now to show that those stories have been written by two different persons.

From the first verse of the first chapter to the end of the third verse of the second chapter, which makes the whole of the first story, the word God is used without any epithet or additional word conjoined with it, as the reader will see: and this style of expression is invariably used throughout the whole of this story, and is repeated no less than thirty-five times, viz.: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and the spirit of God moved on the face of the waters, and God said, let there be light, and God saw the light," etc.

But immediately from the beginning of the fourth verse of the second chapter, where the second story begins, the style of expression is always the *Lord God*, and this style of expression is invariably used to the end of the chapter, and is repeated eleven times; in the one it is always God, and never the *Lord God*, in the other it is always the *Lord God* and never God. The first story contains thirty-four verses, and repeats the single word God thirty-five times.

The second story contains twenty-two verses, and repeats the compound word *Lord God* eleven times; this difference of style, so often repeated, and so uniformly continued, shows that those two chapters, containing two different stories, are written by different persons; it is the same in all the different editions of the Bible, in all the languages I have seen.

Having thus shown, from the difference of style, that those two chapters, divided, as they properly divide themselves, at the end of the third verse of the second chapter, are the work of two different persons, I

come to show you, from the contradictory matters they contain, that they cannot be the work of one person, and are two different stories.

It is impossible, unless the writer was a lunatic, without memory, that one and the same person could say, as is said in i. 27, 28, "*So God created man in His Own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them: and God blessed them, and God said unto them, be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and every living thing that moveth on the face of the earth.*"

It is, I say, impossible that the same person who said this, could afterwards say, as is said in ii. 5, *and there was not a man to till the ground;* and then proceed in verse seven to give another account of the making a man for the first time, and afterwards of the making a woman out of his rib.

Again, one and the same person could not write, as is written in i. 29: "Behold I (God) have given you every herb bearing seed, which is on the face of all the earth; and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree bearing seed, to you it shall be for meat"; and afterwards say, as is said in the second chapter, that the Lord God planted a tree in the midst of a garden, and forbade man to eat thereof.

Again, one and the same person could not say, "*Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them, and on the seventh day God ended all His work which He had made*"; and immediately after set the Creator to work again, to plant a garden, to make a man and a woman, etc., as done in the second chapter.

Here are evidently two different stories contradicting each other. According to the first, the two sexes, the male and the female, were made at the same time. According to the second, they were made at different times; the man first, and the woman afterwards.

According to the first story, they were to have dominion over all the earth. According to the second, their dominion was limited to a garden. How large a garden it could be that one man and one woman could dress and keep in order, I leave to the prosecutor, the judge, the jury, and Mr. Erskine to determine.

The story of the talking serpent and its *tête-à-tête* with Eve; the doleful adventure called the *Fall of Man*; and how he was turned out of this fine garden, and how the garden was afterwards locked up and guarded by a flaming sword (if any one can tell what a flaming sword is), belong altogether to the second story. They have no connection with

the first story. According to the first there was no garden of Eden; no forbidden tree: the scene was the whole earth, and the fruit of all trees were allowed to be eaten.

In giving this example of the strange state of the Bible, it cannot be said I have gone out of my way to seek it, for I have taken the beginning of the book; nor can it be said I have made more of it than it makes of itself. That there are two stories is as visible to the eye, when attended to, as that there are two chapters, and that they have been written by different persons, nobody knows by whom.

If this then is the strange condition the beginning of the Bible is in it leads to a just suspicion that the other parts are no better, and consequently it becomes every man's duty to examine the case. I have done it for myself, and am satisfied that the Bible is *fabulous*.

Perhaps I shall be told in the cant language of the day, as I have often been told by the Bishop of Llandaff and others, of the great and laudable pains that many pious and learned men have taken to explain the obscure and reconcile the contradictory, or as they say the *seemingly contradictory*, passages of the Bible. It is because the Bible needs such an undertaking, that is one of the first causes to suspect it is NOT the Word of God: this single reflection, when carried home to the mind, is in itself a volume.

What! does not the Creator of the Universe, the Fountain of all Wisdom, the Origin of all Science, the Author of all Knowledge, the God of Order and of Harmony, know how to write? When we contemplate the vast economy of the creation, when we behold the unerring regularity of the visible solar system, the perfection with which all its several parts revolve, and by corresponding assemblage form a whole;—when we launch our eye into the boundless ocean of space, and see ourselves surrounded by innumerable worlds, not one of which varies from its appointed place—when we trace the power of a creator, from a mite to an elephant, from an atom to an universe—can we suppose that the mind that could conceive such a design, and the power that executed it with incomparable perfection, cannot write without the inconsistency, or that a book so written can be the work of such a power?

The writings of Thomas Paine, even of Thomas Paine, need no commentator to explain, compound, derange and rearrange their several parts, to render them intelligible; he can relate a fact, or write an essay, without forgetting in one page what he has written in another: certainly then, did the God of all perfection condescend to write or dictate a book,

that book would be as perfect as Himself is perfect. The Bible is not so, and it is confessedly not so, by the attempts to amend it.

Perhaps I shall be told that though I have produced one instance I cannot produce another of equal force. One is sufficient to call in question the genuineness or authenticity of any book that pretends to be the Word of God; for such a book would, as before said, be as perfect as its author is perfect.

I will, however, advance only four chapters further into the book of Genesis, and produce another example that is sufficient to invalidate the story to which it belongs.

We have all heard of Noah's Flood; and it is impossible to think of the whole human race—men, women, children, and infants, except one family—deliberately drowning, without feeling a painful sensation. That heart must be a heart of flint that can contemplate such a scene with tranquillity.

There is nothing of the ancient mythology, nor in the religion of any people we know of upon the globe, that records a sentence of their God, or of their gods, so tremendously severe and merciless. If the story be not true, we blasphemously dishonor God by believing it, and still more so in forcing, by laws and penalties, that belief upon others. I go now to show from the face of the story that it carries the evidence of not being true.

I know not if the judge, the jury, and Mr. Erskine, who tried and convicted Williams, ever read the Bible or know anything of its contents, and therefore I will state the case precisely.

There was no such people as Jews or Israelites in the time that Noah is said to have lived, and consequently there was no such law as that which is called the Jewish or Mosaic law. It is, according to the Bible, more than six hundred years from the time the Flood is said to have happened, to the time of Moses, and consequently the time the Flood is said to have happened was more than six hundred years prior to the law, called the Law of Moses, even admitting Moses to have been the giver of that law, of which there is great cause to doubt.

We have here two different epochs, or points of time—that of the Flood, and that of the Law of Moses—the former more than six hundred years prior to the latter. But the maker of the story of the Flood, whoever he was, has betrayed himself by blundering, for he has reversed the order of the times. He has told the story, as if the Law of Moses was prior to the Flood; for he has made God to say to Noah (Gen. vii. 2),

“Of every clean beast, thou shalt take unto thee by sevens, male and his female, and of beasts that are *not clean* by two, the male and his female.”

This is the Mosaic law, and could only be said after that law was given, not before. There was no such thing as beasts clean and unclean in the time of Noah. It is nowhere said they were created so. They were only *declared* to be so, *as meats*, by the Mosaic law, and that to the Jews only, and there were no such people as Jews in the time of Noah. This is the blundering condition in which this strange story stands.

When we reflect on a sentence so tremendously severe as that of consigning the whole human race, eight persons excepted, to deliberate drowning; a sentence, which represents the Creator in a more merciless character than any of those whom we call Pagans ever represented the Creator to be, under the figure of any of their deities, we ought at least to suspend our belief of it, on a comparison of the beneficent character of the Creator with the tremendous severity of the sentence; but when we see the story told with such an evident contradiction of circumstances, we ought to set it down for nothing better than a Jewish fable told by nobody knows whom and nobody knows when.

It is a relief to the genuine and sensible soul of man to find the story unfounded. It frees us from two painful sensations at once; that of having hard thoughts of the Creator, on account of the severity of the sentence; and that of sympathizing in the horrid tragedy of a drowning world. He who cannot feel the force of what I mean is not, in my estimation, of character worthy the name of a human being.

I have just said there is great cause to doubt if the law, called the Law of Moses, was given by Moses; the books called the books of Moses, which contain among other things what is called the Mosaic law, are put in front of the Bible, in the manner of a constitution, with a history annexed to it.

Had these books been written by Moses, they would undoubtedly have been the oldest books in the Bible, and entitled to be placed first, and the law and the history they contain would be frequently referred to in the books that follow; but this is not the case. From the time of Othniel, the first of the judges (Judges iii. 9) to the end of the book of Judges, which contains a period of four hundred and ten years, this law, and those books, were not in practise, nor known among the Jews; nor are they so much as alluded to throughout the whole of that period.

And if the reader will examine 2 Kings xx, xxi. and 2 Chron. xxxiv., he will find that no such law, nor any such books, were known in the

time of the Jewish monarchy, and that the Jews were Pagans during the whole of that time, and of their judges.

The first time the law called the Law of Moses made its appearance was in the time of Josiah, about a thousand years after Moses was dead; it is then said to have been found by accident. The account of this finding, or pretended finding, is given 2 Chron. xxxiv. 14-18: "Hilkiah the priest *found* the book of the Law of the Lord, given by Moses, and Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord, and Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan, and Shaphan carried the book to the king, and Shaphan told the king (Josiah), saying, Hilkiah the priest hath given me a book."

In consequence of this finding—which much resembles that of poor Chatterton finding manuscript poems of Rowley the monk in the cathedral church at Bristol, or the late finding of manuscripts of Shakespeare in an old chest (two well known frauds)—Josiah abolished the Pagan religion of the Jews, massacred all the Pagan priests, though he himself had been a Pagan, as the reader will see in 2 Kings, xxiii., and thus established in blood the law that is there called the Law of Moses, and instituted a passover in commemoration thereof.

The twenty-second verse, speaking of this passover, says, "surely there was not holden such a passover from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor the kings of Judah"; and ver. 25, in speaking of this priest-killing Josiah, says, "*Like unto him, there was no king before him*, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses; *neither after him arose there any like him.*"

This verse, like the former one, is a general declaration against all the preceding kings without exception. It is also a declaration against all that reigned after him, of which there were four, the whole time of whose reigning make but twenty-two years and six months, before the Jews were entirely broken up as a nation and their monarchy destroyed.

It is therefore evident that the law called the Law of Moses, of which the Jews talk so much, was promulgated and established only in the latter time of the Jewish monarchy; and it is very remarkable, that no sooner had they established it than they were a destroyed people, as if they were punished of acting an imposition and affixing the name of the Lord to it, and massacring their former priests under the pretense of religion.

The sum of the history of the Jews is this—they continued to be a

nation about a thousand years, they then established a law, which they called the *Law of the Lord given by Moses*, and were destroyed. This is not opinion, but historical evidence.

Levi the Jew, who has written an answer to "The Age of Reason,"<sup>1</sup> gives a strange account of the Law of Moses. In speaking of the story of the sun and moon standing still, that the Israelites might cut the throats of all their enemies, and hang all their kings, as told in Joshua x., he says, "There is also another proof of the reality of this miracle, which is, the appeal that the author of the book of Joshua makes of the book of Jasher: *Is not this written in the book of Jasher?*"

"Hence," continues Levi, "it is manifest that the book commonly called the book of Jasher existed and was well known at the time the book of Joshua was written; and pray, Sir," continues Levi, "what book do you think this was? *Why, no other than the Law of Moses.*" Levi, like the Bishop of Llandaff, and many other guess-work commentators, either forgets, or does not know, what there is in one part of the Bible, when he is giving his opinion upon another part.

I did not, however, expect to find so much ignorance in a Jew, with respect to the history of his nation, though I might not be surprised at it in a bishop. If Levi will look into the account given in 2 Sam. i. 15-18, of the Amalekite slaying Saul, and bringing the crown and bracelets to David, he will find the following recital: "And David called one of the young men, and said, go near and fall upon him (the Amalekite) and he smote him that he died": "and David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son; also he bade them teach the children the use of the bow;—*behold it is written in the book of Jasher.*"

If the book of Jasher were what Levi calls it, the Law of Moses, written by Moses, it is not possible that anything that David said or did could be written in that law, since Moses died more than five hundred years before David was born; and, on the other hand, admitting the book of Jasher to be the law called the Law of Moses, that law must have been written more than five hundred years after Moses was dead, or it could not relate anything said or done by David. Levi may take which of these cases he pleases, for both are against him.

I am not going in the course of this letter to write a commentary on the Bible. The two instances I have produced, and which are taken from

<sup>1</sup> Paine is referring to the book by David Levi entitled, *A Defence of the Old Testament, in a series of letters addressed to Thomas Paine, Author of a book entitled "The Age of Reason" . . .*, New York, 1797.—Editor.

the beginning of the Bible, show the necessity of examining it. It is a book that has been read more, and examined less, than any book that ever existed.

Had it come to us as an Arabic or Chinese book, and said to have been a sacred book by the people from whom it came, no apology would have been made for the confused and disorderly state it is in. The tales it relates of the Creator would have been censured, and our pity excited for those who believed them. We should have vindicated the goodness of God against such a book, and preached up the disbelief of it out of reverence to Him.

Why then do we not act as honorably by the Creator in the one case as we would do in the other? As a Chinese book we would have examined it; ought we not then to examine it as a Jewish book? The Chinese are a people who have all the appearance of far greater antiquity than the Jews, and in point of permanency there is no comparison. They are also a people of mild manners and of good morals, except where they have been corrupted by European commerce. Yet we take the word of a restless bloody-minded people, as the Jews of Palestine were, when we would reject the same authority from a better people.

We ought to see it is habit and prejudice that have prevented people from examining the Bible. Those of the Church of England call it holy, because the Jews called it so, and because custom and certain acts of Parliament call it so, and they read it from custom. Dissenters read it for the purpose of doctrinal controversy, and are very fertile in discoveries and inventions.

But none of them read it for the pure purpose of information, and of rendering justice to the Creator, by examining if the evidence it contains warrants the belief of its being what it is called.

Instead of doing this they take it blindfolded, and will have it to be the Word of God whether it be so or not.

For my own part, my belief in the perfection of the Deity will not permit me to believe that a book so manifestly obscure, disorderly, and contradictory can be His work. I can write a better book myself. This belief in me proceeds from my belief in the Creator. I cannot pin my faith upon the *say so* of Hilkiah the priest, who said he found it, or any part of it, nor upon Shaphan the scribe, nor upon any priest nor any scribe, or man of the law of the present day.

As to acts of Parliament, there are some that say there are witches and wizards; and the persons who made those acts (it was in the time of



James I), made also some acts which call the Bible the Holy Scriptures, or Word of God. But acts of Parliament decide nothing with respect to God; and as these acts of Parliament makers were wrong with respect to witches and wizards, they may also be wrong with respect to the book in question.

It is, therefore, necessary that the book be examined; it is our duty to examine it; and to suppress the right of examination is sinful in any government, or in any judge or jury. The Bible makes God to say to Moses, Deut. vii. 2, "And when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee, thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them, thou shalt make no covenant with them, *nor show mercy unto them.*"

Not all the priests, nor scribes, nor tribunals in the world, nor all the authority of man, shall make me believe that God ever gave such a *Robespierrian precept* as that of showing *no mercy*; and consequently it is impossible that I, or any person who believes as reverentially of the Creator as I do, can believe such a book to be the Word of God.

There have been, and still are, those, who while they *profess* to believe the Bible to be the Word of God, affect to turn it into ridicule. Taking their profession and conduct together, they act blasphemously; because they act as if *God Himself* was not to be believed. The case is exceedingly different with respect to "The Age of Reason." That book is written to show, from the Bible itself, that there is abundant matter to suspect it is not the Word of God, and that we have been imposed upon, first by Jews, and afterwards by priests and commentators.

Not one of those who have attempted to write answers to "The Age of Reason," have taken the ground upon which only an answer could be written. The case in question is not upon any point of doctrine, but altogether upon a matter of fact. Is the book called the Bible the Word of God, or is it not? If it can be proved to be so, it ought to be believed as such; if not, it ought not to be believed as such. This is the true state of the case. "The Age of Reason" produces evidence to show, and I have in this letter produced additional evidence, that it is *not* the Word of God. Those who take the contrary side, should prove that it is. But this they have not done, nor attempted to do, and consequently they have done nothing to the purpose.

The prosecutors of Williams have shrunk from the point, as the answerers [of "The Age of Reason"] have done. They have availed themselves of prejudice instead of proof. If a writing was produced in a court

of judicature, said to be the writing of a certain person, and upon the reality or non-reality of which some matter at issue depended, the point to be proved would be, that such writing was the writing of such person.

Or if the issue depended upon certain words, which some certain person was said to have spoken, the point to be proved would be that such words were spoken by such person; and Mr. Erskine would contend the case upon this ground. A certain book is said to be the Word of God. What is the proof that it is so? for upon this the whole depends; and if it cannot be proved to be so, the prosecution fails for want of evidence.

The prosecution against Williams charges him with publishing a book, entitled "The Age of Reason," which, it says, is an impious, blasphemous pamphlet, tending to ridicule and bring into contempt the Holy Scriptures. Nothing is more easy than to find abusive words, and English prosecutions are famous for this species of vulgarity.

The charge however is sophistical; for the charge, as growing out of the pamphlet should have stated, not as it now states, to ridicule and bring into contempt the Holy Scriptures, but to show that the book called the Holy Scriptures are not the Holy Scriptures. It is one thing if I ridicule a work as being written by a certain person; but it is quite a different thing if I write to prove that such work was not written by such person.

In the first case, I attack the person through the work; in the other case, I defend the honor of the person against the work. That is what "The Age of Reason" does, and consequently the charge in the indictment is sophistically stated. Every one will admit, that if the Bible be *not* the Word of God we err in believing it to be His word, and ought not to believe it. Certainly then, the ground the prosecution should take would be to prove that the Bible is in fact what it is called. But this the prosecution has not done, and cannot do.

In all cases the prior fact must be proved before the subsequent facts can be admitted in evidence. In a prosecution for adultery, the fact of marriage, which is the prior fact, must be proved, before the facts to prove adultery can be received. If the fact of marriage cannot be proved, adultery cannot be proved; and if the prosecution cannot prove the Bible to be the Word of God, the charge of blasphemy is visionary and groundless.

In Turkey they might prove, if the case happened, that a certain book was bought of a certain bookseller, and that the said book was written

against the Koran. In Spain and Portugal they might prove that a certain book was bought of a certain bookseller, and that the said book was written against the infallibility of the Pope.

Under the ancient mythology they might have proved that a certain writing was bought of a certain person, and that the said writing was written against the belief of a plurality of gods, and in the support of the belief of one god: Socrates was condemned for a work of this kind.

All these are but subsequent facts, and amount to nothing, unless the prior facts be proved. The prior fact, with respect to the first case is, Is the *Koran* the Word of God? With respect to the second, Is the infallibility of the Pope a truth? With respect to the third, Is the belief of a plurality of gods a true belief? And in like manner with respect to the present prosecution, Is the book called the *Bible* the Word of God?

If the present prosecution prove no more than could be proved in any or all of these cases, it proves only as they do, or as an inquisition would prove; and in this view of the case, the prosecutors ought at least to leave off reviling that infernal institution, the Inquisition.

The prosecution, however, though it may injure the individual, may promote the cause of truth; because the manner in which it has been conducted appears a confession to the world that there is no evidence to prove that the *Bible* is the Word of God. On what authority then do we believe the many strange stories that the Bible tells of God?

This prosecution has been carried on through the medium of what is called a special jury, and the whole of a special jury is nominated by the master of the Crown-office. Mr. Erskine vaunts himself upon the bill he brought into Parliament with respect to trials for what the government party calls libels. But if in Crown prosecutions the master of the Crown-office is to continue to appoint the whole special jury, which he does by nominating the forty-eight persons from which the solicitor of each party is to strike out twelve, Mr. Erskine's bill is only vapor and smoke. The root of the grievance lies in the manner of forming the jury, and to this Mr. Erskine's bill applies no remedy.

When the trial of Williams came on, only eleven of the special jurymen appeared, and the trial was adjourned. In cases where the whole number do not appear, it is customary to make up the deficiency by taking jurymen from persons present in court. This in the law term is called a tales. Why was not this done in this case? Reason will suggest that they did not choose to depend on a man accidentally taken.

When the trial recommenced the whole of the special jury appeared,

and Williams was convicted: It is folly to contend a cause where the whole jury is nominated by one of the parties. I will relate a recent case that explains a great deal with respect to special juries in Crown prosecutions.

On the trial of Lambert and others, printers and proprietors of the *Morning Chronicle*, for a libel, a special jury was struck, on the prayer of the attorney-general, who used to be called *Diabolus Regis*, or King's Devil. Only seven or eight of the special jury appeared, and the attorney-general not praying a tales, the trial stood over to a future day; when it was to be brought on a second time the attorney-general prayed for a new special jury, but as this was not admissible the original special jury was summoned.

Only eight of them appeared, on which the attorney-general said, "As I cannot, on a second trial, have a special jury, I will pray a tales." Four persons were then taken from the persons present in court and added to the eight special jurymen. The jury went out at two o'clock to consult on their verdict, and the judge (Kenyon) understanding they were divided, and likely to be some time in making up their minds, retired from the bench and went home.

At seven, the jury went, attended by an officer of the court, to the judge's house, and delivered a verdict, "*Guilty of publishing, but with no malicious intention.*" The judge said, "*I cannot record this verdict: it is no verdict at all.*" The jury withdrew, and after sitting in consultation till five in the morning, brought in a verdict "not guilty." Would this have been the case, had they been all special jurymen nominated by the master of the Crown-office? This is one of the cases that ought to open the eyes of people with respect to the manner of forming special juries.

On the trial of Williams, the judge prevented the counsel for the defendant proceeding in the defense. The prosecution had selected a number of passages from "The Age of Reason" and inserted them in the indictment. The defending counsel was selecting other passages to show that the passages in the indictment were conclusions drawn from premises and unfairly separated therefrom in the indictment.

The judge said, *he did not know how to act*; meaning thereby whether to let the counsel proceed in the defense or not; and asked the jury if they wished to hear the passages read which the defending counsel had selected. The jury said no, and the defending counsel was in consequence silenced.

Mr. Erskine then (Falstaff-like), having all the field to himself, and no enemy at hand, laid about him most heroically, and the jury found the defendant *guilty*. I know not if Mr. Erskine ran out of court and halooed, "Huzza for the Bible and the trial by jury."

Robespierre caused a decree to be passed during the trial of Brissot and others that after a trial had lasted three days (the whole of which time, in the case of Brissot, was taken up by the prosecuting party) the judge should ask the jury (who were then a packed jury) if they were satisfied? If the jury said YES, the trial ended and the jury proceeded to give their verdict without hearing the defense of the accused party. It needs no depth of wisdom to make an application of this case.

I will now state a case to show that the trial of Williams is not a trial according to Kenyon's own explanation of law.

On a late trial in London (Selthens *versus* Hoosman) on a policy of insurance, one of the jurymen, Mr. Dunnage, after hearing one side of the case, and without hearing the other side, got up and said, "*it was as legal a policy of insurance as ever was written.*" The judge, who was the same as presided on the trial of Williams, replied "*that it was a great misfortune when any gentleman of the jury makes up his mind on a cause before it was finished.*"

Mr. Erskine, who in that cause was counsel for the defendant (in this he was against the defendant) cried out, "*it is worse than a misfortune, it is a fault.*" The judge, in his address to the jury in summing up the evidence, expatiated upon, and explained the parts which the law assigned to the counsel on each side, to the witnesses, and to the judge, and said, "*When all this was done, AND NOT UNTIL THEN, it was the business of the jury to declare what the justice of the case was; and that it was extremely rash and imprudent in any man to draw a conclusion before all the premises were laid before them upon which that conclusion was to be grounded.*"

According then to Kenyon's own doctrine, the trial of Williams is an irregular trial, the verdict an irregular verdict, and as such is not recordable.

As to the special juries, they are but modern; and were instituted for the purpose of determining cases at *law* between merchants; because as the method of keeping merchants' accounts differs from that of common tradesmen, and their business, by lying much in foreign bills of exchange, insurance, etc., is of a different description to that of common

tradesmen, it might happen that a common jury might not be competent to form a judgment.

The law that instituted special juries, makes it necessary that the jurors be *merchants*, or of the degree of *squires*. A special jury in London is generally composed of merchants; and in the country, of men called country squires, that is, fox-hunters, or men qualified to hunt foxes. The one may decide very well upon a case of pounds, shillings and pence, or of the counting-house: and the other of the jockey-club or the chase. But who would not laugh, that because such men can decide such cases they can also be jurors upon theology.

Talk with some London merchants about Scripture, and they will understand you mean *scrip*, and tell you how much it is worth at the Stock Exchange. Ask them about theology and they will say they know of no such gentleman upon 'Change. Tell some country squires of the sun and moon standing still, the one on the top of a hill, the other in a valley, and they will swear it is a lie of one's own making.

Tell them that God Almighty ordered a man to make a cake and bake it with a t—d and eat it, and they will say it is one of Dean Swift's blackguard stories. Tell them it is in the Bible and they will lay a bowl of punch it is not, and leave it to the parson of the parish to decide. Ask *them* also about theology and they will say they know of no such a one on the turf.

An appeal to such juries serves to bring the Bible into more ridicule than anything the author of "The Age of Reason" has written; and the manner in which the trial has been conducted shows that the prosecutor dares not come to the point, nor meet the defense of the defendant. But all other cases apart, on what grounds of right, otherwise than on the right assumed by an inquisition, do such prosecutions stand?

Religion is a private affair between every man and his Maker, and no tribunal or third party has a right to interfere between them. It is not properly a thing of this world; it is only practised in this world; but its object is in a future world; and it is not otherwise an object of just laws than for the purpose of protecting the equal rights of all, however various their belief may be.

If one man choose to believe the book called the Bible to be the Word of God, and another, from the convinced idea of the purity and perfection of God compared with the contradictions the book contains—from the lasciviousness of some of its stories, like that of Lot getting drunk and

debauching his two daughters, which is not spoken of as a crime, and for which the most absurd apologies are made—from the immorality of some of its precepts, like that of showing no mercy—and from the total want of evidence on the case—thinks he ought not to believe it to be the Word of God, each of them has an equal right; and if the one has a right to give his reasons for believing it to be so, the other has an equal right to give his reasons for believing the *contrary*.

Anything that goes beyond this rule is an inquisition. Mr. Erskine talks of his moral education: Mr. Erskine is very little acquainted with theological subjects, if he does not know there is such a thing as a *sincere* and *religious* belief that the Bible is not the Word of God. This is my belief; it is the belief of thousands far more learned than Mr. Erskine; and it is a belief that is every day increasing. It is not infidelity, as Mr. Erskine profanely and abusively calls it; it is the direct reverse of infidelity. It is a pure religious belief, founded on the idea of the perfection of the Creator.

If the Bible be the Word of God it needs not the wretched aid of prosecutions to support it, and you might with as much propriety make a law to protect the sunshine as to protect the Bible. Is the Bible like the sun, or the work of God? We see that God takes good care of the creation He has made. He suffers no part of it to be extinguished: and He will take the same care of His word, if he ever gave *one*.

But men ought to be reverentially careful and suspicious how they ascribe books to Him as His *word*, which from this confused condition would dishonor a common scribbler, and against which there is abundant evidence, and every cause to suspect imposition. Leave the Bible to itself. God will take care of it if He has anything to do with it, as He takes care of the sun and the moon, which need not your laws for their better protection.

As the two instances I have produced in the beginning of this letter, from the book of Genesis—the one respecting the account called the Mosaic account of the creation, the other of the flood—sufficiently show the necessity of examining the Bible, in order to ascertain what degree of evidence there is for receiving or rejecting it as a sacred book, I shall not add more upon that subject; but in order to show Mr. Erskine that there are religious establishments for public worship which make no profession of faith of the books called Holy Scriptures, nor admit of priests, I will conclude with an account of a society lately begun in Paris, and which is very rapidly extending itself.

The society takes the name of Théophilantropes, which would be rendered in English by the word Theophilanthropists, a word compounded of three Greek words, signifying God, Love, and Man. The explanation given to this word is lovers of God and man, or adorers of God and friends of man, *adoreurs de Dieu et amis des hommes*. The society proposes to publish each year a volume, entitled *Année Religieuse des Théophilantropes*, Year Religious of the Theophilanthropists. The first volume is just published, entitled:

## RELIGIOUS YEAR OF THE THEOPHILANTHROPISTS:

OR

## ADORERS OF GOD AND FRIENDS OF MAN

Being a collection of the discourses, lectures, hymns and canticles, for all the religious and moral festivals of the Theophilanthropists during the course of the year, whether in their public temples or in their private families, published by the author of the "Manual of the Theophilanthropists."

The volume of this year, which is the first, contains two hundred and fourteen pages of *duodecimo*. The following is the table of contents:

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## INTRODUCTION

### ENTITLED

### PRECISE HISTORY OF THE THEOPHILANTHROPISTS

“Toward the month of Véndemiaire, of the year 5 (September, 1796), there appeared at Paris, a small work entitled “Manual of the Théoantrophiles,” since called, for the sake of easier pronounciation, Théophilantropes (Theophilanthropists), published by C—.

“The worship set forth in this manual, of which the origin is from the beginning of the world, was then professed by some families in the silence of domestic life. But no sooner was the manual published than some persons, respectable for their knowledge and their manners, saw in the formation of a society open to the public an easy method of spreading moral religion and of leading by degrees great numbers to the knowledge thereof, who appear to have forgotten it. This consideration ought of itself not to leave indifferent those persons who know that morality and religion, which is the most solid support thereof, are necessary to the maintenance of society, as well as to the happiness of the individual. These considerations determined the families of the Theophilanthropists to unite publicly for the exercise of their worship.

“The first society of this kind opened in the month of Nivose, year 5 (January, 1797), in the Street Denis, No. 34, corner of Lombard Street. The care of conducting this society was undertaken by five fathers of families. They adopted the manual of the Theophilanthropists.

“They agreed to hold their days of public worship on the days cor-

responding to Sundays, but without making this a hindrance to other societies to choose such other day as they thought more convenient. Soon after this, more societies were opened, of which some celebrate on the *decadi* (tenth day), and others on the Sunday.

“It was also resolved that the committee should meet one hour each week for the purpose of preparing or examining the discourses and lectures proposed for the next general assembly; that the general assemblies should be called *fêtes* (festivals) religious and moral; that those festivals should be conducted in principle and form, in a manner as not to be considered as the festivals of an exclusive worship; and that in recalling those who might not be attached to any particular worship, those festivals might also be attended as moral exercises by disciples of every sect, and consequently avoid, by scrupulous care, everything that might make the society appear under the name of a sect.

“The Society adopts neither *rites* nor *priesthood*, and it will never lose sight of the resolution not to advance anything, as a society, inconvenient to any sect or sects, in any time or country, and under any government.

“It will be seen, that it is so much the more easy for the Society to keep within this circle, because that the dogmas of the Theophilanthropists are those upon which all the sects have agreed, that their moral is that upon which there has never been the least dissent; and that the name they have taken expresses the double end of all the sects, that of leading to the *adoration of God and love of man*.

“The Theophilanthropists do not call themselves the disciples of such or such a man. They avail themselves of the wise precepts that have been transmitted by writers of all countries and in all ages.

“The reader will find in the discourses, lectures, hymns and canticles, which the Theophilanthropists have adopted for their religious and moral festivals, and which they present under the title of *Année Religieuse*, extracts from moralists, ancient and modern, divested of maxims too severe or too loosely conceived, or contrary to piety, whether toward God or toward man.”

Next follow the dogmas of the Theophilanthropists, or things they profess to believe. These are but two, and are thus expressed, *les Théophilanthropes croient à l'existence de Dieu, et à l'immortalité de l'âme*: the Theophilanthropists believe in the existence of God, and the immortality of the soul.

The manual of the Theophilanthropists, a small volume of sixty pages, *duodecimo*, is published separately, as is also their catechism, which is

of the same size. The principles of the Theophilanthropists are the same as those published in the first part of "The Age of Reason" in 1793, and in the second part, in 1795. The Theophilanthropists, as a society, are silent upon all the things they do not profess to believe, as the *sacredness* of the books called the Bible, etc.

They profess the immortality of the soul, but they are silent on the immortality of the body, or that which the Church of England calls the resurrection. The author of "The Age of Reason" gives reasons for everything he *disbelieves*, as well as those he *believes*; and where this cannot be done with safety, the government is a despotism and the Church an inquisition.

It is more than three years since the first part of "The Age of Reason" was published, and more than a year and a half since the publication of the second part: the Bishop of Llandaff undertook to write an answer to the second part; and it was not until after it was known that the author of "The Age of Reason" would reply to the Bishop, that the prosecution against the book was set on foot; and which is said to be carried on by some clergy of the English Church.

If the Bishop is one of them, and the object be to prevent an exposure of the numerous and gross errors he has committed in his work (and which he wrote when report said that Thomas Paine was dead), it is a confession that he feels the weakness of his cause, and finds himself unable to maintain it. In this case he has given me a triumph I did not seek, and Mr. Erskine, the herald of the prosecution, has proclaimed it.

THOMAS PAINE.

## THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

### A DISCOURSE AT THE SOCIETY OF THEOPHILANTHROPISTS, PARIS

One aim Paine had in mind in writing his *Age of Reason* was to recall the French people to a basic belief in the deity and thereby to overcome the influence of atheism. After the publication of his great work, Paine turned his attention to the organization of a movement to combat atheism. In 1797, in this address before the Paris Society of Theophilanthropists, an organization denying the divine origin of the Bible but accepting the existence of God and a future state, he assailed the atheistic concept of a universe which came

into being without the aid of an efficient Agent. Since the cosmos consisted of matter which did not possess the property of motion, Paine argued, the rotation of the planets would be impossible without the assistance of an external Cause. Paine maintained that the prevalence of atheism was due to the introduction of orthodox religion which created atheists by its persecutions. Once persecution was ended, atheism would disappear.

Paine's speech was circulated in America and was reprinted in *The Temple of Reason* of January 3, 1801.

For an interesting discussion of the issues raised in this article, see Ralph C. Roper, "Thomas Paine: Scientist—Religionist," *Scientific Monthly*, Vol. LVIII, 1944, pp. 101-111.—*Editor*.

**R**ELIGION has two principal enemies, fanaticism and infidelity, or that which is called atheism. The first requires to be combated by reason and morality, the other by natural philosophy.

The existence of a God is the first dogma of the Theophilanthropists. It is upon this subject that I solicit your attention; for though it has been often treated of, and that most sublimely, the subject is inexhaustible; and there will always remain something to be said that has not been before advanced. I go therefore to open the subject, and to crave your attention to the end.

The universe is the bible of a true Theophilanthropist. It is there that he reads of God. It is there that the proofs of His existence are to be sought and to be found. As to written or printed books, by whatever name they are called, they are the works of man's hands, and carry no evidence in themselves that God is the Author of any of them. It must be in something that man could not make that we must seek evidence for our belief, and that something is the universe, the true Bible—the inimitable work of God.

Contemplating the universe, the whole system of Creation, in this point of light, we shall discover, that all that which is called natural philosophy is properly a divine study. It is the study of God through His works. It is the best study, by which we can arrive at a knowledge of His existence, and the only one by which we can gain a glimpse of His perfection.

Do we want to contemplate His power? We see it in the immensity of the Creation. Do we want to contemplate His wisdom? We see it in the unchangeable order by which the incomprehensible WHOLE is governed. Do we want to contemplate His munificence? We see it in the abundance with which He fills the earth. Do we want to contemplate

His mercy? We see it in His not withholding that abundance even from the unthankful. In fine, do we want to know what god is? Search not written or printed books, but the Scripture called the *creation*.

It has been the error of the schools to teach astronomy and all the other sciences and subjects of natural philosophy as accomplishments only; whereas they should be taught theologically, or with reference to the *Being* who is the Author of them: for all the principles of science are of divine origin. Man cannot make, or invent, or contrive principles; he can only discover them, and he ought to look through the discovery to the Author.

When we examine an extraordinary piece of machinery, an astonishing pile of architecture, a well executed statue, or a highly finished painting where life and action are imitated, and habit only prevents our mistaking a surface of light and shade for cubical solidity, our ideas are naturally led to think of the extensive genius and talents of the artist.

When we study the elements of geometry, we think of Euclid. When we speak of gravitation, we think of Newton. How then is it that when we study the works of God in the creation we stop short, and do not think of god? It is from the error of the schools in having taught those subjects as accomplishments only, and thereby separated the study of them from the *Being* who is the Author of them.

The schools have made the study of theology to consist in the study of opinions in written or printed books; whereas theology should be studied in the works or books of the Creation. The study of theology in books of opinions has often produced fanaticism, rancor and cruelty of temper; and from hence have proceeded the numerous persecutions, the fanatical quarrels, the religious burnings and massacres, that have desolated Europe.

But the study of theology in the works of the creation produces a direct contrary effect. The mind becomes at once enlightened and serene, a copy of the scene it beholds: information and adoration go hand in hand; and all the social faculties become enlarged.

The evil that has resulted from the error of the schools in teaching natural philosophy as an accomplishment only has been that of generating in the pupils a species of atheism. Instead of looking through the works of creation to the Creator himself, they stop short and employ the knowledge they acquire to create doubts of His existence. They labor with studied ingenuity to ascribe everything they behold to innate properties of matter, and jump over all the rest by saying that matter is eternal.

Let us examine this subject; it is worth examining; for if we examine it through all its cases, the result will be that the existence of a SUPERIOR CAUSE, or that which man calls GOD, will be discoverable by philosophical principles.

In the first place, admitting matter to have properties, as we see it has, the question still remains, how came matter by those properties? To this they will answer that matter possessed those properties eternally. This is not solution, but assertion; and to deny it is equally as impossible of proof as to assert it.

It is then necessary to go further; and therefore I say—if there exist a circumstance that is *not* a property of matter, and without which the universe, or to speak in a limited degree, the solar system composed of planets and a sun, could not exist a moment, all the arguments of atheism, drawn from properties of matter, and applied to account for the universe, will be overthrown, and the existence of a superior cause, or that which man calls God, becomes discoverable, as is before said, by natural philosophy.

I go now to show that such a circumstance exists, and what it is.

The universe is composed of matter, and, as a system, is sustained by motion. Motion is *not a property* of matter, and without this motion, the solar system could not exist. Were motion a property of matter, that undiscovered and undiscoverable thing called perpetual motion would establish itself.

It is because motion is not a property of matter, that perpetual motion is an impossibility in the hand of every being but that of the Creator of motion. When the pretenders to atheism can produce perpetual motion, and not till then, they may expect to be credited.

The natural state of matter, as to place, is a state of rest. Motion, or change of place, is the effect of an external cause acting upon matter. As to that faculty of matter that is called gravitation, it is the influence which two or more bodies have reciprocally on each other to unite and be at rest. Everything which has hitherto been discovered, with respect to the motion of the planets in the system, relates only to the laws by which motion acts, and not to the cause of motion.

Gravitation, so far from being the cause of motion to the planets that compose the solar system, would be the destruction of the solar system were revolutionary motion to cease; for as the action of spinning upholds a top, the revolutionary motion upholds the planets in their orbits, and prevents them from gravitating and forming one mass with the sun.

In one sense of the word, philosophy knows, and atheism says, that matter is in perpetual motion.

But the motion here meant refers to the *state* of matter, and that only on the surface of the earth. It is either decomposition, which is continually destroying the form of bodies of matter, or recomposition, which renews that matter in the same or another form, as the decomposition of animal or vegetable substances enters into the composition of other bodies.

But the motion that upholds the solar system is of an entire different kind, and is not a property of matter. It operates also to an entire different effect. It operates to *perpetual preservation*, and to prevent *any change* in the state of the system.

Giving then to matter all the properties which philosophy knows it has, or all that atheism ascribes to it, and can prove, and even supposing matter to be eternal, it will not account for the system of the universe, or of the solar system, because it will not account for motion, and it is motion that preserves it.

When, therefore, we discover a circumstance of such immense importance that without it the universe could not exist, and for which neither matter, nor any nor all the properties can account, we are by necessity forced into the rational conformable belief of the existence of a cause superior to matter, and that cause man calls god.

As to that which is called nature, it is no other than the laws by which motion and action of every kind, with respect to unintelligible matter, are regulated. And when we speak of looking through nature up to nature's God, we speak philosophically the same rational language as when we speak of looking through human laws up to the Power that ordained them.

God is the power of first cause, nature is the law, and matter is the subject acted upon.

But infidelity, by ascribing every phenomenon to properties of matter, conceives a system for which it cannot account, and yet it pretends to demonstration. It reasons from what it sees on the surface of the earth, but it does not carry itself on the solar system existing by motion.

It sees upon the surface a perpetual decomposition and recomposition of matter. It sees that an oak produces an acorn, an acorn an oak, a bird an egg, an egg a bird, and so on. In things of this kind it sees something which it calls a natural cause, but none of the causes it sees is the cause of that motion which preserves the solar system.

Let us contemplate this wonderful and stupendous system consisting of matter, and existing by motion. It is not matter in a state of rest, nor in a state of decomposition or recomposition. It is matter systematized in perpetual orbicular or circular motion. As a system that motion is the life of it: as animation is life to an animal body, deprive the system of motion and, as a system, it must expire.

Who then breathed into the system the life of motion? What power impelled the planets to move, since motion is not a property of the matter of which they are composed? If we contemplate the immense velocity of this motion, our wonder becomes increased, and our adoration enlarges itself in the same proportion.

To instance only one of the planets, that of the earth we inhabit, its distance from the sun, the center of the orbits of all the planets, is, according to observations of the transit of the planet Venus, about one hundred million miles; consequently, the diameter of the orbit, or circle in which the earth moves round the sun, is double that distance; and the measure of the circumference of the orbit, taken as three times its diameter, is six hundred million miles. The earth performs this voyage in three hundred and sixty-five days and some hours, and consequently moves at the rate of more than one million six hundred thousand miles every twenty-four hours.

Where will infidelity, where will atheism, find cause for this astonishing velocity of motion, never ceasing, never varying, and which is the preservation of the earth in its orbit? It is not by reasoning from an acorn to an oak, from an egg to a bird, or from any change in the state of matter on the surface of the earth, that this can be accounted for.

Its cause is not to be found in matter, nor in anything we call nature. The atheist who affects to reason, and the fanatic who rejects reason, plunge themselves alike into inextricable difficulties.

The one perverts the sublime and enlightening study of natural philosophy into a deformity of absurdities by not reasoning to the end. The other loses himself in the obscurity of metaphysical theories, and dishonors the Creator by treating the study of His works with contempt. The one is a half-rational of whom there is some hope, the other a visionary to whom we must be charitable.

When at first thought we think of a Creator, our ideas appear to us undefined and confused; but if we reason philosophically, those ideas can be easily arranged and simplified. *It is a Being whose power is equal to His will.*



Observe the nature of the will of man. It is of an infinite quality. We cannot conceive the possibility of limits to the will. Observe, on the other hand, how exceedingly limited is his power of acting compared with the nature of his will. Suppose the power equal to the will, and man would be a God. He would will himself eternal, and be so. He could will a creation, and could make it.

In this progressive reasoning, we see in the nature of the will of man half of that which we conceive in thinking of God; add the other half, and we have the whole idea of a Being who could make the universe, and sustain it by perpetual motion; because He could create that motion.

We know nothing of the capacity of the will of animals, but we know a great deal of the difference of their powers. For example, how numerous are the degrees, and how immense is the difference of power, from a mite to a man.

Since then everything we see below us shows a progression of power, where is the difficulty in supposing that there is, at the *summit of all things*, a Being in whom an infinity of power unites with the infinity of the will? When this simple idea presents itself to our mind, we have the idea of a perfect Being that man calls God.

It is comfortable to live under the belief of the existence of an infinite protecting power; and it is an addition to that comfort to know that such a belief is not a mere conceit of the imagination, as many of the theories that are called religious are; nor a belief founded only on tradition or received opinion; but is a belief deducible by the action of reason upon the things that compose the system of the universe; a belief arising out of visible facts. So demonstrable is the truth of this belief that if no such belief had existed, the persons who now controvert it would have been the persons who would have produced and propagated it; because by beginning to reason they would have been led to reason progressively to the end, and thereby have discovered that matter and the properties it has will not account for the system of the universe, and that there must necessarily be a superior cause.

It was the excess to which imaginary systems of religion had been carried, and the intolerance, persecutions, burnings and massacres they occasioned, that first induced certain persons to propagate infidelity; thinking, that upon the whole it was better not to believe at all than to believe a multitude of things and complicated creeds that occasioned so much mischief in the world.

But those days are past, persecution has ceased, and the antidote then

set up against it has no longer even the shadow of apology. We profess, and we proclaim in peace, the pure, unmixed, comfortable and rational belief of a God as manifested to us in the universe. We do this without any apprehension of that belief being made a cause of persecution as other beliefs have been, or of suffering persecution ourselves.<sup>2</sup> To God, and not to man, are all men to account for their belief.

It has been well observed, at the first institution of this Society, that the dogmas it professes to believe are from the commencement of the world; that they are not novelties, but are confessedly the basis of all systems of religion, however numerous and contradictory they may be.

All men in the outset of the religion they profess are Theophilanthropists. It is impossible to form any system of religion without building upon those principles, and therefore they are not sectarian principles, unless we suppose a sect composed of all the world.

I have said in the course of this discourse that the study of natural philosophy is a divine study, because it is the study of the works of God in the creation. If we consider theology upon this ground, what an extensive field of improvement in things both divine and human opens itself before us!

All the principles of science are of divine origin. It was not man that invented the principles on which astronomy, and every branch of mathematics, are founded and studied. It was not man that gave properties to the circle and the triangle. Those principles are eternal and immutable.

We see in them the unchangeable nature of the Divinity. We see in them immortality, an immortality existing after the material figures that express those properties are dissolved in dust.

The Society is at present in its infancy, and its means are small; but I wish to hold in view the subject I allude to, and instead of teaching the philosophical branches of learning as ornamental accomplishments only, as they have hitherto been taught, to teach them in a manner that shall combine theological knowledge with scientific instruction.

To do this to the best advantage some instruments will be necessary, for the purpose of explanation, of which the Society is not yet possessed. But as the views of this Society extend to public good as well as to that of the individual, and as its principles can have no enemies, means may be devised to procure them.

If we unite to the present instruction a series of lectures on the ground

<sup>2</sup> A few years later, however, Napoleon Bonaparte suppressed the Theophilanthropist Societies.—*Editor*.

I have mentioned, we shall, in the first place, render theology the most delightful and entertaining of all studies. In the next place we shall give scientific instruction to those who could not otherwise obtain it. The mechanic of every profession will there be taught the mathematical principles necessary to render him a proficient in his art; the cultivator will there see developed the principles of vegetation; while, at the same time, they will be led to see the hand of God in all these things.

## WORSHIP AND CHURCH BELLS

A LETTER TO CAMILLE JORDAN

This pamphlet, published in the summer of 1797 in Paris and London, was Paine's reply to a Report made to the French Convention by Camille Jordan, a royalist lawyer and member of the Council of Five Hundred, recommending the restoration of certain Catholic privileges, especially the church bells. The petition was rejected by the Convention.

One sentence in particular stands out in the article: "It is a want of feeling to talk of priests and bells while so many infants are perishing in the hospitals, and aged and infirm poor in the streets, from the want of necessaries." —*Editor.*

**CITIZEN REPRESENTATIVE:** As everything in your Report, relating to what you call worship, connects itself with the books called the Scriptures, I begin with a quotation therefrom. It may serve to give us some idea of the fanciful origin and fabrication of those books, II Chronicles xxxiv, 14, etc. "Hilkiah, the priest, *found* the book of the law of the Lord given by Moses. And Hilkiah, the priest, said to Shaphan, the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord, and Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan. And Shaphan, the scribe, told the king (Josiah), saying, Hilkiah, the priest, hath given me a book."

This pretended finding was about a thousand years after the time that Moses is said to have lived. Before this pretended finding there was no such thing practised or known in the world as that which is called the Law of Moses.

This being the case, there is every apparent evidence that the books

called the books of Moses (and which make the first part of what are called the Scriptures) are forgeries contrived between a priest and a limb of the law,<sup>3</sup> Hilkiah, and Shaphan the scribe, a thousand years after Moses is said to have been dead.

Thus much for the first part of the Bible. Every other part is marked with circumstances equally as suspicious. We ought therefore to be reverentially careful how we ascribe books *as His Word*, of which there is no evidence, and against which there is abundant evidence to the contrary, and every cause to suspect imposition.

In your Report you speak continually of something by the name of worship, and you confine yourself to speak of one kind only, as if there were but one, and that one was unquestionably true.

The modes of worship are as various as the sects are numerous; and amidst all this variety and multiplicity there is but one article of belief in which every religion in the world agrees. That article has universal sanction. It is the belief of a God, or what the Greeks described by the word *Theism*, and the Latins by that of *Deism*.

Upon this one article have been erected all the different superstructures of creeds and ceremonies continually warring with each other that now exist or ever existed. But the men most and best informed upon the subject of theology rest themselves upon this universal article, and hold all the various superstructures erected thereon to be at least doubtful, if not altogether artificial.

The intellectual part of religion is a private affair between every man and his Maker, and in which no third party has any right to interfere. The practical part consists in our doing good to each other. But since religion has been made into a trade, the practical part has been made to consist of ceremonies performed by men called priests; and the people have been amused with ceremonial shows, processions and bells.

By devices of this kind true religion has been banished; and such means have been found out to extract money even from the pockets of the poor, instead of contributing to their relief.

No man ought to make a living by religion. It is dishonest so to do. Religion is not an act that can be performed by proxy. One person cannot act religion for another. Every person must perform it for himself; and all that a priest can do is to take from him; he wants nothing but his money and then to riot in the spoil and laugh at his credulity.

The only people who, as a professional sect of Christians provide for

<sup>3</sup> It happens that Camille Jordan is a limb of the law.—*Author*.

the poor of their society, are people known by the name of Quakers. Those men have no priests. They assemble quietly in their places of meeting, and do not disturb their neighbors with shows and noise of bells. Religion does not unite itself to show and noise. True religion is without either. Where there is both there is no true religion.

The first object for inquiry in all cases, more especially in matters of religious concern, is TRUTH. We ought to inquire into the truth of whatever we are taught to believe, and it is certain that the books called the Scriptures stand in this respect in more than a doubtful predicament.

They have been held in existence, and in a sort of credit among the common class of people, by art, terror and persecution. They have little or no credit among the enlightened part, but they have been made the means of encumbering the world with a numerous priesthood, who have fattened on the labor of the people and consumed the sustenance that ought to be applied to the widows and the poor.

It is a want of feeling to talk of priests and bells while so many infants are perishing in the hospitals, and aged and infirm poor in the streets, from the want of necessaries. The abundance that France produces is sufficient for every want, if rightly applied; but priests and bells, like articles of luxury, ought to be the least articles of consideration.

We talk of religion. Let us talk of truth; for that which is not truth is not worthy of the name of religion.

We see different parts of the world overspread with different books, each of which, though contradictory to the other, is said by its partisans to be of divine origin, and is made a rule of faith and practise.

In countries under despotic governments, where inquiry is always forbidden, the people are condemned to believe as they have been taught by their priests. This was for many centuries the case in France: but this link in the chain of slavery is happily broken by the Revolution; and, that it may never be riveted again, let us employ a part of the liberty we enjoy in scrutinizing into the truth.

Let us leave behind us some monument that we have made the cause and honor of our Creator an object of our care. If we have been imposed upon by the terrors of government and the artifice of priests in matters of religion, let us do justice to our Creator by examining into the case. His name is too sacred to be affixed to anything which is fabulous; and it is our duty to inquire whether we believe, or encourage the people to believe, in fables or in facts.

It would be a project worthy the situation we are in to invite an in-

quiry of this kind. We have committees for various objects; and among others, a committee for bells. We have institutions, academies and societies for various purposes; but we have none for inquiring into the historical truth in matters of religious concern.

They show us certain books which they call the Holy Scriptures, the Word of God, and other names of that kind; but we ought to know what evidence there is for our believing them to be so, and at what time they originated and in what manner. We know that men could make books, and we know that artifice and superstition could give them a name—could call them sacred. But we ought to be careful that the name of our Creator be not abused. Let then all the evidence with respect to those books be made a subject of inquiry. If there be evidence to warrant our belief in them, let us encourage the propagation of it; but if not; let us be careful not to promote the cause of delusion and falsehood.

I have already spoken of the Quakers—that they have no priests, no bells—and that they are remarkable for their care of the poor of their Society. They are equally as remarkable for the education of their children. I am a descendant of a family of that profession; my father was a Quaker; and I presume I may be admitted an evidence of what I assert.

The seeds of good principles, and the literary means of advancement in the world, are laid in early life. Instead, therefore, of consuming the substance of the nation upon priests, whose life at best is a life of idleness, let us think of providing for the education of those who have not the means of doing it themselves. One good schoolmaster is of more use than a hundred priests.

If we look back at what was the condition of France under the *ancien régime*, we cannot acquit the priests of corrupting the morals of the nation. Their pretended celibacy led them to carry debauchery and domestic infidelity into every family where they could gain admission; and their blasphemous pretensions to forgive sins encouraged the commission of them. Why has the Revolution of France been stained with crimes, which the Revolution of the United States of America was not? Men are physically the same in all countries; it is education that makes them different. Accustom a people to believe that priests or any other class of men can forgive sins, and you will have sins in abundance.

I come now to speak more particularly to the object of your report.

You claim a privilege incompatible with the Constitution and with rights. The Constitution protects equally, as it ought to do, every pro-

fession of religion; it gives no exclusive privilege to any. The churches are the common property of all the people; they are national goods, and cannot be given exclusively to any one profession, because the right does not exist of giving to any one that which appertains to all.

It would be consistent with right that the churches be sold, and the money arising therefrom be invested as a fund for the education of children of poor parents of every profession, and, if more than sufficient for this purpose, that the surplus be appropriated to the support of the aged poor. After this, every profession can erect its own place of worship, if it choose—support its own priests, if it choose to have any—or perform its worship without priests, as the Quakers do.

As to bells, they are a public nuisance. If one profession is to have bells, and another has the right to use the instruments of the same kind, or any other noisy instrument, some may choose to meet at the sound of cannon, another at the beat of drum, another at the sound of trumpets, and so on, until the whole becomes a scene of general confusion. But if we permit ourselves to think of the state of the sick, and the many sleepless nights and days they undergo, we shall feel the impropriety of increasing their distress by the noise of bells, or any other noisy instruments.

Quiet and private domestic devotion neither offends nor incommodes anybody; and the Constitution has wisely guarded against the use of externals. Bells come under this description, and public processions still more so. Streets and highways are for the accommodation of persons following their several occupations, and no sectary has a right to incommode them. If anyone has, every other has the same; and the meeting of various and contradictory processions would be tumultuous.

Those who formed the Constitution had wisely reflected upon these cases; and, while they were careful to preserve the equal right of everyone, they restrained everyone from giving offense, or incommoding another.

Men who, through a long and tumultuous scene, have lived in retirement as you have done, may think, when they arrive at power, that nothing is more easy than to put the world to rights in an instant; they form to themselves gay ideas at the success of their projects; but they forget to contemplate the difficulties that attend them and the dangers with which they are pregnant.

Alas! nothing is so easy as to deceive one's self. Did all men think as you think, or as you say, your plan would need no advocate, because it

would have no opposer; but there are millions who think differently to you, and who are determined to be neither the dupes nor the slaves of error or design.

It is your good fortune to arrive at power, when the sunshine of prosperity is breaking forth after a long and stormy night. The firmness of your colleagues, and of those you have succeeded—the unabated energy of the Directory, and the unequalled bravery of the armies of the Republic—have made the way smooth and easy to you.

If you look back at the difficulties that existed when the Constitution commenced, you cannot but be confounded with admiration at the difference between that time and now. At that moment the Directory were placed like the forlorn hope of an army, but you were in safe retirement. They occupied the post of honorable danger, and they have merited well of their country.

You talk of justice and benevolence, but you begin at the wrong end. The defenders of your country, and the deplorable state of the poor, are objects of prior consideration to priests and bells and gaudy processions.

You talk of peace, but your manner of talking of it embarrasses the Directory in making it, and serves to prevent it. Had you been an actor in all the scenes of government from its commencement, you would have been too well informed to have brought forward projects that operate to encourage the enemy.

When you arrived at a share in the government, you found everything tending to a prosperous issue. A series of victories unequalled in the world, and in the obtaining of which you had no share, preceded your arrival. Every enemy but one was subdued; and that one (the Hanoverian Government of England), deprived of every hope, and a bankrupt in all its resources, was suing for peace. In such a state of things, no new question that might tend to agitate and anarchize the interior ought to have had place; and the project you propose tends directly to that end.

While France was a monarchy, and under the government of those things called kings and priests, England could always defeat her; but since France has RISEN TO BE A REPUBLIC, the GOVERNMENT OF ENGLAND crouches beneath her, so great is the difference between a government of kings and priests, and that which is founded on the system of representation.

But, could the Government of England find a way, under the sanction of your report, to inundate France with a flood of emigrant priests, she



would find also the way to domineer as before; she would retrieve her shattered finances at your expense, and the ringing of bells would be the tocsin of your downfall.

Did peace consist in nothing but the cessation of war, it would not be difficult; but the terms are yet to be arranged; and those terms will be better or worse, in proportion as France and her counsels be united or divided. That the Government of England counts much upon your Report, and upon others of a similar tendency, is what the writer of this letter, who knows that government well, has no doubt.

You are but new on the theater of government, and you ought to suspect yourself of misjudging; the experience of those who have gone before you, should be of some service to you. But if, in consequence of such measures as you propose, you put it out of the power of the Directory to make a good peace, and force them to accept of terms you would afterwards reprobate, it is yourself that must bear the censure.

You conclude your Report by the following address to your colleagues:

Let us hasten, representatives of the people! to affix to these tutelary laws the seal of our unanimous approbation. All our fellow-citizens will learn to cherish political liberty from the enjoyment of religious liberty: you will have broken the most powerful arm of your enemies; you will have surrounded this assembly with the most impregnable rampart—confidence, and the people's love.

O my colleagues, how desirable is that popularity which is the offspring of good laws! What a consolation it will be to us hereafter, when returned to our own firesides, to hear from the mouths of our fellow-citizens these simple expressions—*Blessings reward you, men of peace! you have restored to us our temples, our ministers, the liberty of adoring the God of our fathers: you have recalled harmony to our families—morality to our hearts: you have made us adore the legislature and respect all its laws!*

Is it possible, citizen representative, that you can be serious in this address? Were the lives of the priests under the *ancien régime* such as to justify anything you say of them? Were not all France convinced of their immorality? Were they not considered as the patrons of debauchery and domestic infidelity, and not as the patrons of morals? What was their pretended celibacy but perpetual adultery? What was their blasphemous pretension to forgive sins but an encouragement to the commission of them, and a love for their own?

Do you want to lead again into France all the vices of which they

have been the patrons, and to overspread the Republic with English pensioners? It is cheaper to corrupt than to conquer; and the English Government, unable to conquer, will stoop to corrupt. Arrogance and meanness, though in appearance opposite, are vices of the same heart.

Instead of concluding in the manner you have done, you ought rather to have said:

“O my colleagues! we are arrived at a glorious period—a period that promises more than we could have expected, and all that we could have wished. Let us hasten to take into consideration the honors and rewards due to our brave defenders. Let us hasten to give encouragement to agriculture and manufactures, that commerce may reinstate itself, and our people have employment. Let us review the condition of the suffering poor, and wipe from our country the reproach of forgetting them.

“Let us devise means to establish schools of instruction, that we may banish the ignorance that the *ancien régime* of kings and priests had spread among the people. Let us propagate morality, unfettered by superstition. Let us cultivate justice and benevolence, that the God of our fathers may bless us. The helpless infant and the aged poor cry to us to remember them. Let not wretchedness be seen in our streets. Let France exhibit to the world the glorious example of expelling ignorance and misery together.

“Let these, my virtuous colleagues, be the subject of our care that, when we return among our fellow-citizens they may say, *Worthy representatives! you have done well. You have done justice and honor to our brave defenders. You have encouraged agriculture, cherished our decayed manufactures, given new life to commerce, and employment to our people.*

*“You have removed from our country the reproach of forgetting the poor— You have caused the cry of the orphan to cease— You have wiped the tear from the eye of the suffering mother— You have given comfort to the aged and infirm— You have penetrated into the gloomy recesses of wretchedness, and have banished it.*

*“Welcome among us, ye brave and virtuous representatives, and may your example be followed by your successors!”*

THOMAS PAINE.

PARIS, 1797.

## EXTRACTS FROM A REPLY TO THE BISHOP OF LLANDAFF

In 1796 the Bishop of Llandaff, Dr. Richard Watson, published a reply to Paine's *Age of Reason* which he entitled *An Apology for the Bible*. After reading it, Paine began to write his rebuttal, intending to publish it as Part III of *The Age of Reason*. He was still at work on it in October, 1800 and, in a letter dated at Paris, February 21, 1802, wrote to Elihu Palmer: "I expect to arrive in America in May next. I have a third part of the *Age of Reason* to publish when I arrive, which, if I mistake not, will make a stronger impression than anything, I have yet published on the subject." Evidently no publisher was willing to bring out the work, and these extracts were not published until after Paine's death. It was published in 1810 in *The Theophilanthropist*, a New York magazine, designed to promote the "mild, tolerant religion of virtue, which the Creator has wisely revealed to the conscience of all mankind. . . ." In this tract, Paine maintained that Bishop Llandaff was wrong in his contention that the Book of Genesis was the oldest work in the world. He argued that its story of the creation was taken from other peoples and that it was the last book of the Pentateuch to be written, and held that the Book of Job, a Gentile work, was composed before Genesis. —*Editor*.

### GENESIS

THE bishop says, "the oldest book in the world is Genesis." This is mere assertion; he offers no proof of it, and I go to controvert it, and to show that the book of Job, which is not a Hebrew book, but is a book of the Gentiles translated into Hebrew, is much older than the book of Genesis.

The book of Genesis means the book of Generations; to which are prefixed two chapters, the first and second, which contain two different cosmogonies, that is, two different accounts of the creation of the world, written by different persons, as I have shown in the preceding part of this work.

The first cosmogony begins at chapter i. 1, and ends at ii. 3; for the adverbial conjunction *thus*, with which chapter ii. begins, shows those

three verses to belong to chapter i. The second cosmogony begins at ii. 4, and ends with that chapter. •

In the first cosmogony the name of God is used without any epithet joined to it, and is repeated thirty-five times. In the second cosmogony it is always the Lord God, which is repeated eleven times. These two different styles of expression show these two chapters to be the work of two different persons, and the contradictions they contain show they cannot be the work of one and the same person, as I have already shown.

The third chapter, in which the style of Lord God is continued in every instance except in the supposed conversation between the woman and the serpent (for in every place in that chapter where the writer speaks, it is always the Lord God) shows this chapter to belong to the second cosmogony.

This chapter gives an account of what is called the *fall of man*, which is no other than a fable borrowed from, and constructed upon, the religious allegory of Zoroaster, or the Persians, of the annual progress of the sun through the twelve signs of the Zodiac. It is the *fall of the year*, the approach and *evil* of winter, announced by the ascension of the autumnal constellation of the *serpent* of the zodiac, and not the moral *fall of man*, that is the key of the allegory, and of the fable in Genesis borrowed from it.

The *fall of man*, in Genesis is said to have been produced by eating a certain fruit, generally taken to be an apple. The fall of the year is the season for the gathering and eating the new apples of that year. The allegory, therefore, holds with respect to the fruit, which it would not have done had it been an early summer fruit. It holds also with respect to place.

The tree is said to have been placed in the midst of the garden. But why in the midst of the garden more than in any other place? The solution of the allegory gives the answer to this question, which is, that the fall of the year, when apples and other autumnal fruits are ripe, and when days and nights are of equal length, is the mid-season between summer and winter.

It holds also with respect to clothing, and the temperature of the air. It is said in Genesis (iii. 21), "*Unto Adam and his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.*" But why are coats of skins mentioned? This cannot be understood as referring to anything of the nature of *moral evil*. The solution of the allegory gives again the answer to this question, which is, that the *evil of winter*, which follows the *fall*

*of the year*, fabulously called in Genesis the *fall of man*, makes warm clothing necessary.

But of these things I shall speak fully when I come in another part to treat of the ancient religion of the Persians, and compare it with the modern religion of the New Testament. At present I shall confine myself to the comparative antiquity of the books of Genesis and Job, taking, at the same time, whatever I may find in my way with respect to the fabulousness of the book of Genesis; for if what is called the *fall of man*, in Genesis, be fabulous, or allegorical, that which is called the redemption in the New Testament cannot be a fact. It is logically impossible, and impossible also in the nature of things, that *moral good* can redeem *physical evil*. I return to the bishop.

If Genesis be, as the bishop asserts, the oldest book in the world, and, consequently, the oldest and first written book of the Bible, and if the extraordinary things related in it; such as the creation of the world in six days, the tree of life, and of good and evil, the story of Eve and the talking serpent, the fall of man and his being turned out of Paradise, were facts, or even believed by the Jews to be facts, they would be referred to as fundamental matters, and that very frequently, in the books of the Bible that were written by various authors afterwards; whereas, there is not a book, chapter or verse of the Bible, from the time that Moses is said to have written the book of Genesis, to the book of Malachi, the last book in the Bible, including a space of more than a thousand years, in which there is any mention made of these things, or any of them, nor are they so much as alluded to. How will the bishop solve this difficulty, which stands as a circumstantial contradiction to his assertion?

There are but two ways of solving it:

First, that the book of Genesis is not an ancient book, that it has been written by some (now) unknown person, after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity, about a thousand years after the time that Moses is said to have lived, and put as a preface or introduction to the other books when they were formed into a canon in the time of the second temple, and therefore not having existed before that time, none of these things mentioned in it could be referred to in those books.

Secondly, that admitting Genesis to have been written by Moses, the Jews did not believe the things stated in it to be true, and therefore, as they could not refer to them as facts, they would not refer to them as fables. The first of these solutions goes against the antiquity of the book,

and the second against its authenticity; and the bishop may take which he please.

But be the author of Genesis whoever it may, there is abundant evidence to show, as well from the early Christian writers as from the Jews themselves, that the things stated in that book were not believed to be facts. Why they have been believed as facts since that time, when better and fuller knowledge existed on the case than is known now, can be accounted for only on the imposition of priestcraft.

Augustine, one of the early champions of the Christian Church, acknowledges in his "City of God" that the adventure of Eve and the serpent, and the account of Paradise, were generally considered as fiction or allegory. He regards them as allegory himself, without attempting to give any explanation, but he supposes that a better explanation might be found than those that had been offered.

Origen, another early champion of the Church, says, "What man of good sense can ever persuade himself that there were a first, a second, and a third day, and that each of these days had a night when there were yet neither sun, moon, nor stars? What man can be stupid enough to believe that God, acting the part of a gardener, had planted a garden in the East, that the tree of life was a real tree, and that its fruit had the virtue of making those who eat of it live forever?"

Maimonides, one of the most learned and celebrated of the Jewish rabbins, who lived in the Eleventh Century (about seven or eight hundred years ago) and to whom the bishop refers in his answer to me, is very explicit in his book entitled "Moreh Nebuchim," upon the non-reality of the things stated in the account of the Creation in the book of Genesis.

We ought not (says he) to understand, nor take according to the letter, that which is written in the book of the creation; nor to have the same ideas of it which common men have; otherwise our ancient sages would not have recommended with so much care to conceal the sense of it, and not to raise the allegorical veil which envelopes the truths it contains.

The book of Genesis, taken according to the letter, gives the most absurd and the most extravagant ideas of the Divinity. Whoever shall find out the sense of it, ought to restrain himself from divulging it. It is a maxim which all our sages repeat, and above all with respect to the work of six days.

It may happen that some one, with the aid he may borrow from others, may hit upon the meaning of it. In that case he ought to impose silence upon

himself; or if he speak of it, he ought to speak obscurely, and in an enigmatical manner, as I do myself, leaving the rest to be found out by those who can understand me.

This is, certainly, a very extraordinary declaration of Maimonides, taking all the parts of it. First, he declares, that the account of the Creation in the book of Genesis is not a fact, and that to believe it to be a fact gives the most absurd and the most extravagant ideas of the Divinity. Secondly, that it is an allegory. Thirdly, that the allegory has a concealed secret. Fourthly, that whoever can find the secret ought not to tell it.

It is this last part that is the most extraordinary. Why all this care of the Jewish rabbins to prevent what they call the concealed meaning, or the secret, from being known, and if known to prevent any of their people from telling it? It certainly must be something which the Jewish nation are afraid or ashamed the world should know.

It must be something personal to them as a people, and not a secret of a divine nature, which the more it is known the more it increases the glory of the Creator, and the gratitude and happiness of man. It is not God's secret but their own they are keeping. I go to unveil the secret.

The case is, the Jews have stolen their cosmogony, that is, their account of the Creation, from the cosmogony of the Persians, contained in the books of Zoroaster, the Persian law-giver, and brought it with them when they returned from captivity by the benevolence of Cyrus, King of Persia. For it is evident, from the silence of all the books of the Bible upon the subject of the Creation, that the Jews had no cosmogony before that time.

If they had a cosmogony from the time of Moses, some of their judges who governed during more than four hundred years, or of their kings, the Davids and Solomons of their day, who governed nearly five hundred years, or of their prophets and psalmists, who lived in the meantime, would have mentioned it.

It would, either as fact or fable, have been the grandest of all subjects for a psalm. It would have suited to a tittle the ranting poetical genius of Isaiah, or served as a cordial to the gloomy Jeremiah. But not one word, not even a whisper, does any of the Bible authors give upon the subject.

To conceal the theft the rabbins of the second temple have published Genesis as a book of Moses, and have enjoined secrecy to all their people, who by traveling or otherwise might happen to discover from

whence the cosmogony was borrowed, not to tell it. The evidence of circumstances is often unanswerable, and there is no other than this which I have given that goes to the whole of the case, and this does.

Diogenes Laertius, an ancient and respectable author, whom the bishop in his answer to me quotes on another occasion, has a passage that corresponds with the solution here given. In speaking of the religion of the Persians as promulgated by their priests or magi, he says the Jewish rabbins were the successors of their doctrine.

Having thus spoken on the plagiarism, and on the non-reality of the book of Genesis, I will give some additional evidence that Moses is not the author of that book.

Aben-Ezra, a celebrated Jewish author, who lived about seven hundred years ago, and whom the bishop allows to have been a man of great erudition, has made a great many observations, too numerous to be repeated here, to show that Moses was not, and could not be, the author of the book of Genesis, nor of any of the five books that bear his name.

Spinoza, another learned Jew, who lived about a hundred and thirty years ago, recites, in his treatise on the ceremonies of the Jews, ancient and modern, the observations of Aben-Ezra, to which he adds many others, to show that Moses is not the author of those books.

He also says, and shows his reasons for saying it, that the Bible did not exist as a book till the time of the Maccabees, which was more than a hundred years after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity.

In the second part of "The Age of Reason," I have, among other things, referred to nine verses in Genesis xxxvi, beginning at verse 31 (These are the kings that reigned in Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel), which it is impossible could have been written by Moses, or in the time of Moses, and which could not have been written till after the Jew kings began to reign in Israel, which was not till several hundred years after the time of Moses.

The bishop allows this, and says "I think you say true." But he then quibbles, and says that "a small addition to a book does not destroy either the genuineness or authenticity of the whole book." This is priest-craft. These verses do not stand in the book as an addition to it, but as making a part of the whole book, and which it is impossible that Moses could write.

The bishop would reject the antiquity of any other book if it could be



proved from the words of the book itself that a part of it could not have been written till several hundred years after the reputed author of it was dead. He would call such a book a forgery. I am authorized, therefore, to call the book of Genesis a forgery.

Combining, then, all the foregoing circumstances together, respecting the antiquity and authenticity of the book of Genesis, a conclusion will naturally follow therefrom. Those circumstances are:

First, that certain parts of the book cannot possibly have been written by Moses, and that the other parts carry no evidence of having been written by him.

Secondly, the universal silence of all the following books of the Bible, for about a thousand years, upon the extraordinary things spoken of in Genesis, such as the creation of the world in six days—the garden of Eden—the tree of knowledge—the tree of life—the story of Eve and the serpent—the fall of man and of his being turned out of this fine garden, together with Noah's flood, and the tower of Babel.

Thirdly, the silence of all the books of the Bible upon even the name of Moses, from the book of Joshua until the second book of Kings, which was not written till after the captivity, for it gives an account of the captivity, a period of about a thousand years.

Strange that a man who is proclaimed as the historian of the Creation, the privy-counsellor and confidant of the Almighty—the legislator of the Jewish nation and the founder of its religion; strange, I say, that even the name of such a man should not find a place in their books for a thousand years, if they knew or believed anything about him or the books he is said to have written.

Fourthly, the opinion of some of the most celebrated of the Jewish commentators that Moses is not the author of the book of Genesis, founded on the reasons given for that opinion.

Fifthly, the opinion of the early Christian writers, and of the great champion of Jewish literature, Maimonides, that the book of Genesis is not a book of facts.

Sixthly, the silence imposed by all the Jewish rabbins, and by Maimonides himself, upon the Jewish nation, not to speak of anything they may happen to know or discover respecting the cosmogony (or creation of the world), in the book of Genesis.

From these circumstances the following conclusions offer:

First, that the book of Genesis is not a book of facts.

Secondly, that as no mention is made throughout the Bible of any of

the extraordinary things related in [it], Genesis has not been written till after the other books were written, and put as a preface to the Bible. Every one knows that a preface to a book, though it stands first, is the last written.

Thirdly, that the silence imposed by all the Jewish rabbins and by Maimonides upon the Jewish nation, to keep silence upon everything related in their cosmogony, evinces a secret they are not willing should be known.

The secret therefore explains itself to be that when the Jews were in captivity in Babylon and Persia they became acquainted with the cosmogony of the Persians, as registered in the Zend-Avesta of Zoroaster, the Persian law-giver, which, after their return from captivity, they manufactured and modeled as their own, and antedated it by giving to it the name of Moses. The case admits of no other explanation.

From all which it appears that the book of Genesis, instead of being the *oldest book in the world*, as the bishop calls it, has been the last written book of the Bible, and that the cosmogony it contains has been manufactured.

#### OF THE NAMES IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS

Everything in Genesis serves as evidence or symptom that the book has been composed in some late period of the Jewish nation. Even the names mentioned in it serve to this purpose.

Nothing is more common or more natural than to name the children of succeeding generations after the names of those who had been celebrated in some former generation. This holds good with respect to all the people and all the histories we know of, and it does not hold good with the Bible. There must be some cause for this.

This book of Genesis tells us of a man whom it calls Adam, and of his sons Abel and Seth; of Enoch, who lived three hundred and sixty-five years (it is exactly the number of days in a year), and that then God took him up. (It has the appearance of being taken from some allegory of the Gentiles on the commencement and termination of the year, by the progress of the sun through the twelve signs of the zodiac, on which the allegorical religion of the Gentiles was founded.)

It tells us of Methuselah who lived 969 years, and of a long train of other names in the fifth chapter. It then passes on to a man whom it calls Noah, and his sons, Shem, Ham and Japhet; then to Lot, Abraham,

Isaac and Jacob and his sons, with which the book of Genesis finishes.

All these, according to the account given in that book were the most extraordinary and celebrated of men. They were moreover heads of families. Adam was the father of the world. Enoch, for his righteousness, was taken up to heaven. Methuselah lived to almost a thousand years. He was the son of Enoch, the man of 365, the number of days in a year. It has the appearance of being the continuation of an allegory on the 365 days of the year, and its abundant productions.

Noah was selected from all the world to be preserved when it was drowned, and became the second father of the world. Abraham was the father of the faithful multitude. Isaac and Jacob were the inheritors of his fame, and the last was the father of the twelve tribes.

Now, if these very wonderful men and their names, and the book that records them, had been known by the Jews before the Babylonian captivity, those names would have been as common among the Jews before that period as they have been since. We now hear of thousands of Abrahams, Isaacs, and Jacobs among the Jews, but there were none of that name before the Babylonian captivity. The Bible does not mention one, though from the time that Abraham is said to have lived to the time of the Babylonian captivity is about 1,400 years.

How is it to be accounted for that there have been so many thousands, and perhaps hundreds of thousands of Jews of the names of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob since that period, and not one before?

It can be accounted for but one way, which is, that before the Babylonian captivity the Jews had no such book as Genesis, nor knew anything of the names and persons it mentions, nor of the things it relates, and that the stories in it have been manufactured since that time. From the Arabic name *Ibrahim* (which is the manner the Turks write that name to this day) the Jews have, most probably, manufactured their Abraham.

I will advance my observations a point further, and speak of the names of *Moses* and *Aaron*, mentioned for the first time in the book of Exodus. There are now, and have continued to be from the time of the Babylonian captivity, or soon after it, thousands of Jews of the names of *Moses* and *Aaron*, and we read not of any of that name before that time. The Bible does not mention one.

The direct inference from this is, that the Jews knew of no such book as Exodus before the Babylonian captivity. In fact, that it did not exist before that time, and that it is only since the book has been invented that the names of *Moses* and *Aaron* have been common among the Jews.

It is applicable to the purpose to observe that the picturesque work, called *Mosaic-work*; spelled the same as you would say the *Mosaic* account of the Creation, is not derived from the word *Moses* but from *Muses* (the *Muses*), because of the variegated and picturesque pavement in the temple dedicated to the *Muses*. This carries a strong implication that the name *Moses* is drawn from the same source, and that he is not a real but an allegorical person, as Maimonides describes what is called the *Mosaic* account of the Creation to be.

I will go a point still further. The Jews now know the book of Genesis, and the names of all the persons mentioned in the first *ten chapters* of that book, from Adam to Noah: yet we do not hear (I speak for myself) of any *Jew* of the present day, of the name of Adam, Abel, Seth, Enoch, Methuselah, Noah, Shem, Ham or Japhet (names mentioned in the first ten chapters), though these were, according to the account in that book, the most extraordinary of all the names that make up the catalogue of the Jewish chronology.

The names the Jews now adopt are those that are mentioned in Genesis after the tenth chapter, as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc. How then does it happen that they do not adopt the names found in the first ten chapters? Here is evidently a line of division drawn between the first ten chapters of Genesis and the remaining chapters, with respect to the adoption of names. There must be some cause for this, and I go to offer a solution of the problem.

The reader will recollect the quotation I have already made from the Jewish rabbin, Maimonides, wherein he says, "We ought not to understand nor to take according to the letter that which is written in the book of the creation. . . . It is a maxim (says he) which all our sages repeat, *above all* with respect to the work of six days." The qualifying expression *above all* implies there are other parts of the book, though not so important, that ought not to be understood or taken according to the letter, and as the Jews do not adopt the names mentioned in the first ten chapters, it appears evident those chapters are included in the injunction not to take them in a literal sense, or according to the letter.

From which it follows, that the persons or characters mentioned in the first ten chapters, as Adam, Abel, Seth, Enoch, Methuselah, and so on to Noah, are not real, but fictitious or allegorical persons, and therefore the Jews do not adopt their names into their families. If they affixed the same idea of reality to them as they do to those that follow after the tenth chapter, the names of Adam, Abel, Seth, etc., would be as com-

mon among the Jews of the present day as are those of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and Aaron.

In the superstition they have been in, scarcely a Jew family would have been without an *Enoch*, as a presage of his going to heaven as ambassador for the whole family. Every mother who wished that the *days* of her son *might be long in the land* would call him *Methuselah*; and all the Jews that might have to traverse the ocean would be named Noah, as a charm against shipwreck and drowning.

This is domestic evidence against the book of Genesis, which, joined to the several kinds of evidence before recited, show the book of Genesis not to be older than the Babylonian captivity, and to be fictitious. I proceed to fix the character and antiquity of the book of Job.

The book of Job has not the least appearance of being a book of the Jews, and though printed among the books of the Bible, does not belong to it. There is no reference to it in any Jewish law or ceremony. On the contrary, all the internal evidence it contains shows it to be a book of the Gentiles, either of Persia or Chaldea.

The name of Job does not appear to be a Jewish name. There is no Jew of that name in any of the books of the Bible, neither is there now that I ever heard of. The country where Job is said or supposed to have lived, or rather where the scene of the drama is laid, is called Uz, and there was no place of that name ever belonging to the Jews. If Uz is the same as Ur, it was in Chaldea, the country of the Gentiles.

The Jews can give no account how they came by this book, nor who was the author, nor the time when it was written. Origen, in his work against Celsus (in the first ages of the Christian Church), says that *the book of Job is older than Moses*. Aben-Ezra, the Jewish commentator, whom (as I have before said) the bishop allows to have been a man of great erudition, and who certainly understood his own language, says that the book of Job has been translated from another language into Hebrew.

Spinoza, another Jewish commentator of great learning, confirms the opinion of Aben-Ezra, and says moreover, "*Je crois que Job était Gentil*";<sup>4</sup> "I believe that Job was a Gentile."

The bishop (in answer to me), says, that "the structure of the whole book of Job, in whatever light of history or drama it be considered, is

<sup>4</sup> Spinoza on the Ceremonies of the Jews, p. 296, published in French at Amsterdam, 1678.—*Author*.

founded on the belief that prevailed with the Persians and Chaldeans, and other Gentile nations, of a good and an evil spirit."

In speaking of the good and evil spirit of the Persians, the bishop writes them *Arimanius* and *Oromasdes*. I will not dispute about the orthography, because I know that translated names are differently spelled in different languages. But he has nevertheless made a capital error. He has put the devil first; for *Arimanius*, or, as it is more generally written, *Ahriman*, is the *evil spirit*, and *Oromasdes* or *Ormud* the good spirit.

He has made the same mistake in the same paragraph, in speaking of the good and evil spirit of the ancient Egyptians, *Osiris* and *Typho*; he puts *Typho* before *Osiris*. The error is just the same as if the bishop in writing about the Christian religion, or in preaching a sermon, were to say the *Devil* and *God*.

A priest ought to know his own trade better. We agree, however, about the structure of the book of Job, that it is Gentile. I have said in the second part of "The Age of Reason," and given my reasons for it, that *the drama of it is not Hebrew*.

From the testimonies I have cited, that of Origen, who, about fourteen hundred years ago, said that the book of Job was more ancient than Moses, that of Aben-Ezra who, in his commentary on Job, says it has been translated from another language (and consequently from a Gentile language) into Hebrew; that of Spinoza, who not only says the same thing, but that the author of it was a Gentile; and that of the bishop, who says that the structure of the whole book is Gentile; it follows, in the first place, that the book of Job is not a book of the Jews originally.

Then, in order to determine to what people or nation any book of religion belongs, we must compare it with the leading dogmas and precepts of that people or nation; and therefore, upon the bishop's own construction, the book of Job belongs either to the ancient Persians, the Chaldeans or the Egyptians; because the structure of it is consistent with the dogma they held, that of a good and an evil spirit, called in Job *God* and *Satan*, existing as distinct and separate beings, and it is not consistent with any dogma of the Jews.

The belief of a good and an evil spirit, existing as distinct and separate beings, is not a dogma to be found in any of the books of the Bible. It is not till we come to the New Testament that we hear of any such

dogma. There the person called the Son of God holds conversation with Satan on a mountain, as familiarly as is represented in the drama of Job. Consequently the bishop cannot say, in this respect, that the New Testament is founded upon the Old.

According to the Old, the God of the Jews was the God of everything. All good and evil came from Him. According to Exodus it was God, and not the devil, that hardened Pharaoh's heart. According to the book of Samuel, it was an evil spirit from *God* that troubled Saul. And Ezekiel makes God to say, in speaking of the Jews, "*I gave them the statutes that were not good, and judgments by which they should not live.*"

The Bible describes the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in such a contradictory manner, and under such a twofold character, there would be no knowing when He was in earnest and when in irony; when to believe, and when not.

As to the precepts, principles, and maxims in the book of Job, they show that the people abusively called the heathen in the books of the Jews, had the most sublime ideas of the Creator, and the most exalted devotional morality. It was the Jews who dishonored God. It was the Gentiles who glorified Him.

As to the fabulous personifications introduced by the Greek and Latin poets, it was a corruption of the ancient religion of the Gentiles, which consisted in the adoration of a first cause of the works of the creation, in which the sun was the great visible agent. It appears to have been a religion of gratitude and adoration, and not of prayer and discontented solicitation.

In Job we find adoration and submission, but not prayer. Even the Ten Commandments enjoin not prayer. Prayer has been added to devotion by the Church of Rome, as the instrument of fees and perquisites.

All prayers by the priests of the Christian Church, whether public or private, must be paid for. It may be right, individually, to pray for virtues or mental instruction, but not for things. It is an attempt to dictate to the Almighty in the government of the world. But to return to the book of Job.

As the book of Job decides itself to be a book of the Gentiles, the next thing is to find out to what particular nation it belongs, and lastly, what is its antiquity.

As a composition, it is sublime, beautiful and scientific: full of sentiment, and abounding in grand metaphorical description. As a drama it

is regular. The *dramatis personæ*, the persons performing the several parts, are regularly introduced, and speak without interruption or confusion. The scene, as I have before said, is laid in the country of the Gentiles, and the unities, though not always necessary in a drama, are observed here as strictly as the subject would admit.

In the last act, where the Almighty is introduced as speaking from the whirlwind, to decide the controversy between Job and his friends, it is an idea as grand as poetical imagination can conceive. What follows of Job's future prosperity does not belong to it as a drama. It is an epilogue of the writer, as the first verses of the first chapter, which gave an account of Job, his country and his riches, are the prologue.

The book carries the appearance of being the work of some of the Persian magi, not only because the structure of it corresponds to the dogma of the religion of those people, as founded by Zoroaster, but from the astronomical references in it to the constellations of the zodiac and other objects in the heavens, of which the sun, in their religion called Mithra, was the chief.

Job, in describing the power of God (ix. 7-9), says, "Who commandeth the sun, and it riseth not, and sealeth up the stars. Who alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea. Who maketh Arcturus, Orion and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south." All this astronomical allusion is consistent with the religion of the Persians.

Establishing then the book of Job as the work of some of the Persian or Eastern magi, the case naturally follows that when the Jews returned from captivity, by the permission of Cyrus, King of Persia, they brought this book with them, had it translated into Hebrew, and put into their scriptural canons, which were not formed till after their return. This will account for the name of Job being mentioned in Ezekiel (xiv. 14), who was one of the captives, and also for its not being mentioned in any book said or supposed to have been written before the captivity.

Among the astronomical allusions in the book, there is one which serves to fix its antiquity. It is that where God is made to say to Job, in the style of reprimand, "*Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades*" (xxxviii. 31). As the explanation of this depends upon astronomical calculation, I will, for the sake of those who would not otherwise understand it, endeavor to explain it as clearly as the subject will admit.

The Pleiades are a cluster of pale, milky stars, about the size of a man's hand, in the constellation Taurus, or in English, the Bull. It is



one of the constellations of the zodiac, of which there are twelve, answering to the twelve months of the year. The Pleiades are visible in the winter nights, but not in the summer nights, being then below the horizon.

The zodiac is an imaginary belt or circle in the heavens, eighteen degrees broad, in which the sun apparently makes his annual course, and in which all the planets move. When the sun appears to our view to be between us and the group of stars forming such or such a constellation, he is said to be in that constellation. Consequently the constellations he appears to be in, in the summer, are directly opposite to those he appeared in in the winter, and the same with respect to spring and autumn.

The zodiac, besides being divided into twelve constellations, is also, like every other circle, great or small, divided into 360 equal parts, called degrees; consequently each constellation contains 30 degrees. The constellations of the zodiac are generally called signs, to distinguish them from the constellations that are placed out of the zodiac, and this is the name I shall now use.

The procession of the Equinoxes is the part most difficult to explain, and it is on this that the explanation chiefly depends.

The Equinoxes correspond to the two seasons of the year when the sun makes equal day and night.

**SABBATH OR SUNDAY.**—The seventh day, or more properly speaking the period of seven days, was originally a numerical division of time and nothing more; and had the bishop been acquainted with the history of astronomy, he would have known this. The annual revolution of the earth makes what we call a year. The year is artificially divided into months, the months into weeks of seven days, the days into hours, etc. The period of seven days, like any other of the artificial divisions of the year, is only a fractional part thereof, contrived for the convenience of countries. It is ignorance, imposition, and priestcraft, that have called it otherwise.

They might as well talk of the Lord's month, of the Lord's week, of the Lord's hour, as of the Lord's day. All time is His, and no part of it is more holy or more sacred than another. It is, however, necessary to the trade of a priest that he should preach up a distinction of days.

Before the science of astronomy was studied and carried to the degree of eminence to which it was by the Egyptians and Chaldeans, the people of those times had no other helps than what common observation of the

very visible changes of the sun and moon afforded to enable them to keep an account of the progress of time.

As far as history establishes the point, the Egyptians were the first people who divided the year into twelve months. Herodotus, who lived above 2,200 years ago, and is the most ancient historian whose works have reached our time, says, *they did this by the knowledge they had of the stars.*

As to the Jews, there is not one single improvement in any science or in any scientific art that they ever produced. They were the most ignorant of all the illiterate world. If the word of the Lord had come to them, as they pretend, and as the bishop professes to believe, and that they were to be the harbingers of it to the rest of the world, the Lord would have taught them the use of letters, and the art of printing; for without the means of communicating the word, it could not be communicated; whereas letters were the invention of the Gentile world, and printing of the modern world. But to return to my subject—

Before the helps which the science of astronomy afforded, the people, as before said, had no other whereby to keep an account of the progress of time than what the common and very visible changes of the sun and moon afforded. They saw that a great number of days made a year, but the account of them was too tedious and too difficult to be kept numerically, from one to three hundred and sixty-five; neither did they know the true time of a solar year.

It therefore became necessary, for the purpose of marking the progress of days, to put them into small parcels such as are now called weeks; and which consisted as they now do of seven days.

By this means the memory was assisted as it is with us at this day; for we do not say of anything past that it was fifty, sixty or seventy days ago, but that it was so many weeks, or, if longer time, so many months. It is impossible to keep an account of time without helps of this kind.

Julian Scaliger, the inventor of the Julian period of 7,980 years, produced by multiplying the cycle of the moon, the cycle of the sun, and the years of an indiction, 19, 28, 15, into each other, says that the custom of reckoning by periods of seven days was used by the Assyrians, the Egyptians, the Hebrews, the people of India, the Arabs, and by all the nations of the East.

In addition to what Scaliger says, it is evident that in Britain, in Germany, and the north of Europe, they reckoned by periods of seven days

long before the book called the Bible was known in those parts; and, consequently, that they did not take that mode of reckoning from anything written in that book.

That they reckoned by periods of seven days is evident from their having seven names and no more for the several days; and which have not the most distant relation to anything in the book of Genesis, or to that which is called the fourth commandment.

Those names are still retained in England, with no other alteration than what has been produced by molding the Saxon and Danish languages into modern English:

1. Sun-day from *Sunne* the sun, and *dag*, day, Saxon. *Sondag*, Danish. The day dedicated to the sun.

2. Monday, that is moonday, from *Mona*, the moon, Saxon. *Moano*, Danish. Day dedicated to the moon.

3. Tuesday, that is *Tuisco's-day*. The day dedicated to the Idol *Tuisco*.

4. Wednes-day, that is *Woden's-day*. The day dedicated to *Woden*, the Mars of the Germans.

5. Thursday, that is *Thor's-day*, dedicated to the Idol *Thor*.

6. Friday, that is *Friga's-day*. The day dedicated to *Friga*, the Venus of the Saxons.

7. Saturday from *Seaten* (*Saturn*), an idol of the Saxons; one of the emblems representing time, which continually terminates and renews itself; the last day of the period of seven days.

When we see a certain mode of reckoning general among nations totally unconnected, differing from each other in religion and in government, and some of them unknown to each other, we may be certain that it arises from some natural and common cause, prevailing alike over all, and which strikes everyone in the same manner.

Thus all nations have reckoned arithmetically by tens, because the people of all nations have ten fingers. If they had more or less than ten, the mode of arithmetical reckoning would have followed that number, for the fingers are a natural numeration table to all the world. I now come to show why the period of seven days is so generally adopted.

Though the sun is the great luminary of the world, and the animating cause of all the fruits of the earth, the moon by renewing herself more than twelve times oftener than the sun, which does it but once a year, served the rustic world as a natural almanac, as the fingers served it for a numeration table.

All the world could see the moon, her changes, and her monthly revo-

lutions; and their mode of reckoning time was accommodated, as nearly as could possibly be done in round numbers, to agree with the changes of that planet, their natural almanac. The moon performs her natural revolution round the earth in twenty-nine days and a half. She goes from a new moon to a half moon, to a full moon, to a half moon gibbous or convex, and then to a new moon again.

Each of these changes is performed in seven days and nine hours; but seven days is the nearest division in round numbers that could be taken; and this was sufficient to suggest the universal custom of reckoning by periods of seven days, since it is impossible to reckon time without some stated period.

How the odd hours could be disposed of without interfering with the regular periods of seven days, in case the ancients recommenced a new Septenary period with every new moon, required no more difficulty than it did to regulate the Egyptian calendar afterwards of twelve months of thirty days each, or the odd hour in the Julian calendar, or the odd days and hours in the French calendar. In all cases it is done by the addition of complementary days; and it can be done in no otherwise.

The bishop knows that as the solar year does not end at the termination of what we call a day, but runs some hours into the next day, as the quarter of the moon runs some hours beyond seven days; that it is impossible to give the year any fixed number of days that will not in course of years become wrong, and make a complementary time necessary to keep the nominal year parallel with the solar year.

The same must have been the case with those who regulated time formerly by lunar revolutions. They would have to add three days to every second moon, or in that proportion, in order to make the new moon and the new week commence together, like the nominal year and the solar year.

Diodorus of Sicily, who, as before said, lived before Christ was born, in giving an account of times much anterior to his own, speaks of years of three months, of four months, and of six months. These could be of no other than years composed of lunar revolutions, and therefore, to bring the several periods of seven days to agree with such years, there must have been complementary days.

The moon was the first almanac the world knew; and the only one which the face of the heavens afforded to common spectators. Her changes and her revolutions have entered into all the calendars that have been known in the known world.

The division of the year into twelve months, which, as before shown, was first done by the Egyptians, though arranged with astronomical knowledge, had reference to the twelve moons, or more properly speaking to the twelve lunar revolutions, that appear in the space of a solar year; as the period of seven days had reference to one revolution of the moon.

The feasts of the Jews were, and those of the Christian Church still are, regulated by the moon. The Jews observed the feasts of the new moon and full moon, and therefore the period of seven days was necessary to them.

All the feasts of the Christian Church are regulated by the moon. That called Easter governs all the rest, and the moon governs Easter. It is always the first Sunday after the first full moon that happens after the vernal equinox, or twenty-first of March.

In proportion as the science of astronomy was studied and improved by the Egyptians and Chaldeans, and the solar year regulated by astronomical observations, the custom of reckoning by lunar revolutions became of less use, and in time discontinued. But such is the harmony of all parts of the machinery of the universe, that a calculation made from the motion of one part will correspond with the motion of some other.

The period of seven days, deduced from the revolution of the moon round the earth, corresponded nearer than any other period of days would do to the revolution of the earth round the sun. Fifty-two periods of seven days make 364, which is within one day and some odd hours of a solar year; and there is no other periodical number that will do the same, till we come to the number thirteen, which is too great for common use, and the numbers before seven are too small.

The custom therefore of reckoning by periods of seven days, as best suited to the revolution of the moon, applied with equal convenience to the solar year, and became united with it. But the decimal division of time, as regulated by the French calendar, is superior to every other method.<sup>5</sup>

There is no part of the Bible that is supposed to have been written by

<sup>5</sup> The method Paine refers to was adopted by the French National Convention in 1793. According to this division of time the year was divided into twelve months of thirty days each, with five extra days (six every fourth year) which were festivals. The months were divided by decades, and the days into ten hours of one hundred minutes each.—*Editor*.

persons who lived before the time of Josiah (which was a thousand years after the time of Moses), that mentions anything about the Sabbath as a day consecrated to that which is called the fourth commandment, or that the Jews kept any such day.

Had any such day been kept, during the thousand years of which I am speaking, it certainly would have been mentioned frequently; and that it should never be mentioned is strong presumptive and circumstantial evidence that no such day was kept. But mention is often made of the feasts of the new moon, and of the full moon; for the Jews, as before shown, worshiped the moon; and the word *Sabbath* was applied by the Jews to the feasts of that planet, and to those of their other deities.

It is said in Hosea, ii. 11, in speaking of the Jewish nation, "And I will cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her *new moons*, and her *sabbaths*, and all her solemn feasts." Nobody will be so foolish as to contend that the *sabbaths* here spoken of are Mosaic sabbaths. The construction of the verse implies they are lunar sabbaths, or sabbaths of the moon.

It ought also to be observed that Hosea lived in the time of Ahaz and Hezekiah, about seventy years before the time of Josiah, when the law called the Law of Moses is said to have been found; and, consequently, the sabbaths that Hosea speaks of are sabbaths of the Idolatry.

When those priestly reformers (impostors I should call them) Hilkiah, Ezra and Nehemiah, began to produce books under the name of the books of Moses, they found the word *sabbath* in use: and as to the period of seven days, it is, like numbering arithmetically by tens, from time immemorial.

But having found them in use, they continued to make them serve to the support of their new imposition. They trumped up a story of the creation being made in six days, and of the Creator resting on the seventh, to suit with the lunar and chronological period of seven days; and they manufactured a commandment to agree with both.

Impostors always work in this manner. They put fables for originals, and causes for effects.

There is scarcely any part of science, or anything in nature, which those impostors and blasphemers of science, called priests, as well Christians as Jews, have not, at some time or other, perverted, or sought to pervert to the purpose of superstition and falsehood.

Everything wonderful in appearance has been ascribed to angels, to

devils, or to saints. Everything ancient has some legendary tale annexed to it. The common operations of nature have not escaped their practise of corrupting everything.

**FUTURE STATE.** The idea of a future state was a universal idea to all nations except the Jews. At the time, and long before, Jesus Christ and the men called his disciples were born, it had been sublimely treated of by Cicero (in his book on Old Age), by Plato, Socrates, Xenophon and other of the ancient theologians, whom the abusive Christian Church calls heathen. Xenophon represents the elder Cyrus speaking after this manner:

Think not, my dearest children, that when I depart from you, I shall be no more: but remember that my soul, even while I lived among you, was invisible to you; yet by my actions you were sensible it existed in this body. Believe it therefore existing still, though it be still unseen. How quickly would the honors of illustrious men perish after death, if their souls performed nothing to preserve their fame?

For my own part, I could never think that the soul while in a mortal body lives, but when departed from it dies; or that its consciousness is lost when it is discharged out of an unconscious habitation. But when it is freed from all corporeal alliance, it is then that it truly exists.

Since then the idea of a future existence was universal, it may be asked, what new doctrine does the New Testament contain? I answer, that of corrupting the theory of the ancient theologians by annexing to it the heavy and gloomy doctrine of the resurrection of the body.

As to the resurrection of the body, whether the same body or another, it is a miserable conceit, fit only to be preached to man as an animal. It is not worthy to be called doctrine. Such an idea never entered the brain of any visionary but those of the Christian Church; yet it is in this that the novelty of the New Testament consists! All the other matters serve but as props to this, and those props are most wretchedly put together.

**MIRACLES.** The Christian Church is full of miracles. In one of the churches of Brabant they show a number of cannon balls which, they say, the Virgin Mary, in some former war, caught in her muslin *apron* as they came roaring out of the cannon's mouth, to prevent their hurting the *saints* of her favorite army. She does no such feats now-a-days. Perhaps the reason is that the infidels have taken away her muslin apron.

They show also, between Montmartre and the village of St. Denis, several places where they say St. Denis stopped with his head in his hands after it had been cut off at Montmartre. The Protestants will call

those things lies; and where is the proof that all the other things called miracles are not as great lies as those?

CABALISM. Christ, say those Cabalists, came in the *fulness of time*. And pray what is the fulness of time? The words admit of no idea. They are perfectly cabalistical. Time is a word invented to describe to our conception a greater or less portion of eternity. It may be a minute, a portion of eternity measured by the vibration of a pendulum of a certain length; it may be a day, a year, a hundred, or a thousand years, or any other quantity. Those portions are only greater or less comparatively.

The word "fulness" applies not to any of them. The idea of fulness of time cannot be conceived. A woman with child and ready for delivery, as Mary was when Christ was born, may be said to have gone her full time; but it is the woman that is full, not time.

It may also be said figuratively, in certain cases, that the times are full of events; but time itself is incapable of being full of itself. Ye hypocrites! learn to speak intelligible language.

It happened to be a time of peace when they say Christ was born; and what then? There had been many such intervals; and have been many such since. Time was no fuller in any of them than in the other. If he were he would be fuller now than he ever was before. If he was full then he must be bursting now.

But peace or war have relation to circumstances, and not to time; and those Cabalists would be at as much loss to make out any meaning to fulness of circumstances as to fulness of time. And if they could, it would be fatal; for fulness of circumstances would mean when there are not more circumstances to happen; and fulness of time when there is no more time to follow.

Christ, therefore, like every other person, was neither in the fulness of one nor the other.

But though we cannot conceive the idea of fulness of time, because we cannot have conception of a time when there shall be no time; nor of fulness of circumstance, because we cannot conceive a state of existence to be without circumstances; we can often see, after a thing is past, if any circumstance necessary to give the utmost activity and success to that thing was wanting at the time that thing took place.

If such a circumstance was wanting, we may be certain that the thing which took place was not a thing of God's ordaining; whose work is always perfect, and His means perfect means. They tell us that Christ was the Son of God: in that case, he would have known everything;



and he came upon earth to make known the will of God to man throughout the whole earth.

If this had been true, Christ would have known and would have been furnished with all the possible means of doing it; and would have instructed mankind, or at least his apostles, in the use of such of the means as they could use themselves to facilitate the accomplishment of the mission; consequently he would have instructed them in the art of printing, for the press is the tongue of the world, and without which, his or their preaching was less than a whistle compared to thunder.

Since then he did not do this, he had not the means necessary to the mission; and consequently had not the mission.

They tell us in the book of Acts (ii.), a very stupid story of the apostles' having the gift of tongues; and *cloven tongues of fire* descended and sat upon each of them. Perhaps it was this story of cloven tongues that gave rise to the notion of slitting jackdaws' tongues to make them talk. Be that however as it may, the gift of tongues, even if it were true, would be but of little use without the art of printing.

I can sit in my chamber, as I do while writing this, and by the aid of printing can send the thoughts I am writing through the greatest part of Europe, to the East Indies, and over all North America, in a few months. Jesus Christ and his apostles could not do this. They had not the means, and the want of means detects the pretended mission.

There are three modes of communication. Speaking, writing and printing. The first is exceedingly limited. A man's voice can be heard but a few yards of distance; and his person can be but in one place. Writing is much more extensive; but the thing written cannot be multiplied but at great expense, and the multiplication will be slow and incorrect.

Were there no other means of circulating what priests call the Word of God (the Old and New Testament) than by writing copies, those copies could not be purchased at less than forty pounds sterling each; consequently, but few people could purchase them, while the writers could scarcely obtain a livelihood by it.

But the art of printing changes all the cases, and opens a scene as vast as the world. It gives to man a sort of divine attribute. It gives to him mental omnipresence. He can be everywhere and at the same instant; for wherever he is read he is mentally there.

The case applies not only against the pretended mission of Christ and his apostles but against everything that priests call the Word of God, and against all those who pretend to deliver it; for had God ever de-

livered any verbal word, He would have taught the means of communicating it. The one without the other is inconsistent with the wisdom we conceive of the Creator.

Genesis iii. 21 tells us that *God made coats of skin and clothed Adam and Eve*. It was infinitely more important that man should be taught the art of printing, than that Adam should be taught to make a pair of leather breeches, or his wife a petticoat.

There is another matter, equally striking and important, that connects itself with these observations against this pretended Word of God, this manufactured book called *Revealed Religion*. We know that whatever is of God's doing is unalterable by man beyond the laws which the Creator has ordained. We cannot make a tree grow with the root in the air and the fruit in the ground; we cannot make iron into gold nor gold into iron; we cannot make rays of light shine forth rays of darkness, nor darkness shine forth light.

If there were such a thing as a Word of God, it would possess the same properties which all His other works do. It would resist destructive alteration. But we see that the book which they call the Word of God has not this property. That book says (Genesis i. 27), "*So God created man in His own image*"; but the printer can make it say, *So man created God in his own image*.

The words are passive to every transposition of them, or can be annihilated and others put in their places. This is not the case with anything that is of God's doing; and, therefore, this book called the Word of God, tried by the same universal rule which every other of God's works within our reach can be tried by, proves itself to be a forgery.

The bishop says, that "*miracles are proper proofs of a divine mission*." Admitted. But we know that men, and especially priests, can tell lies and call them miracles. It is therefore necessary that the thing called a miracle be proved to be true, and also to be miraculous, before it can be admitted as proof of the thing called revelation.

The bishop must be a bad logician not to know that one doubtful thing cannot be admitted as proof that another doubtful thing is true. It would be like attempting to prove a liar not to be a liar by the evidence of another who is as great a liar as himself.

Though Jesus Christ, by being ignorant of the art of printing, shows he had not the means necessary to a divine mission, and consequently had no such mission, it does not follow that if he had known that art the divinity of what they call his mission would be proved thereby, any

more than it proved the divinity of the man who invented printing.

Something therefore beyond printing, even if he had known it, was necessary *as a miracle*, to have proved that what he delivered was the Word of God; and this was that the book in which that Word should be contained, which is now called the Old and New Testament, should possess the miraculous property, distinct from all human books, of resisting alteration.

This would be not only a miracle, but an ever existing and universal miracle; whereas, those which they tell us of, even if they had been true, were momentary and local; they would leave no trace behind, after the lapse of a few years, of having ever existed; but this would prove, in all ages and in all places, the book to be divine and not human, as effectually and as conveniently as aquafortis proves gold to be gold by not being capable of acting upon it, and detects all other metals and all counterfeit composition, by dissolving them.

Since then the only miracle capable of every proof is wanting, and which everything that is of a divine origin possesses; all the tales of miracles, with which the Old and New Testament are filled, are fit only for impostors to preach and fools to believe.

## PROSPECT PAPERS

When Paine returned to the United States in 1802, he found a growing deistic movement in existence in New York. Elihu Palmer, who was the foremost figure in promoting the religion of Deism in New York, was a graduate of Dartmouth College, had entered the Presbyterian ministry, but left it on discovering that he could not subscribe to Presbyterian doctrines. Palmer was greatly influenced by Paine, of whom he once wrote: "He is one of the first and best writers, and probably the most useful man that ever existed upon the face of the earth. His moral and political writings are equally excellent and the beneficial influence of the principles for which he contended, will be felt through all the succeeding ages." (Elihu Palmer, *Principles of Nature; or a Development of the Moral Causes of Happiness and Misery among the Human Species*, London, 1823, p. 112.)

Paine heartily sympathized with Palmer's deistic activities in New York, joined with him in founding the Theistic Society in 1804, and became an important contributor to the deistical monthly journal edited by Palmer, *The*

*Prospect, or View of the Moral World.* The seventeen papers printed below under the heading of "Prospect Papers" were contributed by Paine to Palmer's journal during 1804. The magazine failed in the spring of 1805, and the activities of organized Deism in New York gradually came to an end. Palmer himself died suddenly in Philadelphia in 1804, and Paine could not, at this late date in his life and in his state of health, take over the active leadership of the movement.—*Editor.*

REMARKS ON R. HALL'S SERMON <sup>6</sup>

ROBERT HALL, a Protestant minister in England, preached and published a sermon against what he called *Modern Infidelity*. A copy of it was sent to a gentleman in America with a request for his opinion thereon. That gentleman sent it to a friend of his in New York, with the request written on the cover—and this last gentleman sent it to Thomas Paine, who wrote the following observations on the blank leaf at the end of the sermon:

The preacher of the foregoing sermon speaks a great deal about *infidelity*, but does not define what he means by it. His harangue is a general exclamation. Everything, I suppose, that is not in his creed is infidelity with him, and his creed is infidelity with me. Infidelity is believing falsely. If what Christians believe is not true, it is the Christians that are the infidels.

The point between Deists and Christians is not about doctrine, but about fact—for if the things believed by the Christians to be facts are not facts, the doctrine founded thereon falls of itself. There is such a book as the Bible, but is it a fact that the Bible is *revealed religion*? The Christians cannot prove it is. They put tradition in place of evidence, and tradition is not proof. If it were, the reality of witches could be proved by the same kind of evidence.

The Bible is a history of the times of which it speaks, and history is not revelation. The obscene and vulgar stories in the Bible are as repugnant to our ideas of the purity of a divine Being, as the horrid cruelties and murders it ascribes to Him are repugnant to our ideas of His justice. It is the reverence of the *Deists* for the attributes of the DEITY that causes them to reject the Bible.

Is the account which the Christian Church gives of the person called Jesus Christ a fact, or a fable? Is it a fact that he was begotten by the

<sup>6</sup> The article appeared in *The Prospect* of February 18, 1804.—*Editor.*

Holy Ghost? The Christians cannot prove it, for the case does not admit of proof.

The things called miracles in the Bible, such for instance as raising the dead, admitted *if true* of ocular demonstration, but the story of the conception of Jesus Christ in the womb is a case beyond miracle, for it did not admit of demonstration.

Mary, the reputed mother of Jesus, who must be supposed to know best, never said so herself, and all the evidence of it is that the book of Matthew says that Joseph dreamed an angel told him so. Had an old maid two or three hundred years of age brought forth a child it would have been much better presumptive evidence of a supernatural conception than Matthew's story of Joseph's dream about his young wife.

Is it a fact that Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world, and how is it proved? If a God, he could not die, and as a man he could not redeem. How then is this redemption proved to be fact? It is said that Adam ate of the forbidden fruit, commonly called an apple, and thereby subjected himself and all his posterity forever to eternal damnation.

This is worse than visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the *third and fourth generations*. But how was the death of Jesus Christ to affect or alter the case? Did God thirst for blood? If so, would it not have been better to have crucified Adam at once upon the forbidden tree, and made a new man? Would not this have been more creator-like than repairing the old one?

Or did God, when He made Adam, supposing the story to be true, exclude Himself from the right of making another? or impose on Himself the necessity of breeding from the old stock? Priests should first prove facts, and deduce doctrines from them afterwards. But instead of this they assume everything and prove nothing. Authorities drawn from the Bible are no more than authorities drawn from other books, unless it can be proved that the Bible is revelation.

The story of the redemption will not stand examination. That man should redeem himself from the sin of eating an apple by committing a murder on Jesus Christ, is the strangest system of religion ever set up. Deism is perfect purity compared with this.

It is an established principle with the Quakers not to shed blood: suppose then all Jerusalem had been Quakers when Christ lived, there would have been nobody to crucify him, and in that case, if man is redeemed by his blood, which is the belief of the Church, there could have been no redemption; and the people of Jerusalem must all have been

damned because they were too good to commit murder. The Christian system of religion is an outrage on common sense. Why is man afraid to think?

Why do not the Christians, to be consistent, make saints of Judas and Pontius Pilate? For they were the persons who accomplished the acts of salvation. The merit of a sacrifice, if there can be any merit in it, was never in the thing sacrificed, but in the persons offering up the sacrifice—and, therefore, Judas and Pontius Pilate ought to stand first on the calendar of saints.

THOMAS PAINE.

OF THE WORD "RELIGION," AND OTHER WORDS OF  
UNCERTAIN SIGNIFICATION <sup>7</sup>

The word *religion* is a word of forced application when used with respect to the worship of God. The root of the word is the Latin verb *ligo*, to tie or bind. From *ligo*, comes *religo*, to tie or bind over again, to make more fast—from *religo*, comes the substantive *religio*, which, with the addition of *n* makes the English substantive *religion*.

The French use the word properly: when a woman enters a convent she is called a *novitiate*, that is, she is upon trial or probation. When she takes the oath, she is called a *religieuse*, that is, she is tied or bound by that oath to the performance of it. We use the word in the same kind of sense when we say we will religiously perform the promise that we make.

But the word, without referring to its etymology, has, in the manner it is used, no definite meaning, because it does not designate what religion a man is of. There is the religion of the Chinese, of the Tartars, of the Bramins, of the Persians, of the Jews, of the Turks, etc.

The word Christianity is equally as vague as the word religion. No two sectaries can agree what it is. It is *lo here* and *lo there*. The two principal sectaries, Papists and Protestants, have often cut each other's throats about it.

The Papists call the Protestants heretics, and the Protestants call the Papists idolators. The minor sectaries have shown the same spirit of rancor, but as the civil law restrains them from blood, they content themselves with preaching damnation against each other.

The word *protestant* has a positive signification in the sense it is used.

<sup>7</sup> The article appeared in *The Prospect* of March 3, 1804.—*Editor*.

It means protesting against the authority of the Pope, and this is the only article in which the Protestants agree. In every other sense, with respect to religion, the word protestant is as vague as the word Christian.

When we say an Episcopalian, a Presbyterian, a Baptist, a Quaker, we know what those persons are, and what tenets they hold; but when we say a "Christian," we know he is not a Jew nor a Mahometan, but we know not if he be a trinitarian or an anti-trinitarian, a believer in what is called the immaculate conception, or a disbeliever, a man of seven sacraments, or of two sacraments, or of none. The word "Christian" describes what a man is not, but not what he is.

The word *theology*, from *Theos*, the Greek word for God, and meaning the study and knowledge of God, is a word that strictly speaking belongs to Theists or Deists, and not to the Christians. The head of the Christian Church is the person called Christ, but the head of the Church of the Theists, or Deists, as they are more commonly called (from *Deus*, the Latin word for God), is God Himself; and therefore the word "Theology" belongs to that Church which has Theos or God for its head, and not to the Christian Church which has the person called Christ for its head. Their technical word is *Christianity*, and they cannot agree on what Christianity is.

The words *revealed religion* and *natural religion* also require explanation. They are both invented terms, contrived by the Church for the support of priestcraft. With respect to the first, there is no evidence of any such thing, except in the universal revelation that God has made of His power, His wisdom, His goodness, in the structure of the universe, and in all the works of creation.

We have no cause for ground from anything we behold in those works to suppose God would deal partially by mankind, and reveal knowledge to one nation and withhold it from another, and then damn them for not knowing it. The sun shines an equal quantity of light all over the world—and mankind in all ages and countries are endued with reason, and blessed with sight, to read the visible works of God in the creation, and so intelligent is this book that *he that runs may read*.

We admire the wisdom of the ancients, yet they had no Bibles nor books called "revelation." They cultivated the reason that God gave them, studied Him in His works, and arose to eminence.

As to the Bible, whether true or fabulous, it is a history, and history is not a revelation. If Solomon had seven hundred wives, and three hundred concubines, and if Samson slept in Delilah's lap, and she cut his

hair off, the relation of those things is mere history that needed no revelation from heaven to tell it; neither does it need any revelation to tell us that Samson was a fool for his pains, and Solomon too.

As to the expressions so often used in the Bible, that *the word of the Lord* came to such an one, or such an one, it was the fashion of speaking in those times, like the expression used by a Quaker, that the *spirit moveth him*, or that used by priests, that they *have a call*. We ought not to be deceived by phrases because they are ancient. But if we admit the supposition that God would condescend to reveal Himself in words, we ought not to believe it would be in such idle and profligate stories as are in the Bible; and it is for this reason, among others which our reverence to God inspires, that the Deists deny that the book called the Bible is the Word of God, or that it is revealed religion.

With respect to the term *natural religion*, it is upon the face of it, the opposite of artificial religion, and it is impossible for any man to be certain that what is called *revealed religion* is not artificial.

Man has the power of making books, inventing stories of God, and calling them revelation, or the Word of God. The Koran exists as an instance that this can be done, and we must be credulous indeed to suppose that this is the only instance and Mahomet the only impostor. The Jews could match him, and the Church of Rome could overmatch the Jews. The Mahometans believe the Koran, the Christians believe the Bible, and it is education makes all the difference.

Books, whether Bibles or Korans, carry no evidence of being the work of any other power than man. It is only that which man cannot do that carries the evidence of being the work of a superior power. Man could not invent and make a universe—he could not invent nature, for nature is of divine origin. It is the laws by which the universe is governed.

When, therefore, we look through nature up to nature's God, we are in the right road of happiness, but when we trust to books as the Word of God, and confide in them as revealed religion, we are afloat on the ocean of uncertainty, and shatter into contending factions. The term, therefore, *natural religion*, explains itself to be *divine religion*, and the term *revealed religion* involves in it the suspicion of being *artificial*.

To show the necessity of understanding the meaning of words, I will mention an instance of a minister, I believe of the Episcopalian Church of Newark, in [New] Jersey. He wrote and published a book, and entitled it "An Antidote to Deism." An antidote to *Deism* must be *Atheism*. It has no other antidote—for what can be an antidote to the



belief of a God, but the disbelief of God? Under the tuition of such pastors, what but ignorance and false information can be expected?

T. P.

#### OF CAIN AND ABEL<sup>8</sup>

The story of Cain and Abel is told in Genesis iv. Cain was the elder brother and Abel the younger, and Cain killed Abel. The Egyptian story of Typhon and Osiris, and the Jewish story in Genesis of Cain and Abel, have the appearance of being the same story differently told, and that it came originally from Egypt.

In the Egyptian story, Typhon and Osiris are brothers; Typhon is the elder and Osiris the younger, and Typhon kills Osiris. The story is an allegory on Darkness and Light: Typhon, the elder brother, is Darkness because Darkness was supposed to be more ancient than Light: Osiris is the Good Light who rules during the summer months, and brings forth the fruits of the earth, and is the favorite, as Abel is said to have been; for which Typhon hates him; and when the winter comes, and cold and darkness overspread the earth, Typhon is represented as having killed Osiris out of malice, as Cain is said to have killed Abel.

The two stories are alike in their circumstances and their event, and are probably but the same story. What corroborates this opinion is that the fifth chapter of Genesis historically contradicts the reality of the story of Cain and Abel in the fourth chapter; for though the name of *Seth*, a son of Adam, is mentioned in the fourth chapter, he is spoken of in the fifth chapter as if he was the first born of Adam. The chapter begins thus:

“This is the book of the *generations* of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God created He him; male and female created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created. And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years and begat a son, in his own likeness and after his image, and called his name *Seth*.” The rest of the chapter goes on with the genealogy.

Anybody reading this chapter cannot suppose there were any sons born before *Seth*. The chapter begins with what is called *the creation of Adam*, and calls itself the book of the *generations of Adam*, yet no mention is made of such persons as Cain and Abel.

One thing however is evident on the face of these two chapters, which is that the same person is not the writer of both; the most blunder-

<sup>8</sup> The article appeared in *The Prospect* of March 31, 1804.—*Editor*.

ing historian could not have committed himself in such a manner.

Though I look on everything in the first ten chapters of Genesis to be fiction, yet fiction historically told should be consistent; whereas these two chapters are not. The Cain and Abel of Genesis appear to be no other than the ancient Egyptian story of Typhon and Osiris, the Darkness and the Light, which answered very well as an allegory without being believed as a fact.

#### THE TOWER OF BABEL<sup>9</sup>

The story of the tower of Babel is told in Genesis xi. It begins thus: "And the whole earth [it was but a very little part of it they knew] was of one language and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the East, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, *Go to*, let us make brick and burn them thoroughly, and they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.

"And they said, *Go to*, let us build us a city, and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men builded.

"And the Lord said, Behold the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do; and now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do. *Go to*, let us go down and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.

"So [that is, by that means] the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth; and they left off building the city."

This is the story, and a very foolish, inconsistent story it is. In the first place, the familiar and irreverend manner in which the Almighty is spoken of in this chapter is offensive to a serious mind.

As to the project of building a tower whose top should reach to heaven, there never could be a people so foolish as to have such a notion; but to represent the Almighty as jealous of the attempt, as the writer of the story has done, is adding profanation to folly. "*Go to*," says the builders, "let us build us a tower whose top shall reach to heaven." "*Go to*," says God, "let us go down and confound their language."

This quaintness is indecent, and the reason given for it is worse, for, "now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined

<sup>9</sup> The article appeared in *The Prospect* of March 24, 1804.—*Editor*.

to do." This is representing the Almighty as jealous of their getting into heaven. The story is too ridiculous, even as a fable, to account for the diversity of languages in the world, for which it seems to have been intended.

As to the project of confounding their language for the purpose of making them separate, it is altogether inconsistent; because instead of producing this effect, it would, by increasing their difficulties, render them more necessary to each other, and cause them to keep together. Where could they go to better themselves?

Another observation upon this story is, the inconsistency of it with respect to the opinion that the Bible is the Word of God given for the information of mankind; for nothing could so effectually prevent such a word from being known by mankind as confounding their language. The people, who after this spoke different languages, could no more understand such a Word generally than the builders of Babel could understand one another. It would have been necessary, therefore, had such Word ever been given or intended to be given, that the whole earth should be, as they say it was at first, of one language and of one speech, and that it should never have been confounded.

The case, however, is, that the Bible will not bear examination in any part of it, which it would do if it was the Word of God. Those who most believe it are those who know least about it, and priests always take care to keep the inconsistent and contradictory parts out of sight.

T. P.

OF THE RELIGION OF DEISM COMPARED WITH THE CHRISTIAN  
RELIGION, AND THE SUPERIORITY OF THE FORMER  
OVER THE LATTER <sup>10</sup>

Every person, of whatever religious denomination he may be, is a DEIST in the first article of his Creed. Deism, from the Latin word *Deus*, God, is the belief of a God, and this belief is the first article of every man's creed.

It is on this article, universally consented to by all mankind, that the Deist builds his church, and here he rests. Whenever we step aside from this article, by mixing it with articles of human invention, we wander into a labyrinth of uncertainty and fable, and become exposed to every kind of imposition by pretenders to revelation.

The Persian shows the Zend-Avesta of Zoroaster, the lawgiver of

<sup>10</sup> The article appeared in *The Prospect* of June 30, July 7, 1804.—*Editor*.

Persia, and calls it the divine law; the Bramin shows the *Shaster*, revealed, he says, by God to Brama, and given to him out of a cloud; the Jew shows what he calls the Law of Moses, given, he says, by God, on the Mount Sinai; the Christian shows a collection of books and epistles, written by nobody knows who, and called the New Testament; and the Mahometan shows the Koran, given, he says, by God to Mahomet: each of these calls itself *revealed religion*, and the *only* true Word of God, and this the followers of each profess to believe from the habit of education, and each believes the others are imposed upon.

But when the divine gift of reason begins to expand itself in the mind and calls man to reflection, he then reads and contemplates God and His works, and not in the books pretending to be revelation. The creation is the Bible of the true believer in God. Everything in this vast volume inspires him with sublime ideas of the Creator. The little and paltry, and often obscene, tales of the Bible sink into wretchedness when put in comparison with this mighty work.

The Deist needs none of those tricks and shows called miracles to confirm his faith, for what can be a greater miracle than the creation itself and his own existence?

There is a happiness in Deism, when rightly understood, that is not to be found in any other system of religion. All other systems have something in them that either shock our reason, or are repugnant to it, and man, if he thinks at all, must stifle his reason in order to force himself to believe them.

But in Deism our reason and our belief become happily united. The wonderful structure of the universe, and everything we behold in the system of the creation, prove to us, far better than books can do, the existence of a God, and at the same time proclaim His attributes.

It is by the exercise of our reason that we are enabled to contemplate God in His works, and imitate Him in His way. When we see His care and goodness extended over all His creatures, it teaches us our duty toward each other, while it calls forth our gratitude to Him. It is by forgetting God in His works, and running after the books of pretended revelation, that man has wandered from the straight path of duty and happiness, and become by turns the victim of doubt and the dupe of delusion.

Except in the first article in the Christian creed, that of believing in God, there is not an article in it but fills the mind with doubt as to the truth of it, the instant man begins to think. Now every article in a creed

that is necessary to the happiness and salvation of man ought to be as evident to the reason and comprehension of man as the first article is, for God has not given us reason for the purpose of confounding us, but that we should use it for our own happiness and His glory.

The truth of the first article is proved by God Himself, and is universal; for *the creation is of itself demonstration of the existence of a Creator*. But the second article, that of God's begetting a son, is not proved in like manner, and stands on no other authority than that of a tale.

Certain books in what is called the New Testament tell us that Joseph dreamed that the angel told him so (Matthew i, 20): "And behold the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph, in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost."

The evidence upon this article bears no comparison with the evidence upon the first article, and therefore is not entitled to the same credit, and ought not to be made an article in a creed, because the evidence of it is defective, and what evidence there is is doubtful and suspicious. We do not believe the first article on the authority of books, whether called Bibles or Korans, nor yet on the visionary authority of dreams, but on the authority of God's own visible works in the creation.

The nations who never heard of such books, nor of such people as Jews, Christians or Mahometans, believe the existence of a God as fully as we do, because it is self-evident. The work of man's hands is a proof of the existence of man as fully as his personal appearance would be.

When we see a watch, we have as positive evidence of the existence of a watchmaker, as if we saw him; and in like manner the creation is evidence to our reason and our senses of the existence of a Creator. But there is nothing in the works of God that is evidence that He begat a son, nor anything in the system of creation that corroborates such an idea, and, therefore, we are not authorized in believing it.

What truth there may be in the story that Mary, before she was married to Joseph, was kept by one of the Roman soldiers, and was with child by him, I leave to be settled between the Jews and the Christians. The story, however, has probability on its side, for her husband Joseph suspected and was jealous of her, and was going to put her away. "Joseph, her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was going to put her away, privately." (Matt. i, 19.)

I have already said that "whenever we step aside from the first article

(that of believing in God), we wander into a labyrinth of uncertainty," and here is evidence of the justness of the remark, for it is impossible for us to decide who was Jesus Christ's father.

But presumption can assume anything, and therefore it makes Joseph's dream to be of equal authority with the existence of God, and to help it on calls it revelation. It is impossible for the mind of man in its serious moments, however it may have been entangled by education, or beset by priestcraft, not to stand still and doubt upon the truth of this article and of its creed.

But this is not all. The second article of the Christian creed having brought the son of Mary into the world (and this Mary, according to the chronological tables, was a girl of only fifteen years of age when this son was born), the next article goes on to account for his being begotten, which was that when he grew a man he should be put to death, to expiate, they say, the sin that Adam brought into the world by eating an apple or some kind of forbidden fruit.

But though this is the creed of the Church of Rome, from whence the Protestants borrowed it, it is a creed which that Church has manufactured of itself, for it is not contained in nor derived from, the book called the New Testament.

The four books called the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, which give, or pretend to give, the birth, sayings, life, preaching, and death of Jesus Christ, make no mention of what is called the fall of man; nor is the name of Adam to be found in any of those books, which it certainly would be if the writers of them believed that Jesus was begotten, born and died for the purpose of redeeming mankind from the sin which Adam had brought into the world. Jesus never speaks of Adam himself, of the Garden of Eden, nor of what is called the fall of man.

But the Church of Rome having set up its new religion, which it called Christianity, invented the creed which it named the Apostles's Creed, in which it calls Jesus the *only son of God, conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary*; things of which it is impossible that man or woman can have any idea, and consequently no belief but in words; and for which there is no authority but the idle story of Joseph's dream in the first chapter of Matthew, which any designing impostor or foolish fanatic might make.

It then manufactured the allegories in the book of Genesis into fact, and the allegorical tree of life and the tree of knowledge into real trees,

contrary to the belief of the first Christians, and for which there is not the least authority in any of the books of the New Testament; for in none of them is there any mention made of such place as the Garden of Eden, nor of anything that is said to have happened there.

But the Church of Rome could not erect the person called Jesus into a Savior of the world without making the allegories in the book of Genesis into fact, though the New Testament, as before observed, gives no authority for it. All at once the allegorical tree of knowledge became, according to the Church, a real tree, the fruit of it real fruit, and the eating of it sinful.

As priestcraft was always the enemy of knowledge, because priestcraft supports itself by keeping people in delusion and ignorance, it was consistent with its policy to make the acquisition of knowledge a real sin.

The Church of Rome having done this, it then brings forward Jesus the son of Mary as suffering death to redeem mankind from sin, which Adam, it says, had brought into the world by eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge. But as it is impossible for reason to believe such a story, because it can see no reason for it, nor have any evidence of it, the Church then tells us we must not regard our reason, but must *believe*, as it were, and that through thick and thin, as if God had given man reason like a plaything, or a rattle, on purpose to make fun of him.

Reason is the forbidden tree of priestcraft and may serve to explain the allegory of the forbidden tree of knowledge, for we may reasonably suppose the allegory had some meaning and application at the time it was invented. It was the practise of the Eastern nations to convey their meaning by allegory, and relate it in the manner of fact. Jesus followed the same method, yet nobody ever supposed the allegory or parable of the rich man and Lazarus, the Prodigal Son, the ten Virgins, etc., were facts.

Why then should the tree of knowledge, which is far more romantic in idea than the parables in the New Testament are, be supposed to be a real tree? <sup>11</sup> The answer to this is, because the Church could not make its new-fangled system, which is called Christianity, hold together without it. To have made Christ to die on account of an allegorical tree would have been too barefaced a fable.

But the account, as it is given of Jesus in the New Testament, even

<sup>11</sup> The remark of the Emperor Julian on the story of the Tree of Knowledge is worth observing. "If," said he, "there ever had been, or could be, a Tree of Knowledge, instead of God forbidding man to eat thereof, it would be that of which he would order him to eat the most."—*Author*.

visionary as it is, does not support the creed of the Church that he died for the redemption of the world. According to that account he was crucified and buried on the Friday, and rose again in good health on the Sunday morning, for we do not hear that he was sick. This cannot be called dying, and is rather making fun of death than suffering it.

There are thousands of men and women also, who if they could know they should come back again in good health in about thirty-six hours, would prefer such kind of death for the sake of the experiment, and to know what the other side of the grave was. Why then should that which would be only a voyage of curious amusement to us be magnified into merit and suffering in him? If a God, he could not suffer death, for immortality cannot die, and as a man his death could be no more than the death of any other person.

The belief of the redemption of Jesus Christ is altogether an invention of the Church of Rome, not the doctrine of the New Testament. What the writers of the New Testament attempted to prove by the story of Jesus is the *resurrection of the same body from the grave*, which was the belief of the Pharisees, in opposition to the Sadducees (a sect of Jews) who denied it.

Paul, who was brought up a Pharisee, labors hard at this point, for it was the creed of his own Pharisaical Church: I Corinthians xv is full of supposed cases and assertions about the resurrection of the same body, but there is not a word in it about redemption. This chapter makes part of the funeral services of the Episcopal Church.

The dogma of the redemption is the fable of priestcraft invented since the time the New Testament was compiled, and the agreeable delusion of it suited with the depravity of immoral livers. When men are taught to ascribe all their crimes and vices to the temptations of the devil, and to believe that Jesus, by his death, rubs all off, and pays their passage to heaven gratis, they become as careless in morals as a spendthrift would be of money were he told that his father had engaged to pay off all his scores.

It is a doctrine not only dangerous to morals in this world, but to our happiness in the next world, because it holds out such a cheap, easy, and lazy way of getting to heaven, as has a tendency to induce men to hug the delusion of it to their own injury.

But there are times when men have serious thoughts, and it is at such times, when they begin to think, that they begin to doubt the truth of the Christian religion; and well they may, for it is too fanciful and too full



of conjecture, inconsistency, improbability and irrationality to afford consolation to the thoughtful man. His reason revolts against his creed. He sees that none of its articles are proved, or can be proved.

He may believe that such a person as is called Jesus (for Christ was not his name) was born and grew to be a man, because it is no more than a natural and probable case. But who is to prove he is the son of God, that he was begotten by the Holy Ghost? Of these things there can be no proof; and that which admits not of proof, and is against the laws of probability and the order of nature, which God Himself has established, is not an object for belief. God has not given man reason to embarrass him, but to prevent his being imposed upon.

He may believe that Jesus was crucified, because many others were crucified, but who is to prove he was crucified *for the sins of the world*? This article has no evidence, not even in the New Testament; and if it had, where is the proof that the New Testament, in relating things neither probable nor provable, is to be believed as true?

When an article in a creed does not admit of proof nor of probability, the salvo is to call it revelation; but this is only putting one difficulty in the place of another, for it is as impossible to prove a thing to be revelation as it is to prove that Mary was gotten with child by the Holy Ghost.

Here it is that the religion of Deism is superior to the Christian religion. It is free from all those invented and torturing articles that shock our reason or injure our humanity, and with which the Christian religion abounds. Its creeds is pure, and sublimely simple. It believes in God, and there it rests.

It honors reason as the choicest gift of God to man, and the faculty by which he is enabled to contemplate the power, wisdom and goodness of the Creator displayed in the creation; and reposing itself on His protection, both here and hereafter, it avoids all presumptuous beliefs, and rejects, as the fabulous inventions of men, all books pretending to revelation.

T. P.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY, STYLING ITSELF  
THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY <sup>12</sup>

*The New York Gazette of the sixteenth (August) contains the following article—"On Tuesday, a committee of the Missionary Society, consisting chiefly of distinguished Clergymen, had an interview, at the*

<sup>12</sup> The article appeared in *The Prospect* of September 1, 1804.—Editor.

*City Hotel, with the chiefs of the Osage tribe of Indians, now in this city (New York) to whom they presented a Bible, together with an address, the object of which was to inform them that this good book contained the will and laws of the GREAT SPIRIT."*

It is to be hoped some humane person will, on account of our people on the frontiers, as well as of the Indians, undeceive them with respect to the present the missionaries have made them, and which they call a *good book*, containing, they say, *the will and laws of the GREAT SPIRIT*. Can those missionaries suppose that the assassination of men, women and children, and sucking infants, related in the books ascribed to Moses, Joshua, etc., and blasphemously said to be done by the command of the Lord, the Great Spirit, can be edifying to our Indian neighbors, or advantageous to us?

Is not the Bible warfare the same kind of warfare as the Indians themselves carry on, that of indiscriminate destruction, and against which humanity shudders? Can the horrid examples and vulgar obscenity with which the Bible abounds improve the morals or civilize the manners of the Indians? Will they learn sobriety and decency from drunken Noah and beastly Lot; or will their daughters be edified by the example of Lot's daughters?

Will the prisoners they take in war be treated the better by their knowing the horrid story of Samuel's hewing Agag in pieces like a block of wood, or David's putting them under harrows of iron?

Will not the shocking accounts of the destruction of the Canaanites, when the Israelites invaded their country, suggest the idea that we may serve them in the same manner, or the accounts stir them up to do the like to our people on the frontiers, and then justify the assassination by the Bible the missionaries have given them? Will those missionary societies never leave off doing mischief?

In the accounts which this missionary committee give of their interview, they make the chief of the Indians to say, that, "as neither he nor his people could read it, he begged that some good white man might be sent to instruct them."

It is necessary the general Government keep a strict eye over those missionary societies, who, under the pretense of instructing the Indians, send spies into their country to find out the best lands. No society should be permitted to have intercourse with the Indian tribes, nor send any person among them, but with the knowledge and consent of the Government.

The present Administration [Jefferson's] has brought the Indians into a good disposition, and is improving them in the moral and civil comforts of life; but if these self-created societies be suffered to interfere, and send their speculating missionaries among them, the laudable object of government will be defeated. Priests, we know, are not remarkable for doing anything gratis; they have in general some scheme in everything they do, either to impose on the ignorant, or derange the operations of government.

A FRIEND TO THE INDIANS.

OF THE SABBATH-DAY IN CONNECTICUT<sup>13</sup>

The word Sabbath, means REST; that is, cessation from labor, but the stupid Blue Laws<sup>14</sup> of Connecticut make a labor of rest, for they oblige a person to sit still from sunrise to sunset on a Sabbath-day, which is hard work. Fanaticism made those laws, and hypocrisy pretends to reverence them, for where such laws prevail hypocrisy will prevail also.

One of those laws says, "No person shall run on a Sabbath-day, nor walk in his garden, nor elsewhere; but reverently to and from meeting." These fanatical hypocrites forgot that God dwells not in temples made with hands, and that the earth is full of His glory.

One of the finest scenes and subjects of religious contemplation is to walk into the woods and fields, and survey the works of the God of the Creation. The wide expanse of heaven, the earth covered with verdure, the lofty forest, the waving corn, the magnificent roll of mighty rivers, and the murmuring melody of the cheerful brooks, are scenes that inspire the mind with gratitude and delight.

But this the gloomy Calvinist of Connecticut must not behold on a Sabbath-day. Entombed within the walls of his dwelling, he shuts from his view the Temple of Creation. The sun shines no joy to him. The gladdening voice of nature calls on him in vain. He is deaf, dumb and blind to everything around that God has made. Such is the Sabbath-day of Connecticut.

From whence could come this miserable notion of devotion? It comes from the gloominess of the Calvinistic creed. If men love darkness rather than light, because their works are evil, the ulcerated mind of a Cal-

<sup>13</sup> The article appeared in *The Prospect* of September 15, 1804.—*Editor*.

<sup>14</sup> They were called Blue Laws because they were originally printed on blue paper.—*Author*.

vinist, who sees God only in terror, and sits brooding over the scenes of hell and damnation, can have no joy in beholding the glories of the creation. Nothing in that mighty and wondrous system accords with his principles or his devotion.

He sees nothing there that tells him that God created millions on purpose to be damned, and that the children of a span long are born to burn forever in hell. The creation preaches a different doctrine to this. We there see that the care and goodness of God is extended impartially over all the creatures He has made. The worm of the earth shares His protection equally with the elephant of the desert. The grass that springs beneath our feet grows by His bounty as well as the cedars of Lebanon.

Everything in the creation reproaches the Calvinist with unjust ideas of God, and disowns the hardness and ingratitude of his principles. Therefore he shuns the sight of them on a Sabbath-day.

AN ENEMY TO CANT AND IMPOSITION.

#### OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT <sup>15</sup>

Archbishop Tillotson says: "The difference between the style of the Old and New Testament is so remarkable, that one of the greatest sects in the primitive times, did, upon this very ground, found their heresy of two Gods, the one evil, fierce and cruel, whom they called the God of the Old Testament; the other good, kind and merciful, whom they called the God of the New Testament; so great a difference is there between the representations that are given of God in the books of the Jewish and Christian religion, as to give, at least, some color and pretense to an imagination of two Gods." Thus far Tillotson.

But the case was that as the Church had picked out several passages from the Old Testament, which she most absurdly and falsely calls prophecies of Jesus Christ (whereas there is no prophecy of any such person, as anyone may see by examining the passages and the cases to which they apply), she was under the necessity of keeping up the credit of the Old Testament, because if that fell the other would soon follow, and the Christian system of faith would soon be at an end.

As a book of morals, there are several parts of the New Testament that are good; but they are no other than what had been preached in the Eastern world several hundred years before Christ was born. Confucius, the Chinese philosopher, who lived five hundred years before the

<sup>15</sup> The article appeared in *The Prospect* of March 31, 1804.—*Editor*.

time of Christ, says, *Acknowledge thy benefits by the return of benefits, but never revenge injuries.*

The clergy in Popish countries were cunning enough to know that if the Old Testament was made public, the fallacy of the New, with respect to Christ, would be detected, and they prohibited the use of it, and always took it away wherever they found it.

The Deists, on the contrary, always encouraged the reading it, that people might see and judge for themselves, that a book so full of contradictions and wickedness could not be the Word of God, and that we dishonor God by ascribing it to Him.

A TRUE DEIST.

HINTS TOWARD FORMING A SOCIETY FOR INQUIRING INTO THE  
TRUTH OR FALSEHOOD OF ANCIENT HISTORY, SO FAR AS  
HISTORY IS CONNECTED WITH SYSTEMS OF RELIGION  
ANCIENT AND MODERN <sup>16</sup>

It has been customary to class history into three divisions, distinguished by the names of Sacred, Profane and Ecclesiastical. By the first is meant the Bible; by the second, the history of nations, of men and things; and by the third, the history of the church and its priesthood.

Nothing is more easy than to give names, and, therefore, mere names signify nothing unless they lead to the discovery of some cause for which that name was given. For example, *Sunday* is the name given to the first day of the week, in the English language, and it is the same in the Latin, that is, it has the same meaning (*Dies solis*), and also in the German and in several other languages.

Why then was this name given to that day? Because it was the day dedicated by the ancient world to the luminary which in the English we call the Sun, and therefore the day *Sun-day*, or the day of the Sun; as in the like manner we call the second day Monday, the day dedicated to the Moon.

Here the name *Sunday* leads to the cause of its being called so, and we have visible evidence of the fact, because we behold the Sun from whence the name comes; but this is not the case when we distinguish one part of history from another by the name of *Sacred*.

All histories have been written by men. We have no evidence, nor any cause to believe, that any have been written by God. That part of

<sup>16</sup> The article appeared in *The Prospect* of July 21, 1804.—*Editor*.

the Bible called the Old Testament, is the history of the Jewish nation, from the time of Abraham, which begins in Genesis xi, to the downfall of that nation by Nebuchadnezzar, and is no more entitled to be called sacred than any other history. It is altogether the contrivance of priestcraft that has given it that name. So far from its being *sacred*, it has not the appearance of being true in many of the things it relates.

It must be better authority than a book which any impostor might make, as Mahomet made the Koran, to make a thoughtful man believe that the sun and moon stood still, or that Moses and Aaron turned the Nile, which is larger than the Delaware, into blood; and that the Egyptian magicians did the same. These things have too much the appearance of romance to be believed for fact.

It would be of use to inquire, and ascertain the time, when that part of the Bible called the Old Testament first appeared. From all that can be collected there was no such book till after the Jews returned from captivity in Babylon, and that is the work of the Pharisees of the Second Temple. How they came to make Kings xix and Isaiah xxxvii word for word alike, can only be accounted for by their having no plan to go by, and not knowing what they were about.

The same is the case with respect to the last verses in II Chronicles, and the first verses in Ezra; they also are word for word alike, which shows that the Bible has been put together at random.

But besides these things there is great reason to believe we have been imposed upon with respect to the antiquity of the Bible, and especially with respect to the books ascribed to Moses. Herodotus, who is called the father of history, and is the most ancient historian whose works have reached to our time, and who traveled into Egypt, conversed with the priests, historians, astronomers and learned men of that country, for the purpose of obtaining all the information of it he could, and who gives an account of the ancient state of it, makes no mention of such a man as Moses, though the Bible makes him to have been the greatest hero there, nor of any one circumstance mentioned in the book of Exodus respecting Egypt, such as turning the rivers into blood, the dust into lice, the death of the first born throughout all the land of Egypt, the passage of the Red Sea, the drowning of Pharaoh and all his host, things which could not have been a secret in Egypt, and must have been generally known, had they been facts; and, therefore, as no such things were known in Egypt, nor any such man as Moses at the time Herodotus was there, which is about 2,200 years ago, it shows that the account of

these things in the books ascribed to Moses is a made story of later times; that is, after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity, and that Moses is not the author of the books ascribed to him.

With respect to the cosmogony, or account of the Creation, in Genesis i, of the Garden of Eden in chapter ii, and of what is called the Fall of Man in chapter iii, there is something concerning them we are not historically acquainted with. In none of the books of the Bible, after Genesis, are any of these things mentioned or even alluded to.

How is this to be accounted for? The obvious inference is that either they were not known, or not believed to be facts, by the writers of the other books of the Bible, and that Moses is not the author of the chapters where these accounts are given.

The next question on the case is how did the Jews come by these notions, and at what time were they written? To answer this question we must first consider what the state of the world was at the time the Jews began to be a people, for the Jews are but a modern race compared with the antiquity of other nations.

At the time there were, even by their own account, but thirteen Jews or Israelites in the world, *Jacob and his twelve sons*, and four of these were bastards, the nations of Egypt, Chaldea, Persia and India, were great and populous, abounding in learning and science, particularly in the knowledge of astronomy, of which the Jews were always ignorant.

The chronological tables mention that eclipses were observed at Babylon above two thousand years before the Christian era, which was before there was a single Jew or Israelite in the world.

All those ancient nations had their cosmogonies, that is, their accounts how the creation was made, before there was such people as Jews or Israelites. An account of these cosmogonies of India and Persia is given by Henry Lord, Chaplain to the East India Company at Surat, and published in London in 1630. The writer of this has seen a copy of the edition of 1630, and made extracts from it. The work, which is now scarce, was dedicated by Lord to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

We know that the Jews were carried captive into Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, and remained in captivity several years, when they were liberated by Cyrus, King of Persia. During their captivity they would have had an opportunity of acquiring some knowledge of the cosmogony of the Persians, or at least of getting some ideas how to fabricate one to put at the head of their own history after their return from cap-

tivity. This will account for the cause, for some cause there must have been, that no mention nor reference is made to the cosmogony in Genesis in any of the books of the Bible supposed to have been written before the captivity, nor is the name of Adam to be found in any of those books.

The books of Chronicles were written after the return of the Jews from captivity, for the third chapter of the first book gives a list of all the Jewish kings from David to Zedekiah, who was carried captive into Babylon, and to four generations beyond the time of Zedekiah. In Chron. i, 1, the name of Adam is mentioned, but not in any book in the Bible written before that time, nor could it be, for Adam and Eve are names taken from the cosmogony of the Persians.

Henry Lord, in his book, written from Surat and dedicated, as I have already said, to the Archbishop of Canterbury, says that in the Persian cosmogony the name of the first man was *Adamoh*, and of the woman *Hevah*.<sup>17</sup> From hence comes the Adam and Eve of the book of Genesis. In the cosmogony of India, of which I shall speak in a future number, the name of the first man was *Pourous*, and of the woman *Parcoutee*. We want a knowledge of the Sanscrit language of India to understand the meaning of the names, and I mention it in this place, only to show that it is from the cosmogony of Persia, rather than that of India, that the cosmogony in Genesis has been fabricated by the Jews, who returned from captivity by the liberality of Cyrus, King of Persia.

There is, however, reason to conclude, on the authority of Sir William Jones, who resided several years in India, that these names were very expressive in the language to which they belonged, for in speaking of this language, he says (see the Asiatic Researches), "The Sanscrit language, whatever be its antiquity, is of wonderful structure; it is more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either."

These hints, which are intended to be continued, will serve to show that a society for inquiring into the ancient state of the world, and the state of ancient history, so far as history is connected with systems of religion, ancient and modern, may become a useful and instructive institution.

There is good reason to believe we have been in great error with respect to the antiquity of the Bible, as well as imposed upon by its contents. Truth ought to be the object of every man; for without truth there

<sup>17</sup> In an English edition of the Bible, in 1583, the first woman is called Hevah.—*Author*.



can be no real happiness to a thoughtful mind, or any assurance of happiness hereafter. It is the duty of man to obtain all the knowledge he can, and then make the best use of it.

T. P.

TO MR. MOORE, OF NEW YORK, COMMONLY CALLED BISHOP MOORE <sup>18</sup>

I have read in the newspapers your account of the visit you made to the unfortunate General Hamilton, and of administering to him a ceremony of your church which you call the *Holy Communion*.

I regret the fate of General Hamilton, and I so far hope with you that it will be a warning to thoughtless man not to sport away the life that God has given him; but with respect to other parts of your letter I think it very reprehensible, and betrays great ignorance of what true religion is. But you are a priest, you get your living by it, and it is not your worldly interest to undeceive yourself.

After giving an account of your administering to the deceased what you call the Holy Communion, you add, "By reflecting on this melancholy event let the humble believer be encouraged ever to hold fast that precious faith which is the *only source of true consolation* in the last extremity of nature. Let the infidel be persuaded to abandon his opposition to the Gospel."

To show you, Sir, that your promise of consolation from Scripture has no foundation to stand upon, I will cite to you one of the greatest falsehoods upon record, and which was given, as the record says, for the purpose, and as a promise, of consolation.

In the epistle called the First Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, iv, the writer consoles the Thessalonians as to the case of their friends who were already dead.

He does this by informing them, and he does it he says, by the word of the Lord (a most notorious falsehood), that the general resurrection of the dead and the ascension of the living will be in his and their days; that their friends will then come to life again; that the dead in Christ will rise first.—"Then we (says he, ver. 17, 18) which *are alive and remain* shall be *caught up* together with THEM *in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air*, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore *comfort* one another with these words."

<sup>18</sup> The article appeared in *The Prospect* of August 4, 1804. It dealt with the Holy Communion which the Rev. Dr. Moore had administered to Alexander Hamilton on his deathbed. Hamilton was killed in a duel with Aaron Burr in 1804.—*Editor*.

Delusion and falsehood cannot be carried higher than they are in this passage. You, Sir, are but a novice in the art. The words admit of no equivocation. The whole passage is in the first person and the present tense, "*We which are alive.*"

Had the writer meant a future time, and a distant generation, it must have been in the third person and the future tense. "*They who shall then be alive.*" I am thus particular for the purpose of nailing you down to the text, that you may not ramble from it, nor put other constructions upon the words than they will bear, which priests are very apt to do.

Now, Sir, it is impossible for serious man, to whom God has given the divine gift of reason, and who employs that reason to reverence and adore the God that gave it, it is, I say, impossible for such a man to put confidence in a book that abounds with fable and falsehood as the New Testament does. This passage is but a sample of what I could give you.

You call on those whom you style "*infidels*" (and they in return might call you an idolator, a worshiper of false gods, a preacher of false doctrines), "to abandon their opposition to the Gospel." Prove, Sir, the Gospel to be true, and the opposition will cease of itself; but until you do this (which we know you cannot do) you have no right to expect they will notice your call. If by *infidels* you mean *Deists* (and you must be exceedingly ignorant of the origin of the word *Deist*, and know but little of *Deus*, to put that construction upon it), you will find yourself overmatched if you begin to engage in a controversy with them.

Priests may dispute with priests, and sectaries with sectaries, about the meaning of what they *agree* to call Scripture, and end as they began; but when you engage with a *Deist* you must keep to fact. Now, Sir, you cannot prove a single article of your religion to be true, and we tell you so publicly. Do it *if you can*. The *Deistical* article, *the belief of a God*, with which your creed begins, has been borrowed by your church from the ancient *Deists*, and even this article you dishonor by putting a *dream-begotten* phantom<sup>19</sup> which you call His son, over His head, and treating God as if he was superannuated.

*Deism* is the only profession of religion that admits of worshiping and reverencing God in purity, and the only one on which the thoughtful mind can repose with undisturbed tranquillity. God is almost for-

<sup>19</sup> The first chapter of Matthew, relates that Joseph, the betrothed husband of Mary, dreamed that the angel told him that his intended bride was with child by the Holy Ghost. It is not every husband, whether carpenter or priest, that can be so easily satisfied, for lo! it was a dream. Whether Mary was in a dream when this was done we are not told. It is, however, a comical story. There is no woman living can understand it.—*Author.*

gotten in the Christian religion. Everything, even the creation, is ascribed to the son of Mary.

In religion, as in everything else, perfection consists in simplicity. The Christian religion of Gods within Gods, like wheels within wheels, is like a complicated machine that never goes right, and every projector in the art of Christianity is trying to mend it. It is its defects that have caused such a number and variety of tinkers to be hammering at it, and still it goes wrong.

In the visible world no time-keeper can go equally true with the sun; and in like manner, no complicated religion can be equally true with the pure and unmixed religion of Deism.

Had you not offensively glanced at a description of men whom you call by a false name, you would not have been troubled nor honored with this address; neither has the writer of it any desire or intention to enter into controversy with you. He thinks the temporal establishment of your church politically unjust and offensively unfair; but with respect to religion itself, distinct from temporal establishments, he is happy in the enjoyment of his own, and he leaves you to make the best you can of yours.

A MEMBER OF THE DEISTICAL CHURCH.

TO JOHN MASON,<sup>20</sup>

ONE OF THE MINISTERS OF THE SCOTCH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEW YORK, WITH REMARKS ON HIS ACCOUNT OF THE VISIT HE MADE TO THE LATE GENERAL HAMILTON

"Come now, let us REASON together, saith the Lord." This is one of the passages you quoted from your Bible, in your conversation with General Hamilton, as given in your letter, signed with your name, and published in the *Commercial Advertiser*, and other New York papers, and I requote the passage to show that your *text* and your *religion* contradict each other.

It is impossible to reason upon things *not comprehensible by reason*; and therefore, if you keep to your text, which priests seldom do (for they are generally either above it, or below it, or forget it), you must admit a religion to which reason can apply, and this certainly is not the Christian religion.

There is not an article in the Christian religion that is cognizable by

<sup>20</sup> The article appeared in *The Prospect* of August 18, 1804.—*Editor*.

religion. The Deistical article of your religion, *the belief of a God*, is no more a Christian article than it is a Mahometan article. It is an universal article, common to all religions, and which is held in greater purity by Turks than by Christians; but the Deistical Church is the only one which holds it in real purity; because that Church acknowledges no co-partnership with God. It believes in Him solely; and knows nothing of sons, married virgins, nor ghosts. It holds all these things to be the fables of priestcraft.

Why then do you talk of reason, or refer to it, since your religion has nothing to do with reason, nor reason with that? You tell people as you told Hamilton, that they must have *faith!* Faith in what? You ought to know that before the mind can have faith in anything, it must either know it as a fact, or see cause to believe it on the probability of that kind of evidence that is cognizable by reason.

But your religion is not within either of these cases; for, in the first place, you cannot prove it to be fact; and in the second place, you cannot support it by reason, not only because it is not cognizable by reason, but because it is contrary to reason.

What reason can there be in supposing, or believing that God put *Himself to death to satisfy Himself, and be revenged on the devil on account of Adam?* For, tell the story which way you will, it comes to this at last.

As you can make no appeal to reason in support of an unreasonable religion, you then (and others of your profession) bring yourselves off by telling people they must not believe in reason but in *revelation*.

This is the artifice of habit without reflection. It is putting *words* in the place of *things*; for do you not see that when you tell people to believe in revelation, you must first prove that what you *call* revelation, *is* revelation; and as you cannot do this, you put the *word*, which is easily spoken, in the place of the *thing* you cannot prove.

You have no more evidence that your Gospel is revelation than the Turks have that their Koran is revelation, and the only difference between them and you is, that they preach their delusion and you preach yours.

In your conversation with General Hamilton, you say to him, "The *simple truths* of the Gospel which require *no abstruse investigation*, but faith in the veracity of *God who cannot lie*, are best suited to your present condition."

If those matters you call "*simple truths*" are what you call them, and

require no abstruse investigation, they would be so obvious that reason would easily comprehend them; yet the doctrine you preach at other times is, *that the mysteries of the Gospel are beyond the reach of reason.*

If your first position be true, that they are *simple truths*, priests are unnecessary, for we do not want preachers to tell us the sun shines; and if your second be true, the case, as to effect, is the same, for it is waste of money to pay a man to explain unexplainable things, and loss of time to listen to him.

That *God cannot lie*, is no advantage to your argument, because it is no proof that priests can not, or that the Bible does not. Did not Paul lie when he told the Thessalonians, that the general resurrection of the dead would be in his lifetime, and that he should go up alive along with them into the clouds to meet the Lord in the air? I Thes. iv, 17.

You spoke of what you call, "*the precious blood of Christ.*" This savage style of language belongs to the priests of the Christian religion. The professors of this religion say they are shocked at the accounts of human sacrifices of which they read in the histories of some countries. Do they not see that their own religion is founded on a human sacrifice, the blood of man, of which their priests talk like so many butchers?

It is no wonder the Christian religion has been so bloody in its effects, for it began in blood, and many thousands of human sacrifices have since been offered on the altar of the Christian religion.

It is necessary to the character of a religion, as being true, and immutable as God Himself is, that the evidence of it be equally the same through all periods of time and circumstance.

This is not the case with the Christian religion, nor with that of the Jews that preceded it (for there was a time and that within the knowledge of history, when these religions did not exist); nor is it the case with any religion we know of but the religion of Deism. In this the evidences are eternal and universal. "*The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge.*"<sup>21</sup> But all other re-

<sup>21</sup> This Psalm (19) which is a *Deistical Psalm*, is so much in the manner of some parts of the book of Job (which is not a book of the Jews, and does not belong to the Bible), that it has the appearance of having been translated into Hebrew from the same language in which the book of Job was originally written, and brought by the Jews from Chaldea or Persia, when they returned from captivity. The contemplation of the heavens made a great part of the religious devotion of the Chaldeans and Persians, and their religious festivals were regulated by the progress of the sun through the twelve signs of the zodiac. But the Jews knew nothing about the heavens, or they would not have told the foolish story of the sun's standing still upon a hill, and the moon in a valley. What could they want the moon for in the day time?—*Author.*

ligions are made to arise from some local circumstance, and are introduced by some temporary trifle which its partisans call a miracle, but of which there is no proof but the story of it.

The Jewish religion, according to the history of it, began in a *wilderness*, and the Christian religion in a *stable*. The Jewish books tell us of wonders exhibited upon Mount Sinai. It happened that nobody lived there to contradict the account.

The Christian books tell us of a star that hung over the *stable* at the birth of Jesus. There is no star there now, nor any person living that saw it. But all the stars in the heavens bear eternal evidence to the truth of Deism. It did not begin in a stable, nor in a wilderness. It began everywhere. The theater of the universe is the place of its birth.

As adoration paid to any being but God Himself is idolatry, the Christian religion by paying adoration to a man, born of a woman called Mary, belongs to the idolatrous class of religions; consequently the consolation drawn from it is delusion.

Between you and your rival in communion ceremonies, Dr. Moore of the Episcopal Church, you have, in order to make yourselves appear of some importance, reduced General Hamilton's character to that of a feeble-minded man, who in going out of the world wanted a passport from a priest. Which of you was first or last applied to for this purpose is a matter of no consequence.

The man, Sir, who puts his trust and confidence in God, that leads a just and moral life, and endeavors to do good, does not trouble himself about priests when his hour of departure comes, nor permits priests to trouble themselves about him. They are in general mischievous beings where character is concerned; a consultation of priests is worse than a consultation of physicians.

A MEMBER OF THE DEISTICAL CONGREGATION.

#### ON DEISM, AND THE WRITINGS OF THOMAS PAINE

The following reflections, written last winter, were occasioned by *certain* expressions in some of the public papers against Deism and the writings of Thomas Paine on that subject.

"*Great is Diana of the Ephesians*," was the cry of the people of Ephesus (Acts xix, 28); and the cry of "*our holy religion*" has been the cry of superstition in some instances, and of hypocrisy in others, from that day to this.

The Brahmin, the follower of Zoroaster, the Jew, the Mahometan, the Church of Rome, the Greek Church, the Protestant Church, split into several hundred contradictory sectaries, preaching in some instances damnation against each other, all cry out, "*our holy religion.*"

The Calvinist, who damns children of a span long to hell to burn forever for the glory of God (and this is called Christianity), and the Universalist who preaches that all shall be saved and none shall be damned (and this also is called Christianity), boast alike of their *holy religion* and their Christian faith.

Something more therefore is necessary than mere *cry* and wholesale assertion, and that something is TRUTH; and as inquiry is the road to truth, he that is opposed to inquiry is not a friend to truth.

The God of truth is not the God of fable; when, therefore, any book is introduced into the world as the Word of God, and made a groundwork for religion, it ought to be scrutinized more than other books to see if it bear evidence of being what it is called. Our reverence to God demands that we do this, lest we ascribe to God what is not His, and our duty to ourselves demands it lest we take fable for fact, and rest our hope of salvation on a false foundation.

It is not our calling a book *holy* that makes it so, any more than our calling a religion holy that entitles it to the name. Inquiry therefore is necessary in order to arrive at truth. But inquiry must have some principle to proceed on, some standard to judge by, superior to human authority.

When we survey the works of creation, the revolutions of the planetary system, and the whole economy of what is called nature, which is no other than the laws the Creator has prescribed to matter, we see unerring order and universal harmony reigning throughout the whole. No one part contradicts another. The sun does not run against the moon, nor the moon against the sun, nor the planets against each other. Everything keeps its appointed time and place.

This harmony in the works of God is so obvious, that the farmer of the field, though he cannot calculate eclipses, is as sensible of it as the philosophical astronomer. He sees the God of order in every part of the visible universe.

Here, then, is the standard to which everything must be brought that pretends to be the work or Word of God, and by this standard it must be judged, independently of anything and everything that man can say or

do. His opinion is like a feather in the scale compared with the standard that God Himself has set up.

It is, therefore, by this standard that the Bible and all other books pretending to be the Word of God (and there are many of them in the world) must be judged, and not by the opinions of men or the decrees of ecclesiastical councils. These have been so contradictory that they have often rejected in one council what they had voted to be the Word of God in another; and admitted what had been before rejected.

In this state of uncertainty in which we are, and which is rendered still more uncertain by the numerous contradictory sectaries that have sprung up since the time of Luther and Calvin, what is man to do? The answer is easy. Begin at the root—begin with the Bible itself. Examine it with the utmost strictness. It is our duty so to do.

Compare the parts with each other, and the whole with the harmonious, magnificent order that reigns throughout the visible universe, and the result will be, that if the same Almighty wisdom that created the universe dictated also the Bible, the Bible will be as harmonious and as magnificent in all its parts, and in the whole, as the universe is.

But if, instead of this, the parts are found to be discordant, contradicting in one place what is said in another (as in II Sam. xxiv, 1, and I Chron. xxi, 1, where the same action is ascribed to God in one book and to Satan in the other), abounding also in idle and obscene stories, and representing the Almighty as a passionate, whimsical Being, continually changing His mind, making and unmaking His own works as if He did not know what He was about, we may take it for certainty that the Creator of the universe is not the author of such a book, that it is not the Word of God, and that to call it so is to dishonor His name.

The Quakers, who are a people more moral and regular in their conduct than the people of other sectaries, and generally allowed so to be, do not hold the Bible to be the Word of God. They call it *a history of the times*, and a bad history it is, and also a history of bad men and of bad actions, and abounding with bad examples.

For several centuries past the dispute has been about doctrines. It is now about fact. Is the Bible the Word of God, or is it not? For until this point is established, no doctrine drawn from the Bible can afford real consolation to man, and he ought to be careful he does not mistake delusion for truth. This is a case that concerns all men alike.

There has always existed in Europe, and also in America, since its



establishment, a numerous description of men (I do not here mean the Quakers) who did not, and do not believe the Bible to be the Word of God. These men never formed themselves into an established society, but are to be found in all the sectaries that exist, and are more numerous than any, perhaps equal to all, and are daily increasing. From *Deus*, the Latin word for God, they have been denominated *Deists*, that is, believers in God. It is the most honorable appellation that can be given to man, because it is derived immediately from the Deity. It is not an artificial name like Episcopalian, Presbyterian, etc., but is a name of sacred signification, and to revile it is to revile the name of God.

Since then there is so much doubt and uncertainty about the Bible, some asserting and others denying it to be the Word of God, it is best that the whole matter come out. It is necessary for the information of the world that it should.

A better time cannot offer than while the Government,<sup>22</sup> patronizing no one sect or opinion in preference to another, protects equally the rights of all; and certainly every man must spurn the idea of an ecclesiastical tyranny, engrossing the rights of the press, and holding it free only for itself.

While the terrors of the Church, and the tyranny of the State, hung like a pointed sword over Europe, men were commanded to believe what the Church told them, or go to the stake. All inquiries into the authenticity of the Bible were shut out by the Inquisition. We ought therefore to suspect that a great mass of information respecting the Bible, and the introduction of it into the world, has been suppressed by the united tyranny of Church and State, for the purpose of keeping people in ignorance, and which ought to be known.

The Bible has been received by the Protestants on the authority of the Church of Rome, and on no other authority. It is she that has said it is the Word of God. We do not admit the authority of that Church with respect to its pretended *infallibility*, its manufactured miracles, its setting itself up to forgive sins, its amphibious doctrine of transubstantiation, etc.; and we ought to be watchful with respect to any book introduced by her, or her ecclesiastical councils, and called by her the Word of God: and the more so, because it was by propagating that belief and supporting it by fire and faggot that she kept up her temporal power.

That the belief of the Bible does no good in the world, may be seen by the irregular lives of those, as well priests as laymen, who profess to

<sup>22</sup> The reference is to the administration of President Jefferson.—*Editor*.

believe it to be the Word of God, and the moral lives of the Quakers who do not. It abounds with too many ill examples to be made a rule for moral life, and were a man to copy after the lives of some of its most celebrated characters he would come to the gallows.

Thomas Paine has written <sup>23</sup> to show that the Bible is not the Word of God, that the books it contains were not written by the persons to whom they are ascribed, that it is an anonymous book, and that we have no authority for calling it the Word of God, or for saying it was written by inspired penmen, since we do not know who the writers were.

This is the opinion not only of Thomas Paine, but of thousands and tens of thousands of the most respectable characters in the United States and in Europe. These men have the same right to their opinions as others have to contrary opinions, and the same right to publish them. Ecclesiastical tyranny is not admissible in the United States.

With respect to morality, the writings of Thomas Paine are remarkable for purity and benevolence; and though he often enlivens them with touches of wit and humor, he never loses sight of the real solemnity of his subject. No man's morals, either with respect to his Maker, himself, or his neighbor, can suffer by the writings of Thomas Paine.

It is now too late to abuse Deism, especially in a country where the press is free, *or where free presses can be established*. It is a religion that has God for its patron and derives its name from Him. The thoughtful mind of man, wearied with the endless contents of sectaries against sectaries, doctrines against doctrines, and priests against priests, finds its repose at last in the contemplative belief and worship of one God and the practice of morality; for as Pope wisely says—"He can't be wrong whose life is in the right."

#### OF THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT <sup>24</sup>

##### . ADDRESS TO THE BELIEVERS IN THE BOOK CALLED THE SCRIPTURES

The New Testament contains twenty-seven books, of which four are called Gospels; one called the Acts of the Apostles; fourteen called the Epistles of Paul; one of James; two of Peter; three of John; one of Jude; one called the Revelation.

None of those books have the appearance of being written by the

<sup>23</sup> The article appeared anonymously in *The Prospect*, hence the direct references to Thomas Paine.—*Editor*.

<sup>24</sup> The article appeared in *The Prospect* of September 1 and 8, 1804.—*Editor*.

persons whose names they bear, neither do we know who the authors were. They come to us on no other authority than the Church of Rome, which the Protestant priests, especially those of New England, call the *Whore of Babylon*.

This Church, or to use their own vulgar language, *this whore*, appointed sundry councils to be held, to compose creeds for the people, and to regulate Church affairs. Two of the principal of these councils were that of Nice, and of Laodicea (names of the places where the councils were held) about three hundred and fifty years after the time that Jesus is said to have lived. Before this time there was no such book as the New Testament.

But the Church could not well go on without having something to show, as the Persians showed the Zend-Avesta, revealed they say by God to Zoroaster; the Bramins of India, the Shaster, revealed, they say, by God to Brama, and given to him out of a dusky cloud; the Jews, the books they call the Law of Moses, given they say also out of a cloud on Mount Sinai.

The Church set about forming a code for itself out of such materials as it could find or pick up. But where they got those materials, in what language they were written, or whose handwriting they were, or whether they were originals or copies, or on what authority they stood, we know nothing of, nor does the New Testament tell us.

The Church was resolved to have a New Testament, and as, after the lapse of more than three hundred years, no handwriting could be proved or disproved, the Church, which like former impostors had then gotten possession of the State, had everything its own way. It invented creeds, such as that called the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed, and out of the loads of rubbish that were presented it voted four to be Gospels, and others to be Epistles, as we now find them arranged.

Of those called Gospels, above forty were presented, each pretending to be genuine. Four only were voted in, and entitled: the Gospel *according* to St. Matthew—the Gospel *according* to St. Mark—the Gospel *according* to St. Luke—the Gospel *according* to St. John.

This word *according*, shows that those books have not been written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, but according to some accounts or traditions, picked up concerning them. The word "according" means agreeing with, and necessarily includes the idea of two things, or two persons.

We cannot say, *The Gospel written by Matthew according to Matthew*; but we might say, the Gospel of some other person according to what was reported to have been the opinion of Matthew. Now we do not know who those other persons were, nor whether what they wrote accorded with anything that Matthew, Mark, Luke and John might have said. There is too little evidence, and too much contrivance, about those books to merit credit.

The next book after those called Gospels, is that called the Acts of the Apostles. This book is anonymous; neither do the councils that compiled or contrived the New Testament tell us how they came by it. The Church, to supply this defect, say it was written by Luke, which shows that the Church and its priests have not compared that called the Gospel according to St. Luke and the Acts together, for the two contradict each other.

The book of Luke, xxiv, makes Jesus ascend into heaven the very same day that it makes him rise from the grave. The book of Acts, i, 3, says that he remained on earth forty days after his crucifixion. There is no believing what either of them says.

The next to the book of Acts is that entitled, "The Epistle of Paul the Apostle<sup>25</sup> to the Romans." This is not an epistle, or letter, written by Paul or signed by him. It is an epistle, or letter, written by a person who signs himself TERTIUS, and sent, as it is said in the end, by a servant woman called Phebe. The last chapter, ver. 22, says, "I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you." Who Tertius or Phebe was, we know nothing of.

The epistle is not dated. The whole of it is written in the first person, and that person is Tertius, not Paul. But it suited the Church to ascribe it to Paul. There is nothing in it that is interesting except it be to contending and wrangling sectaries. The stupid metaphor of the potter and the clay is in chapter ix.

The next book is entitled "The First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians." This, like the former, is not an epistle written by Paul, nor signed by him. The conclusion of the epistle says, "The first epistle to the Corinthians was written from Philippi, by Stephanas, and Fortunatus, and Achaicus, and Timotheus."

<sup>25</sup> According to the criterion of the Church, Paul was not an apostle; that appellation being given only to those called the Twelve. Two sailors belonging to a man-of-war got into a dispute upon this point, whether Paul was an apostle or not, and they agreed to refer it to the boatswain, who decided very *canonically* that Paul was an *acting* apostle but not *rated*.—*Author*.

The second epistle entitled "The Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians," is in the same case with the first. The conclusion of it says, "It was written from Philippi, a city of Macedonia, by Titus and Lucas."

A question may arise upon these cases, which is, are these persons the writers of the epistles originally, or are they the writers and attestors of copies sent to the councils who compiled the code or canon of the New Testament? If the epistles had been dated this question could be decided; but in either of the cases the evidences of Paul's handwriting and of their being written by him is wanting, and, therefore, there is no authority for calling them Epistles of Paul. We know not whose epistles they were, nor whether they are genuine or forged.

The next is entitled, "The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians." It contains six short chapters, yet the writer of it says, vi, 11, "Ye see how large a letter I have written to you with my own hand." If Paul was the writer of this it shows he did not accustom himself to write long epistles; yet the epistle to the Romans and the first to the Corinthians contain sixteen chapters each; the second to the Corinthians and that to the Hebrews thirteen each.

There is something contradictory in these matters. But short as the epistle is, it does not carry the appearance of being the work or composition of one person. Chapter v, 2, says, "If ye be circumcised Christ shall avail you nothing." It does not say circumcision shall profit you nothing, but Christ shall profit you nothing. Yet in vi, 15, it says "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."

These are not reconcilable passages, nor can contrivance make them so. The conclusion of the epistle says it was written from Rome, but it is not dated, nor is there any signature to it, neither do the compilers of the New Testament say how they came by it. We are in the dark upon all these matters.

The next is entitled, "The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians." Paul is not the writer. The conclusion of it says, "Written from Rome unto the Ephesians by Tychicus."

The next is entitled, "The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Philippians." Paul is not the writer. The conclusion of it says, "It was written to the Philippians from Rome by Epaphroditus." It is not dated. Query, were those men who wrote and signed those epistles journeymen Apos-

bles, who undertook to write in Paul's name, as Paul is said to have preached in Christ's name?

The next is entitled, "The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Colossians." Paul is not the writer. Doctor Luke is spoken of in this epistle as sending his compliments. "Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you" (iv, 14). It does not say a word about his writing any Gospel. The conclusion of the epistle says, "Written from Rome to the Colossians by Tychicus and Onesimus."

The next is entitled, "The First and the Second Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Thessalonians." Either the writer of these epistles was a visionary enthusiast, or a direct impostor, for he tells the Thessalonians, and, he says, he tells them by the Word of the Lord, that the world will be at an end in his and their time; and after telling them that those who are already dead shall rise, he adds, iv, 17, "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up with them into the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be ever with the Lord."

Such detected lies as these, ought to fill priests with confusion, when they preach such books to be the Word of God. These two epistles are said in the conclusion of them to be written from Athens. They are without date or signature.

The next four epistles are private letters. Two of them are private letters. Two of them are to Timothy, one to Titus and one to Philemon. Who they were, nobody knows.

The first to Timothy, is said to be written from Laodicea. It is without date or signature. The second to Timothy, is said to be written from Rome, and is without date or signature. The epistle to Titus is said to be written from Nicopolis in Macedonia. It is without date or signature. The epistle to Philemon is said to be written from Rome by Onesimus. It is without date.

The last epistle ascribed to Paul is entitled "The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews," and is said in the conclusion to be written from Italy, by Timothy. This Timothy (according to the conclusion of the epistle called the Second Epistle of Paul to Timothy) was Bishop of the Church of the Ephesians, and consequently this is not an epistle of Paul.

On what slender cobweb evidence do the priests and professors of the Christian religion hang their faith? The same degree of hearsay evidence, and that at third and fourth hand, would not, in a court of jus-

tice, give a man title to a cottage, and yet the priests of this profession presumptuously promise their deluded followers the Kingdom of Heaven. A little reflection would teach men that those books are not to be trusted to; that so far from there being any proof they are the Word of God, it is unknown who the writers of them were, or at what time they were written, within three hundred years after the reputed authors are said to have lived.

It is not the interest of priests, who get their living by them, to examine into the insufficiency of the evidence upon which those books were received by the popish councils who compiled the New Testament. But if Messrs. Linn and Mason would occupy themselves upon this subject (it signifies not which side they take, for the event will be the same) they would be better employed than they were last Presidential election, in writing Jesuitical electioneering pamphlets. The very name of a priest attaches suspicion on to it the instant he becomes a dabbler in party politics.

The New England priests set themselves up to govern the state, and they are falling into contempt for so doing. Men who have their farms and their several occupations to follow, and have a common interest with their neighbors in the public prosperity and tranquillity of their country, neither want nor choose to be told by a priest who they shall vote for, nor how they shall conduct their temporal concerns.

The cry of the priests that the Church is in danger, is the cry of men who do not understand the interest of their own craft; for instead of exciting alarms and apprehensions for its safety, as they expect, it excites suspicion that the foundation is not sound, and that it is necessary to take down and build it on a surer foundation. Nobody fears for the safety of a mountain, but a hillock of sand may be washed away! Blow then, O ye priests, "The Trumpet in Zion," for the Hillock in in danger.

DETECTOR—P.

#### BIBLICAL BLASPHEMY

The Church tells us that the books of the Old and New Testament are divine revelation, and without this revelation we could not have true ideas of God.

The Deist, on the contrary, says that those books are *not* divine revelation; and that were it not for the light of reason and the religion of Deism, those books, instead of teaching us true ideas of God, would teach us not only false but blasphemous ideas of Him.

Deism teaches us that God is a God of truth and justice. Does the Bible teach the same doctrine? It does not.

The Bible says (Jeremiah xx, 5, 7) that God is a deceiver. "O Lord (says Jeremiah) thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived. Thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed."

Jeremiah not only upbraids God with deceiving *him*, but, in iv, 9, he upbraids God with deceiving the people of Jerusalem. "Ah! Lord God (says he), surely thou hast greatly deceived this people and Jerusalem, saying, ye shall have peace, whereas the sword reacheth unto the soul."

In xv, 8, the Bible becomes more impudent, and calls God in plain language, a *liar*. "Wilt thou (says Jeremiah to God) be altogether unto me as a liar and as waters that fail?"

Ezekiel xiv, 9, makes God to say—"If the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, *I the Lord have deceived that prophet.*" All this is downright blasphemy.

The prophet Micaiah, as he is called, II Chron. xviii, 18-21, tells another blasphemous story of God. "I saw," says he, "the Lord sitting on His throne, and all the hosts of Heaven standing on His right hand and on His left. And the Lord said, who shall entice Ahab, King of Israel, to go up and *fall* at Ramoth Gilead? And one spoke after this manner, and another after that manner.

"Then there came out a spirit [Micaiah does not tell us where he came from] and *stood before the Lord* [what an impudent fellow this spirit was] and said, I will entice him. And the Lord said unto him, where-with? And he said, I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And the Lord said, Thou shalt entice him, and thou shalt also prevail; go out, and do even so."

We often hear of a gang of thieves plotting to rob and murder a man, and laying a plan to entice him out that they may execute their design, and we always feel shocked at the wickedness of such wretches; but what must we think of a book that describes the Almighty acting in the same manner, and laying plans in heaven to entrap and ruin mankind? Our ideas of His justice and goodness forbid us to believe such stories, and therefore we say that a lying spirit has been in the mouth of the writers of the books of the Bible.

T. P.



## BIBLICAL ANACHRONISM

In addition to the judicious remarks in your twelfth number,<sup>26</sup> on the absurd story of Noah's Flood, in Genesis vii, I send you the following:

The second verse makes God to say unto Noah, "Of every *clean* beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female, and of every beast that are *not clean*, by two, the male and his female."

Now, there was no such thing as beasts *clean* and *unclean* in the time of Noah. Neither were there any such people as Jews or Israelites at that time, to whom that distinction was a law. The law, called the Law of Moses, by which a distinction is made, beasts clean and unclean, was not until several hundred years after the time that Noah is said to have lived.

The story, therefore, detects itself, because the inventor forgot himself, by making God make use of an expression that could not be used at the time. The blunder is of the same kind as if a man, in telling a story about America a hundred years ago, should quote an expression from Mr. Jefferson's inaugural speech as if spoken by him at that time.

My opinion of this story is the same as what a man once said to another, who asked him in a drawling tone of voice, "Do you believe the account about No-ah?" The other replied in the same tone of voice, *ah-no*.

T. P.

## RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE

The following publication, which has appeared in several newspapers in different parts of the United States, shows in the most striking manner the character and effects of religious fanaticism, and to what extravagant lengths it will carry its unruly and destructive operations.

We give it a place in *The Prospect*, because we think the perusal of it will be gratifying to our subscribers; and, because, by exposing the true character of such frantic zeal, we hope to produce some influence upon the reason of man, and induce him to rise superior to such dreadful illusions. The judicious remarks at the end of this account were communicated to us by a very intelligent and faithful friend to the cause of Deism.

<sup>26</sup> This was addressed to the editor of *The Prospect*.—*Editor*.

*Extract from a Letter of the Rev. George Scott, of Mill Creek, Washington County, Pennsylvania, to Colonel William M'Farran, of Mount Bethel, Northampton County, Pa., dated November 3, 1802.*

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"We have wonderful times here. God has been pleased to visit this barren corner with abundance of His grace. The work began in a neighboring congregation, at a sacramental occasion, about the last of September. It did not make its appearance in my congregation till the first Tuesday of October. After society in the night there appeared an evident stir among the young people, but nothing of the appearance of what appeared afterwards.

"On Saturday evening following we had society, but it was dull throughout. On Sabbath-day one cried out, but nothing else extraordinary appeared. That evening I went part of the way to the Raccoon congregation, where the sacrament of the supper was administered; but on Monday morning a very strong impression of duty constrained me to return to my congregation in the Flats, where the work was begun.

"We met in the afternoon at the meeting-house, where we had a warm society. In the evening we removed to a neighboring house, where we continued in society till midnight; numbers were falling all the time of society. After the people were dismissed, a considerable number stayed and sung hymns till perhaps two o'clock in the morning, when the work began, to the astonishment of all. Only five or six were left able to take care of the rest, to the number perhaps of near forty. They fell in all directions, on benches, on beds and on the floor.

"Next morning the people began to flock in from all quarters. One girl came early in the morning, but did not get within one hundred yards of the house before she fell powerless, and was carried in. We could not leave the house, and, therefore, continued society all that day and all that night, and on Wednesday morning I was obliged to leave a number of them on the spot.

"On Thursday evening we met again, when the work was amazing; about twenty persons lay to all appearances dead for near two and a half hours, and a great number cried out with sore distress.

"Friday I preached at Mill Creek. Here nothing appeared more than an unusual solemnity. That evening we had society, where great numbers were brought under conviction, but none fell. On Sabbath-day, I

preached at Mill Creek. This day and evening was a very solemn time but none fell.

“On Monday I went to attend presbytery, but returned on Thursday evening to the Flats, where society was appointed, when numbers were struck down. On Saturday evening we had society, and a very solemn time—about a dozen persons lay dead three and a half hours by the watch. On Sabbath a number fell, and we were obliged to continue all night in society, as we had done every evening we had met before.

“On Monday a Mr. Hughes preached at Mill Creek, but nothing extraordinary appeared, only a great deal of falling. We concluded to divide that evening into two societies, in order to accommodate the people. Mr. H. attended the one and I the other. Nothing strange appeared when Mr. H. attended; but where I attended God was present in the most wonderful manner. I believe there was not one present but was more or less affected. A considerable number fell powerless, and two or three, after laying some time, recovered with joy, and spoke near half an hour.

“One, especially, declared in a surprising manner the wonderful view she had of the person, character and offices of Christ, with such accuracy of language that I was astonished to hear it. Surely this must be the work of God! On Thursday evening we had a lively society, but not much falling down. On Saturday we all went to the Cross Roads and attended a sacrament. Here were, perhaps, about four thousand people collected. The weather was uncomfortable; on the Sabbath-day it rained, and on Monday it snowed. We had thirteen ministers present.

“The exercises began on Saturday, and continued on night and day with little or no intermission. Great numbers fell; to speak within bounds, there were upwards of one hundred and fifty down at one time, and some of them continued three or four hours with but little appearance of life. Numbers came to, rejoicing, while others were deeply distressed. The scene was wonderful; the cries of the distressed, and the agonizing groans, gave some faint representation of the awful cries and the bitter screams which will no doubt be extorted from the damned in hell.

“But what is to me the most surprising, of those who have been subjects among my people with whom I have conversed, but three had any terrors of hell during their exercise. The principal cry is, O how long have I rejected Christ! O how often have I embroiled my hands in his precious blood! O how often have I waded through his precious blood

by stifling conviction! O this dreadful hard heart! O what a dreadful monster sin is! It was my sin that nailed Jesus to the cross! etc.

“The preaching is various; some thunder the terrors of the law—others preach the mild invitation of the Gospel. For my part, since the work began, I have confined myself chiefly to the doctrines of our fallen state by nature, and the way of recovery through Christ; opening the way of salvation; showing how God can be just and yet be the justifier of them that believe, and also the nature of true faith and repentance; pointing out the difference between true and false religion, and urging the invitations of the Gospel in the most engaging manner that I am master of, without any strokes of terror.

“The convictions and cries appear to be, perhaps, nearly equal under all these different modes of preaching, but it appears rather most when we preach on the fulness and freeness of salvation.”

#### REMARKS BY MR. PAINE

In the fifth chapter of Mark, we read a strange story of the devil getting into the swine after he had been turned out of a man, and as the freaks of the devil in *that* story and the tumbledown description in *this* are very much alike, the two stories ought to go together.<sup>27</sup>

The force of the imagination is capable of producing strange effects. When animal magnetism began in France, which was while Dr. Franklin was Minister of that country, the wonderful accounts given of the wonderful effects it produced on the persons who were under operation, exceeded anything related in the foregoing letter from Washington County. They tumbled down, fell into trances, roared and rolled about like persons supposed to be bewitched.

The Government, in order to ascertain the fact, or detect the imposition, appointed a committee of physicians to inquire into the case, and Dr. Franklin was requested to accompany them, which he did. The committee went to the operator's house, and the persons on whom an operation was to be performed were assembled. They were placed in the position in which they had been when under former operations, and *blindfolded*.

In a little time they began to show signs of agitation, and in the space of about two hours they went through all the frantic airs they had shown before; but the case was that no operation was performing upon them,

<sup>27</sup> At this point in the article Paine quotes in full Mark, V, 1-13.—*Editor*.

neither was the operator in the room, for he had been ordered out of it by the physicians; but as the persons did not know this, they supposed him present and operating upon them. It was the effect of imagination only.

Dr. Franklin, in relating this account to the writer of this article, said that he thought the Government might as well have let it gone on, for that as imagination sometimes produced disorders it might also cure some. It is fortunate, however, that this falling down and crying out scene did not happen in New England a century ago, for if it had the preachers would have been hung for witchcraft, and in more ancient times the poor falling-down folks would have been supposed to be possessed of a devil, like the man in Mark, among the tombs. The progress that reason and Deism make in the world lessen the force of superstition and abate the spirit of persecution.

## ORIGIN OF FREEMASONRY

In this essay, written in New York City in 1805, Paine developed the thesis that Masonry was descended from the religion of the Druids. The essay was not published during Paine's lifetime, but appeared in 1810 in fragmentary form, edited by Madame Bonneville, Paine's executrix, who omitted certain references which offended her Roman Catholic leanings. In 1818 it was published as a pamphlet with an anonymous preface stating: "This tract is a chapter belonging to the Third Part of *The Age of Reason*, as will be seen by the references made in it to preceding articles, as forming part of the same work."—*Editor*.

**I**T is always understood that Freemasons have a secret which they carefully conceal; but from everything that can be collected from their own accounts of Masonry, their real secret is no other than their origin, which but few of them understand; and those who do, envelop it in mystery. The Society of Masons are distinguished into three classes or degrees. 1st. The Entered Apprentice. 2d. The Fellow Craft. 3d. The Master Mason.

The Entered Apprentice knows but little more of Masonry than the use of signs and tokens, and certain steps and words by which Masons can recognize each other without being discovered by a person who is

not a Mason. The Fellow Craft is not much better instructed in Masonry than the Entered Apprentice. It is only in the Master Mason's Lodge that whatever knowledge remains of the origin of Masonry is preserved and concealed.

In 1730, Samuel Pritchard, member of a constituted lodge in England, published a treatise entitled "Masonry Dissected"; and made oath before the Lord Mayor of London that it was a true copy. "Samuel Pritchard maketh oath that the copy hereunto annexed is a true and genuine copy in every particular." In his work he has given the catechism or examination, in question and answer, of the Apprentices, the Fellow Craft, and the Master Mason. There was no difficulty in doing this, as it is mere form.

In his introduction he says, "the original institution of Masonry consisted in the foundation of the liberal arts and sciences, but more especially in geometry, for at the building of the tower of Babel the art and mystery of Masonry was first introduced, and from thence handed down by Euclid, a worthy and excellent mathematician of the Egyptians; and he communicated it to Hiram, the Master Mason concerned in building Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem."

Besides the absurdity of deriving Masonry from the building of Babel, where, according to the story, the confusion of languages prevented the builders understanding each other, and consequently of communicating any knowledge they had, there is a glaring contradiction in point of chronology in the account he gives.

Solomon's Temple was built and dedicated 1004 years before the Christian era; and Euclid, as may be seen in the tables of chronology, lived 277 before the same era. It was therefore impossible that Euclid could communicate anything to Hiram, since Euclid did not live till seven hundred years after the time of Hiram.

In 1783, Captain George Smith, inspector of the Royal Artillery Academy at Woolwich, in England, and Provincial Grand Master of Masonry for the County of Kent, published a treatise entitled, "The Use and Abuse of Freemasonry."

In his chapter of the antiquity of Masonry he makes it to be coeval with creation, "when," says he, "the sovereign architect raised on Masonic principles the beauteous globe, and commanded the master science, geometry, to lay the planetary world, and to regulate by its laws the whole stupendous system in just, unerring proportion, rolling round the central sun.

"But," continues he, "I am not at liberty publicly to undraw the curtain and openly to descant on this head; it is sacred, and ever will remain so; those who are honored with the trust will not reveal it, and those who are ignorant of it cannot betray it."

By this last part of the phrase, Smith means the two inferior classes, the Fellow Craft and the Entered Apprentice, for he says in the next page of his work, "It is not every one that is barely initiated into Freemasonry that is intrusted with all the mysteries thereto belonging; they are not attainable as things of course, nor by every capacity."

The learned, but unfortunate Doctor Dodd, Grand Chaplain of Masonry, in his oration at the dedication of Freemason's Hall, London, traces Masonry through a variety of stages. "Masons," says he, "are well informed from their own private and interior records that the building of Solomon's Temple is an important era, from whence they derive many mysteries of their art.

"Now," says he, "be it remembered that this great event took place above one thousand years before the Christian era, and consequently more than a century before Homer, the first of the Grecian poets, wrote; and about five centuries before Pythagoras brought from the East his sublime system of truly Masonic instruction to illuminate our western world. But, remote as this period is, we date not from thence the commencement of our art. For though it might owe to the wise and glorious King of Israel some of its many mystic forms and hieroglyphic ceremonies, yet certainly the art itself is coeval with man, the great subject of it.

"We trace," continues he, "its footsteps in the most distant, the most remote ages and nations of the world. We find it among the first and most celebrated civiliziers of the East. We deduce it regularly from the first astronomers on the plains of Chaldea, to the wise and mystic kings and priests of Egypt, the sages of Greece, and the philosophers of Rome."

From these reports and declarations of Masons of the highest order in the institution, we see that Masonry, without publicly declaring so, lays claim to some divine communication from the Creator, in a manner different from, and unconnected with, the book which the Christians call the Bible; and the natural result from this is that Masonry is derived from some very ancient religion, wholly independent of and unconnected with that book.

To come then at once to the point, *Masonry* (as I shall show from the customs, ceremonies, hieroglyphics and chronology of Masonry) is

derived and is the remains of the religion of the ancient Druids; who, like the magi of Persia and the priests of Heliopolis in Egypt, were priests of the sun. They paid worship to this great luminary, as the great visible agent of a great invisible first cause, whom they styled "Time without limits."

The Christian religion and Masonry have one and the same common origin: both are derived from the worship of the sun. The difference between their origin is that the Christian religion is a parody on the worship of the sun, in which they put a man whom they call Christ in the place of the sun, and pay him the same adoration which was originally paid to the sun, as I have shown in the chapter on the origin of the Christian religion.

In Masonry many of the ceremonies of the Druids are preserved in their original state, at least without any parody. With them the sun is still the sun; and his image in the form of the sun is the great emblematical ornament of Masonic lodges and Masonic dresses. It is the central figure on their aprons, and they wear it also pendant on the breast in their lodges and in their processions. It has the figure of a man, as at the head of the sun, as Christ is always represented.

At what period of antiquity, or in what nation, this religion was first established, is lost in the labyrinth of unrecorded time. It is generally ascribed to the ancient Egyptians, the Babylonians and Chaldeans, and reduced afterwards to a system regulated by the apparent progress of the sun through the twelve signs of zodiac by Zoroaster the lawgiver of Persia, from whence Pythagoras brought it into Greece. It is to these matters Dr. Dodd refers in the passage already quoted from his oration.

The worship of the sun as the great visible agent of a great invisible first cause, "Time without limits," spread itself over a considerable part of Asia and Africa, from thence to Greece and Rome, through all ancient Gaul, and into Britain and Ireland.

Smith, in his chapter on the antiquity of Masonry in Britain, says, that "notwithstanding the obscurity which envelops Masonic history in that country, various circumstances contribute to prove that Freemasonry was introduced into Britain about 1,030 years before Christ."

It cannot be Masonry in its present state that Smith here alludes to. The Druids flourished in Britain at the period he speaks of, and it is from them that Masonry is descended. Smith has put the child in the place of the parent.

It sometimes happens, as well in writing as in conversation, that a



person lets slip an expression that serves to unravel what he intends to conceal, and this is the case with Smith, for in the same chapter he says, "The Druids, when they committed anything to writing, used the Greek alphabet, and I am bold to assert that the most perfect remains of the Druids' rites and ceremonies are preserved in the customs and ceremonies of the Masons that are to be found existing among mankind. My brethren," says he, "may be able to trace them with greater exactness than I am at liberty to explain to the public."

This is a confession from a Master Mason, without intending it to be so understood by the public, that Masonry is the remains of the religion of the Druids; the reasons for the Masons keeping this a secret I shall explain in the course of this work.

As the study and contemplation of the Creator [is] in the works of the creation, the sun, as the great visible agent of that Being, was the visible object of the adoration of Druids; all their religious rites and ceremonies had reference to the apparent progress of the sun through the twelve signs of the zodiac, and his influence upon the earth.

The Masons adopt the same practises. The roof of their temples or lodges is ornamented with a sun, and the floor is a representation of the variegated face of the earth either by carpeting or mosaic work.

Freemasons' Hall, in Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, is a magnificent building, and cost upward of 12,000 pounds sterling. Smith, in speaking of this building, says (page 152), "The roof of this magnificent hall is in all probability the highest piece of finished architecture in Europe. In the center of this roof, a most resplendent sun is represented in burnished gold, surrounded with the twelve signs of the zodiac, with their respective characters:

♈ Aries	♎ Libra
♉ Taurus	♏ Scorpio
♊ Gemini	♐ Sagittarius
♋ Cancer	♑ Capricornus
♌ Leo	♒ Aquarius
♍ Virgo	♓ Pisces."

After giving this description, he says, "The emblematical meaning of the sun is well known to the enlightened and inquisitive Freemason; and as the real sun is situated in the center of the universe, so the emblematical sun is the center of real Masonry. We all know," continues

he, "that the sun is the fountain of light, the source of the seasons, the cause of the vicissitudes of day and night, the parent of vegetation, the friend of man; hence the scientific Freemason only knows the reason why the sun is placed in the center of this beautiful hall."

The Masons, in order to protect themselves from the persecution of the Christian Church, have always spoken in a mystical manner of the figure of the sun in their lodges, or, like the astronomer Lalande, who is a Mason, been silent upon the subject.

It is their secret, especially in Catholic countries, because the figure of the sun is the expressive criterion that denotes they are descended from the Druids, and that wise, elegant, philosophical religion was the faith opposite to the faith of the gloomy Christian Church.

The lodges of the Masons, if built for the purpose, are constructed in a manner to correspond with the apparent motion of the sun. They are situated East and West. The master's place is always in the East. In the examination of an Entered Apprentice, the master, among many other questions, asks him,

Q. "How is the lodge situated?"

A. "East and West."

Q. "Why so?"

A. "Because all churches and chapels are, or ought to be so."

This answer, which is mere catechismal form, is not an answer to the question. It does no more than remove the question a point further, which is, why ought all churches and chapels to be so? But as the Entered Apprentice is not initiated into the druidical mysteries of Masonry, he is not asked any questions a direct answer to which would lead thereto.

Q. "Where stands your master?"

A. "In the East."

Q. "Why so?"

A. "As the sun rises in the East and opens the day, so the master stands in the East (with his right hand upon his left breast, being a sign, and the square about his neck), to open the lodge, and set his men at work."

Q. "Where stand your wardens?"

A. "In the West."

Q. "What is their business?"

A. "As the sun sets in the West to close the day, so the wardens stand

in the West (with their right hands upon their left breasts, being a sign, and the level and plumb rule about their necks), to close the lodge, and dismiss the men from labor, paying them their wages."

Here the name of the sun is mentioned, but it is proper to observe that in this place it has reference only to labor or to the time of labor, and not to any religious druidical rite or ceremony, as it would have with respect to the situation of lodges East and West.

I have already observed in the chapter on the origin of the Christian religion, that the situation of churches East and West is taken from the worship of the sun, which rises in the East, and has not the least reference to the person called Jesus Christ.

The Christians never bury their dead on the North side of a church; and a Mason's lodge always has, or is supposed to have, three windows which are called fixed lights, to distinguish them from the movable lights of the sun and the moon. The master asks the Entered Apprentice,

Q. "How are they (the fixed lights) situated?"

A. "East, West and South."

Q. "What are their uses?"

A. "To light the men to and from their work."

Q. "Why are there no lights in the North?"

A. "Because the sun darts no rays from thence."

This, among numerous other instances, shows that the Christian religion and Masonry have one and the same common origin, the ancient worship of the sun.

The high festival of the Masons is on the day they call St. John's day; but every enlightened Mason must know that holding their festival on this day has no reference to the person called St. John, and that it is only to disguise the true cause of holding it on this day, that they call the day by that name. As there were Masons, or at least Druids, many centuries before the time of St. John, if such person ever existed, the holding their festival on this day must refer to some cause totally unconnected with John.

The case is that the day called St. John's day is the twenty-fourth day of June, and is what is called mid-summer day. The sun is then arrived at the summer solstice; and, with respect to his meridinal altitude, or height at high noon, appears for some days to be of the same height.

The astronomical longest day, like the shortest day, is not every year, on account of leap year, on the same numerical day, and therefore the twenty-fourth of June is always taken for midsummer day; and it is in

honor of the sun, which has then arrived at his greatest height in our hemisphere, and not anything with respect to St. John, that this annual festival of the Masons, taken from the Druids, is celebrated on midsummer day.

Customs will often outlive the remembrance of their origin, and this is the case with respect to a custom still practised in Ireland, where the Druids flourished at the time they flourished in Britain.

On the eve of St. John's day, that is, on the eve of midsummer day, the Irish light fires on the tops of the hills. This can have no reference to St. John; but it has emblematical reference to the sun, which on that day is at his highest summer elevation, and might in common language be said to have arrived at the top of the hill.

As to what Masons, and books of Masonry, tell us of Solomon's Temple at Jerusalem, it is no wise improbable that some Masonic ceremonies may have been derived from the building of that temple, for the worship of the sun was in practise many centuries before the temple existed, or before the Israelites came out of Egypt. And we learn from the history of the Jewish kings, II Kings xxii, xxiii, that the worship of the sun was performed by the Jews in that temple.

It is, however, much to be doubted if it was done with the same scientific purity and religious morality with which it was performed by the Druids, who, by all accounts that historically remain of them, were a wise, learned, and moral class of men. The Jews, on the contrary, were ignorant of astronomy, and of science in general, and if a religion founded upon astronomy fell into their hands, it is almost certain it would be corrupted.

We do not read in the history of the Jews, whether in the Bible or elsewhere, that they were the inventors or the improvers of any one art or science. Even in the building of this temple, the Jews did not know how to square and frame the timber for beginning and carrying on the work, and Solomon was obliged to send to Hiram, King of Tyre (Zidon), to procure workmen; "for thou knowest" (says Solomon to Hiram, I Kings v, 6), "that there is not among us any that can skill to hew timber like unto the Zidonians."

This temple was more properly Hiram's Temple than Solomon's, and if the Masons derive anything from the building of it, they owe it to the Zidonians and not to the Jews. But to return to the worship of the sun in this temple.

It is said, II Kings xxiii, 5, "And [King Josiah] put down all the

idolatrous priests . . . that burned incense unto . . . the sun, the moon, the planets, and all the host of heaven." And it is said at the eleventh verse: "And he took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun, at the entering in of the house of the Lord . . . and burned the chariots of the sun with fire"; verse 13, "And the high places that were before Jerusalem, which were on the right hand of the mount of corruption, which Solomon the King of Israel had builded for Ashtoreth, the abomination of the Zidonians" (the very people that built the temple) "did the king defile."

Besides these things, the description that Josephus gives of the decorations of this temple, resembles on a large scale those of a Mason's lodge. He says that the distribution of the several parts of the Temple of the Jews represented all nature, particularly the parts most apparent of it, as the sun, moon, the planets, the zodiac, the earth, the elements; and that the system of the world was retraced there by numerous ingenious emblems.

These, in all probability, are, what Josiah, in his ignorance, calls the abominations of the Zidonians.<sup>28</sup> Everything, however, drawn from this temple,<sup>29</sup> and applied to Masonry, still refers to the worship of the sun, however corrupted or misunderstood by the Jews, and consequently to the religion of the Druids.

Another circumstance, which shows that Masonry is derived from some ancient system, prior to and unconnected with the Christian religion, is the chronology, or method of counting time, used by the Masons in the records of their lodges. They make no use of what is called the Christian era; and they reckon their months numerically, as the ancient Egyptians did, and as the Quakers do now.

I have by me a record of a French lodge, at the time the late Duke of Orleans, then Duke de Chartres, was Grand Master of Masonry in

<sup>28</sup> Smith, in speaking of a lodge, says, when the lodge is revealed to an entering Mason, it discovers to him *a representation of the World*; in which, from the wonders of nature, we are led to contemplate her great Original, and worship Him from His mighty works; and we are thereby also moved to exercise those moral and social virtues which become mankind as the servants of the great Architect of the world.—*Author*.

<sup>29</sup> It may not be improper here to observe, that the law called the Law of Moses could not have been in existence at the time of building this Temple. Here is the likeness of things in heaven above and in earth beneath. And we read in I Kings, vi, vii, that Solomon made cherubs and cherubim, that he *carved* all the walls of the house round about with cherubim, and palm-trees, and open flowers, and that he made a molten sea, placed on twelve oxen, and the ledges of it were ornamented with lions, oxen, and cherubim: all this is contrary to the law called the Law of Moses.—*Author*.

France. It begins as follows: "*Le trentième jour du sixième mois de l'an de la V. L. cinq mille sept cent soixante treize*"; that is, the thirteenth day of the sixth month of the year of the Venerable Lodge, 5773.

By what I observe in English books of Masonry, the English Masons use the initials A. L. and not V. L. By A. L. they mean in the *year of Light*, as the Christians by A. D. mean in the year of our Lord. But A. L. like V. L. refers to the same chronological era, that is, to the supposed time of the Creation.

In the chapter on the origin of the Christian religion I have shown that the cosmogony, that is, the account of the Creation with which the book of Genesis opens, has been taken and mutilated from the Zend-Avesta of Zoroaster, and was fixed as a preface to the Bible after the Jews returned from captivity in Babylon, and that the rabbins of the Jews do not hold their account in Genesis to be a fact, but mere allegory. The six thousand years in the Zend-Avesta, is changed or interpolated into six days in the account of Genesis.

The Masons appear to have chosen the same period, and perhaps to avoid the suspicion and persecution of the Church, have adopted the era of the world as the era of Masonry. The V. L. of the French, and A. L. of the English Mason, answer to the A. M. *Anno Mundi*, or year of the world.

Though the Masons have taken many of their ceremonies and hieroglyphics from the ancient Egyptians, it is certain they have not taken their chronology from thence. If they had, the Church would soon have sent them to the stake; as the chronology of the Egyptians, like that of the Chinese, goes many thousand years beyond the Bible chronology.

The religion of the Druids, as before said, was the same as the religion of the ancient Egyptians. The priests of Egypt were the professors and teachers of science, and were styled priests of Heliopolis, that is, of the *City of the Sun*.

The Druids in Europe, who were the same order of men, have their name from the Teutonic or ancient German language; the Germans being anciently called Teutones. The word Druid signifies a *wise man*. In Persia they were called magi, which signifies the same thing.

"Egypt," says Smith, "from whence we derive many of our mysteries, has always borne a distinguished rank in history, and was once celebrated above all others for its antiquities, learning, opulence and fertility. In their system, their principal hero-gods, Osiris and Isis, theologically represented the Supreme Being and universal nature; and

physically the two great celestial luminaries, the sun and the moon, by whose influence all nature was actuated.

"The experienced brethren of the Society," says Smith in a note to this passage, "are well informed what affinity these symbols bear to Masonry, and why they are used in all Masonic lodges."

In speaking of the apparel of the Masons in their lodges, part of which, as we see in their public processions, is a white leather apron, he says, "the Druids were appareled in white at the time of their sacrifices and solemn offices. The Egyptian priests of Osiris wore snow-white cotton. The Grecian and most other priests wore white garments. As Masons, we regard the principles of those *who were the first worshipers of the true God*, imitate their apparel, and assume the badge of innocence."

"The Egyptians," continues Smith, "in the earliest ages constituted a great number of lodges, but with assiduous care kept their secrets of Masonry from all strangers. These secrets have been imperfectly handed down to us by oral tradition only, and ought to be kept undiscovered to the laborers, craftsmen, and apprentices, till by good behavior and long study they become better acquainted in geometry and the liberal arts, and thereby qualified for masters and wardens, which is seldom or never the case with English Masons."

Under the head of Freemasonry, written by the astronomer Lalande, in the French Encyclopedia, I expected from his great knowledge in astronomy to have found much information on the origin of Masonry; for what connection can there be between any institution and the sun and twelve signs of the zodiac, if there be not something in that institution, or in its origin, that has reference to astronomy?

Everything used as a hieroglyphic has reference to the subject and purpose for which it is used, and we are not to suppose the Freemasons, among whom are many very learned and scientific men, to be such idiots as to make use of astronomical signs without some astronomical purpose.

But I was much disappointed in my expectation from Lalande. In speaking of the origin of Masonry, he says, "*L'origine de la maçonnerie se perd, comme tant d'autres dans l'obscurité des temps*"; that is, the origin of Masonry, like many others, loses itself in the obscurity of time. When I came to this expression, I supposed Lalande a Mason, and on inquiry found he was. This *passing over* saved him from the embarrassment which Masons are under respecting the disclosure of their origin, and which they are sworn to conceal.

There is a society of Masons in Dublin who take the name of Druids; these Masons must be supposed to have a reason for taking that name.

I come now to speak of the cause of secrecy used by the Masons.

The natural source of secrecy is fear. When any new religion over-runs a former religion, the professors of the new become the persecutors of the old. We see this in all instances that history brings before us.

When Hilkiah the priest and Shaphan the scribe, in the reign of King Josiah, found, or pretended to find, the law, called the Law of Moses, a thousand years after the time of Moses (and it does not appear from II Kings, xxii, xxiii, that such a law was ever practised or known before the time of Josiah), he established that law as a national religion, and put all the priests of the sun to death.

When the Christian religion over-ran the Jewish religion, the Jews were the continual subject of persecution in all Christian countries. When the Protestant religion in England over-ran the Roman Catholic religion, it was made death for a Catholic priest to be found in England.

As this has been the case in all the instances we have any knowledge of, we are obliged to admit it with respect to the case in question, and that when the Christian religion over-ran the religion of the Druids in Italy, ancient Gaul, Britain and Ireland, the Druids became the subject of persecution.

This would naturally and necessarily oblige such of them as remained attached to their original religion to meet in secret, and under the strongest injunctions of secrecy. Their safety depended upon it. A false brother might expose the lives of many of them to destruction; and from the remains of the religion of the Druids, thus preserved, arose the institution which, to avoid the name of Druid, took that of Mason, and practised under this new name the rites and ceremonies of Druids.

## AN ESSAY ON DREAM

This essay was first published in Paris after Paine's departure for America in 1802. Its title read: *Extract from the M.S. Third Part of Thomas Paine's Age of Reason. Chapter the Second: Article, Dream. Paris: Printed for M. Chateau, 1803.* In 1807 it was published as the introductory chapter to



Paine's Examination of the Prophecies, immediately following the "Author's Preface." The part of the essay, beginning with the last paragraph on p. 845 down to the last two paragraphs on p. 848 was omitted by Paine when he published it in America.

AS a great deal is said in the New Testament about dreams, it is first necessary to explain the nature of Dream, and to show by what operation of the mind a dream is produced during sleep.

When this is understood we shall be the better enabled to judge whether any reliance can be placed upon them; and consequently, whether the several matters in the New Testament related of dreams deserve the credit which the writers of that book and priests and commentators ascribe to them.

In order to understand the nature of Dream, or of that which passes in ideal vision during a state of sleep, it is first necessary to understand the composition and decomposition of the human mind.

The three great faculties of the mind are IMAGINATION, JUDGMENT and MEMORY. Every action of the mind comes under one or the other of these faculties. In a state of wakefulness, as in the day-time, these three faculties are all active; but that is seldom the case in sleep, and never perfectly; and this is the cause that our dreams are not so regular and rational as our waking thoughts.

The seat of that collection of powers or faculties that constitute what is called the mind is in the brain. There is not, and cannot be, any visible demonstration of this anatomically, but accidents happening to living persons show it to be so. An injury done to the brain by a fracture of the skull will sometimes change a wise man into a childish idiot—a being without a mind. But so careful has nature been of that *sanctum sanctorum* of man, the brain, that of all the external accidents to which humanity is subject, this occurs the most seldom. But we often see it happening by long and habitual intemperance.

Whether those three faculties occupy distinct apartments of the brain, is known only to that ALMIGHTY POWER that formed and organized it. We can see the external effects of muscular motion in all the members of the body, though its *primum mobile*, or first moving cause, is unknown to man.

Our external motions are sometimes the effect of intention, sometimes not. If we are sitting and intend to rise, or standing and intend to sit or to walk, the limbs obey that intention as if they heard the order given. But we make a thousand motions every day, and that as well

waking as sleeping, that have no prior intention to direct them. Each member acts as if it had a will or mind of its own.

Man governs the whole when he pleases to govern, but in the interim the several parts, like little suburbs, govern themselves without consulting the sovereign.

And all these motions, whatever be the generating cause, are external and visible. But with respect to the brain, no ocular observation can be made upon it. All is mystery; all is darkness in that womb of thought.

Whether the brain is a mass of matter in continual rest; whether it has a vibrating, pulsative motion, or a heaving and falling motion like matter in fermentation; whether different parts of the brain have different motions according to the faculty that is employed, be it the imagination, the judgment, or the memory, man knows nothing of. He knows not the cause of his own wit. His own brain conceals it from him.

Comparing invisible by visible things, as metaphysical can sometimes be compared to physical things, the operations of these distinct and several faculties have some resemblance to a watch. The main spring which puts all in motion corresponds to the imagination; the pendulum which corrects and regulates that motion corresponds to the judgment; and the hand and dial, like the memory, record the operation.

Now in proportion as these several faculties sleep, slumber, or keep awake, during the continuance of a dream, in that proportion the dream will be reasonable or frantic, remembered or forgotten.

If there is any faculty in mental man that never sleeps it is that volatile thing the imagination. The case is different with the judgment and memory. The sedate and sober constitution of the judgment easily disposes it to rest; and as to the memory, it records in silence and is active only when it is called upon.

That the judgment soon goes to sleep may be perceived by our sometimes beginning to dream before we are fully asleep ourselves. Some random thought runs in the mind and we start, as it were, into recollection that we are dreaming between sleeping and waking.

If a pendulum of a watch by any accident becomes so displaced that it can no longer control and regulate the elastic force of the spring, the works are instantly thrown into confusion, and continue so as long as the spring continues to have force.

In like manner if the judgment sleeps while the imagination keeps awake, the dream will be a riotous assemblage of misshapen images and ranting ideas, and the more active the imagination is the wilder the

dream will be. The most inconsistent and the most impossible things will appear right; because that faculty whose province it is to keep order is in a state of absence. The master of the school is gone out and the boys are in an uproar.

If the memory sleeps, we shall have no other knowledge of the dream than that we have dreamt, without knowing what it was about. In this case it is sensation rather than recollection that acts. The dream has given us some sense of pain or trouble, and we feel it as a hurt, rather than remember it as vision.

If the memory slumbers we shall have a faint remembrance of the dream, and after a few minutes it will sometimes happen that the principal passages of the dream will occur to us more fully. The cause of this is that the memory will sometimes continue slumbering or sleeping after we are awake ourselves, and so fully that it may and sometimes does happen that we do not immediately recollect where we are, nor what we have been about, or have to do. But when the memory starts into wakefulness it brings the knowledge of these things back upon us like a flood of light, and sometimes the dream with it.

But the most curious circumstance of the mind in a state of dream is the power it has to become the agent of every person, character and thing of which it dreams. It carries on conversation with several, asks questions, hears answers, gives and receives information, and it acts all these parts itself.

Yet however various and eccentric the imagination may be in the creating of images and ideas, it cannot supply the place of memory with respect to things that are forgotten when we are awake. For example, if we have forgotten the name of a person, and dream of seeing him and asking him his name, he cannot tell it; for it is ourselves asking ourselves the question.

But though the imagination cannot supply the place of real memory, it has the wild faculty of counterfeiting memory. It dreams of persons it never knew, and talks to them as if it remembered them as old acquaintance. It relates circumstances that never happened, and tells them as if they had happened. It goes to places that never existed, and knows where all the streets and houses are, as if we had been there before. The scenes it creates are often as scenes remembered. It will sometimes act a dream within a dream, and, in the delusion of dreaming, tell a dream it never dreamed, and tell it as if it was from memory.

It may also be remarked, that the imagination in a dream has no idea

of time, *as time*. It counts only by circumstances; and if a succession of circumstances pass in a dream that would require a great length of time to accomplish them, it will appear to the dreamer that a length of time equal thereto has passed also.

As this is the state of the mind in a dream, it may rationally be said that every person is mad once in twenty-four hours, for were he to act in the day as he dreams in the night, he would be confined for a lunatic. In a state of wakefulness, those three faculties being all active, and acting in unison, constitute the rational man.

In dream it is otherwise, and, therefore, that state which is called insanity appears to be no other than a dismissal of those faculties, and a cessation of the judgment during wakefulness that we so often experience during sleep; and idiocy, into which some persons have fallen, is that cessation of all the faculties of which we can be sensible when we happen to wake before our memory.

In this view of the mind, how absurd it is to place reliance upon dreams, and how much more absurd to make them a foundation for religion; yet the belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, begotten by the Holy Ghost, a being never heard of before, stands on the foolish story of an old man's dream. "*And behold the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not thou to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.*"—Matt. i, 20.

After this we have the childish stories of three or four other dreams: about Joseph going into Egypt; about his coming back again; about this, and about that, and this story of dreams has thrown Europe into a dream for more than a thousand years.

All the efforts that nature, reason and conscience have made to awaken man from it, have been ascribed by priestcraft and superstition to the working of the devil, and had it not been for the American Revolution, which, by establishing the universal right of conscience, first opened the way to free discussion, and for the French Revolution that followed, this Religion of Dreams had continued to be preached, and that after it had ceased to be believed. Those who preached it and did not believe it, still believe the delusion necessary. They were not bold enough to be honest, nor honest enough to be bold.

Every new religion, like a new play, requires a new apparatus of dresses and machinery, to fit the new characters it creates. The story of Christ in the New Testament brings a new being upon the stage, which

it calls the Holy Ghost; and the story of Abraham, the father of the Jews, in the Old Testament, gives existence to a new order of beings it calls angels. There was no Holy Ghost before the time of Christ, nor angels before the time of Abraham.

We hear nothing of these winged gentlemen, till more than two thousand years, according to the Bible chronology, from the time they say the heavens, the earth and all therein were made. After this, they hop about as thick as birds in a grove. The first we hear of pays his addresses to Hagar in the wilderness; then three of them visit Sarah; another wrestles a fall with Jacob; and these birds of passage having found their way to earth and back, are continually coming and going. They eat and drink, and up again to heaven.

What they do with the food they carry away in their bellies, the Bible does not tell us. Perhaps they do as the birds do, discharge it as they fly; for neither the Scripture nor the Church hath told us there are necessary houses for them in heaven. One would think that a system loaded with such gross and vulgar absurdities as Scripture religion is could never have obtained credit; yet we have seen what priestcraft and fanaticism could do, and credulity believe.

From angels in the Old Testament we get to prophets, to witches, to seers of visions, and dreamers of dreams; and sometimes we are told, as in I Samuel ix, 15, that God whispers in the ear. At other times we are not told how the impulse was given, or whether sleeping or waking. In II Samuel xxiv, 1, it is said, "*And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go number Israel and Judah.*" And in I Chronicles xxi, 1, when the same story is again related, it is said, "*And Satan stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel.*"

Whether this was done sleeping or waking, we are not told, but it seems that David, whom they call "a man after God's own heart," did not know by what spirit he was moved; and as to the men called inspired penmen, they agree so well about the matter that in one book they say it was God, and in the other that it was the devil.

Yet this is trash that the Church imposes upon the world as the WORD OF GOD; this is the collection of lies and contradictions called the HOLY BIBLE! this is the rubbish called REVEALED RELIGION!

The idea that writers of the Old Testament had of a God was boisterous, contemptible, and vulgar. They make Him the Mars of the Jews, the fighting God of Israel, the conjuring God of their priests and proph-

cts. They tell us as many fables of Him as the Greeks told of Hercules. They pit Him against Pharaoh, as it were to box with him, and Moses carries the challenge. They make their God to say insultingly, "*I will get me honor upon Pharaoh and upon all his host, upon his chariots and upon his horsemen.*" And that He may keep His word, they make Him set a trap in the Red Sea, in the dead of the night, for Pharaoh, his host and his horses, and drown them as a rat-catcher would do so many rats. Great honor indeed! the story of Jack the giant-killer is better told!

They match Him against the Egyptian magicians to conjure with them, and after hard conjuring on both sides (for where there is no great contest there is no great honor) they bring Him off victorious. The first three essays are a dead match: each party turns his rod into a serpent, the rivers into blood, and creates frogs: but upon the fourth, the God of the Israelites obtains the laurel, He covers them all over with lice! The Egyptian magicians cannot do the same, and this lousy triumph proclaims the victory!

They make their God to rain fire and brimstone upon Sodom and Gomorrah, and belch fire and smoke upon Mount Sinai, as if He was the Pluto of the lower regions. They make Him salt up Lot's wife like pickled pork; they make Him pass like Shakespeare's *Queen Mab* into the brain of their priests, prophets and prophetesses, and tickle them into dreams, and after making Him play all kinds of tricks they confound Him with Satan, and leave us at a loss to know what God they meant!

This is the descriptive God of the Old Testament; and as to the New, though the authors of it have varied the scene, they have continued the vulgarity.

Is man ever to be the dupe of priestcraft, the slave of superstition? Is he never to have just ideas of his Creator? It is better not to believe there is a God than to believe of Him falsely. When we behold the mighty universe that surrounds us, and dart our contemplation into the eternity of space, filled with innumerable orbs revolving in eternal harmony, how paltry must the tales of the Old and New Testaments, profanely called the Word of God, appear to thoughtful man!

The stupendous wisdom and unerring order that reign and govern throughout this wondrous whole, and call us to reflection, *put to shame the Bible!* The God of eternity and of all that is real, is not the god of passing dreams and shadows of man's imagination. The God of truth is

not the god of fable; the belief of a god begotten and a god crucified, is a god blasphemed. It is making a profane use of reason.

I shall conclude this Essay on Dream with the first two verses of Ecclesiasticus xxxiv, one of the books of the Apocrypha. "*The hopes of a man void of understanding are vain and false; and dreams lift up fools. Whoso regardeth dreams is like him that catcheth at a shadow and followeth after the wind.*"

I now proceed to an examination of the passages in the Bible, called prophecies of the coming of Christ, and to show there are no prophecies of any such person; that the passages clandestinely styled prophecies are not prophecies; and that they refer to circumstances the Jewish nation was in at the time they were written or spoken, and not to any distance of future time or person.

## EXAMINATION OF THE PROPHECIES

In his will Paine mentioned having in manuscript Part III of *The Age of Reason* and also an *Answer to the Bishop Llandaff*. As early as 1802, Paine attempted to find a publisher for them, but Jefferson "advised and requested him" not to have them printed, fearing the effect upon Paine's prestige at a time when every reactionary writer was seeking some excuse to attack the author of *The Age of Reason*. In 1807, however, most of the material did appear in pamphlet form under the title of *An Examination of the Passages in the New Testament, quoted from the Old and called Prophecies concerning Jesus Christ. To which is Prefixed an Essay on Dream, showing by what operation of the mind a Dream is produced in sleep, and applying the same to the account of Dreams in the New Testament. With an Appendix containing my private thoughts of a Future State. And remarks on the Contradictory Doctrine in the Books of Matthew and Mark. By Thomas Paine, New York: Printed for the Author.* This was the last work that Paine ever published.—*Editor.*

### AUTHOR'S PREFACE

*To the Ministers and Preachers of all Denominations of Religion*

**I**T is the duty of every man, as far as his ability extends, to detect and expose delusion and error. But nature has not given to everyone a talent for the purpose; and among those to whom such a talent is given there is often a want of disposition or of courage to do it.

The world or, more properly speaking, that small part of it called Christendom or the Christian world, has been amused for more than a thousand years with accounts of prophecies in the Old Testament about the coming of the person called Jesus Christ, and thousands of sermons have been preached and volumes written to make man believe it.

In the following treatise I have examined all the passages in the New Testament, quoted from the Old, and called prophecies concerning Jesus Christ, and I find no such thing as a prophecy of any such person, and I deny there are any.

The passages all relate to circumstances the Jewish nation was in at the time they were written or spoken, and not to anything that was or was not to happen in the world several hundred years afterwards; and I have shown what the circumstances were to which the passages apply or refer.

I have given chapter and verse for everything I have said, and have not gone out of the books of the Old and New Testament for evidence that the passages are not prophecies of the person called Jesus Christ.

The prejudice of unfounded belief, often degenerates into the prejudice of custom, and becomes at last rank hypocrisy. When men, from custom or fashion or any worldly motive, profess or pretend to believe what they do not believe, nor can give any reason for believing, they unship the helm of their morality, and being no longer honest to their own minds they feel no moral difficulty in being unjust to others.

It is from the influence of this vice, hypocrisy, that we see so many church-and-meeting-going professors and pretenders to religion so full of trick and deceit in their dealings, and so loose in the performance of their engagements that they are not to be trusted further than the laws of the country will bind them. Morality has no hold on their minds, no restraint on their actions.

One set of preachers make salvation to consist in believing. They tell their congregations that if they believe in Christ their sins shall be forgiven. This, in the first place, is an encouragement to sin, in a similar manner as when a prodigal young fellow is told his father will pay all his debts, he runs into debt the faster, and becomes the more extravagant. Daddy, says he, pays all, and on he goes: just so in the other case, *Christ pays all*, and on goes the sinner.

In the next place, the doctrine these men preach is not true. The New Testament rests itself for credibility and testimony on what are called prophecies in the Old Testament of the person called Jesus Christ; and



if there are no such things as prophecies of any such person in the Old Testament, the New Testament is a forgery of the councils of Nice and Laodicea, and the faith founded thereon delusion and falsehood.<sup>30</sup>

Another set of preachers tell their congregations that God predestinated and selected, from all eternity, a certain number to be saved, and a certain number to be damned eternally. If this were true, *the day of Judgment* is PAST: *their preaching* is in vain, and they had better work at some useful calling for their livelihood.

This doctrine, also, like the former, has a direct tendency to demoralize mankind. Can a bad man be reformed by telling him that if he is one of those who was decreed to be damned before he was born his reformation will do him no good; and if he was decreed to be saved that he will be saved whether he believes it or not? For this is the result of the doctrine. Such preaching and such preachers do injury to the moral world. They had better be at the plow.

As in my political works my motive and object have been to give man an elevated sense of his own character, and free him from the slavish and superstitious absurdity of monarchy and hereditary government, so in my publications on religious subjects my endeavors have been directed to bring man to a right use of the reason that God has given him, to impress on him the great principles of divine morality, justice, mercy and a benevolent disposition to all men and to all creatures, and to inspire in him a spirit of trust, confidence and consolation in his Creator, unshackled by the fables of books pretending to be *the Word of God*.

THOMAS PAINE.

THE passages called prophecies of, or concerning, Jesus Christ, in the Old Testament may be classed under the two following heads.

First, those referred to in the four books of the New Testament, called the four Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Secondly, those which translators and commentators have, of their own imagination, erected into prophecies, and dubbed with that title at the head of the several chapters of the Old Testament. Of these it is scarcely worth while to waste time, ink, and paper upon; I shall, therefore, confine myself chiefly to those referred to in the aforesaid four

<sup>30</sup> The councils of Nice and Laodicea were held about three hundred and fifty years after the time Christ is said to have lived; and the books that now compose the New Testament, were then voted for by YEAS and NAYS, as we now vote a law. A great many that were offered had a majority of nays, and were rejected. This is the way the New Testament came into being.—*Author*.

books of the New Testament. If I show that these are not prophecies of the person called Jesus Christ, nor have reference to any such person, it will be perfectly needless to combat those which translators or the Church have invented, and for which they had no other authority than their own imagination.

I begin with the book called the Gospel according to St. Matthew.

In i. 18, it is said, "*Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When His mother Mary was espoused to Joseph before they came together, SHE WAS FOUND WITH CHILD OF THE HOLY GHOST.*"

This is going a little too fast; because to make this verse agree with the next it should have said no more than that *she was found with child*; for the next verse says, "*Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privately.*" Consequently Joseph had found out no more than that she was with child, and he knew it was not by himself.

Verses 20, 21. "*And while he thought of these things* [that is, whether he should put her away privately, or make a public example of her], *behold the Angel of the Lord appeared to him IN A DREAM* [that is, Joseph dreamed that an angel appeared unto him] *saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and call his name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins.*"

Now, without entering into any discussion upon the merits or demerits of the account here given, it is proper to observe, that it *has no higher authority than that of a dream*; for it is impossible to a man to behold anything in a dream but that which he dreams of.

I ask not, therefore, whether Joseph, if there was such a man, had such a dream or not, because admitting he had, it proves nothing. So wonderful and irrational is the faculty of the mind in dream that it acts the part of all the characters its imagination creates, and what it thinks it hears from any of them is no other than what the roving rapidity of its own imagination invents. It is therefore nothing to me what Joseph dreamed of; whether of the fidelity or infidelity of his wife. I pay no regard to my own dreams, and I should be weak indeed to put faith in the dreams of another.

The verses that follow those I have quoted are the words of the writer of the book of Matthew. "*Now* [says he] *all this* [that is, all this dreaming and this pregnancy] *was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet, saying, Behold a virgin shall be with*

*child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted, is, God with us."*

This passage is in Isaiah vii, 14, and the writer of the book of Matthew endeavors to make his readers believe that this passage is a prophecy of the person called Jesus Christ. It is no such thing, and I go to show it is not. But it is first necessary that I explain the occasion of these words being spoken by Isaiah.

The reader will then easily perceive that so far from their being a prophecy of Jesus Christ, they have not the least reference to such a person, nor to anything that could happen in the time that Christ is said to have lived, which was about seven hundred years after the time of Isaiah. The case is this:

On the death of Solomon the Jewish nation split into two monarchies: one called the kingdom of Judah, the capital of which was Jerusalem: the other the kingdom of Israel, the capital of which was Samaria. The kingdom of Judah followed the line of David, and the kingdom of Israel that of Saul; and these two rival monarchies frequently carried on fierce wars against each other.

At this time Ahaz was King of Judah, which was in the time of Isaiah, Pekah was King of Israel; and Pekah joined himself to Rezin, King of Syria, to make war against Ahaz, King of Judah; and these two kings marched a confederated and powerful army against Jerusalem. Ahaz and his people became alarmed at their danger, and "*their hearts were moved as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.*" Isaiah vii, 3.

In this perilous situation of things, Isaiah addresses himself to Ahaz, and assures him in the name of the Lord (the cant phrase of all the prophets), that these two kings should not succeed against him; and to assure him that this should be the case (the case was however directly contrary) <sup>31</sup> tells Ahaz to ask a sign of the Lord.

This Ahaz declined doing, giving as a reason, that he would not tempt the Lord; upon which Isaiah, who pretends to be sent from God, says, verse 14, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign, *behold a*

<sup>31</sup> II. Chron. xxviii. 1. *Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem, but he did not that which was right in the sight of the Lord.—ver. 5. Wherefore the Lord his God delivered him into the hand of the King of Syria, and they smote him, and carried away a great multitude of them captive and brought them to Damascus; and he was also delivered into the hand of the King of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter.—ver. 6. And Pekah (King of Israel) slew in Judah an hundred and twenty thousand in one day.—ver. 8. And the children of Israel carried away captive of their brethren two hundred thousand women, sons and daughters.—*  
*Author.*

*virgin shall conceive and bear a son*—butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good—for before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land which thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings”—meaning the King of Israel and the King of Syria who were marching against him.

Here then is the sign which was to be the birth of a child, and that child a son; and here also is the time limited for the accomplishment of the sign, namely, before the child should know to refuse the evil and choose the good.

The thing, therefore, to be a sign of success to Ahaz must be something that would take place before the event of the battle then pending between him and the two kings could be known. A thing to be a sign must precede the thing signified. The sign of rain must be before the rain.

It would have been mockery and insulting nonsense for Isaiah to have assured Ahaz as a sign that these two things should not prevail against him, that a child should be born seven hundred years after he was dead, and that before the child so born should know to refuse the evil and choose the good, he, Ahaz, should be delivered from the danger he was then immediately threatened with.

But the case is that the child of which Isaiah speaks *was his own child*, with which his wife or his mistress was then pregnant; for he says in the next chapter (Is. viii, 2), “*And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah; and I went unto the prophetess, and she conceived and bear a son*”; and he says, at verse 18 of the same chapter “*Behold I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel.*”

It may not be improper here to observe, that the word translated *a virgin* in Isaiah, does not signify a virgin in Hebrew, but merely a *young woman*. The tense is also falsified in the translation. Levi<sup>32</sup> gives the Hebrew text of Isaiah vii, 14, and the translation in English with it—“*Behold a young woman is with child and beareth a son.*” The expression, says he, is in the present tense.

This translation agrees with the other circumstances related of the birth of this child which was to be a sign to Ahaz. But as the true translation could not have been imposed upon the world as a prophecy of a child to be born seven hundred years afterwards, the Christian transla-

<sup>32</sup> The reference is to David Levi, the author of *Defence of the Old Testament* . . . , written as a reply to *The Age of Reason*.—Editor.

tors have falsified the original: and instead of making Isaiah to say, behold a *young woman* is with child and *beareth* a son, they have made him to say, "Behold a *virgin shall* conceive and *bear* a son."

It is, however, only necessary for a person to read Isaiah vii, and viii, and he will be convinced that the passage in question is no prophecy of the person called Jesus Christ. I pass on to the second passage quoted from the Old Testament by the New, as a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

Matthew ii, 1-6. "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, behold there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem, saying, where is he that is born king of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the East and are come to worship him. When Herod the king heard these things he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem, in the land of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet, *And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judea, art not the least among the princes of Judah, for out of thee shall come a Governor that shall rule my people Israel.*" This passage is in Micah v, 2.

I pass over the absurdity of seeing and following a star in the day time, as a man would a *will-o'-the-wisp*, or a candle and lantern at night; and also that of seeing it in the East, when themselves came from the East; for could such a thing be seen at all to serve them for a guide, it must be in the West to them. I confine myself solely to the passage called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

The book of Micah, in the passage above quoted, v, 2, is speaking of some person, without mentioning his name, from whom some great achievements were expected; but the description he gives of this person, verses 5, 6, proves evidently that it is not Jesus Christ, for he says, "and *this man* shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land: and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise up against him [that is against the Assyrian] seven shepherds and eight principal men.

"And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod on the entrance thereof; thus shall *he* [the person spoken of at the head of the second verse] deliver us from the Assyrian, when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our borders."

This is so evidently descriptive of a military chief that it cannot be applied to Christ without outraging the character they pretend to give us of him. Besides which, the circumstances of the times here spoken of

and those of the times in which Christ is said to have lived are in contradiction to each other.

It was the Romans, and not the Assyrians that had conquered and *were in the land* of Judea, and *trod in their palaces* when Christ was born, and when he died, and so far from his driving them out, it was they who signed the warrant for his execution, and he suffered under it.

Having thus shown that this is no prophecy of Jesus Christ, I pass on to the third passage quoted from the Old Testament by the New, as a prophecy of him. This, like the first I have spoken of, is introduced by a dream. Joseph dreams another dream, and dreams that he sees another angel.

The account begins at Matthew ii, 13. "The angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise and take the young child and his mother and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: For Herod will seek the life of the young child to destroy him.

"When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night and departed into Egypt: and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, *Out of Egypt have I called my son.*"

This passage is in the book of Hosea, xi, 1. The words are, "When Israel was a child then I loved him and *called my son out of Egypt*. As they called them so they went from them: they sacrificed unto Baalim and burned incense to graven images."

This passage, falsely called a prophecy of Christ, refers to the children of Israel coming out of Egypt in the time of Pharaoh, and to the idolatry they committed afterwards. To make it apply to Jesus Christ, he then must be the person *who sacrificed unto Baalim and burned incense to graven images*; for the person called out of Egypt by the collective name, Israel, and the persons committing this idolatry, are the same persons or the descendants of them.

This then can be no prophecy of Jesus Christ, unless they are willing to make an idolator of him. I pass on the fourth passage called a prophecy by the writer of the book of Matthew.

This is introduced by a story told by nobody but himself, and scarcely believed by anybody, of the slaughter of all the children under two years old, by the command of Herod. A thing which it is not probable should be done by Herod, as he only held an office under the Roman Government, to which appeals could always be had, as we see in the case of Paul. Matthew, however, having made or told his story, says, ii, 17, 18,

"Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying—*In Ramah was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted because they were not.*"

This passage is in Jeremiah xxxi, 15; and this verse, when separated from the verses before and after it, and which explain its application, might with equal propriety be applied to every case of wars, sieges and other violences, such as the Christians themselves have often done to the Jews, where mothers have lamented the loss of their children.

There is nothing in the verse, taken singly, that designates or points out any particular application of it otherwise than it points to some circumstances which, at the time of writing it, had already happened, and not to a thing yet to happen, for the verse is in the preter or past tense. I go to explain the case and show the application of the verse.

Jeremiah lived in the time that Nebuchadnezzar besieged, took, plundered and destroyed Jerusalem, and led the Jews captive to Babylon. He carried his violence against the Jews to every extreme. He slew the sons of King Zedekiah before his face, he then put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and kept him in prison till the day of his death.

It is of this time of sorrow and suffering to the Jews that Jeremiah is speaking. Their Temple was destroyed, their land desolated, their nation and government entirely broken up, and themselves, men, women and children, carried into captivity. They had too many sorrows of their own, immediately before their eyes, to permit them, or any of their chiefs, to be employing themselves on things that might, or might not, happen in the world seven hundred years afterwards.

It is, as already observed, of this time of sorrow and suffering to the Jews that Jeremiah is speaking in the verse in question. In the next two verses (16, 17), he endeavors to console the sufferers by giving them hopes, and, according to the fashion of speaking in those days, assurances from the Lord that their sufferings should have an end, and that *their children should return again to their own children*. But I leave the verses to speak for themselves, and the Old Testament to testify against the New.

Jeremiah xxxi, 15, "Thus saith the Lord, a voice *was* heard in Ramah [it is in the preter tense], lamentation and bitter weeping: Rachel, weeping for her children, refused to be comforted for her children because they were not." Verse 16, "Thus saith the Lord: Refrain thy voice from weeping and thine eyes from tears; for thy work shall be rewarded, saith

the Lord; *and THEY shall come again from the land of the enemy.*" Verse 17.—"And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that *thy children shall come again to their own border.*"

By what strange ignorance or imposition is it, that the children of which Jeremiah speaks (meaning the people of the Jewish nation, scripturally called *children of Israel*, and not mere infants under two years old), and who were to return again from the land of the enemy, and come again into their own borders, can mean the children that Matthew makes Herod to slaughter? Could those return again from the land of the enemy, or how can the land of the enemy be applied to them? Could they come again to their own borders?

Good heavens! How has the world been imposed upon by testament-makers, priestcraft and pretended prophecies. I pass on to the fifth passage called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

This, like two of the former, is introduced by dream. Joseph dreamed another dream, and dreamed of another angel. And Matthew is again the historian of the dream and the dreamer. If it were asked how Matthew could know what Joseph dreamed, neither the Bishop nor all the Church could answer the question.

Perhaps it was Matthew that dreamed, and not Joseph; that is, Joseph dreamed by proxy, in Matthew's brain, as they tell us Daniel dreamed for Nebuchadnezzar. But be this as it may, I go on with my subject.

The account of this dream is in Matthew ii, 19–23. "But when Herod was dead, behold an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother and go into the land of Israel; for they are dead which sought the young child's life. And he arose and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.

"But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither. Notwithstanding being warned of God in a *dream* [here is another dream] he turned aside into the parts of Galilee; and he came and dwelt in a city called *Nazareth*, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, *He shall be called a Nazarene.*"

Here is good circumstantial evidence that Matthew dreamed, for there is no such passage in all the Old Testament; and I invite the Bishop,<sup>33</sup> and all the priests in Christendom, including those of America, to produce it. I pass on to the sixth passage, called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

<sup>33</sup> The reference is to Dr. Richard Watson, Bishop of Llandaff.—*Editor.*



This, as Swift says on another occasion, is *lugged in head and shoulders*; it need only to be seen in order to be hooted as a forced and far-fetched piece of imposition.

Matthew iv, 12-16, "Now when Jesus heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee: and leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea-coast, in the borders of Zebulon and Nephtholim: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias [Isaiah] the prophet, saying, *The land of Zebulon and the land of Nephtholim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; the people which sat in darkness saw great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is springing upon them.*"

I wonder Matthew has not made the criss-cross-row, or the Christ-cross-row (I know not how the priests spell it) into a prophecy. He might as well have done this as cut out these unconnected and un-descriptive sentences from the place they stand in and dubbed them with that title. The words, however, are in Isaiah ix, 1, 2, as follows: "Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted *the land of Zebulon and the land of Naphtali, and afterwards did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea beyond Jordan in Galilee of the nations.*"

All this relates to two circumstances that had already happened at the time these words in Isaiah were written. The one, where the land of Zebulon and Naphtali had been lightly afflicted, and afterwards more grievously by the way of the sea.

But observe, reader, how Matthew has falsified the text. He begins his quotation at a part of the verse where there is not so much as a comma, and thereby cuts off everything that relates to the first affliction. He then leaves out all that relates to the second affliction, and by this means leaves out everything that makes the verse intelligible, and reduces it to a senseless skeleton of names of towns.

To bring this imposition of Matthew clearly and immediately before the eye of the reader, I will repeat the verse, and put between brackets [ ] the words he has left out, and put in *italics* those he has preserved.

"[Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation when at the first he lightly afflicted] *the land of Zebulon and the land of Naphtali* [and did afterwards more grievously afflict her] *by the way of the sea beyond Jordan in Galilee of the nations.*"

What gross imposition is it to gut, as the phrase is, a verse in this

manner, render it perfectly senseless, and then puff it off on a credulous world as a prophecy. I proceed to the next verse.

Verse 2. "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." All this is historical, and not in the least prophetic. The whole is in the preter tense: it speaks of things that *had been accomplished* at the time the words were written, and not of things to be accomplished afterwards.

As then the passage is in no possible sense prophetic, nor intended to be so, and that to attempt to make it so is not only to falsify the original but to commit a criminal imposition, it is matter of no concern to us, otherwise than as curiosity, to know who the people were of which the passage speaks that sat in darkness, and what the light was that had shined in upon them.

If we look into the preceding chapter, Isaiah viii, of which ix is only a continuation, we shall find the writer speaking, at verse nineteen of "*witches and wizards who peep about and mutter,*" and of people who made application to them; and he preaches and exhorts them against this darksome practise.

It is of this people, and of this darksome practise, or *walking in darkness*, that he is speaking at ix, 2; and with respect to *the light that had shined in upon them*, it refers entirely to his own ministry, and to the boldness of it, which opposed itself to that of *the witches and wizards who peeped about and muttered*.

Isaiah is, upon the whole, a wild, disorderly writer, preserving in general no clear chain of perception in the arrangement of his ideas, and consequently producing no defined conclusions from them.

It is the wildness of his style, the confusion of his ideas, and the ranting metaphors he employs, that have afforded so many opportunities to priestcraft in some cases, and to superstition in others, to impose those defects upon the world as prophecies of Jesus Christ.

Finding no direct meaning in them, and not knowing what to make of them, and supposing at the same time they were intended to have a meaning, they supplied the defect by inventing a meaning of their own, and called it *his*. I have however in this place done Isaiah the justice to rescue him from the claws of Matthew, who has torn him unmercifully to pieces, and from the imposition or ignorance of priests and commentators, by letting Isaiah speak for himself.

If the words *walking in darkness*, and *light breaking in*, could in any

case be applied prophetically, which they cannot be, they would better apply to the times we now live in than to any other. The world has "*walked in darkness*" for eighteen hundred years, both as to religion and government, and it is only since the American Revolution began that light has broken in.

The belief of *one God*, whose attributes are revealed to us in the book or scripture of the creation, which no human hand can counterfeit or falsify, and not in the written or printed book which, as Matthew has shown, can be altered or falsified by ignorance or design, is now making its way among us: and as to government, *the light is already gone forth*, and while men ought to be careful not to be blinded by the excess of it, as at a certain time in France when everything was Robespierrean violence, they ought to reverence, and even to adore it, with all the perseverance that true wisdom can inspire.

I pass on to the seventh passage, called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

Matthew viii, 16, 17. "When the evening was come, they brought unto him [Jesus] many that were possessed with devils, and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias [Isaiah] the prophet, saying, *himself took our infirmities, and bare our sickness.*"

This affair of people being possessed by devils, and of casting them out, was the fable of the day when the books of the New Testament were written. It had not existence at any other time. The books of the Old Testament mention no such thing; the people of the present day know of no such thing; nor does the history of any people or country speak of such a thing. It starts upon us all at once in the book of Matthew, and is altogether an invention of the New Testament-makers and the Christian Church.

The book of Matthew is the first book where the word *devil* is mentioned.<sup>34</sup> We read in some of the books of the Old Testament of things called familiar spirits, the supposed companions of people called witches and wizards. It was no other than the trick of pretended conjurers to obtain money from credulous and ignorant people, or the fabricated charge of superstitious malignancy against unfortunate and decrepit old age. But the idea of a familiar spirit, if we can affix any idea to the term, is exceedingly different to that of being possessed by a devil.

In the one case, the supposed familiar spirit is a dexterous agent, that comes and goes and does as he is bidden; in the other, he is a turbulent

<sup>34</sup> The word *devil* is a personification of the word *evil*.—*Author*.

roaring monster that tears and tortures the body into convulsions. Reader, whoever thou art, put thy trust in thy Creator, make use of the reason He endowed thee with, and cast from thee all such fables.

The passage alluded to by Matthew, for as a quotation it is false, is in Isaiah, liii, 4, which is as follows: "Surely *he* [the person of whom Isaiah is speaking] *hath borne* our griefs and carried our sorrows." It is in the preter tense.

Here is nothing about casting out devils, nor curing of sicknesses. The passage, therefore, so far from being a prophecy of Christ, is not even applicable as a circumstance.

Isaiah, or at least the writer of the book that bears his name, employs the whole of this chapter, liii, in lamenting the sufferings of some deceased persons, of whom he speaks very pathetically. It is a monody on the death of a friend; but he mentions not the name of the person, nor gives any circumstance of him by which he can be personally known; and it is this silence, which is evidence of nothing, that Matthew has laid hold of, to put the name of Christ to it; as if the chiefs of the Jews, whose sorrows were then great, and the times they lived in big with danger, were never thinking about their own affairs, nor the fate of their own friends, but were continually running a wild-goose chase into futurity.

To make a monody into a prophecy is an absurdity. The characters and circumstances of men, even in the different ages of the world, are so much alike, that what is said of one may with propriety be said of many; but this fitness does not make the passage into a prophecy; and none but an impostor, or a bigot, would call it so.

Isaiah, in deploring the hard fate and loss of his friend, mentions nothing of him but what the human lot of man is subject to. All the cases he states of him, his persecutions, his imprisonment, his patience in suffering, and his perseverance in principle, are all within the line of nature; they belong exclusively to none, and may with justness be said of many.

But if Jesus Christ was the person the Church represents him to be, that which would exclusively apply to him must be something that could not apply to any other person; something beyond the line of nature, something beyond the lot of mortal man; and there are no such expressions in this chapter, nor any other chapter in the Old Testament.

It is no exclusive description to say of a person, as is said of the person Isaiah is lamenting in this chapter, *He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the*

*slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.* This may be said of thousands of persons, who have suffered oppressions and unjust death with patience, silence, and perfect resignation.

Grotius, whom the Bishop [of Llandaff] esteems a most learned man, and who certainly was so, supposes that the person of whom Isaiah is speaking, is Jeremiah. Grotius is led into this opinion from the agreement there is between the description given by Isaiah and the case of Jeremiah, as stated in the book that bears his name.

If Jeremiah was an innocent man, and not a traitor in the interest of Nebuchadnezzar when Jerusalem was besieged, his case was hard; he was accused by his countrymen, was persecuted, oppressed, and imprisoned, and he says of himself (see Jer. xi. 19), "*But as for me I was like a lamb or an ox that is brought to the slaughter.*"

I should be inclined to the same opinion with Grotius, had Isaiah lived at the time when Jeremiah underwent the cruelties of which he speaks; but Isaiah died about fifty years before; and it is of a person of his own time whose case Isaiah is lamenting in the chapter in question, and which imposition and bigotry, more than seven hundred years afterwards, perverted into a prophecy of a person they call Jesus Christ.

I pass on to the eighth passage called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

Matthew xii, 14-21: "Then the Pharisees went out and held a council against him, how they might destroy him. But when Jesus knew it he withdrew himself; and great numbers followed him and he healed them all; and he charged them they should not make him known; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias [Isaiah] the prophet, saying, Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased; I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles.

"He shall not strive nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust."

In the first place, this passage hath not the least relation to the purpose for which it is quoted.

Matthew says that the Pharisees held a council against Jesus to destroy him—that Jesus withdrew himself—that great numbers followed him—that he healed them—and that he charged them they should not make him known. But the passage Matthew has quoted as being fulfilled by

these circumstances does not so much as apply to any one of them.

It has nothing to do with the Pharisees holding a council to destroy Jesus—with his withdrawing himself—with great numbers following him—with his healing them—nor with his charging them not to make him known.

The purpose for which the passage is quoted, and the passage itself, are as remote from each other, as nothing from something. But the case is that people have been so long in the habit of reading the books called the Bible and Testament with their eyes shut, and their senses locked up, that the most stupid inconsistencies have passed on them for truth, and imposition for prophecy. The Allwise Creator has been dishonored by being made the Author of fable, and the human mind degraded by believing it.

In this passage, as in that last mentioned, the name of the person of whom the passage speaks is not given, and we are left in the dark respecting him. It is this defect in the history that bigotry and imposition have laid hold of, to call it prophecy.

Had Isaiah lived in the time of Cyrus, the passage would descriptively apply to him. As King of Persia, his authority was great among the Gentiles, and it is of such a character the passage speaks; and his friendship for the Jews, whom he liberated from captivity, and who might then be compared to a *bruised reed*, was extensive.

But this description does not apply to Jesus Christ, who had no authority among the Gentiles; and as to his own countrymen, figuratively described by the bruised reed, it was they who crucified him. Neither can it be said of him that he did not cry, and that his voice was not heard in the street. As a preacher it was his business to be heard, and we are told that he traveled about the country for that purpose.

Matthew has given a long sermon, which (if his authority is good, but which is much to be doubted since he imposes so much) Jesus preached to a multitude upon a mountain, and it would be a quibble to say that a mountain is not a street, since it is a place equally as public.

The last verse in the passage (the fourth) as it stands in Isaiah, and which Matthew has not quoted, says, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged till he have set judgment in the earth, and the isles shall wait for his law." This also applies to Cyrus. He was not discouraged, he did not fail, he conquered all Babylon, liberated the Jews, and established laws.

But this cannot be said of Jesus Christ, who in the passage before us, according to Matthew [xii, 15], withdrew himself for fear of the Phari-

sees, and charged the people that followed him not to make it known where he was; and who, according to other parts of the Testament, was continually moving from place to place to avoid being apprehended.<sup>35</sup>

But it is immaterial to us, at this distance of time, to know who the person was: it is sufficient to the purpose I am upon, that of detecting fraud and falsehood, to know who it was not, and to show it was not the person called Jesus Christ.

I pass on to the ninth passage called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

Matthew xxi. 1-5. "And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethpage, unto the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two of his disciples, saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her; loose them and bring them unto me. And if any man say ought to you, ye shall say, the Lord hath need of them, and straightway he will send them. All this

<sup>35</sup> In the second part of the "Age of Reason," I have shown that the book ascribed to Isaiah is not only miscellaneous as to matter, but as to authorship; that there are parts in it which could not be written by Isaiah, because they speak of things one hundred and fifty years after he was dead. The instance I have given of this, in that work, corresponds with the subject I am upon, *at least a little better than Matthew's introduction and his question.*

Isaiah lived, the latter part of his life, in the time of Hezekiah, and it was about one hundred and fifty years from the death of Hezekiah to the first year of the reign of Cyrus, when Cyrus published a proclamation, which is given in Ezra i, for the return of the Jews to Jerusalem. It cannot be doubted, at least it ought not to be doubted, that the Jews would feel an affectionate gratitude for this act of benevolent justice, and it is natural they would express that gratitude in the customary style, bombastical and hyperbolic as it was, which they used on extraordinary occasions, and which was and still is in practice with all the eastern nations.

The instance to which I refer, and which is given in the second part of the "Age of Reason," Is. xliv, 28 and xlv, 1, in these words: "*That saith of Cyrus, he is my shepherd and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built, and to the Temple, Thy foundation shall be laid. Thus saith the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut.*"

This complimentary address is in the present tense, which shows that the things of which it speaks were in existence at the time of writing it; and consequently that the author must have been at least one hundred and fifty years later than Isaiah, and that the book which bears his name is a compilation. The Proverbs called Solomon's, and the Psalms called David's, are of the same kind. The last two verses of the second book of Chronicles, and the first three verses of Ezra i are word for word the same; which show that the compilers of the Bible mixed the writings of different authors together, and put them under some common head.

As we have here an instance in Isaiah xliv and xlv of the introduction of the name of Cyrus into a book to which it cannot belong, it affords good ground to conclude, that the passage in chapter xlii, in which the character of Cyrus is given without his name, has been introduced in like manner, and that the person there spoken of is Cyrus.—*Author.*

was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, *Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.*"

Poor ass! let it be some consolation amidst all thy sufferings, that if the heathen world erected a bear into a constellation the Christian world has elevated thee into a prophecy.

This passage is in Zechariah ix, 9, and is one of the whims of friend Zechariah to congratulate his countrymen, who were then returning from captivity in Babylon, and himself with them, to Jerusalem. It has no concern with any other subject. It is strange that apostles, priests and commentators never permit, or never suppose, the Jews to be speaking of their own affairs.

Everything in the Jewish books is perverted and distorted into meanings never intended by the writers. Even the poor ass must not be a Jew-ass but a Christian-ass. I wonder they did not make an apostle of him, or a bishop, or at least make him speak and prophesy. He could have lifted up his voice as loud as any of them.

Zechariah, in the first chapter of his book, indulges himself in several whims on the joy of getting back to Jerusalem. He says at the eighth verse, "I saw by night [Zechariah was a sharp-sighted seer] and behold a man setting on a *red horse* [yes, reader, a *red horse*], and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom, and behind him were *red horses, speckled and white.*" He says nothing about green horses, nor blue horses, perhaps because it is difficult to distinguish green from blue by night, but a Christian can have no doubt they were there, because "*faith is the evidence of things not seen.*"

Zechariah then introduces an angel among his horses, but he does not tell us what color the angel was of, whether black or white, nor whether he came to buy horses, or only to look at them as curiosities, for certainly they were of that kind. Be this however as it may, he enters into conversation with this angel on the joyful affair of getting back to Jerusalem, and he saith at the sixteenth verse, "*Therefore, thus saith the Lord, I AM RETURNED to Jerusalem with mercies; my house shall be built in it saith the Lord of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem.*" An expression signifying the rebuilding the city.

All this, whimsical and imaginary as it is, sufficiently proves that it was the entry of the Jews into Jerusalem from captivity, and not the entry of Jesus Christ seven hundred years afterwards, that is the subject upon which Zechariah is always speaking.



As to the expression of riding upon an ass, which commentators represent as a sign of humility in Jesus Christ, the case is, he never was so well mounted before. The asses of those countries are large and well proportioned, and were anciently the chief of riding animals. Their beasts of burden, and which served also for the conveyance of the poor, were camels and dromedaries. We read in Judges x, 4, that Jair [one of the Judges of Israel] "had thirty sons that *rode on thirty ass-colts*, and they had thirty cities." But commentators distort everything.

There is besides very reasonable grounds to conclude that this story of Jesus riding publicly into Jerusalem, accompanied, as it is said at verses eight and nine, by a great multitude, shouting and rejoicing and spreading their garments by the way, is a story altogether destitute of truth.

In the last passage called a prophecy that I examined, Jesus is represented as withdrawing, that is, running away, and concealing himself for fear of being apprehended, and charging the people that were with him not to make him known. No new circumstance had arisen in the interim to change his condition for the better; yet here he is represented as making his public entry into the same city from which he had fled for safety. The two cases contradict each other so much that if both are not false, one of them at least can scarcely be true.

For my own part, I do not believe there is one word of historical truth in the whole book. I look upon it at best to be a romance; the principal personage of which is an imaginary or allegorical character founded upon some tale, and in which the moral is in many parts good, and the narrative part very badly and blunderingly written.

I pass on to the tenth passage called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

Matthew xxvi, 51-56: "And behold one of them which was with Jesus [meaning Peter] stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, put up again thy sword into its place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be?"

"In that same hour Jesus said to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief, with swords and with staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me. But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled."

This loose and general manner of speaking, admits neither of detection nor of proof. Here is no quotation given, nor the name of any Bible author mentioned, to which reference can be had.

There are, however, some high improbabilities against the truth of the account.

First—It is not probable that the Jews, who were then a conquered people, and under subjection to the Romans, should be permitted to wear swords.

Secondly—If Peter had attacked the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear, he would have been immediately taken up by the guard that took up his master and sent to prison with him.

Thirdly—What sort of disciples and preaching apostles must those of Christ have been that wore swords?

Fourthly—This scene is represented to have taken place the same evening of what is called the Lord's supper, which makes, according to the ceremony of it, the inconsistency of wearing swords the greater.

I pass on to the eleventh passage called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

Matthew xxvii, 3-10: "Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us, see thou to that. And he cast down the thirty pieces of silver, and departed, and went and hanged himself.

"And the chief priests took the silver pieces and said, it is not lawful to put them in the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field is called the field of blood unto this day.

"Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value, and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me."

This is a most barefaced piece of imposition. The passage in Jeremiah which speaks of the purchase of a field has no more to do with the case to which Matthew applies it than it has to do with the purchase of lands in America. I will recite the whole passage:

Jeremiah xxxii, 6-15: "And Jeremiah said, The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Behold Hanameel, the son of Shallum thine uncle, shall come unto thee, saying, Buy thee my field that is in Anathoth, for the right of redemption is thine to buy it. So Hanameel mine uncle's

son came to me in the court of the prison, according to the word of the Lord, and said unto me, Buy my field I pray thee that is in Anathoth, which is in the country of Benjamin; for the right of inheritance is thine, and the redemption is thine; buy it for thyself.

"Then I knew this was the word of the Lord. And I bought the field of Hanameel mine uncle's son, that was in Anathoth, and weighed him the money, even seventeen shekels of silver. And I subscribed the evidence and sealed it, and took witnesses and weighed him the money in the balances.

"So I took the evidence of the purchase, both that which was sealed according to the law and custom, and that which was open; and I gave the evidence of the purchase unto Baruch the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, in the sight of Hanameel mine uncle's son, and in the presence of the witnesses that subscribed [the book of the purchase], before all the Jews that sat in the court of the prison.

"And I charged Baruch before them, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open, and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days. For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land."

I forebear making any remark on this abominable imposition of Matthew. The thing glaringly speaks for itself. It is priests and commentators that I rather ought to censure for having preached falsehood so long and kept people in darkness with respect to those impositions.

I am not contending with these men upon points of doctrine, for I know that sophistry has always a city of refuge. I am speaking of facts; for wherever the thing called a fact is a falsehood, the faith founded upon it is delusion, and the doctrine raised upon it not true. Ah, reader, put thy trust in thy Creator, and thou wilt be safe; but if thou trust to the book called the Scriptures thou trust to the rotten staff of fable and falsehood. But I return to my subject.

There is among the whims and reveries of Zechariah, mention made of thirty pieces of silver given to a potter. They can hardly have been so stupid as to mistake a potter for a field: and if they had, the passage in Zechariah has no more to do with Jesus, Judas and the field to bury strangers in than that already quoted. I will recite the passage.

Zechariah xi, 7-14: "And I will feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock. And I took unto me two staves; the one I called

*Beauty*, the other I called *Bands*; and I fed the flock. Three shepherds also I cut off in one month; and my soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me. Then said I, I will not feed you; that which dieth, let it die; and that which is to be cut off, let it be cut off; and let the rest eat everyone the flesh of another.

“And I took my staff, even *Beauty*, and cut it asunder, that I might break my covenant which I had made with all the people. And it was broken in that day; and so the poor of the flock who waited upon me knew that it was the word of the Lord. And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price, and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price *thirty pieces of silver*.

“And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the *potter*; a goodly price that I was prised at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord. Then I cut asunder mine other staff, even *Bands*, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.”<sup>36</sup>

There is no making either head or tail of this incoherent gibberish. His two staves, one called *Beauty* and the other *Bands*, is so much like a fairy tale that I doubt if it had any other origin. There is, however,

<sup>36</sup> Whiston, in his “*Essay on the Old Testament*,” says that the passage of Zechariah of which I have spoken, was, in the copies of the Bible of the First Century, in the book of Jeremiah, from whence, says he, it was taken and inserted without coherence in that of Zechariah. Well, let it be so, it does not make the case a whit the better for the New Testament; but it makes the case a great deal the worse for the Old.

Because it shows, as I have mentioned respecting some passages in a book ascribed to Isaiah, that the works of different authors have been so mixed and confounded together, they cannot now be discriminated, except where they are historical, chronological, or biographical, as in the interpolation in Isaiah. It is the name of Cyrus, inserted where it could not be inserted, as he was not in existence till one hundred and fifty years after the time of Isaiah, that detects the interpolation and the blunder with it.

Whiston was a man of great literary learning, and what is of much higher degree, of deep scientific learning. He was one of the best and most celebrated mathematicians of his time, for which he was made professor of mathematics of the University of Cambridge. He wrote so much in defense of the Old Testament, and of what he calls prophecies of Jesus Christ, that at last he began to suspect the truth of the Scriptures, and wrote against them; for it is only those who examine them, that see the imposition. Those who believe them most, are those who know least about them.

Whiston, after writing so much in defense of the Scriptures, was at last prosecuted for writing against them. It was this that gave occasion to Swift, in his ludicrous epigram on Ditton and Whiston, each of which set up to find out the longitude, to call the one *good master Ditton* and the other *wicked Will Whiston*. But as Swift was a great associate with the Free-thinkers of those days, such as Bolingbroke, Pope, and others, who did not believe the book called the Scriptures, there is no certainty whether he wittily called him *wicked* for defending the Scriptures, or for writing against them. The known character of Swift decides for the former.—*Author*.

no part that has the least relation to the case stated in Matthew; on the contrary, it is the reverse of it. Here the *thirty pieces* of silver, whatever it was for, is called a *goodly price*, it was as much as the thing was worth, and according to the language of the day, was approved of by the Lord, and the money given to the potter in the house of the Lord.

In the case of Jesus and Judas, as stated in Matthew, the thirty pieces of silver were the price of blood; the transaction was condemned by the Lord, and the money when refunded was refused admittance into the treasury. Everything in the two cases is the reverse of each other.

Besides this, a very different and direct contrary account to that of Matthew, is given of the affair of Judas, in the book called the "Acts of the Apostles"; according to that book the case is, that so far from Judas repenting and returning the money, and the high priest buying a field with it to bury strangers in, Judas kept the money and bought a field with it for himself; and instead of hanging himself as Matthew says, that he fell headlong and burst asunder. Some commentators endeavor to get over one part of the contradiction by ridiculously supposing that Judas hanged himself first and the rope broke.

Acts i, 16-18: "Men and brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus [David says not a word about Judas], for he [Judas] was numbered among us and obtained part of our ministry. *Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity, and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst and his bowels gushed out.*"

Is it not a species of blasphemy to call the New Testament *revealed religion*, when we see in it such contradictions and absurdities? I pass on to the twelfth passage called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

Matthew xxvii, 35: "And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, *They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.*" This expression is in Psalm xxii, 18.

The writer of that Psalm (whoever he was, for the Psalms are a collection and not the work of one man) is speaking of himself and his own case, and not that of another. He begins this Psalm with the words which the New Testament writers ascribed to Jesus Christ: "*My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me*"—words which might be uttered by a complaining man without any great impropriety, but very improperly from the mouth of a reputed God.

The picture which the writer draws of his own situation in this Psalm, is gloomy enough. He is not prophesying, but complaining of his own hard case. He represents himself as surrounded by enemies and beset by persecutions of every kind; and by the way of showing the inveteracy of his persecutors he says, "*They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.*"

The expression is in the present tense; and is the same as to say, they pursue me even to the clothes upon my back, and dispute how they shall divide them. Besides, the word *vesture* does not always mean clothing of any kind, but *Property*, or rather the admitting a man to, or *investing* him with property; and as it is used in this Psalm distinct from the word garment, it appears to be used in this sense. But Jesus had no property; for they make him say of himself, "*The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.*"

But be this as it may, if we permit ourselves to suppose the Almighty would condescend to tell, by what is called the spirit of prophecy, what could come to pass in some future age of the world, it is an injury to our own faculties, and to our ideas of His greatness, to imagine that it would be about an old coat, or an old pair of breeches, or about anything which the common accidents of life, or the quarrels which attend it, exhibit every day.

That which is in the power of man to do, or in his will not to do, is not a subject for prophecy, even if there were such a thing, because it cannot carry with it any evidence of divine power, or divine interposition.

The ways of God are not the ways of men. That which an Almighty power performs, or wills, is not within the circle of human power to do, or to control. But any executioner and his assistants might quarrel about dividing the garments of a sufferer, or divide them without quarreling, and by that means fulfil the thing called a prophecy, or set it aside.

In the passages before examined, I have exposed the falsehood of them. In this I exhibit its degrading meanness, as an insult to the Creator and an injury to human reason.

Here end the passages called prophecies by Matthew.

Matthew concludes his book by saying, that when Christ expired on the cross, the rocks rent, the graves opened, and the bodies of many of the saints arose; and Mark says, there was darkness over the land from the sixth hour until the ninth.

They produce no prophecy for this; but had these things been facts, they would have been a proper subject for prophecy, because none but an Almighty power could have inspired a foreknowledge of them, and afterwards fulfilled them. Since then there is no such prophecy, but a pretended prophecy of an old coat, the proper deduction is, there were no such things, and that the book of Matthew was fable and falsehood.

I pass on to the book called the Gospel according to St. Mark.

#### THE BOOK OF MARK

There are but few passages in Mark called prophecies; and but few in Luke and John. Such as there are I shall examine, and also such other passages as interfere with those cited by Matthew.

Mark begins his book by a passage which he puts in the shape of a prophecy. Mark i, 1, 2.—“The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God: As it is written in the prophets, *Behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.*” (Malachi iii, 1.)

The passage in the original is in the first person. Mark makes this passage to be a prophecy of John the Baptist, said by the Church to be a forerunner of Jesus Christ. But if we attend to the verses that follow this expression, as it stands in Malachi, and to the first and fifth verses of the next chapter, we shall see that this application of it is erroneous and false.

Malachi having said, at the first verse, “Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me,” says, at the second verse, “But who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner’s fire, and like fuller’s soap.”

This description can have no reference to the birth of Jesus Christ, and consequently none to John the Baptist. It is a scene of fear and terror that is here described, and the birth of Christ is always spoken of as a time of joy and glad tidings.

Malachi, continuing to speak on the same subject, explains in the next chapter what the scene is of which he speaks in the verses above quoted, and whom the person is whom he calls the messenger.

“Behold,” says he (iv, 1), “the day cometh that shall burn like an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day cometh that shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.” Verse 5: “Behold I will send you

Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord."

By what right, or by what imposition or ignorance Mark has made Elijah into John the Baptist, and Malachi's description of the day of judgment into the birthday of Christ, I leave to the Bishop [of Llandaff] to settle.

Mark (i, 2, 3), confounds two passages together, taken from different books of the Old Testament. The second verse, "Behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee," is taken, as I have said before, from Malachi. The third verse, which says, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight," is not in Malachi, but in Isaiah, xl, 3.

Whiston says that both these verses were originally in Isaiah. If so, it is another instance of the disordered state of the Bible, and corroborates what I have said with respect to the name and description of Cyrus being in the book of Isaiah, to which it cannot chronologically belong.

The words in Isaiah—"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight"—are in the present tense, and consequently not predictive. It is one of those rhetorical figures which the Old Testament authors frequently used. That it is merely rhetorical and metaphorical, may be seen at the sixth verse: "And the voice said, cry; and he said what shall I cry? *All flesh is grass.*"

This is evidently nothing but a figure; for flesh is not grass otherwise than as a figure or metaphor, where one thing is put for another. Besides which, the whole passage is too general and too declamatory to be applied exclusively to any particular person or purpose.

I pass on to the eleventh chapter.

In this chapter, Mark speaks of Christ riding into Jerusalem upon a colt, but he does not make it the accomplishment of a prophecy, as Matthew has done, for he says nothing about a prophecy. Instead of which he goes on the other tack, and in order to add new honors to the ass, he makes it to be a miracle; for he says, verse 2, it was a colt "*whereon never man sat*"; signifying thereby, that as the ass had not been broken, he consequently was *inspired into good manners*, for we do not hear that he kicked Jesus Christ off. There is not a word about his kicking in all the four Evangelists.

I pass on from these feats of *horsemanship* performed upon a jack-ass, to the 15th chapter. At the 24th verse of this chapter, Mark speaks of *parting Christ's garments and casting lots upon them*, but he applies



no prophecy to it as Matthew does. He rather speaks of it as a thing then in practise with executioners, as it is at this day.

At the 28th verse of the same chapter, Mark speaks of Christ being crucified between two thieves; that, says he, the Scripture might be fulfilled, "*which saith, and he was numbered with the transgressors.*" The same might be said of the thieves.

This expression is in Isaiah liii, 12. Grotius applies it to Jeremiah. But the case has happened so often in the world, where innocent men have been numbered with transgressors, and is still continually happening, that it is absurdity to call it a prophecy of any particular person. All those whom the church calls martyrs were numbered with transgressors.

All the honest patriots who fell upon the scaffold in France, in the time of Robespierre, were numbered with transgressors; and if himself had not fallen, the same case according to a note in his own handwriting, had befallen me; yet I suppose the Bishop [of Llandaff] will not allow that Isaiah was prophesying of Thomas Paine.

These are all the passages in Mark which have any reference to prophecies.

Mark concludes his book by making Jesus to say to his disciples (xvi, 16-18), "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not, shall be damned [fine popish stuff this], and these signs shall follow them that believe: in my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

Now, the Bishop, in order to know if he has all this saving and wonder-working faith, should try those things upon himself. He should take a good dose of arsenic, and if he please, I will send him a rattlesnake from America.

As for myself, as I believe in God and not at all in Jesus Christ, nor in the books called the Scriptures, the experiment does not concern me.

I pass on to the book of Luke.

#### THE BOOK OF LUKE

There are no passages in Luke called prophecies, excepting those which relate to the passages I have already examined.

Luke speaks of Mary being espoused to Joseph, but he makes no references to the passage in Isaiah, as Matthew does. He speaks also of Jesus riding into Jerusalem upon a colt, but he says nothing about a prophecy. He speaks of John the Baptist and refers to the passage in Isaiah, of which I have already spoken.

At chapter xiii, 31, 32, he says, "*The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him [Jesus], Get thee out and depart hence, for Herod will kill thee. And he said unto them, Go ye and tell that fox, Behold I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.*"

Matthew makes Herod to die while Christ was a child in Egypt, and makes Joseph to return with the child on the news of Herod's death, who had sought to kill him. Luke makes Herod to be living, and to seek the life of Jesus after Jesus was thirty years of age: for he says (iii, 23), "And Jesus began to be about thirty years of age, being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph."

The obscurity in which the historical part of the New Testament is involved, with respect to Herod, may afford to priests and commentators a plea, which to some may appear plausible, but to none satisfactory, that the Herod of which Matthew speaks, and the Herod of which Luke speaks, were different persons.

Matthew calls Herod a king; and Luke (iii, 1) calls Herod, Tetrarch (that is, Governor) of Galilee. But there could be no such person as a *King Herod*, because the Jews and their country were then under the dominion of the Roman Emperors who governed then by tetrarchs, or governors.

Luke ii makes Jesus to be born when Cyrenius was Governor of Syria, to which government Judea was annexed; and according to this, Jesus was not born in the time of Herod. Luke says nothing about Herod seeking the life of Jesus when he was born; nor of his destroying the children under two years old; nor of Joseph fleeing with Jesus into Egypt; nor of his returning from thence. On the contrary, the book of Luke speaks as if the person it calls Christ had never been out of Judea, and that Herod sought his life after he commenced preaching, as is before stated.

I have already shown that Luke, in the book called the Acts of the Apostles (which commentators ascribe to Luke), contradicts the account in Matthew with respect to Judas and the thirty pieces of silver. Matthew

says that Judas returned the money, and that the high priests bought with it a field to bury strangers in; Luke says that Judas kept the money, and bought a field with it for himself.

As it is impossible the wisdom of God should err, so it is impossible those books should have been written by divine inspiration. Our belief in God and His unerring wisdom forbids us to believe it. As for myself, I feel religiously happy in the total disbelief of it.

There are no other passages called prophecies in Luke than those I have spoken of. I pass on to the book of John.

#### THE BOOK OF JOHN

John, like Mark and Luke, is not much of a prophecy-monger. He speaks of the ass, and the casting lots for Jesus's clothes, and some other trifles, of which I have already spoken.

John makes Jesus to say (v, 46), "*For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me.*" The book of the Acts, in speaking of Jesus, says (iii, 22), "*For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord, your God, raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.*"

This passage is in Deuteronomy, xviii, 15. They apply it as a prophecy of Jesus. What imposition! The person spoken of in Deuteronomy, and also in Numbers, where the same person is spoken of, is *Joshua*, the minister of Moses, and his immediate successor, and just such another Robespierrear: character as Moses is represented to have been. The case, as related in those books, is as follows:

Moses was grown old and near to his end, and in order to prevent confusion after his death, for the Israelites had no settled system of government, it was thought best to nominate a successor to Moses while he was yet living. This was done, as we are told, in the following manner:

Numbers xxvii, 12, 13 "*And the Lord said unto Moses, Get thee up into this mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given unto the children of Israel. And when thou hast seen it thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother is gathered.*" Verses 15-20. "*And Moses spake unto the Lord, saying, Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep that have no shepherd. And the Lord said unto Moses, take*

thee *Joshua*, the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him; and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation; and give him a charge in their sight. And thou shalt put some of thine honor upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient."

Verses 22, 23. "And Moses did as the Lord commanded him; and he took Joshua, and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation; and he laid hands upon him, and gave him a charge, as the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses."

I have nothing to do, in this place, with the truth, or the conjuration here practised, of raising up a successor to Moses like unto himself. The passage sufficiently proves it is Joshua, and that it is an imposition in John to make the case into a prophecy of Jesus. But the prophecy-mongers were so inspired with falsehood, that they never speak truth.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Newton, Bishop of Bristol in England, published a work in three volumes, entitled, "Dissertations on the Prophecies." The work is tediously written and tiresome to read. He strains hard to make every passage into a prophecy that suits his purpose. Among others, he makes this expression of Moses, "The Lord shall raise thee up a prophet like unto me," into a prophecy of Christ, who was not born, according to the Bible chronologies, till fifteen hundred and fifty-two years after the time of Moses; whereas it was an immediate successor to Moses, who was then near his end, that is spoken of in the passage above quoted.

This bishop, the better to impose this passage on the world as a prophecy of Christ, has entirely omitted the account in the book of Numbers which I have given at length, word for word, and which shows, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that the person spoken of by Moses is Joshua, and no other person.

Newton is but a superficial writer. He takes up things upon *hearsay*, and inserts them without either examination or reflection, and the more extraordinary and incredible they are, the better he likes them. In speaking of the walls of Babylon (vol. i, p. 263), he makes a quotation from a traveler of the name of *Tavernier*, whom he calls (by way of giving credit to what he says), a *celebrated traveler*, that those walls *were made of burnt brick, ten feet square and three feet thick*.

If Newton had only thought of calculating the weight of such a brick he would have seen the impossibility of their being used or even made. A brick ten feet square, and three feet thick, contains 300 cubic feet and allowing a cubic foot of brick to be only one hundred pounds, each of the bishop's bricks would weigh 30,000 pounds; and it would take about thirty cart-loads of clay (one-horse carts) to make one brick.

But his account of the stones used in the building of Solomon's temple (vol. ii, p. 211), far exceeds his bricks of ten feet square in the walls of Babylon; these are but brickbats compared to them. The stones (says he) employed in the foundation, were in magnitude forty cubits (that is above sixty feet), a cubit, says he, being somewhat more than one foot and a half (a cubit is one foot nine inches), and the superstructure (says this bishop) was worthy of such foundations.

There were some stones (says he) of the whitest marble, forty-five cubits long, five cubits high, and six cubits broad. These are the dimensions this bishop has given, which, in measure of twelve inches to a foot, is seventy-eight feet nine inches long, ten feet six inches broad, and eight feet three inches thick, and contains 7,234 cubic feet.

I now go to demonstrate the imposition of this bishop. A cubic foot of water weighs

I pass to the last passage, in these fables of the Evangelists, called a prophecy of Jesus Christ.

John, having spoken of Jesus expiring on the cross between two thieves, says (xix, 32, 33), "Then came the soldiers and brake the legs of the first [meaning one of the thieves] and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs." Verse 36: "For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, *A bone of him shall not be broken.*"

The passage here referred to is in Exodus, and has no more to do with Jesus than with the ass he rode upon to Jerusalem; nor yet so much, if a roasted jack-ass, like a roasted he-goat, might be eaten at a Jewish passover. It might be some consolation to an ass to know that though his bones might be picked, they would not be broken. I go to state the case.

The book of Exodus, in instituting the Jewish passover, in which they were to eat a he-lamb, or a he-goat, says (xii, 5), "Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year; ye shall take it from the *sheep* or from the *goats.*" The book, after stating some ceremonies to be used in killing and dressing it (for it was to be roasted, not boiled), says (verses 43-48), "And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron, This is the ordinance of the passover: there shall no stranger eat thereof; but every man's servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised

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sixty-two pounds and a half. The specific gravity of marble to water is as two and one-half is to one. The weight, therefore, of a cubic foot of marble is 156 pounds, which, multiplied by 7,234, the number of cubic feet in one of those stones, makes the weight of it to be 1,128,504 pounds, which is 503 tons.

Allowing then a horse to draw about half a ton, it will require a thousand horses to draw one such stone on the ground; how then were they to be lifted into the building by human hands? The bishop may talk of faith removing mountains, but all the faith of all the bishops that ever lived could not remove one of those stones, and their bodily strength given in.

This bishop also tells of *great guns* used by the Turks at the taking of Constantinople, one of which, he says, was drawn by seventy yoke of oxen, and by two thousand men. (Vol. III, p. 117.) The weight of a cannon that carries a ball of forty-three pounds, which is the largest cannon that are cast, weighs 8,000 pounds, about three tons and a half, and may be drawn by three yoke of oxen.

Anybody may now calculate what the weight of the bishop's *great gun* must be, that required seventy yoke of oxen to draw it. This bishop beats Gulliver.

When men give up the use of the divine gift of reason in writing on any subject, be it religious or anything else, there are no bounds to their extravagance, no limit to their absurdities. The three volumes which this bishop has written on what he calls the prophecies, contain above 1,200 pages, and he says in Vol. III, p. 117, "*I have studied brevity.*" This is as marvelous as the bishop's great gun.—*Author.*

him, then shall he eat thereof. A foreigner shall not eat thereof. In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh thereof abroad out of the house; *neither shall ye break a bone thereof.*"

We here see that the case as it stands in Exodus is a ceremony and not a prophecy, and totally unconnected with Jesus's bones, or any part of him.

John, having thus filled up the measure of apostolic fable, concludes his book with something that beats all fable; for he says at the last verse, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they could be written everyone, *I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.*"

This is what in vulgar life is called a *thumper*; that is, not only a lie, but a lie beyond the line of possibility; besides which it is an absurdity, for if they should be written in the world, the world would contain them. Here ends the examination of the passages called prophecies.

I have now, reader, gone through and examined all the passages which the four books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, quote from the Old Testament and call them prophecies of Jesus Christ. When I first sat down to this examination, I expected to find cause for some censure, but little did I expect to find them so utterly destitute of truth, and of all pretensions to it, as I have shown them to be.

The practise which the writers of these books employ is not more false than it is absurd. They state some trifling case of the person they call Jesus Christ, and then cut out a sentence from some passage of the Old Testament and call it a prophecy of that case. But when the words thus cut out are restored to the place they are taken from, and read with the words before and after them, they give the lie to the New Testament. A short instance or two of this will suffice for the whole.

They make Joseph to dream of an angel, who informs him that Herod is dead, and tells him to come with the child out of Egypt. They then cut out a sentence from the book of Hosea, "*Out of Egypt have I called my Son,*" and apply it as a prophecy in that case. The words, "*And called my Son out of Egypt,*" are in the Bible.

But what of that? They are only part of a passage, and not a whole passage, and stand immediately connected with other words which show they refer to the children of Israel coming out of Egypt in the time of Pharaoh, and to the idolatry they committed afterwards.

Again, they tell us that when the soldiers came to break the legs of the

crucified persons, they found Jesus was already dead, and, therefore, did not break his. They then, with some alteration of the original, cut out a sentence from Exodus, "*a bone of him shall not be broken,*" and apply it as a prophecy of that case.

The words "*Neither shall ye break a bone thereof*" (for they have altered the text), are in the Bible. But what of that? They are, as in the former case, only part of a passage, and not a whole passage, and when read with the words they are immediately joined to, show it is the bones of a he-lamb or a he-goat of which the passage speaks.

These repeated forgeries and falsifications create a well-founded suspicion that all the cases spoken of concerning the person called Jesus Christ are *made cases*, on purpose to lug in, and that very clumsily, some broken sentences from the Old Testament, and apply them as prophecies of those cases; and that so far from his being the Son of God, he did not exist even as a man—that he is merely an imaginary or allegorical character, as Apollo, Hercules, Jupiter and all the deities of antiquity were. There is no history written at the time Jesus Christ is said to have lived that speaks of the existence of such a person, even as a man.

Did we find in any other book pretending to give a system of religion, the falsehoods, falsifications, contradictions, and absurdities, which are to be met with in almost every page of the Old and New Testament, all the priests of the present day, who supposed themselves capable, would triumphantly show their skill in criticism, and cry it down as a most glaring imposition.

But since the books in question belong to their own trade and profession, they, or at least many of them, seek to stifle every inquiry into them and abuse those who have the honesty and the courage to do it.

When a book, as is the case with the Old and New Testament, is ushered into the world under the title of being the WORD OF GOD, it ought to be examined with the utmost strictness, in order to know if it has a well founded claim to that title or not, and whether we are or are not imposed upon: for no poison is so dangerous as that which poisons the physic, so no falsehood is so fatal as that which is made an article of faith.

This examination becomes more necessary, because when the New Testament was written, I might say invented, the art of printing was not known, and there were no other copies of the Old Testament than written copies. A written copy of that book would cost about as much as

six hundred common printed Bibles now cost. Consequently the book was in the hands of very few persons, and these chiefly of the Church.

This gave an opportunity to the writers of the New Testament to make quotations from the Old Testament as they pleased, and called them prophecies, with very little danger of being detected. Besides which, the terrors and inquisitorial fury of the Church, like what they tell us of the flaming sword that turned every way, stood sentry over the New Testament; and time, which brings everything else to light, has served to thicken the darkness that guards it from detection.

Were the New Testament now to appear for the first time every priest of the present day would examine it line by line, and compare the detached sentences it calls prophecies with the whole passages in the Old Testament from whence they are taken. Why then do they not make the same examination at this time, as they would make had the New Testament never appeared before?

If it be proper and right to make it in one case, it is equally proper and right to do it in the other case. Length of time can make no difference in the right to do it at any time. But, instead of doing this, they go on as their predecessors went on before them, to tell the people there are prophecies of Jesus Christ, when the truth is there are none.

They tell us that Jesus rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven. It is very easy to say so; a great lie is as easily told as a little one. But if he had done so, those would have been the only circumstances respecting him that would have differed from the common lot of man; and, consequently, the only case that would apply exclusively to him, as prophecy, would be some passage in the Old Testament that foretold such things of him.

But there is not a passage in the Old Testament that speaks of a person who, after being crucified, dead and buried, should rise from the dead, and ascend into heaven. Our prophecy-mongers supply the silence the Old Testament guards upon such things, by telling us of passages they call prophecies, and that falsely so, about Joseph's dream, old clothes, broken bones and such like trifling stuff.

In writing upon this, as upon every other subject, I speak a language full and intelligible. I deal not in hints and intimations. I have several reasons for this: First, that I may be clearly understood. Secondly, that it may be seen I am in earnest; and thirdly, because it is an affront to truth to treat falsehood with complaisance.



I will close this treatise with a subject I have already touched upon in the first part of "The Age of Reason."

The world has been amused with the term *revealed religion*, and the generality of priests apply this term to the books called the Old and New Testament. The Mahometans apply the same term to the Koran. There is no man that believes in revealed religion stronger than I do; but it is not the reveries of the Old and New Testament, nor of the Koran, that I dignify with that sacred title. That which is revelation to me exists in something which no human mind can invent, no human hand can counterfeit or alter.

The *Word of God* is the *Creation* we behold; and this Word of God reveals to man all that is necessary for man to know of his Creator. Do we want to contemplate His power? We see it in the immensity of His creation. Do we want to contemplate His wisdom? We see it in the unchangeable order by which the incomprehensible whole is governed.

Do we want to contemplate His munificence? We see it in the abundance with which He fills the earth. Do we want to contemplate His mercy? We see it in His not withholding that abundance, even from the unthankful.

Do we want to contemplate His will, so far as it respects man? The goodness He shows to all is a lesson for our conduct to each other.

In fine—do we want to know what God is? Search not the book called the Scripture, which any human hand might make, or any impostor invent; but the SCRIPTURE CALLED THE CREATION.

When, in the first part of "The Age of Reason," I called the creation the true revelation of God to man, I did not know that any other person had expressed the same idea. But I lately met with the writings of Doctor Conyers Middleton, published the beginning of last century, in which he expresses himself in the same manner, with respect to the creation, as I have done in "The Age of Reason."

He was principal librarian of the University of Cambridge, in England, which furnished him with extensive opportunities of reading, and necessarily required he should be well acquainted with the dead as well as the living languages. He was a man of a strong original mind, had the courage to think for himself, and the honesty to speak his thoughts.

He made a journey to Rome, from whence he wrote letters to show that the forms and ceremonies of the Romish Christian Church were taken from the degenerate state of the heathen mythology, as it stood in the latter times of the Greeks and Romans. He attacked without cere-

mony the miracles which the Church pretended to perform; and in one of his treatises, he calls the *creation a revelation*.

The priests of England, of that day, in order to defend their citadel, by first defending its out-works, attacked him for attacking the Roman ceremonies; and one of them censures him for calling the *creation a revelation*. He thus replies to him:

“One of them,” says he, “appears to be scandalized by the title of *revelation* which I have given to that discovery which God made of Himself in the visible works of his creation. Yet it is no other than what the wise in all ages have given to it, who consider it as the most authentic and indisputable revelation which God has ever given of Himself, from the beginning of the world to this day.

“It was this by which the first notice of Him was revealed to the inhabitants of the earth, and by which alone it has been kept up ever since among the several nations of it. From this the reason of man was enabled to trace out his nature and attributes, and, by a gradual deduction of consequences, to learn his own nature also, with all the duties belonging to it, which relate either to God or to his fellow-creatures.

“This constitution of things was ordained by God, as an universal law, or rule of conduct to man; the source of all his knowledge; the test of all truth, by which all subsequent revelations, which are supposed to have been given by God in any other manner must be tried, and cannot be received as divine any further than as they are found to tally and coincide with this original standard.

“It was this divine law which I referred to in the passage above recited [meaning the passage on which they had attacked him], being desirous to excite the reader’s attention to it, as it would enable him to judge more freely of the argument I was handling. For by contemplating this law, he would discover the genuine way which God Himself has marked out to us for the acquisition of true knowledge, not from the authority or reports of our fellow-creatures, but from the information of the facts and material objects which, in His providential distribution of worldly things, He hath presented to the perpetual observation of our senses. For as it was from these that his existence and nature, the most important articles of all knowledge, were first discovered to man, so that grand discovery furnished new light toward tracing out the rest, and made all the inferior subjects of human knowledge more easily discoverable to us by the same method.

“I had another view likewise in the same passage, and applicable to

the same end, of giving the reader a more enlarged notion of the question in dispute, who, by turning his thoughts to reflect on the works of the Creator, as they are manifested to us in this fabric of the world, could not fail to observe that they are all of them great, noble, and suitable to the majesty of His nature; carrying with them the proofs of their origin, and showing themselves to be the production of an all-wise and Almighty being; and by accustoming his mind to these sublime reflections, he will be prepared to determine whether those miraculous interpositions, so confidently affirmed to us by the primitive fathers, can reasonably be thought to make a part in the grand scheme of the Divine administration, or whether it be agreeable that God, who created all things by His will, and can give what turn to them He pleases by the same will, should, for the particular purposes of His government and the services of the Church, *descend to the expedient of visions and revelations*, granted sometimes to boys for the instruction of the elders, and sometimes to women to settle the fashion and length of their veils, and sometimes to pastors of the Church to enjoin them to ordain one man a lecturer, another a priest; or that he should scatter a profusion of miracles around the stake of a martyr, yet all of them vain and insignificant, and without any sensible effect, either of preserving the life or easing the sufferings of the saint, or even of mortifying his persecutors, who were always left to enjoy the full triumph of their cruelty, and the poor martyr to expire in a miserable death.

“When these things, I say, are brought to the original test, and compared with the genuine and indisputable works of the Creator, how minute, how trifling, how contemptible must they be? And how incredible must it be thought that, for the instruction of His Church, God should employ ministers so precarious, unsatisfactory, and inadequate, as the ecstasies of women and boys, and the visions of interested priests, which were derided at the very time by men of sense to whom they were proposed.

“That this universal law [continues Middleton, meaning the law revealed in the works of the Creation] was actually revealed to the heathen world long before the Gospel was known, we learn from all the principal sages of antiquity, who made it the capital subject of their studies and writings.

“Cicero [says Middleton] has given us a short abstract of it in a fragment still remaining from one of his books on government, which [says Middleton] I shall here transcribe in his own words, as they will illus-

trate my sense also, in the passages that appear so dark and dangerous to my antagonist:

“The true law [it is Cicero who speaks], is right reason, comformable to the nature of things, constant, eternal, diffused through all, which calls us to duty by commanding, deters us from sin by forbidding; which never loses its influence with the good, nor ever preserves it with the wicked. This law cannot be over-ruled by any other, nor abrogated in whole or in part; nor can we be absolved from it either by the senate or by the people; nor are we to seek any other comment or interpreter of it but Himself; nor can there be one law at Rome and another at Athens; one now and another hereafter; but the same eternal immutable law comprehends all nations at all times, under one common master and governor of all—GOD. He is the inventor, propounder, enacter of this law; and whoever will not obey it must first renounce himself, and throw off the nature of man; by doing which, he will suffer the greatest punishments though he should escape all the other torments which are commonly believed to be prepared for the wicked.’ Here ends the quotation from Cicero.

“Our Doctors [continues Middleton] perhaps will look on this as RANK DEISM; but let them call it what they will, I shall ever avow and defend it as the fundamental, essential, and vital part of all true religion.” Here ends the quotation from Middleton.

I have here given the reader two sublime extracts from men who lived in ages of time far remote from each other, but who thought alike. Cicero lived before the time in which they tell us Christ was born. Middleton may be called a man of our own time, as he lived within the same century with ourselves.

In Cicero we see that vast superiority of mind, that sublimity of right reasoning and justness of ideas, which man acquires, not by studying Bibles and Testaments, and the theology of schools built thereon, but by studying the Creator in the immensity and unchangeable order of His creation, and the immutability of His law.

“*There cannot,*” says Cicero, “*be one law now, and another hereafter; but the same eternal immutable law comprehends all nations, at all times, under one common Master and Governor of all—GOD.*” But according to the doctrine of schools which priests have set up, we see one law, called the *Old Testament*, given in one age of the world, and another law, called the *New Testament*, given in another age of the world.

As all this is contradictory to the eternal immutable nature, and the

unerring and unchangeable wisdom of God, we must be compelled to hold this doctrine to be false, and the old and the new law, called the Old and the New Testament, to be impositions, fables and forgeries.

In Middleton, we see the manly eloquence of an enlarged mind and the genuine sentiments of a true believer in his Creator. Instead of reposing his faith on books, by whatever name they may be called, whether Old Testament or New, he fixes the creation as the great original standard by which every other thing called the word or work of God is to be tried. In this we have an indisputable scale whereby to measure every word or work imputed to Him. If the thing so imputed carries not in itself the evidence of the same Almighty power, of the same unerring truth and wisdom, and the same unchangeable order in all its parts, as are visibly demonstrated to our senses, and comprehensible by our reason, in the magnificent fabric of the universe, that word or that work is not of God. Let then the two books called the Old and New Testament be tried by this rule, and the result will be that the authors of them, whoever they were, will be convicted of forgery.

The invariable principles, and unchangeable order, which regulate the movements of all the parts that compose the universe, demonstrate both to our senses and our reason that its creator is a God of unerring truth.

But the Old Testament, beside the numberless absurd and bagatelle stories it tells of God, represents Him as a God of deceit, a God not to be confided in. Ezekiel makes God to say (xiv, 9), "And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I, *the Lord have deceived that prophet.*" And at xx, 25, he makes God, in speaking of the children of Israel, to say "*Wherefore I gave them statutes that were not good, and judgments by which they should not live.*" This, so far from being the Word of God, is horrid blasphemy against Him. Reader, put thy confidence in thy God, and put no trust in the Bible.

This same Old Testament, after telling us that God created the heavens and the earth in six days, makes the same Almighty power and eternal wisdom employ itself in giving directions how a priest's garments should be cut, and what sort of stuff they should be made of, and what their offerings should be, gold and silver, and brass and blue, and purple and scarlet, and fine linen and goats' hair, and rams' skins dyed red, and badger skins, etc. (xxv, 3); and in one of the pretended prophecies I have just examined, God is made to give directions how they should kill, cook and eat a he-lamb or a he-goat.

And Ezekiel (iv), to fill up the measure of abominable absurdity,

makes God to order him to take *wheat and barley, and beans and lentiles, and millet and fitches, and make a loaf or a cake thereof, and bake it with human dung and eat it*; but as Ezekiel complained that this mess was too strong for his stomach, the matter was compromised from man's dung to cow-dung. Compare all this ribaldry, blasphemously called the Word of God, with the Almighty power that created the universe, and whose eternal wisdom directs and governs all its mighty movements, and we shall be at a loss to find a name sufficiently contemptible for it.

In the promises which the Old Testament pretends that God made to His people, the same derogatory ideas of Him prevail. It makes God to promise to Abraham that his seed should be like the stars in heaven and the sand on the sea shore for multitude, and that He would give them the land of Canaan as their inheritance forever.

But observe, reader, how the performance of this promise was to begin, and then ask thine own reason, if the wisdom of God, whose power is equal to His will, could, consistently with that power and that wisdom, make such a promise.

The performance of the promise was to begin, according to that book, by four hundred years of bondage and affliction. Genesis xv, 13, "*And he said unto Abraham, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years.*"

This promise then to Abraham and his seed forever, to inherit the land of Canaan, had it been a fact instead of a fable, was to operate, in the commencement of it, as a curse upon all the people and their children, and their children's children, for four hundred years.

But the case is, the book of Genesis was written after the bondage in Egypt had taken place; and in order to get rid of the disgrace of the Lord's chosen people, as they called themselves, being in bondage to the Gentiles, they make God to be the author of it, and annex it as a condition to a pretended promise; as if God, in making that promise, had exceeded His power in performing it, and consequently, His wisdom in making it, and was obliged to compromise with them for one-half, and with the Egyptians, to whom they were to be in bondage, for the other half.

Without degrading my own reason by bringing those wretched and contemptible tales into a comparative view with the Almighty power and eternal wisdom, which the Creator hath demonstrated to our senses in the creation of the universe, I will confine myself to say, that if we

compare them with the divine and forcible sentiments of Cicero, the result will be that the human mind has degenerated by believing them. Man, in a state of groveling superstition from which he has not courage to rise, loses the energy of his mental powers.

I will not tire the reader with more observations on the Old Testament.

As to the New Testament, if it be brought and tried by that standard which, as Middleton wisely says, God has revealed to our senses, of His Almighty power and wisdom in the creation and government of the visible universe, it will be found equally as false, paltry, and absurd, as the Old.

Without entering, in this place, into any other argument, that the story of Christ is of human invention and not of divine origin, I will confine myself to show that it is derogatory to God by the contrivance of it; because the means it supposes God to use, are not adequate to the end to be obtained; and, therefore, are derogatory to the Almightyness of His power, and the eternity of His wisdom.

The New Testament supposes that God sent His Son upon earth to make a new covenant with man, which the Church calls *the covenant of grace*; and to instruct mankind in a new doctrine, which it calls *Faith*, meaning thereby, not faith in God, for Cicero and all true Deists always had and always will have this, but faith in the person called Jesus Christ; and that whoever had not this faith should, to use the words of the New Testament, be DAMNED.

Now, if this were a fact, it is consistent with that attribute of God called His *goodness*, that no time should be lost in letting poor unfortunate man know it; and as that goodness was united to Almighty power, and that power to Almighty wisdom, all the means existed in the hand of the Creator to make it known immediately over the whole earth, in a manner suitable to the Almightyness of His divine nature, and with evidence that would not leave man in doubt; for it is always incumbent upon us, in all cases, to believe that the Almighty always acts, not by imperfect means as imperfect man acts, but consistently with His Almightyness. It is this only that can become the infallible criterion by which we can possibly distinguish the works of God from the works of man.

Observe now, reader, how the comparison between this supposed mission of Christ, on the belief or disbelief of which they say man was to be saved or damned—observe, I say, how the comparison between this,

and the Almighty power and wisdom of God demonstrated to our senses in the visible creation, goes on.

The Old Testament tells us that God created the heavens and the earth, and everything therein, in six days. The term *six days* is ridiculous enough when applied to God; but leaving out that absurdity, it contains the idea of Almighty power acting unitedly with Almighty wisdom, to produce an immense work, that of the creation of the universe and everything therein, in a short time.

Now as the eternal salvation of man is of much greater importance than his creation, and as that salvation depends, as the New Testament tells us, on man's knowledge of and belief in the person called Jesus Christ, it necessarily follows from our belief in the goodness and justice of God, and our knowledge of His Almighty power and wisdom, as demonstrated in the creation, that ALL THIS, if true, would be made known to all parts of the world, in as little time at least, as was employed in making the world.

To suppose the Almighty would pay greater regard and attention to the creation and organization of inanimate matter, than he would to the salvation of innumerable millions of souls, which Himself had created, "*as the image of Himself,*" is to offer an insult to His goodness and His justice.

Now observe, reader, how the promulgation of this pretended salvation by a knowledge of, and a belief in Jesus Christ went on, compared with the work of creation. In the first place, it took longer time to make the child than to make the world, for nine months were passed away and totally lost in a state of pregnancy; which is more than forty times longer time than God employed in making the world, according to the Bible account.

Secondly, several years of Christ's life were lost in a state of human infancy. But the universe was in maturity the moment it existed. Thirdly, Christ, as Luke asserts, was thirty years old before he began to preach what they call his mission. Millions of souls died in the meantime without knowing it.

Fourthly, it was above three hundred years from that time before the book called the New Testament was compiled into a written copy, before which time there was no such book. Fifthly, it was above a thousand years after that before it could be circulated; because neither Jesus nor his apostles had knowledge of, or were inspired with, the art of printing; and, consequently, as the means for making it universally known



did not exist, the means were not equal to the end, and therefore it is not the work of God.

I will here subjoin the nineteenth Psalm, which is truly deistical, to show how universally and instantaneously the works of God make themselves known, compared with this pretended salvation by Jesus Christ:

“The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.

“Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a chamber for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.

“His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.”

Now, had the news of salvation by Jesus Christ been inscribed on the face of the sun and the moon, in characters that all nations would have understood, the whole earth had known it in twenty-four hours; and all nations would have believed it; whereas, though it is now almost two thousand years since, as they tell us, Christ came upon earth, not a twentieth part of the people of the earth know anything of it, and among those who do, the wiser part do not believe it.

I have now, reader, gone through all the passages called prophecies of Jesus Christ, and shown there is no such thing.

I have examined the story told of Jesus Christ, and compared the several circumstances of it with that revelation which, as Middleton wisely says, God has made to us of His power and wisdom in the structure of the universe, and by which everything ascribed to Him is to be tried.

The result is that the story of Christ has not one trait, either in its character or in the means employed, that bears the least resemblance to the power and wisdom of God, as demonstrated in the creation of the universe. All the means are human means, slow, uncertain and inadequate to the accomplishment of the end proposed; and therefore the whole is a fabulous invention, and undeserving of credit.

The priests of the present day profess to believe it. They gain their living by it, and they exclaim against something they call infidelity. I will define what it is. **HE THAT BELIEVES IN THE STORY OF CHRIST IS AN INFIDEL TO GOD.**

## AUTHOR'S APPENDIX

## CONTRADICTORY DOCTRINES BETWEEN MATTHEW AND MARK

**I**N the New Testament (Mark xvi, 16), it is said "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." This is making salvation, or, in other words, the happiness of man after this life, to depend entirely on believing, or on what Christians call faith.

But *The Gospel according to Matthew* makes Jesus Christ preach a direct contrary doctrine to *The Gospel according to Mark*; for it makes salvation, or the future happiness of man, to depend entirely on *good works*; and those good works are not works done to God, for He needs them not, but good works done to man.

The passage referred to in Matthew is the account there given of what is called the last day, or the day of judgment, where the whole world is represented to be divided into two parts, the righteous and the unrighteous, metaphorically called the *sheep* and the *goats*. To the one part called the righteous, or the sheep, it says, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

"Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, *Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*"

Here is nothing about believing in Christ—nothing about that phantom of the imagination called *Faith*. The works here spoken of are works of humanity and benevolence, or, in other words, an endeavor to make God's creation happy.

Here is nothing about preaching and making long prayers, as if God must be dictated to by man; nor about building churches and meetings, nor hiring priests to pray and preach in them. Here is nothing about

predestination, that lust which some men have for damning one another.

Here is nothing about baptism, whether by sprinkling or plunging, nor about any of those ceremonies for which the Christian Church has been fighting, persecuting and burning each other ever since the Christian Church began.

If it be asked why priests do not preach the doctrine contained in this chapter, the answer is easy: they are not fond of practising it themselves. It does not answer for their trade. They had rather get than give. Charity with them begins and ends at home.

Had it been said, *Come ye blessed, ye have been liberal in paying the preachers of the word, ye have contributed largely towards building churches and meeting-houses*, there is not a hired priest in Christendom but would have thundered it continually in the ears of his congregation. But as it is altogether on good works done to men, the priests pass over it in silence, and they will abuse me for bringing it into notice.

THOMAS PAINE.

## MY PRIVATE THOUGHTS ON A FUTURE STATE

I HAVE said, in the first part of "The Age of Reason," that "*I hope for happiness after this life.*" This hope is comfortable to me, and I presume not to go beyond the comfortable idea of hope, with respect to a future state.

I consider myself in the hands of my Creator, and that He will dispose of me after this life consistently with His justice and goodness. I leave all these matters to Him, as my Creator and friend, and I hold it to be presumption in man to make an article of faith as to what the Creator will do with us hereafter. I do not believe because a man and a woman make a child that it imposes on the Creator the unavoidable obligation of keeping the being so made in eternal existence hereafter. It is in His power to do so, or not to do so, and it is not in our power to decide which He will do.

The book called the New Testament, which I hold to be fabulous and

have shown to be false, gives an account in Matthew xxv of what is there called the last day, or the day of judgment.

The whole world, according to that account, is divided into two parts, the righteous and the unrighteous, figuratively called the sheep and the goats. They are then to receive their sentence. To the one, figuratively called the sheep, it says, "*Come ye blessed of my Fathr, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*" To the other, figuratively called the goats, it says, "*Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.*"

Now the case is, the world cannot be thus divided: the moral world, like the physical world, is composed of numerous degrees of character, running imperceptibly one into the other, in such a manner that no fixed point of division can be found in either. That point is nowhere, or is everywhere.

The whole world might be divided into two parts numerically, but not as to moral character; and therefore the metaphor of dividing them, as sheep and goats can be divided, whose difference is marked by their external figure, is absurd. All sheep are still sheep; all goats are still goats; it is their physical nature to be so. But one part of the world are not all good alike, nor the other part all wicked alike. There are some exceedingly good; others exceedingly wicked.

There is another description of men who cannot be ranked with either the one or the other—they belong neither to the sheep nor the goats; and there is still another description of them who are so very insignificant, both in character and conduct, as not to be worth the trouble of damning or saving, or of raising from the dead.

My own opinion is, that those whose lives have been spent in doing good, and endeavoring to make their fellow-mortals happy, for this is the only way in which we can serve God, *will be happy hereafter*; and that the very wicked will meet with some punishment. But those who are neither good nor bad, or are too insignificant for notice, will be dropped entirely.

This is my opinion. It is consistent with my idea of God's justice, and with the reason that God has given me, and I gratefully know that He has given me a large share of that divine gift.

THOMAS PAINE.

## PREDESTINATION

REMARKS ON ROMANS, IX, 18-21

*Addressed to the Ministers of the Calvinistic Church*

These are generally believed to be the last words written by Paine before his death, June 8, 1809. They were published in the form of an article in 1820 in London by Mary Ann Carlile, wife of the English publisher, Richard Carlile. Carlile himself had been fined £1,500 and sentenced to three years' imprisonment in 1819 for publishing Paine's writings. Mrs. Carlile was fined £500 and imprisoned for two years for the same offense. However, public opinion was so aroused by these outrageous violations of freedom of thought and of the press, that Mrs. Carlile's petition to the House of Commons gained nationwide support.—*Editor.*

**P**AUL, in speaking of God, says, "Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth. Thou wilt say, why doth He yet find fault? For who hath resisted His will? Nay, but who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, Why hast Thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump, to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?"

I shall leave it to Calvinists and Universalists to wrangle about these expressions, and to oppose or corroborate them by other passages from other books of the Old or New Testament. I shall go to the root at once, and say, that the whole passage is presumption and nonsense.

Presumption, because it pretends to know the private mind of God: and nonsense, because the cases it states as parallel cases have no parallel in them, and are opposite cases.

The first expression says, "Therefore hath He (God) mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth." As this is ascribing to the attribute of God's power at the expense of the attribute of His justice, I, as a believer in the justice of God, disbelieve the assertion of Paul. The Predestinarians, of which the loquacious Paul was one, appear to acknowledge but one attribute in God, that of *power*, which may not improperly be called the *physical attribute*. The Deists,

in addition to this, believe in His moral attributes, those of justice and goodness.

In the next verses, Paul gets himself into what in vulgar life is called a hobble, and he tries to get out of it by nonsense and sophistry; for having committed himself by saying that "God hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth," he felt the difficulty he was in, and the objections that would be made, which he anticipates by saying, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth He (God) yet find fault? for who hath resisted His will? Nay, but, O man, who art thou, that repliest against God!"

This is neither answering the question, nor explaining the case. It is downright quibbling and shuffling off the question, and the proper retort upon him would have been, "Nay, but who art thou, presumptuous Paul, that putteth thyself in God's place?"

Paul, however, goes on and says, "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?" Yes, if the thing felt itself hurt, and could speak, it would say it. But as pots and pans have not the faculty of speech, the supposition of such things speaking is putting nonsense in the place of argument, and is too ridiculous even to admit of apology. It shows to what wretched shifts sophistry will resort.

Paul, however, dashes on, and the more he tries to reason the more he involves himself, and the more ridiculous he appears. "Hath not," says he, "the potter power over the clay of the same lump, to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?"

In this metaphor, and a most wretched one it is, Paul makes the potter to represent God; the lump of clay the whole human race; the vessels unto honor those souls "on whom He hath mercy because He will have mercy"; and the vessels unto dishonor, those souls "whom He hardeneth (for damnation) because He will harden them." The metaphor is false in every one of its points, and if it admits of any meaning or conclusion, it is the reverse of what Paul intended and the Calvinists understand.

In the first place, a potter doth not, because he cannot, make vessels of different qualities, from the same lump of clay; he cannot make a fine china bowl, intended to ornament a sideboard, from the same lump of clay that he makes a coarse pan, intended for a close-stool. The potter selects his clays for different uses, according to their different qualities, and degrees of fineness and goodness.

Paul might as well talk of making gun-flints from the same stick of

wood of which the gunstock is made, as of making china bowls from the same lump of clay of which are made common earthen pots and pans.

Paul could not have hit upon a more unfortunate metaphor for his purpose, than this of the potter and the clay; for if any inference is to follow from it, it is that as the potter selects his clay for different kinds of vessels according to the different qualities and degrees of fineness and goodness in the clay, so God selects for future happiness those among mankind who excel in purity and good life, which is the reverse of predestination.

In the second place there is no comparison between the souls of men and vessels made of clay; and, therefore, to put one to represent the other is a false position. The vessels, or the clay they are made from, are insensible of honor or dishonor. They neither suffer nor enjoy. The clay is not punished that serves the purpose of a close-stool, nor is the finer sort rendered happy that is made up into a punch-bowl.

The potter violates no principle of justice in the different uses to which he puts his different clays; for he selects as an artist, not as a moral judge; and the materials he works upon know nothing, and feel nothing, of his mercy or his wrath. Mercy or wrath would make a potter appear ridiculous, when bestowed upon his clay. He might kick some of his pots to pieces.

But the case is quite different with man, either in this world or the next. He is a being sensible of misery as well as of happiness, and therefore Paul argues like an unfeeling idiot when he compares man to clay on a potter's wheel, or to vessels made therefrom: and with respect to God, it is an offense to His attributes of justice, goodness and wisdom to suppose that He would treat the choicest work of creation like inanimate and insensible clay. If Paul believed that God made man after His own image, he dishonors it by making that image and a brickbat to be alike.

The absurd and impious doctrine of predestination, a doctrine destructive of morals, would never have been thought of had it not been for some stupid passages in the Bible, which priestcraft at first, and ignorance since, have imposed upon mankind as revelation.

Nonsense ought to be treated as nonsense wherever it be found; and had this been done in the rational manner it ought to be done, instead of intimating and mincing the matter, as has been too much the case, the nonsense and false doctrine of the Bible, with all the aid that priestcraft

can give, could never have stood their ground against the divine reason that God has given to man.

Doctor Franklin gives a remarkable instance of the truth of this in an account of his life, written by himself. He was in London at the time of which he speaks. "Some volumes," says he, "against Deism, fell into my hands. They were said to be the substance of sermons preached at Boyle's lectures.

"It happened that they produced on me an effect precisely the reverse of what was intended by the writers; for the arguments of the Deists, which were cited in order to be refuted, appeared to me more forcible than the refutation itself. In a word I soon became a perfect Deist."—New York edition of Franklin's Life, page 93.

All America, and more than all America, knows Franklin. His life was devoted to the good and improvement of man. Let, then, those who profess a different creed, imitate his virtues, and excel him if they can.

THOMAS PAINE.





AMERICAN ISSUES, 1791-1807

THOUGHTS ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MINT IN THE  
UNITED STATES

TO THE CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES

REMARKS ON GOUVERNEUR MORRIS'S FUNERAL ORATION  
ON GENERAL HAMILTON

TO THE FRENCH INHABITANTS OF LOUISIANA

THREE LETTERS TO MORGAN LEWIS

TO MR. HULBERT OF SHEFFIELD

ANOTHER CALLENDER—THOMAS TURNER OF VIRGINIA

CONSTITUTIONS, GOVERNMENTS, AND CHARTERS

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

A CHALLENGE TO THE FEDERALISTS TO DECLARE THEIR PRINCIPLES

LIBERTY OF THE PRESS

ON THE QUESTION, WILL THERE BE A WAR?

CHEETHAM AND HIS TORY PAPER

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Paine's influence in the United States did not end with the American Revolution. His *Rights of Man* inspired the growth of popular democratic societies in this country, and became the book of the hour for all liberty-loving Americans. *The Age of Reason* influenced the rise of deistic societies, and accelerated the campaign for separation of Church and State. Many of the essays contained in this section awakened a real understanding of the basic conflict between the Federalists and the Jeffersonians, exposed the reactionary aims of the Hamiltonians, and rallied popular support for the Jeffersonian cause. Indeed, much of the personal invective heaped upon Paine by Federalist newspapers and spokesmen arose from a frantic effort to weaken his influence among the people, and to check the popularity of his writings on major issues of the day.

## THOUGHTS ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MINT IN THE UNITED STATES

Paine enclosed his plan for the establishment of a mint in the United States in a letter he sent to Thomas Jefferson from London, September 28, 1790 (see below pp. 1314-1315), and Jefferson was so impressed by these suggestions that he turned over Paine's manuscripts to Philip Freneau who published the essay in the *National Gazette* of November 17, 1791. It has never before been reprinted.—*Editor.*

**T**HE price of machinery and the expense of labor are reserved to the conclusion. I proceed therefore to consider the Metals and the means of procuring them.

I begin with Copper. This Metal is of too little value and of too much bulk, to answer the purposes of coin to any great extent: About ten or twenty thousand dollars worth of copper coin is, I believe, as much as can be circulated in America.

Copper may be had in America, cheaper than in any other part of the world, and in greater quantities than are necessary for coining. This copper comes from the West-Indies, it is the old boiler stills, and other utensils which being worn out, the Planters have no use for the old copper. They have not, as I am informed, the means of melting it up, or do not give themselves the trouble to do it, besides which there is a duty of 3d sterling per lb. on landing it in England.

Considerable quantities of this copper have, since the war, been brought in New York, for 6d. per lb. York currency; but supposing ten pounds of it be bought for one dollar, it will consequently follow that ten pound weight of copper is only equal to about one ounce weight of silver; if therefore one dollar worth of copper was to be divided into

a hundred parts or cents, each cent would be above the weight and size of a silver dollar. Two opposite difficulties, therefore, present themselves with respect to a copper coinage; the one is, that to give the coins, or cents, the intrinsic value they ought to have by weight, they will be too heavy and bulky for use they are intended for; the other is, that to make them light enough to be convenient, they will not have intrinsic value enough to pass, any more than half dollars would pass for dollars.

The proportionate or relative value of silver to gold, is about 16 to one; that is, 16 ounces of silver is about the value of one ounce of gold, but the relative value of copper to silver, is from 120 to 140 to 1, which makes them too remote to represent each other in the shape of coin convenient for the pocket. Nobody would think of carrying brass pound weights about him for coin, yet he must carry copper in that proportion.

The metal convenient for a coin under the silver coin, should not differ more in its value from silver than silver does from gold—and if it differed still less it would be better: but as the relative values now stand, the difference increases where convenience requires it should decrease. But as no such a metal, which convenience requires, exists naturally, the question is whether it will answer to produce it by composition.

Of compositions, three methods present themselves—1st. Mixing silver and copper in fusion—2d. Plating the copper with silver—3d. Plugging the copper with silver. But against all these there are very capital objections. Wherever there is a want of satisfaction there must necessarily be a want of confidence; and this must always take place in all compounded metals. There is also a decrease in the intrinsic value of metals when compounded; one shilling worth of silver compounded with one shilling worth of copper, the composition is not worth two shillings, or what the metals were worth before they were compounded, because they must again be separated to acquire their utmost value, and this only can be done at a refiner's. It is not what the coin cost to make, but what the coin is intrinsically worth when made; that only can give it currency in all cases. Plugging copper with silver is the least detrimental to the intrinsic value of the metals, because they are the easiest separated; but in all these cases the value of the silver put into the composition will be so predominant to the value of the copper, that it will be rather a base silver coin than a copper coin.

As therefore copper presents so many inconveniences arising from its great bulk and little value, and so small an object for establishing a mint (for people have learned the value of copper coin too well to take

it as they formerly did) all the calculations for a mint must be made upon silver and gold, and whatever may [be] done in copper to be considered only as incidental.

It is I think pretty evident that copper has become a coin not from the want or scarcity of silver (because the value of all the copper coin in any nation is but a trifle, and never considered in the estimation of national property), but because silver does not admit of being divided and sub-divided down into such small pieces as to contain only the value of a copper or a cent. It is this only which has induced a recourse to copper.

In England, the lowest silver coin is six-pence, which is equal to twelve coppers, and therefore the resource to coppers for change, or for the purchase of small articles under the value of six-pence is frequently recurring; but if in America we were to coin silver as low as the twentieth part of a dollar, which would be pieces of five cents, the occasion for coppers would be very much diminished, and such pieces would be nearly of the size of the French silver six sous. I think the policy is in favor of keeping as much silver coin as we can in the country; and this is one of my motives for excluding copper as much as possible.

Some denomination under the five cent pieces would still be necessary—but as the occasions would be diminished, a small quantity would be sufficient. It is *convenience* only that ought to be considered with respect to copper coinage, and not money or riches. It was going on this last idea instead of the first one that entangled the former Congress and the several States. They attempted to do what no other nation ever thought of doing, and which is impossible to do—that of exalting copper into national wealth. Nature has fixed its boundary and we must keep to it.

It is therefore something by which to divide the five cent silver pieces, that appears to me the only thing to be considered with respect to a copper coinage. This may be done either by coining copper cents of the size and intrinsic value they ought to be, which will prevent their being counterfeited, or depreciated, or to coin or stamp small copper pieces, as a sort of treasury notes, or notes of the mint, of the nominal value of one, two, and three cents, to be exchanged, if any person chooses to exchange them, at the treasury or the mint for silver. These will be more durable than paper tickets, and capable of being extended over the continent without the danger of wearing out; and people will not compare the value of them by the metal they contain, but by the obliga-

tion to exchange them for silver if required. To prevent their being counterfeited they should not be a tender for any thing above five cents, or more than five in any one payment; as they would be merely for the purpose of dividing the silver cents by, and not for the purpose of supplying the place of silver coin in large quantities, but the mint or the treasury should always exchange them to any amount, though the amount can never be much at any one time.

To give these notes the opportunity of getting into circulation no faster, nor in greater quantities than the occasions for them require, the mint should not issue them in payment, but have them in readiness for merchants, shop-keepers, etc. to fetch away by sale in exchange for silver or gold. This used to be the way the copper coinage at the tower of London got into circulation; every shop-keeper knew where to go to get ten or twenty shillings worth.

Congress could sustain no inconvenience, nor run any risk in exchanging those pieces for silver whenever they should be presented, because the value of them in silver would be deposited when they were first taken away. The difference between coining cents of their full value by weight, which they must have if they are to depend on their own worth for a currency, and coining copper notes, whose value is to depend upon their being exchangeable for silver at the mint, is, that the first of these methods is more than double the expence of the last, and the convenience to the public not so great, nor the security so good. If twenty thousand dollars worth of nominal cents or notes were coined, the saving in metal and workmanship would be upwards of one-half, and Congress would have the nominal value of them realized in silver. This difference between the two methods is equal to the first years expence in establishing a mint. To consider copper only as change, or as a medium by which to divide the silver coin, and to permit it to come out no faster than it shall be called for, will always prevent inconvenience in the copper coinage. The contract for 100,000 pounds (lawful) of copper coinage, is, I believe, ten times more than can be circulated, because it will only circulate as change. Of the profits which the contractors calculated upon, I send you a specimen upon six hundred weight of copper.

Three English coppers new from the mint at the tower (London) weigh 1 ounce avoirdupois—consequently 1 lb. wt. copper coins 48 coppers, and 600 wt. coins 28,800, which at 108 to the dollar is £80 0 0. All these estimations are at 6s the dollar. From this may very easily be

600 wt of West-India copper in utensils, at 8d  
 pr lb. York, or 6d lawful money ..... £15 0 0

*Melting, Casting, and Plating.*

Four hands at casting, 2s6 ..... £0 10 0  
 One hand at plating ..... 0 3 0  
 50 bushels coal ..... 0 10 5  
 Salt ..... 0 1 0  
 Molasses ..... 0 1 0

1 5 5

*Coining.*

One man cleaning and boiling ..... 0 2 6  
 Four at the culting mill 2s6 ..... 0 10 0  
 Fifteen at stamping ... do. .... 1 17 6

2 10 0

Six shillings the dollar ..... £18 15 5

calculated the profits which the contractors expected to make upon £100,000. The expence of the machinery is to be added, as I have only stated the manual expence and materials.

Quitting this part of the subject, I come to make some considerations on the silver coin.

Opportunities for procuring silver and gold for coining do not present themselves like those for copper; but they undoubtedly would present themselves more frequently if a mint were established. As every nation puts some value upon its coin, the coin passes for more than the metal is worth—if, therefore, we are charged for the expence of making Spanish dollars, we had better make dollars for ourselves, provided we can procure the silver in bars. But until we have a mint the importation of silver will continue to be made in coin, because what can a merchant do with silver or gold in bars or ingots where there is no mint.

It therefore rests to know whether silver in bars or gold in ingots, or any other way not coin, can be procured cheaper than in coin, and what the difference is.

The most effectual method to acquire this knowledge and to procure silver in bars, is to establish a mint, and to deliver to every importer of bars, or other person, the net produce in coin which his bars shall produce.

The price of silver in bars at the bullion-office in the bank (London) is 5s1½—the price of silver in new Mexican dollars is 4s11½—the difference is 2d. or the 27th part of a dollar. It is hardly to be supposed



that we pay to the amount of this difference at the Havannah or elsewhere in receiving dollars instead of silver unmanufactured into coin—if we do, we pay above four times the price we can manufacture the coin for ourselves, provided we can procure the silver in that proportion.

Twenty-five men will be able to complete 4,000 dollars per day from the bars. A million of dollars, coined within the space of about a year and a half, at one cent per dollar, will pay all the expense of labor, and the price of machinery necessary for such an operation, after which the expence per dollar will diminish, provided the men are kept employed.

The following is given me as a tolerable proportionate estimate of the expense of coining copper, silver and gold, into cents, dollars and half-joes;

The labor of 25 men will	
coin, per day, about . . . . .	10,000 coppers,
	or 4,000 dollars,
	or 2,200 half-joes.

By this it appears that the expense of coining copper is about forty times greater than that of silver, and about two hundred times greater than that of gold. This furnishes an additional reason against copper coinage.

It may perhaps be asked, that if the importer of silver in bars is to receive the exact produce of his bars from the mint, in coin, where will be the advantage? I answer, that the advantage in the first instance will be to the importer, because he gets more dollars for his cargo than he would by receiving dollars at the place of sale, and this is his inducement to bring in bars. The advantage in the second instance, is to the whole country, because it makes a greater quantity of money than there would be by importing the silver in coin. If the difference is 1-27th in a dollar, and bars can be procured instead of Spanish dollars, the increase of silver money in the country would be as 112 to 108.

There is another circumstance by which money would increase in the country if a mint were established, which is from the old silver plate which is now sent to England, and it is not improbable that some old silver plate might come from the West-Indies. But until there is a mint, we must remain ignorant of the resources by which silver and gold are to be obtained.

The whole apparatus of a mint can be made in America. The only

thing necessary to import will be a small quantity of cast-steel, which is an article not made in America.

The following is a tolerable estimate of the expense of as much machinery as will be sufficient to begin with, as it can occasionally be employed in gold, silver, and copper,

1 coining mill .....	450 Dols.
2 cutting mills .....	180
1 plating mill for copper .....	270
1 do. for silver .....	180
1 do. for gold .....	180
1 set of ingots, cast-steel, small tools, etc. . .	250
	<hr/>
	1500

Coining is a new business in America. Those who have proposed contracts, knew, either of themselves, or from those who were to execute, what they were doing, but they supposed Congress to know nothing of the matter. Accident and a turn for mechanics have thrown me into a knowledge of their plans, and the profits they expected to make.

Whenever Congress goes into this business it will be best to do it on their own account. The experience will cost something, but it will be worth obtaining, and the cheapest way of obtaining it. The fact is, that the American coiners can afford to manufacture coppers and send them to England cheaper than the English coiners can send them to America. In England copper is about 10*d* or 10 1-2 sterling per lb. but old copper from the West-Indies is not half that price. When copper coining first began in the New-England States, a person concerned in that business has since told me, that he sent his son to the West-Indies to see after copper—that in the possession of one person, at Providence, he found upwards of 50 tons, which was offered him at the rate of 15 lb. for a dollar. When it is considered how great the exportation of copper utensils must annually be from England to the islands, and that they are a drug after they are worn out, and have no market for the old copper, but in America, it will be easy to account for the plans, schemes and proposed contracts that have been lately set on foot.

In contemplating the extent of a mint, I carry my mind a little further than the business of counting. The introduction of such a machinery as coining requires, will serve to bring forward those kind of arts which are connected with it, such as making buttons of various kinds. The

mint may also be an Assay office for wrought plate, which will considerably contribute towards defraying the expence of the mint, at least it will be a convenient appendix to it—and the having an Assay office will promote the manufactory of plate in America, and prevent that branch of business going to England, which it now does from the want of that confidence in the purity of the metal which an Assay office would give. An Assay office is much wanted in Philadelphia. Before the war a bill was brought into the Assembly to appoint an Assay master, but the Governor refused passing the bill unless he had the appointment of the person, and the matter dropped, and has not been since revived— But it ought to be connected with the mint, as the standard for metals comes properly into that department. The silversmiths who bring the plate pay something for the stamp, and the office, as well for the seller as the buyer is a very necessary one.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES

AND PARTICULARLY TO THE LEADERS OF THE FEDERAL FACTION

Although Paine devoted a large portion of his time and energy, after his return to the United States in 1802, to the growing deistic movement and to religious issues in general, he was by no means indifferent to political questions. Indeed, he felt that the struggle he was waging against the reactionary clergy was essential for the progress of Jeffersonian democracy in America. To advance the Jeffersonian movement by exposing the principles and practices of the Federalists, he published several letters in *The National Intelligencer* during 1802 and 1803. The paper, published in the nation's capital, was edited by an English refugee named Gales, who in England had suffered persecution for his adherence to Paine's democratic doctrines. Other letters appeared in the Philadelphia *National Aurora* and the Trenton *True American*.

Between November, 1802 and April, 1803 seven letters addressed to the People of the United States appeared in the Jeffersonian press. (Some editions of these letters also include the correspondence between Paine and Samuel Adams, but it was thought wiser to include it in the section of correspondence, pp. 1432-1438.) In June, 1805, however, Paine published his Eighth letter to the Citizens of the United States, and described it as "the most im-

portant of any I have published." (See below p. 1468.) This letter has never before been reprinted, and is now for the first time, since its original publication, made available to the public.

The letters were widely reprinted and lent courage to those in America who believed with Jefferson and Paine in broadening American democratic institutions. They were also important in exposing and demolishing the Federalist claim that only those of their political persuasion had fought for a stronger, central government and were responsible for the adoption of the Federal Constitution. A contemporary observed: "His [Paine's] *Letters to the People of the United States* written since his return from France, show that there is no abatement of the vigor of his mind at his advanced age. They were peculiarly seasonable, being calculated to prevent the mischief that might have arisen from a set of disappointed men, endeavoring to propagate disaffection to the best government in the world." See "A Christian," in the Philadelphia *Aurora*, March 26, 1803.—*Editor*.

#### LETTER I<sup>1</sup>

**A**FTER an absence of almost fifteen years, I am again returned to the country in whose dangers I bore my share, and to whose greatness I contributed my part.

When I sailed for Europe, in the spring of 1787, it was my intention to return to America the next year, and enjoy in retirement the esteem of my friends, and the repose I was entitled to. I had stood out the storm of one revolution, and had no wish to embark in another. But other scenes and other circumstances than those of contemplated ease were allotted to me.

The French Revolution was beginning to germinate when I arrived in France. The principles of it were good, they were copied from America, and the men who conducted it were honest. But the fury of faction soon extinguished the one and sent the other to the scaffold. Of those who began that Revolution, I am almost the only survivor, and that through a thousand dangers. I owe this not to the prayers of priests, nor to the piety of hypocrites, but to the continued protection of Providence.

But while I beheld with pleasure the dawn of liberty rising in Europe, I saw with regret the lustre of it fading in America. In less than two years from the time of my departure some distant symptoms painfully suggested the idea that the principles of the Revolution were expiring

<sup>1</sup> This letter appeared in *The National Intelligencer* of November 15, 1802.—*Editor*.

on the soil that produced them. I received at that time a letter from a female literary correspondent, and in my answer to her, I expressed my fears on that head.<sup>2</sup>

I now know from the information I obtain upon the spot, that the impressions that then distressed me, for I was proud of America, were but too well founded. She was turning her back on her own glory, and making hasty strides in the retrograde path of oblivion. But a spark from the altar of *Seventy-six*, unextinguished and unextinguishable through the long night of error, is again lighting up, in every part of the Union, the genuine name of rational liberty.

As the French Revolution advanced it fixed the attention of the world, and drew from the pensioned pen of Edmund Burke a furious attack. This brought me once more on the public theater of politics, and occasioned the pamphlet "Rights of Man." It had the greatest run of any work ever published in the English language. The number of copies circulated in England, Scotland and Ireland, besides translations into foreign languages, was between four and five hundred thousand.

The principles of that work were the same as those in "Common Sense," and the effects would have been the same in England as that had produced in America, could the vote of the nation been quietly taken, or had equal opportunities of consulting or acting existed. The only difference between the two works was that the one was adapted to the local circumstances of England, and the other to those of America.

As to myself, I acted in both cases alike; I relinquished to the people of England, as I had done to those of America, all profits from the work. My reward existed in the ambition to do good, and the independent happiness of my own mind.

But a faction, acting in disguise, was rising in America; they had lost sight of first principles. They were beginning to contemplate government as a profitable monopoly, and the people as hereditary property. It is, therefore, no wonder that the "Rights of Man" was attacked by that faction, and its author continually abused. But let them go on; give them rope enough and they will put an end to their own insignificance. There is too much common sense and independence in America to be long the dupe of any faction, foreign or domestic.

But, in the midst of the freedom we enjoy, the licentiousness of the papers called Federal (and I know not why they are called so, for they

<sup>2</sup> The reference is to Mrs. Few with whom Paine corresponded while in France. His letter to Mrs. Few appears below, pp. 1274-1278.—*Editor.*

are in their principles anti-federal and despotic), is a dishonor to the character of the country, and an injury to its reputation and importance abroad. They represent the whole people of America as destitute of public principle and private manners.

As to any injury they can do at home to those whom they abuse, or service they can render to those who employ them, it is to be set down to the account of noisy nothingness. It is on themselves the disgrace recoils, for the reflection easily presents itself to every thinking mind, that *those who abuse liberty when they possess it would abuse power could they obtain it*; and, therefore, they may as well take as a general motto, for all such papers, *We and our patrons are not fit to be trusted with power*.

There is in America, more than in any other country, a large body of people who attend quietly to their farms, or follow their several occupations; who pay no regard to the clamors of anonymous scribblers, who think for themselves, and judge of government, not by the fury of newspaper writers, but by the prudent frugality of its measures, and the encouragement it gives to the improvement and prosperity of the country; and who, acting on their own judgment, never come forward in an election but on some important occasion.

When this body moves, all the little barkings of scribbling and witless curs pass for nothing. To say to this independent description of men, "You must turn out such and such persons at the next election, for they have taken off a great many taxes, and lessened the expenses of government, they have dismissed my son, or my brother, or myself, from a lucrative office, in which there was nothing to do"—is to show the cloven foot of faction, and preach the language of ill-disguised mortification.

In every part of the Union, this faction is in the agonies of death, and in proportion as its fate approaches, gnashes its teeth and struggles. My arrival has struck it as with an hydrophobia, it is like the sight of water to canine madness.

As this letter is intended to announce my arrival to my friends, and to my enemies if I have any, for I ought to have none in America, and as introductory to others that will occasionally follow, I shall close it by detailing the line of conduct I shall pursue.

I have no occasion to ask, and do not intend to accept, any place or office in the Government. There is none it could give me that would be any ways equal to the profits I could make as an author, for I have an established fame in the literary world, could I reconcile it to my principles to make money by my politics or religion. I must be in everything

what I have ever been, a disinterested volunteer; my proper sphere of action is on the common floor of citizenship, and to honest men I give my hand and my heart freely.

I have some manuscript works to publish, of which I shall give proper notice, and some mechanical affairs to bring forward, that will employ all my leisure time. I shall continue these letters as I see occasion, and as to the low party prints that choose to abuse me, they are welcome; I shall not descend to answer them. I have been too much used to such common stuff to take any notice of it.

The Government of England honored me with a thousand martyrdoms, by burning me in effigy in every town in that country, and their hirelings in America may do the same.

THOMAS PAINE.

CITY OF WASHINGTON.

### LETTER II<sup>3</sup>

As the affairs of the country to which I am returned are of more importance to the world, and to me, than of that I have lately left (for it is through the New World the Old must be regenerated, if regenerated at all), I shall not take up the time of the reader with an account of scenes that have passed in France, many of which are painful to remember and horrid to relate, but come at once to the circumstances in which I find America on my arrival.

Fourteen years, and something more, have produced a change, at least among a part of the people, and I ask myself what it is? I meet or hear of thousands of my former connections, who are men of the same principles and friendships as when I left them. But a nondescript race, and of equivocal generation, assuming the name of *Federalist*—a name that describes no character of principle good or bad, and may equally be applied to either—has since started up with the rapidity of a mushroom, and like a mushroom is withering on its rootless stalk.

Are those men *federalized* to support the liberties of their country or to overturn them? To add to its fair fame or riot on its spoils? The name contains no defined idea. It is like John Adams's definition of a republic, in his letter to Mr. Wythe<sup>4</sup> of Virginia. *It is*, says he, *an empire of laws*

<sup>3</sup> This letter appeared in *The National Intelligencer* of November 22, 1802.—*Editor*.

<sup>4</sup> The reference is to Chancellor George Wythe, Jefferson's famous teacher and one of the framers of the Constitution.—*Editor*.

*and not of men.* But as laws may be bad as well as good, an empire of laws may be the best of all governments or the worst of all tyrannies.

But John Adams is a man of paradoxical heresies, and consequently of a bewildered mind. He wrote a book entitled, "A Defense of the American Constitutions,"<sup>5</sup> and the principles of it are an attack upon them. But the book is descended to the tomb of forgetfulness, and the best fortune that can attend its author is quietly to follow its fate. John was not born for immortality. But, to return to Federalism.

In the history of parties and the names they assume, it often happens that they finish by the direct contrary principles with which they profess to begin, and thus it has happened with Federalism.

During the time of the old Congress, and prior to the establishment of the Federal Government, the Continental belt was too loosely buckled. The several States were united in name but not in fact, and that nominal union had neither center nor circle. The laws of one State frequently interfered with, and sometimes opposed, those of another. Commerce between State and State was without protection, and confidence without a point to rest on. The condition the country was then in was aptly described by Pelatiah Webster, when he said, "*thirteen staves and ne'er a hoop will not make a barrel.*"

If, then, by *Federalist* is to be understood one who was for cementing the Union by a general government operating equally over all the States, in all matters that embraced the common interest, and to which the authority of the States severally was not adequate, for no one State can make laws to bind another; if, I say, by a *Federalist* is meant a person of this description (and this is the origin of the name), *I ought to stand first on the list of Federalists*, for the proposition for establishing a general government over the Union, came originally from me in 1783, in a written memorial to Chancellor Livingston,<sup>6</sup> then Secretary for Foreign Affairs to Congress, Robert Morris, Minister of Finance, and his associate, Gouverneur Morris, all of whom are now living; and we had a dinner and conference at Robert Morris's on the subject. The occasion was as follows:

Congress had proposed a duty of five per cent on imported articles, the money to be applied as a fund toward paying the interest of loans to be borrowed in Holland. The resolve was sent to the several States to be

<sup>5</sup> John Adams, *A defence of the Constitutions of government of the United States*, London and Philadelphia, 1797.—*Editor*.

<sup>6</sup> See above p. 692 note 2.—*Editor*.



enacted into a law. Rhode Island absolutely refused. I was at the trouble of a journey to Rhode Island to reason with them on the subject. Some other of the States enacted it with alterations, each one as it pleased. Virginia adopted it, and afterwards repealed it, and the affair came to nothing.

It was then visible, at least to me, that either Congress must frame the laws necessary for the Union, and send them to the several States to be enregistered without any alteration, which would in itself appear like usurpation on one part and passive obedience on the other, or some method must be devised to accomplish the same end by constitutional principles; and the proposition I made in the memorial was, to *add a Continental legislature to Congress, to be elected by the several States.*

The proposition met the full approbation of the gentlemen to whom it was addressed, and the conversation turned on the manner of bringing it forward. Gouverneur Morris, in talking with me after dinner, wished me to throw out the idea in the newspaper; I replied, that I did not like to be always the proposer of new things, that it would have too assuming an appearance; and besides, that *I did not think the country was quite wrong enough to be put right.*

I remember giving the same reason to Dr. [Benjamin] Rush, at Philadelphia, and to General [Horatio] Gates, at whose quarters I spent a day on my return from Rhode Island; and I suppose they will remember it because the observation seemed to strike them.

But the embarrassments increasing, as they necessarily must from the want of a better cemented union, the State of Virginia proposed holding a commercial convention, and that convention, which was not sufficiently numerous, proposed that another convention, with more extensive and better defined powers, should be held at Philadelphia, May 10, 1787.

When the plan of the Federal Government, formed by this convention, was proposed and submitted to the consideration of the several States, it was strongly objected to in each of them. But the objections were not on anti-Federal grounds, but on constitutional points. Many were shocked at the idea of placing what is called executive power in the hands of a single individual. To them it had too much the form and appearance of a military government, or a despotic one.

Others objected that the powers given to a President were too great, and that in the hands of an ambitious and designing man it might grow into tyranny as it did in England under Oliver Cromwell, and as it has

since done in France. A republic must not only be so in its principles, but in its forms.

The executive part of the Federal Government was made for a man, and those who consented, against their judgment, to place executive power in the hands of a single individual, reposed more on the supposed moderation of the person they had in view, than on the wisdom of the measure itself.

Two considerations, however, overcame all objections. The one was the absolute necessity of a Federal Government. The other, the rational reflections, that as government in America is founded on the representative system any error in the first essay could be reformed by the same quiet and rational process by which the Constitution was formed, and that either by the generation then living, or by those who were to succeed.

If ever America lose sight of this principle, she will no longer be the *land of liberty*. The father will become the assassin of the rights of the son, and his descendants be a race of slaves.

As many thousands who were minors are grown up to manhood since the name of *Federalist* began, it became necessary, for their information, to go back and show the origin of the name, which is now no longer what it originally was; but it was the more necessary to do this, in order to bring forward, in the open face of day, the apostasy of those who first called themselves Federalists.

To them it served as a cloak for treason, a mask for tyranny. Scarcely were they placed in the seat of power and office, than federalism was to be destroyed, and the representative system of government, the pride and glory of America, and the palladium of her liberties, was to be overthrown and abolished. The next generation was not to be free. The son was to bend his neck beneath the father's foot, and live, deprived of his rights, under hereditary control.

Among the men of this apostate description, is to be ranked the ex-President *John Adams*. It has been the political career of this man to begin with hypocrisy, proceed with arrogance, and finish in contempt. May such be the fate of all such characters.

I have had doubts of John Adams ever since the year 1776. In a conversation with me at that time, concerning the pamphlet "Common Sense," he censured it because it attacked the English form of government. John was for independence because he expected to be made great by it; but it was not difficult to perceive, for the surliness of his temper

makes him an awkward hypocrite, that his head was as full of kings, queens and knaves, as a pack of cards. But John has lost deal.

When a man has a concealed project in his brain that he wants to bring forward, and fears will not succeed, he begins with it as physicians do by suspected poison, try it first on an animal; if it agree with the stomach of the animal he makes further experiments, and this was the way John took. His brain was teeming with projects to overturn the liberties of America and the representative system of government, and he began by hinting it in little companies.

The secretary of John Jay, an excellent painter and a poor politician, told me, in presence of another American, Daniel Parker, that in a company where himself was present, John Adams talked of making the government hereditary, and that as Mr. Washington had no children, it should be made hereditary in the family of Lund Washington.

John had not impudence enough to propose himself in the first instance, as the old French Normandy baron did, who offered to come over to be king of America, and if Congress did not accept his offer, that they would give him thirty thousand pounds for the generosity of it; but John, like a mole, was grubbing his way to it under ground. He knew that Lund Washington was unknown, for nobody had heard of him, and that as the President had no children to succeed him, the Vice-President had, and if the treason had succeeded, and the hint with it, the goldsmith might be sent for to take measure of the head of John or of his son for a golden wig.

In this case, the good people of Boston might have for a king the man they have rejected as a delegate. The representative system is fatal to ambition.

Knowing, as I do, the consummate vanity of John Adams, and the shallowness of his judgment, I can easily picture to myself that when he arrived at the Federal City [Washington] he was strutting in the pomp of his imagination before the presidential house, or in the audience hall, and exulting in the language of Nebuchadnezzar, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the honor of my Majesty!" But in that unfortunate hour, or soon after, John, like Nebuchadnezzar, was driven from among men, and fled with the speed of a post-horse.

Some of John Adams's loyal subjects, I see, have been to present him with an address on his birthday; but the language they use is too tame for the occasion. Birthday addresses, like birthday odes, should not creep along like mildrops down a cabbage leaf, but roll in a torrent of poetical

metaphor. I will give them a specimen for the next year. Here it is:

When an ant, in traveling over the globe, lifts up its foot, and puts it again on the ground, it shakes the earth to its center: but when YOU, the mighty Ant of the East, was born, etc., etc., etc., the center jumped upon the surface.

This, gentlemen, is the proper style of addresses from *well-bred* ants to the monarch of the ant hills; and as I never take pay for preaching, praying, politics or poetry, I make you a present of it. Some people talk of impeaching John Adams; but I am for softer measures. I would keep him to make fun of. He will then answer one of the end for which he was born, and he ought to be thankful that I am arrived to take his part.

I voted in earnest to save the life of one unfortunate king, and I now vote in jest to save another. It is my fate to be always plagued with fools. But to return to Federalism and apostasy.

The plan of the leaders of the faction was to overthrow the liberties of the New World, and place government on the corrupt system of the Old. They wanted to hold their power by a more lasting tenure than the choice of their constituents. It is impossible to account for their conduct and the measures they adopted on any other ground.

But to accomplish that object, a standing army and a prodigal revenue must be raised; and to obtain these pretenses must be invented to deceive. Alarms of dangers that did not exist even in imagination, but in the direct spirit of lying, were spread abroad. Apostasy stalked through the land in the garb of patriotism, and the torch of treason blinded for a while the flame of liberty.

For what purpose could an army of twenty-five thousand men be wanted? A single reflection might have taught the most credulous that while the war raged between France and England, neither could spare a man to invade America. For what purpose, then, could it be wanted? The case carries its own explanation. It was wanted for the purpose of destroying the representative system, for it could be employed for no other. Are these men Federalists? If they are, they are federalized to deceive and to destroy.

The rage against Dr. Logan's patriotic and voluntary mission to France<sup>7</sup> was excited by the shame they felt at the detection of the false

<sup>7</sup> George Logan, friend of Jefferson and of the French Revolution, sought in 1798 to bring about a better understanding between the United States and France in order to avert the war that threatened as a result of the "X,Y,Z" affair. The Federalists bitterly opposed the project, but Logan persisted in his determination to cement friendly rela-

alarms they had circulated. As to the opposition given by the remnant of the faction to the repeal of the taxes laid on during the former Administration, it is easily accounted for. The repeal of those taxes was a sentence of condemnation on those who laid them on, and in the opposition they gave in that repeal they are to be considered in the light of criminals standing on their defense and the country has passed judgment upon them.

THOMAS PAINE.

CITY OF WASHINGTON, Lovett's Hotel,  
November 19, 1802.

### LETTER III<sup>8</sup>

TO ELECT, and to REJECT, is the prerogative of a free people.

Since the establishment of independence, no period has arrived that so decidedly proves the excellence of the representative system of government, and its superiority over every other, as the time we now live in. Had America been cursed with John Adams's *hereditary Monarchy*, or Alexander Hamilton's *Senate for life*,<sup>9</sup> she must have sought, in the doubtful contest of civil war, what she now obtains by the expression of public will. An appeal to elections decides better than an appeal to the sword.

The Reign of Terror that raged in America during the latter end of the Washington Administration, and the whole of that of Adams, is enveloped in mystery to me. That there were men in the Government

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tions between his country and France. Selling some land to pay his expenses and, equipped with a letter of introduction from Jefferson, he sailed for Hamburg. There, through the influence of Lafayette, who was living in exile in the region, he obtained papers from the French legation which permitted him to enter France. In August, 1798 he met Talleyrand, and convinced him that the recent French policy towards the United States had had a disastrous effect upon American public opinion. Eventually Logan was able to secure the release of imprisoned American seamen, the raising of an embargo on American ships, and received assurance from French officials that a minister from the United States would be warmly received. The Federalists, however, still continued to denounce Logan for frustrating their schemes to involve America in a war with France, and Congress, on January 30, 1799, passed the so-called "Logan Act," forbidding a private citizen from undertaking diplomatic negotiations without official sanction.—*Editor*.

<sup>8</sup> This letter appeared in *The National Intelligencer* of November 29, 1802. William Duane sought vainly to persuade Paine to exclude religious issues from the article. See *Proceedings*, Massachusetts Historical Society, 2nd. Series, Vol. XX, 1906, p. 279.—*Editor*.

<sup>9</sup> The reference is to Hamilton's proposal in the Constitutional Convention that Senators hold office during good behavior.—*Editor*.

hostile to the representative system, was once their boast, though it is now their overthrow, and therefore the fact is established against them.

But that so large a mass of the people should become the dupes of those who were loading them with taxes in order to load them with chains, and deprive them of the right of election, can be ascribed only to that species of wildfire rage, lighted up by falsehood that not only acts without reflection, but is too impetuous to make any.

There is a general and striking difference between the genuine effects of truth itself, and the effects of falsehood believed to be truth. Truth is naturally benign; but falsehood believed to be truth is always furious. The former delights in serenity, is mild and persuasive, and seeks not the auxiliary aid of invention. The latter sticks at nothing.

It has naturally no morals. Every lie is welcome that suits its purpose. It is the innate character of the thing to act in this manner, and the criterion by which it may be known, whether in politics or religion. When anything is attempted to be supported by lying it is presumptive evidence that the thing so supported is a lie also. The stock on which a lie can be grafted must be of the same species as the graft.

What is become of the mighty clamor of French invasion, and the cry that our country is in danger, and taxes and armies must be raised to defend it? The danger is fled with the faction that created it, and what is worst of all, the money is fled too. It is I only that have committed the hostility of invasion, and all the artillery of pop-guns are prepared for action.

Poor fellows, how they foam! They set half their own partisans in laughter; for among ridiculous things nothing is more ridiculous than ridiculous rage. But I hope they will not leave off. I shall lose half my greatness when they cease to lie.

So far as respects myself, I have reason to believe and a right to say that the leaders of the Reign of Terror in America and the leaders of the Reign of Terror in France, during the time of Robespierre, were in character the same sort of men; or how is it to be accounted for, that I was persecuted by both at the same time? <sup>10</sup> When I was voted out of the French Convention, the reason assigned for it was, that I was a foreigner.

When Robespierre had me seized in the night, and imprisoned in the Luxembourg (where I remained eleven months), he assigned no

<sup>10</sup> The comparison is hardly valid, and indicates Paine's failure to understand the class composition of the two movements.—*Editor*.

reason for it. But when he proposed bringing me to the tribunal, which was like sending me at once to the scaffold, he then assigned a reason, and the reason was, *for the interests of America as well as of France. "Pour les intérêts de l'Amérique autant que de la France."*

The words are in his own hand-writing, and reported to the Convention by the committee appointed to examine his papers, and are printed in their report, with this reflection added to them, "*Why Thomas Paine more than another? Because he contributed to the liberty of both worlds.*"

There must have been a coalition in sentiment, if not in fact, between the Terrorists of America and the Terrorists of France, and Robespierre must have known it, or he could not have had the idea of putting America into the bill of accusation against me.

Yet these men, these Terrorists of the New World, who were waiting in the devotion of their hearts for the joyful news of my destruction, are the same banditti who are now bellowing in all the hackneyed language of hackneyed hypocrisy about humanity and piety, and often about something they call infidelity, and they finish with the chorus of *Crucify him, crucify him*. I am become so famous among them, they cannot eat or drink without me. I serve them as a standing dish, and they cannot make up a bill of fare if I am not in it.

But there is one dish, and that the choicest of all, that they have not presented on the table, and it is time they should. They have not yet *accused Providence of Infidelity*. Yet according to their outrageous piety, she must be as bad as Thomas Paine; she has protected him in all his dangers, patronized him in all his undertaking, encouraged him in all his ways, and rewarded him at last by bringing him in safety and in health to the Promised Land.

This is more than she did by the Jews, the chosen people, that they tell us she brought out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage; for they all died in the wilderness, and Moses too.

I was one of the nine members that composed the first Committee of Constitution. Six of them have been destroyed. Sieyès and myself have survived—he by bending with the times, and I by not bending. The other survivor joined Robespierre; he was seized and imprisoned in his turn, and sentenced to transportation. He has since apologized to me for having signed the warrant, by saying he felt himself in danger and was obliged to do it.

Herault Sechelles, an acquaintance of Mr. Jefferson, and a good patriot, was my *suppléant* as member of the Committee of Constitution,

that is, he was to supply my place, if I had not accepted or had resigned, being next in number of votes to me. He was imprisoned in the Luxembourg with me, was taken to the tribunal and the guillotine, and I, his principal, was left.

There were two foreigners in the Convention, Anarcharsis Clootz and myself. We were both put out of the Convention by the same vote, arrested by the same order, and carried to prison together the same night. He was taken to the guillotine, and I was again left. Joel Barlow was with us when we went to prison.

Joseph Lebon, one of the vilest characters that ever existed, and who made the streets of Arras run with blood, was my *suppléant*, as member of the Convention for the department of the Pas de Calais. When I was put out of the Convention he came and took my place. When I was liberated from prison and voted again into the Convention, he was sent to the same prison and took my place there, and he was sent to the guillotine instead of me. He supplied my place all the way through.

One hundred and sixty-eight persons were taken out of the Luxembourg in one night, and a hundred and sixty of them guillotined next day, of which I now know I was to have been one; and the manner I escaped that fate is curious, and has all the appearance of accident.

The room in which I was lodged was on the ground floor, and one of a long range of rooms under a gallery, and the door of it opened outward and flat against the wall; so that when it was open the inside of the door appeared outward, and the contrary when it was shut. I had three comrades, fellow prisoners with me, Joseph Vanhuele, of Bruges, since president of the municipality of that town, Michael Rubyns, and Charles Bastini of Louvain.

When persons by scores and by hundreds were to be taken out of the prison for the guillotine it was always done in the night, and those who performed that office had a private mark or signal, by which they knew what rooms to go to, and what number to take. We, as I have stated, were four, and the door of our room was marked, unobserved by us, with that number in chalk; but it happened, if happening is a proper word, that the mark was put on when the door was open, and flat against the wall, and thereby came on the inside when we shut it at night, and the destroying angel passed by it. A few days after this, Robespierre fell, and Mr. Monroe arrived and reclaimed me, and invited me to his house.

During the whole of my imprisonment, prior to the fall of Robes-



pierre, there was no time when I could think my life worth twenty-four hours, and my mind was made up to meet its fate. The Americans in Paris went in a body to the Convention to reclaim me, but without success. There was no party among them with respect to me.

My only hope then rested on the Government of America, that it would *remember me*. But the icy heart of ingratitude, in whatever man it be placed, has neither feeling nor sense of honor. The letter of Mr. Jefferson has served to wipe away the reproach, and done justice to the mass of the people of America.

When a party was forming, in the latter end of 1777, and beginning of 1778, of which John Adams was one, to remove Mr. Washington from the command of the army on the complaint that *he did nothing*, I wrote the fifth number of the "Crisis," and published it at Lancaster (Congress then being at York Town, in Pennsylvania), to ward off that meditated blow; for though I well knew that the black times of '76 were the natural consequence of his want of military judgment in the choice of positions into which the army was put about New York and New Jersey, I could see no possible advantage, and nothing but mischief, that could arise by distracting the army into parties, which would have been the case had the intended motion gone on.

General [Charles] Lee, who with a sarcastic genius joined [to] a great fund of military knowledge, was perfectly right when he said "*We have no business on islands, and in the bottom of bogs, where the enemy, by the aid of its ships, can bring its whole force against a part of ours and shut it up.*" This had like to have been the case at New York, and it was the case at Fort Washington, and would have been the case at Fort Lee if General [Nathanael] Greene had not moved instantly off on the first news of the enemy's approach. I was with Greene through the whole of that affair and know it perfectly.

But though I came forward in defense of Mr. Washington when he was attacked, and made the best that could be made of a series of blunders that had nearly ruined the country, he left me to perish when I was in prison. But as I told him of it in his life-time, I should not now bring it up if the ignorant impertinence of some of the Federal papers, who are pushing Mr. Washington forward as their stalking horse, did not make it necessary.

That gentleman did not perform his part in the Revolution better, nor with more honor, than I did mine, and the one part was as necessary as the other. He accepted as a present (though he was already rich),

a hundred thousand acres of land in America, and left me to occupy six foot of earth in France.

I wish, for his own reputation, he had acted with more justice. But it was always known of Mr. Washington, by those who best knew him, that he was of such an icy and death-like constitution that he neither loved his friends nor hated his enemies. But, be this as it may, I see no reason that a difference between Mr. Washington and me should be made a theme of discord with other people. There are those who may see merit in both without making themselves partisans of either, and with this reflection I close the subject.

As to the hypocritical abuse thrown out by the Federalists on other subjects, I recommend to them the observance of a commandment that existed before either Christian or Jew existed:

Thou shalt make a covenant with thy senses:  
With thine eye, that it behold no evil,  
With thine ear, that it hear no evil,  
With thy tongue, that it speak no evil,  
With thy hands, that they commit no evil.

If the Federalists will follow this commandment, they will leave off lying.

THOMAS PAINE.

FEDERAL CITY, Lovett's Hotel, November 26, 1802.

#### LETTER IV <sup>11</sup>

As Congress is on the point of meeting, the public papers will necessarily be occupied with the debates of the ensuing session, and as, in consequence of my long absence from America, my private affairs require my attendance (for it is necessary I do this, or I could not preserve, as I do, my independence), I shall close my address to the public with this letter.

I congratulate them on the success of the late elections, and *that* with the additional confidence, that while honest men are chosen and wise measures pursued, neither the treason of apostasy, masked under the name of Federalism, of which I have spoken in my second letter, nor the intrigues of foreign emissaries, acting in concert with that mask, can prevail.

<sup>11</sup> This letter appeared in *The National Intelligencer* of December 6, 1802.—*Editor*.

As to the licentiousness of the papers calling themselves *Federal*, a name that apostasy has taken, it can hurt nobody but the party or the persons who support such papers. There is naturally a wholesome pride in the public mind that revolts at open vulgarity. It feels itself dishonored even by hearing it, as a chaste woman feels dishonor by hearing obscenity she cannot avoid. It can smile at wit, or be diverted with strokes of satirical humor, but it detests the *blackguard*.

The same sense of propriety that governs in private companies, governs in public life. If a man in company runs his wit upon another, it may draw a smile from some persons present, but as soon as he turns a blackguard in his language the company gives him up; and it is the same in public life.

The event of the late election shows this to be true; for in proportion as those papers have become more and more vulgar and abusive, the elections have gone more and more against the party they support, or that supports them. Their predecessor, *Porcupine*<sup>12</sup> had wit—these scribblers have none. But as soon as his *blackguardism* (for it is the proper name of it) outran his wit, he was abandoned by everybody but the English minister who protected him.

The Spanish proverb says, "*there never was a cover large enough to hide itself*"; and the proverb applies to the case of those papers and the shattered remnant of the faction that supports them. The falsehoods they fabricate, and the abuse they circulate, is a cover to hide something from being seen, but it is not large enough to hide itself. It is as a tub thrown out to the whale to prevent its attacking and sinking the vessel. They want to draw the attention of the public from thinking about, or inquiring into, the measures of the late Administration, and the reason why so much public money was raised and expended; and so far as a lie to-day, and a new one to-morrow, will answer this purpose, it answers theirs. It is nothing to them whether they be believed or not, for if the negative purpose be answered the main point is answered, to them.

He that picks your pocket always tries to make you look another way. "Look," says he, "at yon man t'other side the street—what a nose he has got?—Lord, yonder is a chimney on fire!—Do you see yon man going along in the salamander great coat? That is the very man that stole one

<sup>12</sup> William Cobbett, reactionary spokesman for the Federalists, launched *Porcupine's Gazette and Daily Advertiser* on March 4, 1797, to advocate an alliance with England and war against France. Later he turned liberal and sought to atone for his attacks on Paine.—*Editor*.

of Jupiter's satellites, and sold it to a countryman for a gold watch, and it set his breeches on fire!"

Now the man that has his hand in your pocket, does not care a farthing whether you believe what he says or not. All his aim is to prevent your looking at *him*; and this is the case with the remnant of the Federal faction. The leaders of it have imposed upon the country, and they want to turn the attention of it from the subject.

In taking up any public matter, I have never made it a consideration, and never will, whether it be popular or unpopular; but whether it be *right* or *wrong*. The right will always become the popular, if it has courage to show itself, and the shortest way is always a straight line.

I despise expedients, they are the gutter-hole of politics, and the sink where reputation dies. In the present case, as in every other, I cannot be accused of using any; and I have no doubt but thousands will hereafter be ready to say, as Gouverneur Morris said to me, after having abused me pretty-handsomely in Congress for the opposition I gave the fraudulent demand of Silas Deane of two thousand pounds sterling: "*Well, we were all duped, and I among the rest!*"

Were the late Administration to be called upon to give reasons for the expense it put the country to, it can give none. The danger of an invasion was a bubble that served as a cover to raise taxes and armies to be employed on some other purpose. But if the people of America believed it true, the cheerfulness with which they supported these measures and paid those taxes is an evidence of their patriotism; and if they supposed me their enemy, though in that supposition they did me injustice, it was not injustice in them. He that acts as he believes, though he may act wrong, is not conscious of wrong.

But though there was no danger, no thanks are due to the late Administration for it. They sought to blow up a flame between the two countries; and so intent were they upon this, that they went out of their way to accomplish it. In a letter which the Secretary of State, Timothy Pickering, wrote to Mr. Skipwith, the American Consul at Paris, he broke off from the official subject of his letter, to *thank God* in very exulting language, *that the Russians had cut the French Army to pieces*. Mr. Skipwith, after showing me the letter, very prudently concealed it.

It was the injudicious and wicked acrimony of this letter, and some other like conduct of the then Secretary of State, that occasioned me, in a letter to a friend in the Government, to say, that if there was any official business to be done in France, till a regular Minister could be ap-

pointed, it could not be trusted to a more proper person than Mr. Skipwith. "He is," said I, "*an honest man, and will do business, and that with good manners to the government he is commissioned to act with. A faculty which that BEAR, Timothy Pickering, wanted, and which the BEAR of that BEAR, John Adams, never possessed.*"

In another letter to the same friend, in 1797, and which was put unsealed under cover to Colonel [Aaron] Burr, I expressed a satisfaction that Mr. Jefferson, since he was not President, had accepted the Vice-presidency; "for," said I, "*John Adams has such a talent for blundering and offending, it will be necessary to keep an eye over him.*" He has now sufficiently proved, that though I have not the spirit of prophecy, I have the gift of *judging right*.

And all the world knows, for it cannot help knowing, that to judge *rightly* and to write *clearly*, and that upon all sorts of subjects, to be able to command thought and as it were to play with it at pleasure, and be always master of one's temper in writing, is the faculty only of a serene mind, and the attribute of a happy and philosophical temperament.

The scribblers, who know me not, and who fill their papers with paragraphs about me, besides their want of talents, drink too many slings and drams in a morning to have any chance with me. But, poor fellows, they must do something for the little pittance they get from their employers. This is my apology for them.

My anxiety to get back to America was great for many years. It is the country of my heart, and the place of my political and literary birth. It was the American Revolution that made me an author, and forced into action the mind that had been dormant, and had no wish for public life, nor has it now.

By the accounts I received, she appeared to me to be going wrong, and that some meditated treason against her liberties lurked at the bottom of her government. I heard that my friends were oppressed, and I longed to take my stand among them, and if other times to *try men's souls* were to arrive, that I might bear my share. But my efforts to return were ineffectual.

As soon as Mr. Monroe had made a good standing with the French Government, for the conduct of his predecessor [Morris] had made his reception as Minister difficult, he wanted to send despatches to his own Government by a person to whom he could confide a verbal communication, and he fixed his choice on me. He then applied to the Committee of Public Safety for a passport; but as I had been voted again into the

Convention, it was only the Convention that could give the passport; and as an application to them for that purpose would have made my going publicly known, I was obliged to sustain the disappointment, and Mr. Monroe to lose the opportunity.

When that gentleman left France to return to America I was to have gone with him. It was fortunate I did not. The vessel he sailed in was visited by a British frigate, that searched every part of it, and down to the hold, for Thomas Paine. I then went, the same year, to embark at Havre. But several British frigates were cruising in sight of the port who knew I was there, and I had to return again to Paris.

Seeing myself thus cut off from every opportunity that was in my power to command, I wrote to Mr. Jefferson, that, if the fate of the election should put him in the chair of the Presidency, and he should have occasion to send a frigate to France, he would give me the opportunity of returning by it, which he did. But I declined coming by the *Maryland*, the vessel that was offered me, and waited for the frigate that was to bring the new Minister, Mr. Chancellor Livingstone, to France.

But that frigate was ordered round to the Mediterranean; and as at that time the war was over, and the British cruisers called in, I could come any way. I then agreed to come with Commodore Barney in a vessel he had engaged. It was again fortunate I did not, for the vessel sank at sea, and the people were preserved in the boat.

Had half the number of evils befallen me that the number of dangers amount to through which I have been preserved, there are those who would ascribe it to the wrath of heaven; why then do they not ascribe my preservation to the protecting favor of heaven?

Even in my worldly concerns, I have been blessed. The little property I left in America,<sup>13</sup> and which I cared nothing about, not even to receive the rent of it, has been increasing in the value of its capital more than eight hundred dollars every year, for the fourteen years and more that I have been absent from it. I am now in my circumstances independent; and my economy makes me rich. As to my health, it is perfectly good, and I leave the world to judge of the stature of my mind. I am in every instance a living contradiction to the mortified Federalists.

In my publications, I follow the rule I began with in "Common

<sup>13</sup> Paine's property in America consisted of a house at Bordentown, New Jersey, and a farm of 277 acres on the present site of New Rochelle, New York, given him in 1784 by the State of New York in recognition of his patriotic services during the American Revolution.—*Editor*.

Sense," that is, to consult nobody, nor to let anybody see what I write till it appears publicly. Were I to do otherwise the case would be that between the timidity of some, who are so afraid of doing wrong that they never do right, the puny judgment of others, and the despicable craft of preferring *expedient to right*, as if the world was a world of babies in leading strings, I should get forward with nothing.

My path is a right line, as straight and clear to me as a ray of light. The boldness (if they will have it to be so) with which I speak on any subject is a compliment to the judgment of the reader. It is like saying to him, *I treat you as a man and not as a child*. With respect to any worldly object, as it is impossible to discover any in me, therefore what I do, and my manner of doing it, ought to be ascribed to a good motive.

In a great affair, where the happiness of man is at stake, I love to work for nothing; and so fully am I under the influence of this principle, that I should lose the spirit, the pleasure, and the pride of it, were I conscious that I looked for reward; and with this declaration, I take my leave for the present.

THOMAS PAINE.

FEDERAL CITY, Lovett's Hotel, December 3, 1802.

#### LETTER V<sup>14</sup>

It is always the interest of a far greater part of the nation to have a thing right than to have it wrong; and therefore, in a country whose government is founded on the system of election and representation, the fate of every party is decided by its principles.

As this system is the only form and principle of government by which liberty can be preserved, and the only one that can embrace all the varieties of a great extent of country, it necessarily follows that to have the representation real, the election must be real; and that where the election is a fiction, the representation is a fiction also. *Like will always produce like*.

A great deal has been said and written concerning the conduct of Mr. Burr, during the late contest, in the Federal Legislature, whether Mr. Jefferson or Mr. Burr should be declared President of the United States.<sup>15</sup> Mr. Burr has been accused of intriguing to obtain the Presi-

<sup>14</sup> This letter appeared in *The National Intelligencer* of February 2, 1803.—*Editor*.

<sup>15</sup> In the Presidential election of 1800, neither Jefferson, Aaron Burr, the New York politician who later turned traitor, nor John Adams, had a clear majority of the electoral votes. The election was, therefore, thrown into the House of Representatives. The charge

gency. Whether this charge be substantiated or not makes little or no part of the purport of this letter.

There is a point of much higher importance to attend to than anything that relates to the individual Mr. Burr: for the great point is not whether Mr. Burr has intrigued, but whether the Legislature has intrigued with *him*.

Mr. Ogden, a relation of one of the Senators of New Jersey of the same name,<sup>16</sup> and of the party assuming the style of Federalists, has written a letter published in the New York papers, signed with his name, the purport of which is to exculpate Mr. Burr from the charges brought against him. In this letter he says:

“When about to return from Washington, two or three *Members of Congress* of the Federal party spoke to me of *their views* as to the election of a President, desiring me to converse with Colonel Burr on the subject, and to ascertain *whether he would enter into terms*. On my return to New York I called on Colonel Burr, and communicated the above to him. He explicitly declined the explanation, and did neither propose nor agree to any terms.”

How nearly is human cunning allied to folly! The animals to whom nature has given the faculty we call *cunning*, know always when to use it, and use it wisely; but when man descends to cunning, he blunders and betrays.

Mr. Ogden's letter is intended to exculpate Mr. Burr from the charge of intriguing to obtain the Presidency; and the letter that he (Ogden) writes for this purpose is direct evidence against his party in Congress that they intrigued with Burr to obtain him for President, and employed him (Ogden) for the purpose. To save *Aaron*, he betrays *Moses*, and then turns informer against the *Golden Calf*.

It is but of little importance to the world to know if Mr. Burr *listened* to an intriguing proposal, but it is of great importance to the constituents to know if their representatives in Congress made one. The ear can commit no crime, but the tongue may; and therefore the right policy is to drop Mr. Burr, as being only the hearer, and direct the whole charge against the Federal faction in Congress as the active original culprit, or,

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that Burr intrigued with the Federalists in the House to secure the election has been substantiated by historical investigation. Fortunately, however, Hamilton did not join in the conspiracy, believing that despite his democratic philosophy Jefferson was preferable to Burr. Jefferson was finally elected by the House on the thirty-sixth ballot.—*Editor*.

<sup>16</sup> The reference is to Aaron Ogden, who was elected to the United States Senate by the New Jersey legislature in 1801.—*Editor*.



if the priests will have Scripture for it, as the serpent that beguiled Eve.

The plot of the intrigue was to make Mr. Burr President, on the private condition of his agreeing to, and entering into, terms with them, that is, with the proposers. Had then the election been made, the country, knowing nothing of this private and illegal transaction, would have supposed, for who could have supposed otherwise, that it had a President according to the forms, principles and intention of the Constitution.

No such thing. Every form, principle and intention of the Constitution would have been violated; and instead of a President, it would have had a mute, a sort of image, hand-bound and tongue-tied, the dupe and slave of a party, placed on the theater of the United States and acting the farce of President.

It is of little importance, in a constitutional sense, to know what the terms to be proposed might be, because any terms other than those which the Constitution prescribes to a President are criminal. Neither do I see how Mr. Burr, or any other person put in the same condition, could have taken the oath prescribed by the Constitution to a President, which is, "*I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.*"

How, I ask, could such a person have taken such an oath, knowing at the same time that he had entered into the Presidency on terms unknown in the Constitution, and private, and which would deprive him of the freedom and power of acting as President of the United States, agreeably to his constitutional oath?

Mr. Burr, by not agreeing to terms, has escaped the danger to which they exposed him, and the perjury that would have followed, and also the punishment annexed thereto. Had he accepted the Presidency on terms unknown in the Constitution, and private, and had the transaction afterwards transpired (which it most probably would, for roguery is a thing difficult to conceal), it would have produced a sensation in the country too violent to be quieted, and too just to be resisted; and in any case the election must have been void.

But what are we to think of those Members of Congress, who, having taken an oath of the same constitutional import as the oath of the President, violate that oath by tampering to obtain a President on private conditions? If this is not sedition against the Constitution and the country, it is difficult to define what sedition in a representative can be.

Say not that this statement of the case is the effect of personal or party

resentment. No. It is the effect of *sincere concern* that such corruption, of which this is but a sample, should, in the space of a few years, have crept into a country that had the fairest opportunity that Providence ever gave, within the knowledge of history, of making itself an illustrious example to the world.

What the terms were, or were to be, it is probable we never shall know; or what is more probable that feigned ones, if any, will be given. But from the conduct of the party since that time we may conclude that no taxes would have been taken off, that the clamor for war would have been kept up, new expenses incurred, and taxes and offices increased in consequence; and, among the articles of a private nature, that the leaders in this seditious traffic were to stipulate with the mock President for lucrative appointments for themselves.

But if these plotters against the Constitution understood their business, and they had been plotting long enough to be masters of it, a single article would have comprehended everything, which is, *That the President (thus made) should be governed in all cases whatsoever by a private junto appointed by themselves*. They could then, through the medium of a mock President, have negatived all bills which their party in Congress could not have opposed with success, and reduced representation to a nullity.

The country has been imposed upon, and the real culprits are but few; and as it is necessary for the peace, harmony and honor of the Union to separate the deceiver from the deceived, the betrayer from the betrayed, that men who once were friends in the worst of times should be friends again, it is necessary, as a beginning, that this dark business be brought to full investigation. Ogden's letter is direct evidence of the fact of tampering to obtain a conditional President. He knows the two or three Members of Congress that commissioned him, and they know who commissioned them.

THOMAS PAINE.

FEDERAL CITY, Lovett's Hotel, January 29, 1803.

#### LETTER VI <sup>17</sup>

Religion and War is the cry of the Federalists; Morality and Peace the voice of Republicans. The union of morality and peace is congenial;

<sup>17</sup> This letter, written at Bordentown, New Jersey on March 12, 1803, appeared in the Philadelphia *Aurora* of May 14, 1803.—*Editor*.

but that of religion and war is a paradox, and the solution of it is hypocrisy.

The leaders of the Federalists have no judgment; their plans no consistency of parts; and want of consistency is the natural consequence of want of principle.

They exhibit to the world the curious spectacle of an *Opposition* without a *cause*, and conduct without system. Were they, as doctors, to prescribe medicine as they practise politics, they would poison their patients with destructive compounds.

There are not two things more opposed to each other than war and religion; and yet, in the double game those leaders have to play, the one is necessarily the theme of their politics, and the other the text of their sermons. The week-day orator of Mars, and the Sunday preacher of Federal grace, play like gamblers into each other's hands, and this they call religion.

Though hypocrisy can counterfeit every virtue, and become the associate of every vice, it requires a great dexterity of craft to give it the power of deceiving. A painted sun may glisten, but it cannot warm. For hypocrisy to personate virtue successfully it must know and feel what virtue is, and as it cannot long do this it cannot long deceive. When an orator foaming for war breathes forth in another sentence a *plaintive piety of words*, he may as well write HYPOCRISY on his front.

The late attempt of the Federal leaders in Congress (for they acted without the knowledge of their constituents) to plunge the country into war merits not only reproach but indignation. It was madness, conceived in ignorance and acted in wickedness. The head and the heart went partners in the crime.

A neglect of punctuality in the performance of a treaty is made a *cause* of war by the *Barbary Powers*, and of remonstrance and explanation by *civilized Powers*. The Mahometans of Barbary negotiate by the sword—they seize first, and expostulate afterwards; and the Federal leaders have been laboring to *barbarize* the United States by adopting the practise of the Barbary States, and this they call honor. Let their honor and their hypocrisy go weep together, for both are defeated. Their present Administration is too moral for hypocrites, and too economical for public spendthrifts.

A man the least acquainted with diplomatic affairs must know that a neglect in punctuality is not one of the legal causes of war, unless that neglect be confirmed by a refusal to perform; and even then it depends

upon circumstances connected with it. The world would be in continual quarrels and war, and commerce be annihilated, if Algerine policy was the law of nations.

And were America, instead of becoming an example to the Old World of good and moral government and civil manners, or, if they like it better, of gentlemanly conduct toward other nations, to set up the character of ruffian, that of *word and blow, and the blow first*, and thereby give the example of pulling down the little that civilization has gained upon barbarism, her independence, instead of being an honor and a blessing, would become a curse upon the world and upon herself.

The conduct of the Barbary Powers, though unjust in principle, is suited to their prejudices, situation and circumstances. The crusades of the Church to exterminate them fixed in their minds the unobliterated belief that every Christian power was their mortal enemy.

Their religious prejudices, therefore, suggest the policy, which their situation and circumstances protect them in. As a people, they are neither commercial nor agricultural, they neither import nor export, have no property floating on the seas, nor ships and cargoes in the ports of foreign nations. No retaliation, therefore, can be acted upon them, and they sin secure from punishment.

But this is not the case with the United States. If she sins as a Barbary Power, she must answer for it as a civilized one. Her commerce is continually passing on the seas, exposed to capture, and her ships and cargoes in foreign ports to detention and reprisal. An act of war committed by her in the Mississippi would produce a war against the commerce of the Atlantic States, and the latter would have to curse the policy that provoked the former.

In every point, therefore, in which the character and interest of the United States be considered, it would ill become her to set an example contrary to the policy and custom of civilized powers, and practised only by the Barbary Powers, that of striking before she expostulates.

But can any man, calling himself a legislator, and supposed by his constituents to know something of his duty, be so ignorant as to imagine that seizing on New Orleans would finish the affair or even contribute toward it? On the contrary it would have made it worse.

The treaty right of deposit at New Orleans and the right of the navigation of the Mississippi into the Gulf of Mexico are distant things. New Orleans is more than a hundred miles in the country from the mouth of the river, and, as a place of deposit, is of no value if the mouth of the

river be shut, which either France or Spain could do, and which our possession of New Orleans could neither prevent nor remove.

New Orleans in our possession, by an act of hostility, would have become a blockaded port, and consequently of no value to the Western people as a place of deposit. Since, therefore, an interruption had arisen to the commerce of the Western states, and until the matter could be brought to a fair explanation, it was of less injury to have the port shut and the river open than to have the river shut and the port in our possession.

That New Orleans could be taken required no stretch of policy to plan, nor spirit of enterprise to effect. It was like marching behind a man to knock him down: and the dastardly slyness of such an attack would have stained the fame of the United States. Where there is no danger cowards are bold, and Captain Bobadils are to be found in the Senate as well as on the stage. Even *Gouverneur*, on such a march, dare have shown a leg.

The people of the Western country to whom the Mississippi serves as an inland sea to their commerce must be supposed to understand the circumstances of that commerce better than a man who is a stranger to it; and as they have shown no approbation of the war-whoop measures of the Federal senators it becomes presumptive evidence they disapprove them.

This is a new mortification for those war-whoop politicians; for the case is, that finding themselves losing ground and withering away in the Atlantic States, they laid hold of the affair of New Orleans in the vain hope of rooting and reinforcing themselves in the Western States; and they did this without perceiving that it was one of those ill-judged hypocritical expedients in politics, that whether it succeeded or failed the event would be the same.

Had their motion<sup>18</sup> [that of Ross and Morris] succeeded, it would have endangered the commerce of the Atlantic States and ruined their reputation there; and on the other hand the attempt to make a tool of

<sup>18</sup> On February 14, 1803, Senator James Ross of Pittsburgh offered a series of resolutions in the United States Senate which called on President Jefferson to call out 50,000 militiamen and to use them together with the land and naval forces of the United States, to take possession of such place or places on the island of New Orleans as he might deem fit for a place of deposit. The Senator aimed to place the responsibility for the consequences of this action on Jefferson's shoulders. Basically the resolution was part of the Federalist strategy to get the United States into a war with France by seizing New Orleans. For background material, see Arthur Preston Whitaker, *The Mississippi Question, 1795-1803*, New York, 1934, pp. 22-25, 221-226.

the Western people was so badly concealed as to extinguish all credit with them.

But hypocrisy is a vice of sanguine constitution. It flatters and promises itself everything; and it has yet to learn, with respect to moral and political reputation, it is less dangerous to offend than to deceive.

To the measures of Administration, supported by the firmness and integrity of the majority in Congress, the United States owe, as far as human means are concerned, the preservation of peace, and of national honor. The confidence which the Western people reposed in the Government and their representatives is rewarded with success. They are reinstated in their rights with the least possible loss of time; and their harmony with the people of New Orleans, so necessary to the prosperity of the United States, which would have been broken, and the seeds of discord sown in its place, had hostilities been preferred to accommodation, remains unimpaired. Have the Federal ministers of the Church meditated on these matters? and laying aside, as they ought to do, their electioneering and vindictive prayers and sermons, returned thanks that peace is preserved, and commerce, without the stain of blood?

In the pleasing contemplation of this state of things the mind, by comparison, carries itself back to those days of uproar and extravagance that marked the career of the former Administration, and decides, by the unstudied impulse of its own feelings, that something must then have been wrong. Why was it that America, formed for happiness, and remote by situation and circumstances from the troubles and tumults of the European world, became plunged into its vortex and contaminated with its crimes?

The answer is easy. Those who were then at the head of affairs were apostates from the principles of the Revolution. Raised to an elevation they had not a right to expect, nor judgment to conduct, they became like feathers in the air, and blown about by every puff of passion or conceit.

Candor would find some apology for their conduct if want of judgment was their only defect. But error and crime, though often alike in their features, are distant in their characters and in their origin. The one has its source in the weakness of the head, the other in the hardness of the heart, and the coalition of the two describes the former Administration.

Had no injurious consequences arisen from the conduct of that Administration, it might have passed for error or imbecility, and been per-

mitted to die and be forgotten. The grave is kind to innocent offense. But even innocence, when it is a cause of injury, ought to undergo an inquiry.

The country, during the time of the former Administration, was kept in continual agitation and alarm; and that no investigation might be made into its conduct, it intrinched itself within a magic circle of terror, and called it a *SEDITION LAW*.<sup>19</sup> Violent and mysterious in its measures and arrogant in its manners, it affected to disdain information, and insulted the principles that raised it from obscurity.

John Adams and Timothy Pickering were men whom nothing but the accidents of the times rendered visible on the political horizon. Elevation turned their heads, and public indignation has cast them to the ground. But an inquiry into the conduct and measures of that Administration is nevertheless necessary.

The country was put to great expense. Loans, taxes and standing armies became the standing order of the day. The militia, said Secretary Pickering, are not to be depended upon, and fifty thousand men must be raised. For what? No cause to justify such measures has yet appeared. No discovery of such a cause has yet been made. The pretended Sedition Law shut up the sources of investigation, and the precipitate flight of John Adams closed the scene. But the matter ought not to sleep here.

It is not to gratify resentment, or encourage it in others, that I enter upon this subject. It is not in the power of man to accuse me of a persecuting spirit. But some explanation ought to be had. The motives and objects respecting the extraordinary and expensive measures of the former Administration ought to be known. The Sedition Law, that shield of the moment, prevented it then, and justice demands it now.

If the public have been imposed upon, it is proper they should know it; for where judgment is to act, or a choice is to be made, knowledge is first necessary. The conciliation of parties, if it does not grow out of explanation, partakes of the character of collusion or indifference.

There has been guilt somewhere; and it is better to fix it where it belongs, and separate the deceiver from the deceived, than that suspicion, the bane of society, should range at large, and sour the public mind. The

<sup>19</sup> The Sedition Act, passed July 14, 1798, and in force until March 3, 1801, imposed a fine not exceeding \$2,000 and imprisonment not exceeding two years on anyone who should "write, print, utter or publish . . . any false, scandalous, and malicious writing or writings against the government of the United States, or either house of the Congress of the United States or the President of the United States, with intent . . . to bring them . . . into contempt or disrepute."—*Editor*.

military measures that were proposed and carried on during the former Administration could not have for their object the defense of the country against invasion. This is a case that decides itself; for it is self-evident, that while the war raged in Europe, neither France nor England could spare a man to send to America.

The object, therefore, must be something at home, and that something was the overthrow of the representative system of government, for it could be nothing else. But the plotters got into confusion and became enemies to each other. Adams hated and was jealous of Hamilton, and Hamilton hated and despised both Adams and Washington. Surly Timothy stood aloof, as he did at the affair of Lexington, and the part that fell to the public was to pay the expense.

But ought a people who, but a few years ago, were fighting the battles of the world for liberty had no home but here, ought such a people to stand quietly by and see that liberty undermined by apostasy and overthrown by intrigue? Let the tombs of the slain recall their recollection, and the forethought of what their children are to be revive and fix in their hearts the love of liberty.

If the former Administration can justify its conduct, give it the opportunity. The manner in which John Adams disappeared from the Government renders an inquiry the more necessary. He gave some account of himself, lame and confused as it was, to certain *Eastern wise men* who came to pay homage to him on his birthday. But if he thought it necessary to do this, ought he not to have rendered an account to the public? They had a right to expect it of him.

In that *tête-à-tête* account, he says, "Some measures were the effect of imperious necessity, much against my inclination." What measures does Mr. Adams mean, and what is the imperious necessity to which he alludes? "Others (says he) were measures of the Legislature, which, although approved when passed, were never previously proposed or recommended by me." What measures, it may be asked, were those, for the public have a right to know the conduct of their representatives? "Some (says he) left to my discretion were never executed, because no necessity for them, in my judgment, ever occurred."

What does this dark apology, mixed with accusation, amount to, but to increase and confirm the suspicion that something was wrong? Administration only was possessed of foreign official information, and it was only upon that information communicated by him publicly or privately, or to Congress, that Congress could act; and it is not in the power



of Mr. Adams to show, from the condition of the belligerent powers, that any imperious necessity called for the warlike and expensive measures of his Administration.

What the correspondence between the Administration and Rufus King in London, or Quincy Adams in Holland, or Berlin, might be, is but little known. The public papers have told us that the former became cup-bearer from the London underwriters to Captain Truxton, for which, as Minister from a neutral nation, he ought to have been censured. It is, however, a feature that marks the politics of the Minister, and hints at the character of the correspondence.

I know that it is the opinion of several members of both Houses of Congress, that an inquiry with respect to the conduct of the late Administration ought to be gone into. The convulsed state into which the country has been thrown will be best settled by a full and fair exposition of the conduct of that Administration, and the causes and object of that conduct. To be deceived, or to remain deceived, can be the interest of no man who seeks the public good; and it is the deceiver only, or one interested in the deception, that can wish to preclude inquiry.

The suspicion against the late Administration is that it was plotting to overturn the representative system of government, and that it spread alarms of invasions that had no foundation as a pretense for raising and establishing a military force as the means of accomplishing that object.

The law, called the Sedition Law, enacted, that if any person should write or publish, or cause to be written or published, any libel [without defining what a libel is] against the Government of the United States, or either House of Congress, or against the President, he should be punished by a fine not exceeding two thousand dollars, and by imprisonment not exceeding two years.

But it is a much greater crime for a President to plot against a constitution and the liberties of the people, than for an individual to plot against a President; and consequently, John Adams is accountable to the public for his conduct, as the individuals under his Administration were to the Sedition Law.

The object, however, of an inquiry, in this case, is not to punish, but to satisfy; and to show, by example, to future Administrations, that an abuse of power and trust, however disguised by appearances, or rendered plausible by pretense, is one time or another to be accounted for.

THOMAS PAINE.

BORDENTOWN, ON THE DELAWARE, New Jersey, March 12, 1803.

LETTER VII<sup>20</sup>

The malignant mind, like the jaundiced eye, sees everything through a false medium of its own creating. The light of heaven appears stained with yellow to the distempered sight of the one, and the fairest actions have the form of crimes in the venomed imagination of the other.

For seven months, both before and after my return to America in October last, the apostate papers styling themselves "Federal" were filled with paragraphs and essays respecting a letter from Mr. Jefferson to me at Paris; and though none of them knew the contents of the letter, nor the occasion of writing it, malignity taught them to suppose it, and the lying tongue of injustice lent them its aid.

That the public may no longer be imposed upon by Federal apostasy, I will now publish the letter, and the occasion of its being written.

The treaty negotiated in England by John Jay, and ratified by the Washington Administration, had so disgracefully surrendered the right and freedom of the American flag, that all the commerce of the United States on the ocean became exposed to capture, and suffered in consequence of it. The duration of the treaty was limited to two years after the war; and consequently America could not, during that period, relieve herself of the chains which the treaty had fixed upon her. This being the case, the only relief that could come must arise out of something originating in Europe that would, in its consequences, extend to America. It had long been my opinion that commerce contained within itself the means of its own protection; but as the time for bringing forward any new system is not always happening, it is necessary to watch its approach and lay hold of it before it passes away.

As soon as the late Emperor Paul of Russia abandoned his coalition with England and became a neutral power, this crisis of time, and also of circumstances, was then arriving; and I employed it in arranging a plan for the protection of the commerce of neutral nations during war that might, in its operation and consequences, relieve the commerce of America. The plan, with the pieces accompanying it, consisted of about forty pages. The Citizen Bonneville, with whom I lived in Paris, translated it into French; Mr. Skipwith, the American Consul, Joel Barlow and myself had the translation printed and distributed as a present to

<sup>20</sup> This letter, written in Bordentown, New Jersey on April 21, 1803, appeared in the *Trenton (New Jersey) True-American* late in the same month.—*Editor*.

the foreign ministers of all the neutral nations then resident in Paris. This was in the summer of 1800.

It was entitled "Maritime Compact" (in French *Pacte Maritime*). The plan, exclusive of the pieces that accompanied it, consisted of the following preamble and article:<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> The following is the original draft of the Compact in the French National Archives. It is included in this edition of Paine's writings in order to enable the reader to trace the growth of the idea of economic sanctions in Paine's mind. It is copied from a photostat of the original through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

PROPOSALS FOR AN ASSOCIATION OF NATIONS FOR THE PROTECTION OF  
THE RIGHTS AND COMMERCE OF NATIONS THAT SHALL BE NEUTRAL  
IN TIME OF WAR

Whereas the inconvenience and injuries to which the commerce of neutral nations is exposed in time of maritime war, render it absolutely necessary that measures be taken to prevent a continuance of the same, and to secure to them during the time of such war the exercise of their just rights— We the undersigned, each in behalf of the Nation he represents, enter into the following association.

Art. 1.

That the common rights of nations, such as are exercised by them in time of Peace in their intercourse with each, ought not and cannot of Right, be injured or interrupted in consequence of war breaking out between any two or more of them.

2.

That ships and vessels of nations that shall be neutral during such war, have a right to pass unmolested by the seas and to enter the port, or ports, of any of the belligerent powers *unmolested by the party with which that nation is at war*. Provided that nothing herein contained shall be construed to give to any ship or vessel a right of entering such ports, otherwise than in conformity to laws of the country to which it shall enter; nor to give protection to any cargoes prohibited by the laws of that country.

3.

For the maintenance of the aforesaid Rights, we the undersigned powers declare, and for the performance thereof bind ourselves in honor to each other that if any belligerent power shall seize or injuriously molest any ship or vessel belonging to the citizens or subjects of any of the powers composing this association, and all and each one of the parties composing the same will cease to import and will not permit to be imported in any ship or vessel whatever any goods, wares, or merchandise, manufactured or unmanufactured, from the nation so offending against this association, that all the ports appertaining to the powers composing this association shall be shut against the flag ships and vessels of the offending nation and furthermore that no remittances in money, goods and bills of exchange shall be made by any of the citizens and subjects of any of the powers composing this association to the citizens or subjects of the nation so offending for the space of one year or until reparation be made as is hereinafter expressed.

4.

When any ship or vessel belonging to any of the citizens or subjects composing this association shall be seized by the ship or ships of the belligerent powers and be forced into port, or be forcibly prevented entering the port to which she is going, or be seized

## MARITIME COMPACT

*Being an UNARMED ASSOCIATION of Nations for the protection of the Rights and Commerce of Nations that shall be neutral in time of War.*

Whereas, the vexations and injuries to which the rights and commerce of neutral nations have been, and continue to be, exposed during the time of maritime war, render it necessary to establish a law of nations for the purpose of putting an end to such vexations and injuries,

or molested in coming therefrom, the Executive government of the nation to which the ship or vessel so seized or molested belong, shall immediately on ascertaining the fact, make proclamation of same, and send a copy thereof to the executive of each of the powers composing this association, each of which shall within ten days after receiving the same make publication thereof subjoining thereto the following proclamation:

We therefore the — of — do in our own name, and in the name of the nations associated for the protection of the Rights of neutral nations of which association we are a member, declare, that all goods, wares, and merchandise produced or manufactured in the country or Dominions of (here insert the name of the offending nation) are forbidden to be imported into any of our ports for the term of one year, or until reparation be made to the party injured; the representation to be three times the value of the vessel and cargo according to the invoice, and that in the meantime all ships and vessels of (here insert the name of the offending nation), are forbidden to enter any of our ports, and that all remittances from any of our — to the — of — in money goods or bills of exchange do cease until reparation be made as aforesaid.

5.

In case reparation be not made within the space of one year, the proclamation shall be renewed for the space of one year more and so on.

6.

The association establishes a flag for itself to be carried by every ship and vessel of every nation composing this association. This flag to be a pennant at the head of the main mast, and is to be composed of the same colors as compose the Rainbow, and arranged in the same order as they appear in that Phenomenon.

7.

The ships of the Powers that now are, or in any future time shall be in a state of war, and members of this association, shall not carry the flag at the masthead, but the flag shall be bound round the main mast to denote they are members of the association and bound to respect the laws thereof.

8.

As soon as seven of the Powers of Europe, or six of them with the United States of America shall have subscribed to this association, a Congress, composed of one member or more, from each power shall meet to confer upon what further measures, shall be adopted for securing the Rights of neutral nations and establishing the permanent code of marine laws.

9.

Articles admitted to be contraband—gunpowder etc.

and to guarantee to the neutral nations the exercise of their just rights.

We, therefore, the undersigned Powers, form ourselves into an association, and establish the following as a law of nations on the seas.

#### ARTICLE THE FIRST

##### *Definition of the Rights of Neutral Nations*

The rights of nations, such as are exercised by them in their intercourse with each other in time of peace, are, and of right ought to be, the rights of neutral nations at all times; because,

First, those rights not having been abandoned by them, remain with them.

Secondly, because those rights cannot become forfeited or void, in consequence of war breaking out between two or more other nations.

A war of nation against nation being exclusively the act of the nations that make the war, and not the act of the neutral nations, cannot, whether considered in itself or in its consequences, destroy or diminish the rights of the nations remaining in peace.

#### ARTICLE THE SECOND

The ships and vessels of nations that rest neuter and at peace with the world during a war with other nations have a right to navigate freely on the seas as they navigated before that war broke out, and to proceed to and enter the port or ports of any of the belligerent powers, *with the consent of that Power*, without being seized, searched, visited, or any ways interrupted, by the nation or nations with which that nation is at war.

#### ARTICLE THE THIRD

For the conservation of the aforesaid rights, we, the undersigned Powers, engaging to each other our sacred faith and honor, DECLARE

That if any belligerent Power shall seize, search, visit, or any ways interrupt any ship or vessel belonging to the citizens or subjects of any of the Powers composing this Association, then each and all of the said undersigned Powers will cease to import, and will not permit to be imported into the ports or dominions of any of the said undersigned Powers, in any ship or vessel whatever, any goods, wares, or merchandise, produced or manufactured in, or exported from, the dominions of the

Power so offending against the Association hereby, established and proclaimed.

ARTICLE THE FOURTH

That all the ports appertaining to any and all of the Powers composing this Association shall be shut against the flag of the offending nation.

ARTICLE THE FIFTH

That no remittance or payment in money, merchandise, or bills of exchange, shall be made by any of the citizens, or subjects, of any of the Powers composing this Association, to the citizens or subjects of the offending nation, for the term of one year, or until reparation be made. The reparation to be ——— times the amount of the damages sustained.

ARTICLE THE SIXTH

If any ship or vessel appertaining to any of the citizens or subjects of any of the Powers composing this Association shall be seized, searched, visited or interrupted by any belligerent nation, or be forcibly prevented entering the port of her destination, or be seized, searched, visited, or interrupted in coming out of such port, or be forcibly prevented from proceeding to any new destination, or be insulted or visited by any agent from on board any vessel of any belligerent power, the government or executive power of the nation to which the ship or vessel so seized, searched, visited or interrupted belongs, shall, on evidence of the fact, make public proclamation of the same, and send a copy thereof to the government, or executive, of each of the Powers composing this Association, who shall publish the same in all the extent of his dominions, together with a declaration, that at the expiration of ——— days after publication, the penal articles of this Association shall be put in execution against the offending nation.

ARTICLE THE SEVENTH

If reparation be not made within the space of one year, the said proclamation shall be renewed for one year more, and so on.

ARTICLE THE EIGHTH

The Association chooses for itself a flag to be carried at the mast-head conjointly with the national flag of each nation composing this Association.

The flag of the Association shall be composed of the same colors as compose the rain-bow, and arranged in the same order as they appear in that phenomenon.

## ARTICLE THE NINTH

And whereas it may happen that one or more of the nations composing this Association may be, at the time of forming it, engaged in war or become so in future, in that case, the ships and vessels of such nation shall carry the flag of the Association bound round the mast to denote that the nation to which she belongs is a member of the Association and a respecter of its laws.

N.B. This distinction in the manner of carrying the flag is merely for the purpose that neutral vessels having the flag at the mast-head may be known at first sight.

## ARTICLE THE TENTH

And whereas it is contrary to the moral principles of neutrality and peace that any neutral nation should furnish to the belligerent Powers, or any of them, the means of carrying on war against each other, We, therefore, the Powers composing this Association, declare that we will each one for itself prohibit in our dominions the exportation or transportation of military stores, comprehending gun-powder, cannon and cannon-balls, firearms of all kinds, and all kinds of iron and steel weapons used in war. Excluding therefrom all kinds of utensils and instruments used in civil or domestic life, and every other article that cannot, in its immediate state, be employed in war.

Having thus declared the moral motives of the foregoing article, we declare also the civil and political intention thereof, to wit,

That as belligerent nations have no right to visit or search any ship or vessel belonging to a nation at peace and under the protection of the laws and government thereof, and as all such visit or search is an insult to the nation to which such ship or vessel belongs and to the government of the same, We, therefore, the Powers composing this Association, will take the right of prohibition on ourselves to whom it properly belongs, and by whom only it can be legally exercised, and not permit foreign nations, in a state of war, to usurp the right of legislating by proclamation for any of the citizens or subjects of the Powers composing this Association.

It is, therefore, in order to take away all pretense of search or visit,

which by being offensive might become a new cause of war, that we will provide laws and publish them by proclamation, each in his own dominion, to prohibit the supplying or carrying to the belligerent Powers, or either of them, the military stores or articles before mentioned, annexing thereto a penalty to be levied or inflicted upon any persons within our several dominions transgressing the same.

And we invite all persons, as well of the belligerent nations as of our own, or of any other, to give information of any knowledge they may have of any transgressions against the said law, that the offenders may be prosecuted.

By this conduct we restore the word contraband (*contra* and *ban*) to its true and original signification, which means against law, edict or proclamation; and none but the government of a nation can have, or can exercise, the right of making laws, edicts or proclamations, for the conduct of its citizens or subjects.

Now We, the undersigned Powers, declare the aforesaid articles to be a law of nations at all times, or until a congress of nations shall meet to form some law more effectual.

And we do recommend that, immediately on the breaking out of war between any two or more nations, deputies be appointed by all neutral nations, whether members of this Association or not, to meet in congress in some central place to take cognizance of any violations of the rights of neutral nations.

Signed, etc.

For the purpose of giving operation to the aforesaid plan of an *unarmed association*, the following paragraph was subjoined:

It may be judged proper for the order of business, that the Association of Nations have a president for a term of years, and the presidency to pass by rotation to each of the parties composing the Association.

In that case, and for the sake of regularity, the first president to be the executive power of the most northerly nation composing the Association, and his deputy or minister at the congress to be president of the congress—and the next most northerly to be vice-president, who shall succeed to the presidency, and so on. The line determining the geographical situation of each to be the latitude of the capital of each nation.

If this method be adopted it will be proper that the first president be nominally constituted in order to give rotation to the rest. In that case the following article might be added to the foregoing, viz. The constitu-



tion of the Association nominates the EMPEROR PAUL to be *first President* of the Association of Nations for the protection of neutral commerce and securing the freedom of the seas.

The foregoing plan, as I have before mentioned, was presented to the Ministers of all the neutral nations then in Paris, in the summer of 1800. Six copies were given to the Russian General Springporten; and a Russian gentleman who was going to Petersburg took two expressly for the purpose of putting them into the hands of Paul. I sent the original manuscript, in my own handwriting, to Mr. Jefferson, and also wrote him four letters, dated the first, fourth, sixth, sixteenth of October, 1800, giving him an account of what was then going on in Europe respecting neutral commerce.<sup>22</sup>

The case was that in order to compel the English Government to acknowledge the rights of neutral commerce, and that free ships make free goods, the *Emperor Paul*, in the month of September following the publication of the plan, shut all the ports of Russia against England. Sweden and Denmark did the same by their ports, and Denmark shut up Hamburg. Prussia shut up the Elbe and the Weser.

The ports of Spain, Portugal and Naples were shut up and, in general, all the ports of Italy except Venice, which the Emperor of Germany held; and had it not been for the untimely death of *Paul*, a *Law of Nations*, founded on the authority of nations, for establishing the rights of neutral commerce and the freedom of the seas, would have been proclaimed and the Government of England must have consented to that law, or the nation must have lost its commerce; and the consequence to America would have been that such a law would, in a great measure if not entirely, have released her from the injuries of Jay's Treaty.

Of all these matters I informed Mr. Jefferson. This was before he was President, and the letter he wrote me after he was President was in answer to those I had written to him and the manuscript copy of the plan I had sent here. Here follows the letter:

WASHINGTON, March 18, 1801.

DEAR SIR:

Your letters of October first, fourth, sixth, sixteenth, came duly to hand, and the papers which they covered were, according to your permission, published in the newspapers, and in a pamphlet, and under your own name. These papers contain precisely our principles, and I hope they will be generally recognized here. *Determined as we are to avoid, if possible, wasting*

<sup>22</sup> The letters referred to are printed below, pp. 1413-1418.—*Editor*.

*the energies of our people in war and destruction, we shall avoid implicating ourselves with the Powers of Europe, even in support of principles which we mean to pursue. They have so many other interests different from ours that we must avoid being entangled in them. We believe we can enforce those principles as to ourselves by peaceable means, now that we are likely to have our public councils detached from foreign views. The return of our citizens from the frenzy into which they had been wrought, partly by ill conduct in France, partly by artifices practised upon them, is almost extinct, and will, I believe, become quite so.* But these details, too minute and long for a letter, will be better developed by Mr. [John] Dawson, the bearer of this, a member of the late Congress, to whom I refer you for them. He goes in the *Maryland*, sloop of war, which will wait a few days at Havre to receive his letters to be written on his arrival at Paris. You expressed a wish to get a passage to this country in a public vessel. Mr. Dawson is charged with orders to the captain of the *Maryland* to receive and accommodate you back if you can be ready to depart at such a short warning. Rob't R. Livingston is appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to the Republic of France, but will not leave this, till we receive the ratification of the Convention by Mr. Dawson. I am in hopes you will find us returned generally to sentiments worthy of former times. In these it will be your glory to have steadily labored and with as much effect as any man living. That you may long live to continue your useful labors and to reap the reward in the thankfulness of nations is my sincere prayer. Accept assurances of my high esteem and affectionate attachment.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

This, citizens of the United States, is the letter about which the leaders and tools of the Federal faction, without knowing its contents or the occasion of writing it, have wasted so many malignant falsehoods.

It is a letter which on account of its wise economy and peaceable principles, and its forbearance to reproach, will be read by every good man and every good citizen with pleasure; and the faction mortified at its appearance will have to regret they forced it into publication. The least atonement they can now offer is to make the letter as public as they have made their own infamy, and learn to lie no more.

The same injustice they showed to Mr. Jefferson they showed to me. I had employed myself in Europe, and at my own expense, in forming and promoting a plan that would, in its operation, have benefited the commerce of America; and the faction here invented and circulated an account in the papers they employ that I had given a plan to the French for burning all the towns on the coast from Savannah to Baltimore.

Were I to prosecute them for this (and I do not promise that I will

not, for the liberty of the press is not the liberty of lying) there is not a Federal judge, not even one of midnight appointment, but must, from the nature of the case, be obliged to condemn them. The faction, however, cannot complain they have been restrained in anything. They have had their full swing of lying uncontradicted; they have availed themselves, unopposed, of all the arts hypocrisy could devise; and the event has been, what in all such cases it ever will and ought to be, *the ruin of themselves*.

The characters of the late and of the present Administrations are now sufficiently marked, and the adherents of each keep up the distinction. The former Administration rendered itself notorious by outrage, cock-combical parade, false alarms, a continual increase of taxes and an unceasing clamor for war; and as every vice has a virtue opposed to it the present Administration moves on the direct contrary line.

The question, therefore, at elections is not properly a question upon persons, but upon principles. Those who are for peace, moderate taxes and mild government will vote for the Administration that conducts itself by those principles, in whatever hands that Administration may be.

There are in the United States, and particularly in the Middle States, several religious sects, whose leading moral principle is PEACE. It is, therefore, impossible that such persons, consistently with the dictates of that principle, can vote for an Administration that is clamorous for war. When moral principles, rather than persons, are candidates for power, to vote is to perform a moral duty, and not to vote is to neglect a duty.

That persons who are hunting after places, offices and contracts, should be advocates for war, taxes and extravagance, is not to be wondered at; but that so large a portion of the people who had nothing to depend upon but their industry, and no other public prospect but that of paying taxes, and bearing the burden, should be advocates for the same measures, is a thoughtlessness not easily accounted for. But reason is recovering her empire, and the fog of delusion is clearing away.

THOMAS PAINE.

BORDENTOWN, ON THE DELAWARE, New Jersey, April 21, 1803.

LETTER VIII <sup>23</sup>

Much has been said, and much remains to be said, of that undescribed and undescribable *nothing*, called federalism. It is a word without a meaning, and designates a faction that has no principles. Ask a man who called himself a federalist, what federalism is, and he cannot tell you. Ask him, what are its principles, and he has none to give. Federalism, then, with respect to government, is similar to atheism with respect to religion, a *nominal nothing* without principles. The federal papers, especially those of New England, have often said, that "*religion and federalism must go together.*" But if their religion is related to their federalism; if it is as destitute of morals as their federalism is of principles; and I fear it is; it will do them no good in this world or the next. It will condemn them as imposters and hypocrites in both.

Those who once figured as leaders under the assumed and fraudulent name of *federalism* (but who are since gone, not into honorable and peaceable retirement, like *John Dickinson* and *Charles Thomson* <sup>24</sup> but into obscurity and oblivion, like *John Adams* and *John Jay*), had some plans in contemplation which they concealed from their deluded adherents, but those plans can be discovered through the gauzy, but clumsy, veil of conduct those leaders adopted. "*No cover is large enough to hide itself,*" says the Spanish proverb.

It requires more artifice and management to disguise and conceal sinister designs than schemers are aware of. A man never turns a rogue but he turns a fool. He incautiously lets out something by which those he intended to cheat or impose upon begin to *find him out*. Whereas truth is a straight forward thing, even an ignorant man will not blunder in a true story—nor can an artful man keep a false story straight.

But those leaders, supposing themselves in a higher position than what common observation would reach, presume, on their supposed consequence and the expected credulity of their adherents, to impose on the nation by clamorous and false pretences, for the purpose of raising a standing army of fifty thousand men; and when they had got that army the mask would have been thrown off, and their deluded

<sup>23</sup> This letter appeared in the Philadelphia *Aurora* of June 7, 1805.—*Editor*.

<sup>24</sup> John Dickinson, the respectable author of the farmer's letters before the revolution began. Charles Thomson, the faithful secretary of the old congress during the revolution.—*Author*.

adherents would have paid the price of their duplicity by being enslaved.

But in the midst of this career of delusion and imposition, those leaders became fools. They did everything they ought not to have done. They advocated plans which showed that their intention and their cause were not good. They labored to provoke war. They opposed every thing which led to peace. They loaded the country with vexatious and unnecessary taxes, and then opposed the reduction of them. They opposed a reduction of useless offices that served no other purpose than to maintain their own partisans at the expense of the public. In short, they run themselves a-ground first, by their extravagance and next by their folly. Blinded by their own vanity, and though bewildered in the wilderness of their own projects, they foolishly supposed themselves above detection. They had neither sense enough to know, nor logic enough to perceive, that as we can reason upward from cause to effect, so also can we reason downward from effect to cause, and discover, by the means they make use of, the motives and object of any party; for when the means are bad, the motive and the end to be obtained cannot be good.

The manners also, and language of any party is another clue that leads to a discovery of their real characters. When the cause and principles of a party are *good*, its advocates make use of *reason, argument, and good language*. *Truth* can derive no advantage from boisterous *vulgarity*. But when the motives and principles of a party are *bad*, it is necessary to *conceal them*; and its abettors having *principles they dare to acknowledge* and cannot *defend*, avoid everything of argument, and take refuge in *abuse and falsehood*.

The federal papers are an instance of the justness of this remark. Their pages are crowded with abuse, but never with argument; for they have no principles to argue from: and as to falsehood, it is become so naturally their *mother tongue*, especially in New England, that they seem to have lost the *power* as well as the *disposition*, of speaking the *truth*. Those papers have been of great aid to the republican cause, not only by the additional disgrace they have brought on their own disgraceful faction, but by serving as a foil to set off, with greater *éclat*, the decency and well principled arguments of the republican papers. I have had some experience, perhaps as much as most men have had in the various turns of political life, but I never saw a greater set of fools undertake to conduct a party than the leaders of the federalists have been, and the editors

of their papers. They correspond to the story told of a man who was become so proud and famous for lying that he disdained speaking truth lest he should lose his character.

Cannot those stupid people see, or, according to some dogmas, of their own, are their hearts hardened, that they shall not see, that the more vulgar and abusive they are, the more ground they lose in the estimation of the public. Every election, especially in New England, is wearing them down, till they will be lost even as a faction, and Massachusetts and Connecticut will recover their former character. Everything this faction does hastens its exit. The abusive vulgarity of Hulbert, a pettyfogging attorney of Sheffield, in Massachusetts, and one of its legislators, has contributed to bring forward the funeral. In his late unprincipled speech in the legislature of that state,<sup>25</sup> he has driven another nail in the coffin of the federal faction, and I leave to the *New England Palladium* to clinch it. It is a paper worthy of being the buffoon of such a faction, and of such an hypocritical impostor— Thus much for the character of parties and the method of ascertaining their motives and objects. I now proceed to other matters.

When I returned to America in November 1802 (after an absence of more than fourteen years) I found the country in a state of disquietude. The people were divided into two classes, under the names of *republicans* and *federalists*, and in point of numbers appeared to be nearly balanced. The republicans were the majority in congress, and all the administration were of that description; but they were assailed with outrageous abuse in the federal papers, but never by argument. I am enough acquainted with life and the world, to know, that *abuse* is the evidence of *want of argument*, and that those who use it, have no right on their side. There is a dignified calmness in conscious rectitude, which descends not to abuse. It can reason but it cannot rage. It cannot quit the strong fortress of rectitude to skirmish in the fields of vulgarity.

It was not difficult to perceive, that this division and agitation arose from some reports spread during the administration of John Adams, and in the latter time of General Washington, which one part of the people believed, and the other did not; and the point to be ascertained was whether those reports were true or false. If either of those cases could be ascertained effectually, it would unite the people. The chief of those reports, was the danger of an *invasion* from France; and this

<sup>25</sup> See below, pp. 975-979.—*Editor*.

was made a cause for borrowing, by loan, at the high rate of *eight per cent*, laying on a land tax of two million dollars annually; besides a greater number of other taxes; and for raising a standing army of fifty thousand men.

Now, if the danger was real, it ought to have been provided against. If it was a fiction, with the design of raising an army to be employed to accomplish some concealed purpose, the country ought to be informed of it. The party styling themselves federalists appeared to believe the danger, and the republicans to ridicule it as fabulous; and in this state the parties stood. It was, however, equally the interest of both to know the truth, on which ever side the truth might fall.

Being at Washington in the winter of 1802-3, I talked with some members of congress on the subject, particularly with Mr. Breckenridge, senator from Kentucky, the same person who brought in the bill for repealing John Adams's judiciary law, and the midnight appointments made in the consequence of it.<sup>26</sup> This repeal saved the country *thirty-two thousand dollars annually*, besides freeing it from an intended judiciary despotism.

I spoke to him of the propriety of congress appointing a committee, or by some other method as they might think proper, to enquire into the conduct of the former administration, that of John Adams, and to call upon him to produce the information whether official or otherwise, which he went upon, if he had any, for putting the country to such vast expence, under the idea, real or pretended, of an invasion from France. This would be giving John Adams a fair chance of clearing himself, if he could, from the suspicion that his administration was a gross imposition on the public; and on the other hand, if the imposition should be proved, it would enlighten the country, and put it on its guard against future impositions.

Mr. Breckenridge agreed with me in the propriety and fitness of the measure. He saw that information was wanted, and that it would be useful, because when the truth should be known, it would compose the people. John Adams had gone away in what may be called a *clandestine*

<sup>26</sup> The Judiciary Act referred to by Paine provided for new district judges, and a number of new Justices of the Peace for the District of Columbia were created. During the two weeks prior to the inauguration of Thomas Jefferson on March 4, 1801, John Adams appointed Federalists to the newly created judgeships. The "lame duck" Federalist Senate in the last moments of its existence speedily ratified the appointments. Until midnight of March 3, Adams and John Marshall were engaged in making the notorious "Midnight appointments."—*Editor*.

*manner*,<sup>27</sup> without surrendering into the hands of his successor, as he ought to have done in person, any account of the affairs of the executive department, foreign or domestic. There are no papers or documents that I know of, and I believe there are none, because there can be none in the secretary of state's office, that will justify John Adams in the expence to which his administration put the country; or even afford ground for suspicion that either France or England intended to invade the United States. For what purpose then was an army to be raised. The projectors of such a measure must have had some object in view, and as that object has never been explained, it ought to be enquired into. It is bad policy, and also a bad precedent, especially in public affairs, to let imposition slide away without detection.

At the time I talked with Mr. Breckenridge on this subject, I expected that Mr. *Skipwith* formerly<sup>28</sup> and at this time, American consul at Paris, and *Joel Barlow* would soon arrive, and I did not wish the enquiry to be gone into till they came. After the fall of Robespierre and the establishment of the directory constitution, these two gentlemen and myself (Mr. Monroe being recalled) had better opportunities of knowing the sentiments and intentions of the French government with respect to American than other persons had; and they can be evidence equally with myself, that no intention existed in the French government to invade America; nor was any preparation made for such an attempt, nor could it be made. The possibility of such a thing did not exist. The French navy at that time was nearly annihilated; her ports blockaded by the British; and she had to fight by land, single handed, against almost the whole of Europe. She had it not in her power to spare a *regiment*, much less could she spare an *army*, to send to America; and if she could have spared one, she had not the means of transporting it, nor the convoy to protect it. All the circumstances as well as the evidence that can be provided, will show that the administration of John Adams was a fraudulent and expensive imposition on the country; and that the army to be raised was intended for some secret purpose, and not for the purpose of defence. If John Adams was not conscious of something wrong, and apprehensive of some consequences, why did he abscond in the hasty and private manner he did? or why did his

<sup>27</sup> Adams left Washington in the morning of March 4, 1801, not even waiting to witness the seating of the new administration.—*Editor*.

<sup>28</sup> Mr. Skipwith resigned the consulship during the administration of John Adams. I believe on account of a rude insulting letter he received from Timothy Pickering then secretary of state. Mr. Jefferson re-appointed Mr. Skipwith.—*Author*.



partisans want to put Aaron Burr in the presidency. In the days of the black cockades John Adams had one so enormous and so valiantly large, that he appeared to be suspended by it; but when his *midnight hour* arrived, his valor fled and himself also.

The *voluntary embassy* of Dr. Logan to Paris appears to have disconcerted John's administration, and discomfited its leaders; because it served to expose and put an end to their projects. When Dr. Logan called on Timothy Pickering, secretary of state, with Mr. Skipwith's dispatches from Paris, Timothy, before he knew their contents, though Logan knew the whole, began to talk of invasions and dangers, and the necessity of *preparation*. "*It may be very well*" said Logan, "*to have the militia in good order.*" "*The militia, sir!*" said Timothy, "*the militia never did any good and never will.*"<sup>29</sup> *We must have any army of fifty thousand men.*" When Logan was coming away, Timothy said to him at the door, "Sir, the government don't thank you."

When Logan waited on General Washington, who had been then appointed lieutenant general of the army then raising, of which John was commander in chief!—the General received him coldly and sternly, and said to him in a haughty tone, "*and pray sir, what right have you, that are but a private citizen, to interfere in matters of government?*" Logan very prudently replied, "I have no answer, sir, to make to that," and withdrew. The state of Pennsylvania, soon after this, elected Dr. Logan one of its senators in congress.

<sup>29</sup> Timothy Pickering's reflection on the *militia* deserves a rebuff. It was the militia that fought at *Bunker's hill*, under *Warren*, a military general. It was by the aid of numerous reinforcements of militia to join General Gates that *Burgoyne* was taken. It was by a volunteer militia under *Stark*, a volunteer general, that Col. *Baum*, a Hessian officer, was defeated at Bennington, in Vermont, which was the prelude to the capture of *Burgoyne*. But perhaps Timothy reasons from himself; and if he makes himself the standard by which to judge of the merits of the militia there is ground for his saying the *militia never did any good and never will*. Timothy's first public employment was very harmless, that of a teacher of psalmody. When the revolution began he *learned the manual exercise*, and then *taught it*. He was afterwards appointed a colonel of a regiment of *militia*, and when the affairs of *Lexington and Concord* took place, April 19, 1775, and the British were retreating from Concord back to Boston, an order was sent to *Timothy*, to march with his regiment, and post himself at a certain place to cut off their retreat. Timothy marched but he stopped short of the *place*, and drew up his men, and went to prayers, till the British passed it. His prayers saved him from the *dangers* of that day. I do not know that he sung psalms. Perhaps not. The enemy might have *overheard him*. Had Timothy done his duty on that occasion, and put his trust in God without loitering away his time, the whole party of the British, about two thousand, must have been prisoners, for they could not have got back into Boston; and the slaughter at *Bunker's hill*, the 17th of June following, could not have taken place. The whole force of the British at Boston at that time was about four thousand; *one half* of which were on this expedition.—*Author*.

Circumstances often unriddle and explain *themselves*, and it happens so in this case; for if the administration, and those leaders connected with it, were sincere in their belief that the danger was real, and that the country (as *Gouverneur Morris* expressed it, in his *funeral* oration on Hamilton) was "*menaced with dangers from without*," and that France intended an invasion; and if, at the same time, they had no concealed object in contemplation themselves, they would welcome the messenger that should bring them good tidings that *all was well*. But if, on the contrary, they *knew* they were acting a *fraud*, and heating the country with falsehoods and false alarms for the purpose of procuring loans, levying new taxes, and raising an army to accomplish some *concealed purpose* that could not be accomplished without that treachery, they would be *enraged at him*; and this accounts for the rude reception Dr. Logan received from that administration. Thousands who supported that administration from a belief that it was acting right, have since abandoned it from a conviction that it acted deceitfully wrong, and this also accounts for the great majority at the last presidential election.<sup>30</sup> We have no alarms now, nor should we have had any then, if the present administration had existed at that time.

It requires only a prudent and honest administration to preserve America always in peace. Her distance from the European world frees her from its intrigues. But when men get into power, whose heads, like the head of *John Adams*, are filled with "*strange notions*" and counter revolutionary principles and projects, things will be sure to go wrong. John Adams, who was more the *dupe* of a party than the *leader* of it, entered on the office of president with his *head turned* by the *elevation* he was lifted to; and his principles (if ever he had any), corrupted. He turned out to be a counter revolutionist; and if the concealed objects of his administration had succeeded, the federal constitution would have been destroyed, and that by persons under the assumed and fraudulent name of *federalists*.

"*As General Washington* (said John Adams) *has no children, it will be right to make the government in the family of Lund Washington.*" Perhaps John intended this as a sly introduction of himself and his hopeful son *Quincy*, in preference to any of the Washingtons; for this same John Adams was one of the *chiefs* of a party in *congress at York-*

<sup>30</sup> In the Presidential election of 1804 every state in the Union voted for Jefferson except Delaware and Connecticut, and the former Federalist stronghold, Massachusetts, cast every electoral vote for the leader of the Democratic-Republican party.—*Editor*.

town in Pennsylvania, in the latter end of the year 1777 and beginning of '78, for dismissing *Washington* from the command of the army, *because, they said, he was not capable of it and did nothing.* Yet under John's administration the name of *Washington* was made use of, for the purpose of introducing and covering a counter revolutionary system. Such is the inconsistency of faction and of men who have no fixed principles!

The independence of America would have added but little to her own happiness, and been of no benefit to the world, if her government had been formed on the *corrupt models of the old world.* It was the opportunity of *beginning the world anew,* as it were; and of bringing forward a *new system* of government in which the rights of *all* men should be preserved that gave *value* to independence. The pamphlet *Common Sense,* the first work I ever published, embraced both those objects. *Mere* independence might at some future time, have been effected and established by arms, *without principle,* but a *just* system of government could not. In short, it was the *principle;* at *that* time, that produced the independence; for until the principle spread itself abroad among the people, independence was not thought of, and America was fighting without an object. Those who know the circumstances of the times I speak of, know this to be true.

I am not persecuting John Adams, nor any other man, nor did I ever persecute any; but I see the propriety, and even the necessity of instituting an enquiry into the confused state of affairs during his administration. All the circumstances and the evidence combined with them, justify the suspicion that during *that* administration the country was grossly imposed upon, and put to so great and unnecessary expence, which the present administration has to pay off; and that some concealed counter-revolutionary scheme was in contemplation. The leaders, separately, might hide from each other what his own particular object was. Each of them might have a *different one.* But all of them agreed in the preliminary project, that of raising an army: and the case would have been, that when they had collected that army, they would have broken into distinct parties, like the generals of Alexander's army, and destroyed each other, to decide who should be the reigning usurper. Symptoms of disgust had already begun to appear among the chiefs. Hamilton despised Washington; Adams was jealous of Hamilton; and Hamilton had a perfect contempt for Adams. But in the end, John, I

believe would have come poorly off. He was not a man of the sword, but only of *the cockade*.

I purposely delayed entering upon this subject till the presidential election should be over. Had I published it before that time the clamor of faction would have said it was an electioneering trick. *Now*, they cannot say it. The choice made at that election was the spontaneous choice of the people, and is therefore the more honorable both to the electors and the elected. The country at this time, compared with what it was two or three years ago, is in a state of tranquility; and in a fit disposition of calmness to take the matters herein stated into consideration before the next meeting of congress. It is by keeping a country well informed upon its affairs, and discarding from its councils every thing of mystery, that harmony is preserved or restored among the people, and confidence reposed in the government.

THOMAS PAINE.

June 5th, 1805.

## REMARKS ON GOUVERNEUR MORRIS'S FUNERAL ORATION ON GENERAL HAMILTON

This article by Paine was originally published in William Duane's Philadelphia *Aurora* of August 7, 1804 but, though it created considerable discussion at the time it appeared in print, it has never been included in any collection of Paine's writings or even reprinted since 1804. Yet it contains some extremely effective attacks upon those who longed for a stronger government in order to keep popular movements in check. The concluding paragraph represents Paine at his best. The following sentences will undoubtedly take their place in all collections of quotations illustrating the democratic spirit: "Make it the interest of the people to live in a state of government, and they will protect that which protects them. But when they are harassed with alarms which time discovers to be false, and burdened with taxes for which they can see no cause, their confidence in such government withers away, and they laugh at the energy that attempts to restore it."—*Editor*.

THE QUOTATIONS FROM THE ORATION ARE TAKEN FROM  
CHEETHAM'S N[EW] YORK COUNTRY PAPER,  
THE WATCH-TOWER, OF JULY 18.

AS GOUVERNEUR MORRIS is fond of criticizing others, he becomes a fair object for criticism himself. Give and take is *fair play*.

In all Gouverneur's harangues, let the purpose be what it may, there is always a great deal of what the players call *stage trick*, that is, an extraneous attempt to excite surprise. Of this kind was his speech in Congress on the judiciary bill, when putting himself in an attitude of marvellous solemnity, and holding out his hand in awful position as if he was going to announce the sound of the last trump he cried, "*Pause! Pause! for Heaven's sake Pause!*" Heaven, however, did not listen to his call, for laughter followed where he expected a groan.

In his funeral oration on Hamilton he said "*his life* (pointing at the corpse) *was one of honor and glory.*" This *pointing scene* (like the ghost in Hamlet pointing with its finger) was a sort of *stage trick*, and, in this place, injudiciously introduced, for you cannot say *the life of a corpse*, and consequently not "*his life*," pointing to a corpse. The proper expression would have been, *the life of our departed friend*, but the sedateness of this would have excluded the *stage trick* of the finger scene, and Government cannot go on long in any thing, without some sort of *tricks*. As to "*the honor and glory*" we'll let that pass. Least said is soonest mended. Perhaps what the ill-fated duke of Wharton said in one of his last epistles to a friend would have suited quite as well, and made a better impression than this wholesale encomium of Gouverneur

"Be kind to my remains; and O defend  
Against your judgment, your deceased friend."

"When our revolution began" (says Gouverneur) "*his fame was heard of before his person was seen.*" This is undoubtedly true if *his fame* was heard of, or prophesied of before he was born; but in any other case it is one of the Gouverneur's bulls; neither is it correct to the circumstance, for Hamilton was unknown when the revolution began.

Our orator goes on, "*Washington*, says he, *that excellent judge of human nature, perceived his virtues, appreciated his talents, etc.*" This is one of Gouverneur's *sly tricks*, for it includes the idea, that "*Washington, that excellent judge of human nature,*" perceived *my* virtues, yes, *my* virtues, and appreciated *my* talents, for he appointed me minister

to France—and a very injudicious and unfortunate appointment it was.

From hence Gouverneur goes to Yorktown in Virginia, where Cornwallis was taken, and where Hamilton had a command, at the head (says he) of a forlorn hope, attacked the redoubt (a redoubt) of the enemy and “was victorious. *This occurrence gave us peace.*” Hold, not quite so fast Mr. Orator, Burgoyne and his army had been taken before, and General Greene (the best general in the American army) had triumphed to the southward, and recovered the southern states. But if there is any one circumstance that contributed more than another to the capture of Cornwallis, it was the French fleet of thirty-one sail of the line shutting Cornwallis up in the Chesapeake, and preventing the English fleet taking him off; and in addition to this, a frigate loaded with money brought from France by Col. John Laurens and Thomas Paine, arrived at Boston the twenty-fifth of August, almost two months before Cornwallis surrendered. This timely supply enabled Congress to go on, and the army to proceed to Yorktown.<sup>31</sup> Gouverneur knows all these matters (for he was at that time a sort of a deputy financier to Robert Morris), but it did not suit *his tricks* even to allude to them, and therefore he sacrificed them all to the merit of taking *a redoubt*. But Gouverneur is no soldier—he did not lose a leg *in battle*.

From hence our orator conducts Hamilton to the convention which met in Philadelphia in 1787, to form the federal constitution. “*Here,*” says he,<sup>32</sup> “*I saw him labor indefatigably*”—for what?—“*for his country's good,*” continues the orator. No Sir. He labored to establish a constitution that would have deprived the citizens of every description of the right of election, and have put *himself*, and you too, Mr. *Prate-a-pace*, in possession of part of the government for life.

“When (continues our orator) the labors of the convention were closed, he frankly expressed a doubt of the fitness of the constitution to maintain with *necessary energy* public freedom.” Gouverneur Morris has got to learn the principles of civil government, but he *will* talk about it, for

“On all things talkable he boldly talks.”

<sup>31</sup> It took sixteen ox teams to remove the money brought by this frigate, the *Resolve*, from Boston to Philadelphia. Thomas Willing, now president of the U. S. bank received it.—*Author.*

<sup>32</sup> Gouverneur Morris was not appointed to the convention by his own state, for he had lost its confidence—but Robert Morris managed to get him appointed for Pennsylvania, to which he did not belong.—*Author.*

Gouverneur Morris and others of his description, who have *conceits* instead of *principles*, and *vanity* instead of *wisdom* are very fond of this word *energy*, but they always mean the energy they are to *act themselves*, not that which they are to suffer. The same persons who were for what they called an *energetic government*, and a president for life in the time of Washington (who was of their own party) would oppose it, now the presidency is in the hands of Mr. Jefferson, and that the senate is no longer of their faction; which shows that those *energy schemers* do not act from principle, because principle, if right, is right at all times. The *energy* of the people has overthrown these schemes, but we do not hear them praise this sort of energy! No! No! It is the energy of themselves over the people that they mean. When the constitution for the federal city was to be formed, Gouverneur's first article was, *There shall be a d—ned strong Jail*. He certainly did not mean it for himself; but had he stayed a few days longer in France he would have known what a strong jail was, and energy too, for the committee of public safety had intercepted some letters and they sent a guard to the house where he used to live, to arrest and take him to prison. But fortunately for him he was off, with all his wagon loads of fine French furniture, for Gouverneur knew how to feather his nest.

The constitution being established, and Washington elected president, our orator thus proceeds with his harangue. "Washington, with whom he (Hamilton) had toiled, and by whose aid he had travelled through every stage of our revolutionary contest—Washington, who saw his *manly struggle in the convention*, and best knew how to promote his country's welfare, called him, under the new constitution, to preside over an important department of our government."—Secretary of the treasury.

Washington's choice of officers for the principal departments of government, was neither judicious nor fortunate, nor could it be so; for excepting Mr. Jefferson (who had just arrived from his ministry in France, and was appointed secretary of state, which he soon resigned) Washington appointed those only of the convention who supported arbitrary measures. "*The manly struggles* (of which Gouverneur speaks) "*that Hamilton made in the convention,*" and which Washington saw with approbation, were exerted to lift Washington above his fellows, by making him President for life, with a senate of the same description, or something worse. "Here (continues our orator, that is, in the treasury) Hamilton displayed all the talents of a great financier" (for) "at

this period we had no *credit*, but we had *resources*." This is putting the cart before the horse, which Gouverneur is very apt to do, for he seldom begins at the right end of any thing. The old Congress had no credit because it *had no resources*. The new constitution provided resources for the new congress, and credit, like the cart behind the horse, followed of consequence. Hamilton created neither the one nor the other; but he created an insurrection by his injudicious, vexatious, and unproductive tax upon stills;<sup>33</sup> but this was energy. Our orator next proceeds to the period when an army of fifty thousand men were to be raised, of which Washington was appointed commander in chief by that poor creature John Adams.

"Menaced," says he, *by dangers from without* (this is an absolute falsehood with respect to a foreign invasion) "*Washington was called from his beloved retirement to the field*" (the bloodless field where the masquerade of danger was to be performed). Gouverneur then goes on, "*that great man*" (who made Gouverneur Morris a great man), "had not forgotten the young hero (Hamilton) who, early in the revolution attracted his notice. He viewed him as worthy of the second in command, and he was appointed major general of our army." As our orator had no deeds of "*honor and glory*" to rehearse on this dangerless occasion, he closes his account by saying, "Washington deemed him in case of accident" (it must be all accident where there is no danger) "perhaps the *only man in whose hands, which now lie cold in his coffin*"<sup>34</sup> (this is a paltry attempt at the pathetic) "the sword and purse of America could be so safely entrusted." It is a thing of no consequence to us, what Washington thought of Hamilton when he appointed him to office of command, or what Hamilton thought of Washington when he called him an *old fool*; thank God those times are past and better are come in their place.

As to the danger of which our orator speaks, it marks one of those well-remembered circumstances which shows that the politics of that day were either foolish or worse. No man who possessed a grain of common sense could have supposed that while France and England were engaged in war, especially a land war, that either could spare a regiment, much less an army to send against America; neither was it

<sup>33</sup> Paine is referring to the so-called "Whiskey Rebellion" of 1794.—*Editor*.

<sup>34</sup> When an affair of business is said to be put into a person's *hands*, it means figuratively, his care and judgment; but Morris referring to the *hands* in the coffin, destroyed the figurative meaning of the phrase, and makes nonsense of it.—*Author*.



ever thought of by either of them. The impossibility of the thing did not permit the existence of such a thought. What then was the army wanted for? When we consider the parties engaged in it and know what their politics were, we have a right to conclude, that it was to accomplish by an armed force in the field, what had failed of success by projects in the convention. The chiefs however, did not draw cordially together. Between Washington, Adams, and Hamilton, there was a reciprocal jealousy and distrust, and some specimens of hatred; and they were well founded.

Our orator concludes his account of Hamilton's public career as follows:—"He toiled incessantly with manly firmness against *popular zeal, and snatched you, in spite of yourselves*" (this is an affront to the audience) "*from impending ruin.*"<sup>35</sup>—If somebody would be kind enough to *snatch* Gouverneur Morris from his "worst enemy," his *foolish self*, it might cure his otherwise incurable folly. Experience is lost upon him. In business he is a babe, and in politics a visionary; and the older he grows the more foolish he becomes.

Of civil government he knows nothing; he has yet to learn that the strength of government consists in the interest the people have in supporting it. The present administration is, for this reason, stronger than any that preceded it; and the next presidential election will show it. Mere politicians of the old school may talk of alliances, but the strongest of all alliances is that which the mildness, wisdom, and justice of government form, unperceived, with the people it govern[s]. It grows in the mind with the secrecy and fidelity of love, and reposes on its own energy. Make it the interest of the people to live in a state of government, and they will protect that which protects them. But when they are harassed with alarms which time discovers to be false, and burdened with taxes for which they can see no cause, their confidence in such government withers away, and they laugh at the energy that attempts to restore it. Their cry then is, as in the time of the terror ("*not to your tents, O! Israel*), but to the NEXT ELECTION O! CITIZENS." It is thus the *representative system corrects wrongs and preserves rights.*

COMMON SENSE.

<sup>35</sup> An orator ought not to take advantage of a funeral oration, to propagate things which are not facts. Morris ought to prove what he has said or retract it. Funeral orations give no protection to falsehoods.—*Author.*

## TO THE FRENCH INHABITANTS OF LOUISIANA

The purchase of Louisiana was announced officially by President Thomas Jefferson on October 17, 1803. Several months later the French inhabitants of Louisiana sent a memorial to Congress demanding immediate admission to the Union and the right to continue the importation of Negro slaves. On September 22, 1804, Paine issued this address reminding the French inhabitants of Louisiana that a people who desired freedom for themselves had no right to deprive others—the Negro people—of their freedom. While the address reveals that Paine still clung to certain misconceptions regarding the French Revolution, it also showed what an advanced position he had with respect to Negro slavery. Needless to add, his document was not appreciated by many defenders of slavery in the South.—*Editor.*

A PUBLICATION having the appearance of a memorial and remonstrance, to be presented to Congress at the ensuing session, has appeared in several papers. It is therefore open to examination, and I offer you my remarks upon it. The title and introductory paragraph are as follows:

*"To the Congress of the United States, in the Senate and House of Representatives convened: We the subscribers, planters, merchants and other inhabitants of Louisiana, respectfully approach the Legislature of the United States with a memorial of our rights, a remonstrance against certain laws which contravene them, and a petition for that redress to which the laws of nature, sanctioned by positive stipulations, have entitled us."*

It often happens that when one party, or one that thinks itself a party, talks much about its rights, it puts those of the other party upon examining into their own, and such is the effect produced by your memorial.

A single reading of that memorial will show it is the work of some person who is not of your people. His acquaintance with the cause, commencement, progress and termination of the American Revolution decides this point; and his making *our* merits in that Revolution the ground of *your* claims, as if *our* merits could become *yours*, show he does not understand *your* situation.

We obtained our rights by calmly understanding principles, and by the successful event of a long, obstinate and expensive war. But it is not incumbent on us to fight the battles of the world for the world's profit.

You are already participating, without any merit or expense in obtaining it, the blessings of freedom acquired by ourselves; and in proportion as you become initiated into the principles and practise of the representative system of government, of which you have yet had no experience, you will participate more and finally be partakers of the whole.

You see what mischief ensued in France by the possession of power before they understood principles. They earned liberty in words, but not in fact. The writer of this was in France through the whole of the Revolution, and knows the truth of what he speaks; for after endeavoring to give it principle, he had nearly fallen a victim to its rage.

There is a great want of judgment in the person who drew up your memorial. He has mistaken *your* case, and forgotten his *own*; and by trying to court your applause has injured your pretensions. He has written like a lawyer, straining every point that would please his client, without studying his advantage.

I find no fault with the composition of the memorial, for it is well written; nor with the principles of liberty it contains, considered in the abstract. The error lies in the misapplication of them, and in assuming a ground they have not a right to stand upon.

Instead of their serving you as a ground of reclamation against us, they change into a satire on yourselves. Why did you not speak thus when you ought to have spoken it? We fought for liberty when you stood quiet in slavery.

The author of the memorial, injudiciously confounding two distinct cases together, has spoken as if he was the memorialist of a body of Americans, who, after sharing equally with us in all the dangers and hardships of the Revolutionary War, had retired to a distance and made a settlement for themselves. If, in such a situation, Congress had established a temporary government over them, in which they were not personally consulted, they would have had a right to speak as the memorial speaks. But your situation is different from what the situation of such persons would be, and therefore *their* ground of reclamation cannot *of right* become yours.

You are arriving at freedom by the easiest means that any people ever enjoyed it; without contest, without expense, and even without any con-

trivance of your own. And you already so far mistake principles, that under the name of *rights* you ask for *powers*; *power to import and enslave Africans*; and *to govern* a territory that *we* have *purchased*.

To give color to your memorial, you refer to the treaty of cession (in which *you were not* one of the contracting parties), concluded at Paris between the Governments of the United States and France.

"The third article" you say "of the treaty lately concluded at Paris declares that the inhabitants of the ceded territory shall be incorporated in the Union of the United States, and admitted *as soon as possible, according* to the *principles* of the Federal Constitution, to the enjoyment of all the rights, advantages and immunities of citizens of the United States; and *in the meantime*, they shall be protected in the enjoyment of their liberty, property and the exercise of the religion they profess."

As from your former condition, you cannot be much acquainted with diplomatic policy, and I am convinced that even the gentleman who drew up the memorial is not, I will explain to you the grounds of this article. It may prevent your running into further errors.

The territory of Louisiana had been so often ceded to different European powers that it became a necessary article on the part of France, and for the security of Spain, the ally of France, and which accorded perfectly with our own principles and intentions, that it should be *ceded no more*; and this article, stipulating for the incorporation of Louisiana into the Union of the United States, stands as a bar against all future cession, and at the same time, as well as "*in the meantime*," secures to you a civil and political permanency, personal security and liberty which you never enjoyed before.

France and Spain might suspect (and the suspicion would not have been ill-founded had the cession been treated for in the Administration of John Adams, or when Washington was President, and Alexander Hamilton President over him), that we *bought* Louisiana for the British Government, or with a view of selling it to her; and though such suspicion had no just ground to stand upon with respect to our present President, Thomas Jefferson, who is not only not a man of intrigue but who possesses that honest pride of principle that cannot be intrigued with, and which keeps intriguers at a distance, the article was nevertheless necessary as a precaution against future contingencies.

But you, from not knowing the political ground of the article, apply to yourselves *personally* and *exclusively* what had reference to the *territory*, to prevent its falling into the hands of any foreign power that might

endanger the [establishment of] *Spanish* dominion in America, or those of the *French* in the West India islands.

You claim (you say) to be incorporated into the Union of the United States, and your remonstrances on this subject are unjust and without cause.

You are already *incorporated* into it as fully and effectually as the Americans themselves are, who are settled in Louisiana. You enjoy the same rights, privileges, advantages and immunities which they enjoy; and when Louisiana, or some part of it, shall be erected into a constitutional state, you also will be citizens equal with them.

You speak in your memorial, as if *you* were the *only* people who were to live in Louisiana, and as if the territory was purchased that *you* exclusively might govern it. In both these cases you are greatly mistaken. The emigrations from the United States into the purchased territory, and the population arising therefrom, will, in a few years, exceed you in numbers. It is but twenty-six years since Kentucky began to be settled, and it already contains more than *double* your population.

In a candid view of the case you ask for what would be injurious to yourselves to receive, and unjust in us to grant. *Injurious*, because the settlement of Louisiana will go on much faster under the government and guardianship of Congress, than if the government of it were committed to *your* hands; and consequently, the landed property you possessed as individuals when the treaty was concluded, or have purchased since, will increase so much faster in value.

*Unjust to ourselves*, because as the reimbursements of the purchase money must come out of the sale of the lands to new settlers, the government of it cannot suddenly go out of the hands of Congress. They are guardians of that property for *all the people of the United States*.

And besides this, as the new settlers will be chiefly from the United States it would be unjust and ill policy to put them and their property under the jurisdiction of a people whose freedom they had contributed to purchase.

You ought also to recollect that the French Revolution has not exhibited to the world that grand display of principles and rights that would induce settlers from other countries to put themselves under a French jurisdiction in Louisiana. Beware of intriguers who may push you on from private motives of their own.

You complain of two cases, one of which you have *no right*, no concern with; and the other is founded in direct injustice.

You complain that Congress has passed a law to divide the country into two territories. It is not improper to inform you, that after the Revolutionary War ended, Congress divided the territory acquired by that war into ten territories; each of which was to be erected into a constitutional State, when it arrived at a certain population mentioned in the Act; and, in the meantime, an officer appointed by the President, as the Governor of Louisiana now is, presided as Governor of the Western Territory over all such parts as have not arrived at the maturity of *statehood*.

Louisiana will require to be divided into twelve States or more; but this is a matter that belongs to the *purchaser* of the territory of Louisiana, and with which the inhabitants of the town of New Orleans have no right to interfere; and beside this, it is probable that the inhabitants of the other territory would choose to be independent of New Orleans. They might apprehend that on some speculating pretense their produce might be put in requisition, and a maximum price put on it—a thing not uncommon in a French Government.

As a general rule, without refining upon sentiment, one may put confidence in the justice of those who have no inducement to do us injustice; and this is the case Congress stands in with respect to both territories, and to all other divisions that may be laid out, and to all inhabitants and settlers, of whatever nation they may be.

There can be no such thing as what the memorial speaks of, that is *of a governor appointed by the President who may have no interest in the welfare of Louisiana*. He must, from the nature of the case, have more interest in it than any other person can have. He is intrusted with the care of an extensive tract of country, now the property of the United States by purchase.

The value of those lands will depend on the increasing prosperity of Louisiana, its agriculture, commerce and population.

You have only a local and partial interest in the town of New Orleans, or its vicinity; and if, in consequence of exploring the country, new seats of commerce should offer, his general interest would lead him to open them, and your partial interest to shut them up.

There is probably some justice in your remark as it applies to the governments under which you *formerly* lived. Such governments always look with jealousy, and an apprehension of revolt, on colonies increasing in prosperity and population and they send governors to *keep them down*.

But when you argue from the conduct of governments *distant* and *despotic*, to that of *domestic* and *free* government, it shows you do not understand the principles and interest of a republic, and to put you right is friendship. We have had experience, and you have not.

The other case to which I alluded as being founded in direct injustice is that in which you petition for *power*, under the name of *rights*, to import and enslave Africans!

*Dare you put up a petition to heaven for such a power, without fearing to be struck from the earth by its justice?*

*Why, then, do you ask it of man against man?*

*Do you want to renew in Louisiana the horrors of Domingo?*<sup>36</sup>

COMMON SENSE.

September 22, 1804.

### THREE LETTERS TO MORGAN LEWIS, ON HIS PROSECUTION OF THOMAS FARMAR, FOR ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS DAMAGES

Morgan Lewis, formerly Attorney-General and Justice of the Supreme Court in New York, was nominated and elected Governor of the Empire State in 1804. During the campaign a meeting to oppose his election was held by Republicans in New York City and Lewis was accused of working secretly with the Federalists. After the election, Governor Lewis sued Thomas Farmar, chairman of the meeting, for libel. Paine wrote these public letters to arouse public support for Farmar. They appeared in the New York *Public Advertiser* and the Philadelphia *National Aurora* of April 27, 1807. Later they were published in pamphlet form.—*Editor*.

#### LETTER FIRST

**T**HE proud integrity of conscious rectitude fears no reproach, and disdains the mercenary idea of damages. It is not the found, but the ulcerated flesh that flinches from the touch. A man must feel his char-

<sup>36</sup> The reference is to the slave uprising in St. Domingo in 1791.—*Editor*.

acter exceedingly vulnerable, who can suppose that anything said about him, or against him, can endamage him an hundred thousand dollars: yet this is the sum Morgan Lewis has laid his damages at, at his persecution of Mr. Farmar, as chairman of a meeting of Republican citizens. This is a case, abstracted from any idea of damages, that ought to be brought before the representatives of the people assembled in legislature. It is an attempted violation of the rights of citizenship, by the man whose official duty it was to protect them.

Mr. Farmar was in the exercise of a legal and constitutional right. He was chairman of a meeting of citizens, peaceably assembled to consider on a matter that concerned themselves, *the nomination of a proper person to be voted for as governor at the ensuing election*. Had the meeting thought Morgan Lewis a proper person, they would have said so, and would have had a right to say so. But the meeting thought otherwise, and they had a right to say otherwise. But what has Morgan Lewis, as governor, to do with either of these cases. He is not governor *jure divino*, by divine right, nor is he covered with the magical mantle which covers a king of England, that HE can do no wrong; nor is the governorship of the state his property, or the property of his family connections.<sup>37</sup>

If Morgan Lewis could be so unwise and vain as to suppose he could prosecute for what he calls damages, he should prosecute every man who composed that meeting, *except the chairman*; for in the office of chairman Mr. Farmar was a silent man on any matter discussed or decided there. He could not even give a vote on any subject, unless it was a tie vote, which was not the case. The utmost use Mr. Lewis could have made of Mr. Farmar would have been to have subpoenaed him to prove that such resolves were voted by the meeting; for Mr. Farmar's signature to those resolves, as chairman of the meeting, was no other than an attestation that such resolves were then passed.

Morgan Lewis, in this prosecution, has committed the same kind of error that a man would commit who should prosecute a witness for proving a fact done by a third person, instead of prosecuting that third person on whom the fact was proved. Morgan Lewis is, in my estimation of character, a poor lawyer, and a worse politician. He cannot maintain this prosecution; but I think Mr. Farmar might maintain a prosecution against him. False prosecution ought to be punished; and this is a false prosecution, because it is a willful prosecution of the wrong person. If

<sup>37</sup> Lewis had married Margaret Beekman Livingston and was thus allied with the wealthy "Livingston interest."—*Editor*.



Morgan Lewis has sustained any damage, or any injury, which I do not believe he has, it is by the members composing the meeting, and not by the chairman. The resolves of a meeting are not the act of the chairman.

But in what manner will Morgan Lewis prove damages? Damages must be proved by facts; they cannot be proved by opinion—opinions prove nothing. Damages given by opinion, are not damages in fact, and a jury is tied down to fact, and cannot take cognizance of opinion. Morgan Lewis must prove that between the time those resolves were passed, and the time he commenced his prosecution, he sustained damages to the amount of one hundred thousand dollars, and he must produce facts in proof of it. He must also prove that those damages were *in consequence* of those resolves, and could he prove all this, it would not reach Mr. Farmar, because as before said, *the resolves of a meeting are not the act of the chairman.*

This is not a case merely before a jury of twelve men. The whole public is a jury in a case like this, for it concerns their public rights as citizens, and it is for the purpose of freeing it from the quibbling chicanery of law, and to place it in a clear intelligible point of view before the people that I have taken it up.

But as people do not read long pieces on the approach of an election, and as it is probable I may give a second piece on the subject of Damages, I will stop where I am for the present.

## LETTER SECOND

In my former letter, I showed that Morgan Lewis could not maintain a prosecution against Mr. Farmar because the resolves of a public meeting are not the act of the chairman. His signature affixed thereto is not even evidence of his approbation, though I have no doubt myself but he approved them. It is put there for the purpose of certifying that such resolves were passed. In this letter I shall proceed further into the subject.

This prosecution is, upon the face of it, an attempt to intimidate the people in their character as citizens, from exercising their right of opinion on public men and public measures. Had it been a prosecution by one individual against another individual, in which the people had no interest or concern, I should not have taken the subject up. But it is a case that involves a question of public rights, and which shows that Mor-

gan Lewis is not a proper person to be entrusted with the guardianship of those rights. In the second place, it is a bad example, because it is giving, as governor of the state, the pernicious example of instituting frivolous prosecutions for the purpose of making money by them. A man of conscious integrity would feel himself above it, and a man of spirit would disdain it.

One of the objections stated against Morgan Lewis in those resolves, is, *that he had formed a coalition with the federalists*. If Morgan Lewis conceived and felt this to be a disgrace to him, he must necessarily, as a cause for that conception, have considered the federalists an infamous set of men, and it is now incumbent on him to prove them such, as one of the grounds on which he is to prove damages. It is tantamount to his having said, in his own manner of speaking, *they accuse me of being associated with scoundrels*. Morgan Lewis is a weak man. He has not talents for the station he holds. He entraps himself in his own contrivances.

But if the objection contained in the resolves was ill-founded, why did not Morgan Lewis come forward in the spirit of a man and the language of a gentleman, and contradict it. He would have gained credit by this, if he was innocent enough to have done it. The objection against him was publicly stated, and if not true ought to have been publicly refuted; for as Morgan Lewis is a public man, and the case involves a public question, it is the public of all parties that have a right to know if the objections against him are true or not. This case is not a question of law, but a question of honor and of public rights.

The man who resorts to artifice and cunning, instead of standing on the firm and open ground of principle can easily be found out. When those resolves first appeared, Morgan Lewis must have felt the necessity of taking some notice of them; but as it did not suit him at that time either to acknowledge them or contradict them, he had recourse to a prosecution, as it would afford a pretence for doing neither. A prosecution viewed in this light would accommodate itself to the situation he was in, by holding the matter in obscurity and indecision 'till the election should be over. But the artifice is too gauzy not to be seen through, and too apparently trickish not to be despised.

As to damages, Morgan Lewis has sustained none. If those resolves have had any effect, it has been to his benefit. He was a lost man among the republicans before the resolves appeared, and their public appearance has given him some standing among such of the federalists who are desti-

tute of honor and insensible of disgrace. These men will vote for him, and also for Rufus King, the persecutor of the unfortunate Irish.<sup>38</sup>

I now come to speak on the subject of damages generally; for it appears to me that certain juries have run into great mistakes on this subject. They have not distinguished between *penalty* and damages. Penalty is punishment for crime. Damages is indemnification for losses sustained. When a man is prosecuted criminally, all that is necessary to be proved is, the fact with which he is charged, and all that the jury has to do in this case is to bring in a verdict according to the evidence given. The court then passes sentence conformable to the law under which the crime is punishable. If it is by fine, or imprisonment, or both, the law generally limits the extent of the fine or penalty, and also the period of imprisonment. It does not leave it to any mad-headed, or avaricious individual, or to any jury, to say it shall be an hundred thousand dollars.

But in prosecutions for what are called damages, two things are necessary to be proved. First, the words spoken or published, or actions done. Secondly, damages actually sustained in consequence of those words or actions. The words or actions can often be proved, and Morgan Lewis may prove that certain resolves were passed at a meeting of the citizens, at which Thomas Farmar was chairman. But unless Morgan Lewis can prove that the meeting exercised illegal authority in passing those resolves, and that he has sustained damage in consequence thereof, a jury can award him no damages: and certain it is, the juries in cases of prosecution for what is called damages, cannot inflict penalties. Penalties go to the state, and not to the individual. If in any of the late prosecutions, juries have awarded damages where damages were not proved, the execution of the verdict ought to be suspended, and the case referred to a new trial.

### LETTER THIRD

In this letter I shall continue my observations on damages. The one is the man whose character is already so infamous that nothing said of him

<sup>38</sup> In 1798, after the Irish rebellion was suppressed by the British, the British government consented to spare the lives of the leaders of the rebellion on condition that they would go to some other country. They chose to go to the United States, but Rufus King, Federalist minister plenipotentiary to Great Britain, refused to permit them to come to this country. In a letter to the Secretary of State, June 14, 1798, he urged that these "Malcontents" be kept out of the United States. See Charles R. King, *The Life and Correspondence of Rufus King*, 6 vols., New York, 1895, vol. II, pp. 637-38.—*Editor*.

can make him appear worse than he is. The other is the man whose character is so invulnerable that no reproach against him can reach him. It falls pointless to the ground, or reacts upon the party from whence it came.

The first time Mr. Jefferson was elected president the majority in his favor was 92 to 84. As this majority was small, the faction of the Feds redoubled their abuse and multiplied falsehood upon falsehood to throw him out at the next election. Their malignity and their lies were permitted to pass uncontradicted, and the event was, that at the next election Mr. Jefferson had a majority of 162 to 14.

As this is an instance that invulnerable character cannot suffer damage, I leave it to Coleman, Cullen and Rufus King to identify the persons of the contrary description; and they may, if they please, draw lots among themselves to decide which of them shall stand foremost on the list of *infamous security* from damage:

When Morgan Lewis in conversation with William Livingston, said that "*De Witt Clinton, Judge Comstock, and Judge Johnson were three of the damnedest rascals that ever disgraced the councils of a state,*" the venom and vulgarity of the expression, were too visible to do injury, and the character of the man who said it, too equivocal to obtain credit. It was not worth the trouble of contradicting. Calumny is a vice of a curious constitution. Trying to kill it keeps it alive; leave it to itself and it will die a natural death.

Chancellor Lansing's ill judged and ill written address to the public comes precisely under the head of calumny.<sup>39</sup> He insinuated in that address a charge against Gov. Clinton when he (Gov. Clinton) was almost three hundred miles distant from New York, and when called upon by George Clinton Jr. to explain himself, that the public might know what he meant refused to do it. Mr. Lansing holds the office of Chancellor *during good behavior*, and this is the reverse of good behavior. The words *good behavior* which are the words of the constitution must have some meaning or why are they put there. They certainly apply to the whole of a man's moral and civil character and not merely to official character. A man may be punctual in his official character because it is his interest to be so, and yet be dishonorable and unjust in every thing else.

Mr. Lansing should have recollected that Gov. Clinton's long experi-

<sup>39</sup> John Lansing became Chancellor of New York State in 1801 and held the post until 1814.—*Editor*

ence in the office of governor enabled him to give useful advice to a young beginner, and his well known integrity precludes every idea of his giving any other. If Governor Clinton gave any advice to Mr. Lansing on the subject he speaks of, Mr. Lansing ought to have felt himself obliged to him, instead of which he has turned treacherous and ungrateful.

But though men of conscious integrity, calm and philosophical, will not descend to the low expedient of prosecuting for the sake of what are called damages, there nevertheless ought to be a law for punishing calumny; and this becomes the more necessary because it often happens that the prosecutor for damages is himself the calumniator. Morgan Lewis's prosecution of Thomas Farmar for one hundred thousand dollars damages, is holding Mr. Farmar up to the public as an unjust man. Maturin Livingston is playing the same game towards Mr. Jackson, one of the editors of the independent Republican, and the Anglo Irish Imposter Cullen, who is secured from damage by the infamy of his character, is trying to make three thousand dollars out of Mr. Frank, one of the editors of the Public Advertiser. As the matter stands at present, a rogue has a better chance than an honest man.

There is not a man in the United States, Thomas Jefferson excepted, that has been more abused by this mean and unprincipled faction than myself; yet I have never prosecuted any of them. I have left them to welter in their own lies. But had there been a law to punish calumny and lying by penalty and the money to be given to the poor, I would have done it. But as to damages, as I do not believe they have character enough of their own to endamage mine, I could claim none.

### JAMES MONROE AND RUFUS KING

The names of Monroe and King ought not to be mentioned in the same breath, but for the same purpose of framing the different character[s] of the two ministers.

When Hamilton Rowan effected his escape from an Irish prison and came to Paris he met Thomas Paine in the street and they agreed to spend the day together in the country. Mr. Paine called on Mr. Monroe to inform him of it and that he should not dine with him that day. On Mr. Paine mentioning the name of Hamilton Rowan, Mr. Monroe desired Mr. Paine to introduce him, which he did. Mr. Monroe received him with great cordiality and respect. Mr. Rowan then took his leave and when they were descending the stairs to go their country walk, Mr.

Monroe called Mr. Paine back and said to him, "As Mr. Rowan has met with a great many difficulties it is most probable he may be in difficulty with respect to money; please to tell from me that I will supply him."

Compare this nobleness of heart with the scoundrel conduct of Rufus King towards the comrades of Hamilton Rowan and every man of honor and feeling must despise and detest the wretch.

## TO MR. HULBERT, OF SHEFFIELD, ONE OF THE MORTIFIED FEDERAL MEMBERS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS LEGISLATURE

Few Presidents in our history were subjected to the abuse and venom visited upon Thomas Jefferson by his political opponents. Reactionary Federalists literally frothed at the mouth at the mere mention of Jefferson's name. "The Federalists hated Jefferson," writes Henry Cabot Lodge, "with no common political hatred, but rather with the vindictiveness of men toward a deadly foe who, as they believed, sought the ruin of all they most prized and cherished." (Quoted in Philip S. Foner, editor, *Thomas Jefferson: Selections from His Writings*, p. 32.)

Having felt the whip of Federalist attacks himself, Paine was more than anxious to trade blows with the abusers of his friend. On July 9, 1805, he wrote to John Fellows: "There has been a great deal of anonymous abuse thrown out in the federal papers against Mr. Jefferson, but until some names could be got hold of it was fighting the air to take any notice of them. We have now got hold of two names, your townsman Hulbert, the hypocritical Infidel of Sheffield, and Thomas Turner of Virginia, his correspondent. . . ."

The following article was Paine's reply to Hulbert's attacks upon Jefferson. It appeared in William Duane's Philadelphia *Aurora* of March 12, 1805, and is now for the first time included in a collection of Paine's writings.—*Editor.*

**W**HEN the poison-tooth of a rattlesnake is drawn, the bite and slaver of the reptile, like the slander and foam of Mr. Hulbert, become deprived of the power of injuring. The success of the republican ticket in Massachusetts has, at last, drawn the teeth of the rattlesnake of federalism, and reduced the mischievous animal to laughable insignificance. In this toothless and pitiless condition, the rattle in its tail, like the rattle of the legislator of Sheffield, is heard without alarm.

Slander belongs to the class of dastardly vices. It always acts under

cover. It puts insinuation in the place of evidence, and tries to impose by pretending to believe. Its loudest language, when it speaks, is a whisper. At other times, it disguises itself in anonymous paragraphs, for which nobody is accountable. But it is a refinement on meanness when the slanderer covers himself with the privilege of a legislator speaking in his place. It requires no courage to tell a lie, insinuate a calumny, where the prerogative of the place protects him from punishment, and the absence of the person slandered precludes immediate detection, and this is what Hurlbert has done.

Mr. Jefferson, at the distance of six or seven hundred miles, and myself at the distance of almost four hundred miles, have both been attacked in the legislature of Massachusetts, by this toothless rattlesnake, the legislator of Sheffield. Mr. Jefferson, as president of the United States, has other matters to attend to than that of answering this successor of Callender,<sup>40</sup> who finished his career of slander by putting an end to his existence; and as to myself, Mr. Hulbert may see by the reply I now make to him, that I hold him and his abuse in laughable derision.

One of his attacks on Mr. Jefferson is introduced in the following manner:

“Does any one doubt (said he) that Mr. Jefferson invited Thomas Paine to leave France and return to the United States. Let him read his letter and he will doubt no more.” Here Hulbert read part of Mr. Jefferson’s letter.

Any one unacquainted with the case would suppose, from the mystification with which the legislator of Sheffield brought forward the letter that he had made a discovery that had remained concealed from all the world beside, and been miraculously revealed to him for the salvation of the feds. Poor foolish impostor!

The whole of Mr. Jefferson’s letter to me was published in my sixth

<sup>40</sup> James Thomas Callender, a fugitive from political persecution in England, was the author of *Political Progress of Britain*. When this study appeared in America in the 1790’s, Jefferson commented favorably on it and, when approached to help Callender, extended several small loans to him. Later Callender was imprisoned under the notorious Alien and Sedition act, but was pardoned by Jefferson along with other victims of the Federalist anti-democratic offensive. After his pardon, Callender demanded an appointment in the Richmond post-office, but was refused by Jefferson. Enraged by this rebuff, Callender started to edit “the most scurrilous anti-Jefferson paper in the country to the infinite delight of the Federalists of light and leading who exerted themselves to spread its circulation even to the rarefied atmosphere of Beacon Hill” (Claude G. Bowers, *Jefferson in Power*, Boston, 1936, p. 67). After his paper sank into the insignificance it deserved, Callender committed suicide.—*Editor*.

letter to the citizens of the United States, the summer before last.<sup>41</sup> The falling faction of the feds, feeling themselves sinking into the bottomless pit of public contempt, had been, for several months before, inventing and publishing falsehood upon falsehood with respect to the supposed contents of this letter, and when they had run their length (for only give such people rope enough and they will hang themselves), I published the letter to expose their falsehoods and put them to confusion. The letter when publicly known did honor to the writer of it, and the re-election of Mr. Jefferson, by a majority of one hundred and sixty-two votes, out of an hundred and seventy-six, confirms it to be a fact.

The part which this toothless rattlesnake, the aforesaid legislator of Sheffield, attacks is that, in which Mr. Jefferson, after he arrived at the presidency, looks back with generous and even grateful remembrance (a virtue which the ulcerated heart of federalism knows nothing of), on the long services of a former fellow laborer in the vineyard of independence. I was myself among the first that proposed independence, and it was Mr. Jefferson who drew up the declaration of it. Here follows the part which our graceless legislator read. It was in answer to a letter received from me:

“You express a wish (says the letter) to return to America by a national ship. Mr. Dawson is charged with orders to the captain of the Maryland to receive and accommodate you back, if you can be ready to depart at such a short notice. You will find us, in general, returned to sentiments worthy of former times. In these it will be your glory to have steadily labored and with as much effect as any man living. That you may live long to continue your useful labors, and reap the reward in the thankfulness of nations, is my sincere prayer. Accept the assurances of my high esteem and affectionate attachment.”

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

There is one thing, of which Mr. Hulbert may be assured, which is, that it is impossible for any man, whether president or private, to write such a letter to him, without telling a lie in every line.

Our legislator (who is now acting the part of a slanderer and also of a hypocrite as I shall show), having read this extract, proceeds with his remarks thereupon:

“Is this, said he, the language of cold indifference? Is it the language

<sup>41</sup> See above pp. 946-947.—*Editor*.



of ordinary civility? No (said he), it is the ardent expression of high esteem and affectionate attachment to one of the *most unprincipled and abandoned of the human race*—Well done thou herald of old Satan—thou shalt sit at his right hand.

In the next paragraph our legislator goes a step further, for lying has no limit.

It has been said, continues Hulbert, that the writings of Thomas Paine were useful to this country at the commencement of our revolution; so, said he, were the exertions of Benedict Arnold. Both were once useful men. *Both turned traitors to their country.*

As it is totally unnecessary to contradict that which all the world knows to be a lie, I republish it to proclaim the ingratitude and baseness of its inventor.

In the volcano of his abuse he next involves France, without knowing any thing of the subject he speaks of, except what one lying impostor of his own class had told to another.

“It is true, said he (he ought to have said it is a lie) that by a national decree, all religion had been banished in France—the idea of a God discarded—and it had been, said he, impiously inscribed over the entrance of all the burying places in France, *that death was an eternal sleep.*”

It would, perhaps, be happy for such unprincipled impostors as Hulbert, if it was true, that *death was an eternal sleep*, for he has much to answer for. But it is false to say, that such an inscription was put up by a national decree, or by any other decree or order whatever or that it was put up any where.

It is also false that all religion in France was abolished by a decree. The national assembly passed a decree to banish the refractory priests, those who took the oath of fidelity to the republic, performed their worship as before, except they were prohibited making public processions in the streets with their crucifixes, images of the Virgin Mary, saints etc., and as to the Protestant church in the Rue St. Thomas, at Paris, the service in it was never interrupted.

It is also false that all idea of a God was discarded by a decree or by any authority whatever. The only decree that was passed by the convention, on the subject of creeds, is directly the reverse of what this impostor says. The decree was, “*the French people recognize the Supreme Being,*” that is, acknowledge and declare their belief in him;

and this decree was inserted in the French language, on several of the churches where the constitutional priests officiated.

There was also another inscription put up in the time of Robespierre in front of the building where the national convention sat, which, though it does honor to the French with respect to humanity, stands as a contradiction to this licentious libeller. The inscription was, "*The Divinity condemns tyrants; the French people execute the decree.*"

The religious society of the Theophilanthropism a word compounded of three Greek words, and meaning, *adorers of God and lovers of man*, was established in the time of the directory, and Raveliere la Peaux, one of the five directors, was one of its principled founders. It professed two articles as its creed, *the belief of a God, and a state of future existence*. Its moral dogmas were exceedingly good.

Having now detected Hulbert in his falsehoods not by mere assertions, as he deals in, but by the evidence of fact, I go to show that he is an impostor and a hypocrite, for notwithstanding his clamor about religion, he does not believe the Christian religion himself, nor holds it to be true.

It is neither his belief nor his disbelief that I trouble myself about. Every man must answer for the truth or falsehood of his creed at the tribunal of *his creator*, and not to that of *man*, nor of one man to another. It is Hulbert's hypocrisy only that I expose.

If Mr. Hulbert, or the speaker of the house of representatives, who heard his nonsense, will write to John Fellows, Water Street, New York, he will be informed of the evidence that will prove the hypocrisy of Hulbert.

Slander and hypocrisy are class mates in the school of vice. They are the necessary aids of each other. The same cowardly depravity of heart that leads to the one conducts to the other, and Hulbert has made the tour of both.

Had not Hulbert profaned the sanctuary of legislation, and covered himself with the privilege of a legislator, to pour forth his abuse, his slander and his falsehoods, he would have drawn no reply from me. I should have let him pass, unnoticed, among the group of nameless and indiscriminate libellers who have wasted their venom and their invention in vain.

THOMAS PAINE.

## ANOTHER CALLENDER—THOMAS TURNER OF VIRGINIA

Paine sent the following defense of Jefferson to John Fellows who was to forward it to James Cheetham for inclusion in the columns of the *American Citizen*. "I have not signed it either with my name or signature (Common Sense)," he wrote to Fellows, "because I found myself obliged, in order to make such scoundrels feel a little smart, to get somewhat out of my usual manner of writing, but there are some sentiments had some expressions that will be supposed to be in my style, and I have no objection to that supposition, but I do not wish Mr. Jefferson to be *obliged* to know it is from me." Significantly enough, Paine chose as his pen-name for this article, "A Spark from the Altar of '76," a term he had used in 1802. (See p. 910 line 8.)

The article appeared in two parts in the *American Citizen* of July 23, 24, 1805. Cheetham, however, deleted one section from Paine's manuscript, for Paine writes to Fellows on July 31, 1805: "I see that Cheetham has left out the part respecting Hamilton and Mrs. Reynolds but for my own part I wish it had been in. Had the story never been publicly told I would not have been the first to tell it; but Hamilton has told it himself and therefore it was no secret. But my motive in introducing it was because it was applicable to the subject I was upon, and to show the revilers of Mr. Jefferson that while they are affecting a morality of horror at an unproved and unfounded story about Mr. Jefferson they had better look at home. . . ." (See below pp. 1469-1470 for the entire letter.)

This article, which contains some of Paine's spiciest writing, has never been reprinted since 1805, and never before included in any collection of Paine's writings. This is hardly surprising, since it would be difficult, without first having access to Paine's letter to Fellows, to know that he had written the article.—*Editor*.

### NUMBER I

**F**EDERALISM and blackguardism are synonymous terms. A man of Virginia who signs himself *Thomas Turner* (if any body knows him) has written a letter to some nobody or other in Massachusetts (if any body knows such a person) for the purpose of defaming Mr. Jefferson. The letter has been published in that repository of filth, the *Repertory*, printed somewhere in the federal purlieu of Yanky-town.

As I sometimes amuse myself with dissecting impostors and hypocrites and putting the parts together again in their proper form, I have thrown away an hour or two, having nothing else at that time to do, in examining the component parts of this putrid production of Thomas Turner.

There is not a worse character in life than that of a mischief-making blackhearted man. It is a disposition that leads to every thing that disturbs the peace of society. It works under ground like a mole, and having thrown up its little mole-hills of dirt, blows them with its pestiferous breath into mountains. This is evidently the character of this co-partner of Callender, Thomas Turner. Who he is the Lord knows, for his name is not known in the list of patriots. If one may hazard a guess at him from the jaundiced complexion of his letter, and the circumstances of the case, he is some petty-fogging attorney like that hypocritical dabbler in dirt *Hulbert*, of Sheffield, Massachusetts, and that they are correspondents, or in other words, *two skunks who stink in concert*; for Hulbert's speech, and Turner's letter are alike.

I will now examine the charges he brings in his letter against Mr. Jefferson, and show, that while they prove the vile disposition of the writer, they amount to nothing against Mr. Jefferson, but on the contrary add to the opinion the public have of his integrity. The first charge is as follows:

"At the time Petersburg (Virginia) was occupied by the *British troops* under the command of the *Generals Phillips and Arnold*" (*observe, reader, the qualified toryism of the man, for it is by little inadvertencies that great scoundrels are first discovered*). "*At the time, says he, Petersburg was occupied by the British troops under the command of Generals Phillips and Arnold.*" *A man who had the proper feelings of an American would have said, "at the time Petersburg was occupied by the enemy under the command of the British general Phillips and the traitor Arnold";* but this did not suit Turner's creed; "Mr. Jefferson, says he, who was then Governor of the state, did participate in the *partial* consternation (it was undoubtedly partial, for the tories were not in any consternation about it), *and did abandon the seat of government.* This is the first charge.

Now, if the circumstances of the times, of which Mr. Jefferson was himself the Judge, and not this runagate, rendered it proper for him, as Governor of the state, to remove from Richmond he did what was his duty to do, and in so doing he did right. In the year '76 Congress

sat at Philadelphia, and according to Turner's phrase and inference Philadelphia was then the *seat of government*, and Congress ought not to have *abandoned* it. But when the enemy penetrated the Jerseys and approached towards the Delaware, Congress removed to Baltimore; the next year they removed to Lancaster, and from thence to Yorktown in Pennsylvania. It is nonsense to talk about a seat of government when a count[r]y is invaded. The seat of government then is wherever government sit. Perhaps in a village; perhaps in the open air. Pray how much does Pitt and Dundas give this ignoramus for making a public fool of himself?

Turner's second charge is of the same character with his first; malignant and impotent. "The sequel, says he, of Mr. Jefferson's conduct after the assembly returned to Charlottesville, and on the approach of Col. Tarlton to that place (so then the Assembly also had *abandoned* Richmond), stands attested by thousands of witnesses and can never be forgotten by those of his country—men who respect the character of a firm and virtuous public officer, and who abhor that of a dastardly *traitor* to the trust reposed in him." On reading this terrible introductory passage of alarm one would expect that some most enormous crime was to be announced, nothing less than that Governor Jefferson, like General Arnold, had come over to the enemy. No such thing, but directly the contrary. "Mr. Jefferson's retreat (says Turner) or rather *flight* from *Monticello* (Mr. Jefferson's residence in Virginia) on the information that Tarlton had penetrated the country, and was advancing to Charlottesville; was effected with such hurried abruptness as to produce a fall from his horse and a dislocation of the shoulder." (Now if any one was a traitor in this affair it must have been the *horse* for having thrown his rider and dislocated his shoulder, that the forces who were after him might be able to come up with him.) In this situation (continues Turner, that is, with his shoulder dislocated) "Mr. Jefferson proceeded about 60 miles south to the county of Bedford whence he forwarded his resignation to the Assembly, who had, in the mean time, removed to Staunton (so the Assembly has also retreated) and who thereupon, that is, on Mr. Jefferson's resignation, elected General Nelson Governor." Turner having told this most wonderful tale concludes it by assuring his brother skunk of Massachusetts, that "these circumstances are *substantially and literally true*."

Now, would any one but a half-witted malignant torified Paltroon, one who has not sense enough to know how to do mischief, have told

this story for the purpose of defaming Mr. Jefferson when even from his own manner of telling it, it shows Mr. Jefferson's patriotism and integrity. The state of Virginia being then invaded, it was most proper that a military man should be at the head of its affairs, and Mr. Jefferson had never made the study and use of arms his profession; and besides this, the dislocation of his shoulder had rendered him unfit for any thing of active life. In this state of things he did what an honest patriot ought to do, that is, make room for another person by sending in his resignation—a mere skunk, such as Turner has proved himself to be, would have acted a different part. He would have gone over to the "*British troops,*" or if he could not do this, would have shut himself up in his chamber, or kept his bed, done nothing, continued drawing his salary as Governor in the mean time, and perhaps charged the state with the surgeon's bill, on the plea that he received his injury in the public service of his country and ought to have a pension settled on him for life, and if they did not do this he would join Gen. Arnold and make Virginia smart for it. Thus much for Turner's second charge.

His third charge relates to some pecuniary assistance Mr. Jefferson gave to Callender in his distress. The charge is introduced by the following preamble.

"Mr. Jefferson's encouragement of *Callender and his rewarding that miscreant for the blackest effusions of the blackest calumny that ever escaped the envenomed pen of a villain,* are circumstances, as well known in Richmond, and as capable of positive proof, as is the circumstances of his having delivered an inaugural speech or any thing else of the most public notoriety." This paragraph is in the highest style of envenomed blackguardism; and it is first necessary to know to what publication of Callender Turner applies this language, for it is by knowing this, that we come at the political character of Turner and of the gang to which he belongs.

Callender began his career in this country by publishing a work on the atrocities of the English system of government, and the ruinous measures copied from thence and adopted in this country during the wretched administration of John Adams. The work has some merit both as to matter and composition; but it has no merit with a tory nor with any *conspirator concerned in the treasonable project of bringing over a foreign royal blackguard to be king of America.* It is to this work of Callender that Turner applies his abuse. We now know what Turner is.

As to Callender, the case is, that under the character of a distressed patriot of some talents, though he turned out to be a scoundrel, afterwards, he made his case known to Mr. Jefferson who assisted him, according to Turner's account, with fifty dollars at one time, and fifty more afterwards. All this is to Mr. Jefferson's credit. But such miscreants as Turner, viewing every thing through the perverting fog of toryism, make good, evil; and evil, good; for the work that Callender was then publishing was against toryism. Turner, as if in proving the public spirited benevolence of Mr. Jefferson was proving something against him, assures us, fool-like, that *it is* true, and appeals to Mr. *Davis* of Richmond as evidence that Mr. Jefferson did actually assist Callender, that is, when he was publishing his work against toryism, with an hundred dollars.

[This is most probably the same Davis, for *birds of a feather will flock together*, that circulated a forgery done by Donald Frazer, a Scotch school-master in William Street, N. York, and entitled "*The Recantation of Thomas Payne.*" The case is concisely as follows:—Mr. Paine was not in America when it was done, and Frazer hearing after Mr. Paine's return that he intended to prosecute him for the forgery, put on a face of brass and went to Mr. P. last winter and New York to make his *confession* which he did in the following manner, several persons being present: "Sir, said Frazer, I came over to this country in the war to fight the rebels; but I was put in prison; and when I got out, wanting something to do, I set up for a *fencing master*; but a Frenchman came and set up against me, and he soon showed that I was no fencing master. Then, sir, I turned *Clergyman* and set out to preach, but there were others that out-preached me and I had to give up preaching. After several adventures I became a School-master; at last a lucky thought came in my head to turn author, and write your *Recantation*; and I got more money by it than I did by preaching and fencing, for I cleared between seventy and eighty dollars. The work had not much sale in New York for the people soon knew it was not yours. But I sent four hundred copies to my friend *Davis* in Virginia and he sold them all as your genuine work."'] If Turner's Davis is the same as Donald Frazer's Davis, there is a pretty gang of them.

This much for Turner's third charge. The baseness of this man consists in a villainous misrepresentation of every circumstance he relates. Mr. Jefferson's quitting Richmond, when the state was invaded (for the legislature also quitted it) and his quitting afterwards his own house (for the legislature at the same time quitted Charlottesville) are stated by this man as crimes; whereas they were necessary precautions

to preserve the official papers and orders of the government from falling into the hands of the enemy; and Mr. Jefferson's resignation of the office of Governor after the dislocation of his shoulder, to make room for General Nelson, was disinterested patriotism. The assistance also given to Callender, at the time it was done, and for the purpose for which it was done, that of enabling him to get out his work against toryism, was a praise worthy act—Callender afterwards turned a scoundrel and then expiated his crime by drowning himself; and the world, Turner, will be rid of another scoundrel if thou wilt go and do so likewise.

## NUMBER II

In the former number I showed the villainous misrepresentations of this co-partner of Callender, Thomas Turner of Virginia, in the three first calumnious charges he brings in his letter, against Mr. Jefferson. Before I proceed further I will make some remarks respecting that letter.

In the first place it does not appear that he intended it should. He wrote it to set somebody else on; for he says in the conclusion of his letter, "If you (the person to whom it was written) find occasion you are at liberty to make use of *my name in this business* (that is in the business of blackguarding Mr. Jefferson) but if not necessary *I have no particular inclination to appear in it.*" The inference from this is, you may use my name verbally, by word of mouth, but not publish my letter.

The letter, as far as circumstances justify the conjecture, was written to that hypocritical imposter *Hulbert*, of Sheffield in Massachusetts, for Hulbert's speech in the legislature of that *once* respectable state is a detail of all the blackguardism in this letter. The person, however, to whom it was written is evidently the person who sent it for publication in the *Repertory*. He speaks of himself in the first person, the self-important pronoun *I*, but without letting the reader know who *I* is, and he introduces the letter with a preface of his own, beginning with the following sentence—"The various charges which have been advanced against Mr. Jefferson, and which, from a complete conviction of their truth *I* pledged myself to support, instead of silencing the *head-strong* advocates of the *distinguished profligate* (the writer of this deserves to have his head broke) have produced nothing but a torrent of personal



abuse." He has good luck that it did not produce a personal horse-whipping.

We find by this doleful confession that Hulbert's unprincipled speech and infamous abuse of Mr. Jefferson has recoiled upon himself, and that to lessen the severity of the stroke he turns traitor to his prompter, *Turner*, and publishes his letter, which he calls a communication from Thomas Turner, Esq. of Virginia, "*A gentleman of very respectable character and whose veracity will not be questioned.*" It would make even a surly Diogenes laugh to hear two scoundrels vouching for each other's veracity. I now return to an examination of Turner's letter.

Turner's fourth calumny is a tale about Mrs. Walker; who, if now living, must be upwards of sixty years of age; a tale, of which the public knows no fact, and is possessed of no evidence. The tale, however, is badly told, and swelled with such improbabilities as to render it distortedly ridiculous like a mite in a microscope. We have heard of a ten years siege of Troy; but who ever heard of a ten years siege to seduce?—and what is equally as wonderful, that a woman should keep it a secret ten years. "*Ten years* (says Turner and then repeats it in capitals) TEN YEARS, was Mr. Jefferson repeatedly and assiduously making attempts which were as repeatedly and with *horror* repelled." There could not be much *horror* in the case or it would have killed any woman in less than a tenth part of that time.

Neither will it be easy to find any ten years of Mr. Jefferson's life that could be thus devoted. It could not be within the last thirty years; for he drew up the Declaration of Independence in '76 and Congress was then at Philadelphia. He was Governor of Virginia when it was invaded, and Turner himself has shown he had then no stationary residence and had quitted his own plantation. After the war he went as minister to France; returned about the year '88 and was secretary of state at Philadelphia. When John Adams was President Mr. Jefferson was Vice-President at Washington and since that time President. Where, then, is this ten years to be placed? If liars ought to have good memories, manufacturers of Romance ought at least to consult possibilities.

But, says Turner, I have seen the original correspondence between Mr. Walker and Mr. Jefferson. Perhaps what he saw, *if he saw any*, was as original and as genuine as the forged recantation of Thomas Paine. But admitting it to be what he calls it, what does his *seeing* it amount to? He has not given a single verbatim extract from it, which

he certainly would have done if he *had* seen it, and if the correspondence had contained what he insinuates. Instead of this, he makes Mr. Jefferson express a sentiment that is highly honorable, for he makes him to say (I suppose he means in a letter to Mr. Walker) that "*he shall never cease to revere and attest the purity of Mrs. Walker's character.*" This, though malignantly intended by Turner, redounds to Mr. Jefferson's honor; for there is not a case in the social circle of life in which a man appears more a man, or more a man of honor, than when he vindicates the reputation of a woman unjustly accused or censured on his account. But Turner seems to have no other idea of a woman than as an animal, and to be insensible and incapable of that chaste and sentimental respect a man may conceive for a woman on account of her virtues and excellencies. He must therefore be unfit to be trusted with the society of any woman of character. This story, hackneyed as it is, has the appearance of being fabricated from some trifling circumstance, or some mistake, or to have originated in some family dispute with which the public has no concern, and all that we discover by it, is the malignant, unjust and hateful spite of faction. The story will never lose Mr. Jefferson a friend, or a vote; but the malicious misrepresentations with which it is told may gain him many.

As a general rule, we may take it for granted, and that with as few exceptions as any general rule will admit of, that *private character is the foundation of public character*, and that where public character is uniformly honorable and upright, and that for a great length of time, the private character will be found the same. The country has had experience of Mr. Jefferson for thirty years in the various situations of member of Congress, foreign minister, secretary of state, vice-president, and President, in all which the breath of detraction has not dared to approach him. With this public testimony of fact in his favor the villainous detraction of private individual libellers recoil on themselves.

Turner comes next to another tale, a tale about a *black*, or rather, he says, a *mulatto Sally*, for he seems not to know which it is, nor any thing about it; but he says "*it is unquestionably true,*" and as he might say this of any story however false, it serves to show that he would say something if he could.

Turner's last calumny is about some money that Mr. Jefferson, when he commenced the practice of the law, borrowed *on bond* of a Mr. Gabriel Jones. Turner does not tell us the sum, but I have somewhere seen it stated to be fifty pounds, Virginia currency, about one hundred

and sixty-seven dollars (no great bond, for it looks more like usury than friendship). This debt, Turner says, Mr. Jefferson paid in paper money: "I think, says Turner, in the year 1779." Perhaps it was in '78, or '77, or '76. "Mr. Jones, says Turner, indignant at such treatment, and appreciating the transaction by its merits, inclosed the *bond* to Mr. Jefferson accompanied with the paper money tendered and such remarks as the nature of the case was calculated to suggest." (Turner does not tell us what those remarks were, which show[s] he knows nothing about them, or if he does know, that it does not suit his purpose to tell them.) "The consequence," says Turner, "was, *a full discharge of the debt in specie.*"

This is stated as a charge against Mr. Jefferson; whereas it is one of the most honorable instances that can be produced, and I believe the only one, of the payment of a debt at that time, and the friends of Mr. Jefferson are highly gratified that the maliciousness of his enemies has made it known. This Thomas Turner must be some stupid upstart that knows nothing of the times he writes about. Continental paper money was then a legal tender, and were tender of it made for a debt due and the tender refused, the debt was cancelled and could not be recovered by law. Mr. Jefferson did not avail himself of the law, though thousands did, but paid the debt in specie, even after his bond was returned, and when no law could compel him to pay it in any kind of money— Thus much for the sixth and last calumny of Thomas Turner of Virginia, the stupid correspondent of Hulbert, the hypocritical legislator of Sheffield, in Massachusetts.

I have now gone, calmly and deliberately through all the charges and calumnies raised against Mr. Jefferson; but I have not done it for the purpose of defending him. I have done it to expose the baseness of the federal faction, and to hold it up to public detestation. Mr. Jefferson's conduct needs no defense. He has heard, with undisturbed composure, the ravings of this unprincipled faction, and residing his character on its own merits the public voice of his country has rewarded him with honor.

It is, perhaps, a bold sentiment but it is a true one, that a *just man, when attacked, should not defend himself*. His conduct will do it for him, and Time will put his detractors under his feet.

A SPARK FROM THE ALTAR OF '76.

*End of the second, and last, number for the present.*

## CONSTITUTIONS, GOVERNMENTS, AND CHARTERS

Paine wrote this essay, which was published in pamphlet form in June, 1805, to prove the unconstitutionality of the power assumed by the New York legislature to grant charters. He argues that the entire object of annual elections would be defeated "if any one legislature, during the year of its authority, had the power to place any of its acts beyond the reach of succeeding legislatures; yet this is always attempted to be done in those acts of a legislature called charters." Paine proposes that all kinds of "extraordinary legislation," such as those involving land grants and incorporations of companies, should be passed only by a legislature succeeding the one in which it was proposed. The spirit of the essay reflects the popular opposition to chartered monopolies.—*Editor.*

**T**HE people of Pennsylvania are, at this time, earnestly occupied on the subject of calling a convention to revise their State Constitution, and there can be but little doubt that a revision is necessary. It is a Constitution, they say, for the emolument of lawyers.

It has happened that the constitutions of all the states were formed before any experience had been had on the representative system of government; and it would be a miracle in human affairs that mere theory without experience should start into perfection at once. The Constitution of New York was formed so early as the year 1777.

The subject that occupied and engrossed the mind of the public at that time was the Revolutionary War, and the establishment of independence, and in order to give effect to the Declaration of Independence by Congress it was necessary that the states severally should make a practical beginning by establishing state constitutions, and trust to time and experience for improvement. The general defect in all the constitutions is that they are modeled too much after the system, if it can be called a system, of the English Government, which in practise is the most corrupt system in existence, for it is corruption systematized.

An idea also generally prevailed at that time of keeping what were called the legislative, the executive, and the judicial powers distinct and separated from each other. But this idea, whether correct or not, is

always contradicted in practise; for where the consent of a governor or executive is required to an act before it can become a law, or where he can by his negative prevent an act of the legislature becoming a law, he is effectually a part of the legislature, and possesses full one-half of the powers of a whole legislature.

In this State (New York) this power is vested in a select body of men, composed of the executive, by which is to be understood the governor, the chancellor, and the judges, and called the Council of Revision. This is certainly better than vesting that power in an individual, if it is necessary to invest it anywhere; but is a direct contradiction to the maxim set up, that those powers ought to be kept separate; for here the executive and the judiciary are united into one power, acting legislatively.

When we see maxims that fail in practise, we ought to go to the root, and see if the maxim be true. Now it does not signify how many nominal divisions, and sub-divisions, and classifications we make, for the fact is, *there are but two powers in any government, the power of willing or enacting the laws, and the power of executing them*; for what is called the *judiciary* is a branch of executive power; it executes the laws; and what is called the *executive* is a superintending power to see that the laws are executed.

Errors in theory are, sooner or later, accompanied with errors in practise; and this leads me to another part of the subject, that of considering a constitution and a government relatively to each other.

A constitution is the act of the people in their original character of sovereignty. A government is a creature of the constitution; it is produced and brought into existence by it. A constitution defines and limits the powers of the government it creates. It therefore follows, as a natural and also a logical result, that the governmental exercise of any power not authorized by the constitution is an assumed power, and therefore illegal.

There is no article in the Constitution of this State, nor of any of the states, that invests the Government in whole or in part with the power of granting charters or monopolies of any kind; the spirit of the times was then against all such speculation; and therefore the assuming to grant them is unconstitutional, and when obtained by bribery and corruption is criminal. It is also contrary to the intention and principle of annual elections.

Legislatures are elected annually, not only for the purpose of giving the people, in their elective character, the opportunity of showing their

approbation of those who have acted right, by re-electing them, and rejecting those who have acted wrong; but also for the purpose of correcting the wrong (where any wrong has been done) of a former legislature. But the very intention, essence and principle of annual election would be destroyed if any one legislature, during the year of its authority, had the power to place any of its acts beyond the reach of succeeding legislatures; yet this is always attempted to be done in those acts of a legislature called charters.

Of what use is it to dismiss legislators for having done wrong, if the wrong is to continue on the authority of those who did it? Thus much for things that are wrong. I now come to speak of things that are right and may be necessary.

Experience shows that matters will occasionally arise, especially in a new country, that will require the exercise of a power differently constituted to that of ordinary legislation; and therefore there ought to be in a constitution an article defining how that power shall be constituted and exercised. Perhaps the simplest method, that which I am going to mention, is the best; because it is still keeping strictly within the limits of annual elections, makes no new appointments necessary and creates no additional expense. For example,

That all matters of a different quality to matters of ordinary legislation, such, for instance, as sales or grants of public lands, acts of incorporation, public contracts with individuals or companies beyond a certain amount, shall be proposed in one legislature, and published in the form of a bill, with the yeas and nays, after the second reading, and in that state shall lie over to be taken up by the succeeding legislature; that is, there shall always be, on all such matters, one annual election [which] takes place between the time of bringing in the bill and the time of enacting it into a permanent law.

It is the rapidity with which a self-interested speculation, or a fraud on the public property, can be carried through within the short space of one session, and before the people can be apprised of it, that renders it necessary that a precaution of this kind, unless a better can be devised, should be made an article of the Constitution.

Had such an article been originally in the Constitution, the bribery and corruption employed to seduce and manager the members of the late Legislature, in the affair of the Merchants' Bank, could not have taken place. It would not have been worth while to bribe men to do what they had not the power of doing. That Legislature could only have

proposed, but not have enacted the law; and the election then ensuing would, by discarding the proposers, have negated the proposal without any further trouble.

This method has the appearance of doubling the value and importance of annual elections. It is only by means of elections that the mind of the public can be collected to a point on any important subject; and as it is always the interest of a much greater number of people in a country to have a thing right than to have it wrong, the public sentiment is always worth attending to. It may sometimes err, but never intentionally, and never long.

The experiment of the Merchants' Bank shows it is impossible to bribe a small body of men, but it is always *impossible* to bribe a whole nation; and therefore in all legislative matters that by requiring permanency differ from acts of ordinary legislation, which are alterable or repealable at all times, it is safest that they pass through two legislatures, and a general election intervene between. The elections will always bring up the mind of the country on any important proposed bill; and thus the whole State will be its own *Council of Revision*. It has already passed its *veto* on the Merchants' Bank bill, notwithstanding the *minor* Council of Revision approved it.

COMMON SENSE.

NEW ROCHELLE, JUNE 21, 1805.

## CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

TO THE CITIZENS OF PENNSYLVANIA ON THE PROPOSAL FOR  
CALLING A CONVENTION

This public letter to the people of Pennsylvania, printed and distributed by the Philadelphia *Aurora* in 1805, was the last political pamphlet Paine wrote. Paine's pamphlet helped to secure the election of Thomas McKean, the Jeffersonian candidate for Governor, for the issues he discussed were the main questions in the gubernatorial campaign of 1805.—*Editor*.

AS I resided in the capital of your State, Philadelphia, in the *time that* *A**tried men's souls*, and all my political writings, during the Revolutionary War, were written in that city, it seems natural for me to look back to the place of my political and literary birth, and feel an interest

for its happiness. Removed as I now am from the place, and detached from everything of personal party, I address this token to you on the ground of principle and in remembrance of former times and friendships.

The subject now before you is the call of a Convention to examine and, if necessary, to reform the Constitution of the State; or to speak in the correct language of constitutional order, to propose written articles of reform to be accepted or rejected by the people by vote, in the room of those now existing that shall be judged improper or defective.

There cannot be, on the ground of reason, any objection to this; because if no reform or alteration is necessary the sense of the country will permit none to be made; and, *if necessary*, it *will* be made because it *ought* to be made. Until, therefore, the sense of the country can be collected and made known by a convention elected for that purpose, all opposition to the call of a convention not only passes for nothing, but serves to create a suspicion that the opposers are conscious that the Constitution will not bear an examination.

The Constitution formed by the Convention of 1776, of which Benjamin Franklin (the greatest and most useful man America has yet produced), was president, had many good points in it which were overthrown by the Convention of 1790,<sup>42</sup> under the pretense of making the Constitution conformable to that of the United States; as if the forms and periods of election for a territory extensive as that of the United States is could become a rule for a single state.

The principal defect in the Constitution of 1776 was that it was subject, in practise, to too much precipitancy; but the groundwork of that Constitution was good. The present Constitution appears to me to be clogged with inconsistencies of a hazardous tendency, as a supposed remedy against a precipitancy that might not happen. Investing any individual, by whatever name or official title he may be called, with a negative over the formation of the laws, is copied from the English Government, without ever perceiving the inconsistency and absurdity of it, when applied to the representative system, or understanding the origin of it in England.

The present form of government in England and all those things

<sup>42</sup> In 1777, 1778, and in 1783 and 1784, the conservatives in Pennsylvania had attempted to overthrow the progressive constitution of 1776 but each time they had failed. In 1790 their fourth attempt was crowned with success, and the counter-revolution in the keystone state achieved its goal with the adoption of a new constitution.—*Editor*.



called prerogatives of the Crown, of which this negative power is one, was established by conquest, not by compact. Their origin was the conquest of England by the Normans, under William of Normandy, surnamed the Conqueror, in 1066, and the genealogy of its kings takes its date from him. He is the first of the list.

There is no historical certainty of the time when parliaments began; but be the time when it may, they began by what are called grants or charters from the Norman Conqueror, or his successors, to certain towns, and to counties, to elect members to meet and serve in Parliament<sup>43</sup> subject to his control; and the custom still continues with the King of England calling the Parliament *my Parliament*; that is, a Parliament originating from his authority, and over which he holds control in right of himself, derived from that conquest.

It is from this assumed right, derived from conquest, and not from any constitutional right by compact, that kings of England hold a negative over the formation of the laws; and they hold this for the purpose of preventing any being enacted that might abridge, invade, or in any way affect or diminish what they claim to be their hereditary or family rights and prerogatives, derived originally from the conquest of the country.<sup>44</sup> This is the origin of the King of England's negative. It is a badge of disgrace which *his* Parliaments are obliged to wear, and to which they are abject enough to submit.

But what has this case to do with a legislature chosen by freemen, on their own authority, in right of themselves? Or in what manner does a person styled Governor or Chief Magistrate resemble a conqueror subjugating a country, as William of Normandy subjugated England, and saying to it, *you shall have no laws but what I please?*

The negating power in a country like America is of that kind, that a wise man would not choose to be embarrassed with it, and a man fond of using it will be overthrown by it. It is not difficult to see that when Mr. M'Kean negated the Arbitration Act, he was induced to it as a *lawyer*, for the benefit of the profession, and not as a *magistrate*, for the

<sup>43</sup> *Parliament* is a French word, brought into England by the Normans. It comes from the French verb *parler*—to speak.—*Author*.

<sup>44</sup> When a king of England (for they are not an English race of kings) negatives an act passed by the Parliament, he does it in the Norman or French language, which was the language of the Conquest. the literal translation of which is, *the king will advise himself of it*. It is the only instance of a king of England speaking French in Parliament; and shows the origin of the negative.—*Author*.

benefit of the people; for it is the office of a chief magistrate to compose differences and *prevent* lawsuits.

If the people choose to have arbitrations instead of lawsuits why should they not have them? It is a matter that concerns them as individuals, and not as a state or community, and is not a proper case for a governor to interfere in, for it is not a state or government concern: nor does it concern the peace thereof, otherwise than to make it more peaceable by making it less contentious.

This negating power in the hands of an individual ought to be constitutionally abolished. It is a dangerous power. There is no prescribing rules for the use of it. It is discretionary and arbitrary; and the will and temper of the person at any time possessing it, is its only rule. There must have been great want of reflection in the Convention that admitted it into the Constitution. Would that Convention have put the Constitution it had formed (whether good or bad) in the power of any individual to negative? It would not. It would have treated such a proposal with disdain. Why then did it put the legislatures thereafter to be chosen, and all the laws, in that predicament?

Had that Convention, or the law members thereof, known the origin of the negating power used by kings of England, from whence they copied it, they must have seen the inconsistency of introducing it into an American Constitution. We are not a conquered people; we know no conqueror; and the negating power used by kings in England is for the defense of the personal and family prerogatives of the successors of the conqueror against the Parliament and the people. What is all this to us? We know no prerogatives but what belong to the sovereignty of ourselves.

At the time this Constitution was formed, there was a great departure from the principles of the Revolution, among those who then assumed the lead, and the country was grossly imposed upon. This accounts for some inconsistencies that are to be found in the present Constitution, among which is the negating power inconsistently copied from England. While the exercise of the power over the state remained dormant it remained unnoticed; but the instant it began to be active it began to alarm; and the exercise of it against the rights of the people to settle their private pecuniary differences by the peaceable mode of arbitration, without the interference of lawyers, and the expense of tediousness of courts of law, has brought its existence to a crisis.

Arbitration is of more importance to society than courts of law, and ought to have precedence of them in all cases of pecuniary concerns between individuals or parties of them. Who are better qualified than merchants to settle disputes between merchants, or who better than farmers to settle disputes between farmers? And the same for every other description of men. What do lawyers or courts of law know of these matters? They devote themselves to forms rather than to principles, and the merits of the case become obscure and lost in a labyrinth of verbal perplexities. We do not hear of lawyers going to law with each other, though they could do it cheaper than other people, which shows they have no opinion of it for themselves.

The principle and rule of arbitration ought to be constitutionally established. The honest sense of a country collected in convention will find out how to do this without the interference of lawyers, who may be hired to advocate any side of any cause; for the case is the practise of the bar is become a species of prostitution that ought to be controlled. It lives by encouraging the injustice it pretends to redress.

Courts in which law is practised are of two kinds. The one for criminal cases, the other for civil cases, or cases between individuals respecting property of any kind or the value thereof. I know not what may be the numerical proportion of these two classes of cases to each other; but that the civil cases are far more numerous than the criminal cases, I make no doubt of. Whether they be ten, twenty, thirty or forty to one, or more, I leave to those who live in the state, or in the several counties thereof, to determine.

But be the proportion what it may, the expense to the public of supporting a judiciary for both will be, in some relative degree, according to the number of cases the one bears to the other; yet it is only one of them that the public, as a public, have any concern with. The criminal cases, being breaches of the peace, are consequently under the cognizance of the government of the state, and the expense of supporting the courts thereof belongs to the public, because the preservation of the peace is a public concern.

But civil cases, that is, cases of private property between individuals, belong wholly to the individuals themselves; and all that government has consistently to do in the matter is to establish the process by which the parties concerned shall proceed and bring the matter to decision themselves, by referring it to impartial and judicious men of the neighborhood, of their own choosing. This is by far the most convenient, as to

time and place, and the cheapest method to them; for it is bringing *justice home to their own doors*, without the chicanery of law and lawyers.

Every case ought to be determined on its own merits, without the farce of what are called precedents, or reports of cases; because, in the first place, it often happens that the decision upon the case brought as a precedent is bad, and ought to be shunned instead of imitated; and, in the second place, because there are no two cases perfectly alike in all their circumstances, and therefore, the one cannot become a rule of decision for the other. It is justice and good judgment that preside by right in a court of arbitration. It is forms, quoted precedents and contrivances for delay and expense to the parties, that govern the proceedings of a court of law.

By establishing arbitrations in the room of courts of law for the adjustment of private cases, the public will be eased of a great part of the expense of the present judiciary establishment; for certainly such a host of judges, associate judges, presidents of circuits, clerks and criers of courts, as are at present supported at the public expense, will not then be necessary. There are, perhaps, more of them than there are criminals to try in the space of a year.

Arbitration will lessen the sphere of patronage, and it is not improbable that this was one of the private reasons for negating the arbitration act; but public economy, and the convenience and ease of the individuals, ought to have outweighed all such considerations. The present Administration of the United States has struck off a long list of useless officers, and economized the public expenditure, and it is better to make a precedent of this, than to imitate its forms and long periods of election, which require reform themselves.

A great part of the people of Pennsylvania make a principle of not going to law, and others avoid it from prudential reasons; yet all those people are taxed to support a judiciary to which they never resort, which is as inconsistent and unjust as it is in England to make the Quakers pay tithes to support the Episcopal Church. Arbitration will put an end to this imposition.

Another complaint against the Constitution of Pennsylvania is the great quantity of patronage annexed to the office of governor.

Patronage has a natural tendency to increase the public expense by the temptation it leads to (unless in the hands of a wise man like Franklin) to multiply offices within the gift or appointment of that patronage. John Adams, in his Administration, went upon the plan of increasing

offices and officers. He expected by thus increasing his patronage, and making numerous appointments, that he should attach a numerous train of adherents to him who would support his measures and his future election.

He copied this from the corrupt system of England; and he closed his midnight labors by appointing sixteen new unnecessary judges, at an expense to the public of \$32,000 annually.<sup>45</sup> John counted only on one side of the case. He forgot that where there was *one* man to be benefited by an appointment, all the rest had to pay the cost of it; and that by attaching *the one* to him by patronage, he ran the risk of losing *the many* by disgust. And such was the consequence; and such will ever be the consequence in a free country, where men reason *for* themselves and *from* themselves, and not from the dictates of others.

The less quantity of patronage a man is *incumbered* with the safer he stands. He cannot please everybody by the use of it; and he will have to refuse, and consequently to displease, a greater number than he can please. Mr. Jefferson gained more friends by dismissing a long train of officers than John Adams did by appointing them. Like a wise man, Mr. Jefferson dismantled himself of patronage.

The Constitution of New York, though like all the rest it has its defects, arising from want of experience in the representative system of government at the time it was formed, has provided much better in this case than the Constitution of Pennsylvania has done.

The appointments in New York are made by a *Council of Appointment*, composed of the Governor and a certain number of members of the Senate taken from different parts of the State. By this means they have among them a personal knowledge of whomsoever they appoint. The Governor has one vote, but no negative. I do not hear complaints of the abuse of this kind of patronage.

The Constitution of Pennsylvania, instead of being an improvement in the representative system of government, is a departure from the principles of it. It is a copy in miniature of the Government of England, established at the conquest of that country by William of Normandy. I have shown this in part in the case of the king's negative, and I shall show it more fully as I go on. This brings me to speak of the Senate.

The complaint respecting the Senate is the length of its duration, being four years. The sage Franklin has said, "Where annual election ends, tyranny begins"; and no man was a better judge of human nature than

<sup>45</sup> These were known as the midnight appointments.—*Editor*.

Franklin, nor has any man in our time exceeded him in the principles of honor and honesty.

When a man ceases to be accountable to those who elected him, and with whose public affairs he is intrusted, he ceases to be their representative, and is put in a condition of being their despot. He becomes the representative of nobody but himself. *I am elected, says he, for four years; you cannot turn me out, neither am I responsible to you in the meantime. All that you have to do with me is to pay me.*

The conduct of the Pennsylvania Senate in 1800, respecting the choice of electors for the Presidency of the United States, shows the impropriety and danger of such an establishment. The manner of choosing electors ought to be fixed in the Constitution, and not be left to the caprice of contention. It is a matter equally as important, and concerns the rights and interests of the people as much as the election of members for the State Legislature, and in some instances much more.

By the conduct of the Senate at that time, the people were deprived of their right of suffrage, and the State lost its consequence in the Union. It had but one vote. The other fourteen were paired off by compromise—seven and seven. If the people had chosen the electors, which they had a right to do, for the electors were to represent *them* and not to represent the Senate, the State would have had fifteen votes which would have counted.

The Senate is an imitation of what is called the House of Lords in England, and which Chesterfield, who was a member of it, and therefore knew it, calls "*the Hospital of Incurables.*" The Senate in Pennsylvania is not quite a hospital of incurables, but it took almost four years to bring it to a *state of convalescence*.

Before we imitate anything, we ought to examine whether it be worth imitating, and had this been done by the Convention at that time, they would have seen that the model from which their mimic imitation was made, was no better than unprofitable and disgraceful lumber.

There was no such thing in England as what is called the House of Lords until the conquest of that country by the Normans, under William the Conqueror, and like the king's negative over the laws, it is a badge of disgrace upon the country; for it is the effect and evidence of its having been reduced to unconditional submission.

William, having made the conquest, dispossessed the owners of their lands, and divided those lands among the chiefs of the plundering army he brought with him, and from hence arose what is called the *House of*

*Lords.* Daniel de Foe, in his historical satire entitled "The True-born Englishman," has very concisely given the origin and character of this House, as follows:

The great invading Norman let them know  
 What conquerors, in after times, might do;  
 To every musketeer he brought to town,  
 He gave the lands that never were his own—  
 He cantoned out the country to his men,  
 And every soldier was a denizen;  
 No parliament his army could disband.  
 He raised no money, for he paid in land;  
 The rascals, thus enriched, he called them *Lords*.  
 To please their upstart pride with new made words,  
 And Domesday Book his tyranny records;  
 Some show the sword, the bow, and some the spear,  
 Which their great ancestor, forsooth, did wear;  
 But who the hero was, no man can tell,  
 Whether a colonel or a corporal;  
 The silent record blushes to reveal  
 Their undescended dark original;  
 Great ancestors of yesterday they show,  
 And Lords whose fathers were—*the Lord knows who?*

This is the disgraceful origin of what is called the House of Lords in England, and it still retains some tokens of the plundering baseness of its origin. The swindler Dundas<sup>46</sup> was lately made a lord, and is now called *noble lord!* Why do they not give him his proper title, and call him *noble swindler*, for he swindled by wholesale? But it is probable he will escape punishment; for Blackstone, in his commentary on the laws, recites an act of Parliament, passed in 1550, and not since repealed, that extends what is called the benefit of clergy, that is, exemption from punishment for all clerical offenses, to all lords and peers of the realm who could not read, as well as those who could, and also for "the crimes of *house-breaking, highway-robbing, horse-stealing and robbing of churches.*"

This is consistent with the original establishment of the House of Lords, for it was originally composed of robbers. This is aristocracy. This is one of the pillars of John Adams' "stupendous fabric of human inven-

<sup>46</sup> Henry Dundas, Lord Melville, was impeached on charges preferred against him for his conduct as Treasurer of the Navy, but he was acquitted by the House of Lords.—*Editor.*

tion." A privilege for house-breaking, highway-robbing, horse-stealing and robbing of churches! John Adams knew but little of the origin and practise of the Government of England. As to constitution, it has none.

The Pennsylvania Convention of 1776 copied nothing from the English Government. It formed a Constitution on the basis of honesty. The defect, as I have already said, of that Constitution was the precipitancy to which the legislatures might be subject in enacting laws. All the members of the Legislature established by that Constitution sat in one chamber and debated in one body, and this subjected them to precipitancy. This precipitancy was provided against, but not effectually.

The Constitution ordered that the laws, before being finally enacted, should be published for public consideration. But as no given time was fixed for that consideration, nor any means for collecting its effects, nor were there then any public newspapers in the State but what were printed in Philadelphia, the provision did not reach the intention of it, and thus a good and wise intention sank into mere form, which is generally the case when the means are not adequate to the end.

The ground-work, however, of that Constitution was good, and deserves to be resorted to. Everything that Franklin was concerned in producing merits attention. He was the wise and benevolent friend of man. Riches and honors made no alternation in his principles or his manners.

The Constitution of 1776 was conformable to the Declaration of Independence and the Declaration of Rights, which the present Constitution is not; for it makes artificial distinctions among men in the right of suffrage, which the principles of equity know nothing of; neither is it consistent with sound policy. We every day see the rich becoming poor, and those who were poor before, becoming rich. Riches, therefore, having no stability, cannot and ought not to be made a criterion of right. Man is man in every condition of life, and the varieties of fortune and misfortune are open to all.

Had the number of representatives in the Legislature established by that Constitution been increased, and instead of their sitting together in one chamber, and debating and voting all at one time, been divided by lot into two equal parts, and sat in separate chambers, the advantage would have been, that one-half, by not being entangled in the first debate, nor having committed itself by voting, would be silently possessed of the arguments, for and against, of the former part, and be in a calm condition to review the whole.

And instead of one chamber, or one house, or by whatever name they



may be called, negating the vote of the other, which is now the case, and which admits of inconsistencies even to absurdities, to have added the votes of both chambers together, and the majority of the whole to be the final decision—there would be reason in this, but there is none in the present mode. The instance that occurred in the Pennsylvania Senate, in the year 1800, on the bill for choosing electors, where a small majority in that House controlled and negated a large majority in the other House, shows the absurdity of such a division of legislative power.

To know if any theory or position be true or rational in practise, the method is to carry it to its greatest extent; if it be not true upon the whole, or be absurd, it is so in all its parts, however small. For instance, if one house consists of 200 members and the other 50, which is about the proportion they are in some of the States, and if a proposed law be carried on the affirmative in the larger house with only one dissenting voice, and be negated in the smaller house by a majority of 1, the event will be that 27 control and govern 223, which is too absurd even for argument, and totally inconsistent with the principles of representative government, which know no difference in the value and importance of its members but what arises from their virtues and talents, and not at all from the name of the house or chamber they sit in.

As the practise of a smaller number negating a greater is not founded in reason, we must look for its origin in some other cause.

The Americans have copied it from England, and it was brought into England by the Norman Conqueror, and is derived from the ancient French practise of voting by *ORDERS*, of which they counted three; *the Clergy* (that is, Roman Catholic clergy), the *Noblesse* (those who had titles), and the *Tiers État*, or Third Estate<sup>47</sup> which included all who were not of the two former orders, and which in England are called the *Commons* or *common people*, and the house in which they are represented is from thence called the *House of Commons*.

The case with the Conqueror was, in order to complete and secure the conquest he had made, and hold the country in subjection, he canted it out among the chiefs of his army, to whom he gave castles and whom he dubbed with the title of *Lords*, as is before shown. These being dependent on the Conqueror, and having a united interest with

<sup>47</sup> The practise of voting by *orders* in France, whenever the States-General met, continued until the late Revolution. It was the present Abbé Sieyès who made the motion, in what was afterward called the National Assembly, for abolishing the vote by *orders*, and established the rational practise of deciding by a majority of numbers.—*Author*.

him, became the defenders of his measures, and the guardians of his assumed prerogative against the people; and when the house called the *Common House of Parliament* began by grants and charters from the Conqueror and his successors, these lords, claiming to be a distinct ORDER from the Commons, though smaller in number, held a controlling or negative vote over them, and from hence arose the irrational practise of a smaller number negating a greater.

But what are these things to us, or why should we imitate them? We have but one ORDER in America, and that of the highest degree, the ORDER OF SOVEREIGNTY, and of this ORDER every citizen is a member of his own personal right. Why then have we descended to the base imitation of inferior things? By the event of the Revolution we were put in a condition of thinking originally. The history of past ages shows scarcely anything to us but instances of tyranny and antiquated absurdities. We have copied some of them and experienced the folly of them.

Another subject of complaint in Pennsylvania is the judiciary, and this appears to require a thorough reform. Arbitration will of itself reform a great part, but much will remain to require amendment. The courts of law still continue to go on, as to practise, in the same manner as when the State was a British colony. They have not yet arrived at the dignity of independence. They hobble along by the stilts and crutches of English and antiquated precedents. Their pleadings are made up of cases and reports from English law books; many of which are tyrannical, and all of them now foreign to us.

Our courts require to be domesticated, for as they are at present conducted, they are a dishonor to the national sovereignty. Every case in America ought to be determined on its own merits, according to American laws, and all reference to foreign adjudications prohibited. The introduction of them into American courts serves only to waste time, embarrass causes and perplex juries. This reform alone will reduce cases to a narrow compass easily understood.

The terms used in courts of law, in sheriffs' sales, and on several other occasions, in writs, and other legal proceedings, require reform. Many of those terms are Latin, and others French. The Latin terms were brought into Britain by the Romans, who spoke Latin, and who continued in Britain between 400 and 500 years, from the first invasion of it by Julius Cæsar, fifty-two years before the Christian era. The French terms were brought by the Normans when they conquered England in 1066, as I have before shown, and whose language was French.

These terms being still used in English law courts show the origin of those courts, and are evidence of the country having been under foreign jurisdiction. But they serve to *mystify*, by not being generally understood, and therefore they serve the purpose of what is called law, whose business is to perplex; and the courts in England put up with the disgrace of recording foreign jurisdiction and foreign conquest, for the sake of using terms which the clients and the public do not understand, and from thence to create the false belief that law is a learned science, and lawyers are learned men.

The English pleaders, in order to keep up the farce of the profession, always compliment each other, though in contradiction, with the title of *my learned brother*. Two farmers or two merchants will settle cases by arbitration which lawyers cannot settle by law. Where then is the learning of the law, or what is it good for?

It is here necessary to distinguish between *lawyer's law*, and *legislative law*. Legislative law is the law of the land, enacted by our own legislators, chosen by the people for that purpose. Lawyer's law is a mass of opinions and decisions, many of them contradictory to each other, which courts and lawyers have instituted themselves, and is chiefly made up of law-reports of cases taken from English law books. The case of every man ought to be tried by the laws of his own country, which he knows, and not by opinions and authorities from other countries, of which he may know nothing. A lawyer, in pleading, will talk several hours about law, but it is *lawyer's law*, and not *legislative law*, that he means.

The whole of the judiciary needs reform. It is very loosely appointed in most of the states, and also in the general government. The case, I suppose, has been, that the judiciary department in a constitution has been left to the lawyers, who might be in a convention, to form, and they have taken care to leave it loose. To say, that a judge shall hold his office during *good behavior*, is saying nothing; for the term *good behavior* has neither a legal nor a moral definition.

In the common acceptation of the term, it refers rather to a style of manners than to principles, and may be applied to signify different and contradictory things. A child of good behavior, a judge of good behavior, a soldier of good behavior in the field, and a dancing-master of good behavior in his school, cannot be [of] the same good behavior. What then is the good behavior of a judge?

Many circumstances in the conduct and character of a man may render him unfit to hold the office of a judge, yet not amount to cause

of impeachment, which always supposes the commission of some known crime. Judges ought to be held to their duty by continual responsibility, instead of which the Constitution releases them from all responsibility, except by impeachment, from which, by the loose, undefined establishment of the judiciary, there is always a hole to creep out. In annual elections for legislators, every legislator is responsible every year, and no good reason can be given why those intrusted with the execution of the laws should not be as responsible, at stated periods, as those intrusted with the power of enacting them.

Releasing the judges from responsibility is in imitation of an act of the English Parliament for rendering the judges so far independent of what is called the Crown, as not to be removable by it. The case is that judges in England are appointed by the Crown, and are paid out of the King's civil list, as being his representatives when sitting in court; and in all prosecutions for treason and criminal offenses the King is the prosecutor.

It was therefore reasonable that the judge, before whom a man was to be tried, should not be dependent for the tenure of his office on the will of the prosecutor. But this is no reason that in a government founded on the representative system a judge should not be responsible, and also removable by some constitutional mode, without the tedious and expensive formality of impeachment. We remove or turn out presidents, governors, senators and representatives without this formality. Why then are judges, who are generally lawyers, privileged with duration? It is, I suppose, because lawyers have had the formation of the judiciary part of the Constitution.

The term, "contempt of court," which has caused some agitation in Pennsylvania, is also copied from England; and in that country it means *contempt of the King's authority or prerogative in court*, because the judges appear there as his representatives, and are styled in their commissions, when they open a court, "His Majesty the King's Justices."

This now undefined thing called *contempt of court* is derived from the Norman Conquest of England, as is shown by the French words used in England, with which proclamation for silence, "on pain of imprisonment," begins, "Oyez, Oyez, Oyez."<sup>48</sup> This shows it to be of Norman origin. It is, however, a species of despotism; for contempt of court is now anything a court imperiously pleases to call so, and then it inflicts punishment as by prerogative without trial, as in Passmore's

<sup>48</sup> French for "hear ye, hear ye, hear ye."—*Author*.

case, which has a good deal agitated the public mind. This practise requires to be constitutionally regulated, but not by lawyers.

Much yet remains to be done in the improvement of constitutions. The Pennsylvania Convention, when it meets, will be possessed of advantages which those that preceded it were not. The ensuing Convention will have two constitutions before them; that of 1776, and that of 1790, each of which continued about fourteen years. I know no material objection against the Constitution of 1776, except that in practise it might be subject to precipitancy; but this can be easily and effectually remedied, as the annexed essay, respecting "Constitutions, Governments and Charters," will show. But there have been many and great objections and complaints against the present Constitution and the practise upon it arising from the improper and unequal distribution it makes of power.

The circumstance that occurred in the Pennsylvania Senate in the year 1800, on the bill passed by the House of Representatives for choosing electors, justifies Franklin's opinion, which he gave by request of the Convention of 1776, of which he was president, respecting the propriety or impropriety of two houses negating each other. "It appears to me," said he, "like putting one horse before a cart and the other behind it, and whipping them both. If the horses are of equal strength, the wheels of the cart, like the wheels of government, will stand still; and if the horses are strong enough, the cart will be torn to pieces."

It was only the moderation of good sense of the country, which did not engage in the dispute raised by the Senate, that prevented Pennsylvania from being torn to pieces by commotion.

Inequality of rights has been the cause of all the disturbances, insurrections and civil wars that ever happened in any country, in any age of mankind. It was the cause of the American Revolution, when the English Parliament sat itself up to *bind America in all cases whatsoever*, and to reduce her to unconditional submission. It was the cause of the French Revolution; and also of the civil wars in England, in the time of Charles and Cromwell, when the House of Commons voted the House of Lords useless.

The fundamental principle in representative government is that *the majority governs*; and as it will be always happening that a man may be in the minority on one question, and in the majority on another, he obeys by the same principle that he rules. But when there are two houses of unequal numbers, and the smaller number negating the

greater, it is the minority that governs, which is contrary to the principle. This was the case in Pennsylvania in 1800.

America has the high honor and happiness of being the first nation that gave to the world the example of forming written constitutions by conventions elected expressly for the purpose, and of improving them by the same procedure, as time and experience shall show necessary. Government in other nations, vainly calling themselves civilized, has been established by bloodshed. Not a drop of blood has been shed in the United States in consequence of establishing constitutions and governments by her own peaceful system. The silent vote, or the simple *yea* or *nay*, is more powerful than the bayonet, and decides the strength of numbers without a blow.

I have now, citizens of Pennsylvania, presented you, in good will, with a collection of thoughts and historical references, condensed into a small compass that they may circulate the more conveniently. They are applicable to the subject before you, that of calling a convention, in the progress and completion of which I wish you success and happiness, and the honor of showing a profitable example to the States around you and to the world.

Yours, in friendship,

THOMAS PAINE.

NEW ROCHELLE, N. Y., August, 1805.

## A CHALLENGE TO THE FEDERALISTS TO DECLARE THEIR PRINCIPLES

This article is reprinted from *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays of Thomas Paine*, London, 1819, pp. 188-190.

Paine's definitions of the principles for which the Federalists and the Jeffersonians contended are excellent expositions of basic political issues in American society.—*Editor*.

THE old names of *Whig* and *Tory* have given place to the later names of *Republicans* and *Federalists*; by contraction *Feds*. The word *Republican* contains some meaning though not very positive, except that it is the opposite of monarchy; but the word *Federalist* contains none. It is merely a name without a meaning. It may apply to a gang of

thieves federalized to commit robbery, or to any other kind of association. When men form themselves into political parties, it is customary with them to make a declaration of their principles. But the Feds do not declare what their principles are; from which we may infer, that either they have no principles, and are mere *snarlers*, or that their principles are too bad to be told. Their object, however, is to get possession of power; and their caution is to conceal the use they will make of it. Such men ought not to be trusted.

The Republicans, on the contrary, are open and frank, in declaring their principles, for they are of a nature that requires no concealment. The more they are published and understood the more they are approved.

The principles of the Republicans are to support the representative system of government, and to leave it an inheritance to their children, to cultivate peace and civil manners with all nations, as the surest means of avoiding wars, and never to embroil themselves in the wars of other nations, nor in foreign coalitions—to adjust and settle all differences that might arise with foreign nations by explanation and negotiation in preference to the sword, if it can be done—to have no more taxes than are necessary for the decent support of Government—to pay every man for his service, and to have no more servants than are wanted.

The Republicans hold, as a fixed incontrovertible principle, that sovereignty resides in the great mass of the people, and that the persons they elect are the representatives of that sovereignty itself. They know of no such thing as hereditary Government, or of men born to govern them; for, besides the injustice of it, it never can be known before they are born whether they will be wise men or fools.

The Republicans now challenge the Federalists to declare their principles. But as the Federalists have never yet done this, and most probably never will, we have a right to infer what their principles are from the conduct they have exhibited.

The Federalists opposed the suppression of the internal taxes laid on in the stupid, expensive, and unprincipled administration of John Adams; though it was at that time evident, and experience has since confirmed it for a fact, that those taxes answered no other purpose than to make offices for the maintenance of a number of their dependents at the expence of the public. From this conduct of theirs we infer, that could the Federalists get again into power, they would again load the country with internal taxes.

The Federalists, while in power, proposed and voted for a standing army, and in order to induce the country to consent to a measure so unpopular in itself, they raised and circulated the fabricated falsehood that France was going to send an army to invade the United States; and to prevent being detected in this lie, and to keep the country in ignorance, they passed a law to prohibit all commerce and intercourse with France. As the pretence for which a standing army was to be raised had no existence, not even in their own brain, for it was a wilful lie, we have a right to infer, that the object of the Federal faction in raising that army, was to overthrow the representative system of Government, and to establish a Government of war and taxes on the corrupt principles of the English Government; and that, could they get again into power, they would again attempt the same thing.

As to the inconsistencies, contradictions, and falsehoods of the Federal faction, they are too numerous to be counted. When Spain shut up the port of New Orleans, so as to exclude from it the citizens of the United States, the Federal faction in Congress bellowed out for war, and the Federal papers echoed the cry. The faction, both in and out of Congress, declared New Orleans to be of such vast importance, that without it the Western States would be ruined. But mark the change! No sooner was the cession of New Orleans and the territory of Louisiana obtained by peaceable negotiation, and for many times less expence than a war, with all its uncertainties of success, would have cost, than this self-same faction gave itself the lie, and represented the place as of no value. According to them, it was worth fighting for at a great expence, but not worth having quietly at a comparatively small expence. It has been said of a thief that he had rather steal a purse than find one, and the conduct of the Federalists on this occasion corresponds with that saying. But all these inconsistencies become understood, when we recollect that the leaders of the Federal faction are an English faction, and that they follow, like a satellite, the variations of their principal. Their continual aim has been and still is, to involve the United States in a war with France and Spain. This is an English scheme, and the papers of the faction give every provocation that words can give, to provoke France to hostilities. The bugbear held up by them is, that Bonaparte will attack Louisiana. This is an invention of the British emissary, Cullen, alias Carpenter, and the association of the Federalists, at least some of them, with this miserable emissary, involves their own characters in suspicion.



The Republicans, as before said, are open, bold, and candid in declaring their principles. They are no skulkers. Let, then, the Federalists declare theirs.

COMMON SENSE.

Oct. 17, 1806.

## LIBERTY OF THE PRESS

While Paine always defended liberty of the press, he recognized with Jefferson that this did not include the liberty of lying or personal abuse, and he urges that "there ought to be some regulation with respect to the spirit of denunciation." This article appeared in *The American Citizen* of October 20, 1806, whose editor, James Cheetham, soon became Paine's greatest enemy and a most vicious slanderer of the great democratic writer.—*Editor*.

THE writer of this remembers a remark made to him by Mr. Jefferson concerning the English newspapers, which at that time, 1787, while Mr. Jefferson was Minister at Paris, were most vulgarly abusive. The remark applies with equal force to the Federal papers of America. The remark was, that "the licentiousness of the press produces the same effect as the restraint of the press was intended to do if the restraint was to prevent things being told, and the licentiousness of the press prevents things being believed when they are told."

We have in this State an evidence of the truth of this remark. The number of Federal papers in the city and State of New York, are more than five to one to the number of Republican papers, yet the majority of the elections go always against the Federal papers; which is demonstrative evidence that the licentiousness of those papers is destitute of credit.

Whoever has made observation on the characters of nations will find it generally true that the manners of a nation, or of a party, can be better ascertained from the character of its press than from any other public circumstance. If its press is licentious, its manners are not good. Nobody believes a common liar or a common defamer.

Nothing is more common with printers, especially of newspapers, than the continual cry of the *Liberty of the Press*, as if because they are printers they are to have more privileges than other people. As the term *Liberty of the Press* is adopted in this country without being under-

stood, I will state the origin of it and show what it means. The term comes from England, and the case was as follows:

Prior to what is in England called *the Revolution*, which was in 1688, no work could be published in that country without first obtaining the permission of an officer appointed by the Government for inspecting works intended for publication. The same was the case in France, except that in France there were forty who were called *Censors*, and in England there was but one, called *Imprimatur*.

At the Revolution, the office of *Imprimatur* was abolished, and as works could then be published without first obtaining the permission of the government officer, the press was, in consequence of that abolition, said to be free, and it was from this circumstance that the term *Liberty of the Press* arose. The press, which is a tongue to the eye, was then put exactly in the case of the human tongue. A man does not ask liberty beforehand to say something he has a mind to say, but he becomes answerable afterwards for the atrocities he may utter.

In like manner, if a man makes the press utter atrocious things he becomes as answerable for them as if he had uttered them by word of mouth. Mr. Jefferson has said in his inaugural speech, that "*error of opinion might be tolerated, when reason was left free to combat it.*" This is sound philosophy in cases of error. But there is a difference between error and licentiousness.

Some lawyers in defending their clients (for the generality of lawyers, like Swiss soldiers, will fight on either side), have often given their opinion of what they defined the liberty of the press to be. One said it was this, another said it was that, and so on, according to the case they were pleading. Now these men ought to have known that the term *liberty of the press* arose from a FACT, the abolition of the office of *Imprimatur*, and that opinion has nothing to do in the case. The term refers to the fact of printing *free from prior restraint*, and not at all to the matter printed, whether good or bad. The public at large—or in case of prosecution, a jury of the country—will be judges of the matter.

THOMAS PAINE.

October 19, 1806.

## ON THE QUESTION, WILL THERE BE WAR?

This article is reprinted from *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays on Various Subjects by Thomas Paine*, London, 1819, pp. 241–246. It contains Paine's observations on the question of British violations of American rights on the high seas.—*Editor*.

EVERY one asks, Will there be war? The answer to this is easy, which is, That so long as the English Government be permitted, at her own discretion, to search, capture, and condemn our vessels, control our commerce, impress our seamen, and fire upon and plunder our national ships, as she has done, she will *Not Declare War*, because she will not give us the acknowledged right of making reprisals. Her plan is a monopoly of war, and she thinks to succeed by the maneuver of not declaring war.

The case then is altogether a question among ourselves. Shall we make war on the English Government, as the English Government has made upon us; or shall we submit, as we have done, and that with long forbearance, to the evil of having war made upon us without reprisals? This is a right statement of the case between the United States and England.

For several years past it has been the scheme of that Government to terrify us, by acts of violence, into submission to her measures, and in the insane stupidity of attempting this, she has incensed us into war. We neither fear nor care about England, otherwise than pitying the people who live under such a wretched system of government. As to navies, they have lost their terrifying powers. They can do nothing against us at land, and if they come within our waters, they will be taken the first calm that comes. They can rob us on the ocean, as robbers can do, and we can find a way to indemnify ourselves by reprisals, in more ways than one.

The British Government is not entitled, even as an enemy, to be treated as civilized enemies are treated. She is a pirate, and should be treated as a pirate. Nations do not declare war against pirates, but attack them as a natural right. All civilities shown to the British Government, is like pearl[s] thrown before swine. She is insensible of principle

and destitute of honor. Her monarch is mad, and her ministers have caught the contagion.

The British Government, and also the nation, deceive themselves with respect to the power of navies. They suppose that ships of war can make conquests at land; that they can take or destroy towns or cities near the shore and obtain by terror what terms they please. They sent Admiral Duckworth to Constantinople upon this stupid idea, and the event has shown to the world the imbecility of navies against cannon on shore. Constantinople was not fortified any more than our American towns are now; but the Turks, on the appearance of the British fleet, got five hundred cannon and a hundred mortars down from the arsenals to the shore, and the blustering heroes of the navy seeing this, fled like a hound with a rattle at his tail. The gallant people of Norfolk and its neighborhood have sent Douglas off in a similar manner. An Indian who studies nature is a better judge of naval power than an English minister.

In March, 1777, soon after taking the Hessians at Trenton, I was at a treaty held with the five northern nations of Indians at East Town, in Pennsylvania, and was often pleased with the sagacious remarks of those original people. The chief of one of the tribes, who went by the name of *King Lastnight*, because his tribe had sold their lands, had seen some English men of war in some of the waters of Canada and was impressed with an idea of the power of those great canoes; but he saw that the English made no progress against us by land. This was enough for an Indian to form an opinion by. He could speak some English, and in conversation with me, alluding to the great canoes, he gave me his idea of the power of a king of England by the following metaphor.

"The king of England," said he, "is like a fish. When he is in the water he can wag his tail.—When he comes on land he lays down on his side." Now, if the English Government had but half the sense this Indian had, they would not have sent Duckworth to Constantinople, and Douglas to Norfolk, to lay down on their side.

Accounts from Halifax state, that Admiral Berkeley has alleged in writing, that "his orders (to Douglas) were not issued until every application to restore the mutineers and deserters (as he calls them) had been made by his Britannic Majesty's ministers, consul, and officer, and had been refused by the Government of the United States."

If this account be true, it shows that Berkeley is an idiot in governmental affairs; for if the matter was in the hands of the British minister, who is the immediate representative of his Government, Berkeley

could have no interference in it. That minister would report to his Government the demand he made, if he made any, and the answer he received, if he received any, and Berkeley could act only in consequence of orders received afterwards. It does not belong to subordinate officers of any Government to commence hostilities at their own discretion.

I now come to speak of the politics of the day as they rise out of the circumstances that have taken place.

The injustice of the British Government, and the insolence of its naval officers, is no longer to be borne. That injustice, and that insolence grows out of a presumption the British Government has set up, which it calls "*the right of search.*" There is not, nor ever was, such a right appertaining to a nation in consequence of its being in war with another nation. Wherever such a right existed it has been by treaty, and where no such treaty exist, no such right can exist, and to assume the exercise of it is an act of hostility which if not abandoned must be repelled until it be abandoned. The United States cannot even cede such a right to England, without ceding the same right to France, Spain, Holland, Naples, Italy, and Turkey, or they will take it, and the United States must take the consequence. It is [a] very difficult matter, and requires great political wisdom for a neutral nation to make a treaty during a time of war with one belligerent nation, that shall not commit her with the other. The best way then, since matters are come to the extremity they are, is to resist this pretended *right of search* in the first instance. The United States are able to do it, and she is the only neutral nation that is able.

We are not the diminutive people now that we were when the revolution began. Our population then was two millions and an half, it is now between six and seven millions, and in less than ten years will exceed the population of England. The United States have increased more in power, ability, and wealth within the last twenty or twenty-two years than she did for almost two hundred years before, while the states were British Colonies.

She owes this to two things, *independence* and the *representative system of Government*. It was always the ill-judged and impracticable system of the British Government to keep the Colonies in a state of continual nonage. They never were to be of full age that she might always control them.

While the United States have been going forward in this unparalleled manner, England has been going backward. Her Government is a

bankrupt, and her people miserable. More than a million of them are paupers. Her king is mad, and her parliament is corrupt. We have yet to see what the present new elected parliament will be. There is one man in it, whom I proudly call a friend, from whom there will be great expectations; but *what can one honest independent member do*, surrounded by such a mass of ignorance and corruption as have for many years past governed that unfortunate nation.

The great dependence of England has been on her navy, and it is her navy that has been her ruin. The falsely imagined power of that navy (for it was necessary it should be amphibious to perform what was expected from it) has prompted the ignorance of her Government into insolence towards all foreign powers till England has not a friend left among nations. Russia and Sweden will quarter themselves upon her purse till it becomes empty, and then very probably will turn against her.

Depending on her navy she blockaded whole countries by proclamation, and now, Bonaparte, by way of justifiable retaliation, has blockaded her by land from the commerce of the western part of the Continent of Europe. Her insolent and imbecile expedition to Constantinople, has excluded her from the commerce of Turkish Europe and Turkey in Asia, and thrown it into the hands of France—and her outrageous conduct to us will exclude her from the commerce of the United States. By the insolence of the crew of her navy she is in danger of losing her trade to China; and it is easy to see that Bonaparte is paving his way to India by Turkey and Persia. The madness of the British Government has thrown Turkey into the arms of France. Persia lies between Turkey and India, and Bonaparte is forming friendly connections with the Persian Government. There is already an exchange of ambassadors. Bonaparte is sending military officers into Persia, and will, with the consent of its Government, raise an army there and attack the English monopoly in India. If France holds her connections with Turkey and Persia, England cannot hold India.

It is in this wretched chaos of affairs that the mad Government of England has brought on herself a new enemy by commencing hostilities against the United States. She must be ignorant of the geography of America, or she would know that we can dispossess her of all her possessions on the Continent whenever we please, and she cannot, with safety, keep a fleet in the West Indies during the hurricane months. Bonaparte will find employment for every soldier she can raise, and those she may

send to the Continent of Europe will become prisoners. There never was an instance of a Government conducting itself with the madness and ignorance the British Government has done! This is John Adams's stupendous fabric of human wisdom!

That the British Government will disown giving hostile instructions to Berkeley I have no doubt. It is the trick of old governments to do so when they find themselves wrong, and pay some scape-goat to bear the blame. But this will not be sufficient. The pretended *right of search* and the impressment of our seamen must be abandoned. Three thousand of them have been impressed by British ships to fight against France. The French Government has shown a great deal of patience in not complaining of it, for it is a great injury to her, and must be redressed, or worse consequences will follow.

I have said in the former part of this essay that it is a difficult matter and requires great political wisdom for a neutral nation during a war to form a treaty with one belligerent nation that shall not commit her with the other. I will now give an instance of it.

In 1794, Washington sent Mr. Monroe as minister to France, and John Jay to England, and gave them contradictory instructions. By the treaty that then existed between the United States and France, "*Free ships made free goods.*" So that English property on board American ships was protected from seizure by France. John Jay made a treaty with England which Washington and the stupid Senate of that day ratified, by which free ships DID NOT make free property, and that French property on board American ships could be seized by England. This of consequence vacated the free article in the treaty with France, and she availed herself of it, and the United States lost the carrying trade of both nations. There is a jesuitism in Jay's treaty, which says, that the question whether *free ships make free goods* shall be taken into consideration two years after the war. It is now more than two years since that war, and therefore it forms an item with the matters to be now settled with the English Government.

The British Government have been so long in the habit of insolence that she has not the sense of seeing when the power of being insolent ceases. She ought to see that the power of France by land is far superior to *her* power at sea. France, by land, can blockade the commerce of England out of Europe and India, and the English navy can do nothing to prevent it. Of what use is it to "*rule the waves,*" if you cannot put your foot on shore? If it was a contest for fisheries, the most powerful navy

would decide; but as it is a contest for commerce it is land force that decides, and navies are out of the question.

If the British Government were wise, she would cease the pretended *right of search* of her own accord, for it brings her into endless trouble. It makes all nations her enemy. Every nation detests the piratical insolence of England and none more so than the United States. The spirit that is now raised, cannot be appeased until reparation is made for the past, and security be given for the future.

COMMON SENSE.

NEW YORK, Aug. 14, 1807.

## CHEETHAM AND HIS TORY PAPER

This brief essay represents one of Paine's last efforts to cement cordial relationship between America and France. Cheetham's paper was, of course, the *American Citizen*, once a Jeffersonian organ, but by the time the article was written, September 25, 1807, a scandal-sheet with reactionary leanings.

The article is reprinted from *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays of Thomas Paine*, pp. 252-253.

CHEETHAM is frequently giving symptoms of being the successor of Cullen, alias Carpenter, as Cullen was the successor of Cobbett, alias Porcupine. Like him, he is seeking to involve the United States in a quarrel with France for the benefit of England.

In his paper of Tuesday, September 22, he has a long abusive piece against France, under the title of "Remarks" on the speech of the arch-chancellor of France to the French Senate. This is a matter that CHEETHAM, as an adopted American citizen, has no business with; and as a John BULL it is impertinence in him to come here to spit out his venom against France. But CHEETHAM cannot live without quarreling, nor write without abuse. He is a disgrace to the republicans, whose principle is to live in peace and friendship with all nations, and not to interfere in the domestic concerns of any.

CHEETHAM seems to regret that peace is made on the continent of Europe, and he shows his spleen against it by the following round-about scurrilous paragraph.



"The people of France," says he, "now breathe the air of peace, under slavery, closer, more systematic, military, and universal (CHEETHAM knows nothing about it), than that with which they were overwhelmed previous to the beginning of the long continued calamity." This is spoken exactly in the character of a stupid prejudiced John BULL, who, shut up in his island, and ignorant of the world, supposed all nations slaves but themselves; whereas, those at a distance can see, that of all people enslaved by their governments, none are so much so as the people of England. Had CHEETHAM stayed in England till this time, he would have had to shoulder a musket, and this would have been dreadful to him, for, as all bullies are cowards, the smell of gunpowder would be as horrid to CHEETHAM, as the scent of a skunk to other animals.

The danger to which the city of New York was exposed, by the continual abuse of France in such papers as CULLEN's, was, that the French government might be induced to consider the city of New York as a British colony, such as it was during the revolutionary war, and exclude her from the commerce of the continent of Europe, as she has excluded Britain. CHEETHAM is following the footsteps of CULLEN.

The French nation, under all its changes of government, has always behaved in a civil and friendly manner to the United States. We have no cause of dispute with France. It was by the aid of France in men, money, and ships, that the revolution and independence of the United States were so completely established,<sup>49</sup> and it is scarcely sufferable that a prejudiced and surly-tempered John BULL should fix himself among us to abuse a friendly power.

THOMAS PAINE.

September 25, 1807.

<sup>49</sup> Six thousand French troops under General Rochambeau and thirty-one sail of the line under Admiral De Grass, assisted at the capture of Cornwallis at Yorktown, Virginia. —*Editor*.

## SCIENTIFIC WRITINGS

USEFUL AND ENTERTAINING HINTS

LETTER TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, DECEMBER 31, 1785

LETTER TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, JUNE 6TH, 1786

LETTER TO THOMAS JEFFERSON, May, 1788

SPECIFICATION OF THOMAS PAINE

LETTER TO THOMAS JEFFERSON, SEPTEMBER 7, 1788

LETTER TO THOMAS JEFFERSON, FEBRUARY 16, 1789

LETTER TO SIR GEORGE STAUNTON, BART., SPRING OF 1789

LETTER TO THOMAS JEFFERSON, JUNE 25, 1801

THE CONSTRUCTION OF IRON BRIDGES

LETTER TO THOMAS JEFFERSON, APRIL 20, 1805

THE CAUSE OF THE YELLOW FEVER  
AND THE MEANS OF PREVENTING IT

OF GUN-BOATS

OF THE COMPARATIVE POWERS AND EXPENSE OF SHIPS  
OF WAR, GUN-BOATS, AND FORTIFICATIONS

TO THE PEOPLE OF NEW YORK

## EDITOR'S NOTE

The letters and documents in this section exhibit Paine's breadth and depth of approach towards scientific problems. Here and there, as has been indicated in notes accompanying the text, his limitations are evident, but, in the main, his scientific writings reveal that Paine gave great promise, and that had not other events intervened he would have become a very important engineer and inventor. His main claim to fame as an engineer is his invention of an iron bridge (the bridge over the Wear in England was built under his influence), but these letters and articles also show that he had a clear grasp of the scientific method of basing conclusions on experimentation and observation. It is indeed unfortunate that some of these writings were not published in scientific journals of the time, for many of the principles advanced by Paine were not carried out until they were discovered independently by other people decades later.

There are other discussions of scientific problems in the section of Paine's correspondence, but they are so closely connected with other issues that it has been impossible to include them in this section. The reader is urged to turn to pages 1135-1136, 1258, 1263-1264, 1266-1269, 1272, 1278, 1281, 1285, 1291, 1295, 1425-1426, 1440, 1474-1476 for these additional scientific discussions.

## USEFUL AND ENTERTAINING HINTS <sup>1</sup>

“The real value of a thing,  
Is as much money as ’twill bring.”

**I**N the possession of the Philadelphia Library Company is a cabinet of fossils,<sup>2</sup> with several specimens of earth, clay, sand, etc., with some account of each, and where brought from.

I have always considered these kinds of researches as productive of many advantages, and in a new country they are particularly so. As subjects for speculation, they afford entertainment to the curious; but as objects of utility they merit a closer attention. The same materials which delight the fossilist, enrich the manufacturer and the merchant. While the one is scientifically examining their structure and composition, the others, by industry and commerce, are transmuting them to gold. Possessed of the power of pleasing, they gratify on both sides; the one contemplates their *natural* beauties in the cabinet, the others, their *re-created* ones in the coffer.

’Tis by the researches of the virtuoso that the hidden parts of the earth are brought to light, and from his discoveries of its qualities, the potter, the glassmaker, and numerous other artists, are enabled to furnish us with their productions. Artists considered *merely* as such, would have made but a slender progress, had they not been led on by the enter-

<sup>1</sup> This interesting article appeared in the *Pennsylvania Magazine* for February, 1775. Through Franklin’s introduction Paine had a chance to enter immediately into the intellectual circles of Philadelphia. He could also study the technical improvements of Pennsylvania, one of the most advanced colonies. In this article he reveals these influences.—*Editor*.

<sup>2</sup> In the catalogue it is called a collection of American fossils, etc., but a considerable part of them are foreign ones. I presume that the collector, in order to judge the better of such as he might discover here, made first a collection of such foreign ones whose values were known, in order to compare by: as his design seems rather bent towards discovering the treasures of America than merely to make a collection.—*Author*.

prising spirit of the curious. I am unwilling to dismiss this remark without entering my protest against that unkind, ungrateful, and impolitic custom of ridiculing unsuccessful experiments. And of informing those unwise or overwise pasquinaders, that half the felicities they enjoy sprung originally from generous curiosity.

Were a man to propose or set out to bore his lands as a carpenter does a board, he might probably bring on himself a shower of witticisms; and though he could not be jested at for *building castles in the air*, yet many *magnanimous* laughs might break forth at his expense and vociferously predict the explosion of a mine in his subterraneous pursuits. I am led to this reflection by the present domestic state of America, because it will unavoidably happen, that before we can arrive at that perfection of things which other nations have acquired, many hopes will fail, many whimsical attempts will become fortunate, and many reasonable ones end in air and expense. *The degree of improvement which America has already arrived at is unparalleled and astonishing*, but 'tis miniature to what she will one day boast of, if heaven continue her happiness. We have nearly one whole region yet unexplored: I mean the internal region of the earth. By industry and tillage we have acquired a considerable knowledge of what America will *produce*, but very little of what it *contains*. The bowels of the earth have been only slightly inquired into: We seem to content ourselves with such parts of it as are absolutely necessary, and cannot well be imported; as brick, stone, etc., but have gone very little further, except in the article of iron. The glass and the pottery manufactures are yet very imperfect, and will continue so, till some curious researcher finds out the proper material.

Copper, lead, and tin articles, valuable both in their simple state, and as being the component parts of other metals (*viz.* brass and pewter) are at present but little known throughout the continent in their mineral form: yet I doubt not, but very valuable mines of them, are daily travelled over in the western parts of America. Perhaps a few feet of surface conceal a treasure sufficient to enrich a kingdom.

The value of the interior part of the earth (like ourselves) cannot be judged certainly by the surface, neither do the corresponding strata lie with the unvariable order of the colors of the rainbow, and if they ever did (which I do not believe) age and misfortune have now broken in upon their union; earthquakes, deluges and volcanoes have so disunited and re-united them, that in their present state they appear like a world in ruins. Yet the ruins are beautiful. The caverns, museums of antiquities.

Though nature is gay, polite, and generous abroad, she is sullen, rude and niggardly at home. Return the visit, and she admits you with all the suspicion of a miser, and all the reluctance of an antiquated beauty retired to replenish her charms. Bred up in antediluvian notions, she has not yet acquired the European taste of receiving visitants in her dressing-room: she locks and bolts up her private recesses with extraordinary care, as if not only resolved to preserve her hoards, but to conceal her age, and hide the remains of a face that was young and lovely in the days of Adam. He that would view nature in her undress, and partake of her internal treasures, must proceed with the resolution of a robber, if not a ravisher. She gives no invitation to follow her to the cavern. The external earth makes no proclamation of the interior stores, but leaves to chance and industry, the discovery of the whole. In such gifts as nature can annually re-create, she is noble and profuse, and entertains the whole world with the interest of her fortunes; but watches over the capital with the care of a miser. Her gold and jewels lie concealed in the earth, in caves of utter darkness; and hoards of wealth, heaps upon heaps, mould in the chests, like the riches of a necromancer's cell. It must be very pleasant to an adventurous speculist to make excursions into these Gothic regions; and in his travels he may possibly come to a cabinet locked up in some rocky vault, whose treasures shall reward his toil, and enable him to shine on his return, as splendidly as nature herself.

By a small degree of attention to the order and origin of things, we shall perceive, that though the *surface* of the earth produce us the *necessaries* of life, yet 'tis from the mine we extract the *conveniencies* thereof. Our houses would diminish to wigwams, furnished in the Indian style, and ourselves resemble the building, were it not for the ores of the earth. Agriculture and manufactures would wither away for want of tools and implements, and commerce stand still for want of materials. The beasts of the field would elude our power, and the birds of the air get beyond our reach. Our dominion would shrink to a narrow circle, and the mind itself, partaking of the change, would contract its prospects, and lessen into almost animal instinct. Take away but the single article of iron, and half the felicities of life fall with it. Little as we may prize this common ore, the loss of it would *cut* deeper than the use of it. And by the way of laughing off misfortunes 'tis easy to prove, by this method of investigation, that *an iron age is better than a golden one*.

Since so great a portion of our enjoyments is drawn from the mine, it is certainly an evidence of our prudence to enquire and know what our possessions are. Every man's landed property extends to the [cen-

ter]<sup>3</sup> of the earth. Why then should he sit down contented with a part, and practise upon his estate those fashionable follies in life, which prefer the superface to the solid? Curiosity alone, should the thought occur conveniently, would move an active mind to examine (though not to the bottom) at least to a considerable depth.

The propriety and reasonableness of these internal enquiries are continually pointed out to us by numberless occurrences. Accident is almost every day turning out some new secret from the earth. How often has the plow-share or the spade broken open a treasure, which for ages, perhaps for ever, had lain just beneath the surface? And though every estate have not mines of gold or silver, yet they may contain some strata of valuable earth, proper for manufactures; and if they have not those, there is a great probability of their having chalk, marl, or some rich soil proper for manure, which only requires to be removed to the surface.

I have been informed of some land in England being raised to four times its former value by the discovery of a chalk or marl pit, in digging a hole to fix a post in; and in embanking a meadow in the Jerseys, the laborers threw out with the soil, a fine blue powdery earth, resembling indigo, which, when mixed with oil, was used for paint. I imagine the vein is now exhausted.

Many valuable ores, clays, etc. appear in such rude forms in their natural state, as not even to excite *curiosity*, much less *attention*. A true knowledge of their different value can only be obtained by experiment: As soil proper for manure, they may be judged of by the planter; but as matter, they come under the enquiry of the philosopher. This leads me to reflect with inexpressible pleasure, on the numberless benefits arising to a community, by the institution of societies for promoting useful knowledge.

The American Philosophical Society, like the Royal Society in England, by having public spirit for its support, and public good for its object, is a treasure we ought to glory in. Here the defective knowledge of the individual is supplied by the common stock. Societies without endangering private fortunes, are enabled to proceed in their enquiries by analysis and experiment: But individuals are seldom furnished with conveniences for so doing, and generally rest their opinion on reasonable conjecture.

I presume that were samples of different soils from different parts of

<sup>3</sup> In the original (page 55 column 2 ten lines from the bottom), the word "surface" is used. This undoubtedly was a printer's error.—*Editor*.

America, presented to the society for their inspection and examination, it would greatly facilitate our knowledge of the internal earth, and give a new spring both to agriculture and manufactures.

These hints are not intended to lament any loss of time, or remissness in the pursuit of useful knowledge, but to furnish matter for future studies; that while we glory in what we are, we may not neglect what *we are to be*.

Of the present state we may justly say, that no nation under heaven ever struck out in so short a time, and with so much spirit and reputation, into the labyrinth of art and science; and that, not in the *acquisition* knowledge only, but in the happy advantages flowing *from* it. The world does not at this day exhibit a parallel, neither can history produce its equal.

ATLANTICUS.

PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 10.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,  
ESQUIRE <sup>4</sup>

December 31, 1785.

DEAR SIR:

I send you the candles I have been making. In a little time after they are lighted the smoke and flame separate, the one issuing from one end of the candle, and the other from the other end. I suppose this to be because a quantity of air enters into the candle between the tallow and the flame, and in its passage downwards takes the smoke with it; for if you blow a quantity of air up the candle, the current will be changed, and the smoke reascends, and in passing this the flame makes a small flash and a little noise.

But to express the idea I mean, of the smoke descending more clearly it is this,—that the air enters the candle in the very place where the

<sup>4</sup> This letter dealing with Paine's invention of a smokeless candle is printed from the original manuscript in the Benjamin Franklin Papers through the courtesy of the American Philosophical Society.

W. E. Woodward has concluded, after some experimentation, that Paine's candle really was not smokeless and had no merits over an ordinary candle. The Candle Manufacturers Association confirms this opinion, and suggests that Paine's candle was a novelty type. (W. E. Woodward, *Tom Paine: America's Godfather*, New York, 1945, p. 157.)—*Editor*.



mellow tallow is getting into the state of flame, and takes it down before the change is completed—for there appears to me to be two kinds of smoke, humid matter which never can be flame, and inflammable matter which would be flame if some accident did not prevent the change being completed—and this I suppose to be the case with the descending smoke of the candle.

As you can compare the candle with the lamp, you will have an opportunity of ascertaining the cause—why it will do in the one and not in the other. When the edge of the enflamed part of the wick is close with the edge of the tin of the lamp no counter current of air can enter—but as this contact does not take place in the candle a counter current enters and prevents the effect in the candles which illuminates the lamp. For the passing of the air through the lamp does not, I imagine, burn the smoke, but burns up all the oil into flame, or by its rapidity prevents any part of the oil flying off in the state of half-flame which is smoke.

I do not, my dear sir, offer these reasons to you but to myself, for I have often observed that by lending words for my thoughts I understand my thoughts the better. Thoughts are a kind of mental smoke, which require words to illuminate them.

I am affectionately your obedient and humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

I hope to be well enough tomorrow to wait on you.

## TO HIS EXCELLENCY BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, ESQUIRE <sup>5</sup>

BORDENTOWN, June 6th, 1786.

DEAR SIR:

The gentleman, Mr. Hall,<sup>6</sup> who presents you with this letter, has the case of two models for a bridge, one of wood, the other of cast iron,

<sup>5</sup> This letter dealing with Paine's iron bridge is printed from the original manuscript in the Benjamin Franklin Papers through the courtesy of the American Philosophical Society.—*Editor*.

<sup>6</sup> John Hall was an English mechanic who emigrated in 1785 from Leicester, England, to Philadelphia, carrying with him letters of introduction to Paine. For Hall's journals, see Conway, *Life of Thomas Paine*, vol. II, pp. 460 ff.—*Editor*.

which I have the pleasure of submitting to you, as well for the purposes of showing my respect to you, as my patron in this country as for the sake of having your opinion and judgment thereon.

The European method of Bridge architecture, by piers and arches, is not adapted to the condition of many of the rivers in America on account of the ice in the winter. The construction of those I have the honor of presenting to you is designed to obviate that difficulty by leaving the whole passage of the river clear of the incumbrance of piers. The wooden model was the first executed. The timbers are an inch square, and twelve inches and a half long, the extent of the model is thirteen feet, and the height of the arch about a twenty eighth part of the length of the chord. It is made of cherry tree which is not a very strong wood. What weight it will bear, as it cannot be ascertained without breaking it, I am unwilling to put to an experiment. Four men have been on it at one time, without the least injury to it, or signs of any.

The objections against the wooden model are the compressibility and perishableness of the material. The ends of the timber by continually pressing against each other will in time diminish something in their length either by splitting up or wearing away. The iron model is intended to obviate those objections. Though the principle is the same as in the other, the preparations and dimensions are not exactly the same. The least angle in the wooden model is a right angle, and the greatest angle in the iron one is about 88 degrees, and the height of the arch is a sixteenth part of the length of its chord which is twelve feet.

It does not appear to me, that increasing the height of the arch is an advantage, on the contrary I think it a disadvantage. Whatever the chord, may be, I should prefer making the height of the arch about a  $\frac{1}{22}$  part of it.

My first design in the wooden model was for a bridge over the Harlem river for my good friend General Morris of Morrisania. It is made on a scale of one to twenty four, that is, the timbers being increased twenty four the length of those in the model, the same number of angles (nine) substituted in the room of arches, would extend across that river which is three hundred feet.

It would be tedious in a letter to give you all the observations that have occurred to me in the progress of putting the parts together in the two models. As to what may be the best angle, or the best proportions of the several parts I do not undertake to decide. The longer the legs are

the fewer (of consequence) will be the number of the angles, and the shorter the most; but neither case, if the same angle be used, the quantity of timber or iron will be nearly the same: for the eighteen legs which compose each side of either of the bridges are only equal to one angle whose base would be the extent of the length of the bridge. Therefore as the quantity of timber or iron will be nearly the same in a greater or less number of angles for any given length the only consideration is the relative proportion.

To what extent, on a great work, such a construction of a bridge can be carried, is what I am unwilling to venture too much opinion on; but I cannot help thinking that it might be carried across the Schuylkill. On the proportions I have mentioned it would have an elevation of about twenty feet in the center, but it might be made either more or less.

As I do not think it possible for any bridge constructed with piers to withstand the ice which comes down that river in some winters, there appears to me no hope of a permanent bridge unless it can be carried clear across. A floating bridge at all times obstruct[s] the navigation, and in winter, when a bridge is most wanted, is often of no use, and frequently carried away by driving ice. But could a bridge be erected on the plan of the iron model, it would exceedingly benefit the city and county, and besides its usefulness would, I believe, be the most extensive arch in the world, and the longest bridge without piers. I should therefore wish to see it undertaken and performed during your Presidency, as any share I might have therein would be greatly heightened by that circumstance, but of this, and other matters relating thereto I reserve myself till I have the honor of seeing you which I hope will be on Sunday. In the meantime, Mr. Hall, who has been with me at Bordentown, and has done the chief share of the working part, for we have done the whole ourselves, will inform you of any circumstance relating to it which does not depend on the mathematical construction.

Mr. Hall will undertake to see the models brought safe from the stage boat to you. They are too large to be admitted into the house but will stand very well in the garden.

Should there be a vessel going round to N[ew] York within about a week after my arrival at Philadelphia, I shall take that convenience for sending them there, at which place I hope to be in about a fortnight.

I am, dear sir, your affectionate and obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>7</sup>

LONDON, ENGLAND, May, 1788.

SIR:

Your saying last evening that Sir Isaac Newton's principle of gravitation would not explain, or could not apply as a rule to find the quantity of the attraction of cohesion and my replying that I never could comprehend any meaning in the term "attraction of cohesion," the result must be that either I have a dull comprehension, or that the term does not admit of comprehension. It appears to me an jumble of words—each of which admits of a clear and distinct idea, but of no idea at all when compounded.

The immense difference there is between the attracting power of two Bodies. At the least possible difference the mind is capable of conceiving, and the great power that instantly takes place to resist separation when the two Bodies are incorporated prove, to me, that there is something else to be considered in the case than can be comprehended by attraction or gravitation.<sup>8</sup> Yet this matter appears sufficiently luminous to me according to my own line of ideas.

Attraction is to matter what desire is to the mind but cohesion is an entire different thing produced by an entire different cause. It is the effect of the figure of matter.

Take two iron hooks, the one strongly magnetical and bring them to touch each other, and a very little force will separate them—for they are held together only by attraction.



But their figure renders them capable of holding each other infinitely more powerful to resist separation than what attraction can; by hooking the



<sup>7</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>8</sup> Paine is referring to forces other than gravitational forces which hold matter together, but his cohesion is clearly conceived as a mechanical interlocking of particles.—*Editor*.

Now if we suppose the particles of matter to have figure capable of interlocking and embracing each other we shall have a clear distinct idea between cohesion and attraction and that they are things totally distinct from each other and arise from as different causes.

The welding of two pieces of iron appears to me no other then entangling the particles in much the same manner as turning a key within the works of a lock, and if our eyes were good enough we should see how it was done.<sup>9</sup>

I recollect a scene at one of the Theatres that very well explain the difference between attraction and cohesion. A condemned Lady wished to see her child and the child its mother. This call attraction. They were admitted to meet, but when ordered to part they threw their arms round each other and fastened their persons together. This is what I mean by cohesion—which is a mechanical contact of the figures of their persons as I believe all cohesion is.

Though the term "*attraction of cohesion*" has always appeared to me like the Athanasion creed,<sup>10</sup> yet I think I can help the philosopher to a better explanation of it than what they give themselves—which is, to suppose the attraction to continue in such a direction as to produce the mechanical interlocking of the figure of the particles of the bodies attracted.

Then suppose a male and female screw lying on a table and attracting each other with a force capable of drawing them together. The direction of the attracting power to be a right line till screws begin to touch each other and then if the direction of the attracting power to be circular the screws will be screwed together. But even in this explanation, the cohesion is mechanical, and the attraction serves only to produce the contact.

While I consider attraction is a quality of matter capable of acting at a distance from the visible presence of matter, I have as clear an idea of it as I can have of invisible things. And while I consider cohesion is the mechanical interlocking of particles of matter, I can conceive the possibility of it much easier than I can attraction, because I can by crooking my fingers see figures that will interlock. But no visible figure can explain attraction, therefore to endeavor to explain the less difficulty

<sup>9</sup> Again Paine thinks of forces of another nature than gravitational, but here too he errs in his conception of welding as a mechanical interlocking of particles.—*Editor*.

<sup>10</sup> Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria and saint, lived in the fourth century A. D. He advanced the doctrine, in opposition to the Arians, of the essential divinity of Christ. The Father and the Son—God and Christ—were one.—*Editor*.

by the greater appears to me unphilosophical. The cohesion which others attribute to attraction and which they cannot explain, I attribute to figures which I can explain.

A number of fish hooks attracting and moving towards each other will show me there is such a thing as attraction. But their figurative hooking together shows cohesion visibly, and a handful of fish hooks threw together in a heap explain cohesion better than all the Newtonian philosophy. It is with gravitation as it is with all new discoveries; it is applied to explain too many things.<sup>11</sup>

It is a rainy morning and I am waiting for Mr. Parker, and in the meantime, having nothing else to do I have amused myself with writing this.

THOMAS PAINE.

## SPECIFICATION OF THOMAS PAINE<sup>12</sup>

A.D. 1788. No. 1667.

### CONSTRUCTING ARCHES, VAULTED ROOFS, AND CEILINGS

**T**O ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME, I, THOMAS PAINE, send greeting.

WHEREAS, His Most Excellent Majesty King George III, by his letters patent under the Great Seal of Great Britain, bearing date the twenty-sixth day of August, in the twenty-eighth year of his reign, did give unto me, the said Thomas Paine, his special license that I, the said Thomas Paine, during the term of fourteen years therein expressed, should and lawfully might make, use, exercise, and vend, within England, Wales, and Town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, my invention of "A METHOD OF CONSTRUCTING ARCHES, VAULTED ROOFS, AND CEILINGS, EITHER IN IRON OR WOOD, ON PRINCIPLES NEW AND DIFFERENT TO ANY-

<sup>11</sup> While Paine sees clearly that one should not try to explain too much with gravity, he still only thinks in terms of mechanical forces.—*Editor*.

<sup>12</sup> The patents for his iron bridge for England, Scotland and Ireland were granted Paine in September, 1788, a few weeks after this specification, dated August 28, 1788, was submitted.—*Editor*.

THING HITHERTO PRACTISED, BY MEANS OF WHICH CONSTRUCTION, ARCHES, VAULTED ROOFS, AND CEILINGS MAY BE ERECTED TO THE EXTENT OF SEVERAL HUNDRED FEET BEYOND WHAT CAN BE PERFORMED IN THE PRESENT PRACTISE OF ARCHITECTURE;" in which said letters patent there is contained a proviso obliging me, the said Thomas Paine, to cause a particular description of the nature of my said invention, and in what manner the same is to be performed, by an instrument in writing under my hand and seal, to be enrolled in His Majesty's High Court of Chancery within one calendar month next and immediately after the date of the said recited letters patent, as in and by the same (relation being thereunto had) may more fully and at large appear.

NOW KNOW YE, that in compliance with the said proviso, I, the said Thomas Paine, do hereby declare that my said invention of A Method of Constructing of Arches, Vaulted Roofs, and Ceilings, either in Iron or Wood, on Principles New and Different to anything hitherto practised by means of which Construction, Arches, Vaulted Roofs, and Ceilings may be Erected to the Extent of several Hundred Feet beyond what can be performed in the present practise of Architecture, is described in manner following (that is to say):—

The idea and construction of this arch is taken from the figure of a spider's circular web, of which it resembles a section, and from a conviction that when nature empowered this insect to make a web she also instructed her in the strongest mechanical method of constructing it.

Another idea, taken from nature in the construction of this arch, is that of increasing the strength of matter by dividing and combining it, and thereby causing it to act over a larger space than it would occupy in a solid state, as is seen in the quills of birds, bones of animals, reeds, canes, etc. The curved bars of the arch are composed of pieces of any length joined together to the whole extent of the arch, and take curvature by bending.

Those curves, to any number, height or thickness, as the extent of the arch may require, are raised concentrically one above another, and separated, when the extent of the arch requires it, by the interposition of blocks, tubes, or pins, and the whole bolted close and fast together (the direction of the radius is the best) through the whole thickness of the arch, the bolts being made fast by a head pin or screw at each end of them. This connection forms one arched rib, and the number of ribs to be used is in proportion to the breadth and extent of the arch, and those separate ribs are also combined and braced together by bars pass-

ing across all the ribs, and made fast thereto above and below, and as often and wherever the arch, from its extent, depth, and breadth, requires. When this arch is to be applied to the purpose of a bridge, which requires more arches than one, they are to be connected in the following manner (this is to say):

Wood piles are to be driven into the earth; over each of those piles are to be let fall a hollow iron or metal case, with a broad foot let into a bed; the interspace between the case and the wood pile to be filled up with a cement and pinned together. The whole number of those pillars are to be braced together, and formed into a platform for receiving and connecting the arches. The inter spaces of those pillars may be filled with plates of iron or lattice work so as to resemble a pier, or left open so as to resemble a colonnade of any of the orders of architecture.

Among the advantages of this construction is that of rendering the construction of bridges into a portable manufacture, as the bars and parts of which it is composed need not be longer or larger than is convenient to be stowed in a vessel, boat, or wagon, and that with as much compactness as iron or timber is transported to or from Great Britain; and a bridge of any extent upon this construction may be manufactured in Great Britain and sent to any part of the world to be erected.<sup>13</sup> For the purpose of preserving the iron from rust it is to be varnished over with a coat of melted glass. It ought to be observed that extreme simplicity, though striking to the view, is difficult to be conceived from description, although such description exactly accords, upon inspection, with the thing described.

A practicable method of constructing arches to several hundred feet span, with a small elevation, is the desideratum of bridge architecture, and it is the principle and practicability of constructing and connecting such arches so as totally to remove or effectually lessen the danger and inconvenience of obstructing the channel of rivers, together with that of adding a new and important manufacture to the iron works of the nation, capable of transportation and exportation, that is herein described. When this arch is to be applied to the purpose of a roof and ceiling cords may be added to the arch to supply the want of butments, which are to be braced to or connected with the arch by perpendiculars.

<sup>13</sup> In a letter to a friend, dated March 16, 1789, Paine wrote of his bridge: "It is as portable as common bars of iron, and can be put up and taken down at pleasure, and is, in fact, rendering bridges a portable manufacture." For the full text of this letter, see below p. 1285.—*Editor*.



In witness whereof, I, the said Thomas Paine, have hereunto set my hand and seal, the twenty-fifth day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-eight.

THOMAS (L.S.) PAINE.

Sealed and delivered, being first duly stamped, in the presence of

PETER WHITESIDE.

AND BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the twenty-fifth day of September, in the twenty-eighth year of the reign of His Majesty, King George, III, the said Thomas Paine came before our said Lord the King in His Chancery, and acknowledged the instrument aforesaid, and all and everything therein contained and specified, in form above written. And also the instrument aforesaid was stamped according to the tenor of the several statutes made in the sixth year of the reign of the late King and Queen, William and Mary of England, and so forth, and in the seventeenth and twenty-third years of the reign of His Majesty King George III.

Enrolled the said twenty-fifth day of September, in the year last above written.

## TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>14</sup>

PARIS, FRANCE, Sept. 7, 1788.

DEAR SIR:

I enclose <sup>15</sup> you a problem not about bridges but trees, and to explain my meaning I begin with a fountain. The idea seems far-fetched, but fountains and trees are in my walk to Challeot.

Suppose Fig. 1 is a fountain. It is evident that no more water can pass through the branching tubes than pass through the trunk. 2d that

<sup>14</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>15</sup> Paine's enclosed drawings to illustrate the method of estimating timber in standing trees appear on pages 1036–1037.

In the letter Paine makes use of the fact that if an incompressible fluid moves with uniform velocity through a system of pipes, the area of all concentric cross sections must be equal.—*Editor*.

admitting all the water to pass with equal freedom the sum of the squares of the diameters of the two first branches must be equal to the square of the diameter of the trunk; also the sum of the squares of the four branches, must be equal to the two, and the sum of the squares of the 8 branches must be equal to the four, and therefore the 8, 4, 2, and the trunk being reciprocally equal the solid content of the whole will be equal to the cylinder Fig. 2 of the same diameter of the trunk and height of the fountain.

Carry the idea of a fountain to a tree growing; consider the sap ascending in capillary tubes like the water in the fountain, and no more sap will pass through the branches than pass through the trunk.

2dly consider the branches as so many divisions and sub-divisions of the trunk as they are in the fountain, and that their contents are to be found by some rule with the difference only of a Pynmidien figure instead of cylindrical one.

Therefore to find the quantity of timber (or rather loads) in the tree, figure 3d. Draw a pyramid equal to the height of the tree as Fig. 4th, taking for the inclination of the pyramid, the diameter at the bottom, and at any discretionary height above it which in this is as 3 & 2.

As sensible men should never guess, and as it is impossible to judge without some point to begin at, this appears to me to be that point, and by which a person may ascertain near enough the quantity of timber and loads of wood in any quantity of land, and he may distinguish them into timber, wood and faggots.

Yours, etc.

T. P.

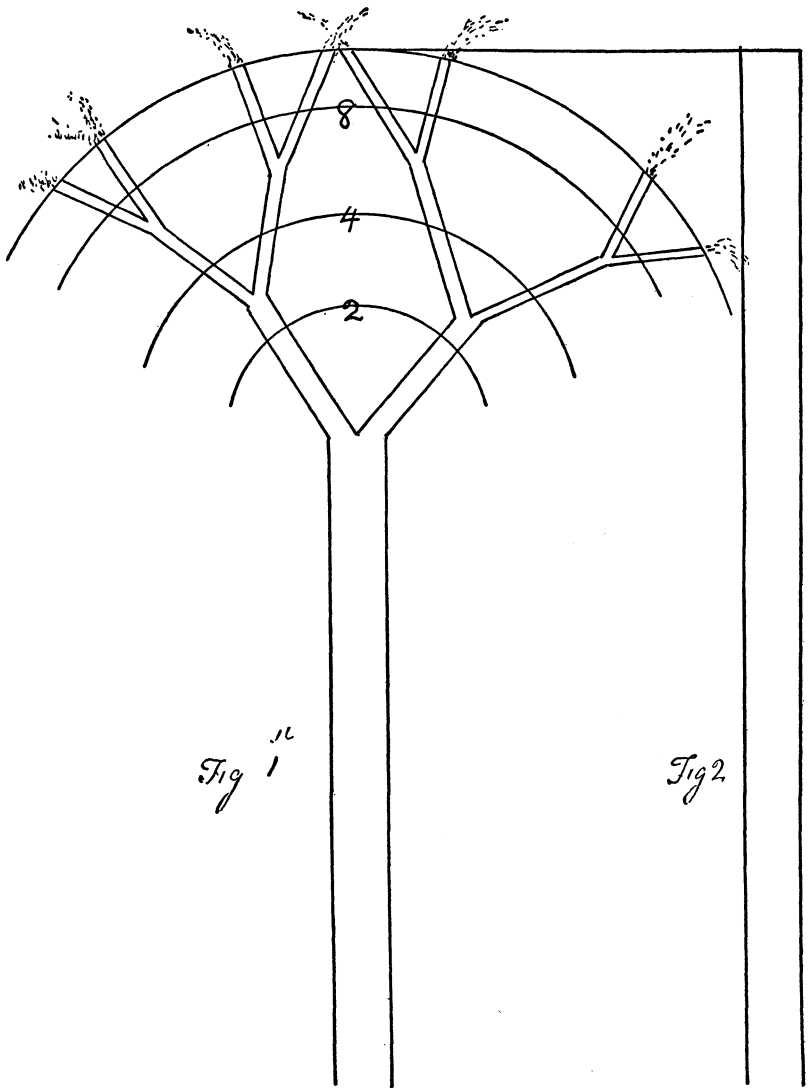
## TO THOMAS JEFFERSON<sup>16</sup>

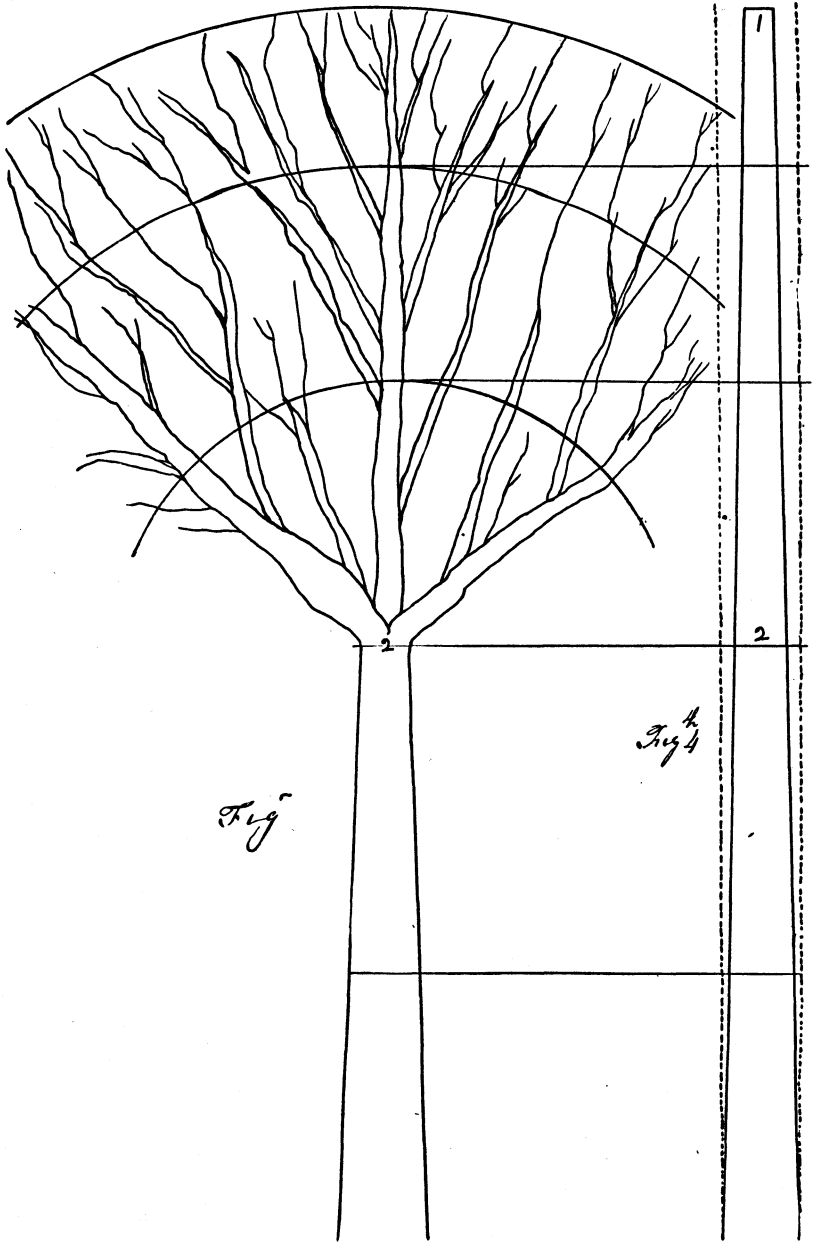
NO. 13, BROAD STREET BUILDINGS (LONDON, ENGLAND),  
February, 16th, 1789.

DEAR SIR:

Your favor of the 23rd February continued to the 11th of January came safe to hand for which I thank you. I begin this without knowing

<sup>16</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.





Fig

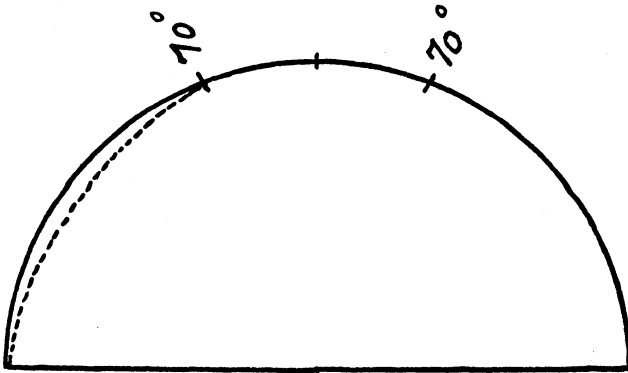
Fig 4

of any opportunity of conveyance, and shall follow the method of your letter by writing on till an opportunity offers.


I thank you for the many and judicious observations about my bridge. I am exactly in your ideas as you will perceive by the following account. I went to the Iron Works the latter end of October; my intention at the time of writing to you was to construct an experiment arch of 250 feet, but in the first place, the season was too far advanced to work out of doors and an arch of that extent could not be worked within doors, and neatly there was a prospect of a real bridge being wanted on the spot of 90 feet extent. The person who appeared disposed to erect a bridge was Mr. Foljambe, nephew to the late Sir George Saville and member in the last Parliament for Yorkshire. He lives about three miles from the works and the river Don runs in front of his house over which there is an ill constructed bridge which he wants to remove. These circumstances determined me to begin an arch of 90 feet with an elevation of 5 feet. This extent I could manage within doors by working half the arch at a time. Having found a short wall suited to my purpose, I set off a center and five feet for the height of the arch, and forty five feet each way for the extent, then suspended a cord and left it to stretch itself for a day, then took off the ordinates at every foot (for one half the arch only). Having already calculated the ordinates of an arch of a circle of the same extent I compared them together and found scarcely any certain distinguishable difference, the reason of this is that however considerable the difference may be when the segment is a semi-circle that difference is contained between the 1st and 60th is 70 degrees reckoning from the bases of the arch, and above that the catenary appears to me to unite with the arch of the circle or exceedingly nearly thereto so that I conclude that the treatises on catenarian arches apply to the semi-circle or a very large portion of it. I annex a sketch to help out my meaning. [See diagram on p. 1039.]

Having taken my measurements I transferred them to the working floor. 1st I set off half the line divided into feet; 2d the ordinates upon it; 3rd drove nails at the extremity of every ordinate; 4th bent a bar of wood over them corresponding to the swinging cord on the wall, above this first bar, and at the distance the blocks would occupy, I set off all the other bars and struck the radii thro[ugh] the whole number; which marked the places where the holes were to be cut and consequently the wooden bars became patterns for the iron bars.

I had calculated on drilling the holes for which I had allowed 8



sterling each in my private estimation, but I found, when at the works, that I could punch a square, or oblong square hole for 1 or 1 4 each. This was gratifying to me, not only because it was under my estimation, but because it took away less of the bar in breadth than a round hole of the same capacity would do, and made the work in every respect stronger and firmer. I was very unwilling to cut the bar longitudinally, and for the same reasons you mention therefore did not do it, yet I was apprehensive of difficulty in getting the work together owing to diverging of the bolts, but this I think I have completely got over by putting the work together with wood bolts, and then driving them out with the iron ones.

Having made all my patterns of bars, and a pattern for my blocks, and chosen my iron 3 inches by  $\frac{3}{4}$  we began punching the holes. To do this it is necessary the iron bar be treated hot. When this was mentioned to me I pondered a little on the effects of heat, and instead of marking the iron bar when cold from the wood pattern, I first treated it and then marked and punch[ed] it, and that only one hole at a time; by this method the changes of atmospherical heat and cold are prevented operating on the bars while they are under the operation, as it is always the same season to the bar whether the season of the year be summer or winter, and as the wood patterns is laid to the bar for every fresh hole, there can be no accumulation of error, if any, would happen, and the square hole  can be corrected by a file whereas the round one could not.

A great part of our time, as you will naturally suppose was taken up in preparations, but after we began to work we went on rapidly, and

that without any mistake, or anything to alter or amend. The foreman of the works is a relation to the proprietors, an excellent mechanic, and who fell into all my ideas with great ease and penetration. I stayed at the works till one half the rib, 45 feet, was completed and framed horizontally together, and came up to London at the meeting of Parliament on the 4th of December. The foreman, whom, as I told him, I should appoint "President of the Board of Works in my absence," wrote me word that he has got the other half together with much less trouble than the first. He is now preparing for erecting, and I for returning.<sup>17</sup>

## TO SIR GEORGE STAUNTON, BART.<sup>18</sup>

ROTHERHAM, Spring of 1789.

SIR:

As I know you interest yourself in the success of the useful arts, and are a member of the society for the promotion thereof, I do myself the pleasure to send you an account of a small experiment I have been making at Messrs. Walker's iron works at this place. You have already seen the model I constructed for a bridge of a single arch, to be made of iron, and erected over the river Schuylkill, at Philadelphia; but as the dimensions may have escaped your recollection, I will begin with stating those particulars.

The vast quantity of ice and melted snow at the breaking up of the frost in that part of America render it impracticable to erect a bridge on piers. The river can conveniently be contracted to 400 feet, the model, therefore, is for an arch of 400 feet span; the height of the arch in the center, from the chord thereof, is to be about 20 feet, and to be brought off on the top so as to make the ascent about 1 foot in 18 or 20.

The judgment of the Academy of Sciences at Paris has been given on

<sup>17</sup> Following this paragraph is a continuation of the letter dated February 26th, and March 12th, 1789, but since this material relates solely to political issues it has been separated from the above and printed in the section of Paine's correspondence. See pp. 1281-1284.—*Editor*.

<sup>18</sup> Sir George Staunton was an eminent English physician, diplomat and student of Oriental civilization. His son, Sir George Thomas Staunton, introduced vaccination for smallpox into China.—*Editor*.

the principles and practicability of the construction. The original, signed by the Academy, is in my possession; and in which they fully approve and support the design. They introduce their opinion by saying:

It is certain that when such a project as that of making an iron arch of 400 feet span is thought of, and when we consider the effects resulting from an arch of such vast magnitude, it would be strange if doubts were not raised as to the success of such an enterprise, from the difficulties which at first present themselves. But if such be the disposition of the various parts, and the method of uniting them, that the collective body should present a whole both firm and solid, we should then no longer have the same doubts of the success of the plan.

The Academy then proceed to state the reasons on which their judgment is founded, and conclude with saying:

We conclude from what we have just remarked that Mr. Paine's plan of an iron bridge is ingeniously imagined, that the construction of it is simple, solid and proper to give it the necessary strength for resisting the effects resulting from its burden, and that it is deserving of a trial. In short, it may furnish a new example of the application of a metal, which has not hitherto been used in any works on an extensive scale, although on many occasions it is employed with the greatest success.

As it was my design to pass some time in England before I returned to America, I employed part of it in making the small essay I am now to inform you of.

My intention, when I came to the iron works, was to raise an arch of at least 200 feet span; but as it was late in the fall of last year the season was too far advanced to work out of doors, and an arch of that extent too great to be worked within doors, and as I was unwilling to lose time, I moderated my ambition with a little "common sense," and began with such an arch as could be compassed within some of the buildings belonging to the works. As the construction of the American arch admits, in practise, any species of curve with equal facility, I set off in preference to all others a catenarian arch of 90 feet span and 5 feet high. Were this arch converted into an arch of a circle, the diameter of its circle would be 410 feet. From the ordinates of the arch taken from the wall where the arch was struck, I produced a similar arch on the floor whereon the work was to be fitted and framed, and there was something so apparently just when the work was set out that the looking at it promised success.



You will recollect that the model is composed of four parallel arched ribs, and as the number of ribs may be increased at pleasure to any breadth an arch sufficient for a roadway may require, and the arches to any number the breadth of a river may require, the construction of one rib would determine for the whole; because if one rib succeeded, all the rest of the work, to any extent, is a repetition.

In less time than I expected, and before the winter set in, I had fitted and framed the arch, or properly the rib, completely together on the floor; it was then taken in pieces and stowed away during the winter, in a corner of a workshop, used in the meantime by the carpenters, where it occupied so small a compass as to be hid among the shavings; and though the extent of it is 90 feet, the depth of the arch at the center 2 feet 9 inches, and the depth at the branches 6 feet, the whole of it might, when in pieces, be put in an ordinary stage wagon, and sent to any part of England.

I returned to the works in April, and began to prepare for erecting; we chose a situation between a steel-furnace and a workshop, which served for butments. The distance between those buildings was about 4 feet more than the span of the arch, which we filled up with chumps of wood at each end. I mention this as I shall have occasion to refer to it hereafter.

We soon ran up a center to turn the arch upon, and began our erections. Every part fitted to a mathematical exactness. The raising an arch of this construction is different to the method of raising a stone arch. In a stone arch they begin at the bottom, on the extremities of the arch, and work upward, meeting at the crown. In this we began at the crown by a line perpendicular thereto and worked downward each way. It differs likewise in another respect.

A stone arch is raised by sections of the curve, each stone being so, and this by concentric curves. The effect likewise of the arch upon the center is different, for as stone arches sometimes break down the center by their weight, this, on the contrary, grew lighter on the center as the arch increased in thickness, so much so that before the arch was completely finished it rose itself off the center the full thickness of the blade of a knife from one butment to the other, and is, I suppose, the first arch of ninety feet span that ever struck itself.

I have already mentioned that the spaces between the ends of the arches and the butments were filled up with chumps of wood, and those rather in a damp state; and though we rammed them as close as

we could we could not ram them so close as the drying, and the weight of the arch, or rib, especially when loaded, would be capable of doing; and we had now to observe the effects which the yielding and pressing up of the wood, and which corresponds to the giving away of the buttments, so generally fatal to stone arches, would have upon this.

We loaded the rib with six tons of pig-iron, beginning at the center, and proceeding both ways, which is twice the weight of the iron in the rib, as I shall hereafter more particularly mention.

This had not the least visible effect on the strength of the arch, but it pressed the wood home, so as to gain in three or four days, together with the drying and the shrinking of the wood, above a quarter of an inch at each end, and consequently the chord or span of the arch was lengthened above half an inch. As this lengthening was more than double the feather of the keystone in a stone arch of these dimensions, such an alteration at the butment would have endangered the safety of the stone arch, while it produced on this no other than the proper mathematical effect. To evidence this I had recourse to the cord still swinging on the wall from which the curve of the arch was taken. I set the chord at ninety feet span, and five feet for the height of the arch, and marked the curve on the wall.

I then removed the ends of the cords horizontally something more than a quarter of an inch at each end. The chord should then describe the exact catenarian curve which the rib had assumed by the same lengthening at the buttments; that is, the rising of the chord should exactly correspond to the lowering of the arch, which it did through all their corresponding ordinates. The chord had risen something more than two inches at the center, diminishing to nothing each way, and the arch had descended the same quantity and in the same proportion.

I much doubt whether a stone arch, could it be constructed as flat as this, could sustain such an alteration; and, on the contrary, I see no reason to doubt but an arch on this construction and dimensions, or corresponding thereto, might be let down to half its height, or as far as it would descend, with safety. I say "as far as it would descend," because the construction renders it exceedingly probable that there is a point beyond which it would not descend, but retain itself independent of buttments; but this cannot be explained but by a sight of the arch itself.

In four or five days, the arch having gained nearly all it could gain on the wood, except what the wood would lose by a summer's drying, the lowering of the arch began to be scarcely visible. The weight still

continues on it, to which I intend to add more, and there is not the least visible effect on the perfect curvature or strength of the arch. The arch having thus gained nearly a solid bearing on the wood and the butments, and the days beginning to be warm, and the nights continuing to be cool, I had now to observe the effects of the contraction and expansion of the iron.

The Academy of Sciences at Paris, in their report on the principles and construction of this arch, state these effects as a matter of perfect indifference to the arch, or to the butments, and the experience establishes the truth of their opinion. It is probable the Academy may have taken, in part, the observations of M. Peronnet, architect to the King of France, and a member of the Academy, as some ground for that opinion.

From the observations of M. Peronnet, all arches, whether of stone or brick, are constantly ascending or descending by the changes of the weather, so as to render the difference perceptible by taking a level, and that all stone and brick buildings do the same. In short, that matter is never stationary, with respect to its dimensions, but when the atmosphere is so; but that as arches, like the tops of houses, are open to the air, and at freedom to rise, and all their weight in all changes of heat and cold is the same, their pressure is very little or nothing affected by it.

I hung a thermometer to the arch, where it has continued several days, and by what I can observe it equals, if not exceeds, the thermometer in exactness.

In twenty-four hours it ascends and descends two and three-tenths of an inch at the center, diminishing in exact mathematical proportion each way; and no sooner does an ascent or descent of half a hair's breadth appear at the center, but it may be proportionally discovered through the whole span of ninety feet. I have affixed an index which multiplies ten times, and it can as easily be multiplied a hundred times: could I make a line of fire on each side the arch, so as to heat it in the same equal manner through all its parts, as the natural air does, I would try it up to blood heat.

I will not attempt a description of the construction; first, because you have already seen the model; and secondly, that I have often observed that a thing may be so very simple as to baffle description. On this head I shall only say that I took the idea of constructing it from a spider's web, of which it resembles a section, and I naturally supposed

that when nature enabled that insect to make a web she taught it the best method of putting it together.

Another idea I have taken from nature is that of increasing the strength of matter by causing it to act over a larger space than it would occupy in a solid state, as is evidenced in the bones of animals, quills of birds, reeds, canes, etc., which, were they solid with the same quantity of matter, would have the same weight with a much less degree of strength.

I have already mentioned that the quantity of iron in this rib is three tons; that an arch of sufficient width for a bridge is to be composed of as many ribs as that width requires; and that the number of arches, if the breadth of a river requires more than one, may be multiplied at discretion.

As the intention of this experiment was to ascertain, first, the practicability of the construction, and secondly, what degree of strength any given quantity of iron would have when thus formed into an arch, I employed in it no more than three tons, which is as small a quantity as could well be used in the experiment. It has already a weight of six tons constantly lying on it without any effect on the strength or perfect curvature of the arch. What greater weight it will bear cannot be judged of; but taking even these as data, an arch of any strength, or capable of bearing a greater weight than can ever possibly come upon any bridge, may be easily calculated.

The river Schuylkill, at Philadelphia, as I have already mentioned, requires a single arch of four hundred feet span. The vast quantities of ice render it impossible to erect a bridge on piers, and is the reason why no bridge has been attempted. But great scenes inspire great ideas. The natural mightiness of America expands the mind, and it partakes of the greatness it contemplates. Even the war, with all its evils, had some advantages. It energized invention and lessened the catalogue of impossibilities. At the conclusion of it every man returned to his home to repair the ravages it had occasioned, and *to think of war no more.*

As one among thousands who had borne a share in that memorable Revolution, I returned with them to the re-enjoyment of quiet life, and, that I might not be idle, undertook to construct a bridge of a single arch for this river. Our beloved General [Washington] had engaged in rendering another river, the Potomac, navigable. The quantity of iron I had allowed in my plan for this arch was five hundred and twenty

tons to be distributed into thirteen ribs, in commemoration of the thirteen United States, each rib to contain forty tons; but although strength is the first object in works of this kind, I shall, from the success of this experiment, very considerably lessen the quantity of iron I had proposed.

The Academy of Sciences, in their report upon this construction, say, "there is one advantage in the construction of M. Paine's bridge that is singular and important, which is, that the success of an arch to any span can be determined before the work be undertaken on the river, and with a small part of the expense of the whole by erecting part on the ground."

As to its appearance, I shall give you an extract of a letter from a gentleman in the neighborhood, member in the former Parliament for this county, who, in speaking of the arch, says, "In point of elegance and beauty it far exceeds my expectations, and it is certainly beyond anything I ever saw." I shall likewise mention that it is much visited and exceedingly admired by the ladies, who, though they may not be much acquainted with mathematical principles, are certainly judges of taste.

I shall close my letter with a few other observations naturally and necessarily connected with the subject.

That, contrary to the general opinion, the most preservative situation in which iron can be placed is within the atmosphere of water, whether it be that the air is less saline and nitrous than that which arises from the filth of streets, and the fermentation of the earth, I am not undertaking to prove; I speak only of fact, which anybody may observe by the rings and bolts in wharfs and other watery situations. I never yet saw the iron chain affixed to a well-bucket consumed or injured by rust; and I believe it is impossible to find iron exposed to the open air in the same preserved condition as that which is exposed over water.

A method of extending the span and lessening the height of arches has always been the *desideratum* of bridge architecture. But it has other advantages. It renders bridges capable of becoming a portable manufacture, as they may, on this construction, be made and sent to any part of the world ready to be erected; and at the same time it greatly increases the magnificence, elegance and beauty of bridges, it considerably lessens their expense, and their appearance by repainting will be ever new; and as they may be erected in all situations where stone bridges can be erected, they may, moreover, be erected in certain situations where, on account of ice, infirm foundations in the beds of rivers, low shores and various other causes, stone bridges cannot be erected.

The last convenience, and which is not inconsiderable, that I shall mention is that after they are erected they may very easily be taken down without any injury to the materials of the construction, and be re-erected elsewhere.

I am, sir,

Your much obliged and obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THOMAS JEFFERSON<sup>19</sup>

June 25, 1801.

### ON THE MEANS OF GENERATING MOTION FOR MECHANICAL USES

AS THE limit of the mechanical powers, properly so called, is fixed in nature no addition or improvement otherwise than in the application of them, can be made. To obtain a still greater quantity of power we must have recourse to the natural powers, and for usefulness combine them with the mechanical powers. Of this kind are wind and water to which has since been added steam. The two first cannot be generated at pleasure. We must take them where and when we find them. It is not so with the steam engine. It can be erected in any place, and act in all times, where a well can be dug and fuel can be obtained. Attempts have been made to apply this power to the purpose of transportation, as that of moving carriages on land and vessels on the water. The first I believe to be impracticable, because, I suppose, that the weight of the apparatus necessary to produce steam is greater than the power of the steam to remove that weight, and consequently that the steam engine cannot move itself.<sup>20</sup>

The thing wanted for purposes of this kind and if applicable to this may be applicable to many other, is something that contains the greatest quantity of power in the least quantity of weight and bulk, and we find

<sup>19</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>20</sup> Paine had not closely followed the development of the steam engine. Only three years after Paine wrote this letter, a locomotive engine was running in South Wales.—*Editor*.

this property in gunpowder. When I consider the wisdom of nature I must think that she endowed matter with this extraordinary property for other purposes than that of destruction. Poisons are capable of other uses than that of killing.<sup>21</sup>

If the power which an ounce of gunpowder contains could be detailed out as steam or water can be, it would be the most commodious natural power because of its small weight and little bulk; but gunpowder acts, as to its force, by explosion.<sup>22</sup> In most machinery operations the generating power is applied to produce a rotatory motion on wheel, and I think that gunpowder can be applied to this purpose. But as an ounce of gunpowder, or any other quantity, when on fire, cannot be detailed out so as to act with equal force through any given space of time, the substitute in this case is, to divide the gunpowder into a number of equal parts and discharge them in equal spaces of time on the wheel, so as to keep it in nearly an equal and continual motion, as a boy's whipping top is kept up by repeated floggings.<sup>23</sup> Every separate stroke given to the top acts with the sureness of explosion, but produces as to continual motion the effect of uninterrupted power.

When a stream of water strikes on a water wheel it puts it in motion and continues it. Suppose the water removed and that discharges of gunpowder were made on the periphery of the wheel where the water strikes would they not produce the same effect? <sup>24</sup> I mention this merely for the simplicity of the case. But a wheel on which gunpowder is to act must be filled for that purpose. The buckets or boards placed on the periphery of a water wheel are the whole breadth of the stream of water; but the parts corresponding to them on a gunpowder wheel should be of iron and concave like a cup, and of no larger size than to receive the whole of the explosion. The back of them should be convex or oval, because in that shape they meet with less resistance from the air.<sup>25</sup> The barrels from which the discharges should be made, should, I think, be in the direction of a tangent with the cups. But if it should

<sup>21</sup> These remarks are certainly relevant to the discussion of the atomic bomb and its peaceful uses.—*Editor*.

<sup>22</sup> This is exactly the property of gasoline used in internal combustion engines.—*Editor*.

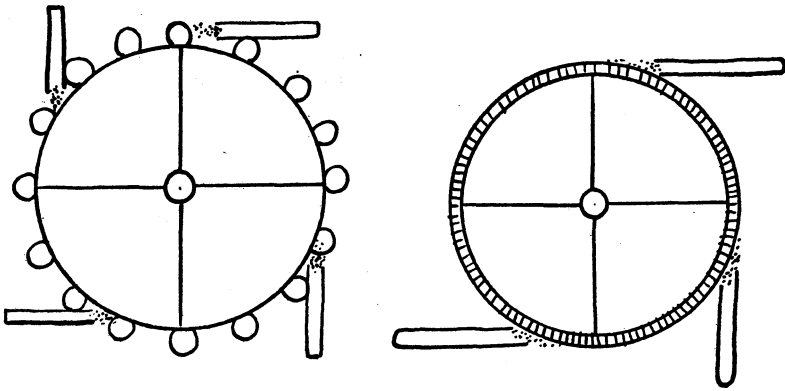
<sup>23</sup> That is why more than one cylinder is used in an automobile. The "continual floggings" are initiated by a timing device in the automobile to set off the explosions in the cylinders continuously.—*Editor*.

<sup>24</sup> The "kick" given by the exploding gunpowder is seen in the development of the Rocket.—*Editor*.

<sup>25</sup> Paine, it is obvious, was even aware of the value of streamlining to cut down wind resistance of the rapidly moving wheel. It must have been observed by others.—*Editor*.

be found better to make the discharge on the solid periphery of the wheel, the barrels should be a tangent of a circle something less than the periphery of the wheel. A wheel put and continued in motion in this manner is represented by holding the axis of a wheel in one hand, and striking the periphery with the other.

If acting on the solid periphery of the wheel should be found preferable to acting on the cups, the wheel should be shod with iron, the edges should be turned up, and the middle part be fluted cross. By this means the explosion cannot well escape sideways and the fluting will be preferable to a plain surface.



That the power of any given quantity of gunpowder can be detailed out by this means to act through any given quantity of time, and that a wheel can be put and continued in motion thereby, there is, I think, no doubt. Whether it will answer profitably in practice is another question. But the experiment, I think, is worth making, and the more so because it appears one of the things in which a small experiment decides almost positively for a large one, which is not the case in many other small experiments. I think the wheel for a great work should be large, 30 or 40 feet diameter, because the explosions would give too much velocity to a small one, and because the larger the wheel is the longer the explosion would rest upon it and the motion will be less irregular.

The machine which it seems to come into competition with is the steam engine. In the first place a steam engine is very expensive to erect. In this only a few iron barrels are required. In a steam engine the



expense and consumption of fuel is great, and this is to be compared to the expense of gunpowder, with the advantage, that the interest of the money expended on erecting a steam engine goes towards the expense of the gunpowder. A steam engine is subject to be out of order, and for this reason they frequently have two, that when one is repairing the other can supply its place, or all the works dependent upon it must stand still.<sup>26</sup> But nothing of this kind can happen to the gunpowder engine, because if a barrel burst, which is all that can happen, its place can be immediately supplied by another; but if a boiler bursts there must be a new one.<sup>27</sup> But I will not take up your time with calculations of this kind. The first thing to know is if the experiment will succeed.

If in your retirement from business you should be disposed to vary your mechanical amusements I wish you would try the effect of gunpowder on a wheel. I suppose on a wheel of two or three feet diameter the smallest bored pistol there is, about the size of a quail, would give it considerable velocity. The first experiment will be to observe how long it will revolve with one impulse, and then with two. If the wheel revolves perpendicularly, fast to its axis, and a cord be fastened to the axis with a weight to the end of the cord which, when the wheel is in motion, will wind on the axis and draw up the weight the force with which it revolves will be known.

Perhaps there may be some difficulty in starting a great wheel in motion at first, because gunpowder acts with a shock. In this case, might not gunpowder be mixed with some other material, such as is used to make sky rockets ascend, because this lessens the shock and prolongs the force.<sup>27</sup> But I conceive that after the wheel is in motion, there will be scarcely any sensible shock from the gunpowder.

As it is always best to say nothing about new concepts till we know something of their effects I shall say nothing of this till I have the happiness to see you which I hope will not be long and which I anxiously wish for.

T. P.

<sup>26</sup> Paine is correct when he points to this disadvantage of steam trains.—*Editor*.

<sup>27</sup> In 1798 Eli Whitney undertook the manufacture of firearms for the United States government, introducing the principle of interchangeability of parts. In 1801, the same year this letter was written, Whitney showed his muskets, built with such parts, to Jefferson.—*Editor*.

## THE CONSTRUCTION OF IRON BRIDGES

AS bridges and the method of constructing them are becoming objects of great importance throughout the United States, and as there are at this time proposals for a bridge over the Delaware, and also a bridge beginning to be erected over the Schuylkill at Philadelphia, I present the public with some account of the construction of iron bridges.

The following memoir on that subject written last winter at the Federal City, was intended to be presented to Congress. But as the session would necessarily be short, and as several of its members would be replaced by new elections at the ensuing session, it was judged better to let it lie over. In the meantime, on account of the bridges now in contemplation, or begun, I give the memoir the opportunity of appearing before the public, and the persons concerned in those works.

N.B.—The two models mentioned in this memoir will, I expect, arrive at Philadelphia by the next packet from the Federal City and will remain for some time in Mr. Peale's museum.

THOMAS PAINE.

BORDENTOWN, June, 1803.

## TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

I have deposited in the office of the Secretary of State, and under the care of the Patent Office, two models of iron bridges; the one in pasteboard, the other cast in metal. As they will show by inspection the manner of constructing iron bridges, I shall not take up the time of Congress with a description of them.

My intention in presenting this memoir to Congress is to put the country in possession of the means and of the right of making use of the construction freely; as I do not intend to take any patent right for it.

As America abounds in rivers that interrupt the land communication, and as by violence of floods and the breaking up of the ice in the spring, the bridges depending for support from the bottom of the river

are frequently carried away, I turned my attention, after the Revolutionary War was over, to find a method of constructing an arch that might, without rendering the height inconvenient or the ascent difficult, extend at once from shore to shore, over rivers of three, four or five hundred feet and probably more.

The principle I took to begin with and work upon was that the small segment of a large circle was preferable to the great segment of a small circle. The appearance of such arches, and the manner of forming and putting the parts together, admit of many varieties, but the principle will be the same in all. The bridge architects that I conversed with in England denied the principle, but it was generally supported by mathematicians, and experiment has now established the fact.

In 1786, I made three models, partly at Philadelphia, but mostly at Bordentown in the State of New Jersey. One model was in wood, one in cast iron, and one in wrought iron connected with blocks of wood, representing cast iron blocks, but all on the same principle, that of the small segment of a large circle.

I took the last mentioned one with me to France in 1787 and presented it to the Academy of Sciences at Paris for their opinion of it. The Academy appointed a committee of three of their own body—Mons. Le Roy, the Abbé Bossou, and Mons. Borda. The first was an acquaintance of Dr. Franklin, and of Mr. Jefferson, then minister at Paris. The two others were celebrated as mathematicians. I presented it as a model for a bridge of a single arch of four hundred feet span over the river Schuylkill at Philadelphia. The committee brought in a report which the Academy adopted—that an arch on the principle and construction of the model, in their opinion, might be extended four hundred feet, the extent proposed.

In September of the same year, I sent the model to Sir Joseph Banks, president of the Royal Society in England, and soon after went there myself.

In order to ascertain the truth of the principle on a larger scale than could be shown by a portable model five or six feet in length, I went to the iron-foundry of Messrs. Walker, at Rotherham, County of Yorkshire, in England, and had a complete rib of 90 feet span, and 5 feet of height from the chord line to the center of the arch, manufactured and erected. It was a segment of a circle of 410 feet diameter; and until this was done no experiment on a circle of such an extensive diameter had ever been made in architecture, or the practicability of it supposed.

The rib was erected between a wall of a furnace belonging to the iron-works and the gable end of a brick building, which served as buttments. The weight of iron in the rib was three tons, and we loaded it with double its weight in pig-iron. I wrote to Mr. Jefferson who was then at Paris, an account of this experiment, and also to Sir Joseph Banks in London, who in his answer to me says—"I look for many other bold improvements from your countrymen, the Americans, who think with vigor, and are not fettered with the trammels of science before they are capable of exerting their mental faculties to advantage."

On the success of this experiment, I entered into an agreement with the iron-founders at Rotherham to cast and manufacture a complete bridge, to be composed of five ribs of 210 feet span, and 5 feet of height from the chord line, being a segment of a circle 610 feet diameter, and sent it to London to be erected as a specimen for establishing a manufactory of iron bridges to be sent to any part of the world.

The bridge was erected at the village of Paddington, near London, but being in a plain field, where no advantage could be taken of buttments without the expense of building them, as in the former case, it served only as a specimen of the practicability of a manufactory of iron bridges. It was brought by sea, packed in the hold of a vessel, from the place where it was made; and after standing a year was taken down without injury to any of its parts, and might be erected anywhere else.

At this time my bridge operations became suspended. Mr. Edmund Burke published his attack on the French Revolution and the system of representative government, and in defense of government by hereditary succession, a thing which is in its nature an absurdity, because it is impossible to make wisdom hereditary; and therefore, so far as wisdom is necessary in a government, it must be looked for where it can be found, sometimes in one family, sometimes in another. History informs us that the son of Solomon was a fool. He lost ten tribes out of twelve (2 Chron. ch. x). There are those in later times who lost thirteen.

The publication of this work by Mr. Burke, absurd in its principles and outrageous in its manner, drew me, as I have said, from my bridge operations, and my time became employed in defending a system then established and operating in America, and which I wished to see peaceably adopted in Europe. I therefore ceased my work on the bridge to employ myself on the more necessary work, "Rights of Man," in answer to Mr. Burke.

In 1792, a convention was elected in France for the express purpose of

forming a Constitution on the authority of the people, as had been done in America, of which convention I was elected a member. I was at this time in England and knew nothing of my being elected till the arrival of the person who was sent officially to inform me of it.

During my residence in France, which was from 1792 to 1802, an iron bridge of 236 feet span, and 34 of height from the chord line, was erected over the river Wear near the town of Sunderland, in the County of Durham, England. It was done chiefly at the expense of the two members of Parliament for that county, Milbanke and Burdon.

It happened that a very intimate friend of mine, Sir Robert Smyth (who was also an acquaintance of Mr. Monroe, the American Minister, and since of Mr. Livingston), was then at Paris. He had been a colleague in Parliament with Milbanke, and supposing that the persons who constructed the iron bridge at Sunderland had made free with my model, which was at the iron-works where the Sunderland bridge was cast, he wrote to Milbanke on the subject, and the following is that gentleman's answer.

"With respect to the iron bridge over the river Wear at Sunderland, it certainly is a work well deserving admiration, both for its structure and utility, and I have good grounds for saying that the first idea was suggested by Mr. Paine's bridge exhibited at Paddington. What difference there may be in some part of the structure, or in the proportion of wrought and cast iron, I cannot pretend to say, Burdon having undertaken to build the bridge, in consequence of his having taken upon himself whatever the expense might be beyond between three and four thousand pounds sterling, subscribed by myself and some other gentlemen.

"But whatever the mechanism might be, it did not supersede the necessity of a center."<sup>28</sup> (The writer has here confounded a center with a scaffolding.) "Which center (continues the writer) was esteemed a very ingenious piece of workmanship, and taken from a plan sketched out by Mr. Nash, an architect of great merit, who had been consulted in the outset of the business when a bridge of stone was in contemplation.

"With respect therefore to any gratuity to Mr. Paine, though ever so desirous of rewarding the labors of an ingenious man, I do not feel

<sup>28</sup> It is the technical term, meaning the boards and numbers which form the arch upon which the permanent materials are laid; when a bridge is finished the workmen say they are ready to strike center, that is to take down the scaffolding.—*Author*.

how, under the circumstances already described, I have it in my power, having had nothing to do with the bridge after the payment of my subscription, Mr. Burdon then becoming accountable for the whole. But if you can point out any mode according to which it would be in my power to be instrumental in procuring him any compensation for the advantages the public may have derived from his ingenious model, from which certainly the outline of the bridge at Sunderland was taken, be assured it will afford me very great satisfaction.<sup>29</sup>

“RA. MILBANKE.”

The year before I left France, the Government of that country had it in contemplation to erect an iron bridge over the river Seine, at Paris. As all edifices of public construction came under the cognizance of the Minister of the Interior (and as their plan was to erect a bridge of five iron arches of 100 feet span each, instead of passing the river with a single arch, and which was going backward in practise, instead of forward, as there was already an iron arch of 230 feet in existence) I wrote the Minister of the Interior, the citizen Chaptal, a memoir on the construction of iron bridges. The following is his answer:

“*The Minister of the Interior to the citizen Thomas Paine.*—I have received, citizen, the observations that you have been so good as to address to me upon the construction of iron bridges. They will be of the greatest utility to us when the new kind of construction goes to be executed for the first time. With pleasure, I assure you, citizen, that you have rights of more than one kind to the thankfulness of nations, and I give you, cordially, the particular expression of my esteem.

“—CHAPTAL.”<sup>30</sup>

A short time before I left France, a person came to me from London with plans and drawings for an iron bridge of one arch over the river Thames at London, of 600 feet span, and 60 feet of height from the chord line. The subject was then before a committee of the House of Commons, but I know not the proceedings thereon.

As this new construction of an arch for bridges, and the principles on which it is founded, originated in America, as the documents I have produced sufficiently prove, and is becoming an object of importance to the world, and to no part of it more than to our own country, on ac-

<sup>29</sup> The original is in my possession.—*Author.*

<sup>30</sup> The original, in French, is in my possession.—*Author.*

count of its numerous rivers, and as no experiment has been made in America to bring it into practise further than on the model I have executed myself and at my own expense, I beg leave to submit a proposal to Congress on the subject, which is:

To erect an experiment rib of about 400 feet span, to be the segment of a circle of at least 1,000 feet diameter, and to let it remain exposed to public view, so that the method of constructing such arches may be generally known.

It is an advantage peculiar to the construction of iron bridges that the success of an arch of a given extent and height can be ascertained without being at the expense of building the bridge; which is, by the method I propose, that of erecting an experiment rib on the ground where advantage can be taken of two hills for buttments.

I began in this manner with the rib of 90 feet span and 5 feet of height, being a segment of a circle of 410 feet diameter. The undertakers of the Sunderland bridge began in the same manner. They contracted with the iron-founder for a single rib, and, finding it to answer, had five more manufactured like it and erected into a bridge consisting of six ribs, the experiment rib being one.

But the Sunderland bridge does not carry the principle much further into practise than had been done by the rib of 90 feet span and 5 feet in height, being, as before said, a segment of a circle of 410 feet diameter; the Sunderland bridge being 206 feet span and 34 feet of height, gives the diameter of the circle of which it is a segment to be 444 feet, within a few inches, which is but a larger segment of a circle 30 feet more diameter.

The construction of those bridges does not come within the line of any established practise of business. The stone architect can derive but little from the theory of practise of his art that enters into his construction of an iron bridge; and the iron-founder, though he may be expert in moulding and casting the parts, when the models are given him, would be at a loss to proportion them, unless he was acquainted with all the lines and properties belonging to a circle.

If it should appear to Congress that the construction of iron bridges will be of utility to the country, and they should direct that an experiment rib be made for that purpose, I will furnish the proportions for the several parts of the work and give my attendance to superintend the erection of it.

But, in any case, I have to request that this memoir may be put on

the journals of Congress, as an evidence hereafter that this new method of constructing bridges originated in America.

THOMAS PAINE.

FEDERAL CITY, January 3, 1803.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON<sup>31</sup>

[April 20, 1805.]

DEAR SIR:

I will first give you an account of my own operations and then pass on to such other matters as may occur.

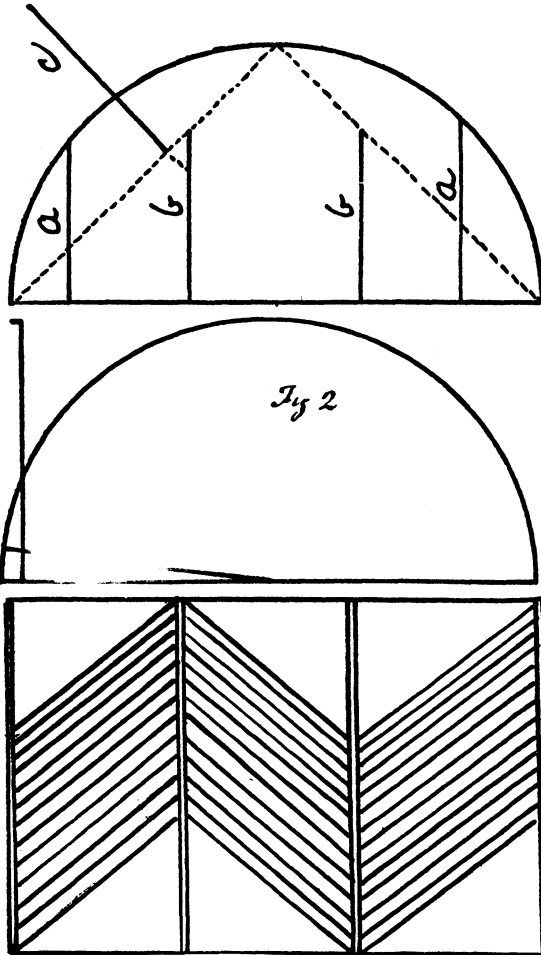
I am settled down on my farm at New Rochelle, twenty miles from N[ew] York. It is a pleasant and healthy situation commanding a prospect always green and agreeable as New Rochelle produces a great deal of grass and hay. The farm contains three hundred acres, about one hundred of which is meadow land, one hundred grazing and tillage land, and the remainder wood land. It is an oblong about a mile and a half in length. I have sold off sixty one acres and an half for four thousand and twenty dollars. With this money I shall improve the other part, and build an addition 34 feet by 32 to the present dwelling house which is small. The additional part will be one room high from the ground (about 11 or 12 feet) divided into apartments with a workshop for my mechanical operations. The upper part of this will be flat as the deck of a ship is, with a little slope to carry off the rain. It will be enclosed with a palisade all round, and covered with arched rafters shingled as the roof of a house is, down to within about 7 feet of the deck or floor. This part will then serve for an observatory and to live on in

<sup>31</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress. It is marked No. 1.

Commenting upon Paine's arrangement of his home, Jefferson wrote, in a letter to Paine, June 5, 1805: "I much doubt whether the open room on your second story will answer your expectations. There will be a few days in the year in which it will be delightful, but not many. Nothing but trees, or Venetian blinds, can protect it from the sun. The semi-cylindrical roof you propose will have advantages. You know it has been practised on the cloth market at Paris. De Lorme, the inventor, shows many forms of roofs in his book to which it is applicable, I have used it at home for a dome, being one hundred and twenty degrees of an oblong octagon, and in the capitol we unite two quadrants of a sphere by a semi-cylinder; all framed in De Lorme's manner. . . ." For other observations by Paine on the construction of houses, see below pp. 1425-1426.—*Editor.*



summer weather, and with screens, or light shrubs in light cases on casters to move easily I can set off what rooms I like in any part, alter them and choose, and be as retired in the open air as I please. The roof of my kitchen is decayed and must be taken down, and I intend putting



*This is one of the methods of making oak floors in France. It is firm and of a handsome appearance.*

a semicircular roof over it, by which means that which is now the garret, in which you can scarcely stand right up but in the middle, will then be spacious and commodious; and I have an idea that appears to me well founded, that a garret with an arched roof will not be hot in the summer like one covered with a roof on straight rafters, because the sun's rays striking on an arched roof will be thrown off on a similar principle that in a concave they are concentrated; but a straight raftered roof presents almost a right angled surface to the sun's rays and the heat of them passes through. I have observed that the round metal globe or ball on the top of andirons does not retain heat. The present form of roofs is unpleasing to the eye and nothing

can make them otherwise; but an arched roof will be an ornament without and commodious within, and support itself better than a

straight raftered roof. This is my opinion but experience must decide.

This figure [see preceding page] shows the different capacities between an arched roof and a straight raftered roof. If the perpendicular to *a* represents a man's height, he cannot stand up right under a straight roof but between the lines *b* and *b*. In the arched roof all the way from *a* to *a*. The diagonal line *c* represents a ray of the sun striking at right angles on a straight raftered roof. The heat of it must either be reflected back on the ray or pass through the roof. The arched roof will, I think, have a disposition to scatter them. I have made a model in pasteboard of an arched roof on a base 32 inches (half an inch to a foot) which equals my expectations. It shows the method of forming arch rafters, which may be done two ways. One, by using narrow boards edgeways cut into short pieces in the direction of the radius and of two or three thickness to break joints. This is on the principle of the dome over the corn market at Paris adapted to a square building, and I wonder they should not have thought of applying it; but they began with a dome and they left off as if it was applicable to no other figure. The second figure in the margin represents a narrow board cut in the direction of the radius. The piece cut off serves as a pattern for cutting all the pieces which when put together form a polygon the corner of which may be sawed or chiseled off.

The other method of making arched rafters is to bend a board flatways to the curve that is wanted then bend another board over it and nail them together. They will then keep that curve, because the upper board being a portion of a larger circle than the under one, the two confine each other to the curve. The thickness may be increased at pleasure. This method is expeditious. I shall roof my kitchen in this method and the new part by the same method.

## THE CAUSE OF THE YELLOW FEVER<sup>32</sup>

AND THE MEANS OF PREVENTING IT IN PLACES NOT  
YET INFECTED WITH IT

ADDRESSED TO THE BOARD OF HEALTH IN AMERICA

A GREAT deal has been written respecting the yellow fever. First, with respect to its causes, whether domestic or imported. Secondly, on the mode of treating it.

What I am going to suggest in this essay is to ascertain some point to begin at, in order to arrive at the cause, and for this purpose some preliminary observations are necessary.

The yellow fever always begins in the lowest part of a populous mercantile town near the water, and continues there, without affecting the higher parts. The sphere or circuit it acts in is small, and it rages most where large quantities of new ground have been made by banking out the river, for the purpose of making wharves.

The appearance and prevalence of the yellow fever in these places, being those where vessels arrive from the West Indies, has caused the belief that the yellow fever was imported from thence; but here are two cases acting in the same place: the one, the condition of the ground at the wharves, which being new made on the muddy and filthy bottom of the river, is different from the natural condition of the ground in the higher parts of the city, and consequently subject to produce a different kind of effluvia or vapor; the other case is the arrival of vessels from the West Indies.<sup>33</sup>

In the State of Jersey neither of these cases has taken place; no ship-

<sup>32</sup> This article represents an earnest and intelligent attempt on Paine's part to find the cause of yellow fever, but it cannot be considered as correct in the light of modern findings. Paine's "thing in the air" which caused the disease actually was a peculiar species of mosquito.—*Editor*.

<sup>33</sup> Due to the heroic work of Walter Reed during and after the Spanish-American war, we now know that yellow fever is carried by a particular type of mosquito, the *Aedes aegypti*, prevalent in the West Indies, Central America and West Africa. The disease is practically unknown in Central America today because the mosquito has been destroyed. We now know that this mosquito carries the deadly virus of yellow fever. The "new wharves" Paine speaks of was the haven for ships from the West Indies, thus the coincidence. The deadly mosquito cannot live long in our climate, but does live long enough to bite people living near the wharves.—*Editor*.

ping arrives there, and consequently there have been no embankments for the purpose of wharfs; and the yellow fever has never broken out in Jersey. This, however, does not decide the point as to the immediate cause of the fever, but it shows that this species of fever is not common to the country in its natural state; <sup>34</sup> and, I believe the same was the case in the West Indies before embankments began for the purpose of making wharfs, which always alter the natural condition of the ground. No old history, that I know of, mentions such a disorder as the yellow fever.

A person seized with the yellow fever in an affected part of the town, and brought into the healthy part, or into the country, and among healthy persons, does not communicate it to the neighborhood, or to those immediately around him; why then are we to suppose it can be brought from the West Indies, a distance of more than a thousand miles, since we see it cannot be carried from one town to another, nor from one part of a town to another, at home? Is it in the air? <sup>35</sup>

This question on the case requires a minute examination. In the first place, the difference between air and wind is the same as between a stream of water and a standing water. A stream of water is water in motion, and wind is air in motion. In a gentle breeze the whole body of air, as far as the breeze extends, moves at the rate of seven or eight miles an hour; in a high wind, at the rate of seventy, eighty or an hundred miles an hour: when we see the shadow of a cloud gliding on the surface of the ground we see the rate at which the air moves, and it must be a good trotting horse that can keep pace with the shadow, even in a gentle breeze; consequently, a body of air that is in and over any place of the same extent as the affected part of a city may be, will, in the space of an hour, even at the moderate rate I speak of, be moved seven or eight miles to leeward; and its place, in and over the city, will be supplied by a new body of air coming from a healthy part, seven or eight miles distant the contrary way; and then on in continual succession.

The disorder, therefore, is not in the air, considered in its natural state, and never stationary. This leads to another consideration of the case.

An impure effluvia, arising from some cause in the ground, in the

<sup>34</sup> Although New Jersey has mosquitoes they are not the kind that carry the yellow fever virus.—*Editor*.

<sup>35</sup> Yellow fever travels only where the mosquito can travel. Influenza, however, is communicated by people to each other.—*Editor*.

manner that fermenting liquors produce near their surface an effluvia that is fatal to life,<sup>36</sup> will become mixed with the air contiguous to it, and as fast as that body of air moves off it will impregnate every succeeding body of air, however pure it may be when it arrives at the place.

The result from this state of the case is, that the impure air, or vapor, that generates the yellow fever, issues from the earth, that is, from the new made earth, or ground raised on the muddy and filthy bottom of the river; and which impregnates every fresh body of air that comes over the place, in like manner as air becomes heated when it approaches or passes over fire, or becomes offensive in smell when it approaches or passes over a body of corrupt vegetable or animal matter in a state of putrefaction.

The muddy bottom of rivers contains great quantities of impure and often inflammable air (carbureted hydrogen gas), injurious to life; and which remains entangled in the mud till let loose from thence by some accident.<sup>37</sup> This air is produced by the dissolution and decomposition of any combustible matter falling into the water and sinking into the mud, of which the following circumstance will serve to give some explanation.

In the fall of the year that New York was evacuated (1783), General Washington had his headquarters at Mrs. Berrian's, at Rocky Hill, in Jersey, and I was there; the Congress then sat at Prince Town [Princeton]. We had several times been told that the river or creek that runs near the bottom of Rocky Hill, and over which there is a mill, might be set on fire, for that was the term the country people used; and as General Washington had a mind to try the experiment, General Lincoln, who was also there, undertook to make preparation for it against the next evening, November fifth. This was to be done, as we were told, by disturbing the mud at the bottom of the river, and holding something in a blaze, as paper or straw, a little above the surface of the water.

Colonels Humphreys and Cobb were at that time aides-de-camp of General Washington, and those two gentlemen and myself got into an argument respecting the cause. Their opinion was that, on disturbing

<sup>36</sup> This is simply a coincidence of phenomena. We now know that decaying matter is not poisonous, but since flies and mosquitoes thrive on putrified matter and since they may carry diseases people in those days associated the putrified matter with disease. However, Paine cautiously points out that he does not know if the putrified matter itself is the disease carrier. (See note 39.)—*Editor*.

<sup>37</sup> Marsh gas, "carbureted hydrogen gas," is inflammable. It is produced by decaying roots, weeds, etc. in marshes.—*Editor*.

the bottom of the river, some bituminous matter arose to the surface, which took fire when the light was put to it; I, on the contrary, supposed that a quantity of inflammable air was let loose, which ascended through the water and took fire above the surface.<sup>38</sup> Each party held to his opinion, and the next evening the experiment was to be made.

A scow had been stationed in the mill dam, and General Washington, General Lincoln and myself, and I believe Colonel Cobb (for Humphreys was sick), and three or four soldiers with poles, were put on board the scow. General Washington placed himself at one end of the scow and I at the other; each of us had a roll of cartridge paper, which we lighted and held over the water about two or three inches from the surface when the soldiers began disturbing the bottom of the river with the poles.

As General Washington sat at one end of the scow and I at the other, I could see better anything that might happen from his light than I could from my own, over which I was nearly perpendicular. When the mud at the bottom was disturbed by the poles, the air bubbles rose fast, and I saw the fire take from General Washington's light and descend from thence to the surface of the water, in a similar manner as when a lighted candle is held so as to touch the smoke of a candle just blown out the smoke will take fire and the fire will descend and light up the candle. This was demonstrative evidence that what was called setting the river on fire was setting on fire the inflammable air that arose out of the mud.

I mentioned this experiment to Mr. Rittenhouse of Philadelphia the next time I went to that city, and our opinion on the case was that the air or vapor that issued from any combustible matter (vegetable or otherwise), that underwent a dissolution and decomposition of its parts, either by fire or water in a confined place, so as not to blaze, would be inflammable and would become flame whenever it came in contact with flame.

In order to determine if this was the case, we filled up the breech of a gun barrel about five or six inches with sawdust, and the proper part with dry sand to the top, and after spiking up the touch-hole, put the breech into a smith's furnace and kept it red hot, so as to consume the sawdust; the sand of consequence would prevent any blaze.

We applied a lighted candle to the mouth of the barrel; as the first vapor that flew off would be humid, it extinguished the candle; but after applying the candle three or four times, the vapor that issued out began

<sup>38</sup> Paine was correct in saying that it was a gas that was inflammable.—*Editor*.

to flash; we then tied a bladder over the mouth of the barrel, which the vapor soon filled, and then tying a string round the neck of the bladder, above the muzzle, took the bladder off.

As we could not conveniently make experiments upon the vapor while it was in the bladder, the next operation was to get it into a phial. For this purpose, we took a phial of about three or four ounces, filled it with water, put a cork slightly into it, and introducing it into the neck of the bladder, worked the cork out, by getting hold of it through the bladder, into which the water then emptied itself, and the air in the bladder ascended into the phial; we then put the cork into the phial, and took it from the bladder. It was now in a convenient condition for experiment.

We put a lighted match into the phial, and the air or vapor in it blazed up in the manner of a chimney on fire; we extinguished it two or three times, by stopping the mouth of the phial; and putting the lighted match to it again it repeatedly took fire, till the vapor was spent, and the phial became filled with atmospheric air. These two experiments, that in which some combustible substance (branches and leaves of trees) had been decomposed by water, in the mud; and this, where the decomposition had been produced by fire, without blazing, shows that a species of air injurious to life, when taken into the lungs, may be generated from substances which, in themselves, are harmless.

It is by means similar to these that charcoal, which is made by fire without blazing, emits a vapor destructive to life. I now come to apply these cases, and the reasoning deduced therefrom, to account for the cause of the yellow fever.<sup>39</sup>

First.—The yellow fever is not a disorder produced by the climate naturally, or it would always have been here in the hot months. The climate is the same now as it was fifty or a hundred years ago; there was no yellow fever then, and it is only within the last twelve years, that such a disorder has been known in America.<sup>40</sup>

Secondly.—The low grounds on the shores of the rivers, at the cities where the yellow fever is annually generated, and continues about three months without spreading, were not subject to that disorder in their natural state, or the Indians would have forsaken them; whereas, they were the parts most frequented by the Indians in all seasons of the

<sup>39</sup> The author does not mean to infer that the inflammable air or carbureted hydrogen gas, is the cause of the yellow fever; but that perhaps it enters into some combination with miasma generated in low grounds, which produces the disease.—*Author.*

<sup>40</sup> Such extensive trade with the West Indies had not taken place previous to the period during which the article was written.—*Editor.*

year, on account of fishing. The result from these cases is that the yellow fever is produced by some new circumstance not common to the country in its natural state, and the question is what is that new circumstance?

It may be said that everything done by the white people, since their settlement in the country, such as building towns, clearing lands, leveling hills, and filling valleys, is a new circumstance; but the yellow fever does not accompany any of these new circumstances. No alteration made on the dry land produces the yellow fever; we must therefore look to some other new circumstances, and we now come to those that have taken place between wet and dry, between land and water.

The shores of the rivers at New York, and also at Philadelphia, have on account of the vast increase of commerce, and for the sake of making wharfs, undergone great and rapid alterations from their natural state within a few years; and it is only in such parts of the shores where those alterations have taken place that the yellow fever has been produced. The parts where little or no alteration has been made, either on the East or North River, and which continue in their natural state, or nearly so, do not produce the yellow fever. The fact therefore points to the cause.

Besides several new streets gained from the river by embankment, there are upwards of eighty new wharfs made since the war, and the much greater part within the last ten or twelve years; the consequence of which has been that great quantities of filth or combustible matter deposited in the muddy bottom of the river contiguous to the shore, and which produced no ill effect while exposed to the air, and washed twice every twenty-four hours by the tide water, have been covered over several feet deep with new earth, and pent up, and the tide excluded. It is in these places, and in these only, that the yellow fever is produced.

Having thus shown, from the circumstances of the case, that the cause of the yellow fever is in the place where it makes its appearance, or rather, in the pernicious vapor issuing therefrom, I go to show a method of constructing wharfs, where wharfs are yet to be constructed (as on the shore on the East River at Corlder's Hook, and also on the North River) that will not occasion the yellow fever, and which may also point out a method of removing it from places already infected with it.

Instead, then, of embanking out the river and raising solid wharfs of earth on the mud bottom of the shore, the better method would be to construct wharfs on arches, built of stone; the tide will then flow in under the arch, by which means the shore, and the muddy bottom, will



be washed and kept clean, as if they were in their natural state, without wharfs.

When wharfs are constructed on the shore lengthways, that is without cutting the shore up into slips, arches can easily be turned, because arches joining each other lengthways serve as butments to each other; but when the shore is cut up into slips there can be no butments; in this case wharfs can be formed on stone pillars, or wooden piles planked over on the top.

In either of these cases, the space underneath will be commodious shelter or harbor for small boats, which can come in and go out always, except at low water, and be secure from storms and injuries. This method besides preventing the cause of the yellow fever, which I think it will, will render the wharfs more productive than the present method, because of the space preserved within the wharf.

I offer no calculation of the expense of constructing wharfs on arches or piles; but on a general view, I believe they will not be so expensive as the present method. A very great part of the expense of making solid wharfs of earth is occasioned by the carriage of materials, which will be greatly reduced by the methods here proposed, and still more so were the arches to be constructed of cast iron blocks. I suppose that one ton of cast iron blocks would go as far in the construction of an arch as twenty tons of stone.

If, by constructing wharfs in such a manner that the tide water can wash the shore and bottom of the river contiguous to the shore, as they are washed in their natural condition, the yellow fever can be prevented from generating in places where wharfs are yet to be constructed, it may point out a method of removing it, at least by degrees, from places already infected with it; which will be by opening the wharfs in two or three places in each, and letting the tide water pass through; the parts opened can be planked over, so as not to prevent the use of the wharf.

In taking up and treating this subject, I have considered it as belonging to natural philosophy, rather than medicinal art; and therefore I say nothing about the treatment of the disease after it takes place; I leave that part to those whose profession it is to study it.

THOMAS PAINE.

NEW YORK, June 27, 1806.

OF GUN-BOATS <sup>41</sup>

**A** GUNBOAT, carrying heavy metal, is a movable fortification; and there is no mode or system of defense the United States can go into for coasts and harbors or ports, that will be so effectual as by gun-boats.

Ships of the line are no ways fitted for the defense of a coast. They are too bulky to act in narrow waters, and cannot act at all in shoal waters. Like a whale, they must be in deep water, and at a distance from land.

Frigates require less room to act in than ships of the line; but a frigate is a feeble machine compared with a gun-boat. Were a frigate to carry and discharge the same weight of metal and ball that a gun-boat can do, it would shake her to pieces. The timbered strength of every ship of war is in proportion to the weight of metal she is to carry, and the weight of metal she is to be exposed to. The sides of a frigate are not proof against the weight of a ball that a gun-boat can discharge. The difference between two ships of war is not so much in their number of guns as in their weight of metal.

I remember the late Commodore Johnson saying in the British House of Commons, at the commencement of the American war, that "a single gun, in a retired situation, would drive a ship of the line from her moorings. I mention this (said he), that too much may not be expected from the navy."

A gun-boat can carry a gun of the same weight of metal and ball that a ship of an hundred guns can carry; and she carries it to the greatest possible advantage. The shot from a gun-boat is a horizontal shot. The gun is fixed in a frame that slides in a groove, and when the man at the helm brings the head of the boat to point at the ship, the gun is pointed with it. When a ship fights with her starboard or larboard

<sup>41</sup> This essay is reprinted from *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays of Thomas Paine*, London, 1819, pp. 215-220.

Paine raises several pertinent arguments in favor of gun-boats which reveal his grasp of fundamental principles of engineering. His point that gun-boats by creating a lower silhouette are harder to hit than ordinary naval vessels, is well taken, and his argument that splintering in boats cause major injuries was distinctly valid. Experience in World War II vividly substantiate Paine's theories.—*Editor*.

guns, she presents the whole broadside of the ship to the object she fires at. A gun-boat fights only with her head, that is, with the gun at her head, and when she fires at an object she presents only the breadth of the boat to that object. Suppose, then, a boat to be ten feet broad and two feet out of the water (I speak here of boats intended for the defense of the coast, and of towns situated near the coast, and to carry a gun of the same weight of metal and ball that a ship of the line carries), such a boat will present a space to be fired at equal to twenty square feet, that is, ten feet horizontal length (being the breadth of the boat) and two feet perpendicular height, being the height of the boat out of the water. Suppose, on the other hand, that a ship be an hundred feet long and ten feet high out of the water, she will present a space to be fired at equal to one thousand square feet, that is, a hundred multiplied by ten. It is probable that a ship, in firing at a gun-boat, would fire one of her bow guns, because in so doing she apparently shortens about one half of her length; but she can fire but one gun at a time in this angular position.

But the gun-boat has other chances in her favor besides what arise from the different dimensions of the two objects. If a shot from the ship, though in a straight line with the boat, passes more than two feet above the water at the place where the boat is, it will pass over the boat without striking it. But a shot from the boat that is too high to strike the ship, may strike the mast and carry it away. It is by this means that masts are carried away. The shot that does it passes clear above the ship, and spends its whole force upon the mast. Again, if a shot from the ship pass an inch or two wide of the boat, it can do her no injury. But a shot from the boat that passes five or six inches wide of the body of the ship at the stern, may unship or carry away her rudder. This, and the carrying away a mast, are the two most fatal accidents that can befall a ship; yet neither of them can happen to a gun-boat.

Of the number of men killed or wounded in a ship, the greater part of them are not by cannon balls, but by splinters from the inside of the ship that fly in all directions; but the sides of a gun-boat not being thick like the sides of a ship, a ball would pass through without splinters; and as an effectual way to prevent splinters, should any happen or be apprehended, the sides of the boat on the inside should be lined with a strong netting made of cord, which the men can make themselves. The cabins of French ships are frequently lined in this manner.

Musketry can be used by ship against ship in close action, but cannot

be used against a gun-boat, because a gun-boat drawing but little water, not more than two and a half or three feet, and depending upon oars, can always keep out of the reach of musketry. The proper distance for a gun-boat to fire at is point blank shot.<sup>42</sup> The men should be frequently exercised at firing point blank shot at banks of earth on shore, or against the high perpendicular shores of rivers, like the North River, or against the bulk of old ships that are to be broken up, the man at the helm to point the boat and give the order for firing. A gun-boat should not carry a less weight of ball than twenty-four pounds. A frigate would not choose to expose her sides to such shot.

The first gun-boats built in the United States, were for the defence of the Delaware, in 1775 and 1776. The Roebuck man of war came up the Delaware within a few miles of Philadelphia, and the gun-boats went and attacked her. The ship fired broadsides without striking any of the boats, and as the deep water the ship was in, was but narrow, the re-action of the broadsides forced her into shoal water, and she got aground. The man who commanded the gun-boats, a suspected character of the name of White, gave orders to the boats to cease firing, and when the tide rose the ship floated and made the best of her way to sea. White afterwards joined the British at New York.

When General Howe sailed from New York, in 1777, to get possession of Philadelphia, he avoided coming up the Delaware, where the gun-boats were, and went to the Chesapeake, where there were none, and marched by land from the head of Elk into Pennsylvania. No cause can be assigned for this circuitous route of several hundred miles, but that of not exposing his ships and transports to the gun-boats. There were at that time a fortification on Mud Island, a few miles below Philadelphia, and another at Red Bank, on the Jersey shore opposite; but Howe could have landed below those, and out of the reach of their shot, but he could land no where on the Delaware shore, nor be any where with his ships in the Delaware, out of the reach of the movable fortifications, the gun-boats. After General Howe got possession of Philadelphia by land, the gun-boats quitted their station below, and came above the city.

The Asia man of war, of 60 guns, Capt. Vandeput, got aground in New York harbor, three or four miles below the city, in the spring of 1776. General Lee commanded at New York at that time, and had

<sup>42</sup> Point blank musket shot is 250 yards, point blank cannon shot varies according to the size of the cannon.—*Author*.

there been any gun-boats, they could have taken her, because they could have raked her fore and aft and obliged her to strike. A man of war aground is like a bird shot in the wing, it can make no effort to save itself. As to the guns on the point now called the Battery, they could do nothing. The ship was out of the reach of their shot.

The gun-boats built in France for the descent upon England are numerous and formidable, being more than two thousand. They were began in the year 1796. Those which I have seen, being both convoy and transport, were about sixty feet long, sixteen broad, drew about two and a half feet water, carried a twenty-four or thirty-six pounder at the head, and a field-piece in the stern, with a flap by which to run the field-piece out as soon as the boat touches ground ashore, as they run a wagon out of a scow. Each boat carried an hundred men, and rowed with twenty-five oars on a side. They have since built a much larger sort called praams. These also are flat-bottomed, draw three or four feet water, and are from four to six hundred tons burthen, and carry several very large cannon, not less, I suppose, than forty-eight pounders at least.

The British men of war have made several attempts against the French gun-boats at Boulogne, but were always defeated. The last attempt was by fire-arrows, which might be formidable against ships, because of their sails and rigging, but is ridiculous against gun-boats.

A great deal has been said in Congress and in the New York newspapers about fortifying New York. Mr. N. Williams, in a speech in Congress, January 23, said, "The gentleman on my right (meaning Mr. Smilie) meets the proposition for fortifying New York with a most formidable objection. Expend (says he), what money you will, it is impossible to erect fortifications that shall prove sufficient to defend the harbor and city of New York. He (Mr. Smilie) calls upon us for a plan, and tells us, that if it can be defended, to produce our plan."—"I do not (continues Mr. Williams) pretend to be *very wise* upon this subject myself, but I have been told that the ablest engineers have examined the position, and have given it as their opinion, that an effectual mode of defense is practicable. But if defense is impossible, I call upon the gentleman (meaning Mr. Smilie) to show wherein the peculiarity of the situation of that place (New York) consists, to render it so. For surely the pretense of impossibility would not be made use of here, unless the city and harbor of New York were different from all other places in the world that were ever defended."

I now come to reply to the demand Mr. Williams has made. I shall do this as concisely as the limit to which I confine myself will admit, but what I say will serve to sow *seeds of thought* in the minds of others upon this subject, and may prevent millions of dollars being wasted in vain.

Fortification is founded on geometrical principles, and where the condition of a place is such that those principles cannot be applied, that place cannot be fortified to produce any effect. A place that cannot be enclosed in a polygon, cannot be fortified on any principles of fortification, unless there be a part so strong by nature, as to be inaccessible to a besieging army. The fortified parts are then sections of a polygon. New York cannot be enclosed in a polygon, and therefore cannot be fortified; neither is any part of it strong by nature. It is approachable in every part by land or water, and besides this, it can be bombarded across the East River from Long Island.

It is absolutely necessary in fortifying a town that all parts of it be equally strong, or an enemy will attack only the weakest part. New York cannot be made equally strong in all its parts, and therefore it is money thrown away to attempt to fortify it. Those who wish to know more on this subject may consult any encyclopedia, or any dictionary of arts and sciences under the head of FORTIFICATION. They will there find plans of fortified places by Count Pagan, Blondel, Vauban, Scheiter, &c. But the plans and drawings are all on the same principles. They are all polygons.

Some of our New York papers have talked of fortifying New York with "*impregnable fortifications.*" There never yet was an impregnable fortification, nor ever can be. Every fortified place can be taken that can be approached. All that a fortified place can do is to delay the progress of an enemy till an army can arrive to raise the siege. Bonaparte takes every fortified place he goes against, but he fortifies no places himself. He trusts to the open field, for when you are master of the field (and the militia of the States are numerous enough to be master of the field against an enemy), fortifications are of no use. The population of the United States when the revolutionary war began was but two millions and an half. It is now nearly six millions, and surely the people are not grown cowards, whatever the *Fed* and *Tory* faction may be. It was cowardice that made them *Tories* at first. The British impostor and emissary, *Cullen, alias McCullen, alias Carpenter*, said in one of his papers that a single frigate could lay the city of New York under contribu-

tion. This showed the extreme ignorance of the man. Two twelve-pounders, or heavier metal if it can conveniently be had, taken to the water edge would soon oblige the frigate to quit her station. I saw this done in the revolutionary war to two frigates, the Pearl frigate and another with her. It proved Commodore Johnson's opinion to be correct.

The lower a gun is to the surface of the water the more certain the shot is. This is one of the cases that gives a gun-boat an advantage against ships. If a shot from a ship strikes another ship between wind and water, it is always a chance occasioned by the heeling of the ship that is struck. But the direction of a shot from a gun-boat is so nearly between wind and water, that it generally strikes there or thereabouts. As to land batteries that are elevated, they have but little chance of striking a ship, as their fire is always in an oblique or sloping direction; whereas from a gun-boat it is a horizontal line. Fort Washington was built to prevent British ships going up the North River, and it never struck one of them; but it killed three men by chance-medley coming down the river in General Washington's barge, and this was the only vessel it ever struck.

When all the plans that can be devised for fortifying the narrows are examined, for there is no fortifying the city, it will be found that half a dozen gun-boats carrying twenty-four pounders, will do it more effectually than can be done by any other method.

COMMON SENSE.

NEW YORK, March 11, 1807.

## OF THE COMPARATIVE POWERS AND EXPENSE OF SHIPS OF WAR, GUN-BOATS, AND FORTIFICATIONS <sup>43</sup>

**T**HE natural defense by men is common to all nations; but artificial defense as an auxiliary to human strength must be adapted to the local condition and circumstances of a country. What may be suitable to one country, or in one state of circumstances, may not be so in another.

The United States have a long line of coast of more than two thou-

<sup>43</sup> This article is reprinted from *Miscellaneous Letters and Writings of Thomas Paine*, London, 1819, pp. 221-25.—*Editor*.

sand miles, every part of which requires defense, because every part is approachable by water.

The right principle for the United States to go upon as a water defense for the coast is that of combining the greatest practical power with the least possible bulk, that the whole quantity of power may be better distributed through the several parts of such an extensive coast.

The power of a ship of war is altogether in the number and size of the guns she carries, for the ship, of itself has no power. Ships cannot struggle with each other like animals; and besides this, as half her guns are on one side the ship and half on the other, and as she can use only the guns on one side at a time, her real power is only equal to half her number of guns. A seventy-four can use only thirty-seven guns. She must tack about to bring the other half into action, and while she is doing this she is defenseless and exposed.

As this is the case with ships of war, a question naturally arises therefrom, which is, whether seventy-four guns, or any other number, cannot be more effectually employed, and that with much less expense, than by putting them all into one ship of such enormous bulk that it cannot approach a shore either to defend it or attack it; and though the ship can change its place, the whole number of guns can be only in one place at a time, and only half that number can be used at a time.

This is a true statement of the case between ships of war and gun-boats for the defense of a coast and of towns situated near a coast. But the case often is, that men are led away by the GREATNESS of an idea and not by the JUSTNESS of it. This is always the case with those who are advocates for navies and large ships.

A gun-boat carrying as heavy metal as a ship of one hundred guns can carry, is a *one gun ship of the line*; and seventy-four of them which would cost much less than a 74 gun ship would cost, would be able to blow a 74 gun ship out of the water. They have, in the use of their guns, double the power of the ship, that is, they have the use of their whole number of 74 to 37.

Having thus stated the general outlines of the subject I come to particulars.

That I might have correct data to go upon with respect to the expense of ships and gun-boats, I wrote to the head of one of the departments at Washington for information on that subject.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>44</sup> The letter Paine refers to seems to have disappeared, for it is not included in any collections in the Library of Congress or in the National Archives. (continued)



The following is the answer I received:

"Calculating the cost of a 74 or 100 gun ship, from the *actual* cost of the ship United States of 44 guns, built at Philadelphia, between the years 1795 and 1798, which amounted to 300,000 dollars, it may be presumed that a 74 gun ship would cost 500,000 dollars and a 100 gun ship 700,000 dollars.

"Gun-boats calculated merely for the defense of harbors and rivers will, on an average, cost about 4000 dollars each when fit to receive the crew and provisions."

On the data here given I proceed to state comparative calculations respecting ships and gun-boats.

The ship, United States, cost 300,000 dollars. Gun-boats cost 4000 dollars each, consequently the 300,000 expended on the ship for the purpose of getting the use of 44 guns, and those not heavy metal would have built *seventy-five* gun-boats each carrying a cannon of the same weight of metal that a ship of an hundred guns can carry. The difference therefore is, that the gun-boats give the use of 31 guns heavy metal, more than can be obtained by the ship and the expenses in both cases equal.

A 74 gun ship cost 500,000 dollars. This same money will build 125 gun-boats. The gain by gun-boats is the use of 51 guns more than can be obtained by expending the money on a ship of 74 guns.

The cost of an 100 gun ship is 700,000 dollars. This money will build 175 gun-boats. The gain, therefore, by the boats is the use of 75 guns more than by the ship.

Though I had a general impression, ever since I had a knowledge of gun-boats, that any given sum of money would go farther in building gun-boats than in building ships of war, and that gun-boats were preferable to ships for home defense, I did not suppose the difference was so

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Paine also sent two letters to Thomas Jefferson on the subject of gun-boats in the summer and fall of 1807, and included in the first letter (dated August 29, 1807) a "model of a contrivance for making one gun-boat do nearly double execution." (See Jefferson's letters to Paine, September 6, October 9, 1807, Andrew A. Lipscomb and Albert Ellery Bergh, eds., *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, Washington, D. C., 1905, vol. XI, pp. 362, 378.) Both the letters and the diagram seem to have disappeared; they are not included in the Jefferson collection in the Library of Congress or in the collections of the Navy Department in the National Archives. In a report in the National Archives, Naval Affairs section, entitled "Data on the Gun-Boats built by the United States, 1804-1808," Jefferson's letter to Paine, September 6, 1807, is quoted, after which appears the following comment: "Whether Paine's plan had any influence upon gun-boats authorized in 1807 and 1808, we are unable to say." It may very well be that Paine simply sent Jefferson the articles on gun-boats which appear in the present collection of his writings, and wrote nothing else on the subject.—*Editor*.

great as the calculations above given prove them to be, for it is almost double in favor of gun-boats. It is as 175 to 100. The cause of this difference is easily explained.

The fact is, that all that part of the expense in building a ship from the deck upward, including mast, yards, sails and rigging is saved by building gun-boats which are moved by oars, or a light sail occasionally.

The difference also in point of repairs between ships of war and gun-boats is not only great but is greater in proportion than in their first cost. The repairs of ships of war is annually from 1-14 to 1-10 of their first cost. The annual expense of the repairs of a ship that cost 300,000 dollars will be above 21,000 dollars; the greatest part of this expense is in her sails and rigging which gun-boats are free from.

The difference also in point of duration is great. Gun-boats, when not in use, can be put under shelter and preserved from the weather, but ships cannot; or the boats can be sunk in the water or the mud. This is the way the nuts of cider mills for grinding apples are preserved. Were they to be exposed to the dry and hot air after coming wet from the mill they would crack and split and be good for nothing. But timber under water will continue sound for several hundred years, provided there be no worms.

Another advantage in favor of gun-boats is the expedition with which a great number of them can be built at once. An hundred may be built as soon as one if there are hands enough to set about them separately. They do not require the preparations for building them that ships require, nor deep water to launch them in. They can be built on the shore of shallow waters, or they might be framed in the woods or forests and the parts brought separately down and put together on the shore. But ships take up a long time building. The ship United States took up two whole years '96 and '97 and part of the years '95 and '98 and all this for the purpose of getting the use of 44 guns and those not heavy metal. This foolish affair was not in the days of the present administration.

Ships and gun-boats are for different services. Ships are for distant expeditions; gun-boats for home defense. The one for the ocean; the other for the shore.

Gun-boats being moved by oars cannot be deprived of motion by calms, for the calmer the weather the better for the boat. But a hostile ship becalmed in any of our waters, can be taken by gun-boats moved by oars, let the rate of the ship be what it may. A 100 gun man of war becalmed, is like a giant in a dead palsy. Every little fellow can kick him.

The United States ought to have 500 gun-boats stationed in different parts of the coast, each carrying a thirty-two or thirty-six pounder. Hostile ships would not then venture to lie within our waters, were it only for the certainty of being sometimes becalmed. They would then become prizes, and the insulting bullies on the ocean become prisoners in our own waters.

Having thus stated the comparative powers and expense of ships of war and gun-boats, I come to speak of fortifications.

Fortifications may be comprehended under two general heads.

First, fortified towns; that is, towns enclosed within a fortified polygon, of which there are many on the continent of Europe but not any in England.

Secondly, simple forts and batteries. These are not formed on the regular principles of fortification, that is, they are not formed for the purpose of standing a siege as a fortified polygon is. They are for the purpose of obstructing or annoying the progress of an enemy by land or water.

Batteries are formidable in defending narrow passes by land; such as the passage of a bridge, or of a road cut through a rough and craggy mountain that cannot be passed any where else. But they are not formidable in defending water-passes, because a ship with a brisk wind tide and running at the rate of ten miles an hour will be out of the reach of the fire of the battery in fifteen or twenty minutes, and being a swift moving object all the time it would be a mere chance that any shot struck her.

When the object of a ship is that of passing a battery for the purpose of attaining or attacking some other object it is not customary with the ship to fire at the battery lest it should disturb her course. Three or four men are kept on deck to attend the helm, and the rest, having nothing to do, go below. Duckworth in passing the Dardenelles up to Constantinople did not fire at the batteries.

When batteries for the defense of water-passes can be erected without any great expense, and the men not exposed to capture, it may be very proper to have them. They may keep off small piratical vessels but they are not to be trusted to for defence.

Fortifications give, in general, a delusive idea of protection. All our principal losses in the revolutionary war were occasioned by trusting to Fortifications. Fort Washington with a garrison of 2500 men was taken in less than four hours and the men made prisoners of war. The

same fate had befallen Fort Lee on the opposite shore, if General Lee had not moved hastily off and gained Hackinsack bridge. General Lincoln fortified Charleston, S. C., and himself and his army were made prisoners of war. General Washington began fortifying New York in 1776, General Howe passed up the East river landed his army at Frog's Point about twenty miles above the city and marched down upon it, and had not General Washington stole silently and suddenly off on the North river side of York Island, himself and his army had also been prisoners. Trust not to Fortifications, otherwise than as batteries that can be abandoned at discretion.

The case however is, that batteries, as a water defence against the passage of ships cannot do much. Were any given number of guns to be put in a battery for that purpose, and an equal number of the same weight of metal put in gun-boats for the same purpose, those in the boats would be more effectual than those in the battery. The reason for this is obvious. A battery is stationary. Its fire is limited to about two miles, and there its power ceases. But every gun-boat moved by oars is a movable fortification that can follow up its fire and change its place and its position as circumstances may require. And besides this, *gun-boats in calms are the sovereigns of ships.*

As this matter interests the public, and most probably will come before Congress at its next meeting, if the printers in any of the States, after publishing it in their newspapers, have a mind to publish it in a pamphlet form, together with my former piece on gun-boats, they have my consent freely. I take neither copy-right nor profit for any thing I publish.

COMMON SENSE.

NEW YORK, July 21, 1807.

## TO THE PEOPLE OF NEW YORK <sup>45</sup>

**T**HE election for Charter officers last year was carried by the federal and quid trick of fortifications and now the people are to be amused and duped to a new obstruction.

<sup>45</sup> This document is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the New York Public Library. It is undated but was probably written in August, 1807, for it was printed in the New York *Public Advertiser* and William Duane's Philadelphia *Aurora* of August 21, 1807. It has not appeared in any previous collection of Paine's Writings.—*Editor.*

The only eligible mode of obstruction is that proposed by Franklin for the Delaware in '76 an account of which was given in the *Public Advertiser* of the 8th inst and republished in the *Philadelphia Aurora* of the 13th August.

The plan of obstruction now proposed for New York is by blocks, that is, by solid bodies of stone or earth in the manner of wharves. This was first suggested by Selah Strong, Chairman of the Committee of the Corporation, and in a publication by Mr. Stevens of Hoboken, which contains many just observations on ships and batteries. He adopts the same unfortunate idea of obstruction by blocks. The blocks to be "25 or 30 feet square or larger at the distance of 50 or 60 feet from each other." And the editor of the New York *American Citizen* in introducing Mr. Smith's piece in his paper of Saturday last, says, "Why not, to make assurance doubly sure," to give us in fact protection, carry the obstruction by blocks or otherwise entirely cross from Robin's Reef to Mud Flat.

This most certainly would prevent hostile ships coming to the city, and it is equally as certain it would prevent the tide coming up and lay the wharves at New York dry, and be the ruin of all the towns on the North River that depend for commerce on tidewater, This, the projectors of obstructors by blocks never thought of; but projectors should think of everything or they will make ruinous work. If Selah Strong's project is adopted New York is ruined, for the obstruction by blocks cannot afterwards be removed.

Every alteration made in the channel of a water course, whether it be in the natural current of a river or the current of a tide, will cause another alteration some where else.

If the obstruction be across the natural current of a river like the obstruction of a mill dam, the water will continue rising till it overtops the obstruction or overflows the country above; for as the daily supply from the source will continue the same it will have a passage somewhere.

If the obstruction be to the tidewater, the effect will be, that the tide-water will rise to the same height at the place where the obstruction is as it did before and no higher, but the channel above the obstruction will be deprived of tidewater.

The stone piers of a bridge lessen the quantity and extent of tide water above the bridge. This everybody knows that knows anything of hydraulics. But to know it as a fact, if any person will look into Salmon's geography or Guthrie's geographical grammar, he will find, in

their account of rivers and bridges in England, that before Westminster bridge was built, which was begun in 1738 the tide flowed up to Kingston about 17 or 18 miles above Westminster, but since the bridge has been built it flows no higher than Richmond which is four miles short of Kingston. Now, if the piers of a bridge lessened the quantity of tide-water, and shortened its extent four miles out of 17 or 18 miles, what must be the effect of a total, or even semi-total, obstruction by blocks of the channel between Robin's Reef and Mud Flat on the wharves at the city and on the long course of the North River?

In projecting obstructions two things are absolutely necessary to be taken into view. The one is, the least possible obstruction to the water up or down; the other is, that the obstruction be such as can be removed afterwards. Neither of these entered the mind of the projectors of blocks, and both are embraced in the plan of Franklin. His frames had very little effect on the tide or the stream; and after the enemy went away they were taken up; but all the power and art of Man could not remove solid blocks of stone or earth 25 or 30 feet square sunk several feet below the surface of the water.

If the channel between Robin's Reef and Mud Flat is not more than about 36 feet it can be obstructed as the Delaware was and the obstruction can be defended by gunboats and batteries, and the militia can defend the shore as the people of Norfolk have done; but for men to be always employing themselves on imaginary fortifications or skulking behind, or within obstruction like a turtle within his shell, lest the crows should pick him, has a very cowardly appearance. It is not the spirit of "*the times that tried men's souls.*"

THOMAS PAINE.



## SONGS AND POEMS

THE DEATH OF GENERAL WOLFE

FARMER SHORT'S DOG PORTER: A TALE

THE SNOWDROP AND THE CRITIC

AN ACCOUNT OF THE BURNING OF BACHELORS' HALL

LIBERTY TREE

AN ADDRESS TO LORD HOWE

HAIL GREAT REPUBLIC

FROM THE CASTLE IN THE AIR, TO THE LITTLE  
CORNER OF THE WORLD

THE NEW COVENANT

CONTENTMENT; OR, IF YOU PLEASE, CONFESSION

EPITAPH ON GENERAL CHARLES LEE

TO SIR ROBERT SMYTH

FROM MR. PAINE TO MR. JEFFERSON

LINES EXTEMPORE, BY THOMAS PAINE, JULY, 1803

STAR IN THE EAST



## EDITOR'S NOTE

Paine's poems and songs reveal a phase of his personality too often obscured in his political and theological writings, hence they make interesting reading even when the writing is not superior. One of the poems contained in this section, *Liberty Tree*, ranks high in all collections of democratic literature. It is included in *The Poetry of Freedom*, an anthology edited by William Rose Benet and Norman Cousins.

## THE DEATH OF 'GENERAL WOLFE'<sup>1</sup>

IN a mouldering cave where the wretched retreat,  
Britannia sat wasted with care;  
She mourned for her Wolfe, and exclaim'd against fate  
And gave herself up to despair.  
The walls of her cell she had sculptured around  
With the feats of her favorite son;  
And even the dust, as it lay on the ground,  
Was engraved with the deeds he had done.

The sire of the Gods, from his crystalline throne,  
Beheld the disconsolate dame,  
And moved with her tears, he sent Mercury down,  
And these were the tidings that came:  
"Britannia forbear, not a sigh nor a tear  
For thy Wolfe so deservedly loved,  
Your tears shall be changed into triumphs of joy,  
For thy Wolfe is not dead but removed.

"The sons of the East, the proud giants of old.  
Have crept from their darksome abodes,  
And this is the news as in Heaven it was told,  
They were marching to war with the Gods;

<sup>1</sup> This song was written by Paine soon after the news reached England that General James Wolfe had been mortally wounded in the battle of Quebec, 1759, during the French and Indian war. It was first published in the *Pennsylvania Magazine* of March, 1775, with music. The song was originally written to be sung at the Headstrong Club of Lewes, England, of which Paine was a member.—*Editor*.

A Council was held in the chambers of Jove,  
 And this was their final decree,  
 That Wolfe should be called to the armies above,  
 And the charge was intrusted to me.

“To the plains of Quebec with the orders I flew,  
 He begg’d for a moment’s delay;  
 He cry’d ‘Oh! forbear, let me victory hear,  
 And then thy command I’ll obey.’  
 With a darksome thick film I compass’d his eyes,  
 And bore him away in an urn,  
 Lest the fondness he bore to his own native shore,  
 Should induce him again to return.”

## FARMER SHORT’S DOG PORTER: A TALE <sup>2</sup>

**T**HREE Justices (so says my tale)  
 Once met upon the public weal.  
 For learning, law, and parts profound,  
 Their fame was spread the county round;  
 Each by his wondrous art could tell  
 Of things as strange as Sydropheil;  
 Or by the help of sturdy ale,  
 So cleverly could tell a tale,  
 That half the gapping standers by  
 Would laugh aloud. The rest would cry.  
 Or by the help of nobler wine,  
 Would knotty points so nice define,  
 That in an instant right was wrong,

<sup>2</sup> These lines were written to be recited before the Headstrong Club of Lewes, England. They were first published in the *Pennsylvania Magazine* of July, 1775, and were preceded by a foreword in which Paine stated: “The following story, ridiculous as it is, is a fact. A farmer at New Shoreham, near Brighthelmstone, in England, having voted at an election for a Member of Parliament, contrary to the pleasure of three neighboring justices, they took revenge upon his dog, which they caused to be hung, for starting a hare upon the road. The piece has been very little seen, never published, nor any copies taken.”—*Editor.*

Yet did not hold that station long,  
 For while they talk'd of wrong and right,  
 The question vanish'd out of sight.  
 Each knew by practise where to turn  
 To every powerful page in Burn,  
 And could by help of note and book  
 Talk law like Littleton and Coke.  
 Each knew by instinct when and where  
 A farmer caught or kill'd a hare;  
 Could tell if any man had got  
 One hundred pounds per ann. or not;  
 Or what was greater, could divine  
 If it was only ninety-nine.  
 For when the hundred wanted one,  
 They took away the owner's gun.  
 Knew by the leering of an eye  
 If girls had lost their chastity,  
 And if they had not—would divine  
 Some way to make their virtue shine.

These learned brothers being assembled,  
 (At which the county feared and trembled),  
 A warrant sent to bring before 'em,  
 One Farmer Short, who dwelt at Shoreham,  
 Upon a great and heavy charge,  
 Which we shall here relate at large,  
 That those who were not there may read,  
 In after days, the mighty deed:

*Viz.*

"That he, the 'foresaid Farmer Short,  
 Being by the devil moved, had not  
 One hundred pounds per annum got;  
 That having not (in form likewise)  
 The fear of God before his eyes,  
 By force and arms did keep and cherish,  
 Within the aforesaid town and parish,  
 Against the statute so provided,  
 A dog. And there the dog abided.  
 That he, this dog, did then and there

Pursue, and take, and kill a hare;  
 Which treason was, or some such thing,  
 Against our SOVEREIGN LORD THE KING."

The constable was bid to jog,  
 And bring the farmer—not the dog.

But fortune, whose perpetual wheel  
 Grinds disappointment sharp as steel,  
 On purpose to attack the pride  
 Of those who over others ride,  
 So nicely brought the matter round,  
 That Farmer Short could not be found,  
 Which plunged the bench in so much doubt  
 They knew not what to go about.  
 But after pondering pro and con,  
 And mighty reasonings thereupon,  
 They found, on opening of the laws,  
 That he, the dog aforesaid, was  
 By being privy to the fact,  
 Within the meaning of the act,  
 And since the master had withdrawn,  
 And was the Lord knows whither gone,  
 They judged it right, and good in law,  
 That he, the dog, should answer for  
 Such crimes as they by proof could show,  
 Were acted by himself and Co.  
 The constable again was sent,  
 To bring the dog; or dread the event.

Poor Porter, right before the door,  
 Was guarding of his master's store;  
 And as the constable approach'd him,  
 He caught him by the leg and broach'd him;  
 Poor Porter thought (if dogs can think)  
 He came to steal his master's chink.  
 The man, by virtue of his staff,  
 Bid people help; not stand and laugh;

On which a mighty rout began;  
Some blamed the dog, and some the man.  
Some said he had no business there,  
Some said he had business everywhere.

At length the constable prevail'd,  
And those who would not help were jail'd;  
And taking Porter by the collar,  
Commanded all the guards to follow.

The justices received the felon,  
With greater form than I can tell on,  
And quitting now their wine and punch,  
Began upon him all at once.

At length a curious quibble rose,  
How far the law could interpose,  
For it was proved, and rightly too,  
That he, the dog, did not pursue  
The hare, with any ill intent,  
But only followed by the scent;  
And she, the hare, by running hard,  
Thro' hedge and ditch, without regard,  
Plunged in a pond, and there was drown'd,  
And by a neighboring justice found;  
Wherefore, though he the hare annoy'd,  
It can't be said that he destroy'd;  
It even can't be proved he beat her,  
And "to destroy" must mean "to eat her."

Did you e'er see a gamester struck,  
With all the symptoms of ill luck?  
Or mark the visage which appears,  
When even Hope herself despairs?  
So look'd the bench, and every brother  
Sad pictures drew of one another;  
Till one more learned than the rest  
Rose up, and thus the court address'd:

“Why, Gentlemen, I’ll tell ye how,  
Ye may clear up this matter now,  
For I am of opinion strong  
The dog deserves, and should be hung.  
I’ll prove it by as plain a case,  
As is the nose upon your face.

“Now if, suppose, a man, or so,  
Should be obliged, or not, to go  
About, or not about, a case,  
To this, or that, or t’ other place!  
And if another man, for fun,  
Should fire a pistol (viz.) a gun,  
And he, the first, by knowing not  
That he, the second man, had shot,  
Should undesign’dly meet the bullet,  
Against the throat (in Greek) the gullet,  
And get such mischief by the hit  
As should unsense him of his wit,  
And if that, after that he died,  
D’ye think the other may n’t be tried?  
Most sure he must, and hang’d, because  
He fired his gun against the laws:  
For ’t is a case most clear and plain,  
Had A not shot, B had not been slain:  
So had the dog not chased the hare,  
She never had been drown’d—that’s clear.”

This logic, rhetoric, and wit,  
So nicely did the matter hit,  
That Porter, though unheard, was cast,  
And in a halter breathed his last.  
The justices adjourned to dine,  
And whet their logic up with wine.

THE SNOWDROP AND THE CRITIC<sup>3</sup>*Enter* CRITIC *and* SNOW DROP.

CRITIC.

PROLOGUES to magazines!—the man is mad,  
 No magazine a prologue ever had;  
 But let us hear what new and mighty things  
 Your wonder working magic fancy brings.

SNOW DROP.

Bit by the muse in an unlucky hour,  
 I've left myself at home, and turn'd a flower,  
 And thus disguised came forth to tell my tale,  
 A plain white snow drop gathered from the vale:  
 I come to sing that summer is at hand,  
 The summer time of wit you'll understand;  
 And that this garden of our magazine  
 Will soon exhibit such a pleasing scene,  
 That even critics shall admire the show  
 If their good grace will give us time to grow;  
 Beneath the surface of the parent earth  
 We've various seeds just struggling into birth;  
 Plants, fruits, and flowers, and all the smiling race,  
 That can the orchard or the garden grace;  
 Our numbers, Sir, so fast and endless are,  
 That when in full complexion we appear,  
 Each eye, each hand, shall pluck what suits its taste,

<sup>3</sup> When the *Pennsylvania Magazine* was first introduced in January, 1775, the public was informed that "like the snow-drop it comes forth in a barren season, and contents itself with foretelling that choicer flowers are preparing to appear." Paine wrote this introduction and followed it up with this anonymous poem which he addressed to himself as the editor of the magazine. The poem was preceded by the following note: "To the Editor of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*. 1775. Sir: I have given your very modest 'Snowdrop' what, I think, Shakespeare calls 'a local habitation and a name'; that is, I have made a poet of him, and have sent him to take possession of a page in your next magazine; here he comes, disputing with a critic about the propriety of a prologue."—*Editor*.



And every palate shall enjoy a feast;  
 The rose and lily shall address the fair,  
 And whisper sweetly out, "My dears, take care";  
 With sterling worth, the plant of sense shall rise  
 And teach the curious to philosophize;  
 The keen eyed wit shall claim the scented briar,  
 And sober cits the solid grain admire;  
 While generous juices sparkling from the vine,  
 Shall warm the audience until they cry—divine!  
 And when the scenes of one gay month are o'er,  
 Shall clap their hands, and shout—encore, encore!

## CRITIC.

All this is mighty fine! but prithee, when  
 The frost returns, how fight you then your men?

## SNOW DROP.

I'll tell you, Sir: we'll garnish out the scenes  
 With stately rows of hardy evergreens,  
 Trees that will bear the frost, and deck their tops  
 With everlasting flowers, like diamond drops;  
 We'll draw, and paint, and carve, with so much skill,  
 That wondering wits shall cry—diviner still!

## CRITIC.

Better, and better, yet! but now suppose,  
 Some critic wight, in mighty verse or prose,  
 Should draw his gray goose weapon, dipt in gall,  
 And mow ye down, plants, flowers, trees, and all.

## SNOW DROP.

Why, then we'll die like flowers of sweet perfume,  
 And yield a fragrance even in the tomb!

## AN ACCOUNT OF THE BURNING OF BACHELORS' HALL <sup>4</sup>

AT PHILADELPHIA, BEING DESTROYED BY LIGHTNING, 1775

BY

THE OLD BACHELOR

FAIR Venus so often was miss'd from the skies,  
And Bacchus as frequently absent likewise,  
That the Synod began to enquire out the reason,  
Suspecting the culprits were plotting of Treason.  
At length it was found they had open'd a ball,  
At a place by the MORTALS call'd Bachelors' Hall;  
Where Venus disclos'd every fun she could think of.  
Jove highly displeas'd at such riotous doings  
Sent TIME to reduce the whole building to ruins.  
But time was so slack with his traces and dashes  
That Jove in a passion consumed it to ashes.

## LIBERTY TREE <sup>5</sup>

A SONG, WRITTEN EARLY IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

*Tune*—The gods of Greece.

IN a chariot of light, from the regions of day,  
The Goddess of Liberty came,  
Ten thousand celestials directed her way,  
And hither conducted the dame.

<sup>4</sup> This poem was published in the *Pennsylvania Magazine* of March, 1775. As a post-script Paine added this note to his readers: "P. S. As many of my papers are burnt, and the rest thrown about in confusion, you must wait a month or two longer to hear the conclusion." The conclusion was never published.—*Editor*.

<sup>5</sup> This stirring song was printed in the *Pennsylvania Evening Post* of September 16, 1775. The last stanza was a definite forecast of *Common Sense* inasmuch as it openly blamed the king as well as Parliament for the oppressive measures imposed upon the American people.—*Editor*.

A fair budding branch from the gardens above,  
Where millions with millions agree,  
She brought in her hand as a pledge of her love,  
And the plant she named Liberty Tree.

The celestial exotic stuck deep in the ground,  
Like a native it flourished and bore;  
The fame of its fruit drew the nations around,  
To seek out this peaceable shore.  
Unmindful of names or distinctions they came,  
For freemen like brothers agree;  
With one spirit endued, they one friendship pursued,  
And their temple was Liberty Tree.

Beneath this fair tree, like the patriarchs of old,  
Their bread in contentment they ate,  
Unvexed with the troubles of silver or gold,  
The cares of the grand and the great.  
With timber and tar they Old England supplied,  
And supported her power on the sea:  
Her battles they fought, without getting a groat,  
For the honor of Liberty Tree.

But hear, O ye swains ('tis a tale most profane),  
How all the tyrannical powers,  
Kings, Commons, and Lords, are uniting amain  
To cut down this guardian of ours.  
From the East to the West blow the trumpet to arms,  
Thro' the land let the sound of it flee:  
Let the far and the near all unite with a cheer,  
In defense of our Liberty Tree.

AN ADDRESS TO LORD HOWE <sup>6</sup>

THE rain pours down, the city looks forlorn,  
 And gloomy subjects suit the howling morn;  
 Close by my fire, with door and window fast,  
 And safely shelter'd from the driving blast,  
 To gayer thoughts I bid a day's adieu,  
 To spend a scene of solitude with you.

So oft has black revenge engross'd the care  
 Of all the leisure hours man finds to spare;  
 So oft has guilt, in all her thousand dens,  
 Call'd for the vengeance of chastising pens;  
 That while I fain would ease my heart on you,  
 No thought is left untold, no passion new.

From flight to flight the mental path appears,  
 Worn with the steps of near six thousand years,  
 And fill'd throughout with every scene of pain,  
 From George the murderer down to murderous Cain  
 Alike in cruelty, alike in hate,  
 In guilt alike, but more alike in fate,  
 Curséd supremely for the blood they drew,  
 Each from the rising world, while each was new.

Go, man of blood! true likeness of the first,  
 And strew your blasted head with homely dust:  
 In ashes sit—in wretched sackcloth weep,

<sup>6</sup> Sir William Howe was the British commander in America from the outbreak of the War for Independence until he resigned his command in May, 1778. Paine also addressed his *Crisis No. II*, January 13, 1777, to Lord Howe.

This seems to have been the only poem Paine wrote during the War for Independence. Conway (*Life*, vol. I, p. 116) also includes among the poems by Paine written during the war the poem, *The American Patriot's Prayer*. But Moses C. Tyler in his *Literary History of the American Revolution*, New York, 1897, vol. I, pp. 177-178, casts doubt on the Paine authorship theory, and in an article in *American Literature*, vol. II, May, 1930, pp. 168-172, Caroline Hogue shows that it appeared as early as 1760 and is definitely not Paine's.—*Editor*.

And with unpitied sorrows cease to sleep.  
 Go haunt the tombs, and single out the place  
 Where earth itself shall suffer a disgrace.  
 Go spell the letters on some moldering urn,  
 And ask if he who sleeps there can return.

Go count the numbers that in silence lie,  
 And learn by study what it is to die;  
 For sure your heart, if any heart you own,  
 Conceits that man expires without a groan;  
 That he who lives receives from you a grace,  
 Or death is nothing but a change of place:  
 That peace is dull, that joy from sorrow springs  
 And war the most desirable of things.  
 Else why these scenes that wound the feeling mind,  
 This sport of death—this cockpit of mankind!  
 Why sobs the widow in perpetual pain?  
 Why cries the orphan, "Oh! my father's slain!"  
 Why hangs the sire his paralytic head,  
 And nods with manly grief—"My son is dead!"  
 Why drops the tear from off the sister's cheek,  
 And sweetly tells the misery she would speak?  
 Or why in sorrow sunk, does pensive John  
 To all the neighbors tell, "Poor master's gone!"

Oh! could I paint the passion that I feel,  
 Or point a horror that would wound like steel,  
 To thy unfeeling, unrelenting mind,  
 I'd send destruction and relieve mankind.  
 You that are husbands, fathers, brothers, all  
 The tender names which kindred learn to call;  
 Yet like an image carved in massy stone,  
 You bear the shape, but sentiment have none;  
 Allied by dust and figure, not with mind,  
 You only herd, but live not with mankind,

Since then no hopes to civilize remain,  
 And mild philosophy has preached in vain,  
 One prayer is left, which dreads no proud reply,  
 That he who made you breathe will make you die.

HAIL GREAT REPUBLIC <sup>7</sup>*Tune*—Rule Britannia

**H**AIL great Republic of the world,  
 Which rear'd her empire in the West,  
 Where fam'd Columbus' flag unfurl'd,  
 Gave tortured Europe scenes of rest;  
 Be thou forever great and free,  
 The land of Love and Liberty!

Beneath thy spreading, mantling vine,  
 Beside each flowery grove and spring,  
 And where thy lofty mountains shine,  
 May all thy sons and fair ones sing.  
 Be thou forever, etc.

From thee may hellish discord prowl,  
 With all her dark and hateful train;  
 And while thy mighty waters roll,  
 May heaven-descended concord reign.  
 Be thou forever, etc.

Where'er the Atlantic surges lave,  
 Or sea the human eye delights,  
 There may thy starry standard wave,  
 The constellation of thy rights!  
 Be thou forever, etc.

May ages as they rise proclaim  
 The glories of thy natal day;  
 And states from thy exalted name  
 Learn how to rule, and to obey.  
 Be thou forever, etc.

<sup>7</sup> Although the exact date of this song by Paine is not known, it was probably written shortly after the signing of the Treaty of Peace following the War for Independence. It was widely reprinted and sung.—*Editor*.

Let laureates make their birthdays known,  
 Or how war's thunderbolts are hurl'd;  
 'Tis ours the charter, ours alone,  
 To sing the birthday of a world!  
 Be thou forever great and free,  
 The land of Love and Liberty!

## FROM THE CASTLE IN THE AIR, TO THE LITTLE CORNER OF THE WORLD <sup>8</sup>

**I**N the region of clouds, where the whirlwinds arise,  
 My castle of fancy was built;  
 The turrets reflected the blue from the skies,  
 And the windows with sunbeams were gilt.

The rainbow sometimes, in its beautiful state,  
 Enamel'd the mansion around;  
 And the figures that fancy in clouds can create,  
 Supplied me with gardens and ground.

I had grottoes, and fountains, and orange tree groves,  
 I had all that enchantment has told;  
 I had sweet shady walks, for the Gods and their Loves,  
 I had mountains of coral and gold.

But a storm that I felt not, had risen and roll'd,  
 While wrapp'd in a slumber I lay;  
 And when I look'd out in the morning, behold  
 My Castle was carried away.

<sup>8</sup> This poem was addressed to Lady Smyth, wife of Sir Robert Smyth, an English banker in Paris. The title of the poem is derived from the fact that while he was imprisoned in the Luxembourg prison Paine received several letters from Lady Smyth signed anonymously "A Little Corner of the World." Paine replied, signing himself "The Castle in the Air," and after a time Lady Smyth revealed her identity.

The original manuscript of this poem, in Paine's handwriting, is in the New York Historical Society. It is printed in this edition through the courtesy of the Society. There is another copy in Paine's handwriting in the manuscript division of the New York Public Library. It differs slightly from the copy in the New York Historical Society, and may have been an earlier draft.—*Editor*.

It pass'd over rivers, and valleys, and groves,  
 The world it was all in my view;  
 I thought of my friends, of their fates, of their loves,  
 And often, full often of you.

At length it came over a beautiful scene,  
 That nature in silence had made;  
 The place was but small, but 'twas sweetly serene  
 And checkered with sunshine and shade.

I gazed and I envied with painful goodwill,  
 And grew tired of my seat in the air;  
 When all of a sudden my Castle stood still,  
 As if some attraction was there.

Like a lark from the sky it came fluttering down,  
 And placed me exactly in view,  
 When whom should I meet in this charming retreat,  
 This corner of calmness, but you.

Delighted to find you in honor and ease,  
 I felt no more sorrow, nor pain;  
 But the wind coming fair, I ascended the breeze,  
 And went back with my Castle again.

## THE NEW COVENANT <sup>9</sup>

FROM THE CASTLE IN THE AIR TO THE LITTLE CORNER OF THE WORLD

**T**HE God that Moses writes about  
 Is one that I refuse,  
 He for his chosen People took  
 The disobedient Jews.

<sup>9</sup> The original manuscript of this poem addressed to Lady Smyth, and signed "T. P.," is in the Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California. It is printed through the courtesy of the library.—*Editor*.



Their country often he laid waste,  
 Their little ones he slew;  
 But I have shown a better taste  
 In chusing Y, O, U.

Then be you gay, or be you grave,  
 Or wheresoe'er you be,  
 Mind this command, that "*Thou shalt have  
 No other Gods than me.*"

All Idols thou shalt put away  
 Thine Eye no Evil see,  
 And if thou'lt love the Lord thy God  
 Thy Lord God will love thee.

## CONTENTMENT; OR, IF YOU PLEASE, CONFESSION <sup>10</sup>

**O** COULD we always live and love,  
 And always be sincere,  
 I would not wish for heaven above,  
 My heaven would be here.

Though many countries I have seen,  
 And more may chance to see,  
*My Little Corner of the World*  
 Is half the world to me;

<sup>10</sup> This poem was addressed to Mrs. Joel Barlow, the wife of the liberal American poet, Joel Barlow, who was living in Paris in 1796 when these verses were written. Accompanying the poem, Paine sent the following note: "To Mrs. Barlow, on her pleasantly telling the author that, after writing against the superstition of the Scripture religion, he was setting up a religion capable of more bigotry and enthusiasms, and more dangerous to its votaries—that of making a religion of Love."

The original manuscript in Paine's handwriting is in the Thomas Paine National Historical Association. It is printed in this edition through the courtesy of the Association.—*Editor.*

The other half, as you may guess,  
 America contains;  
 And thus, between them, I possess  
 The whole world for my pains.

I'm then contented with my lot,  
 I can no happier be;  
 For neither world I'm sure has got  
 So rich a man as me.

Then send no fiery chariot down  
 To take me off from hence,  
 But leave me on my heavenly ground—  
 This prayer is *common-sense*.

Let others choose another plan,  
 I mean no fault to find;  
 The true theology of man  
 Is *happiness of mind*.

EPITAPH ON GENERAL CHARLES LEE <sup>11</sup>

WARRIOR, farewell! eccentrically brave,  
 Above all kings, and yet of gold the slave:  
 In words, a very wit, in deeds less wise,  
 Forever restless, yet could never rise;  
 At least no higher than could meet the ground:  
 If strong the blow—the greater the rebound.  
 Of all men jealous, yet afraid of none,  
 In crowds forever, ever still alone.  
 At once the pride and bubble of a throng,

<sup>11</sup> These lines in manuscript were found in a volume printed in London in 1797, entitled *Anecdotes of the late Charles Lee, Esq., Lieutenant Colonel in the 44th Regiment, and second in command in the service of the United States of America during the Revolution, etc.* The manuscript copy is in the John Carter Brown Library, Providence, Rhode Island, and is printed in this edition through the courtesy of the library.—*Editor*.

Preferring right, and yet forever wrong.  
 By nature form'd to play the monarch's part,  
 At best a true republican at heart.  
 But, to cast up the aggregated sum,  
 Above all nobles and below all scum.  
 Unsettled virtues, with great vices mix't  
 Like the wide welkin, where few stars are fix't.  
 Rest, restless chief, thy sword has taken rust,  
 Peace to thy manes! honor to thy dust.

## TO SIR ROBERT SMYTH <sup>12</sup>

### WHAT IS LOVE?

'TIS that delightsome transport we can feel  
 Which painters cannot paint, nor words reveal,  
 Nor any art we know of can conceal.

Canst thou describe the sunbeams to the blind,  
 Or make him feel a shadow with his mind?  
 So neither can we by description show  
 This first of all felicities below.

When happy Love pours magic o'er the soul,  
 And all our thoughts in sweet delirium roll;  
 When contemplation spreads her rainbow wings,  
 And every flutter some new rapture brings;  
 How sweetly then our moments glide away,  
 And dreams repeat the raptures of the day;  
 We live in ecstasy, to all things kind,  
 For love can teach a moral to the mind.

<sup>12</sup>In a note accompanying this poem, dated Paris, 1800, Paine wrote: "As I will not attempt to rival your witty description of love (in which you say, 'Love is like paper, with a fool it is wit, with a wit it is folly'), I will retreat to sentiment and try if I can match you there; and that I may start with a fair chance, I will begin with your own question."—*Editor.*

But are there not some other marks that prove,  
 What is this wonder of the soul, call'd love?  
 O yes there are, but of a different kind,  
 The dreadful horrors of a dismal mind:  
 Some jealous fury throws her poison'd dart,  
 And rends in pieces the distracted heart.

When love's a tyrant, and the soul a slave,  
 No hope remains to thought, but in the grave;  
 In that dark den it sees an end to grief,  
 And what was once its dread becomes relief.

What are the iron chains that hands have wrought?  
 The hardest chain to break is made of thought.  
 Think well of this, ye lovers, and be kind,  
 Nor play with torture on a tortured mind.

## FROM MR. PAINE TO MR. JEFFERSON <sup>13</sup>

ON THE OCCASION OF A TOAST BEING GIVEN AT A FEDERAL DINNER AT WASHINGTON, OF "MAY THEY NEVER KNOW PLEASURE WHO LOVE PAINE."

I SEND you, Sir, a tale about some Feds,  
 Who, in their wisdom got to loggerheads.  
 The case was this, they felt so flat and sunk,  
 They took a glass together and got drunk.  
 Such things, you know, are neither new nor rare,  
 For some will harry themselves when in despair.  
 It was the natal day of Washington,  
 And they thought a famous day for fun;  
 For with the learned world it is agreed,  
 The better day the better deed.  
 They talked away, and as the glass went round  
 They grew, in point of wisdom, more profound;

<sup>13</sup> This poem was originally published in Conway's *Life of Thomas Paine*, vol. I, pp. 316-317. Conway asserts that it was probably written on February 23, 1803.—*Editor*.

For at the bottom of the bottle lies  
 That kind of sense we overlook when wise.  
 Come here's a toast, cried one, with roar immense,  
 May none know pleasure who love Common Sense.  
 Bravo! cried some,—no, no! some others cried,  
 But left it to the waiter to decide.  
 I think, said he, the case would be more plain,  
 To leave out Common Sense, and put in Paine.  
 On this a mighty noise arose among  
 This drunken, bawling, senseless throng.  
 Some said that Common Sense was all a curse,  
 That making people wiser made them worse;  
 It learned them to be careful of their purse,  
 And not be laid about like babes at nurse,  
 Nor yet believe in stories upon trust,  
 Which all mankind, to be well governed must;  
 And that the toast was better at the first,  
 And he that didn't think so might be cursed.  
 So on they went, till such a fray arose  
 As all who know what Feds are may suppose.

LINES, EXTEMPORE, BY THOMAS PAINE,  
 JULY, 1803.<sup>14</sup>

**Q**UICK as the lightning's vivid flash  
 The poet's eye o'er Europe rolls;  
 Sees battles rage, hears tempests crash,  
 And dims at horror's threatening scowls.

Mark ambition's ruthless king,  
 With crimsoned banners scathe the globe;  
 While trailing after conquest's wing,  
 Man's festering wounds his demons probe.

<sup>14</sup> This poem was originally published in the *American Citizen* of August 9, 1803.—  
*Editor.*

Palléd with streams of reeking gore  
 That stain the proud imperial day,  
 He turns to view the western shore,  
 Where freedom holds her boundless sway.

'Tis here her sage triumphant sways  
 An empire in the people's love;  
 'Tis here the sovereign will obeys  
 No king but Him who rules above.

STAR IN THE EAST <sup>15</sup>

COMMENTARY ON THE EASTERN WISE-MEN TRAVELLING TO BETHLEHEM  
 GUIDED BY A STAR, TO SEE THE LITTLE JESUS IN A MANGER  
 Mat. Chap. 2.

**T**HREE pedlars Trav'ling to a fair,  
 To see the fun & what was there,  
 and sell their merchandise  
 They stopt upon the road to chat.  
 Refresh and ask of this or that  
 That they might be more wise

And pray, the landlord said to them  
 Where go ye sirs?, To Bethlehem,  
 the Citizens replied.  
 Ye are merchants sirs to them said he,  
 We are replied the pedlars three:  
 and Eastern men beside

And pray what have ye in your sacks,  
 If worth the while I will go snacks:  
 To them Quoth Major Domo.

<sup>15</sup> The original, undated, manuscript of this poem is in the New York Historical Society, and it is printed through the courtesy of the Society.—*Editor*.

We've buttons, buckles, spectacles  
and every thing a merchant sells  
replied the travelling trio.

These things are very well said he,  
For beaux, and those who cannot see,  
much further than their knuckles,  
But Bethlehem fairs' for boys & girls,  
who never think of spectacles  
and cannot buy your buckles

I have a pack of Toys quoth he  
a Travelling merchant left with me  
who could not pay his score.  
And you shall have them on condition  
You sell them at a cheap commission  
and make the money sure.

There's one of us will stay in pawn  
untill the other two return  
If you suspect our faith sd they.  
The Landlord tho't this was a plan,  
to leave upon his hands the man,  
and therefore he said nay.

They truck'd however for the pack  
which one of them took on his back,  
and off the merchants travell'd  
and here the tale, the apostles told,  
of wise men and, their gifts of gold,  
will fully be unravell'd

The star in the East, that shin'd so bright,  
as might be seen both day and night,  
If you will credit them;  
It was no other than a sign,  
To a public House, where pedlars dine;  
In East street Bethlehem.

The wise men were those pedlars three,  
as you, and all the world may see,

By reading to the end:

For commentators have mistook,  
In paraphrasing of a Book,  
They did not understand.

Our Travellers coming to the House,  
Scarce fit to entertain a mouse:

Inquir'd to have a room.

The Landlord said he was not able  
to give them any but the stable,  
As many folks were come.

And pray who have you there said they,  
and how much money must we pay,

for we have none to spare:

why theres one Joseph and a wench  
who are to go before the bench,  
about a love affair.

Somehow or other in a manger  
a child exposed to every danger

was found as it was sleeping:

The girl she swears, that she's a maid,  
so swears the man, and I'm afraid:  
on me will fall the keeping.

Now if you'll set yourselves about  
To find this knotty story out

I'll pay whate'er it may be.

So in the travelling pedlars went,  
To pay their birthday compliment,  
and talk about the Baby.

They first unpack'd their pack of Toys,  
some for show and some for noise,

But mostly for the latter.



One gave a rattle, one a whistle,  
and one a Trumpet made of gristle,  
To Introduce the matter.

One squeak'd away, the other blew,  
The third play'd on the rattle too,  
To keep the bautling easy.  
And thus the story comes to us,  
of which the people make such a fuss,  
about the Eastern Magi.

MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS

THE MAGAZINE IN AMERICA

NEW ANECDOTES OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT

CUPID AND HYMEN

REFLECTIONS ON UNHAPPY MARRIAGES

FORGETFULNESS

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Most of Paine's writings were designed to influence popular feeling for progressive causes, but now and then he wrote on general themes for magazines and newspapers. These articles have been included in the section that follows. They reveal the vigor of style and clarity of expression that characterizes all of Paine's writings.

## THE MAGAZINE IN AMERICA<sup>1</sup>

IN a country whose reigning character is the love of science, it is somewhat strange that the channels of communication should continue so narrow and limited. The weekly papers are at present the only vehicles of public information. Convenience and necessity prove that the opportunities of acquiring and communicating knowledge ought always to enlarge with the circle of population. America has now outgrown the state of infancy; her strength and commerce make large advances to manhood; and science in all its branches has not only blossomed, but even ripened on the soil. The cottages as it were of yesterday have grown to villages, and the villages to cities; and while proud antiquity, like a skeleton in rags, parades the streets of other nations, their genius, as if sickened and disgusted with the phantom, comes hither for recovery.

The present enlarged and improved state of things gives every encouragement which the editor of a new magazine can reasonably hope for. The failure of former ones cannot be drawn as a parallel now. Change of times adds propriety to new measures. In the early days of colonization, when a whisper was almost sufficient to have negotiated all our internal concerns, the publishing even of a newspaper would have been premature. Those times are past; and population has established both their use and their credit. But their plan being almost wholly devoted to news and commerce, affords but a scanty residence to the Muses. Their path lies wide of the field of science, and has left a rich and unexplored region for new adventurers.

It has always been the opinion of the learned and curious, that a magazine, when properly conducted, is the nursery of genius; and by con-

<sup>1</sup> This was Paine's introductory number as editor of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, and appeared in the issue of January 24, 1775.—*Editor*.

stantly accumulating new matter, becomes a kind of market for wit and utility. The opportunities which it affords to men of abilities to communicate their studies, kindle up a spirit of invention and emulation. An unexercised genius soon contracts a kind of mossiness, which not only checks its growth, but abates its natural vigor. Like an untenanted house it falls into decay, and frequently ruins the possessor.

The British magazines, at their commencement, were the repositories of ingenuity. They are now the retailers of tale and nonsense. From elegance they sunk to simplicity, from simplicity to folly, and from folly to voluptuousness. The Gentleman's, the London, and the Universal, Magazines, bear yet some marks of their originality; but the Town and Country, the Covent-Garden, and the Westminster, are no better than incentives to profligacy and dissipation. They have added to the dissolution of manners, and supported Venus against the Muses.

America yet inherits a large portion of her first-imported virtue. Degeneracy is here almost a useless word. Those who are conversant with Europe would be tempted to believe that even the air of the Atlantic disagrees with the constitution of foreign vices; if they survive the voyage, they either expire on their arrival, or linger away in an incurable consumption. There is a happy something in the climate of America, which disarms them of all their power both of infection and attraction.

But while we give no encouragement to the importation of foreign vices, we ought to be equally as careful not to create any. A vice begotten might be worse than a vice imported. The latter, depending on favor, would be a sycophant; the other, by pride of birth, would be a tyrant: to the one we should be dupes, to the other slaves.

There is nothing which obtains so general an influence over the manners and morals of a people as the Press; from *that*, as from a fountain, the streams of vice or virtue are poured forth over a country. And of all publications, none are more calculated to improve or infect than a periodical one. All others have their rise and their exit; but *this* renews the pursuit. If it has an evil tendency, it debauches by the power of repetition; if a good one, it obtains favor by the gracefulness of soliciting it. Like a lover, it woos its mistress with unabated ardor, nor gives up the pursuit without a conquest.

The two capital supports of a magazine are utility and entertainment. The first is a boundless path, the other an endless spring. To suppose that arts and sciences are exhausted subjects, is doing them a kind of dishonor. The divine mechanism of creation improves such folly, and

shows us by comparison, the imperfection of our most refined inventions. I cannot believe that this species of vanity is peculiar to the present age only. I have no doubt but that it existed before the flood, and even in the wildest ages of antiquity. 'Tis folly we have inherited, not created; and the discoveries which every day produces, have greatly contributed to dispossess us of it. Improvement and the world will expire together: And till that period arrives, we may plunder the mine, but can never exhaust it! That "*We have found out everything,*" has been the motto of every age. Let our ideas travel a little into antiquity, and we shall find larger portions of it than now; and so unwilling were our ancestors to descend from this mountain of perfection, that when any new discovery exceeded the common standard, the discoverer was believed to be in alliance with the devil. It was not the ignorance of the age only, but the vanity of it, which rendered it dangerous to be ingenious. The man who first planned and erected a tenable hut, with a hole for the smoke to pass, and the light to enter, was perhaps called an able architect, but he who first improved it with a chimney, could be no less than a prodigy; yet had the same man been so unfortunate as to have embellished it with glass windows, he might probably have been burnt for a magician. Our fancies would be highly diverted could we look back, and behold a circle of original Indians haranguing on the sublime perfection of the age: Yet 'tis not impossible but future times may exceed us almost as much as we have exceeded them.

I would wish to extirpate the least remains of this impolitic vanity. It has a direct tendency to unbrace the nerves of invention, and is peculiarly hurtful to young colonies. A magazine can never want matter in America, if the inhabitants will do justice to their own abilities. Agriculture and manufactures owe much of their improvement in England, to hints first thrown out in some of their magazines. Gentlemen whose abilities enabled them to make experiments, frequently chose that method of communication, on account of its convenience. And why should not the same spirit operate in America? I have no doubt of seeing, in a little time, an American magazine full of more useful matter than I ever saw an English one: Because we are not exceeded in abilities, have a more extensive field for enquiry; and, whatever may be our political state, *Our happiness will always depend upon ourselves.*

Something useful will always arise from exercising the invention, though perhaps, like the witch of Endor, we shall raise up a being we did not expect. We owe many of our noblest discoveries more to accident

than wisdom. In quest of a pebble we have found a diamond, and returned enriched with the treasure. Such happy accidents give additional encouragement to the making experiments; and the convenience which a magazine affords of collecting and conveying them to the public, enhances their utility. Where this opportunity is wanting, many little inventions, the forerunners of improvement, are suffered to expire on the spot that produced them; and, as an elegant writer beautifully expresses on another occasion,

“They waste their sweetness on the desert air.”—*Gray*.

In matters of humor and entertainment there can be no reason to apprehend a deficiency. Wit is naturally a volunteer, delights in action, and under proper discipline is capable of great execution. 'Tis a perfect master in the art of bush-fighting; and though it attacks with more subtlety than science, has often defeated a whole regiment of heavy artillery. Though I have rather exceeded the line of gravity in this description of wit, I am unwilling to dismiss it without being a little more serious. 'Tis a qualification which, like the passions, has a natural wildness that requires governing. Left to itself, it soon overflows its banks, mixes with common filth, and brings disrepute on the fountain. We have many valuable springs of it in America, which at present run purer streams, than the generality of it in other countries. In France and Italy, 'tis froth highly fomented; in England it has much of the same spirit, but rather a browner complexion. European wit is one of the worst articles we can import. It has an intoxicating power with it, which debauches the very vitals of chastity, and gives a false coloring to every thing it censures or defends. We soon grow fatigued with the excess, and withdraw like gluttons sickened with intemperance. On the contrary, how happily are the sallies of innocent humor calculated to amuse and sweeten the vacancy of business! We enjoy the harmless luxury without surfeiting, and strengthen the spirits by relaxing them.

The Press has not only a great influence over our manners and morals, but contributes largely to our pleasures; and a magazine when properly enriched, is very conveniently calculated for this purpose. Voluminous works weary the patience, but here we are invited by conciseness and variety. As I have formerly received much pleasure from perusing these kind of publications, I wish the *present* success; and have no doubt of seeing a proper diversity blended so agreeably together, as to furnish out an *Olio* worthy of the company for whom it is designed.

I consider a magazine as a kind of bee-hive, which both allures the swarm, and provides room to store their sweets. Its division into cells, gives every bee a province of its own; and though they all produce honey, yet perhaps they differ in their taste for flowers, and extract with greater dexterity from one than from another. Thus, we are not all Philosophers, all Artists, nor all Poets.

## NEW ANECDOTES OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT<sup>2</sup>

ON one of those calm and gloomy days, which have a strange effect in disposing the mind to pensiveness, I quitted the busy town and withdrew into the country. As I passed towards the Schuylkill, my ideas enlarged with the prospect, and sprung from place to place with an agility for which nature had not a simile. Even the eye is a loiterer, when compared with the rapidity of the thoughts. Before I could reach the ferry, I had made the tour of the creation, and paid a regular visit to almost every country under the sun; and while I was crossing the river, I passed the Styx, and made large excursions into the shadowy regions; but my ideas relanded with my person, and taking a new flight inspected the state of things unborn. This happy wildness of imagination makes a man a lord of the world, and discovers to him the value and the vanity of all it possesses.

Having discharged the two terrestrial Charons, who ferried me over the Schuylkill, I took up my staff and walked into the woods. Every thing conspired to hush me into a pleasing kind of melancholy—the trees seemed to sleep—and the air hung round me with such unbreathing silence, as if listening to my very thoughts. Perfectly at rest from care or business, I suffered my ideas to pursue their own unfettered fancies; and in less time than what is required to express it in, they had again passed the Styx and toured many miles into the new country.

As the servants of great men always imitate their masters abroad, so my ideas, habiting themselves in my likeness, figured away with all the consequence of the person they belonged to; and calling themselves when united, I and *Me*, wherever they went, brought me on their return the following anecdotes of Alexander, viz.

Having a mind to see in what manner Alexander lived in the Pluto-

<sup>2</sup> This essay appeared in the *February*, 1775 issue of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*.—*Editor*.



nian world, I crossed the Styx (without the help of Charon, for the dead only are his fare), and inquired of a melancholy looking shade, who was sitting on the banks of the river, if he could give me any account of him, *Yonder he comes*, replied the shade, *get out of the way or you'll be run over*. Turning myself round I saw a grand equipage rolling towards me, which filled the whole avenue. Bless me! thought I, the gods still continue this man in his insolence and pomp! The chariot was drawn by eight horses in golden harness, and the whole represented his triumphal return, after he had conquered the world. It passed me with a splendor I had never seen before, and shined so luminously up into the country, that I discovered innumerable shades sitting under the trees, which before were invisible. As there were two persons in the chariot equally splendid, I could not distinguish which was Alexander, and on requiring that information of the shade, who still stood by, he replied, *Alexander is not there*. Did you not, continued I, tell me that Alexander was coming, and bid me get out of the way? *Yes*, answered the shade, *because he was the forehorse on the side next to us*. Horse! I mean Alexander the Emperor. *I mean the same*, replied the shade, *for whatever he was on the other side of the water is nothing now, he is a HORSE here; and not always that, for when he is apprehensive that a good licking is intended for him, he watches his opportunity to roll out of the stable in the shape of a piece of dung, or in any other disguise he can escape by*. On this information I turned instantly away, not being able to bear the thought of such astonishing degradation, notwithstanding the aversion I have to his character. But curiosity got the better of my compassion, and having a mind to see what sort of a figure the conquerer of the world cut in the stable, I directed my flight thither; he was just returned with the rest of the horses from the journey, and the groom was rubbing him down with a large furz bush, but turning himself round to get a still larger and more prickly one that was newly brought in, Alexander watched the opportunity, and instantly disappeared, on which I quitted the place, lest I should be suspected of stealing him; when I had reached the banks of the river, and was preparing to take my flight over, I perceived that I had picked up a *bug* among the Plutonian gentry, and thinking it was needless to increase the breed on this side the water, was going to dispatch it, when the little wretch screamed out, *Spare Alexander the GREAT*. On which I withdrew the violence I was offering to his person, and holding up the emperor between my finger and thumb, he exhibited a most contemptible figure of the downfall of ty-

rant greatness. Affected with a mixture of concern and compassion (*which he was always a stranger to*) I suffered him to nibble on a pimple that was newly risen on my hand, in order to refresh him; after which I placed him on a tree to hide him, but a Tom Tit coming by, chopped him up with as little ceremony as he put whole kingdoms to the sword. On which I took my flight, reflecting with pleasure that I was not ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

ESOP.

### CUPID AND HYMEN<sup>3</sup>

AS THE little amorous deity was one day winging his way over a village in Arcadia, he was drawn by the sweet sound of the pipe and tabor, to descend and see what was the matter. The gods themselves are sometimes ravished with the simplicity of mortals. The groves of Arcadia were once the country seats of the celestials, where they relaxed from the business of the skies, and partook of the diversions of the villagers. Cupid being descended, was charmed with the lovely appearance of the place. Every thing he saw had an air of pleasantness. Every shepherd was in his holiday dress, and every shepherdess was decorated with a profusion of flowers. The sound of labor was not heard among them. The little cottages had a peaceable look, and were almost hidden with arbors of jessamine and myrtle. The way to the temple was strewn with flowers, and enclosed with a number of garlands and green arches. Surely, quoth Cupid, here is a festival today. I'll hasten and inquire the matter.

So saying, he concealed his bow and quiver, and took a turn through the village. As he approached a building distinguished from all the rest by the elegance of its appearance, he heard a sweet confusion of voices mingled with instrumental music. What is the matter, said Cupid to a swain who was sitting under a sycamore by the way-side, and humming a very melancholy tune, why are you not at the feast, and why are you so sad? I sit here, answered the swain, to see a sight, and a sad sight 'twill be. What is it, said Cupid, come tell me, for perhaps I can help you. I was once happier than a king, replied the swain, and was envied by all the shepherds of the place, but now everything is dark and gloomy, because—Because what? said Cupid—Because I am robbed of my Rurallinda. Gothic, the Lord of the manor, hath stolen her from me, and this

<sup>3</sup> This article appeared in the March, 1775 issue of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*.—Editor.

is to be the nuptial day. A wedding, quoth Cupid, and I know nothing of it, you must be mistaken, shepherd, I keep a record of marriages, and no such thing has come to my knowledge. 'Tis no wedding, I assure you, if I am not consulted about it. The Lord of the manor, continued the shepherd, consulted nobody but Ruralinda's mother, and she longed to see her fair daughter the Lady of the manor. He hath spent a deal of money to make all this appearance, for money will do anything; I only wait here to see her come by, and then farewell to the hills and dales. Cupid bade him not be rash, and left him. This is another of Hymen's tricks, quoth Cupid to himself, he hath frequently served me thus, but I'll hasten to him, and have it out with him. So saying, he repaired to the mansion. Everything there had an air of grandeur rather than of joy, sumptuous but not serene. The company were preparing to walk in procession to the temple. The Lord of the manor looked like the father of the village, and the business he was upon gave a foolish awkwardness to his age and dignity. Ruralinda smiled, because she *would* smile, but in that smile was sorrow. Hymen with a torch faintly burning on one side only stood ready to accompany them. The gods when they please can converse in silence, and in that language Cupid began on Hymen.

Know, Hymen, said he, that I am your master. Indulgent Jove gave you to me as a clerk, not as a rival, much less a superior. 'Tis my province to form the union, and yours to witness it. But of late you have treacherously assumed to set up for yourself. 'Tis true you may chain couples together like criminals, but you cannot yoke them like lovers; besides you are such a dull fellow when I am not with you, that you poison the felicities of life. You have not a grace but what is borrowed from me. As well may the moon attempt to enlighten the earth without the sun, as you to bestow happiness when I am absent. At best you are but a temporal and a temporary god, whom Jove has appointed not to bestow, but to secure happiness, and restrain the infidelity of mankind. But assure yourself that I'll complain of you to the synod.

This is very high indeed, replied Hymen, to be called to an account by such a boy of a god as you are. You are not of such importance in the world as your vanity thinks; for my own part I have enlisted myself with another master, and can very well do without you. Plutus<sup>4</sup> and I are greater than Cupid; you may complain and welcome, for Jove himself descended in a silver shower and conquered: and by the same

<sup>4</sup> God of riches.—*Author.*

power the Lord of the manor hath won a damsel, in spite of all the arrows in your quiver.

Cupid, incensed at this reply, resolved to support his authority, and expose the folly of Hymen's pretensions to independence. As the quarrel was carried on in silence, the company were not interrupted by it. The procession began to set forward to the temple, where the ceremony was to be performed. The Lord of the manor led the beautiful Ruralinda like a lamb devoted to sacrifice. Cupid immediately despatched a petition for assistance to his mother on one of the sun-beams, and the same messenger returning in an instant, informed him that whatever he wished should be done. He immediately cast the old lord and Ruralinda into one of the most extraordinary sleeps ever known. They continued walking in the procession, talking to each other, and observing every ceremony with as much order as if they had been awake; their souls had in a manner crept from their bodies, as snakes creep from their skin, and leave the perfect appearance of themselves behind. And so rapidly does imagination change the landscape of life, that in the same space of time which passed over while they were walking to the temple, they both ran through, in a strange variety of dreams, seven years of wretched matrimony. In which imaginary time, Gothic experienced all the mortification which age wedded to youth must expect; and she all the infelicity which such a sale and sacrifice of her person justly deserved.

In this state of reciprocal discontent they arrived at the temple. Cupid still continued them in their slumber, and in order to expose the consequences of such marriages, he wrought so magically on the imaginations of them both, that he drove Gothic distracted at the supposed infidelity of his wife, and she mad with joy at the supposed death of her husband; and just as the ceremony was about to be performed, each of them broke out into such passionate soliloquies, as threw the whole company into confusion. He exclaiming, she rejoicing; he imploring death to relieve him, and she preparing to bury him; gold, quoth Ruralinda, may be bought too dear, but the grave has befriended me. The company believing them mad, conveyed them away, Gothic to his mansion, and Ruralinda to her cottage. The next day they awoke, and being grown wise without loss of time, or the pain of real experience, they mutually declined proceeding any farther. The old lord continued as he was, and generously bestowed a handsome dowry on Ruralinda, who was soon after wedded to the young shepherd, that had piteously

bewailed the loss of her. The authority of Cupid was re-established, and Hymen ordered never more to appear in the village, unless Cupid introduced him.

ESOP.

## REFLECTIONS ON UNHAPPY MARRIAGES <sup>5</sup>

**T**HOUGH 't is confessed on all hands that the weal or woe of life depends on no one circumstance so critical as matrimony, yet how few seem to be influenced by this universal acknowledgement, or act with a caution becoming the danger.

Those that are undone this way are the young, the rash and amorous, whose hearts are ever glowing with desire, whose eyes are ever roaming after beauty; these dote on the first amiable image that chance throws in their way, and when the flame is once kindled, would risk eternity itself to appease it. But, still like their first parents, they no sooner taste the tempting fruit, but their eyes are opened: the folly of their intemperance becomes visible; shame succeeds first, and then repentance; but sorrow for themselves soon returns to anger with the innocent cause of their unhappiness. Hence flow bitter reproaches, and keen invectives, which end in mutual hatred and contempt. Love abhors clamor and soon flies away, and happiness finds no entrance when love is gone. Thus for a few hours of dalliance, I will not call it affection, the repose of all their future days are sacrificed; and those who but just before seem'd to live only for each other, now would almost cease to live, that the separation might be eternal.

But hold, says the man of phlegm and economy, all are not of this hasty turn. I allow it. There are persons in the world who are young without passions, and in health without appetite: these hunt out a wife as they go to *Smithfield* for a horse; and intermarry fortunes, not minds, or even bodies. In this case the bridegroom has no joy but in taking possession of the portion, and the bride dreams of little beside new clothes, visits and congratulations. Thus, as their expectations of pleasure are not very great, neither is the disappointment very grievous; they just keep each other in countenance, live decently, and are exactly as fond the twentieth year of matrimony as the first. But I would not advise any one to call this state of insipidity happiness, because it would

<sup>5</sup> This essay appeared in the June, 1775 issue of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*.—*Editor*.

argue him both ignorant of its nature, and incapable of enjoying it. Mere absence of pain will undoubtedly constitute ease; and, without ease, there can be no happiness. Ease, however, is but the medium, through which happiness is tasted, and but passively receives what the last actually bestows; if therefore the rash who marry inconsiderately, perish in the storms raised by their own passions, these slumber away their days in a sluggish calm, and rather dream they live, than experience it by a series of actual sensible enjoyments.

As matrimonial happiness is neither the result of insipidity, or ill-grounded passion, surely those, who make their court to age, ugliness, and all that's detestable both in mind and body, cannot hope to find it, though qualified with all the riches that avarice covets, or *Plutus* could bestow. Matches of this kind are downright prostitution, however softened by the letter of the law; and he or she who receives the golden equivalent of youth and beauty, so wretchedly bestowed, can never enjoy what they so dearly purchased. The shocking incumbrance would render the sumptuous banquet tasteless, and the magnificent bed loathsome; rest would disdain the one, and appetite sicken at the other; uneasiness wait upon both; even gratitude itself would almost cease to be obliging, and good-manners grow such a burden, that the best bred or best-natured people breathing, would be often tempted to throw it down.

But say we should not wonder that those who either marry gold without love, or love without gold, should be miserable. I can't forbear being astonished, if such whose fortunes are affluent, whose desires were mutual, who equally languished for the happy moment before it came, and seemed for a while to be equally transported when it had taken place. If even these should, in the end, prove as unhappy as either of the others! And yet how often is this the melancholy circumstance! As ecstasy abates, coolness succeeds, which often makes way for indifference, and that for neglect: Sure of each other by the nuptial band, they no longer take any pains to be mutually agreeable; careless if they displease; and yet angry if reproached; with so little relish for each other's company that anybody's else is welcome, and more entertaining. Their union thus broke, they pursue separate pleasures; never meet but to wrangle, or part but to find comfort in other society. After this the descent is easy to utter aversion, which having wearied itself out with heart-burnings, clamors, and affronts, subsides into a perfect insensibility; when fresh objects of love step in to their relief on either side,

and mutual infidelity makes way for mutual complaisance, that each may be the better able to deceive the other.

I shall conclude with the sentiments of an American savage on this subject, who being advised by one of our countrymen to marry according to the ceremonies of the church, as being the ordinance of an infinitely wise and good God, briskly replied, "That either the Christians' God was not so good and wise as he was represented, or he never meddled with the marriages of his people; since not one in a hundred of them had anything to do either with happiness or common sense. Hence," continued he, "as soon as ever you meet you long to part; and, not having this relief in your power, by way of revenge, double each other's misery. Whereas in ours, which have no other ceremony than mutual affection, and last no longer than they bestow mutual pleasures, we make it our business to oblige the heart we are afraid to lose; and being at liberty to separate, seldom or never feel the inclination. But if any should be found so wretched among us, as to hate where the only commerce ought to be love, we instantly dissolve the band. God made us all in pairs; each has his mate somewhere or other; and 't is our duty to find each other out, since no creature was ever intended to be miserable."

## FORGETFULNESS <sup>6</sup>

FROM THE CASTLE IN THE AIR TO THE LITTLE  
CORNER OF THE WORLD

MEMORY, like a beauty that is always present to hear itself flattered, is flattered by everyone. But the absent and silent goddess, Forgetfulness, has no votaries, and is never thought of; yet we owe her much. She is the goddess of ease, though not of pleasure.

When the mind is like a room hung with black, and every corner of it crowded with the most horrid images imagination can create, this kind, speechless goddess of a maid, Forgetfulness, is following us night and day with her opium wand, and gently touching first one and then

<sup>6</sup> This composition was addressed to Lady Smyth who wrote cheering letters to Paine while he was in the Luxembourg prison, signing herself "Little Corner of the World." It is undated but was probably written sometime in 1794. Paine showed the composition to Henry Redhead Yorke when the latter visited him in Paris in 1802, and permitted him to copy these extracts.

For Paine's poems addressed to Lady Smyth, see above pp. 1096-1097.—*Edite*

another, benumbs them into rest, and at last glides them away with the silence of a departing shadow. It is thus the tortured mind is restored to the calm condition of ease, and fitted for happiness.

How dismal must the picture of life appear to the mind in that dreadful moment when it resolves on darkness, and to die! One can scarcely believe such a choice was possible. Yet how many of the young and beautiful, timid in everything else, and formed for delight, have shut their eyes upon the world, and made the waters their sepulchral bed! Ah, would they in that crisis, when life and death are before them, and each within their reach, would they but think, or try to think, that Forgetfulness will come to their relief, and lull them into ease, they could stay their hand, and lay hold of life.

But there is a necromancy in wretchedness that entombs the mind, and increases the misery, by shutting out every ray of light and hope. It makes the wretched falsely believe they will be wretched ever. It is the most fatal of all dangerous delusions; and it is only when this necromantic night-mare of the mind begins to vanish, by being resisted, that it is discovered to be but a tyrannic specter.

All grief, like all things else, will yield to the obliterating power of time. While despair is preying on the mind, time and its effects are preying on despair; and certain it is the dismal vision will fade away and Forgetfulness, with her sister Ease, will change the scene. Then let not the wretched be rash, but wait, painful as the struggle may be, the arrival of Forgetfulness; for it will certainly arrive.

I have twice been present at the scene of attempted suicide. The one a love-distracted girl in England, the other of a patriotic friend in France; and as the circumstances of each are strongly pictured in my memory, I will relate them to you. They will in some measure corroborate what I have said of Forgetfulness.

About the year 1766, I was in Lincolnshire, in England, and on a visit at the house of a widow lady, Mrs. E—, at a small village in the fens of that country. It was in summer; and one evening after supper, Mrs. E— and myself went to take a turn in the garden. It was about eleven o'clock, and to avoid the night air of the fens, we were walking in a bower, shaded over with hazel bushes. On a sudden, she screamed out, and cried, "Lord, look, look!" I cast my eyes through the openings of the hazel bushes in the direction she was looking, and saw a white shapeless figure, without head or arms, moving along one of the walks at some distance from us.



I quitted Mrs. E——, and went after it. When I got into the walk where the figure was, and was following it, it took up another walk. There was a holly bush in the corner of the two walks, which, it being night, I did not observe; and as I continued to step forward, the holly bush came in a straight line between me and the figure, and I lost sight of it; and as I passed along one walk, and the figure the other, the holly bush still continued to intercept the view, so as to give the appearance that the figure had vanished.

When I came to the corner of the two walks, I caught sight of it again, and coming up with it, I reached out my hand to touch it; and in the act of doing this, the idea struck me, will my hand pass through the air, or shall I feel anything? Less than a moment would decide this, and my hand rested on the shoulder of a human figure.

I spoke, but do not recollect what I said. It answered in a low voice, "Pray let me alone." I then knew who it was. It was a young lady who was on a visit to Mrs. E——, and who, when we sat down to supper, said she found herself extremely ill, and would go to bed. I called to Mrs. E——, who came, and I said to her, "It is Miss N——." Mrs. E—— said, "My God, I hope you are not going to do yourself any hurt"; for Mrs. E—— suspected something. She replied with pathetic melancholy, "Life has not one pleasure for me." We got her into the house, and Mrs. E—— took her to sleep with her.

The case was, the man to whom she expected to be married had forsaken her, and when she heard he was to be married to another the shock appeared to her to be too great to be borne. She had retired, as I have said, to her room, and when she supposed all the family were gone to bed (which would have been the case if Mrs. E—— and I had not walked into the garden), she undressed herself, and tied her apron over her head; which, descending below her waist, gave her the shapeless figure I have spoken of. With this and a white under-petticoat and slippers, for she had taken out her buckles and put them at the servant maid's door, I suppose as a keepsake, and aided by the obscurity of almost midnight, she came down stairs, and was going to drown herself in a pond at the bottom of the garden, toward which she was going when Mrs. E—— screamed out. We found afterwards that she had heard the scream, and that was the cause of her changing her walk.

By gentle usage, and leading her into subjects that might, without doing violence to her feelings, and without letting her see the direct intention of it, steal her as it were from the horror she was in (and I

felt a compassionate earnest disposition to do it, for she was a good girl) she recovered her former cheerfulness, and was afterwards a happy wife, and the mother of a family.

The other case, and the conclusion in my next:

In Paris, in 1793, I had lodgings in the Rue Fauxbourg, St. Denis, No. 63. They were the most agreeable, for situation, of any I ever had in Paris, except that they were too remote from the Convention, of which I was then a member. But this was recompensed by their being also remote from the alarms and confusion into which the interior of Paris was then often thrown. The news of those things used to arrive to us, as if we were in a state of tranquillity in the country.

The house, which was inclosed by a wall and gateway from the street, was a good deal like an old mansion farm-house, and the court-yard was like a farm-yard, stocked with fowls, ducks, turkeys and geese; which, for amusement, we used to feed out of the parlor window on the ground floor. There were some hutches for habbits, and a sty with two pigs.

Beyond, was a garden of more than an acre of ground, well laid out, and stocked with excellent fruit trees. The orange, apricot, and green-gage plum, were the best I ever tasted; and it is the only place where I saw the wild cucumber. The place had formerly been occupied by some curious person.

My apartments consisted of three rooms; the first for wood, water, etc., with an old fashioned closet chest, high enough to hang up clothes in; the next was the bed room; and beyond it the sitting room, which looked into the garden through a glass door; and on the outside there was a small landing place railed in, and a flight of narrow stairs almost hidden by the vines that grew over it, by which I could descend into the garden, without going down stairs through the house.

I am trying by description to make you see the place in your mind, because it will assist the story I have to tell; and which I think you can do, because you once called upon me there on account of Sir [Robert Smyth], who was then, as I was soon afterwards, in arrestation. But it was winter when you came, and it is a summer scene I am describing.

. . . . .

I went into my chambers to write and sign a certificate for them, which I intended to take to the guard-house to obtain their release. Just as I had finished it a man came into my room dressed in the Parisian uniform of a captain, and spoke to me in good English, and with a good

address. He told me that two young men, Englishmen, were arrested and detained in the guard-house, and that the section (meaning those who represented and acted for the section), had sent him to ask me if I knew them, in which case they would be liberated.

This matter being soon settled between us, he talked to me about the Revolution, and something about the *Rights of Man*, which he had read in English; and at parting offered me in a polite and civil manner, his services. And who do you think the man was that offered me his services? It was no other than the public executioner Samson, who guillotined the King, and all who were guillotined in Paris; and who lived in the same section, and in the same street with me.

. . . .

As to myself, I used to find some relief by walking alone in the garden after dark, and cursing with hearty good will the authors of that terrible system that had turned the character of the Revolution I had been proud to defend.

I went but little to the Convention, and then only to make my appearance; because I found it impossible to join in their tremendous decrees, and useless and dangerous to oppose them. My having voted and spoken extensively, more so than any other member, against the execution of the King, had already fixed a mark upon me: neither dared any of my associates in the Convention to translate and speak in French for me anything I might have dared to have written.

. . . .

Pen and ink were then of no use to me: no good could be done by writing, and no printer dared to print; and whatever I might have written for my private amusement, as anecdotes of the times, would have been continually exposed to be examined, and tortured into any meaning that the rage of party might fix upon it; and as to softer subjects, my heart was in distress at the fate of my friends, and my harp hung upon the weeping willows.<sup>7</sup>

As it was summer we spent most of our time in the garden, and passed it away in those childish amusements that serve to keep reflection from the mind, such as marbles, scotch-hops, battledores, etc., at which we were all pretty expert.

In this retired manner we remained about six or seven weeks, and

<sup>7</sup> Paine is referring to his Girondin friends who were executed.—*Editor*.

our landlord went every evening into the city to bring us the news of the day and the evening journal.

I have now, my "Little Corner of the World," led you on, step by step, to the scene that makes the sequel to this narrative, and I will put that scene before your eyes. You shall see it in description as I saw it in fact.<sup>8</sup>

He recovered, and being anxious to get out of France, a passage was obtained for him and Mr. Choppin; they received it late in the evening, and set off the next morning for Basel before four, from which place I had a letter from them, highly pleased with their escape from France, into which they had entered with an enthusiasm of patriotic devotion. Ah, France! thou hast ruined the character of a Revolution virtuously begun, and destroyed those who produced it. I might almost say like Job's servant, "and I, only, am escaped."

Two days after they were gone I heard a rapping at the gate, and looking out of the window of the bed room I saw the landlord going with the candle to the gate, which he opened, and a guard with muskets and fixed bayonets entered. I went to bed again, and made up my mind for prison, for I was then the only lodger. It was a guard to take up [Johnson and Choppin], but, I thank God, they were out of their reach.

The guard came about a month after in the night, and took away the landlord Georgeit; and the scene in the house finished with the arrestation of myself. This was soon after you called on me, and sorry I was it was not in my power to render to [Sir Robert Smyth] the service that you asked.

I have now fulfilled my engagement, and I hope your expectation, in relating the case of [Johnson], landed back on the shore of life, by the mistake of the pilot who was conducting him out; and preserved afterwards from prison, perhaps a worse fate, without knowing it himself.

You say a story cannot be too melancholy for you. This is interesting and affecting, but not melancholy. It may raise in your mind a sympathetic sentiment in reading it; and though it may start a tear of pity, you will not have a tear of sorrow to drop on the page.

<sup>8</sup> The reference is to the case of a young English disciple of Paine's named Johnson who followed him to Paris, where, upon learning that Marat had decreed Paine's death, he willed his property to Paine and stabbed himself. Paine's wealthy disciple recovered.—*Editor.*

Here, my contemplative correspondent, let us stop and look back upon the scene. The matters here related being all facts, are strongly pictured in my mind, and in this sense Forgetfulness does not apply. But facts and feelings are distinct things, and it is against feelings that the opium wand of Forgetfulness draws us into ease.

Look back on any scene or subject that once gave you distress, for all of us have felt some, and you will find, that though the remembrance of the fact is not extinct in your memory, the feeling is extinct in your mind. You can remember when you had felt distress, but you cannot feel that distress again, and perhaps will wonder you felt it then. It is like a shadow that loses itself by light.

It is often difficult to know what is a misfortune: that which we feel as a great one to-day may be the means of turning aside our steps into some new path that leads to happiness yet unknown. In tracing the scenes of my own life, I can discover that the condition I now enjoy, which is sweet to me, and will be more so when I get to America, except by the loss of your society, has been produced, in the first instance, in my being disappointed in former projects.

Under that impenetrable veil, futurity, we know not what is concealed, and the day to arrive is hidden from us. Turning then our thoughts to those cases of despair that lead to suicide, when, "the mind," as you say, "neither sees nor hears, and holds counsel only with itself; when the very idea of consolation would add to the torture, and self-destruction is its only aim," what, it may be asked, is the best advice, what the best relief? I answer, seek it not in reason, for the mind is at war with reason, and to reason against feelings is as vain as to reason against fire: it serves only to torture the torture by adding reproach to horror.

All reasoning with ourselves in such cases acts upon us like the reason of another person, which, however kindly done, serves but to insult the misery we suffer. If reason could remove the pain, reason would have prevented it. If she could not do the one, how is she to perform the other? In all such cases we must look upon Reason as dispossessed of her empire, by a revolt of the mind. She retires herself to a distance to weep, and the ebony scepter of Despair rules alone. All that Reason can do is to suggest, to hint a thought, to signify a wish, to cast now and then a kind of bewailing look, to hold up when she can catch the eye, the miniature-shaded portrait of Hope; and though dethroned, and can dictate no more, to wait upon us in the humble station of a hand-maid.

**CORRESPONDENCE AND MEMORIALS**

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Many biographies of Thomas Paine have been written, but none of them present as clear a picture of the man as does his personal correspondence. Nor can anything dispel the notion that this revolutionary writer was a scatter-brain and a superficial thinker as effectively as do his letters and memorials. Like his writings on scientific subjects, these documents indicate that the man had a breadth and depth of vision equalled by very few Americans. Most of the letters contained in this section have remained for years in manuscript collections of libraries and historical societies, and are now for the first time made available to the public. They should do much to increase the growing respect in our country for Thomas Paine.

There are only two letters in existence which were written by Paine prior to his departure for America in October, 1774. One, to Oliver Goldsmith, Dec. 21, 1772, is printed below p. 1129. The other is the following sent to the Board of Excise on July 3, 1766, in which he requests to be reinstated to his position as an excise officer. He had been discharged from office on August 27, 1765, for taking the word of a victualer without making an examination of his stock. In his petition, Paine wrote:

Honorable Sirs:

In humble obedience to your honors' letter of discharge bearing date of August 29, 1765, I delivered up my commission and since that time have given you no trouble. I confess the justice of your honors' displeasure and humbly beg to add my thanks for the candor and lenity with which you at that unfortunate time indulged me. And though the nature of the report and my own confession cut off all expectations of enjoying your honors' favor then, yet I humbly hope it has not finally excluded me therefrom, upon which hope I humbly presume to entreat your honors to restore me. The time I enjoyed my former commission was short and unfortunate—an officer only a single year. No complaint of the least dishonesty or intemperance ever appeared against me; and, if I am so happy as to succeed in this, my humble petition, I will endeavor that my future conduct shall as much engage your honors' approbation as my former has merited your displeasure. I am your honors' most dutiful humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

The board, meeting on July 4, ordered that Paine "be restored on a proper vacancy."

## TO OLIVER GOLDSMITH<sup>1</sup>

EXCISE COFFEE HOUSE, Broad Street, Dec. 21, 1772

HONORED SIR:

Herewith I present you with the *Case of the Officers of Excise*.<sup>2</sup> A compliment of this kind from an entire stranger may appear somewhat singular, but the following reasons and information will, I presume, sufficiently apologize. I act myself in the humble station of an officer of excise, though somewhat differently circumstanced to what many of them are, and have been the principal promoter of a plan for applying to Parliament this session for an increase of salary. A petition for this purpose has been circulated through every part of the kingdom, and signed by all the officers therein. A subscription of three shillings per officer is raised, amounting to upwards of £500, for supporting the expenses. The excise officers, in all cities and corporate towns, have obtained letters of recommendation from the electors to the members in their behalf, many or most of whom have promised their support. The enclosed case we have presented to most of the members, and shall to all, before the petition appears in the Houses. The memorial before you met with so much approbation while in manuscript, that I was advised to print 4000 copies; 3000 of which were subscribed for the officers in general, and the remaining 1000 reserved for presents. Since the delivering them I have received so many letters of thanks and approbation for the performance, that were I not rather singularly modest, I should insensibly become a little vain. The literary fame of Dr. Goldsmith has induced me to present one to him, such as it is. It is my first and only

<sup>1</sup> Oliver Goldsmith was the famous author of *The Deserted Village* and other distinguished works in English literature. Goldsmith replied to this letter and he and Paine became very close friends.—*Editor*.

<sup>2</sup> The pamphlet is printed above, pp. 3-15.—*Editor*.



attempt, and even now I should not have undertaken it, had I not been particularly applied to by some of my superiors in office. I have some few questions to trouble Dr. Goldsmith with, and should esteem his company for an hour or two, to partake of a bottle of wine, or anything else, and apologize for this trouble, as a singular favor conferred on

His unknown Humble servant and admirer,

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. Shall take the liberty of waiting on you in a day or two.

### TO HONORABLE BENJAMIN FRANKLIN ESQR.<sup>3</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, March 4th, 1775.

HONORED SIR:

I am just now informed by Mr. Bache<sup>4</sup> of a vessel preparing to sail for London tomorrow, and lest I should not have an other opportunity so soon as I might wish, I have taken this, to acquaint you as *laconically* as I can of the service your good favors have been to me, and my gratitude on that account. Even thanks may be rendered troublesome by being tedious, especially to a gentleman so variously engaged as yourself.

I did not sail in the vessel I first intended, it not having proper conveniences, but in the *London Packet*, Captain Cooke. The exchange was much for the worse. A putrid fever broke out among the servants, having an 120 on board, which though not very fatal, was dismal and dangerous. We buried five, and not above that number escaped the disease. By good Providence we had a Doctor on board, who entered himself as one of the servants, otherwise we must have been in as deplorable a situation, as a passage of nine weeks could have rendered us. Two cabin passengers escaped the illness owing I believe to their being almost constantly sea sick the first three weeks. I had no serious illness but suffered dreadfully with the fever. I had very little hopes that the Captain or myself would live to see America. Dr. Kearsley of this place, attended the ship on her arrival, and when he understood that I was on your recommendation he provided a lodging for me, and sent two of his men with a chaise to bring me on shore, for I could not at that time turn in my bed without help. I was six weeks on shore before

<sup>3</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Benjamin Franklin Papers through the courtesy of the American Philosophical Society.—*Editor*.

<sup>4</sup> Richard Bache was Franklin's son-in-law. He married Franklin's daughter, Sarah, in 1767.—*Editor*.

I was well enough to wait on Mr. Bache with your favor, but am now thank God perfectly recovered. I am the more particular in mentioning this, lest the scarcity of vessels, which may sail for Philadelphia from London, at this time might induce you to come in one of them. I attribute the disease to the impurity of the air between decks, and think ventilation would prevent it, but I am convinced it cannot remove the disease after it has once taken place.

I observe in Dr. Priestley's late experiments on air and your letter thereon,<sup>5</sup> that vegetation will recover air rendered noxious by animal substances decaying in it, to its former purity. Query, whether it will recover air rendered impure by *respiration only*. If it does, it seems to indicate that air either has no vivifying spirit, or does not lose it, by passing through the lungs, but acts only as a cleanser, and becomes foul by carrying off the filth—i.e., not by what it loses but by what it gains. I have not the treatise by me, and may perhaps have made a useless remark.

Governor Franklin is removed to Amboy.<sup>6</sup> I have not yet waited on him. Your countenancing me has obtained me many friends and much reputation, for which, please to accept my sincere thanks. I have been applied to by several gentlemen to instruct their sons, on very advantageous terms to myself, and a Printer and Bookseller here, a man of reputation, and property, a Robert Aitken, has lately attempted a magazine, but having little or no turn that way himself, has applied to me for assistance. He had not above 600 subscribers when I first assisted him. We have now upwards of 1500 and daily increasing. I have not yet entered into terms with him. This is only the second number, the first I was not concerned in. I beg your acceptance of one of the enclosed, and request you to present the other to my good friend, Mr. Scott, to whom I intend to address a letter when I can have time and opportunity to entertain him with a few amusing particulars.

I have not time Sir to copy this letter fair, as I have a long one to write to my father wherefore I beg you to accept it as it is, and should

<sup>5</sup> Joseph Priestley was a distinguished English scientist, educator and liberal writer on politics and theology who came to America from England in June, 1794 seeking political and religious freedom. He published three volumes bearing the title, *Experiments and Observations on Different Kinds of Air*, in 1774, 1775 and 1777. For Franklin's comment on these *Observations*, see his letter to Priestley, April 10, 1774, in Albert Henry Smyth, ed., *The Writings of Benjamin Franklin*, New York, 1906, vol. VI, pp. 226-28.—*Editor*.

<sup>6</sup> The reference is to William Franklin, Benjamin Franklin's son and last royal governor of New Jersey.—*Editor*.

he request you to take charge or forward a letter to me, from him, I entreat your kindness thereon.

Please to present my duty to Mr. Scott as early as you conveniently can  
I am, Honored, Sir, Your much obliged Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

opposite the London Coffee House  
Front Street

P. S.

Should be greatly obliged to you for any thing you may judge serviceable to the magazine, when you make your much hoped for return to America, or sooner if you please. Should be obliged to you to purchase me Goldsmith's History of the Earth and Animated Nature when you return. In short, Sir, We should be glad you would think of us before you embark and beg leave to trouble you with an unlimited commission.

TO HONORABLE BENJAMIN FRANKLIN LL.D.<sup>7</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, June 20th, 1777.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have just time to write you a word or two, and have the pleasure of acquainting you of my being appointed Secretary to the Committee for Foreign Affairs.<sup>8</sup> I conceive the honor to be the greater as the appointment was [not] only unsolicited on my part but made unknown to me.

The news of your safe arrival in France was received here with inexpressible satisfaction. The New York Gentry were very early acquainted with your setting off.<sup>9</sup> I was at that time, at Fort Lee and saw the account of it in the New York papers the fourth day after your departure from Philadelphia, which greatly increased my anxiety for your safety, as I apprehended they would endeavor to make some use of the information. There has been such a wonderful and visible chain of matters, without the disorder of a s[ingle] link, in bringing this important affair to an issue, that a man must be an infidel not to think heaven has some hand in it.

<sup>7</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Benjamin Franklin Papers through the courtesy of the American Philosophical Society.—*Editor*.

<sup>8</sup> Paine was appointed to this office on April 17, 1777 and held the post until January 8, 1779 when he resigned.—*Editor*.

<sup>9</sup> The news of Franklin's embarkation on October 27, 1776 was dispatched immediately to the British authorities in New York, despite efforts to keep it a secret.—*Editor*.

I send you two or three sets of a little production of mine (the *Crisis*) being all which are left at the Printers out of eighteen thousand besides which have been printed in the other States. You will see by the first number and date that it was written in a rage when our affairs were at their lowest ebb and things in the most gloomy state. I think Almon<sup>10</sup> might venture to publish the second number but if any of them be published in France, some republican expressions should be omitted.<sup>11</sup>

I intend next winter to begin on the first volume of the *Revolution of America*, when I mentioned it to you the winter before last you was so kind as to offer me such materials in your possession as might be necessary for that purpose. As I imagine you will appear in a new edition by some capital engraver at Paris I beg to be favored with a copy and shall be exceedingly obliged if you could by the next conveyance send me the *Gentlemen and Universal Magazines* for '74, '75 and '76, the two *Reviews and Parliamentary debates* for the same year, and such as are come out since and the last *Court Register*.<sup>12</sup> Please to make the charge and I will pay it to Mr. Bache.

I am Honored Sir Your Obliged and Affectionate Humble  
Servant,

T. P.

P. S. Please to present my respect to your colleagues. I send you the last paper.

## TO RICHARD HENRY LEE<sup>13</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, July 1st, 1777

MY DEAR SIR:

Soon after your absence from this city we began to have a little military news stirring. On the 11th inst. Governor Mifflin by direction from

<sup>10</sup> John Almon was an English editor and publisher friendly to the Americans. In his annual *Remembrancer; or, Impartial Repository of Public Events*, Almon published articles favorable to the American cause.—*Editor*.

<sup>11</sup> The number Paine is referring to was *Crisis No. II*, dated January 13, 1777 and addressed to Lord Howe. *The Crisis* was published in France in 1793 at which time it was hardly necessary to expurgate the anti-monarchical passages.—*Editor*.

<sup>12</sup> The *Reviews* referred to are the *Monthly Review*, a Whig journal founded in 1749, and *The Critical Review*, a Tory organ started in 1756. The "Parliamentary debates" undoubtedly refers to *Debates and Proceedings: 1743-1774*, and called after 1774, *The Parliamentary Register*.—*Editor*.

<sup>13</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the *Correspondence of Richard Henry Lee and Arthur Lee* through the courtesy of the American Philosophical Society.—*Editor*.

General Washington, acquainted the inhabitants at a meeting in the State House yard that from the late preparations of the enemy, their intentions were for this city. His address was received with as much spirit as it was delivered, and the meeting unanimously resolved to turn out agreeable to the Militia Law on the 13th. At night Generals Howe and Cornwallis moved to Somerset 8 miles from Brunswick and on the 19th at night retreated again to Brunswick. On the morning of the 22d they evacuated the last mentioned place and retreated to Amboy.

I am at a loss to account for General Howe's movements on any other than the following—his short march from Brunswick to Somerset afforded him an opportunity of trying the disposition of the states of New Jersey and Pennsylvania as to the turning out of the Militia, which was very necessary for him to be acquainted with before he ventured too far into the country—it was like moving the previous question, and the issue was against him, for the Militia of both states took the alarm instantly—it then became necessary for him to make a retreat to Amboy and a feint if necessary over to Staten Island, in order that the Militia, which his first march has raised, might be dismissed, and the 3000 men from General Putnam countermanded—both these events have happened and last Thursday General Howe left Amboy and made his appearance again in the country. He is I believe too weak to hope for a decisive victory and is trying to win it as a game, besides which, as this is their only army, they are obliged to preserve it as an army of observation on the motions of the French and Spaniards in the West Indies.

I sincerely regret your absence, both on account of your private friendship and your public service; and I have the pleasure if I may call it such for I wish the occasion had not happened of hearing many others in the same opinion. A man that sets out upon a public bottom must always expect to be privately undermined in some quarter or other. I have often remarked that those who are benefited by the public service of another without feeling themselves rivalled will always be the friends of merit, but those who are benefited *by* being rivalled, will from envy, ever be its enemies—and thus by tracing a received affront to its true cause and reflecting philosophically thereon, a person may often draw very agreeable consolation therefrom.

We have had nothing stirring of news for three weeks past. When the enemy marched from Amboy they endeavored to surprise the di-

vision under Lord Sterling. We lost two if not three pieces of artillery. No other material loss.

I am Dear Sir, your affectionate humble servant,

T. PAINE.

TO HONORABLE BENJAMIN FRANKLIN LL.D.<sup>14</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, July 9th, 1777.

MY DEAR SIR:

The dispatches being made up yesterday I herewith enclose you the papers of last night and this morning. General Howe, by every preparation, is about leaving N[ew] York as he has already retreated from the Army which it was his business to conquer. It is impossible to say what may be his next movement—some suppose the North River to effect a junction with Burgoyne. But there are I think, too many reasons against this project; one of which is, that as they have no other army than this, they are obliged to make use of it as an Army of observation on the motions of the French and Spaniards in the West Indies, and for that reason will, if they have any discretion, keep it somewhere about the coast. Another objection against the North River is, the leaving our Army and a River of near 150 miles in their rear, which circumstances render the safe return of their fleet a matter of great doubt, and any considerable damage done to them in that quarter would be like wounding an Eagle in the wing. Mr. Gross in his *English Antiquities* mentions fire arrows being used for disabling or destroyed fleets but the extract which I have seen, gives me no description how the Machine was constructed by which they were thrown. He says Sir Richard Hawkins did incredible damage to the whole squadron of Spanish Men of War on the Coast of Peru, and that Admiral Watson in the East Indies last war used them in an engagement with Mons D Ache with great success.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> The letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Benjamin Franklin Papers through the courtesy of the American Philosophical Society.—*Editor*.

<sup>15</sup> The exact statement referred to by Paine is from Francis Grose's *Antiquities of England and Wales*, published in 1773, and reads in part: "The manner of using these fire-works was, by throwing them from petraries or cross bows, or firing them to the great darts and arrows, and shooting them into the towns; a method . . . used with good success by the English, the last war, in a naval engagement in the East Indies, between the squadron of Monsieur d'Ache and Admiral Watson." (London Edition, 1787, vol. I, p. 26.) —*Editor*.

I have made a draft of a Bow, something on the plan of the Steel Cross by which I think [it] will [be possible to] throw an Iron Arrow across the Delaware. I purpose, enclosing the fire in a bulb near the top



I have shown it to Mr. Rittenhouse who joins me in getting one made for experiment.<sup>16</sup>

General Howe will probably give an Air to this retreat from the Jerseys by saying that he endeavored in vain to bring General Washington to a general action. If this reason be admitted it proves the impossibility of his ever conquering. The fact, however, is this, General Washington does not *immediately* command much more than half the Army, and could General Howe with his whole force bring General Washington to an action with little more than half he would have done it. But whenever the latter collects his whole force together, either to receive or attack General Howe, he leaves the field to him.

In my former I informed you of my being appointed Secretary to the Committee for Foreign Affairs, and requested you to send me the Reviews, Gentlemans and Universal Magazines and Parliamentary Registers for '74, '75 and '76 and that I would account for them to Mr. Bache. Lest this letter should miscarry I renew my request in this, with any such other pieces as you may be so kind as to favor me with. I intend towards the latter end of the year to send for your approbation the plan on which I intend to conduct the History of this Revolution.

I am Dear Sir with every wish for your health and happiness, Your obliged Humble Servant

T P—N

<sup>16</sup> David Rittenhouse, Philadelphia scholar, scientist and liberal leader, was a close friend of Paine, and according to Conway (*Life*, vol. I, p. 201n.), the two collaborated on an experiment with gases. There is no evidence, however, to show that Rittenhouse experimented with fire arrows. For an excellent brief analysis of his career, see Maurice J. Babb, "David Rittenhouse," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. LVI, July, 1932, pp. 193-224.—*Editor*.

TO WILLIAM BINGHAM <sup>17</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, July 16, 1777.

SIR:

A very sudden opportunity offers of sending you the newspapers, from which you will collect the situation of our Affairs. The enemy finding their attempt of marching through the Jerseys to this city impracticable, have retreated to Staten Island seemingly discontented and dispirited and quite at a loss what step next to pursue. Our army is now well recruited and formidable. Our militia in the several States ready at a day's notice to turn out and support the army when occasion requires; and though we cannot, in the course of a campaign, expect everything in the several parts of the continent to go just as we wish it; yet the general face of our affairs assures us of final success.

In the papers of June 18th and 25 and July 2d you will find General Washington and Arnold's letters of the enemy's movement in, and retreat from the Jerseys. We are under some apprehensions for Ticonderoga, as we find the enemy are unexpectedly come into that quarter. The Congress have several times had it in contemplation to remove the garrison from that place, as by experience we find that men shut up in forts are not of so much use as in the field, especially in the highlands, where every hill is a natural fortification.

I am Sir, Your Obedient Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO TIMOTHY MATLACK <sup>18</sup>

GEN. GREENE'S QUARTERS, Oct. 30, 1777.

SIR:

The enclosed were written when your Express came, please to convey them as directed. Your letter I observe is dated 26, four days ago. Suppose by this Time you have had particulars of Burgoyne's surrender. The bad weather and the high waters render it impossible to pass from one part of the camp to another. I understand by the Articles of Capitulation

<sup>17</sup> William Bingham was a prominent banker and legislator in Philadelphia, and later founded Binghamton, New York.—*Editor*.

<sup>18</sup> This letter is reprinted from a copy of the original in Catalogue No. 1057 compiled and sale conducted by Stan V. Henkels, p. 61 (copy in Wisconsin Historical Society).

The letter to Col. Lee referred to by Paine follows immediately after this letter.—*Editor*.



lation which came to Headquarters that Burgoyne and his Army are to be sent to England. You will see my remarks on that Head in my letter to Col. Lee, which is enclosed and unsealed. No attempt has been made on the Forts since the 22d by the Hessians. Count Dunop is wounded and a Prisoner with about 200 others killed, wounded and taken besides what wounded were carried into Philadelphia, which by ye account of persons who came out, exceed that number. For twenty-four pounds have been got from the wreck and more will yet be gotten. The Army is as well as can be expected after a long continuance of cold rain. I write this at Gen. Greene's. Shall go from hence to headquarters. If anything new there, I will either add it, or send another letter. I shall go forward [to] the forts this afternoon.

THOMAS PAINE

## TO HON. RICHARD HENRY LEE <sup>19</sup>

HEADQUARTERS, fourteen miles from Philadelphia, Oct. 30, 1777.

SIR:

I wrote you last Tuesday 21st inst., including a copy of the King's speech, since which nothing material has happened at camp. General McDougal was sent last Wednesday night 22d to attack a party of the enemy who lay over the Schuylkill at Grey's Ferry where they have a bridge. Generals Greene and Sullivan went down to make a diversion below Germantown at the same time. I was with this last party, but as the enemy withdrew their detachment we had only our labor for our pains.

No particulars of the Northern affair have yet come to headquarters, the want of which has caused much speculation. A copy, said to be the Articles of Capitulation was received 3 or 4 days ago, but they rather appear to be some proposals made by Burgoyne, than the capitulation itself. By those articles it appears to me that Burgoyne has capitulated upon terms which we have a right to doubt the full performance of, viz., "That the officers and men shall be transported to England and not serve in or against North America during the present war"—or words to this effect.

I remark, that this capitulation, if true, has the air of a national treaty;

<sup>19</sup> Richard Henry Lee was a Revolutionary statesman and brother of Francis Lightfoot, William and Arthur Lee. All were close friends of Paine.—*Editor*.

it is binding, not only on Burgoyne as a *general*, but on England as a *nation*; because the troops are to be subject to the conditions of the treaty after they return to England and are out of his command. It regards England and America as separate sovereign States, and puts them on an equal footing by staking the faith and honor of the former for the performance of a contract entered into with the latter.

What in the capitulation is styled the "*Present War*" England affects to call a "*Rebellion*" and while she holds this idea and denies any knowledge of America as a separate sovereign power, she will not conceive herself bound by any capitulation or treaty entered into by her generals which is to bind her as a *nation*, and more especially in those cases where both pride and present advantage tempt her to violation. She will deny Burgoyne's right and authority for making such a treaty, and will, very possibly, show her insult by first censuring him for entering into it, and then immediately sending the troops back.

I think we ought to be exceedingly cautious how we trust her with the power of abusing our credulity. We have no authority for believing she will perform that part of the contract which subjects her not to send the troops to America during the war. The insolent answer given to the Commissioners by Lord Stormont, "*that the King's Ambassadors recd. no letters from rebels but when they came to crave mercy,*" sufficiently instructs us not to entrust them with the power of insulting treaties of capitulation.

Query, whether it would not be proper to detain the troops at Boston and direct the Commissioners at Paris to present the Treaty of Capitulation to the English Court through the hands of Lord Stormont, to know whether it be the intention of that court to abide strictly by the conditions and obligations thereof, and if no assurance be obtained to keep the troops until they can be exchanged here.

Though we have no immediate knowledge of any alliance formed by our Commissioners with France or Spain, yet we have no assurance there is not, and our immediate release of those prisoners, by sending them to England, may operate to the injury of such Allied Powers, and be perhaps directly contrary to some contract subsisting between us and them prior to the capitulation. I think we ought to know this first. Query, ought we not (knowing the infidelity they have already acted) to suspect they will evade the Treaty by putting back into New York under pretence of distress. I would not trust them an inch farther than I could see them in the present state of things.

The army was to have marched yesterday about 2 or 3 miles but the weather has been so exceedingly bad for three days past as to prevent any kind of movement, the waters are so much out and the rivulets so high there is no passing from one part of the camp to another.

I wish the Northern Army was down here. I am apt to think that nothing materially offensive will take place on our part at present. Some means must be taken to fill up the Army this winter. I look upon the recruiting service at an end and that some other plan must be adopted. Suppose the service be by draft—and that those who are not drawn should contribute a dollar or two dollars a man to him on whom the lot falls,—something of this kind would proportion the burden, and those who are drawn would have something either to encourage them to go, or to provide a substitute with.<sup>20</sup> After closing this letter I shall go again to Fort Mifflin; all was safe there on the 27th, but from some preparations of the enemy they expect another attack somewhere.

The enclosed return of provision and stores is taken from an account signed by Burgoyne and sent to Lord George Germain. I have not time to copy the whole. Burgoyne closes his letters as follows, “By a written account found in the Commissary’s House at Ticonderoga six thousand odd hundred persons were fed from the magazine the day before the evacuation.”

I am dear sir, Your affectionate humble servant,

T. PAINE.

Respectful compliments to friends.

If the Congress has the capitulation and particulars of the surrender, they do an exceedingly wrong thing by not publishing them because they subject the whole affair to suspicion.

## TO HENRY LAURENS<sup>21</sup>

LANCASTER, April 11, 1778.

SIR:

I take the liberty of mentioning an affair to you which I think deserves the attention of Congress. The persons who came from Phila-

<sup>20</sup> See above pp. 208–210 for a detailed Plan suggested by Paine for recruiting the army.—*Editor*.

<sup>21</sup> Henry Laurens, distinguished merchant, planter and Revolutionary statesman, was unanimously elected to succeed John Hancock as president of the Continental Congress

delphia some time ago with, or in company with, a flag from the enemy, and were taken up and committed to Lancaster jail for attempting to put off counterfeit Continental money, were yesterday brought to trial and are likely to escape by means of an artful and partial construction of an Act of this State for punishing such offences. The Act makes it felony to counterfeit the money *emitted* by Congress, or to circulate such counterfeits knowing them to be so. The offenders' counsel explained the word "emitted" to have only a retrospect meaning by supplying the idea of "*which have been*" "emitted by Congress." Therefore say they the Act cannot be applied to any money emitted after the date of the Act. I believe the words "emitted by Congress" means only, and should be understood, to distinguish Continental money from other money, and not one time from another time. It has, as I conceive, no reference to any particular time, but only to the particular authority which distinguishes money so emitted from money emitted by the state. It is meant only as a description of the money, and not of the time of striking it, but includes the idea of all time as inseparable from the continuance of the authority of Congress. But be this as it may; the offense is Continental and the consequences of the same extent. I can have no idea of any particular State pardoning an offence against all, or even their letting an offender slip *legally* who is accountable to all and every State alike for his crime. The place where he commits it is the least circumstance of it. It is a mere accident and has nothing or very little to do with the crime itself. I write this hoping the information will point out the necessity of the Congress supporting their emissions by claiming every offender in this line where the present deficiency of the law or the partial interpretation of it operates to the injustice and injury of the whole continent.

I beg leave to trouble you with another hint. Congress I learn has something to propose through the Commissioners on the cartel respecting the admission and stability of the Continental currency. As forgery is a sin against all men alike, and reprobated by all civil nations, query, would it not be right to require of General Howe the persons of Smithers and others in Philadelphia suspected of this crime; and if he, or any other commander, continues to conceal or protect them in such practices, that, in such case, the Congress will consider the crime as the act of the commander-in-chief. Howe affects not to know the Congress—he ought

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on November 1, 1777 and held that post until December 9, 1778. He was a close friend of Paine.—*Editor*.

to be made to know them; and the apprehension of personal consequences may have some effect on his conduct.

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

T. PAINE.

Since writing the foregoing the prisoners have had their trial; the one is acquitted and the other convicted only of a fraud; for as the law now stands, or rather as it is explained, the counterfeiting—or circulating counterfeits—is only a fraud. I do not believe it was the intention of the Act to make it so, and I think it misapplied lenity in the Court to suffer such an explanation, because it has a tendency to invite and encourage a species of treason, the most prejudicial to us of any or all the other kinds. I am aware how very difficult it is to make a law so very perfect at first as not to be subject to false or perplexed conclusions. There never was but one Act (said a Member of the House of Commons) which a man might not creep out of, *i.e.* the Act which obliges a man to be buried in woollen.

T. P.

## TO HENRY LAURENS <sup>22</sup>

[Spring 1778.]

As we are forming government on a new system, *that of representation* I will give you my thoughts on the various classes and merits of men in society so far as relates to each other.

The first useful class of citizens are the farmers and cultivators. These may be called citizens of the first necessity, because every thing comes originally from the earth.

After these follow the various orders of manufacturers and mechanics of every kind. These differ from the first class in this particular, that they contribute to the accommodation rather than to the first necessities of life.

Next follow those called merchants and shopkeepers. These are convenient but not important. They produce nothing themselves as the

<sup>22</sup> This letter, probably written in the spring of 1778, was first published in the New York *Public Advertiser* in 1807 with the following introduction: "The following is a letter from Thomas Paine to the late Henry Laurens of South Carolina, one of the presidents of the old Congress. As the ideas in it correspond with [William] Duane's *Politics for Farmers and Mechanics* and may be useful, we have Mr. Paine's consent to publish it." It was reprinted in the Philadelphia *Aurora* of June 3, 1807.—*Editor*.

two first classes do, but employ their time in exchanging one thing for another and living by the profits.

Perhaps you will say that in this classification of citizens I have marked no place for myself; that I am neither farmer, mechanic, merchant nor shopkeeper. I believe, however, I am of the first class. I am a *farmer of thoughts*, and all the crops I raise I give away. I please myself with making you a present of the thoughts in this letter.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE HONORABLE BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, ESQR.<sup>23</sup>

YORKTOWN, May 16, 1778.

DEAR SIR:

Your favor of October 7th did not come to me till March. I was at Camp when Captain Folger arrived with the Blank Packet.<sup>24</sup> The private letters were, I believe, all safe. Mr. Laurens forwarded yours to me but by some accident it missed me and was returned again to Yorktown where I afterwards received it.

The last winter has been rather barren of military events, but for your amusement I send you a little history how I have passed away part of the time.

The 11th of September last I was preparing dispatches for you when the report of cannon at Brandywine interrupted my proceeding. The event of that day you have doubtless been informed of, which, excepting the enemy keeping the ground, may be deemed a drawn battle. General Washington collected his army at Chester, and the enemy's not moving towards him next day must be attributed to the disability they sustained and the burden of their wounded. On the 16th of the same month the two armies were drawn up in order of battle near White Horse on the Lancaster road, when a most violent and incessant storm of rain prevented an action. Our army sustained a heavy loss in their ammunition, the cartouche boxes, especially as they were not of the most seasoned leather, being no proof against the almost incredible

<sup>23</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Benjamin Franklin Papers through the courtesy of the American Philosophical Society.—*Editor*.

<sup>24</sup> The British had intercepted the dispatches from the American commissioners in France.—*Editor*.

fury of the weather, which obliged General Washington to draw his army up into the country until those injuries could be repaired, and a new supply of ammunition procured. The enemy in the mean time kept on the west side of Schuylkill. On Friday the 19th about one in the morning the first alarm of their crossing was given, and the confusion, as you may suppose, was very great. It was a beautiful still moonlight morning and the streets as full of men, women and children as on a market day. On the evening before I was fully persuaded that unless something was done the city [Philadelphia] would be lost; and under that anxiety I went to Colonel Bayard, Speaker of the House of Assembly,<sup>25</sup> and represented, as I very particularly knew it, the situation we were in, and the probability of saving the city if proper efforts were made for that purpose.

I reasoned thus—General Washington was about 30 miles up the Schuylkill with an army properly collected waiting for ammunition, besides which a reinforcement of 1500 men were marching from the North River to join him; and if only an appearance of defence be made in the city by throwing up works at the heads of the streets, it will make the enemy very suspicious how they threw themselves between the city and General Washington, and between two rivers, which must have been the case; for notwithstanding the knowledge which military gentlemen are supposed to have, I observe they move exceedingly cautiously on new ground, are exceedingly suspicious of villages and towns, and more perplexed at seemingly little things which they cannot clearly understand than at great ones which they are fully acquainted with. And I think it very probable that General Howe would have mistaken our necessity for a deep laid scheme and not have ventured himself in the middle of it. But admitting that he had, he must either have brought his whole army down, or a part of it. If the whole, General Washington would have followed him, perhaps the same day, in two or three days at most, and our assistance in the city would have been material. If only a part of it, we should have been a match for them and General Washington superior to those which remained above. The chief thing was whether the citizens would turn out to defend the city. My proposal to Colonels Bayard and Bradford<sup>26</sup> was to call them to-

<sup>25</sup> John B. Bayard, merchant and leader of the revolutionary movement in Pennsylvania, was active in military as well as political affairs. He was elected speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly in March, 1770 and November, 1778.—*Editor*.

<sup>26</sup> William Bradford, the "patriot printer of 1776" and publisher of the *Weekly Advertiser or Pennsylvania Journal*, was also a military figure of some prominence.—*Editor*.

gether the next morning, make them fully acquainted with the situation and the means and prospect of preserving themselves, and that the city had better voluntarily assess itself \$50,000 for its defence than suffer an enemy to come into it. Colonels Bayard and Bradford were in my opinion, and as General Mifflin<sup>27</sup> was then in town, I next went to him, acquainted him with our design, and mentioned likewise that if two or three thousand men could be mustered up whether we might depend on him to command them, for without some one to lead, nothing could be done. He declined that part, not being then very well, but promised what assistance he could. A few hours after this the alarm happened. I went directly to General Mifflin but he had set off, and nothing was done. I cannot help being of opinion that the city might have been saved, but perhaps it is better otherwise.

I stayed in the city till Sunday having sent my chest and everything belonging to the Foreign Committee to Trenton in a shallop. The enemy did not cross the river till the Wednesday following. Hearing on the Sunday that General Washington had moved to Sunderford I set off for that place, but learning on the road that it was a mistake and that he was six or seven miles above that place, I crossed over to Southfield, and the next morning to Trenton, to see after my chest. On the Wednesday morning I intended returning to Philadelphia, but was informed at Bristol of the enemy's crossing the Schuylkill. At this place I met Colonel Kirkbride<sup>28</sup> of Pennsburg Manor, who invited me home with him. On Friday the 26th a party of the enemy about 1500 took possession of the city, and the same day an account arrived that Colonel Brown had taken 300 of the enemy at the old French lines at Ticonderoga, and destroyed all their water craft, being about 200 boats of different kinds.

On the 29th September I set off for camp without well knowing where to find it, every day occasioning some movement. I kept pretty high up the country, and being unwilling to ask questions, not knowing what company I might be in, I was there three days before I fell in with it. The army had moved about three miles lower down that morning.

<sup>27</sup> Thomas Mifflin, merchant, member of the Continental Congress and Governor of Pennsylvania, was appointed Brigadier General in May, 1776 and was sent to Philadelphia late in 1776 by Washington to rouse the city for its reinforcement. For a careful discussion of the defense of Philadelphia, see Worthington C. Ford, "Defences of Philadelphia in 1777," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, vols. XVIII-XX, 1894-1896.

<sup>28</sup> Colonel Joseph Kirkbride was one of Paine's closest friends, and the revolutionary writer spent many pleasant months at his home in Bordentown.—*Editor*.



The next day they made a movement about the same distance, to the 21st mile-stone on the Skippach Road,—Headquarters at John Wince's. On the 3d October in the morning they began to fortify the camp, as a deception; and about 9 at night marched for Germantown. The number of Continental troops was between 8[000] and 9000, besides militia, the rest remaining as guards for the security of camp. General Greene, whose quarters I was at, desired me to remain there till morning.<sup>29</sup> I set off for Germantown about 5 next morning. The skirmishing with the pickets began soon after. I met no person for several miles riding, which I concluded to be a good sign; after this I met a man on horseback who told me he was going to hasten on a supply of ammunition, that the enemy were broken and retreating fast, which was true. I saw several country people with arms in their hands running cross a field towards Germantown, within about five or six miles, at which I met several of the wounded on wagons, horseback, and on foot. I passed General Nash on a litter made of poles, but did not know him. I felt unwilling to ask questions lest the information should not be agreeable, and kept on. About two miles after this I passed a promiscuous crowd of wounded and otherwise who were halted at a house to refresh. Colonel Biddle D. Q. M. G. was among them, who called after me, that if I went farther on that road I should be taken, for that the firing which I heard was the enemy's. I never could, and cannot now learn, and I believe no man can inform truly the cause of that day's miscarriage.

The retreat was as extraordinary. Nobody hurried themselves. Every one marched his own pace. The enemy kept a civil distance behind, sending every now and then a shot after us, and receiving the same from us. That part of the army which I was with collected and formed on the hill on the side of the road near White Marsh church; the enemy came within three quarters of a mile and halted. The orders on retreat were to assemble that night on the back of Perkioming Creek, about 7 miles above the camp, which had orders to move. The army had marched the preceding night 14 miles, and having full 20 to march back were exceedingly fatigued. They appeared to me to be only sensible of a disappointment, not a defeat, and to be more displeased at their retreating from Germantown, than anxious to get to their rendezvous. I was so lucky that night to get a little house about 4 miles wide of

<sup>29</sup> General Nathanael Greene had appointed Paine an aide-de-camp, and continued the writer on his staff after Paine was made Secretary of the Committee of Foreign Affairs.—*Editor*.

Perkioming, towards which place in the morning I heard a considerable firing, which distressed me exceedingly, knowing that our army was much harassed and not collected. However, I soon relieved myself by going to see. They were discharging their pieces, which, though necessary, prevented several parties going till next day. I breakfasted next morning at General Washington's quarters, who was at the same loss with every other to account for the accidents of the day. I remember his expressing his surprise, by saying, that at the time he supposed everything secure, and was about giving orders for the army to proceed down to Philadelphia; that he most unexpectedly saw a part (I think of the artillery) hastily retreating. This partial retreat was, I believe, misunderstood, and soon followed by others. The fog was frequently very thick, the troops young and unused to breaking and rallying, and our men rendered suspicious to each other, many of them being in red. A new army once disordered is difficult to manage, the attempt dangerous. To this may be added a prudence in not putting matters to too hazardous a trial the first time. Men must be taught *regular* fighting by practice and degrees, and though the expedition failed, it had this good effect—that they seemed to feel themselves more important *after* it than *before*, as it was the first general attack they had ever made.

I have not related the affair at Mr. Chew's house, Germantown, as I was not there, but have seen it since. It certainly afforded the enemy time to rally—yet the matter was difficult. To have pressed on and left 500 men in the rear, might by a change of circumstances been ruinous. To attack them was a loss of time, as the house is a strong stone building, proof against any 12 pounder. General Washington sent a flag, thinking it would procure their surrender and expedite his march to Philadelphia; it was refused, and circumstances changed almost directly after.

I stayed in camp two days after the Germantown action, and lest any ill impression should get among the garrisons at Mud Island and Red Bank, and the vessels and galleys stationed there, I crossed over to the Jerseys at Trenton and went down to those places. I laid the first night on board the *Champion* Continental galley, who was stationed off the mouth of the Schuylkill. The enemy threw up a two-gun battery on the point of the river's mouth opposite the pest house. The next morning was a thick fog, and as soon as it cleared away, and we became visible to each other, they opened on the galley, who returned the fire. The Commodore made a signal to bring the galley under the Jersey

shore, as she was not a match for the battery, nor the battery a sufficient object for the galley. One shot went through the fore sail, which was all. At noon I went with Colonel Greene,<sup>30</sup> who commanded at Red Bank [fort,] over to Fort Mifflin (Mud Island). The enemy opened that day 2 two-gun batteries, and a mortar battery, on the fort. They threw about 30 shells into it that afternoon, without doing any damage; the ground being damp and spongy, not above five or six burst; not a man was killed or wounded. I came away in the evening, laid on board the galley, and the next day came to Colonel Kirkbride's [Bordentown, N. J.]; stayed a few days and came again into camp. An expedition was on foot the evening I got there in which I went as aide de camp to General [Nathaniel] Greene, having a volunteer commission for that purpose. The occasion was—a party of the enemy, about 1500, lay over the Schuylkill at Grey's Ferry. General McDougall with his division was sent to attack them; and Sullivan and Greene with their divisions were to favor the enterprise by a feint on the city, down the Germantown road. We set off about nine at night, and halted at daybreak, between Germantown and the city, the advanced party at Three Miles Run. As I knew the ground I went with two light horse to discover the enemy's picket, but the dress of the light horse being white made them, I thought, too visible, as it was then twilight; on which I left them with my horse, and went on foot, till I distinctly saw the picket at Mr. Dickerson's place—which is the nearest I have been to Philadelphia since September, except once at Cooper's Ferry, as I went to the forts. General Sullivan was at Dr. Redman's house, and McDougall's beginning the attack was to be the signal for moving down to the city. But the enemy either on the approach of McDougall, or on information of it, called in their party, and the expedition was frustrated.

A cannonade, by far the most furious I ever heard, began down the river, soon after daylight, the first gun of which we supposed to be the signal; but was soon undeceived, there being no small arms. After waiting two hours beyond the time, we marched back; the cannon was then less frequent, but on the road between Germantown and White Marsh we were stunned with a report as loud as a peal from a hundred cannon at once; and turning around I saw a thick smoke rising like a pillar, and spreading from the top like a tree. This was the blowing up of the *Augusta*. I did not hear the explosion of the *Berlin*.

<sup>30</sup> In October, 1777, Colonel Christopher Greene was placed in command of Fort Mercer on the Delaware just below and nearly opposite Philadelphia.—*Editor*.

After this I returned to Colonel Kirkbride's, where I stayed about a fortnight, and set off again to camp. The day after I got there Generals Greene, Wayne and Cadwallader, with a party of light horse, were ordered on a reconnoitering party towards the forts. We were out four days and nights without meeting with anything material. An East Indiaman, whom the enemy had cut down so as to draw but little water, came up, without guns, while we were on foot on Carpenter's Island, going to Province Island. Her guns were brought up in the evening in a flat, she got in the rear of the fort, where few or no guns could bear upon her, and the next morning played on it incessantly. The night following the fort was evacuated. The obstruction the enemy met with from those forts, and the *Chevaux de frise*, was extraordinary, and had it not been that the western channel, deepened by the current, being somewhat obstructed by the *Chevaux de frise* in the main river, which enabled them to bring up the light Indiaman battery, it is a doubt whether they would have succeeded at last. By that assistance they reduced the fort, and got sufficient command of the river to move some of the late sunk *Chevaux de frise*. Soon after this the fort on Red Bank (which had bravely repulsed the enemy a little time before) was evacuated, the galleys ordered up to Bristol, and the captains of such other armed vessels as *thought* they could not pass on the eastward side of Wind Mill Island, very precipitately set them on fire. As I judged from this event that the enemy would winter in Philadelphia, I began to think of preparing for Yorktown, which however I was willing to delay, hoping that the ice would afford opportunity for new maneuvers. But the season passed very barrenly away. I stayed at Colonel Kirkbride's till the latter end of January. Commodore Haslewood, who commanded the remainder of the fleet at Trenton, acquainted me with a scheme of his for burning the enemy's shipping, which was by sending a charged boat across the river from Cooper's Ferry, by means of a rocket fixed in its stern. Considering the width of the river, the tide, and the variety of accidents that might change its direction, I thought the project trifling and insufficient; and proposed to him, that if he would get a boat properly charged, and take a batteau in tow, sufficient to bring three or four persons off, that I would make one with him and two other persons that might be relied on to go down on that business. One of the company, Captain Blewer of Philadelphia, seconded the proposal, but the Commodore, and, what I was more surprised at, Colonel Bradford, declined it. The burning of part of the Delaware fleet,

the precipitate retreat of the rest, the little service rendered by them and the great expense they were at, make the only national blot in the proceedings of the last campaign. I felt a strong anxiety for them to recover their credit, which, among others, was one motive for my proposal. After this I came to camp, and from thence to Yorktown, and published the *Crisis* No. 5, to General Howe. I have begun No. 6, which I intend to address to Lord North.<sup>31</sup>

I was not at camp when General Howe marched out on the 20th of December towards White Marsh. It was a most contemptible affair, the threatenings and seeming fury he set out with, and haste and terror the army retreated with, make it laughable. I have seen several persons from Philadelphia who assure me that their coming back was a mere uproar, and plainly indicated their apprehensions of a pursuit. General Howe, in his Letter to Lord George Germain, dated December 13th, represented General Washington's camp as a strongly fortified place. There was not, sir, a work thrown up in it till General Howe marched out, and then only here and there a breastwork. It was a temporary station. Besides which, our men begin to think works in the field of little use.

General Washington keeps his station at the Valley Forge. I was there when the army first began to build huts; they appeared to me like a family of beavers: every one busy; some carrying logs, others mud, and the rest fastening them together. The whole was raised in a few days, and is a curious collection of buildings in the true rustic order.

As to politics, I think we are now safely landed. The apprehension which Britain must be under from her neighbors must effectually prevent her sending reinforcements, could she procure them. She dare not, I think, in the *present* situation of affairs, trust her troops so far from home.

No commissioners are yet arrived. I think fighting is nearly over, for Britain, mad, wicked and foolish, has done her utmost. The only part for her now to act is frugality, and the only way for her to get out of debt is to lessen her government expenses. Two millions a year is a sufficient allowance, and as much as she ought to expend exclusive of the interest of her debt. The affairs of England are approaching either to ruin or redemption. If the latter she may bless the resistance of America.

For my own part, I thought it very hard to have the country set on fire

<sup>31</sup> *Crisis* No. VI was addressed to the Commissioners sent from England to America bearing terms for a negotiated peace.—*Editor*.

about my ears almost the moment I got into it; and among other pleasures I feel in having uniformly done my duty, I feel that of not having discredited your friendship and patronage.

I live in hopes of seeing and advising with you respecting the History of the American Revolution, as soon as a turn of affairs make it safe to take a passage for Europe. Please to accept my thanks for the pamphlets, which Mr. Temple Franklin tells me he has sent. They are not yet come to hand. Mr. and Mrs. Bache are at Mainheim, near Lancaster; I heard they were well a few days ago. I laid two nights at Mr. Duffield's, in the winter. Miss Nancy Clifton was there, who said the enemy had destroyed or sold a great part of your furniture. Mr. Duffield has since been taken by them and carried into the city, but is now at his own house.<sup>32</sup> I just hear they have burnt Colonel Kirkbride's, Mr. Borden's, and some other houses at Bordentown. Governor Johnstone (House of Commons) has written to Mr. Robert Morris informing him of commissioners coming from England. The letter is printed in the newspapers without signature, and is dated *February 5th*, by which you will know it.

Please, sir, to accept this, rough and incorrect as it is, as I have [not] time to copy it fair, which was my design when I began it; besides which, paper is most exceedingly scarce.

I am, dear sir, your obliged and affectionate humble servant,

T. PAINE

P. S. Please to present my thanks and compliments to your grandson, Mr. W. T. Franklin and acquaint him that I have taken care to fulfil his commands respecting the letter and memorials he instructed to my care and that as soon as I can obtain sufficient information I will transmit it to him. I request his favor to forward the enclosed, directed to Mr. Samuel Hustler.

I saw M. Du Plessis<sup>33</sup> lately; he was well

<sup>32</sup> Rev. Dr. George Duffield, pastor of the Third Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, was an Associate Chaplain of the first Continental Congress and later Chaplain in the Continental Army.—*Editor*.

<sup>33</sup> M. Du Plessis was a French scientist, and a close friend of both Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson in Paris and Philadelphia.—*Editor*.

TO THE HONORABLE BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,  
ESQR.<sup>34</sup>

YORKTOWN, May 16th, 1778.

DEAR SIR:

In the Packet No. 1 I have sent you a long letter acknowledging your favor of Oct. 7. Mr. Temple Franklin's of March 1st which on account of the great quantity of public business I have not time to copy. Lest that should not come to hand, I write you this short information. Mr. [and] Mrs. Beache are at Mainheim near Lancaster; they were well a few days ago. I have not yet received the Pamphlets Mr. W. T. Franklin mentions. I think we are now so safely landed that it requires more invention to go wrong than it ever does to go right.

I live in hopes of the pleasure of seeing you and taking your advice respecting the History of the Revolution as soon as matters make it practicable to come to Europe.

I am dear Sir, Your obliged and affectionate humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. Please to present my thanks and compliments to Mr. W. T. Franklin. I have taken care to fulfill his command respecting the letters and Memorials he intrusted to my care, and that as soon as I can obtain sufficient information I will transmit it to him.

I saw M. du Plessis lately he was well.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL  
WASHINGTON<sup>35</sup>

YORKTOWN, June 5th, 1778.

SIR:

As a general opinion prevails that the Enemy will quit Philadelphia, I take the Liberty of transmitting you my reasons why it is probable they will not. In your difficult and distinguished situation every hint may be useful.

I put the immediate cause of their evacuation, to be a declaration of

<sup>34</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Benjamin Franklin Papers through the courtesy of the American Philosophical Society.—*Editor*.

<sup>35</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.—*Editor*.

war in Europe made by them or against them: in which case, their Army would be wanted for other service, and likewise because their present situation would be too unsafe, being subject to be blocked up by France and attacked by you and her jointly.

Britain will avoid a war with France if she can; which, according to my arrangement of Politics she may easily do. She must see the necessity of acknowledging, sometime or other, the independence of America; if she is wise enough to make that acknowledgement *now*, she of consequence admits the Right of France to the quiet enjoyment of her Treaty, and therefore no war can take place upon the ground of having concluded a Treaty with revolted British subjects.

This being admitted, their apprehensions of being doubly attacked, or of being wanted elsewhere, cease of consequence; and they will then endeavor to hold all they can, that they may have something to restore in lieu of something else which they will demand; as I know of no instance where conquered Plans were surrendered up prior to, but only in consequence of a Treaty of Peace.

You will observe, Sir, that my reasoning is founded on the supposition of their being reasonable beings, which if they are not, then they are not within the compass of my system.

I am Sir, with every wish for your happiness, Your affectionate and obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN <sup>36</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, October 24th, 1778.

DEAR HONORED SIR:

I congratulate you on your accession to the State of Minister Plenipotentiary. Could you have lived to fill a particular point in the circle of human affairs, it would have been that to which you are now so honorably called.

We rub and drive on, all things considered, beyond what could ever be expected, and instead of wondering why some things have not been done better, the greater wonder is we have done so well. As I wish to render the History of this Revolution as complete as possible I am un-

<sup>36</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Benjamin Franklin Papers through the courtesy of the American Philosophical Society.—*Editor*.



willing to begin it too soon, and should be glad to consult you first, because the *real motives* of the British King in commencing the War will form a considerable political part. I am sufficiently persuaded myself that they wished for a quarrel and intended to annex America to the Crown of England as a conquered country. They had no doubt of victory and hoped for what they might call a Rebellion, but we have not, on this side the water, sufficient proof of this at present. I intend to embellish it with plates of heads plans etc. which likewise cannot be perfected here.

I enjoy thank God a good share of health and hopes and though my situation is no ways advantageous, it is nevertheless agreeable. I have the pleasure of being respect[ed] and I feel a little of that satisfactory kind of pride that tells me I have some right to it. I am not much hurried in the Secretary department, and have sufficient leisure for anything else.

At this time the public expectations run high on the Enemy quitting New York, but for what or where is all uncertain, neither do I believe they know what to do themselves.

The Marquis de Fayette returns with the warmest thanks from this country. His amiable and benevolent manners have been a living contradiction to the narrow spirited declarations of the British Commissioners. He happily returns in safety, which, considering the exposures he has gone through, is rather to be wondered at.<sup>37</sup>

A large detachment sailed from N[ew] York destination unknown—probably for Boston, but as you will receive later information than this letter can convey, anything which I may mention will be of little use.

I am, with every wish for your happiness, Your obliged and affectionate Humble Servant,

T. PAINE.

Please present my compliments to your Grandsons.<sup>38</sup>

## TO HENRY LAURENS

PHILADELPHIA, December 15, 1778.

DEAR SIR:

In this morning's paper is a piece addressed to Mr. Deane, in which your name is mentioned. My intention in relating the circumstances

<sup>37</sup> Lafayette had been wounded at the Battle of Brandywine.—*Editor*.

<sup>38</sup> Paine is referring to Benjamin Franklin Bache and William Temple Franklin.—*Editor*.

with which it is connected is to prevent the enemy drawing any unjust conclusions from an accidental division in the House on matters no ways political. You will please to observe that I have been exceedingly careful to preserve the honor of Congress in the minds of the people who have been so exceedingly fretted by Mr. Deane's address, and this will appear the more necessary when I inform you that a proposal has been made for calling a Town Meeting to demand justice for Mr. Deane. I have been applied to smoothly and roughly not to publish this piece. Mr. Deane has likewise been with the printer.

I am, etc,  
THOMAS PAINE.

### TO M. GÉRARD <sup>39</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, January 2d, 1779.

DEAR SIR:

As I feel much concern at the interpretation which you supposed my last publication would admit of,<sup>40</sup> so I feel much impatience to relieve both your anxiety and my own. My continuation of the piece will appear on Tuesday.

I thank you for communicating your apprehension to me; it will make me more explicit on the subject, for my design was and is to place the merit of these supplies where I think the merit is most due, that is in the disposition of the French nation to help us, "*in the time of our greatest wants.*" These were the words I used in the papers of today, and my full opinion is, that whether Mr. Deane had been there or not, those supplies would have found their way to America. Yet I mean not to deprive him of what share may be his due, though I cannot believe it to be very great.

It is my wish, it is my earnest desire to lead the people of America to see the friendship of the French nation in the light they ought to see it; they have deserved much from us of friendship and equal benevolence, and I think I am justified in saying, which is I believe the truth, and on honor which France is justly entitled to, that had America not succeeded the supplies would have generously submitted to the loss.

I am under no obligation to Congress otherwise than the honor they

<sup>39</sup> The letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the New York Public Library. Gérard was the French Minister to the United States.—*Editor.*

<sup>40</sup> See above pp. 111*ff.* for the publication Paine refers to.—*Editor.*

did me in the appointment. It is in every other light a disadvantage to me. I serve from principle. No member of Congress knows what I write till it appears in public, and this being the plan I go upon, I request for the sake of the union which has so happily taken place that you will not misapprehend my design.

I am Dear Sir Your obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. An anxiety to give you notice when my next would appear is the cause of my writing this.<sup>41</sup>

## TO THE HONORABLE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES <sup>42</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, January 6, 1779.

HONORABLE SIRS:

Understanding that exceptions have been taken at some parts of my conduct, which exceptions as I am unacquainted with I cannot reply to, I therefore humbly beg leave to submit every part of my conduct public and private, so far as relate to public measures, to the judgment of this Honorable House, to be by them approved or censured as they shall judge proper—at the same time reserving to myself that conscious satisfaction of having ever intended well and to the best of my abilities executed these intentions.

The Honorable Congress in April, 1777, were pleased, not only un-

<sup>41</sup> The Reply of M. Gérard, dated January 2, 1779, reads:

“SIR:

“The attention which you showed to me in giving me notice of the time of the publication which shall take place tomorrow requires my thanks, and I deliver them to you with pleasure and confidence.

“I am fully persuaded that you will remember that all what I had the honor to say to you has no reference to any person and that I have care but for the direct honor and interest of my court and that my desire is rather that all personal reference should be avoided as far as it could start questions which would be desirable, should be avoided; but the sentiment you profess leave no occasion to fear about this delicate object that commands my most serious concern.

“I am with great regard.

“M. GÉRARD”—*Editor.*

<sup>42</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Continental Congress Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.

The issue involved in these letters to Congress was Paine's publication of information concerning French assistance to the United States prior to the signing of the Treaty of Alliance. See above pp. 96-97.—*Editor.*

solicited on my part, but wholly unknown to me, to appoint me unanimously Secretary to the Committee for Foreign Affairs, which mode of appointment I conceive to be the most honorable that can take place. The salary they were pleased to affix to it was 70 dollars per month. It has remained at the same rate ever since, and is not at this time equal to the most moderate expenses I can live at; yet I have never complained, and always conceiving it my duty to bear a share of the inconveniences of the country, have ever cheerfully submitted to them. This being my situation, I am at this time conscious of no error, unless the cheapness of my services, and the generosity with which I have endeavored to do good in other respects, can be imputed to me as a crime, by such individuals as may have acted otherwise.

As my appointment was honorable, therefore whenever it shall appear to Congress that I have not fulfilled their expectations, I shall, though with concern at any misapprehension that might lead to such an opinion, surrender up the books and papers intrusted to my care.

Were my appointment an office of profit it might become me to resign it, but as it is otherwise I conceive that such a step in me might imply a dissatisfaction on account of the smallness of the pay. Therefore I think it my duty to wait the orders of this honorable House, at the same time begging leave to assure them that whatever may be their determination respecting me, my disposition to serve in so honorable a cause, and in any character in which I can best do it, will suffer no alteration.

I am, with profound respect, your honors' dutiful and obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES <sup>43</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, January 7, 1779.

HONORABLE SIRS:

From the manner in which I was called before the House yesterday, I have reason to suspect an unfavorable disposition in them towards some parts in my late publications. What the parts are against which they object, or what those objections are, are wholly unknown to me. If any gentleman has presented any Memorial to this House which con-

<sup>43</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Continental Congress Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

tains any charge against me, or anyways alludes in a censurable manner to my character or interest, so as to become the ground of any such charge, I request, as a servant under your authority, an attested copy of that charge, and in my present character as a freeman of this country, I demand it. I attended at the bar of this House yesterday as their servant, though the warrant did not express my official station, which I conceive it ought to have done, otherwise it could not have been compulsive unless backed by a magistrate. My hopes were that I should be made acquainted with the charge, and admitted to my defence, which I am at all times ready to make either in writing or personally.

I cannot in duty to my character as a freeman submit to be censured unheard. I have evidence which I presume will justify me. And I entreat this House to consider how great their reproach will be should it be told that they passed a sentence upon me without hearing me, and that a copy of the charge against me was refused to me; and likewise how much that reproach will be aggravated should I afterwards prove the censure of this House to be a libel, grounded upon a mistake which they refused fully to inquire into.

I make my application to the heart of every gentleman in this House, that, before he decides on a point that may affect my reputation, he will duly consider his own. Did I court popular praise I should not send this letter. My wish is that by thus stating my situation to the House, they may not commit an act they cannot justify.

I have obtained fame, honor and credit in this country. I am proud of these honors. And as they cannot be taken from me by any unjust censure grounded on a concealed charge, therefore it will become my duty afterwards to do justice to myself. I have no favor to ask more than to be candidly and honorably dealt by; and such being my right I ought to have no doubt but this House will proceed accordingly. Should Congress be disposed to hear me, I have to request that they will give me sufficient time to prepare.

I am Honorable Sirs, your honors most obedient and dutiful humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES <sup>44</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, January 8, 1779.

HONORABLE SIRS:

Finding by the Journals of this House,<sup>45</sup> of yesterday, that I am not to be heard, and having in my letter of the same day, prior to that resolution, declared that I could not "*in duty to my character as a freeman submit to be censured unheard,*" therefore, consistent with that declaration, and to maintain that right, I think it my duty to resign the office of Secretary to the Committee for Foreign Affairs, and I do hereby resign the same. The papers and documents in my charge I shall faithfully deliver up to the Committee, either on honor or oath, as they or this House shall direct.

Considering myself now no longer a servant of Congress, I conceive it convenient that I should declare what have been the motives of my conduct. On the appearance of Mr. Deane's address to the public of the 5 of Dec., in which he said "The ears of the Representatives were shut against him," the honor and justice of this House were impeached and its reputation sunk to the lowest ebb in the opinion of the people. The expressions of suspicion and degradation which have been uttered in my hearing and are too indecent to be related in this letter, first induced me to set the public right; but so grounded were they almost without exception, in their ill opinion of this House, that instead of succeeding as I wished in my first address, I fell under the same reproach and was frequently told that I was defending Congress in their bad designs. This obliged me to go farther into the matters, and I have now reason to believe that my endeavors have been and will be effectual.

My wish and my intentions in all my late publications were to preserve the public from error and imposition, to support as far as laid in my power the *just* authority of the Representatives of the people, and to cordiallize and cement the union that has so happily taken place between this country and France.

<sup>44</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Continental Congress Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>45</sup> Paine's statement aroused considerable discussion in Congress. Many members wished to know how he obtained the Journals of the House, and accused Henry Laurens of giving the document to Paine. Laurens replied that he had merely told Paine from memory the proceedings in the Journal relating to him. See Worthington C. Ford, editor, *Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789*, Washington, 1909, vol. XIII, pp. 36-37.—*Editor*.

I have betrayed no trust because I have constantly employed that trust to the public good. I have revealed no secrets because I have told nothing that was, or I conceive ought to be a secret. I have convicted Mr. Deane of error, and in so doing I hope I have done my duty.

It is to the interest of the Alliance that the people should know that before America had any agent in Europe the "*public-spirited gentlemen*" in that quarter of the world were her warm friends. And I hope this honorable House will receive it from me as a farther testimony of my affection to that Alliance, and of my attention to the duty of my office, that I mention, that the duplicates of the Dispatches of Oct. 6 and 7, 1777, from the *Commissioners*, the originals of which are in the Enemy's possession, seem to require on *that account* a reconsideration.

His Excellency, the Minister of France, is well acquainted with the liberality of my sentiments, and I have had the pleasure of receiving repeated testimonies of his esteem for me. I am concerned that he should in any instance *misconceive* me. I beg likewise to have it understood that my appeal to this honorable House for a hearing yesterday was a *matter of right* in the character of a freeman, which right I ought to yield up to no power whatever. I return my utmost thanks to the honorable Members of this House who endeavored to support me in that right, so sacred to themselves and to their constituents; and I have the pleasure of saying and reflecting that as I came into office an honest man, I go out of it with the same character.

I am, Honorable Sirs, your honors most obedient and humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE HONORABLE HENRY LAURENS <sup>46</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, January 14, 1779.

SIR:

My anxiety for your *personal* safety has not only fixed a profound silence upon me, but prevents my asking you a great many questions, lest I should be the unwilling, unfortunate cause of new difficulties or fatal consequences to you, and in such a case I might indeed say, "*T is the survivor dies.*"

I omitted sending the inclosed in the morning as I intended. It will

<sup>46</sup> This letter and the accompanying autobiographical sketch are printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the New York Public Library.—*Editor.*

serve you to parry ill nature and ingratitude with, when undeserved reflections are cast upon me.

I certainly have some awkward natural feeling, which I never shall get rid of. I was sensible of a kind of shame at the Minister's door to-day, lest any one should think I was going to solicit a pardon or a pension. When I come to you I feel only an *unwillingness* to be seen, on your account. I shall never make a courtier, I see that.<sup>47</sup>

I am your obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

January 14, 1779.

SIR:

For your amusement I give you a short history of my conduct since I have been in America.

I brought with me letters of introduction from Dr. Franklin. These letters were with a flying seal, that I might, if I thought proper, close them with a wafer. One was to Mr. Bache of this city. The terms of Dr. Franklin's recommendation were "*a worthy, ingenious, etc.*" My particular design was to establish an academy on the plan they are conducted in and about London, which I was well acquainted with.<sup>48</sup> I came some months before Dr. Franklin, and waited here for his arrival. In the meantime a person of this city desired me to give him some assistance in conducting a magazine, which I did without making any bargain.<sup>49</sup> The work turned out very profitable. Dr. Witherspoon had likewise a concern [in] it. At the end of six months I thought it necessary to come to some contract. I agreed to leave the matters to arbitration. The bookseller mentioned two on his own part—Mr. Duché, your late chaplain, and Mr. Hopkinson. I agreed to them and declined mentioning any on my part. But the bookseller getting information of what Mr. Duché's private opinion was, withdrew from the arbitration, or rather refused to go into it, as our agreement to abide by it was only verbal. I was requested by several literary gentlemen in this city to undertake such a work on my own account, and I could have rendered it very profitable.

<sup>47</sup> After Paine resigned his position as secretary to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Gérard, the French Minister, asserted that he immediately got him to accept \$1,000 a year to write in support of France. For evidence supporting Gérard's assertion, see John J. Meng, "French Diplomacy in America: 1778-1779," *Catholic Historical Review*, vol. XXIV, p. 51.—*Editor*.

<sup>48</sup> In 1767 Paine was usher in a school in Kensington, London.—*Editor*.

<sup>49</sup> Paine is referring to Robert Aitkin and the *Pennsylvania Magazine*.—*Editor*.



As I always had a taste to science, I naturally had friends of that cast in England; and among the rest George Lewis Scott, Esq., through whose formal introduction my first acquaintance with Dr. Franklin commenced.<sup>50</sup> I esteem Mr. Scott as one of the most amiable characters I know of, but his particular situation had been that in the minority of the present King he was his sub-preceptor, and from the occasional traditionary accounts yet remaining in the family of Mr. Scott, I obtained the true character of the present King from his childhood upwards, and, you may naturally suppose, of the present ministry. I saw the people of this country were all wrong, by an ill-placed confidence. After the breaking out of hostilities I was confident their design was a total conquest. I wrote to Mr. Scott in May, 1775, by Captain James Josiah, now in this city. I read the letter to him before I closed it. I used in it this free expression: "Surely the ministry are all mad; they never will be able to conquer America." The reception which the last petition of Congress met with put it past a doubt that such was their design, on which I determined with myself to write the pamphlet [*Common*] *Sense*. As I knew the time of the Parliament meeting, and had no doubt what sort of King's speech it would produce, my contrivance was to have the pamphlet come out just at the time the speech might arrive in America, and so fortunate was I in this cast of policy that both of them made their appearance in this city on the same day. [January 10, 1776].

The first edition was printed by Bell on the recommendation of Dr. Rush. I gave him the pamphlet on the following conditions: That if any loss should arise I would pay it—and in order to make him industrious in circulating it, I gave him one-half the profits, if it should produce any. I gave a written order to Col. Joseph Dean and Capt. Thos. Prior, both of this city, to receive the other half, and lay it out for mittens for the troops that were going to Quebec. I did this to do honor to the cause. Bell kept the whole, and abused me into the bargain. The price he set upon them was two shillings. I then enlarged the pamphlet with an appendix and an address to the Quakers, which made it one-third bigger than before, printed 6,000 at my own expense, 3,000 by B. Towne, 3,000 by Styner & Cist, and delivered them ready stitched and fit for sale to Mr. Bradford at the Coffee-house; and though the work was thus increased, and consequently should have borne a higher price, yet, in order that it might produce the general service I wished, I confined Mr. Bradford to sell them at only one shilling each, or tenpence by the dozen, and

<sup>50</sup> Scott was a Commissioner of the Board of Excise by which body Paine had been employed.—*Editor*.

to enable him to do this, with sufficient advantage to himself, I let him have the pamphlets at 8½d. Pennsylvania currency each.

The sum of 8½d. each was reserved to defray the expense of printing, paper, advertising, etc., and such as might be given away. The state of the account at present is that I am £39 11s. out of pocket, being the difference between what I have paid for printing, etc., and what I have received from Bradford. He has a sufficiency in his hands to balance with and clear me, which is all I aimed at, but by his unaccountable dilatoriness and unwillingness to settle accounts I fear I shall be obliged to sustain a real loss exclusive of my trouble.

I think the importance of that pamphlet was such that if it had not appeared, and that at the exact time it did, the Congress would not now have been sitting where they are. The light which that performance threw upon the subject gave a turn to the politics of America which enabled her to stand her ground. Independence followed in six months after it, although before it was published it was a dangerous doctrine to speak of, and that because it was not understood.

In order to accommodate that pamphlet to every man's purchase and to do honor to the cause, I gave up the profits I was justly entitled to, which in this city only would at the usual price of books [have] produced me £1,000 at that time a day, besides what I might have made by extending it to other States. I gave permission to the printers in other parts of this State [Pennsylvania] to print it on their own account. I believe the number of copies printed and sold in America was not short of 150,000—and is the greatest sale that any performance ever had since the use of letters,—exclusive of the great run it had in England and Ireland.

The doctrine of that book was opposed in the public newspapers under the signature of Cato, who, I believe, was Dr. Smith,<sup>51</sup> and I was sent for from New York to reply to him, which I did, and happily with success. My letters are under the signature of "The Forester." It was likewise opposed in a pamphlet signed *Plain Truth*, but the performance was too weak to do any hurt or deserve any answer. In July following the publication of *Common Sense* the Associators of this State marched to Amboy under the command of Gen. Roberdeau. The command was large, yet there was no allowance for a secretary. I offered my service voluntarily, only that my expenses should be paid, all the charges I put Gen. Roberdeau to was \$48; although he frequently pressed me to make free with his private assistance. After the Associators returned I went to

<sup>51</sup> Paine is referring to the Rev. William Smith, D.D., President of the University of Pennsylvania.—*Editor*.

Fort Lee, and continued with Gen. [Nathanael] Greene till the evacuation.

A few days after our army had crossed the Delaware on the 8th of December, 1776, I came to Philadelphia on public service, and, seeing the deplorable and melancholy condition the people were in, afraid to speak and almost to think, the public presses stopped, and nothing in circulation but fears and falsehoods, I sat down, and in what I may call a passion of patriotism wrote the first number of the *Crisis*. It was published on the 19th of December, which was the very blackest of times, being before the taking of the Hessians at Trenton. I gave that piece to the printer gratis, and confined him to the price of two coppers, which was sufficient to defray his charge.

I then published the second number, which, being as large again as the first number, I gave it to him on the condition of his taking only four coppers each. It contained sixteen pages.

I then published the third number, containing thirty-two pages, and gave it to the printer, confining him to ninepence.

When the account of the battle of Brandywine got to this city, the people were again in a state of fear and dread. I immediately wrote the fourth number [of the *Crisis*]. It contained only four pages, and as there was no less money than the sixth of dollars in general circulation, which would have been too great a price, I ordered 4,000 to be printed at my own private charge and given away.

The fifth number I gave Mr. Dunlap, at Lancaster. He, very much against my consent, set half a crown upon it; he might have done it for a great deal less. The sixth and seventh numbers I gave in the papers. The seventh number would have made a pamphlet of twenty-four pages, and brought me in \$3,000 or \$4,000 in a very few days, at the price which it ought to have borne.

Monies received since I have been in America:

Salary for 17 months at 70 dollars per month <sup>52</sup> .....	1,190 dollars
For rations and occasional assistance at Fort Lee .....	141 ditto
For defraying the expense of a journey from East Town round by Morriss when secretary to the Indian Commission, <sup>53</sup> and some other matters, about 140 or 145 dollars .....	145 ditto
Total of public money .....	1,476

<sup>52</sup> Paine is referring to the salary he received as Secretary of the Congressional Committee of Foreign Affairs.—*Editor*.

<sup>53</sup> This commission conferred with the Indian chiefs at Easton, Pa., in January, 1777.—*Editor*.

In the spring, 1776, some private gentleman, thinking it was too hard that I should, after giving away my profits for a public good, be money out of pocket on account of some expense I was put to—sent me by the hands of Mr. Christopher Marshall 108 dollars.

You have here, sir, a faithful history of my services and my rewards.

## TO THE HONORABLE HENRY LAURENS <sup>54</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, January 17, 1779.

DEAR SIR:

I received the additional testimony of your friendship, for which, it is needless to say, you have my thanks. It is true that I have subjected myself to present inconveniences, but I beg leave to mention that it is my design to publish all of my political and other writings in two volumes, and to set a proper price upon them. I shall begin with the pamphlet *Common Sense*; and this I believe will make some recompense for the trouble I have been at hitherto. And though I have constantly given everything I have yet published to the public gratis, yet no gentleman will expect that I should give away in volumes.

I feel myself exceedingly hurt by some expressions in Mr. Gérard's letter to Congress of the 14th inst. I have mentioned them to Mr. Mirales and shall write to Mr. Gérard on the subject.

The expressions are:

"I entreat you to receive and to express to Congress the great sensibility with which their frank, noble and categorical manner of destroying those false and dangerous insinuations which might mislead ignorant people, and put arms into the hands of the enemy."

I find myself obliged to tell him that I think it convenient to absent myself from the company even of my most intimate friends till he shall be pleased to explain that I am not personally alluded to in this paragraph. I believe my apprehensions were not ill grounded when I said that I believed they wished to get me to submit to a censure.

The resolution of Congress is more moderate than is either Mr. Jay's or Mr. Gérard's letter. I mean to give Mr. Gérard a most polite opportunity of doing me justice.

<sup>54</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society.—*Editor*.

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

T. PAINE.

Please excuse a scrawl, as I am in haste to get my letter to Mr. G[érard] completed. It is a nice step, but I think I shall manage it with address.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL [NATHANAEL]  
GREENE <sup>55</sup>

January 31st, 1779.

DEAR SIR:

You doubtless think it strange I have not as usual, called to see you. I have been out no where, and was resolved not to go out, till I had set every thing to rights. I know how it must end because I have it in my hands. The roguiry will soon come out, and as I was determined to answer no questions upon the subject. I thought it best to put it out of every body's power to ask me any, but finding you go tomorrow I must break this my resolve by calling upon you to-day. I have acquainted his Excellency with the same reasons.

Notwithstanding my absence, set me down as one your most attached friends, and in return remember your obedient humble servant

THOS PAINE.

P. S. If you should be off when I call I wish you would leave word when you will be at home.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL  
WASHINGTON <sup>56</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, January 31st, 1779.

SIR:

Hearing that you leave this place tomorrow I beg you to accept a short reason why I have not waited on you.

I have been out no where for near these two months. The part I have taken in an affair that is yet depending, rendered it most prudent in me to absent myself from company lest I should be asked questions im-

<sup>55</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Correspondence of General Nathanael Greene through the courtesy of the American Philosophical Society.—*Editor*.

<sup>56</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the George Washington Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

proper to be answered, or subject myself to conversation that might have been unpleasant. That there has been foul play somewhere is clear to every one—and where it lies, will, I believe, soon come out.

Having thus explained myself, I have to add my sincere wishes for your happiness in every line of life, and to assure you, that as far as my abilities extend I shall never suffer a hint of dishonor or even a deficiency of respect to you to pass unnoticed.

I have always acted that part, and am confident that your virtues and conduct will ever require it from me as a duty as well as render it a pleasure.

I never heard either Col. R. or Col. T. Lee express a sentiment in your disfavor. I can answer for nothing farther. I likewise take the liberty of mentioning to you that at the time some discontents from the army and the country last winter were doing you great injustice, I published the fifth No. of the *Crisis*. I hoped that by bringing your former services in view to shame them out, or at least to convince them of their error. I was then at Lancaster, and on my return to Yorktown I saw the foreign committee of which Col. R. H. Lee was chairman had sent off dispatches to France; the copy was in his handwriting and in these dispatches he enclosed that Pamphlet and spoke of it as “the general sentiments of America on what the Enemy had so boastingly called their successes.”

I am very desirous of bidding you farewell and intend making you a short visit today for that purpose, notwithstanding the reasons I have before mentioned.

I am with every wish for your happiness, your obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN<sup>57</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, March 4th, [17]79.

DEAR SIR:

I wrote you twice from Yorktown in June [17]78, but have not received a line from you since yours of Feb. 7th, [17]77 by Capt. Folger.

I have lately met with a turn, which, sooner or later, happens to all men in popular life, that is, I fell, all at once, from high credit to dis-

<sup>57</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Benjamin Franklin Papers through the courtesy of the American Philosophical Society.—*Editor*.

grace, and the worst word was thought too good for me. But so sudden is the revolution of public opinion that the same cause which produced the fall recovered me from it.

Mr. Deane is here. He is certainly not the man you supposed him to be when you wrote your recommendatory letters of him. He published a most inflammatory address in the newspapers of the 5th of December last, which, by the means of a party formed to support it, obtained such an ascendancy over all ranks of people, that the infatuation was surprising. He introduced it by saying that "*the ears of the Representatives were shut against him.*" This declaration, though very unjustly made, gave pretense to the Publication. The clamor against Congress was violent, and as I saw no prospect of it abating, I gave, after ten days, an answer to it; hoping thereby to stay the rage of the public till the matter could be calmly understood. I shared the same fate with Congress, and was set down for a pensioned writer, and most furiously abused both in the newspapers and everywhere else; and what may perhaps appear extraordinary, I was at the same time attacked by Congress, as if they, or a majority of them, wished the imposition to pass. I had suspicions of Mr. Deane which others had not. I compared his single letters with the joint letters of the Commissioners and other letters and found such a disagreement as could not be honestly accounted for. To support Mr. Deane the affair of the supplies from Mr. B——<sup>58</sup> was brought up and Mr. Deane's merit, in procuring them, was represented equal to that of the savior of the country. I had at the same time my suspicions concerning the loss of the dispatches, and the purpose for which they were lost, as you will fully see by the enclosed, to which no answer has been given, and the torrent has taken a direct contrary turn. The dispute has been a disagreeable one, but the imposition had it passed would have been still worse, and it will serve to show to the enemy that the Congress are not the absolute leaders of America.

Mr. Deane and those who at first supported him constantly endeavored to involve all his affairs with your[s] in such a manner as to admit of no separation. I, who, have carefully read all the letters can best see where they meet and where they are distinct. His agency before you arrived is one thing, and his joint commission with you afterwards is quite another thing. Mr. Bach[e] exceedingly surprised me one day, by telling me, that he supposed I intended to attack you after I had done with Mr. Deane. From what he could draw such an inference I cannot

<sup>58</sup> Paine is referring to Beaumarchais.—*Editor.*

conceive as I have constantly studied to keep Mr. D——'s agency distinct from the joint commission. I have always had my eye to the issue, that turn out as it would, you might not be unjustly involved in it. Mr. Deane's connection shelter[s] him under you for support, and there may be others, not your friends, for every man has his enemies, who would likewise tack you to him to share any discredit that might fall on him. I have endeavored to keep you clear from both these dangers. When I say that there may be others, not your friends, etc., I have no particular authority for saying it; but it being the natural consequence of parties, I have endeavored to guard against the probability of any such injury. I never heard a syllable of disrepute towards you from either of the Colonel Lee's, or any of Mr. Izard's connections.<sup>59</sup> They know my attachment to you, and I have taken every care to show by a comparison of things, dates and letters, that you were not privy to such parts of Mr. Deane's conduct as may be found censurable. I really believe he has made mischief between friends to serve himself. I can account for the difference between the commissioners upon no other plan. I have had a most exceeding rough time of it; but the scale of affairs is now entirely turned as to the public sentiment.

I am Dear Sir Your affectionate friend and humble Servant

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. I sent in my resignation as Secretary to the Committee Foreign Affairs January 8th. My compliments to your grandsons.

<sup>59</sup> Ralph Izard, American diplomatic representative to France, was a close friend of Arthur Lee. The Colonel Lee's were Richard Henry and Arthur Lee. There is some evidence that Arthur Lee did link Franklin's name with Deane.

On April 18, 1781 Jonathan Williams, Jr. wrote to Franklin from Nantes: "I travelled with Mr. Payne (Common Sense) from L'Orient hither. I find he is a strong Enemy to Mr. D, he professes not to be so to you but on the contrary expresses himself respectfully of you. He says, however, he laments that you should be the Friend and supporter of Mr. D[eane]. I suspect he is a little of a Leeite though he professes no attachment to him, but I am sure he is attached to Iz[ard] and they you know run in the same Line.

"We agree exceeding well together and are growing intimate. I confess I like him as a companion because he is pleasant as well as a sensible man, and I heartily wish that Party had not so good an assistant. I trust however that when he has been a little longer in Europe, and is made acquainted with Lee's rascality he will, like all other good men, despise the wretch." *Benjamin Franklin Papers, University of Pennsylvania.—Editor.*



## TO THE HONORABLE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES <sup>60</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, March 30th, 1779.

HONORABLE SIRS:

On the 19th Inst. I applied by letter to this honorable House, requesting a copy of their proceedings respecting me from January 2d to January 16th, the day on which the papers of the foreign committee were taken out of my keeping. And by a personal application to Mr. Thomson your Secretary I have since learned that nothing has been done thereon.

I am thus laid under the necessity of renewing my application to Congress for copies of all papers and Proceedings respecting me, except copies of my own Letters of January 6th, 7th, 8th, and March 19th.

Were I asking a favor I should address my language accordingly, but my application being a *matter of right*, I cannot discredit the latter by giving it the disguise of the former. I conceive that the character of no Person can be constitutionally secure, where a formal judgment can be discretionarily produced and published and the grounds and proceedings on which that judgment is founded withheld, or subject to future and private alterations.

Congress have published their judgment in a Resolution of January 12th <sup>61</sup> and I have a right to know the proceedings. That resolution is prefaced in the *Pennsylvania Packet* with a letter signed "*John Jay*"; yet as far as I have a right to know, that letter may be spurious; for as I have never been wanting in any duty I could perform, or service I could render, to America or her allies, I ought not to believe that the Honorable President of Congress would address a letter to the Minister

<sup>60</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Continental Congress Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>61</sup> The resolution Paine refers to read: "That in answer to the memorials of the honorable Sieur Gérard, minister plenipotentiary of his most Christian Majesty, of the 5th and 10th instant the president be directed to assure the said Minister, that Congress do fully, in the clearest and most explicit manner, disavow the publications referred to in his said memorials, and as they are convinced by indisputable evidence, that the supplies shipped in the *Amphitrite*, *Seine*, and *Mercury* were not a present, and that his most Christian Majesty, the great and generous ally of these United States, did not preface his alliance with any supplies whatever sent to America, so they have not authorized the writer of the said publications to make any such assertions as are contained therein, but on the contrary, do highly disapprove of the same."—*Editor*.

of France, which by a very close laid implication holds me up as deserving the "Indignation and resentment of both countries."<sup>62</sup>

I ought likewise not to believe, that at the time I was innocently suffering public abuse for endeavoring, in the sincerity of good will to justify this honorable House from Mr. Deane's libellous publication of December 5th, that any gentleman, a member of this House, would add to the burthen of that undertaking so necessary at that time to the injured and insulted character of Congress, and withal feel so little for himself and the dignity of the State he represented, as to prefer the dishonor of the libel by discrediting the detection of the libeller.

Neither ought I to believe, that, while, apprehensive of clandestine conduct in Mr. Deane to the injury and inconvenience of the United States, I was endeavoring, both officially and otherwise, to collect information on the points in question respecting his proceedings that any Member of this honorable House would use his vote and influence to prevent such information, and thereby to fix on his constituents, a Man, who, there were many reasons to believe was unworthy their esteem and undeserving their confidence.

Furnished with opportunities and anxious in my wishes to support the interest of the United States, I very soon became possessed of many suspicious circumstances respecting Mr. Deane and judging to what issue they would lead and render at that time of the *personal* reputation of Congress, I sent in the most pressing letters of January 6th, 7th and 8th hoping thereby to prevent a precipitate determination on a business which to my knowledge was not sufficiently before the House, the result of which, I had reason to conclude, would contradict the beginning. For though Congress might have reasons to declare that the supplies were not a present from His most Christian Majesty, yet the reasons could form no grounds whereon to conclude they were "*not a present*" because the commissioners letter of the 30th of November, 1777 would have informed you that you were left "*to consider them as the effects of private benevolence.*"

Thus frustrated in my endeavors to promote the interest of the United States, to cement the affections of the countries in alliance, and to guard even the *Personal* honor of Congress, by detection in the first

<sup>62</sup> In transmitting the act to Gérard, Jay wrote: "The explicit disavowal and high disapprobation be no less satisfactory to his most Christian Majesty, than pleasing to the people of these states. Nor have I the least doubt, but that every attempt to injure the Reputation of either, or impair their mutual confidence, will meet with the Indignation and resentment of both."—*Editor*.

instance, and by intimation in the last, I am now anxious to know what returns they severally made to me, that I may not render evil for good.

I am Honorable Sirs Your Honors obedient Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE HONORABLE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES <sup>63</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, April 3d, 1779.

HONORABLE SIRS:

On the 19th and 30th inst., I applied to Congress for copies of all papers and proceedings respecting me from January 2d to January 16, to which I have received no direct answer.

I am told that on the reading my last of the 30th Congress came to a resolution to publish their journals weekly. By so doing they do a justice to the Public; but there is likewise a personal justice due to me, because I am personally concerned, and my application is an assertion of my particular personal right, for I apply not for the journals generally, but for such parts of them and other papers in which I am immediately interested.

I admit the *right* of Congress to have dismissed, or superseded me without assigning any reason, or affording any hearing, because want of capacity, of which the employers in all cases, are supposed to be sole judges, is of itself a good private reason for dismissal, or the finding a fitter person a good reason for supersedure.

But I deny the right of Congress to pass censure without a hearing, because censure is a judgment supposed to proceed from a comparison of evidence and reasons for and against.

It is my design to furnish the United States with a History of the Revolution, and it is as necessary that my character should stand fair as that of any member of this honorable House. Neither can I suffer a blemish to be thrown on me which I am conscious I do not deserve, or desire a defection to be concealed which I am proved guilty of.

The Resolution of Congress of January 12th directs the President to inform the Minister of France of their disavowal of my Publications; which they had an inherent right to do; because it means no more than that the said Publications were made without their knowledge and con-

<sup>63</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Continental Congress Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

sent. I had made the same disavowal on the part of Congress, collectively and individually, to the Honorable Monsieur Gérard, and that not only verbally but in writing on the 2d of January, namely that no member of Congress knew, literally or in substance of what I intended to publish till it appeared in the papers—I act from myself and for myself and mean ever to do so.

The Resolution likewise directs the President to disapprove, which as a matter of State convenience I should have seen the propriety of submitting quietly to; but the Resolution nowhere directs the President to form and publish a judgment of the *motives* which induced me to make those publications. Yet the letter signed *John Jay* of January 13th, addressed to the Honorable Monsieur Gérard, after repeating the *full extent* of the Resolutions, adds: “Nor have I the least doubt that every *attempt* to injure the reputation of either or impair their mutual confidence, will meet with the *indignation and resentment of both.*”

Therefore in addition to my application for the papers I humbly beg Congress to inform me whether the extra judicial sentiment in the letter is the sentiment of Congress applied to me as one who deserves the “indignation and resentment of both countries,” for that it is intentionally applied to me by somebody I have a right to conclude.

I have generally stated my reasons for this request, viz., the reputation of an historian, but I have other reasons which I shall declare after I am honored with the sense of Congress.

If Congress requires any explanation from me in any part, except the reason which I reserve, till after their determination be known, I am ready to attend having a days notice.

I am Honorable Sirs, Your Honors obedient Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE HONORABLE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES <sup>64</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, April 21st, 1779.

HONORABLE SIRS:

Congress having resolved to publish their Journals weekly, beginning with the first of January 1779, and as the proceedings respecting me form a considerable part of the first business in the Journals, and as the pub-

<sup>64</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Continental Congress Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor.*

lication thereof is intended to give information to your constituents I have the request that the purport, at least, of my letters of January 6th, 7th and 8th be inserted.

The substance of the letter of the 6th is sufficiently contained in the first paragraph.

The substance of that of the 7th, is, requesting as your servant and demanding as a citizen of the United States an attested copy of the complaint against me, that I might answer it, and informing this Honorable House that I had evidence that I presumed would justify me, and entreating them not to do an act which they could not justify by proceeding to judgment in the matter without hearing me.

The substance of that of the 8th is, my resignation of the office of Secretary to the Committee for foreign affairs, because a motion for hearing me had been negatived; with my reasons for the part I had acted.

Unless the purport, at least, of those letters be inserted I conceive that the Journals cannot be understood, and will require an explanation from me disagreeable to this Honorable House.

But that which would prevent all future controversy would be to insert the whole of the letters, and it is my request that they may be inserted, and the more so, because they have been represented by some gentlemen of this Honorable House as forming a part of the complaint against me, and consequently *those gentlemen can have no objection to their appearance*; and I request that no member of this Honorable House, out of tenderness to me, will negative a motion for their being inserted at length; for as without them, the proceedings of Congress, by having frequent reference thereto, must appear obscure and partial.

Congress will please to remember, they began their hard treatment of me while I was defending their injured and insulted honor, and which I cannot account for, on any other ground, than supposing, that a private unwarrantable connection was formed between Mr. Deane and certain members of this Honorable House.

I am Honorable Sirs, your Honors Obedient, Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS<sup>65</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, April 23, 1779.

HONORABLE SIRS:

On inquiring yesterday of Mr. Thomson, your Secretary, I find that no answer is given to any of my letters. I am unable to account for the seeming inattention of Congress in collecting information, at this particular time, from whatever quarter it may come; and this wonder is the more increased when I recollect that a private offer was made to me, about three months ago, amounting in money to £700 a year; yet however polite the proposal might be, or however friendly it might be designed, I thought it my duty to decline it; as it was accompanied with a condition which I conceived had a tendency to prevent the information I have since given, and shall yet give to the country on public affairs.

I have repeatedly wrote to Congress respecting Mr. Deane's dark incendiary conduct, and offered every information in my power. The opportunities I have had of knowing the state of foreign affairs is greater than that of many gentlemen of this House, and I want no other knowledge to declare that I look on Mr. Deane to be, what Mr. Carmichael<sup>66</sup> calls him, a rascal. Whether Mr. Deane was encouraged by members of this Honorable House to traduce the characters of the rest of the Commissioners to make room for themselves, and to establish a commercial company calculated to monopolize the trade of the country is what I have not authority to say, but the appearance of things together with some knowledge I am possessed of too much justify the suspicion.

THOS. PAINE.

P. S. The enclosed is part of an original letter which was sent to me about a month ago, and if it be of any use to Congress I offer it for their consideration. I never corresponded with the writer, neither have I yet answered it.

T. P.

I shall be obliged to any of the Pennsylvania delegates that will return the enclosed to me.

<sup>65</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Continental Congress Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>66</sup> William Carmichael served as secretary of the American Commission (Deane, Franklin and Arthur Lee) in France in their efforts to enlist the aid of France for the colonies.—*Editor*.

TO THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS<sup>67</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, May 20, 1779.

HONORABLE SIRs:

Understanding that Mr. Deane has mentioned or alluded to me, in his narrative, and likewise to this Honorable [body], I request that I may be admitted to a per[usal] of the originals, or furnished copies of such p[arts] of his narrative and letters as refer [to] me either by name or as the author of the Publication under the signature of Common Sense of which Publications [I] am the author. If the justice of complying with the application do not instantly appear, I request that it may be laid aside, as I would not wish to be even the accidental means of losing a moment's time.

THOMAS PAINE.

TO THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS<sup>68</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, May 25, '79.

HONORABLE SIRs:

On the 20th inst. I applied to Congress for such parts of Mr. Deane's Narrative and subsequent letters as refer to me personally or to the Publication signed Common Sense of which I am the author to which request I have received no answer.

I have strong reasons to suspect that Mr. Deane in his former official capacity as Agent and Commissioner from the United States, has been dishonest, that he has defrauded the Public, and that he has embezzled or is privy to the embezzling the public dispatches and that conscious of his crime he is seeking shelter, directly or indirectly among his advocates in this House. I therefore request that my application for copies of his Narrative and letters may be granted to me or refused me.

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>67</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Continental Congress Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>68</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Continental Congress Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

TO THE HONORABLE CONGRESS OF THE  
UNITED STATES<sup>69</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, June 17th, 1779.

HONORABLE SIRS:

On the 25th ult., I addressed a letter to this Honorable House (being my second on the same subject) requesting copies of Mr. Deane's Narrative and subsequent letters to Congress so far as they relate to me, which request has not been complied with. I have a right, and do hereby complain of and charge this House with injustice, in withholding from me, such parts of the said Narrative and letters; and find myself obliged to intimate to Congress that as I cannot consider my services to the United States inferior to that of any gentleman in his House, so I find it impossible in me to put up any longer with such treatment.

I have not been a servant for the sake of hire, or a friend from the expectation of reward. I have done what I conceived to be my duty in the worst of times, and shall continue to do so, regardless of the *favor* or *disfavor* of this House, or any of its members on one side or the other. I am sensible that I have deserved the former but if I cannot have it on fair and open grounds I prefer the latter.

I observe by the Journals of the 26th ult., that on the reading of my letter of the 25th, a motion was made for committing it together with my former letters on that subject and to enquire of me, etc., etc.<sup>70</sup> I consider myself obliged to the gentlemen who moved and voted for the committing, and am quite at a loss to understand the conduct of those who negatived it. The motion whatever might be its design has a good appearance, and the compliance of the House therewith would have tended to establish a point which has hitherto been much controverted, namely, whether an extensive trading company had not been formed between Mr. Deane and certain members of Congress. A gentleman was then in town, who was present at the examination of two members of Congress on that subject, was possessed of the questions and answers in

<sup>69</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Continental Congress Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>70</sup> The motion, Paine refers to, reads: "That Mr. Paine's letter of this day, together with his formal letters on the same subject, be referred to a committee, and that the committee be directed to enquire whether Mr. Paine has any other and what evidence against Mr. Deane, than what is now before Congress, and that they report especially and particularly thereon, with all convenient speed." Ford, *op. cit.*, vol. XIV, p. 646.—*Editor*.



writing, and had communicated the substance of them to me. He is a Col[onel] in the Virginia line, and had sat twelve years a member in the former assemblies of that State.

I am Honorable Sirs, Your Obedient Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE HONORABLE HENRY LAURENS

PHILADELPHIA, September 14, 1779.

DEAR SIR:

It was my intention to have communicated to you the substance of this letter last Sunday had I not been prevented by a return of my fever; perhaps finding myself unwell, and feeling, as well as apprehending, inconveniences, have produced in me some thoughts for myself as well as for others. I need not repeat to you the part I have acted or the principle I have acted upon; and perhaps America would feel the less obligation to me, did she know, that it was neither the place nor the people but the Cause itself that irresistibly engaged me in its support; for I should have acted the same part in any other country could the same circumstances have arisen there which have happened here. I have often been obliged to form this distinction to myself by way of smoothing over some disagreeable ingratitude, which, you well know, have been shown to me from a certain quarter.

I find myself so curiously circumstanced that I have both too many friends and too few, the generality of them thinking that from the public part I have so long acted I cannot have less than a mine to draw from. What they have had from me they have got for nothing, and they consequently suppose I must be able to afford it. I know but one kind of life I am fit for, and that is a thinking one, and, of course, a writing one—but I have confined myself so much of late, taken so little exercise, and lived so very sparingly, that unless I alter my way of life it will alter me. I think I have a right to ride a horse of my own, but I cannot now even afford to hire one, which is a situation I never was in before, and I begin to know that a sedentary life cannot be supported without jolting exercise. Having said thus much, which, in truth, is but loss of time to tell to you who so well know how I am situated, I take the liberty of communicating to you my design of doing some degree of justice to myself, but even this is accompanied with some present difficulties, but it is the

easiest, and, I believe, the most useful and reputable of any I can think of. I intend this winter to collect all my publications, beginning with *Common Sense* and ending with the Fisheries, and publishing them in two volumes, octavo, with notes. I have no doubt of a large subscription. The principal difficulty will be to get paper and I can think of no way more practicable than to desire Arthur Lee to send over a quantity from France in the *Confederacy* if she goes there, and settling for it with his brother. After that work is completed, I intend prosecuting a history of the Revolution by means of a subscription—but this undertaking will be attended with such an amazing expense, and will take such a length of time, that unless the States individually give some assistance therein, scarcely any man could afford to go through it. Some kind of an history might be easily executed made up of daily events and trifling matters which would lose their importance in a few years. But a proper history cannot even be begun unless the secrets of the other side of the water can be obtained, for the first part is so interwoven with the politics of England that that which will be the last to get at must be the first to begin with—and this single instance is sufficient to show that no history can take place for some time. My design, if I undertake it, is to comprise it in three quarto volumes and to publish one each year from the time of beginning, and to make an abridgment afterwards in an easy agreeable language for a school book. All the histories of ancient wars that are used for this purpose promote no moral reflection, but like the *Beggar's Opera* renders the villain pleasing in the hero. Another thing that will prolong the completion of an history is the want of plates which only can be done in Europe, for that part of a history which is intended to convey description of places or persons will ever be imperfect without them. I have now, sir, acquainted you with my design, and unwilling, as you know I am, to make use of a friend while I can possibly avoid it, I am really obliged to say that I should now be glad to consult with two or three on some matters that regard my situation till such time as I can bring the first of those subscriptions to bear, or set them on foot, which cannot well be until I can get the paper; for should I be disappointed of that, with the subscriptions in my hand, I might be reflected upon, and the reason, though a true one, would be subject to other explanations.

Here lies the difficulty I alluded to in the beginning of this letter, and I would rather wish to borrow something of a friend or two in the interim than run the risk I have mentioned, because should I be disap-

pointed by the paper being taken or not arriving in time, the reason being understood by them beforehand will not injure me, but in the other case it would, and in the mean time I can be preparing for publication. I have hitherto kept all my private matters a secret, but as I know your friendship and you a great deal of my situation, I can with more ease communicate them to you than to another.

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. If you are not engaged to-morrow evening I should be glad to spend part of it with you—if you are, I shall wait your opportunity.

## TO HIS EXCELLENCY JOSEPH REED, ESQR.<sup>71</sup>

MARKET STREET, Sept. 18th, 1779.

SIR:

I had the honor this morning of receiving by the hands of your Servant your favor of a printed copy respecting Gov[ernor] Johnstone's offer, but the suddenness with which the bearer returned and my not understanding his message till I saw your name on the cover, occasioned that neglect of my thanks which I now request you to accept.

Mr. Matlack<sup>72</sup> mentioned to me some time ago your design of publishing the particulars, and I signified to him my willingness to assist in arranging them (as I presume you cannot have much time for purposes of this kind) and the matter is such an evidence of the principle on which their missionary negotiation where intended to be carried on, that the making them fully known was highly necessary.

I did not, I believe, attend to Mr. Matlack's message so much as I might otherwise have done, because it was somewhat indelicately introduced by his asking me how I lived? And consequently the subsequent part had more the appearance of employment than confidential friendship. Besides which I felt my disposition considerably hurt by the inattention shown to me last winter, though it must be easy to see, that a great part of the opposition I had then to go through respecting Deane's

<sup>71</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Joseph Reed Papers through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society. Paine's signature is cut away in the original.

Reed was President of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania.—*Editor*.

<sup>72</sup> Timothy Matlack was a state official of Pennsylvania and leader of the Pennsylvania revolutionary movement.—*Editor*.

affairs was from resentment to what I had published on the constitution at a time the opposers of it were hoping to be successful.<sup>73</sup> I think I have done better by the State, than the State has by me; and I cannot but look upon it a reflection either on one [or] the other, that after sharing in every difficulty and rendering every service in my power for more than four years, that the only State I have lived in in America, which must be supposed to know most of the matter and which had individually derived some assistance from me, should be so willing to receive and so very backward to acknowledge. I know it will do no good to publish these things, and unpleasant as they be to put up with I yet think it best to do so. But I confess myself unable to account for them and if there is anything which I do not understand or have misconceived I should be glad to have it pointed out, for it is neither agreeable or useful to live under a mistake with those who have the same public object in view with myself.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE SUPREME EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA <sup>74</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, September 28th, 1779.

HONORABLE SIRS:

Though it has always been my disposition to render service rather than to request it, yet the line of duty in which I have acted for four years past without profit or advantage to myself, has subjected me to numerous inconveniences which are now no longer in my power to support. That I could have avoided them is a matter which I presume this board has no doubt of, nor of the apparent necessity there then was of relinquishing every species of private emolument, for the purpose of supporting a cause which originally rested on honor and principle; and so exceedingly cautious have I been in this, that there is not a private soldier in the service of America, during the time in which I have been engaged in public affairs, who has not been a greater expense to govern-

<sup>73</sup> Paine is referring to the Pennsylvania Constitution of 1776 which was opposed by the conservatives throughout the country who regarded it as establishing a "Mobocracy." For his publications on the Constitution see above pp. 269-302, 992-1007.—*Editor*.

<sup>74</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Joseph Reed Papers through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society.—*Editor*.

ment than myself. To this State, individually, I have been no charge, although some considerable portions of my time have been spent in her particular service, at a period when she most required it, and many disadvantages have arose to me in consequence thereof.

I cannot but observe that the course of four years have produced no other signature universally known and read here and abroad except that under which I have constantly published,<sup>75</sup> and should my situation be rendered such as shall oblige me to discontinue the part I have hitherto acted, it will not be easy to establish a new signature that shall collect and keep the sentiments of the country together, should, any future emergency arise, which to me appears very probable.

I conceive that the honor of a cause is considerably strengthened when those who have taken an early and active part therein cannot be accused of ambitious or interested views, and though it is not now within the compass of my abilities to make any further supplies of time and service, and as I am unwilling to qu[ite] what I wish to support, and cannot consistently [move] out of the State while I live within it. I have the liberty of mentioning my situation to this Honorable Board and to inform them, that with every disposition to serve a cause I have been long engaged in, I have it not in my power to do it unassisted as I have hitherto done.

I am Honorable Sirs, Your Obedient, Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE SUPREME EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF PENNSYLVANIA <sup>76</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, October 11, 1779.

HONORABLE SIRS:

Some few days ago I presented a letter to this honorable Board stating the inconveniences which I lay under from an attention to public interest in preference to my own, to which I have received no reply. It is to me a matter of great concern to find in the government of this State, that which appears to be a disposition in them to neglect their friends and to throw discouragements in the way of genius and letters.

<sup>75</sup> Paine used the signature "Common Sense" in most of his public writings.—*Editor.*

<sup>76</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Joseph Reed Papers through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society.—*Editor.*

At the particular request of the gentleman who presides at this Board, I took up the defence of the Constitution, at a time when he declared to me that unless he could be assisted he must give it up and quit the State; as matters then pressed too heavy upon him, and the opposition was gaining ground; yet this Board has since suffered me to combat with all the inconveniences incurred by that service, without any attention to my interest or my situation. For the sake of not dishonoring a cause, good in itself, I have hitherto been silent on these matters, but I cannot help expressing to this Board the concern I feel on this occasion, and the ill effect which such discouraging examples will have on those who might otherwise be disposed to act as I have done.

Having said this much, which is but a little part of which I am sensible, I have a request to make which if complied with will enable me to overcome the difficulties alluded to and to withdraw from a service in which I have experienced nothing but misfortune and neglect. I have an opportunity of importing a quantity of printing paper from France, and intend collecting my several pieces, beginning with *Common Sense*, into two volumes, and publishing them by subscription, with notes; but as I cannot think of beginning the subscription until the paper arrive, and as the undertaking exclusive of the paper, will be attended with more expense than I, who have saved money both in the service of the continent and the State, can bear, I should be glad to be assisted with the loan of fifteen hundred pounds for which I will give bond payable within a year. If this should not be complied with, I request that the services I have rendered may be taken into consideration and such compensation made me therefor as they shall appear to deserve.

I am, honorable sirs, your obedient and humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO BLAIR McCLENAGHAN[?] <sup>77</sup>

[PHILADELPHIA] May, 1780[?]

SIR:

As few are more interested and none better affected than yourself I write you a few thoughts on the state of our Public Affairs. Charleston

<sup>77</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Joseph Reed Papers through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society. The name of the recipient and the date of the letter are not indicated, but it was undoubtedly sent to McClenaghan, a prominent Philadelphia merchant, sometime in May, 1780.—*Editor*.

is without doubt totally gone,<sup>78</sup> and though the fate of America does not depend upon it yet the loss of the garrison is such a formidable blow that unless some very sudden and spirited exertions be made the distress that will follow will be long and heavy.

I wish you to take a view of the general condition of the Continent. Her finances so exhausted, and impoverished by the depreciation that the whole currency in circulation is scarcely equal to a year's expences of the war, and could all the Taxes be instantly collected they would not at the present prices purchase the supplies. How then is the army to be recruited, clothed, fed and paid? The depreciation has weakened the hands not only of Congress, but of every government in America and it is impossible to go on to make the country secure unless a spirit of ardor and a better disposition take place. I feel the utmost concern that the fairest concern that men ever engaged in, and with the fairest prospect of success should now be sunk so low, and that not from any new ability in the Enemy but from a wilful neglect and decay of every species of public spirit in ourselves. We are now conquering for her, and daily doing that which she could not affect without our assistance.

It is exceedingly [easy] to say why do not Congress do this or why do not the state do the other. The ability of any government is nothing more than the abilities of individuals collected, and if there is a defect in the latter there must be a languor in the former. Britain never could have done one quarter what she has done had not the government of that country been strongly aided by the extra exertions of individuals and unless we adopt the same measure we shall either fall a sacrifice or have to drag on a long and expensive war. Scarce a town of note in England but has made voluntary subscriptions to give as additional bounties to recruits and some have raised whole regiments at their own charge. A measure of this kind is far more necessary here than there because the depreciation has effectually disabled every government in giving sufficient bounties.

The army must be recruited at least ten thousand men in a few weeks, or we shall not be safe in this city or elsewhere. The dependence that was put on Charleston threw such a sluggishness over America that it was impossible to make the country see the necessity till it arrived. It is now arrived and there is not time to be lost.

I wish the merchants and traders of Philadelphia to set an honorable example, and enter into a subscription to raise three four or five hundred

<sup>78</sup> Charleston surrendered on May 12, 1780.—*Editor*.

men. I enclose 500 dollars as my mite thereto, and if that is not sufficient I will add 500 more, though the little gratitude I have received does not lay it upon me as a duty, neither do my circumstances well admit of it; but I have an affection for her cause that will carry me as far as the last ability will enable me to go.

You are sensible that it is now hard times with many poor people. Several of the back counties are totally disabled to pay taxes; and as it is the rich that will suffer most by the ravages of an Enemy it is not only duty but true policy to do something spirited, and a way may be found to make the backward and the disaffected do their part. The power which the Council are invested with can make that matter short.

Many a good cause has been lost or disgraced and many a man of extensive property ruined by not supporting necessary measures in time. Scarce a million of good money would repay the mischief done by the enemy in their incursion into this State, and there are thousand[s] who had better be at any reasonable expense now than have the same scene to undergo with perhaps worse consequences.

It is needless I should describe to you the condition of our army as to supplies. You can not overdo it by imagination; and what adds to the distress is the great effect it has on its Commander-in-Chief. He feels himself like a man forsaken by the country whose interest he has so much exposed himself to preserve. I have seen a private letter of his which is truly distressing.<sup>79</sup> Were there no probable remedy the case would be desperate, but as there is it becomes the more aggravating.

I wish you would discourse with your friends on these matters and endeavor to get something into motion that shall renew life and honor among us. If a few would begin the business would go on; for the aids wanted are beyond the compass of the taxes to reach.

Should you form a society for any public purpose I will readily be your Secretary and render every service in my power without regard to who may compose it.

I am your obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>79</sup> Paine was undoubtedly referring to Washington's letter to Joseph Reed which he, as its Clerk, read to the Pennsylvania Assembly. See Volume I of the present edition, p. 165. —*Editor.*



TO THE HONORABLE JOSEPH REED<sup>80</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, Sunday Morning,  
June 4, 1780.

SIR:

I trouble you with a few thoughts on the present state of affairs. Every difficulty we are now in arises from an empty treasury and an exhausted credit. These removed and the prospects were brighter. While the war was carried on by emissions at the pleasure of Congress, any body of men might conduct public business, and the poor were of equal use in government with the rich. But when the means must be drawn from the country the case becomes altered, and unless the wealthier part throw in their aid, public measures must go heavily on.

The people of America understand *rights* better than *politics*. They have a clear idea of their object, but are greatly deficient in comprehending the means. In the first place, they do not distinguish between sinking the debt and raising the current expenses. They want to have the war carried on, the Lord knows how.

It is always dangerous to spread an alarm of danger unless the prospect of success be held out with it, and that not only as probable, but naturally essential. These things premised, I beg leave to mention that suppose you were to send for some of the richer inhabitants of the city, and state to them the situation of the army and the treasury, not as arising so much from defect in the departments of government as from a neglect in the country generally, in not contributing the necessary support in time. If they have any spirit, any foresight of their own interest or danger, they will promote a subscription either of money or articles, and appoint a committee from among themselves to solicit the same in the several counties; and one State setting the example, the rest, I presume, will follow. Suppose it was likewise proposed to them to deposit their plate to be coined for the pay of the Army, crediting the government for the value, by weight.

If measures of this kind could be promoted by the richer of the Whigs, it would justify your calling upon the other part to furnish their proportion without ceremony, and these two measures carried, would make a draft or call for personal service the more palatable and easy.

<sup>80</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Joseph Reed Papers through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society.—*Editor*.

I began to write this yesterday. This morning, it appears clear to me that Charleston is in the hands of the enemy, and the garrison prisoners of war. Something must be done, and that something, to give it popularity, must begin with men of property. Every care ought now to be taken to keep goods from rising. The rising of goods will have a most ruinous ill effect in every light in which it can be viewed.

The army must be reunited, and that by the most expeditious possible means. Drafts should first be countenanced by subscriptions, and if men would but reason rightly, they would see that there are some thousands in this State who had better subscribe thirty, forty, or fifty guineas apiece than run the risk of having to settle with the enemy. Property is always the object of a conqueror, wherever he can find it. A rich man, says King James, makes a bonny traitor; and it cannot be supposed that Britain will not reimburse herself by the wealth of others, could she once get the power of doing it. We must at least recruit eight or ten thousand men in this State, who had better raise a man apiece, though it should cost them a thousand pounds apiece, than not have a sufficient force, were it only for safety sake. Eight or ten thousand men, added to what we have now got, with the force that may arrive, would enable us to make a stroke at New York, to recover the loss of Charleston—but the measure must be expeditious.

I suggest another thought. Suppose every man, working a plantation, who has not taken the oath of allegiance, in Philadelphia County, Bucks, Chester, Lancaster, Northampton and Berks, were, by the new power vested in the Council, called immediately upon for taxes in kind at a certain value. Horses and wagons to be appraised. This would not only give immediate relief, but popularity to the new power. I would remark of taxes in kind, that they are hard-money taxes, and could they be established on the non-jurors, would relieve us in the articles of supplies.<sup>81</sup>

But whatever is necessary or proper to be done, must be done immediately. We must rise vigorously upon the evil, or it will rise upon us. A show of spirit will grow into real spirit, but the country must not be suffered to ponder over their loss for a day. The circumstance of the present hour will justify any means from which good may arise. We want rousing.

On the loss of Charleston I would remark—the expectation of a foreign force arriving will embarrass them whether to go or to stay; and

<sup>81</sup> For a more detailed account of Paine's plans to raise troops and revenue, see above pp. 209-211.—*Editor*.

in either case, what will they do with their prisoners? If they return, they will be but as they were as to dominion; if they continue, they will leave New York an attackable post. They can make no new movements for a considerable time. They may pursue their object to the Southward in detachments, but then in every main point they will naturally be at a stand; and we ought immediately to lay hold of the vacancy.

I am, sir, Your obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO MAJOR-GENERAL NATHANAEL GREENE <sup>82</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, September 9, 1780.

SIR:

Last spring I mentioned to you a wish I had to take a passage for Europe, and endeavor to get privately to England. You pointed out several difficulties in the way, respecting my own safety, which occasioned me to defer the matter at that time, in order not only to weigh it more seriously, but to submit to the government of subsequent circumstances.

I have frequently and carefully thought of it since, and were I now to give an opinion on it as a measure to which I was not a party, it would be like this: that as the press in that country is free and open, could a person possessed of a knowledge of America, and capable of fixing it in the minds of the people of England, go suddenly from this country to that, and keep himself concealed, he might, were he to manage his knowledge rightly, produce a more general disposition for peace than by any method I can suppose.

I see my way so clearly before me in this opinion, that I must be more mistaken than I ever yet was on any political measure, if it fails of its end. I take it for granted that the whole country, ministry, minority, and all, are tired of the war, but the difficulty is how to get rid of it, or how they are to come down from the high ground they have taken, and accommodate their feelings to a treaty for peace. Such a change must be the effect either of necessity or choice. I think it will take at least three or four more campaigns to produce the former, and they are too

<sup>82</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Joseph Reed Papers through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society.

Greene persuaded Paine to abandon his venture on the ground that it was too risky.—*Editor.*

wrong in their opinions of America to act from the latter. I imagine that next spring will begin with a new Parliament, which is so material a crisis in the politics of that country that it ought to be attended to by this; for, should it start wrong, we may look forward to six or seven years more of war.

The influence of the press rightly managed is important; but we can derive no service in this line, because there is no person in England who knows enough of America to treat the subject properly. It was in a great measure owing to my bringing a knowledge of England with me to America that I was enabled to enter deeper into politics, and with more success, than other people; and whoever takes the matter up in England must in like manner be possessed of a knowledge of America. I do not suppose that the acknowledgment of independence is at this time a more unpopular doctrine in England than the declaration of it was in America immediately before the publication of the pamphlet *Common Sense*, and the ground appears as open for the one now as it did for the other then.

The manner in which I would bring such a publication out would be under the cover of an Englishman who had made the tour of America *incog[nito]*. This will afford me all the foundation I wish for and enable me to place matters before them in a light in which they have never yet viewed them. I observe that Mr. Rose in his speech on Governor Pownall's bill,<sup>83</sup> printed in Bradford's last paper, says that "to form an opinion on the propriety of yielding independence to America requires an accurate knowledge of the state of that country, the temper of the people, the resources of their Government, etc." Now there is no other method to give this information a national currency but through the channel of the press, which I have ever considered the tongue of the world, and that which governs the sentiments of mankind more than anything else that ever did or can exist.

The simple point I mean to aim at is to make the acknowledgment of independence a popular subject, and that not by exposing and attacking their errors, but by stating its advantages and apologizing for their errors, by way of accommodating the measure of their pride. The present parties in that country will never bring one another to reason. They are heated with all the passion of opposition, and to rout the ministry, or to

<sup>83</sup> On May 24, 1780 Thomas Pownall introduced a bill in Parliament to enable the king to negotiate peace with America. It was defeated 113 to 50. Pownall had been governor of Massachusetts, Lieutenant Governor of New Jersey, and was the author of *The Administration of Colonies*, first published anonymously in 1764.—*Editor*.

support them, makes their capital point. Was the same channel open to the ministry in this country which is open to us in that they would stick at no expense to improve the opportunity. Men who are used to government know the weight and worth of the press, when in hands which can use it to advantage.

Perhaps with me a little degree of literary pride is connected with principle; for, as I had a considerable share in promoting the Declaration of Independence in this country, I likewise wish to be a means of promoting the acknowledgment of it in that; and were I not persuaded that the measure I have proposed would be productive of much essential service, I would not hazard my own safety, as I have everything to apprehend should I fall into their hands; but, could I escape in safety, till I could get out a publication in England, my apprehensions would be over, because the manner in which I mean to treat the subject would procure me protection.

Having said thus much on the matter, I take the liberty of hinting to you a mode by which the expense may be defrayed without any new charge. Drop a Delegate in Congress at the next election, and apply the pay to defray what I have proposed; and the point then will be, whether you can possibly put any man into Congress who could render as much service in that station as in the one I have pointed out. When you have perused this, I should be glad of some conversation upon it, and will wait on you for that purpose at any hour you may appoint. I have changed my lodgings, and am now in Front Street opposite the Coffee House, next door to Aitkin's bookstore.

I am, sir, your obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA <sup>84</sup>

November 3rd, 1780.

GENTLEMEN:

I informed the members of the last House by letter of the 14th of September, that, as it was my intention to collect materials for a history of the Revolution it would be impossible for me to attend the duty of Clerk

<sup>84</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of Harvard College Library.—*Editor*.

of the House, as no order was then taken on the letter. I have now the honor of repeating the same to this Honorable House.

I am Honorable Gentlemen, Your obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO MAJOR-GENERAL NATHANAEL GREENE <sup>85</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, January 10th, 1781.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have put off the writing of this letter to the last minute lest I should be disappointed by any unexpected circumstance in the journey and voyage I am undertaking. I received your very friendly and affectionate letter from Annapolis for which I thank you. I followed the advice of it and that with the more readiness as it was the advice, too, of several of my best and warmest friends. Since which Congress have appointed Col. Laurens, Envoy Extraordinary to France, and I shall accompany him there as Secretary. I am desirous of giving you this information because no endeavors of mine, so far as they extend, will be wanting to show the necessity of a re-enforcement of *cash* to the Continent, and troops to the Southward.

I leave America with the perfect satisfaction of having been to her an honest, faithful and affectionate friend, and I go away with the hope of returning to spend better or more agreeable days with her than those which are past.

God bless and prosper you.

Yours Sincerely,

T. PAINE.

## TO JAMES HUTCHINSON <sup>86</sup>

L'ORIENT, March 11th, 1781.

MY DEAR HUTCHINSON:

I wrote you from New Windsor and Boston, the former express, the latter by Mr. Curry, which I hope you have received; but in case you

<sup>85</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Joseph Reed Papers through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society.—*Editor*.

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James Hutchinson, a Philadelphia physician, joined the Revolutionary Army as a surgeon and later became surgeon general of Pennsylvania.—*Editor*.

should not, I just mention to you that they contain nothing material. We sailed from Boston on Sunday evening Feb. 11th and arrived here on Friday afternoon the 9th of March, and for your particular information I send you a chart of the track we made. Our setting out was favorable, until the Thursday night, which was accompanied with a circumstance that will not be easily worn from our memories. It was exceedingly dark and we were running eight or nine miles an hour till about nine at night, when from a sudden tremulous motion of the ship attended with a rushing noise, the general cry was that she had struck, and was either a ground or on a rock. The noise and the motion increased fast, but our apprehensions were in a short time abated by finding ourselves surrounded with large floating bodies of ice against which the ship was beating. This was in about latitude 45 and longitude 55 as you will see by the chart. We sounded to find our depth of water, but the lead and line were carried away. However, a second trial gave us the satisfaction of finding no bottom. The wind increased to a severe gale, and before we could take in the sails one of them was torn in two. Nothing could now be done but to lay the ship to and let her take her chance. The ice became every moment more formidable, and we began to apprehend as much danger from it as when we first supposed ourselves on ground. The sea, in whatever direction it could be seen, appeared a tumultuous assemblage of floating rolling rocks, which we could not avoid and against which there was no defence. The thundering attacks, that were every moment made by those massy bodies on the ship's sides, seemed as if they were breaking their way in. About eleven o'clock our larboard quarter gallery was torn away. Happily for Col. Laurens he had quitted it about a minute before, and the pleasure occasioned by his escape made us for a while the less attentive to the general danger. In this situation, dark, stormy, and plunging in an unguided ship to we knew not where, we remained from nine at night till four in the morning. The wind was sufficiently high to have made our condition serious, but to be dashed every moment against a succession of icy rocks, to which there appeared no end, and of whose extent no judgment could be formed, nor yet of the magnitude of these we had still to encounter, made our situation both dangerous and uncommon. About four in the morning we began to hear the agreeable noise of the water round the sides of the ship and felt her roll easily, which to us were the welcome tokens of escape and safety. As we were near eight hours in the ice and made considerable headway, the extent of it I sup-

pose to be about 20 miles. The next morning we were in sight of an island of ice which appeared out of the water like a mountain, how many of these we might pass in the night, or how near, the darkness prevented our knowing.

A few days after this, as you will see by the chart, we had a glorious breeze which carried us from nine to twelve miles an hour for seven days; on the last of which we saw to sail and chased; but finding each of them nearly as large as the alliance we stood our course, and they in their turn chased us, and as they sailed very unequally we expected to reduce the affair to single actions, but this the foremost prudently declined by discontinuing the chase. All the passengers turned out as marines of whom Col. Laurens had the command.

The next day we again saw two sail and chased, one was a large ship the other a cutter, and as we approached we perceived the large one to be under the command of the smaller, by which we concluded it was her prize. When we got within a league, the smaller one quitted and stood different course. We bore away for her, and she not being able to get off, lay to and waited our coming. She proved to be a Scotch cutter of ten guns, *Russel*, Commander, and eight days from Glasgow. About two hours before we appeared in sight she had fallen in with the above ship, an unarmed Venetian having not a single gun mounted either for defence or offence, and bound from London to Venice; which, contrary to every principle of justice, honor, or ability, she had made a capture of, put the crew in irons and was convoying her to Glasgow. What pretence they might have formed to support the capture is not easy to guess at. Her cargo was pepper, indigo, glass bottles, and other like articles of merchandise, without a single thing contraband. Capt. Barry put an officer aboard the Venetian for that night to take charge of her till the circumstances could be enquired into, and took the Captain of the Venetian, his son and the pilot on board the *Alliance*. They supped with us in the cabin, and their joy at being released from their piratical captors seemed beyond their power to express. The son, an agreeable looking youth, crossed his hands and pointed to his ankles to make us understand he had been in irons, and the father, an elderly man of a good appearance, showed a countenance that sparkled with the happiness of his heart, though at that time he could not be affected by any thing but a change of treatment and an idea of personal safety.

The next day, when his papers had been examined, the matter enquired into and consulted on, it was the unanimous opinion of the Cap-



tain and officers, that the captivation by the cutter was contrary to the rights of neutral nations and could be held in no other light than an act of Piracy, and that the justice of America, and the honor of her flag, made it a duty incumbent on her officers to put the much injured Venetian in possession of his property, and restore him to the command of his vessel, without accepting either recompense or salvage. The opportunity of doing an act of humanity like this, must, to every mind capable of enjoying the chief of human pleasures, that of relieving insulted distress, be esteemed preferable to the richest prize that could have been taken. The finding her in the possession of an enemy might have afforded a ground for detaining her, but as no right can arise out of an original wrong, therefore it became a duty to consider the merits and not the pretenses of the case. Had the opinion of the officers been for detaining her, Col. Laurens, who formed an early judgment of the matter, and was warmly affected by the injuries done to the Venetian, would, from the double motives of humanity and honor, have become their advocate; but as no difficulty arose when the question was proposed by the Captain the occasion of argument was superseded. A certificate was given the Venetian of the case we found him in, and others received from him, which when published will do honor to the new constellation.

I have now related to you the principal circumstances of our passage. We made land in 23 days but head winds and fogs kept us off three days more.

As to news, I shall not at present write you much. The rupture with the Dutch you have undoubtedly heard of, and reports, which I suppose true, say, that the British ministry have since that made propositions of accommodations to France, which have been rejected by her as being confined and ungenerous. A formidable fleet by sail of the line, 3 of which to R[hode] Island, will sail from Brest with troops in a short time; and the Dutch are getting twenty sail of the line ready for sea. Be forward in filling up your army and fear nothing.

No account has been received of the *Shelalah*, and the prevailing apprehension is, that she is gone to the bottom. Hard fate indeed and unexpected. Had I set off when my first plan I should have sailed in the *Shelalah* as she seemed the favorite ship, and the same opportunity was proposed to Col. Laurens.

L'Orient is a clean agreeable town, the streets straight but not in general at right angles. I found here several Americans, among whom, your

Brother of the faculty, Doctor Shendal, who in conversation mentioned to me a circumstance relative to supplying the army with medicines, which, as it is within your line of judgment I likewise mention to you, which is, that of having all medicines for the public hospitals and the army purchased by some gentleman of the medical profession in France, commissioned for that purpose in preference to the blending them with the general articles of mechandise. It strikes me in this manner, that medicines are not within the line of mercantile knowledge and may be procured cheaper and with more certainty of their goodness by one of the faculty than by any other person. Dr. Shendal comes passenger to America in the *Lucerne*. If you think it an object of public utility you will easily have an opportunity of conversing with him on the subject.

Please to acquaint Mr. Milne's that I have delivered his letter to Mr. Cummins, and make at the same time my best respects to him.

Mr. and Mrs. Linn desired me to treat with Doctor Franklin for the purchase of a lot adjoining to their house, but in looking over my papers, I miss (at least for the present) the note they gave me, which though I can very well describe the lot to the Doctor, yet for greater certainty I wish you to enclose me another line from them in your first letter to me, though I hope to get it accomplished as soon as I get to Paris, at which place I expect to be in a few days. Remember me to them and to Mrs. Shepele and her brother.

My affectionate wishes to your whole family, and to avoid exceptions present the same to all my friends and commission Dr. Bass to do the same to all his Whig visitants. I hope your brother Owen has not forgot to send me a copy of his oration and if he, Mr. Rittenhouse, or Col. I. P. Smith have leisure at any time to favor me with a line I shall receive it with pleasure. Do not forget my respects to Mr. McClanaghan, and as a particular case I request you to wait on Mr. Izard. You are acquainted with my obligation and gratitude to that gentleman; as soon as I collect material worthy of a separate letter to him I shall with much pleasure devote an hour to that service. Present my compliments to Mr. Bee and his family and acquaint him that no letters from him had arrived at Boston when the *Alliance* sailed.

I find myself no stranger in France; people know me almost as generally here as in America. The commandant of L'Orient paid me very high compliments on what he called the great success and spirit of my publications.

Toward the latter end of the year I hope to see you all safe happy and well. Adieu and consider me as your much obliged and affectionate friend.

T. P.—

P. S. Please to call at my Lodging and let them know I am well. A large ship the *Marquis de la Fayette* with clothing, arms, ammunition, will sail from here in a few days.

## TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN<sup>87</sup>

BREST, Monday, May 28, 1781.

DEAR SIR:

I have just a moment to spare to bid you farewell. We go on board in an hour or two with a fair wind and everything ready.

I understand that you have expressed a desire to withdraw from business and I beg leave to assure you that every wish of mine will be employed to make your resignation, should it be accepted, attended with every possible mark of honor which your long services and high character in life justly merits.

I am Dear Sir your most obedient humble servant

THOMAS PAINE.

Please to forward the letter directed to B. Edmunds.

## TO HIS EXCELLENCY THOMAS McKEAN, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS<sup>88</sup>

SECOND STREET, Thursday Morning [August or September, 1781].

SIR:

It was my intention to have waited on you this morning, but a circumstance having prevented me, I take the liberty of troubling you with a thought or two on the reports of yesterday.

As I see no practicable military object for Clinton to attempt, I think

<sup>87</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Benjamin Franklin Papers through the courtesy of the American Philosophical Society.—*Editor*.

<sup>88</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. It is undated but was undoubtedly written sometime during the late summer of 1781.

McKean, leader of the Revolutionary movement in Delaware and Pennsylvania, was president of Congress from July 10 to November 15, 1781.—*Editor*.

his march this way is probable. It was suggested to me last night by a gentleman that Clinton may have in view to ransom Cornwallis by threatening to burn Philadelphia. But taking it for granted that Cornwallis is a certain object, it may be as properly declared on our part that he and his garrison shall be put to the sword if any further burning or depredation is committed on the inhabitants.

I think Clinton will not attempt the river, [but] probably take the nearest route cross the Jerseys. And considering that his operations will be only exclusive, and to return as soon as possible, he will be more apprehensive of a force collected in his rear than in his front, and the garrison at Pecks kiln or West Point should move the instant he moves could it be possible; for those posts will scarcely require defence, because there will then be no force to act against them, and they may be garrisoned by militia.

As the force against Cornwallis is quite sufficient, and as the French fleet cannot contribute to his reduction, they would render double service by being off the Hook; for supposing the British fleet at sea, they have no transport to bring off Cornwallis. Neither would they in my opinion venture up a river, while a superior fleet was at sea and might shut them in. But supposing them (the British) at the Hook, the French fleet by being stationed off, would overcome all the intended operations of Clinton, and eventually deprive Cornwallis of assistance and at the same time secure all this part of the Country by confining Clinton to defensive measures.

I am Sir your obedient Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. If there is any occasion to send information to the Army, further than what a common Express is sufficient to transact, Congress are welcome to my services.

TO THE HONORABLE ROBERT MORRIS, ESQ.<sup>89</sup>

SECOND STREET, Sept. 20th, [1781].

SIR,

As your acquaintance with the finances, your being a member of the House, and an inhabitant of the City give you a united knowledge and

<sup>89</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society.—*Editor*.

interest, I therefore trouble you with a hint which occurred to me on the reports of yesterday.

I conjecture that one fourth or one third part of the rental of Philadelphia will defray the expense of a body of Men sufficient to prevent the Enemy from destroying it. I estimate at a guess the yearly rental to be £300,000.

As I need not mention to you to great difference between giving up a quarters rent and losing the whole rental together with the Capital, I shall therefore make no remarks thereon, the hint I mean to convey is, to bring in a provisionary bill for the supply of the City at all times, where the destruction of it appears to be the object of the Enemy by empowering the tenant to pay immediately into the Treasury one quarters rent to be applied as above, and in case it should not be necessary to use the money when collected, the same so paid to be considered as part of the customary taxes—this all our circumstances considered appears to me the readiest and most eligible mode of procuring an immediate supply.

Your obedient Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO COLONEL [JOHN] LAURENS<sup>90</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 4, 1781.

DEAR SIR:

I received your favor (by the post) dated Sept. 9th, Head of Elk, respecting a mislaid letter. A gentleman who saw you at that place about the same time told me he had likewise a letter from you to me which he had lost, and that you mentioned something to him respecting baggage. This left me in a difficulty to judge whether after writing to me by post, you had not found the letter you wrote about, and took that opportunity to inform me about it. However, I have wrote to Gen. Heath in case the trunk should be there, and enclosed in it a letter to Blodget in case it should not. I have yet heard nothing from either. I have preferred forwarding the trunk, in case it can be done in a reasonable time, to the opening it, and if it cannot, then to open it agreeably to your directions, though I have no idea of its being there.

<sup>90</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.—*Editor*.

I went for your boots, the next day after you left town, but they were not done, and I directed the man to bring them to me as soon as finished, but have since seen nothing of him, neither do I wish him to bring them just now, as I must be obliged to borrow the money to pay for them; but I imagine somebody else has taken them off his hands. I expect Col. Morgan in town on Saturday, who has some money of mine in his hands, and then I shall renew my application to the boot-maker.

I wish you had thought of me a little before you went away, and at least endeavored to put matters in a train that I might not have to re-experience what has already past. The gentleman who conveys this to you, Mr. Burke, is an assistant judge of South Carolina, and one to whose friendship I am much indebted. He lodged some time in the house with me.

I enclose you the paper of this morning, by which you will see that Gillam had not sailed (or at least I conclude so) on the 4th of July, as Major Jackson was deputy toast master, or Burgos-master, or something, at an entertainment of that day. As soon as I can learn anything concerning Gillam I will inform you of it.

I am with every wish for your happiness and success, &c.

THOMAS PAINE.

Please to present my Compliments and best wishes to the General. I have wrote to the Marquis and put all my politics into his letter. A paper with Rivington's account of the action is enclosed in the Marquis' letter.

## TO HON. ROBERT MORRIS, ESQ.<sup>91</sup>

SECOND STREET, Friday Even'g [Nov. 2, 1781].

SIR:

Two letters of Mr. S[ilas] Deane's having appeared in the N[ew] Y[ork] papers<sup>92</sup> which are variously commented upon, I should like to converse a quarter of an hour with you on that subject. I hope this man's knack of creating confusion and involving characters in suspicion is at an end. Whether the letters be genuine or not I do not undertake to

<sup>91</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Joseph Reed Papers through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society.—*Editor*.

<sup>92</sup> For a more detailed elaboration of Deane's treasonable activities, see volume I of the present edition, pp. 197*ff*.

give judgment upon, but his language in [France] is equally as strange as anything contained in these publications.

I am Sir, Your obedient humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS, MERCHANT<sup>93</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, Nov. 26, 1781.

DEAR SIR:

Since my arrival I have received a letter from you dated Passy May 18, and directed to me at Brest. I intended writing to you by Mr. Baseley who is counsel at L'Orient but neglected it till it was too late.—Mem: I desired Baseley to mention to you that Mr. Butler of So. Carolina is surprised at Capt. Rob—n's drawing on him for money; this Mr. Butler mentioned to me, and as a friend I communicate it to you. I sent you Col. Laurens' draft on Madam Babut (I think that is her name) at Nantes for 12 L' d'ors for the expense of the journey but have never learned if you received it.

Your former friend, Silas Deane, has run his last length. In France he is reprobating America, and in America (by letters) he is reprobating France, and advising her to abandon her alliance, relinquish her independence, and once more become subject to Britain. A number of letters, signed Silas Deane, have been published in the New York papers to this effect; they are believed, by those who formerly were his friends, to be genuine. Mr. Robt. Morris assured me that he had been totally deceived in Deane; but that he now looked upon him to be a bad man, and his reputation totally ruined. Gouverneur Morris hopped round upon one leg, swore they had all been duped, himself among the rest, complimented me on my quick sight,—and by God, says he, nothing carries a man through the world like honesty:—and my old friend Duer, "Sometimes a sloven and sometimes a Beau," says Deane is a damned artful rascal. However, Duer has fairly cleared himself. He received a letter from him a considerable time before the appearance of these in the New York papers—which was so contrary to what he expected to receive, and of such a traitorous cast, that he communicated it to Mr. Luzerne, the Minister.

<sup>93</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.—*Editor*.

Lord Cornwallis with 7247 officers and men are nabbed nicely in the Chesapeake, which I presume you have heard already, otherwise I should send you the particulars. I think the enemy can hardly hold out another campaign. General Greene has performed wonders to the southward, and our affairs in all quarters have a good appearance. The French Ministry have hit on the right scheme, that of bringing their force and ours to act in conjunction against the enemy.

The *Marquis de Lafayette* is on the point of setting out for France, but as I am now safely on this side the water again, I believe I shall postpone my second journey to France a little longer. Lest Doctr. Franklin should not have heard of Deane I wish you would write to him, and if anything new transpires in the meantime and the *Marquis* does not set off too soon, I shall write by him.

Remember me to Mr. & Mrs. Johnstone, Dr. Pierce, Mr. Watson & Ceasey and Mr. Wilt. Make my best wishes to Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Alexander, and all the good girls at St. Germain.

I am your friend, and obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. Mind, I'll write no more till I hear from you. The French fleet is sailed from the Chesapeake, and the British fleet from New York—and since writing the above, a vessel is come up the Delaware, which informs that he was chased by two French frigates to the southward of Chesapeake, which, on their coming up, acquainted him that the French fleet was a head in chase of a fleet which they supposed to be the British.

N. B. The French fleet sailed the 4th of this month, and the British much about the same time—both to the southward.

TO HONORABLE ROBERT MORRIS, ESQ. <sup>94</sup>

MONDAY MORNG, Nov. 26th, '81.

SIR:

I am much obliged to you for the Abbe Raynal's History.<sup>95</sup> I have made some extracts from it, which has occasioned me to keep it longer

<sup>94</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society.—*Editor*.

<sup>95</sup> Paine is referring to Raynal's *On the Revolution of the English Colonies in North America*. See above pp. 211–263 for his answer to Raynal's assertions.—*Editor*.



than I intended. There are several mistakes in it, and his opinions are often contradiction to one another. His account of the rejection of the offers of the British Ministry pages 133, 134, 135, is erroneous. I send you my remarks thereon, which you will please return to me when you have perused them. His idea of the *Alliance* is injurious, because it is not so much what motives brought them together as what consequences will ensue from it that is the object of philosophical enquiry. And all other considerations apart, the *Alliance* has a tendency to free the mind of prejudice. I can feel it in myself, but his account of the confederated powers (page 162) is truly cynical—pages 149 and 155 touches on a political secret.

I am sorry to see Mr. Deane's letters get into our papers, as I am very apprehensive they were written for the purpose of publication, and not with a design of being sent to the persons they are directed to. I have mentioned this to Bailey the printer and advised him to discontinue them, and the more so, as the remarks he makes on them is not equal to the poison they infuse.

I return you my thanks for your kindness to Temple Harris, the bearer of this. He is an honest, diligent, obliging youth, and I am persuaded will answer Mr. Whiteside's expectation.

Col. Eveleigh lent me some English newspapers of yours. I returned them yesterday except two which I have sent to the Printers. The Col[onel] desired me to mention this to you as you will find them two short of the proper number; the other two will be returned on Thursday.

I am, Sir, Your Obedient Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. Contrary to my expectations the attack on Augustine by the Spaniards is spoke of by the S[outh] C[arolina] Gentlemen as an agreeable circumstance to them.

## TO HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL WASHINGTON<sup>96</sup>

SECOND STREET, opposite the Quaker Meeting House, Nov. 30, 1781.

SIR:

As soon as I can suppose you to be a little at leisure from business and

<sup>96</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the George Washington Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

visits, I shall, with much pleasure, wait on you, to pay you my respects and congratulate you on the success you have most deservedly been blest with.

I hope nothing in the perusal of this letter will add a care to the many that employ your mind; but as there is a satisfaction in speaking where one can be conceived and understood, I divulge to you the secret of my own situation; because I would wish to tell it to somebody, and as I do not want to make it public, I may not have a fairer opportunity.

It is seven years, *this day*, since I arrived in America, and though I consider them as the most honorary time of my life, they have nevertheless been the most inconvenient and even distressing. From an anxiety to support, as far as laid in my power, the reputation of the Cause of America, as well as the Cause itself, I declined the customary profits which authors are entitled to, and I have always continued to do so; yet I never thought (if I thought at all on the matter), but that as I dealt generously and honorably by America, she would deal the same by me. But I have experienced the contrary—and it gives me much concern, not only on account of the inconvenience it has occasioned to me, but because it unpleasantly lessens my opinion of the character of a country which once appeared so fair, and it hurts my mind to see her so cold and inattentive to matters which affect her reputation.

Almost everybody knows, not only in this country but in Europe, that I have been of service to her, and as far as the interest of the heart could carry a man I have shared with her in the worst of her fortunes, yet so confined have been my private circumstances that for one summer I was obliged to hire myself as a common clerk to Owen Biddle of this city for my support: but this and many others of the like nature I have always endeavored to conceal, because to expose them would only serve to entail on her the reproach of being ungrateful, and might start an ill opinion of her honor and generosity in other countries, especially as there are pens enough abroad to spread and aggravate it.

Unfortunately for me, I knew the situation of Silas Deane when no other person knew it, and with an honesty, for which I ought to have been thanked, endeavored to prevent his fraud taking place. He has himself proved my opinion right, and the warmest of his advocates now very candidly acknowledge their deception.

While it was everybody's fate to suffer I cheerfully suffered with them, but though the object of the country is now nearly established and her circumstances rising into prosperity, I feel myself left in a very

unpleasant situation. Yet I am totally at a loss what to attribute it to; for wherever I go I find respect, and everybody I meet treats me with friendship; all join in censuring the neglect and throwing blame on each other, so that their civility disarms me as much as their conduct distresses me. But in this situation I cannot go on, and as I have no inclination to differ with the country or to tell the story of her neglect, it is my design to get to Europe, either to France or Holland. I have literary fame, and I am sure I cannot experience worse fortune than I have here. Besides a person who understood the affairs of America, and was capable and disposed to do her a kindness, might render her considerable service in Europe, where her situation is but imperfectly understood and much misrepresented by the publications which have appeared on that side the water, and though she has not behaved to me with any proportionate return of friendship, my wish for her prosperity is no ways abated, and I shall be very happy to see her character as fair as her cause.

Yet after all there is something peculiarly hard that the country which ought to have been to me a home has scarcely afforded me an asylum.

In thus speaking to your Excellency, I know I disclose myself to one who can sympathize with me, for I have often cast a thought at your difficult situation to smooth over the unpleasantness of my own.

I have begun some remarks on the Abbé Raynal's *History of the Revolution*. In several places he is mistaken, and in others injudicious and sometimes cynical. I believe I shall publish it in America, but my principal view is to republish it in Europe both in French and English.

Please, Sir, to make my respectful compliments to your Lady, and accept to yourself the best wishes of, Your obedient humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO BENJAMIN BACHE FRANKLIN <sup>97</sup>

[1781.]

DEAR SIR:

Since writing the enclosed, a messenger arrived with a letter from you for Col. Laurens, who is gone to take leave.

<sup>97</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Bache collection of Franklin Papers through the courtesy of the American Philosophical Society. The letter is undated but was undoubtedly written sometime in 1781.—*Editor*.

Col. Laurens in making out his arrangement of supplies as mentioned in my note to you wants some commercial information, and if Mr. Williams can make it convenient to be here early tomorrow morning it will, I know, be convenient to the Colonel which is the purpose of my letter to Mr. W. Therefore if you do not see him today, I should be glad you could forward it to St. Germain. I have likewise sent a line on the same purpose to Mr. Alexander at his hotel.

I am dear sir with much esteem your obedient humble servant

THOMAS PAINE.

I should be glad of half an hour conversation with you as I want much to mention to you something respecting a person (whom we both know) and his very extraordinary conversation in this country.

## TO HONORABLE ROBERT MORRIS <sup>98</sup>

[PHILADELPHIA], Second Street, January 24, 1782.

SIR:

As some convenience may arise to you in your difficult office by knowing matters before hand, I communicate to you the following.

Some officers of the army were with me this morning by deputation to request me to draw up a petition for them to General Washington respecting their pay and I find it is intended to be a general one. As I am sensible of the inability of the treasury to answer immediate demands, and that it is renewing care to the General who already knows their wants, I entered into some conversation with [them] on the subject by mentioning that the State of the Treasury was now improving—that the taxes laid this year were real and valuable and that any necessary demands just now might rather injure than promote their interest, and that though I would wish to oblige them, I should rather they would in this instance excuse me, as I know, exclusive of the reasons already mentioned, it would be only adding to the distress of the General.

From some expressions they used I believe they do not expect an immediate payment, but only a payment of their interest—I forbore to enquire much as I wished them to suspend their petition. But if the payment of the interest will satisfy them for the present and the Treasury can do it, or begin to do it, it may answer a good purpose. If you should

<sup>98</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Joseph Reed Papers through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society.—*Editor*.

hear no more on the subject it will be well; if you should, the hint may be of some use, as it would be a pity and might be a misfortune to have anything like the scene of 'last year reacted.<sup>99</sup>

I am, Sir, Your obedient Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO ROBERT MORRIS, ESQ.<sup>100</sup>

February 20, 1782.

SIR:

I communicate to you my sentiments on the subjects and conversation of last evening and on such other circumstances as appear to be connected therewith.

It is to me, and must to every sensible mind, be a pleasure when men having the same public good in view, and capable, according to their several talents, to promote it, come to understand and place confidence in each other. Good opinion is the true foundation of acquaintance and when that takes place good designs may be promoted with the greatest ease.

It is upwards of seven years since I came to America, and above six since I published *Common Sense*. My situation from the time of my becoming a public man has been exceedingly inconvenient, and nothing but the purest attachment to, and a natural affection for, a cause which I knew and felt to be right, and in which I found I could be useful, could have held me so long and so invariably under such difficult circumstances; yet these I have carefully and constantly concealed, because it could answer no service to the interest of America to represent her under the character of ingratitude. I am sensible that he who means to do mankind a real service must set down with the determination of putting up, and bearing with all their faults, follies, prejudices and mistakes until he can convince them that he is right, and that his object

<sup>99</sup> Paine is referring to the mutiny of the soldiers in the Pennsylvania regiment under General Wayne in January, 1781 to demand redress from Congress. For detailed studies of the mutiny, see Carl Van Doren, *Mutiny in January*, New York, 1943, and Louis C. Hatch, *The Administration of the American Revolutionary Army*, New York, 1904, pp. 130-37.—*Editor*.

<sup>100</sup> This letter is printed from the original in the Joseph Reed Papers through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society.—*Editor*.

is a general good—and I am persuaded from your own experience that you are of the same opinion.

We have now got rid of two traitors Arnold and Deane, and though the event so far as respects the latter, has proved me right, it has at the same time proved nobody wrong. That they were alone in their crimes every one must see, and thus the mischiefs of their secret defection being remedied in their detection, the minds kept asunder by their contrivance unite with ease, confidence and satisfaction.

General Washington is the only person (except Col. Laurens) to whom I fully and unreservedly communicated my situation, and I was under a pressing necessity of doing it. I found my mind burdened and my situation difficult: and as sincerely as I wished the prosperity of a just cause—I had it no longer in my power to go on as I had done. My reason for mentioning it to him in preference to any other was, because his judgment or his friendship in the case, would and must also be supposed to operate free and clear from himself under no other influence than that of his own mind. I am therefore under no difficulty of accepting the proposal, because I will know that it is not only put of friendship to me, but out of Justice to me, and without which I must be obliged to withdraw my mind from that line in which I can best serve the Community and apply myself to the thought of getting a livelihood. I have the honest pride of thinking and ranking myself among the founders of a new Independent World, and I should suffer exceedingly to be put out of that track.

As I am now speaking my mind and situation very unreservedly, I take the liberty of mentioning for reasons I shall hereafter assign, that I wish that either some allowance could be made for my going to France, or that the salary might take place from the time of my returning to America. I shall state the manner how that business arose, and the inconvenience it has occasioned to me, which has thrown me so back that it will be some time before I get clear, and I should like to feel myself clear at once.

Seeing the distressed situation of the Army and the country at the time I was clerk of the House of Assembly, last September was a twelve month, and seeing no prospect of its being better, and that the matter was not sufficiently taken to heart, I drew up the *Crisis Extraordinary*, to show the necessity as well as the advantage of taxation, and likewise wrote a letter addressed to Count Vergennes, which is enclosed; but

not willing to presume on my own opinion in a matter of such nicety, I showed it to some Members of Congress, and after several conversations the proposition of sending a person over to France was adopted. Col. Laurens was exceedingly averse to going. He mentioned to me that though he was well acquainted with the military, he was not with the political line, and proposed my going with him as secretary. As I was unwilling to give umbrage to several who at that time, from mistake, were not my friends, I declined appearing officially, but agreed to go as a companion. I was then on the point of establishing a newspaper, had purchased twenty reams to begin with, and Mr. Izard sent to St. Eustace for fifty more, but this I relinquished to go [on] the voyage. After settling you my pay with the House of Assembly, and discharging everything I owed, I had as much left as purchased me ninety dollars in bills of exchange, which I got cash for of Mr. Moylan the instant I arrived at L'Orient. As we were not always together, I paid my separate expenses as long as this money lasted without thinking anything about the matter. When the business was finished, I was very desirous, as I was in Europe, to write a pamphlet and send it over to Almon in London to be printed, and to return in the frigate which was to bring the second supply of money. But Col. Laurens was so exceedingly anxious for my returning with him, and as he had nobody to confide in, in case anything had happened to him on the passage, I quitted my design at his request. It was his intention to mention the matter to Congress, or at least to some of the Members but his haste to get away, and his passion to join the army, put everything else out of his mind, and I forbore to mention the least hint on the subject. Inclosed is his last letter to me, of December 13th, when he left me to set off. I had only two L'or's and have been ever since upon expense. Mr. Ferguson, General Gadsden and several of the South Carolina gentlemen proposed my coming to Charlestown, in case they should get possession, and to draw on them here for what money I might want for that purpose, but their disappointment became mine.

I have now circumstantially related to you my situation, which will of itself point out the reason why I should wish some advances might be made in either of these modes I have mentioned, for although I shall feel myself under perplexities, or be obliged to lay myself under obligations for a considerable time, whereas I would wish to stand clear at once and think no more about past embarrassments, for although I have

had a hard time of it [in] America, I would gladly forget it, and you will please to observe that the inconveniences which I mention are from the very service on which I was employed.

I am, Sir, your obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. I received a packet from Mr. G[ouverneur] Morris for which I am obliged to him.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL  
WASHINGTON<sup>101</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, March 17th, 1782.

SIR:

You will do me a great deal of pleasure if you can make it convenient to yourself to spend part of an Evening at my apartment and eat a few oysters or a crust of bread and cheese; for besides the favor you will do me, I want much to consult with you on a matter of public business though of a secret nature, which I have already mentioned to Mr. Morris, whom I likewise intend to ask, as soon as yourself shall please to mention the Evening when.

Though it is impossible to find out what the British will do by finding what they ought to do, yet I have been turning over in my mind the circumstances connected with the probable evacuation of Charleston in order to come at their line of policy on that measure, and as it is a rainy morning, with no inducement to go out, and I am sitting as before I will take the liberty of communicating them to you.

The foundation of the measure as well as the present general opinion is that if they cannot reinforce they must evacuate.

2dly That being a ministerial post, Gen. Clinton must wait either for positive or discretionary orders.

3dly, That as it is now a losing game (I am much inclined to believe), the Ministry will only give discretionary orders.

4thly, That as Clinton sees the Ministry are pushing the matter off their own shoulders on him, he has likewise pushed it from himself upon a Council of war, and this I take to have been the subject of debate, and

<sup>101</sup> This letter is printed from the original in the George Washington Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.



not whether N[ew] York or Charleston should be evacuated as mentioned in General Heath's information.<sup>102</sup>

5thly. That order to prepare for evacuation have been sent, and probably have been accompanied with instructions not to do it till further orders, unless the commanding officer at Charleston sees necessity.

6thly. But while these matters were acting a new circumstance has arisen, not at that time known, which is the miscarriage of Count de Guichon (whose sailing, probably produced in a principal degree, the discretionary instructions from the Ministry) and the sailing of Admiral Rodney by which he will be first in the West Indies.<sup>103</sup> And as Charleston from these two events will be safe for a longer time, I think it is probable that the evacuation will be delayed.

Now all this reasoning may be wrong, because they are without reasons.

I am your Excellency's Obligated and Obedient Humble Servant,  
THOMAS PAINE.

TO HONORABLE ROBERT MORRIS, ESQ. <sup>104</sup>

SUNDAY, March 17th, 1782.

SIR:

I mentioned to General Washington by note this morning—a wish to have his company at my apartment to eat a few Oysters or a crust of Bread and Cheese in company with you some evening before he went away from Town on the matter I mentioned. The enclosed is his answer in which he refers it to your convenience. But it will be time enough after your evening business tomorrow—and unless it is tomorrow, I do not see how it can take place, though I much wish it.

As soon as I get your answer, I shall either see or send to the General.  
I am, Sir, Your Obedient Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>102</sup> In the spring of 1781 Major-General William Heath was assigned the command of the Hudson river posts.—*Editor*.

<sup>103</sup> Admiral Rodney was the commander of the British Naval forces in the West Indies.—*Editor*.

<sup>104</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society.—*Editor*.

TO HONORABLE ROBERT MORRIS, ESQ.<sup>105</sup>

[March 1782.]

SIR:

I shall get out a piece tomorrow on the King of England's speech, and I have sent to all the printers to secure a place in the Wednesday papers. As I have not time to enter on the whole business of Revenue in tomorrow's piece, I shall dispose of it so as to endeavor to create an animated disposition in the country—and shall follow it with another piece in the next week's papers on the subject of Revenue, of which I shall give notice. In the meantime I shall take the liberty of consulting you and Mr. G. Morris.

I am, Sir, your Obedient Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO ROBERT MORRIS <sup>106</sup>

BORDENTOWN, September 6th, 1782.

SIR:

I am enjoying the company of my friends Col. Kirkbride and Mr. Borden of this place, where I purpose (as is my yearly custom), of spending two or three weeks, unless anything in the political world should occasion my return sooner.

As one of my principal designs in getting out my last piece <sup>107</sup> was to give it the chance of an European publication, which I suppose it will obtain in France and England, I desire you to accept of 50 copies to send to any part of Europe or the West Indies.

I am Sir, Your obedient Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>105</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society. It is undated but was probably written on March 4, 1782 since the "piece" Paine refers to was published on March 5, 1782 as *Crisis No. X*. It is printed in full in Volume I of the present edition pp. 189ff.

<sup>106</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the Henry E. Huntington Library.—*Editor*.

<sup>107</sup> Paine is referring to his *Letter to Abbé Raynal* which was published early in September, 1782.—*Editor*.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL  
WASHINGTON<sup>108</sup>

BORDENTOWN, Sept. 7, 1782.

SIR:

I have the honor of presenting you with fifty copies of my *Letter to the Abbé Raynal*, for the use of the army, and to repeat to you my acknowledgments for your friendship.

I fully believe we have seen our worst days over. The spirit of the war, on the part of the enemy, is certainly on the decline, full as much as we think for. I draw this opinion not only from the present promising appearance of things, and the difficulties we know the British Cabinet is in; but I add to it the peculiar effect which certain periods of time have, more or less, upon all men.

The British have accustomed themselves to think of *seven years* in a manner different to other portions of time. They acquire this partly by habit, by reason, by religion, and by superstition. They serve seven years apprenticeship—they elect their Parliament for seven years—they punish by seven years transportation, or the duplicate or triplicate of that term—they let their leases in the same manner, and they read that Jacob served seven years for one wife, and after that seven years for another; and this particular period of time, by a variety of concurrences, has obtained an influence in their minds.

They have now had seven years of war, and are no further on the continent than when they began. The superstitious and populous parts will therefore conclude that *it is not to be*, and the rational part of them will think they have tried an unsuccessful and expensive project long enough, and by these two joining issue in the same eventful opinion, the obstinate part among them will be beaten out; unless, consistent with their former sagacity, they should get over the matter by an act of Parliament, "*to bind TIME in all cases whatsoever,*" or declare him a Rebel.

I observe the affair of Captain Asgill<sup>109</sup> seems to die away: very probably it has been protracted on the part of Clinton and Carleton,<sup>110</sup> to gain time, to state the case of the British Ministry, where following

<sup>108</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the George Washington Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>109</sup> For a detailed analysis of the affair of Captain Asgill, see Volume I of the present edition pp. 217 ff.—*Editor*.

<sup>110</sup> Sir Guy Carleton was the Governor of Canada who succeeded Sir Henry Clinton in New York.—*Editor*.

close on that of Colonel Haynes,<sup>111</sup> it will create new embarrassment to them. For my own part, I am fully persuaded that a suspension of his fate, still holding it *in terrorem*, will operate on a greater quantity of their passions and vices, and restrain them more than his execution would do. However, the change of measures which seems now to be taking place gives somewhat of a new cast to former designs; and if the case, without the execution, can be so managed as to answer all the purposes of the latter, it will look much better hereafter, when the sensations that now provoke, and the circumstances that would justify his exit shall be forgotten or faintly remembered.

Wishing your Excellency every happiness and prosperity.

I remain your obliged and obedient humble servant

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO ROBERT MORRIS <sup>112</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, Second Street, Nov. 20, 1782.

SIR:

As I do not sit down with a design of making a fair copy of this letter, but only to communicate a few thoughts, you will, I hope, excuse what blotting or scratching there may be in the course of it.

I have made a beginning on the citizens of R[hode] I[sland] which will appear in Bradford's and Claypoole's Sunday's papers.<sup>113</sup> I intend to continue the subject to three Letters, as you will see by the conclusion of the first. The second will be on the convenience and equality of the Tax, and the third on the *Union of the States*. I shall not put the signature, Common Sense, to them, because I do not wish to bring them into more notice than there is occasion for. But I intend putting them under cover to the printers of the Providence paper,<sup>114</sup> and that he may not grumble I shall pay the postage.

All these embarrassments are ascribable to the loose and almost dis-

<sup>111</sup> Colonel Haynes was executed lawlessly without a trial at the order of British Colonel Balfour, the post commander at Charleston.—*Editor*.

<sup>112</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society.—*Editor*.

<sup>113</sup> William Bradford edited the *Pennsylvania Journal* in which the first and second of Paine's letters appeared on November 23 and December 4, 1782. David C. Claypoole edited the *Pennsylvania Packet*, in which the same letters appeared on November 23 and December 25. These letters appear above pp. 334-346.—*Editor*.

<sup>114</sup> Paine's letters appeared in the *Providence Gazette* under the signature of "A Friend of Rhode Island and the Union."—*Editor*.

jointed condition of the Union. The States severally not knowing what each will do are unwilling to do anything themselves. But the point to be considered now is, whether we cannot make the inconvenience a foundation for a reform, by applying the inconvenience as a reason for it.

In our situation, as a republic, made up of many parts, there are matters Continental, others which are *Statacal*. The first, like the second, is easily conceived to divide itself into two parts, Executive and Legislative. Of the first kind (a Continental executive) is the right of war and peace, all foreign affairs, the direction of the Army and Navy when we have one, the ascertainment of expenses in the gross, and perhaps the quotoing them out in the several States. Of the second kind (Continental legislation) is the regulation of the Post Office, the regulation of Commerce and consequently of all taxes to be raised by commerce to, or from foreign parts, the right of making laws for treason against the United States, against forgery of Continental bills bonds or notes, and other matters (which are not many) in which all the States are interested alike and for which reason the law therefore must be alike in each.

The people in all the States have conceived an im[pro]priety, or rather what they call an inconsistency an imblending the executive with the legislative (I observe the objection is thrown out by the Citizens of R[hode] I[sland] in the *Freeman's Journal* of today) and I am apt to think that some of the embarrassments respecting the present duly arises from an idea, that Congress is pointing out the *law itself*, instead of calling for the *sum only*, slips into a legislative character.

Now in all matters of this kind which must be alike in all the States, to secure any one from having an unfair advantage taken of her situation by another, were Congress in the form of a message and recommendation to lay the matter with the necessity, propriety and advantage before the several States and summon, once a year or occasionally a legislature of 3 or 5 persons from each State, to meet and enact the law for and in behalf of the whole, and that to be the operating law for all. I think much of the difficulty would be got over and Congress stand in a much better and more exalted situation than at present, because being obliged now to act in cases where it is conceived they *have not* a delegated right, and subjects their whole authority to suspicious observation; and consequently to take from them the occasion of acting *out* of character, will establish their acting *in* character.

As the people of America do not feel themselves legislatively connected, and are not willing that Congress should supply it, they feel a

link wanting in the chain of union which something like what I have mentioned might complete, because I would have all these sort of laws ceremoniously passed by a legislature summoned for the purpose. It would remove the present little and prevailing suspicion of the Executive powers.

But my immediate view in suggesting these thoughts to you is to find a way to carry us over the present difficulty with R[hode] I[sland]. I see a train of evils attending a rupture, and many inconveniences following from his present conduct.

But if you think these hints worthy of some attention, and should find on conversing with others, that they are of the same opinion, might it not be suggested to Rhode Island that it is in contemplation to recommend to the State to depute a number from their bodies for the express purpose of deliberating upon, and framing such a law as shall operate with equal justice over all, inferring at the same time the necessity of her cordially going hand and hand with the States as far as they have already gone, and refer herself in common with the rest to a legislative decision of the whole.

My third Number will be particularly calculated to ENJOIN THE NECESSITY OF A STRONGER UNION, FOR AT PRESENT WE HANG SO LOOSELY TOGETHER THAT WE ARE IN DANGER OF HANGING ONE ANOTHER; and it appears to me more likely that the Union may be strengthened by the adoption of another Cord, than by twisting a new strand into the old one.

Before I publish my third Letter, I should be glad of an opportunity of talking the subject over. Mr. Livingston <sup>115</sup> once mentioned to me that I should see an occasion of taking up the subject of the Confederation, and as this letter has a reference thereto, I wish when you have an opportunity that you would show it [to] him.

As I bargained with you for blots and blunders, I close with reminding you of it. I have just time to close my letter and that is all. It is now past eight O'clock, the 20th of November which is the anniversary of the evacuation of Fort Lee in which I had my share of difficulties and I am going to spend the evening with a Whig of that year who was in the same situation.

I am Sir Your Obedient Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>115</sup> Paine is referring to Robert R. Livingston, Chancellor of New York.—*Editor.*

## TO ROBERT MORRIS

PHILADELPHIA, Second Street, Dec. 7, 1782.

DEAR SIR:

Understanding that Congress has appointed a deputation to Rhode Island, I transmit a thought on that subject.

Considering how unwilling men are to recede from fixed opinions, and that they feel something like disgrace to being convinced, the way to obtain something is to give something. And as it is necessary in the present case, to cast about for every proposition, suppose R[hode] I[sland] was to pass the law for two years, providing that at the expiration of one year, a deputation from the legislatures of all the States were to meet, to confer on any inconveniences that the present state of the several acts might be encumbered with, and adjust a plan suitable to the circumstances of the whole.

The term of two years will carry our system beyond any present hope of the enemy, and the meeting or conference at the end of one year, may be a means of bringing about a more compact Union, and the States severally be eased in the meantime of every apprehension right or wrong.

THOMAS PAINE.

TO ROBERT MORRIS[?] <sup>116</sup>

PROVIDENCE, January 23, 1783.

SIR:

This makes my fourth letter without receiving a line from you in answer to my first letter from Mr. Lots which disappointment will put me to a good deal of difficulty.

Inclosed is my last piece, and as I find the Commissioners are not coming forward I begin to have thoughts of returning, otherwise I should have waited to accompany them back.

There is one idea which occurs very strongly to me, which will finally show the extreme ill-policy of Rhode Island. The fisheries, in all probability will be the last and most difficult point to settle in a negotiation,

<sup>116</sup> This letter is printed from a facsimile in the Manuscript Division of the New York Public Library. The name of the recipient is not indicated, but it was undoubtedly sent to Robert Morris.—*Editor*.

and yet this foolish state which has so great a dependence on them is creating a necessity for closing with the best terms of peace that can be first obtained.

I find that the persons who are at the head of the opposition in this town, are endeavoring to prevent the publication of any more of my pieces.<sup>117</sup> They set out with claiming the privilege and freedom of the press and now want to suppress it. Compliments to Mr. G[ouverneur] M[orris].

I am Sir, your obedient Humble Servant,

T. PAINE.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY ELIAS BOUDINOT,  
PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS<sup>118</sup>

BORDENTOWN, State Of N. Jersey, June 7th, 1783.

SIR:

As I have never troubled Congress with any application on my own account, but, on the contrary, have, from reasons both of delicacy and principle, made a point not to do it, I am the more encouraged to hope, that my request, in the present case, will be granted.

Whatever may have been my private situation or difficulties for these eight years past, I have, nevertheless, carefully concealed them from Congress as well as from the public. I had chosen my part and line of conduct, and whatever misfortunate event might have befallen the public cause, as I must have had my full share in it, so I must have submitted to its fate.

But as the war is now happily and prosperously closed, I am consequently relieved, in common with every gentleman who had rendered himself conspicuous in the contest, from all uneasy sensations respecting the issue. But still the case is different with me to what it is with others. For besides the general principle of right, and their own privileges, they had estates and fortunes to defend, and by the event of the war they now have them to enjoy. They are at home in every sense of the word. But with me it is otherwise. I had no other inducement than principle, and

<sup>117</sup> David Howells led the opposition to Paine in Rhode Island.—*Editor*.

<sup>118</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Continental Congress Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Elias Boudinot, conservative leader of the revolutionary movement in New Jersey, had been elected President of the Continental Congress on November 4, 1782.—*Editor*.



have now nothing else to enjoy. I came to a troubled country just time enough to befriend its rights, and share in its distress; for could personal interest have influenced me, my conduct would not have been what it has been, and I am happy in the reflection, that it has, in the rule of principle, been what it ought.

It is now very probable that circumstances, of which I am, at present, the best, and, perhaps, the only judge, may occasion my departure from America. I found her in adversity and I leave her in prosperity: and it is my ambition to have it known, that during this long contest for public freedom and happiness, that I have in every instance been governed by the most disinterested principle of public good, totally uninfluenced by party of every kind, and that in thus serving a country, I have neither sought, received, nor stipulated for any honors, advantages, or emoluments for myself.

As I have, in some degree, attracted the notice not only of the popular, but of the political and literary world, and as I have seen it asserted, especially in foreign publications, that whenever Congress had any new measures to propose, the success of which they were doubtful of, that I was employed to sound and prepare the disposition of the public. I humbly conceive it convenient to the honor of Congress and the country, as well as necessary to my own reputation, that every such idea of supposed influence should be removed, and that it should appear, as it truly is, that so far as it lay in my power to promote the cause of freedom and the happiness of mankind, that every such service of mine has been freely done and generously given. For men who act from principle, however separated by circumstances, will, without contrivance, act alike, and the concurrence of their conduct is an evidence of their rectitude.

Therefore my humble request to Congress is, that they would please to direct me to lay before them an account of such services as I have rendered to America and the circumstances under which they were performed, from the commencement of the war to the conclusion thereof.<sup>119</sup>

I am your Excellency's most obedient Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>119</sup> Paine's request was referred to Messrs. Clarke, Peters and Hawkins and the writer was to have met them on June 23d, but the mutiny of troops upset the entire machinery of government and Congress left Philadelphia so hastily that Paine was not given an opportunity of stating his case. He again sought a hearing but received no satisfaction until August when the committee delivered a report stating that "a just and impartial account of our interest for public Freedom and happiness should be handed down to posterity"; that this would best be done by an official historiographer, one moreover "who has been

TO DOCTOR BENJAMIN RUSH<sup>120</sup>

SECOND STREET, JUNE 13th, 1783.

SIR:

I enclose you a copy of the original address,<sup>121</sup> the reasons for so doing, are, not only that you may have an opportunity of showing it in the circle of your friends, but as many of them by sickness or otherwise, who may be cordially disposed to promote a measure, calculated to compose differences, and have not an opportunity of signing these which are circulating, may by this do it conveniently to themselves.

But there are now many additional reasons for promoting the original address in preference, and almost in opposition to that manufactured by General Reed. By his leaving out the whole paragraph respecting the five percent, he has taken away one of the principal objects of the address, and which was calculated to give collateral support to the means recommended by Congress, for doing justice both to the foreign and domestic creditors of America.

Besides, the original address was begun by those whom Mr. Dickinson<sup>122</sup> have very good reason to believe his friends, and who intended it as a softening healing measure to all sides. But I apprehend Gen. R— has caught at it as an opportunity of party, neither did he move in it until he saw the ground was made safe, by the countenance which the original address had obtained.

As the general reasons of national honor and reputation, and the good policy of composing differences which if not composed in time may extend to further evils, will occur to you as readily as to any man, I

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and is governed by the most disinterested principles of public good, totally uninfluenced by party of every kind"; that Paine had rendered invaluable services to the United States "without having sought, received or stipulated for any honors, advantages, or emoluments for himself; that a History of the American revolution compiled by Mr. Paine is certainly to be desired." Hence the committee proposed that he be appointed historiographer to the United States at a salary to be determined later. The report was permitted to lie on the table.—*Editor*.

<sup>120</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of Yale University Library.

Benjamin Rush, the recipient, was the distinguished physician and political leader of Philadelphia.—*Editor*.

<sup>121</sup> Paine is referring to "The Address of Citizens of Philadelphia . . ." urging Congress to return to the city of Brotherly Love from Princeton. It appears above pp. 263–265.—*Editor*.

<sup>122</sup> John Dickinson had been elected President of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania.—*Editor*.

forbear to mention them. Of one thing, however, I am certain, that when the matter is over, every good man, will be glad of it, and even these who may feel somehow displeased at the awkward situation of things, will find their situation much pleasanter by composing the affair.

I thought it much better to send you an address entirely unsigned than one that was begun, because you may have an opportunity of beginning and conducting it as you please.

I am Dear Sir, Your obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY ELIAS BOUDINOT,  
PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS <sup>123</sup>

SECOND STREET, June 20th, 1783.

SIR:

As the enclosed letter relates to an important national subject and conveys some information and touches on circumstances which may be improved into a foundation of revenue to the States both collectively and individually, I do myself the honor of presenting Congress with the perusal of it. It came to me yesterday by vessel from Bristol, and I observe is per favor of Mr. Cruger.

The place it is dated from, Salisbury (in Wiltshire) is one of the best farming countries in England.

I am your Excellency's obedient Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO W. WALLACE JUNIOR <sup>124</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, June 30th, 1783.

DEAR SIR:

As you have Congress, and consequently all the news and politics, in the Jerseys, you will not expect anything very important from this side

<sup>123</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Continental Congress Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress. The enclosure has disappeared.—*Editor.*

<sup>124</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.—*Editor.*

the Delaware. We have a report brought by vessel from Granada, of the assassination of the Stadtholder and the Duke of Brunswick, but as it is among the common rumors of the day, I would not wish to be quoted as the news-monger of the report.

The particular occasion of my writing to you is on a matter in which I have no other concern than friendship, and a wish to prevent inconveniences and mistake.

Mr. Harris, I find, has notice that some other person is coming into the house he now lives in, yet the affair is so wrapt in obscurity, that nobody appears to have any direct business with it; and at last I find that the woman, next door, Mrs. Harris, is a principal manager in it.

That the owner of a House has a right to let it to whom he pleases, everybody will admit, but it is one of those kind of rights which in the exercise of it, is so governed by the laws of civility and society, that a tenant never expects to have it let over his head. I have several times heard Mr. Harris mention, that he expected either yourself or some of your family to come into it, which would occasion his moving. But the present notice arises from a different cause and appears to me to be affected by the busy interposition of an ill natured neighbor, who, I can assure you, delights in noise and contention: thus I cannot help saying because I am too near not to be a judge of characters.

As the last half year has been very much against the shop-keepers, they certainly are entitled, on the principles of equity, to every consideration which a Landlord can give them. A man when he buys a stock of goods has an idea of a place to sell them in, otherwise he would not buy them: and his removal is a very different thing to that of a person out of trade.

But I need not mention these things to you who know them much better than myself. The person who was expecting to come in, has, perhaps, from an apprehension that there is something uncivil at the bottom of the affair, signified an inclination to decline it. And Mr. Stamper, as I am told has spoken of it as a proceeding he should not have chosen to have had any concern in. Now if the person next door has been acting a busy unneighborly part (which I think her very capable of doing), you will not take it unfriendly in me in signifying my opinion to you, because while I would, on the one hand, wish to prevent an unnecessary or disagreeable removal to Mr. Harris, I am [*illegible*] to you to explain such of the circumstances as has come to my knowledge.

Mr. Harris has written to you on the affair, and as it does not appear

to me that there is anything finally concluded on (though it is likely that the removal of Congress from Philadelphia may occasion some hesitation in newcomers at the present rents), I have seconded his letter with a wish to explain and settle the matter, and if there is no absolute occasion for her immediate removal which I imagine there is not, that you would enter with your father and mother on the subject with the same ideas on the matter as if you were a tenant yourself.

I am with Compliment to Mrs. Wallace and your family, your affectionate friend and obedient Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO HIS EXCELLENCY GEORGE WASHINGTON <sup>125</sup>

[August, 1783.]

SIR:

The Bearer of this, Mr. Darby, who is introduced to this country by Mr. Laurens, was a pupil of mine in London about twelve or fourteen years ago. His curiosity to see the great world of America has induced him to take the voyage and make the tour of it. As it is his intention to visit camp and wait on your Excellency, I presume on the liberty of adding this, to other introductions he is furnished with to your Excellency.

Mr. Darby waiting for this will I hope apologize for its incorrectness.

I enclose your Excellency a copy of the Address of the citizens to Congress, which, will I hope put an end to the affair. It is signed by near a thousand of the principal merchants and inhabitants.<sup>126</sup>

I send you the paper of today. The account of the entertainment given to the officers is too concise; it will be fuller in the papers of tomorrow. There were present the President of the State, the French Minister, and almost every person of note and rank in the city. The voluntary was the best received I ever knew a toast in my life or none was ever more so.

I likewise enclose you a paper containing a letter to Fairfax, respecting the instructions from this place.

As I have much to write to your Excellency upon, I request you would

<sup>125</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the George Washington Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>126</sup> For the list of signers, see Varnum L. Collins, *The Continental Congress at Princeton*, Princeton, N. J., 1908, pp. 263-269.—*Editor*.

not regard this as a letter but only a line or two, on account of the gentleman who bears it, and the opportunity of enclosing you a few papers.

I just now learn that five Spanish officers have obtained furloughs for six months to visit your Excellency and are in the river

I am Sir with every wish for your happiness,

Your Excellency's much obliged and humble obedient servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

Compliments to the gentlemen of your family.

## TO HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL WASHINGTON <sup>127</sup>

BORDENTOWN, Sept. 21st [1783].

SIR:

I am made exceedingly happy by the receipt of your friendly letter of the 10th instant, which is this moment come to hand; and the young gentleman that brought it, a son of Col. Geo. Morgan, waits while I write this. It had been sent to Philadelphia, and on my not being there, was returned, agreeable to directions on the outside, to Col. Morgan at Princetown, who forwarded it to this place.

I most sincerely thank you for your good wishes and friendship to me, and the kind invitation you have honored me with, which I shall with much pleasure accept.

On the resignation of Mr. Livingston in the winter and likewise of Mr. R. Morris, at [the same] time it was judged proper to discontinue the matter which took place when you were in Philadelphia. It was at the same time a pleasure to me to find both these gentlemen (to whom I was before that time but little known), so warmly disposed to assist in rendering my situation permanent, and Mr. Livingston's letter to me, in answer to one of mine to him, which I enclose, will serve to show that his friendship to me is in concurrence with yours.

By the advice of Mr. Morris I presented a letter to Congress expressing a request that they would be pleased to direct me to lay before them an account of what my services, such as they were, and situation, had been during the course of the war. This letter was referred to a committee, and their report is now before Congress, and contains, as I am

<sup>127</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the George Washington Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor.*

informed, a recommendation that I be appointed historiographer to the continent. I have desired some members that the further consideration of it be postponed, until I can state to the committee some matters which I wish them to be acquainted with, both with regard to myself and the appointment. And as it was my intention, so I am now encouraged by your friendship to take your confidential advice upon it before I present it. For though I was never at a loss in writing on public matters, I feel exceedingly so in what respects myself.

I am hurt by the neglect of the collective ostensible body of America, in a way which it is probable they do not perceive my feelings. It has an effect in putting either my reputation or their generosity at stake; for it cannot fail of suggesting that either I (notwithstanding the appearance of service) have been undeserving their regard or that they are remiss towards me. Their silence is to me something like condemnation, and their neglect must be justified by my loss of reputation, or my reputation supported at their injury; either of which is alike painful to me. But as I have ever been dumb on everything which might touch national honor so I mean ever to continue so.

Wishing you, Sir, the happy enjoyment of peace and every public and private felicity I remain, etc.

THOMAS PAINE.

Col. Kirkbride at whose house I am, desires me to present you his respectful compliments.

## TO HIS EXCELLENCY GEORGE WASHINGTON<sup>128</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 2, 1783.

SIR:

I have drawn up the enclosed with a design of presenting it to the committee to whom a letter of mine to Congress was referred, and who have to hand in a report, as mentioned in a former letter to your Excellency. I have not read the Narrative since I wrote it. A man's judgment in his own behalf, situated as I am, is very likely to be wrong, and between

<sup>128</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the George Washington Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress. The enclosure referred to follows immediately after this letter.—*Editor*.

the apprehensions of saying too little, or too much, he probably errs in both.

What I can best say in favor of it, is that it is true, and contains matters which I wish Congress to know, and though there is an awkwardness in the information coming from me, yet as it cannot come from anybody else, I feel an excuse to myself in doing it.

I have shown it to no person whatever, nor mentioned it to any one except Mr. R[obert] Morris who advised the measure, and for that reason wished it to be done without his knowing anything further of it. Therefore as it is yet in embryo, should there be anything in it that might be thought improper I shall be much obliged to you to point it out to me.

The case as it appears to me turns thus. If Congress and the country are disposed to make me any acknowledgment, it is right and necessary they should know what the narrative mentions and if not, it will serve to exculpate me, in the opinion of future Congresses, from the implied demerit which the neglect of former ones serve to lay me under, and these are the points I had chiefly had in mind in drawing it up.

Mr. Clarke and Mr. Peters who are of the committee were earnest with me to come immediately myself to them freely and had proposed my meeting them on the Monday on which the alarm of the soldiers happened at Philadelphia. This of consequence prevented it, and I then proposed doing it in writing, and therefore as I am under the obligation of presenting something to the committee from whom it will probably come before Congress my wish to your Excellency is that you would give me your confidential opinion whether I am acting in or out of character in what I have drawn up for that purpose.

My landlord where I lodged at Philadelphia having removed from the house occasioned my coming to town to pack up my things, after which I shall return to Bordentown, and hope in a few days to have the happiness to see you well at Rocky hill.

I am now at Col. Biddle's. General Greene is come to Annapolis, and I hope for the opportunity of seeing him before I leave town, as I understand from Col. Peter that his health is on the reverse.

We have no news here. The definitive Treaty and Treaty of Commerce are long in completing.<sup>129</sup> I suppose the British begin to find out the weak part of America: the imprudent conduct and publications of

<sup>129</sup> The final peace with Great Britain was signed September 3, 1783.—*Editor.*



Rhode Island have, among other things, served to show it. The British, I believe, would have had no idea of superior advantages of Treaty of Commerce, had they not discovered that the authority of Congress was not sufficient to control or prevent them.

Though I am most exceedingly obliged to you for your good opinion and kind disposition towards me yet I have not a great deal of expectation from Congress. The constant coldness they have shown in everything which respects me, does not, I am apt to think arise from my not having done enough but too much. Many of them, hitherto, were not friends to fame in individuals, and perhaps less so to me, because that which I gained, or rather could not avoid, though a service to them, was in a line which bordered too nearly on their own. So far as this is a reason it makes the case the harder, yet I cannot help thinking there is some truth in it.

I am with every wish for your health and happiness, your Excellency's  
much obliged and obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO A COMMITTEE OF THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS <sup>130</sup>

[October, 1783.]

GENTLEMEN:

Having understood that a report of the Committee to whom a late application of mine, to Congress, was refer[r]ed, is now before that Honorable Body, I am desirous, before the report be further gone into, to lay before the Committee some matters relative to myself, which I presume may not be inconvenient for them to know, and likewise to offer such remarks on the subject of the report, which (I am distantly informed, for I have not seen it), is, that I be appointed Historiographer to the Continent, as appears to me necessary to elucidate an appointment so exceedingly nice on the part of Congress and so critical and difficult on the part of myself.

In thus looking back and bringing into my own view the many trying and inconvenient situations I have passed over for several years, I may very probably feel something of that unpleasantness of reflection which

<sup>130</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the James Duane Papers through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society.—*Editor*.

cannot fail to arise, when I compare what my unvaried conduct and disposition towards the Cause of America has been, and what hers has been to me in return.

As the last instance of regard to a Country, which, collectively had shown so little to me, and from an affection to those principles of freedom, on which the Cause of America was founded, and as a justification to my own mind for whatever I might hereafter think or say, respecting her public spirit to me, or mine to her, I presented a Letter to Congress of [June 7, 1783] requesting that Congress would be pleased to direct me to lay before them an account of what my services, such as they are, have been, the manner in which they were performed, and the situation I had been cast into during the course of the war. For as I saw little more than a prospect of future inconveniences to arise to myself by continuing in America, and as my return to Europe where I am not, and cannot now pass unknown, and the inconvenient circumstances under which that return must have been made would eventually have suggested an idea that either I had been unworthy of the regard of America, notwithstanding the appearance of service, or that she had been remiss in her regard towards me. I was therefore desirous of placing matters in such an unambiguous light before Congress, that my departure from a Country that did not afford me a home might, under any circumstance whatever, stand (should there be any occasion for it), as open and visible as every other part of my conduct had done. For to me who have often reflected upon it, it appears, that the continued neglect of the Country towards me, has an effect in putting my reputation to stake; which as it has always been my principle, so it is now, more than ever my duty to preserve.

I feel no reproof to myself in speaking thus freely; my situation and the relationship that now ought to subsist between me and America, make it necessary, and I speak so with the more freedom, because it is done to a confidential Body and not to the world, and is as much the effect of a good disposition as of concern.

Scarcely had I put my foot into the Country but it was set on fire about my ears. All the plans or prospects of private life (for I am not by nature fond of, or fitted for a public one, and feel all occasions of it where I must act personally, a burden) all these plans, I say, were immediately disconcerted, and I was at once involved in all the troubles of the Country. From a principle, devoted to the love of liberty, and a disposition to assist injured and suffering people, I felt a pleasure in sharing

their fate without even troubling myself about consequences. I had none of those inducements arising from property of possessions that might operate in a more or less degree with others. I stood on the clear unencumbered line of principle and had no other interest to engage me but that of the heart.

As the progress of the war continued I very likely derived something of satisfaction from the idea of being ranked among the founders of a New Empire raised on the principles of liberty and liberality. Yet large as that Empire is, and fortunate in its circumstances, it does not afford to me a home, and I have both the pleasure and the concern to see, that, I have spent eight years of the prime of my life, in adding to the happiness of those, who, in return appear thoughtless of mine.

I cannot help viewing my situation as singularly inconvenient. Trade I do not understand. Land I have none, or what is equal to none. I have exiled myself from one Country without making a home of another; and I cannot help sometimes asking myself, what am I better off than a refugee? and that of the most extraordinary kind, a Refugee from the Country I have obliged and served, to that which can owe me no good will.

Though it was impossible I could be insensible of the daily inconveniences I experienced during almost the whole of the war, yet as they served to give me a clear standing in the world, and to show that I acted from impulse and not from interest, from principle and not from influence, I endeavored instead of growing discontented, to turn them into matters not only of consolation but of satisfaction. As an Author, I had gained the ear and confidence of a country made of many parts, I had likewise been singular in obtaining a general reading in England, and since that, on the Continent of Europe. In this situation as I could be useful, so it was necessary I should sacrifice something to preserve that usefulness. I easily saw that favor or partiality to me might tend to destroy it. One part of America might have supposed that I belonged to another, or one set of Politicians might imagine that I was attached to their opposites in local matters. Therefore I kept at a distance from all and acted my part alone. And so far as the neglect of Congress to me might arise from the same kind of reflections it was politic. But I now think the Experiment has continued long enough, especially as the war is over.

Badly as the Army has been off, I was yet, in some instances, still worse. I was not so much as in the line of any state. I had even my own

Rations to provide, and while serving all I was neglected by all and belonged to none.

Having said thus much on matters generally I shall now beg leave to trouble the Committee, with a short detail of some principle facts.

The first public work I undertook (and the first thing I ever published in my life except a few miscellaneous pieces in the *Pennsylvania Magazine* in the year '75 for in England I never was the author of a syllable in print) was the pamphlet *Common Sense*. It cannot at this time a day be forgotten that the politics, the opinions and the prejudices of the Country were in direct opposition to the principles contained in that work. And I well know that in Pennsylvania, and I suppose the same in other of the then Provinces, it would have been unsafe for a man to have espoused independence in any public company and after the appearance of that pamphlet it was as dangerous to speak against it. It was a point of time full of critical danger to America, and if her future well being depended on any one political circumstance more than another it was in changing the sentiments of the people from dependence to Independence and from the monarchical to the republican form of government; for had she unhappily split on the question, or entered coldly or hesitatingly into it, she most probably had been ruined; and as for myself, had it failed, I know not where any home in the world would have been, and though it has succeeded I am but little better off.

It cannot be very agreeable to a man to be obliged to speak of himself, but if the situation of any one for years together can apologize for or justify it, I think I may venture to lay claim to the excuse.

As my wish was to serve an oppressed people, and assist in a just and good cause, I conceived that the honor of it would be promoted by my declining to make even the usual profits of an Author, by the publication, and therefore I gave up the profits of the first Edition into the hands of Col. Joseph Deane and Mr. Thomas Pryor both of the city of Philadelphia to be disposed of by them in any public service or private charity. After this I printed six thousand at my own expense and directed Mr. Bradford to sell them at the price of the printing and paper. It may, perhaps, be said, that as I had made a dangerous step it was my interest to make it as little so as possible by promoting by every means, the success of the principle on which my own safety rested, but this would be an uncandid way of accounting for public spirit and conduct.

After the Declaration of Independence, the Pennsylvania associators marched into Jersey, under the command of General Roberdeau, to

whom I went as secretary without pay. And after his command at Amboy expired and the Associators returned home I served as volunteer aid to General Greene at Fort Lee, and continued with him during the gloomy campaign of Seventy-Six.

The wretched and despairing condition of the Country occasioned me to publish the first number of the *Crisis* at a time when few would venture to speak and the printing presses had left off working. I began it at Newark on the retreat and got it printed in Philadelphia the 19th of Dec. 1776. But the printer did not choose to put his name to it.

On the return of Congress from Baltimore they unanimously and unknown to me, appointed me secretary to the Committee for foreign affairs which I was afterwards obliged to resign on account of the affair of Silas Deane.

It very unfortunately happened to me that I was in possession of a Secret, respecting the supplies from abroad and the money demands of Silas Deane which I have good reason to believe Congress were not altogether, if, at all, acquainted with. The Despatches which should have contained the information never arrived at Congress, blank white paper being put in their stead, and that which afterwards came into my hands enjoined in these words, "*That it be kept a dead secret even from Congress where it is supposed England has some intelligence.*" This was in the hand writing of Temple Franklin. That Deane had imposed on his friends and was attempting a fraud on the Country was exceedingly visible to me, and the event has proved that something must have been very wrong in his conduct or he needed not, with so popular a support at first, have made the retreat he did.

On the evening of the day on which my resignation was made, a very lucrative offer, to double the value of what I had resigned was made to me, and repeated for three successive evenings. What the motive was that led to the proposal I am somewhat at a loss to conceive. It might be friendship only. But in the situation I then stood I thought it right to decline it; and preferred hiring myself as a clerk to Mr. Owen Biddle, at the usual wages of a common clerk to avoid running into debt. In which place I continued, still going on in the same line of *Common Sense* I had done before, until the assembly of Pennsylvania, without any application, or even knowledge of mine, appointed me their Clerk.

The next summer introduced itself by the loss of Charleston, and I could not but be confounded at what appeared to me an obstinate dis-

belief in almost all ranks of People, respecting the fall of that place as if believing or disbelieving would govern facts.

The finances of Congress and of the several States were in a deplorable condition, and scarcely anything was left but private credit, and in a letter from the Commander in Chief to the President of Pennsylvania stating the condition of the Army and urging resistance, and which was read confidentially to the house with the doors locked, the complication of difficulties were so affecting, that some of the members began to think them past relief.

In this state of things, and without mentioning the matter either at the time or since, I addressed the enclosed letter No. 1 to Mr. Blair McClanaghan to try what might be done in that line of private credit and assistance. I drew out all the Salary that was due to me, being about a thousand dollars, and enclosed 500 as a deposit for the whole. Mr. McClanaghan introduced the matter and the letter among the merchants at the Coffee [House] and subscribed two hundred pounds hard money. Mr. [Robert] Morris did the same, and by the next day the subscription amounted to one thousand five hundred pounds which was afterwards thrown into a Bank and the army assisted, if not principally supplied, through the remainder of the summer by that means.

Toward the latter end of this year, 1780, I conceived the idea of going to Europe on the following grounds.

By all the English papers, publications and politics that ever came to my hands during the contest, it was exceedingly evident, at least to me, that the British, as a nation, were in a state of profound ignorance respecting many circumstances in America, and had only a loose uninformed notion of others, and that they prosecuted the war, so far as conquest was the object, on the ground of delusion. There was like no person in England who knew enough of the affairs of America to remove that delusion and those who were supposed to know America best, such as [Joseph] Galloway and others, were on the wrong side, and the political parties in Parliament were so heated against each other that no argument from either could effect the other. And we frequently saw that even those who were against the war, were in many instances as wrong as those who were for it.

In this state of things, it was rational to conclude that could a person, who knew the country and the people, and was acquainted with the affairs and politics of America, to convey himself secretly from this

country to that, he might by a well timed and well composed publication, avoiding as much as possible all English parties, have gone a great way, at least in debilitating the rancorous spirit of the nation, and by removing their delusion have disposed them to peace. For the press, wherever it can be freely used, is an Engine, even in the affairs of government, whose force does not admit of calculation. And could the Enemy have gotten hold of our press, in the same manner we could have got hold of theirs in England their chance of conquest would have been far greater than it was.

I mentioned this design confidentially to then President of the State, General [Joseph] Reed, who scarcely knew what to say about it. He seemed to approve it but thought it both difficult and dangerous. But as I saw my own way exceedingly clear in it, and felt a rational consolation, and a self-approving humanity in attempting it, I presented a Petition to the House of Assembly for leave of absence for one year, discontinuing my salary from the time my absence should commence. And as it was necessary for my own safety sake, and for the success of the plan, that I should conceal the true reason of my absence, I assigned, instead thereof, that it was to collect and furnish myself with materials for a history of the revolution.

But the time of the House for that year, being on the point of expiring, the house thought they had no right to give leave in a manner that more properly belonged to the next. And the next house having several new Members, and somewhat variously composed, and many of them viewing my letter as a kind of withdrawing from the appointment, or giving preference to something else, and as I could enter into no explanation with them I found it most convenient to proceed no farther in the application. General Mifflin who was then a member of the House asked me some questions respecting my intention of continuing in the Clerkship of the House, and I saw they proceeded from motives, and were accompanied with offers of friendship, I confided my design fully to him, and resigned the office of Clerk.

I had saved as much money out of the pay I received as Clerk as would bear my expenses to Europe, which was all I wanted. Neither did I see any danger to myself but the being known or caught up in England before I could get out the publication I intended which I meant should appear anonymously as from a person who had made the Tour of America incog. And I am now more than ever persuaded, from the reception and success which my *Letter to the Abbé Raynal* has met with in Eng-

land, and the new light which all their accounts acknowledge have been thrown on the affairs of America by that publication, that to have laid hold of the English presses at that time, in the manner I mention, would have been a serviceable and capital piece of policy, and what is still more, it would have been humanity.

The ship *Franklin* and the unfortunate ship *Shelalah* were getting ready for sea, and I intended a passage on the one or other of them. But on my mentioning the matter to General [Nathanael] Greene who was then at Philadelphia on his way to the Southward, he expressed some apprehensions on the case, and when he arrived at Annapolis he wrote me the enclosed letter No. 2 strongly dissuading me from it. And the fate of Major André <sup>131</sup> happening at the same time, I felt some apprehensions of becoming an object of retaliation should I have been discovered in England when my first landing, and therefore gave the intention up.

I was now once more in the world without the least dependence on it. But as I was of a turn of mind not very easily discouraged, and had sat down from the first with an expectation of difficulties, and a disposition as well as a determination to bear with every thing I might meet with, I felt the less under them.

Some short time before this I had published the *Crisis Extraordinary*, on the resources and revenues of America, a copy of which I enclose. My design in this publication was not only to show the necessity and advantage of going into a solid system of Taxes, but to make use of that Publication in England, as an opportunity of showing that America was in no danger from the want of resources.

I had likewise drawn up a private Letter marked No. 3 to a nobleman in France which I remember showing to a gentleman now in Congress, a considerable time before any proposition for sending Col. Laurens took place, and which is the letter referred to in General Greene's letter to me. The principles and politics in this Letter, as they will do me no discredit, they will likewise serve to show an unvaried and unabated application an attachment to the Cause of America even at a time she was acting so coldly and carelessly by me.

On the appointment of Col. Laurens to the Court of France, he expressed to me his wishes, that as he felt himself out of the Political line, that I would accompany him, and as it appeared to me a convenient op-

<sup>131</sup> Major John André was captured by the Americans on September 23 and executed as a spy on October 2, 1780.—*Editor*.



portunity to get out the Publication intended I accepted the proposition and went with him. He proposed, in order to make it worth my while, that I should act as Secretary to him; but the prejudiced interference of two or three Gentlemen then of Congress but now out, one of whom (who I am sure will never forgive me for publishing *Common Sense* and going a step beyond him in Literary reputation) went so far as to tell Col. Laurens, that he doubted my principles, *for that I did not join in the Cause till it was late*, made it best, in order to avoid contention, and guard against accidents, to change the plan of secretaryship, and for me to go only as a companion.

After the business of his Embassy was dispatched, which it was impossible any man could have executed with more address and alacrity than himself, and the affairs of America were put into a prosperous train, I told Col. Laurens that though I had every wish it was possible a man could feel for the success of the cause which America was engaged in, yet such had been the treatment I had received, and such the hardships and difficulties I had experienced year after year, that I had no heart to return back, and was resolved not to do it. That whatever service I had rendered her she was perfectly welcome to, and that as far as any abilities of mine could go, in any part of Europe, that I should invariably continue the advocate of her cause, and that it was likewise a decided opinion with me that, as matters then stood, I could render her more service, by justifying her cause and explaining and clearing up her affairs in Europe, where they appeared to be but darkly understood, than by any thing I could do in America. But that it appeared an Act of meanness to me, to return to a Country where I had experienced so much thankless treatment.

I mentioned these reasons in a letter from France to the Honble Mr. Izard, and I have no objections to that Gentleman's producing the letter if he has it yet by him.

But such was Col. Laurens's passionate attachment to me, and the more so when he saw my letter to Mr. Izard, that his importunities for my returning with him were pressing and excessive, and he carried them to such a height, that I felt I should not be very easy to myself do which I would; and as he would have had nobody with him on the passage if any misfortune had befallen him, I gave into his wishes and accompanied him back.

After our return we parted company on the road soon after we left Providence, occasioned by the sulky I was in breaking down. We parted

the money he had with him, of which I had six guineas, and he not much more, with which I had to bear my own expences and that of a servant he left with me and two horses, for three hundred miles, and I was obliged to borrow a dollar at Bordentown to pass the ferry with. Perhaps two such travellers as Col. Laurens and myself on such a national business is a novelty.

He left with me five guineas when he went from Philadelphia, out of which I was to buy some few things for him and follow on to the siege of York but this soon became impracticable from the want of means.

Of the many letters I received from him after this until the time of his death, I enclose one marked No. 4. I enclose one, as it serves in general as a voucher for what I have said respecting my connection with him and the concord that subsisted between us, for it is certainly some reputation in a man to be esteemed most by those who know him best.

But notwithstanding the wishes and intentions of Col. Laurens I had again to experience a revival of every former difficulty.

I now felt myself worse off than ever. My intention of getting out a publication in Europe was prevented by my speedy return from that country. The money I had taken with me and which had been saved out of my salary as Clerk of the Assembly was expended. The design of Col. Laurens in placing me as Secretary had been frustrated, and the Clerkship of the House, which though of but little worth, was better than nothing, was in other hands; and I had the mortification of knowing that all this arose from an anxiety to serve in, and promote the cause of a country, whose circumstances were then rising into prosperity, and who, though she owed something of that prosperity to me appeared every day careless of whatever related to my personal interest.

From an unwillingness to upbraid, I was silent, and assumed an appearance of cheerfulness and contentment when I had nothing to make me so, but a consolation in my own integrity and a satisfaction in seeing the war was drawing towards a fortunate issue. Neither is it possible to discover any publication of mine during this situation, which continued several months the least tincture of discontent. I was determined to go on to the last, and when I could go no further, I intended to ask some merchant or Captain of a vessel to give me a passage to Holland, where I was sure of being safe, and could not be worse off. I could not be insensible that I had abilities that could be useful, but the inconvenient situation I stood in narrowed and cramped the exercise

of them, and held me, whenever I reflected on it, in a state of disquietude. I had a mind disposed to public service, but above either asking or complaining, I was conscious that I had acted generously and honorably, and if *that* would not speak for itself I had no intention to speak for it.

This winter the Commander in Chief resided in Philadelphia, and I took an opportunity from an opening which his friendship afforded me to disclose my situation to him, for as I must have done it to somebody, or left the country in a state of circumstances which must have reflected dishonor either on her or me, I judged I could not do it better than to himself whose situation detached him from all political parties and bound him alike to all and to the whole.

From his friendship towards me and an opinion he had pleased to form of my past services and probable future usefulness, he became affectionately interested in the account I gave him, and concerted with a friend or two to make my continuance in America convenient to myself until a proper time might offer to do it more permanently.

As I had been formerly in the department for foreign affairs I was again distantly attached to it while under the management of Mr. Livingstone. But so far as related to any publications of mine, it was a condition between us that I should do as I saw best, and he confided totally and entirely that matter to me. In the instance of Capt. Huddy and Capt. Asgill he informed me of an opportunity he then had of sending to Europe and wished that I would state that unfortunate and distressing affair in its true light, so as to prevent mistakes taking place abroad or unjust reflection being cast on the temper or humanity of America, which I did, at least to the best of my power in a letter signed *Common Sense*, and addressed to Sir Guy Carleton, and which was published, I believe, in all the papers of America. I mention this as being the only instance in which he even pointed anything out to me, and this was entirely a National concern. Mr. Livingstone's resignation dissolved the matter between us, and left me in the former state as before, which has continued ever since.

The Abbé Raynal's account of the Revolution arriving here, his mistakes afforded me, in part, the opportunity I had wished for, of throwing out a Publication that should reach Europe, and by obtaining a general reading there, put the affairs of America and the revolution in the point of light in which they ought to be viewed. I printed my answer to him at my own expense, and made a present of one hundred copies to be sent

to France, 50 of which I sent to Mr. Livingstone's office. I made the army a present of 50. I enclosed the Secretary of Congress an order on the printer for 156, being thirteen dozen, to be sent as occasion might offer to the several governments, but, from what reason I know not, they were not accepted. Upon the whole I gave away nearly five hundred, for all I aimed at on this side the water was to reimburse myself the expences of printing which was about one hundred pounds. In England the Booksellers cannot have made less by it than three hundred guineas, but with them it was business, with me it was an affection. The publication arriving in England just at the time the negotiation for peace was beginning, it could have no ill effect, and probably a good one, in promoting the issue.

The new arrangement of revenue proposed by Congress for carrying on the war, on the decline of the paper currency was, in the year eighty one, the principal hope of the enemy, and as I knew I had the ear of the continent, and I believe its good opinion, it was the most serviceable point I could employ myself in. The best argument that could be used either in Congress or in the Assemblies, were confined to the walls, and it is only by the press, the tongue of the world, that they can be brought before the Eyes and Ears of all men.

How far any publications of mine on this subject might be useful in other states, I am not so well acquainted with, but I have authority to speak on what happened in the State of Pennsylvania.

Upon the recommendation of Congress, and the quota of the State of eight millions of Dollars, a division took place in the House, and it was carried by only one vote, which was the speakers casting vote.

The Speaker, Mr. Muhlenburgh,<sup>132</sup> mentioned this circumstance to me, and on the day on which it was to come on again I got out a Publication on the subject, and in the Evening, Mr. Muhlenburgh came to inform me of its effect, for that all opposition had ceased and the House which before had been equally divided had that day been unanimous.

I shall close this narrative with an account of my journey to Rhode Island last winter.

As no nation whose individuals are wealthy and their public revenues poor and inadequate to their defence, can be considered in a state of honorable safety either in war or peace. I undertook, at my own choice,

<sup>132</sup> John Peter Gabriel Muhlenberg, Lutheran clergyman and Revolutionary soldier, was elected to the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania in 1784. Paine is referring in this sentence to *The Crisis Extraordinary* published on October 4, 1780.—*Editor*.

and without the least intimation from any person whatever, and wholly and perfectly at my own expense (except the hire of a horse, which was lent me by Mr. Joshua Wallace of Rariton), a journey to the State of Rhode Island at the time the five per cent duty was in agitation. It was nearly indifferent to me whether I was there or here. My intentions were liberal, they were friendly, and what is equal to anything they were honest. I had been an exceeding[ly] welcome visitor at Providence in company with Col. Laurens when he returned from France with the money which the five per cent duty was, in part, intended to discharge, and the pleasure of repaying ought to be as great as that of receiving.

That the five per cent duty was darkly understood and worse represented was visible to me by the publications which were introduced into the Philadelphia newspapers, and as it was a matter, which, the less it was blazed about the world, the less would the reputation of America suffer, it was therefore, in me, a piece of prudence to make the debate as limited as possible by keeping it to the Rhode Island papers only, and for the same reason I avoided putting the signature of Common Sense.

But it is more than probable that misfortune will accomplish at last, what prudence and good policy could not at first; for when it becomes perceivable that the Trade of America is run away with by foreigners, who are here today and gone tomorrow, the opposers of the measure will have other ideas; for there was an experience to be had in the matter which the times, and the state of Trade, did not then apply to, and which prejudice could not foresee.

I have now stated to the committee some of the principal matters which have employed my time and attention in America, and some of the difficulties they have been attended with. The war being now ended, and happily for America, *that* disposition which led me to partake of, and share in, the distresses and hardships of the Country is no longer necessary, and I should appear rather a whimsical than a rational man, to affect it when there is no occasion. For the sake of serving others in a Cause that was just and honorable, I have [been] severe to myself, and if Nature gave me any abilities that could be publicly useful, I have been as free in giving them away. But the duty I owe to myself requires me now to pay some attention to the means of living in the world. Scenes of war and tumult were as unnatural and opposite to me as they could possibly be to any man in America; and as the impulse which led me on and the constant agitation of mind, which in a great measure

kept me from feeling, and all cases from regarding inconveniences, are calmed by the issue of the war, I may now, as the last in my own consideration, justly employ my thoughts to make my private situation consistent and agreeable. Party of every kind I have constantly avoided in everything that did not apply to the interest of all, and so national have I been, that the State I have lived in scarcely knows me as a citizen in anything but the Tax-book. Even the distinction of Whig and Tory are very rarely to be met with in any publications of mine; for as I considered myself as endeavoring to raise recruits in the Cause of freedom every one which could be gained to it was an addition to its strength and interest, and if I have any Enemies I am conscious of not having deserved them.

Having thus stated my own situation to the Committee, I beg leave to offer to them some observations on the proposed appointment of an Historiographer to the Continent.

That so extraordinary a Revolution should pass without care being taken to leave to posterity an authenticated History of it, would hereafter call the literary character of the present America in question.

But the matters which unite themselves in this Revolution are so various and numerous, so complicated and extensive, so made up of public and private, and so connected in the beginning with the politics of England, and in its progress with those of almost every country in Europe, that to gain all the necessary information will be exceedingly difficult, and to select such parts as are important enough to be read forever, and omit the diminutives, will be a work of almost endless observation.

I observed that in writing *Common Sense* however easy it may appear now it is over, the necessity of knowing both countries was so material, that no person who had reflected only on one could have sufficiently succeeded in a proposition for their political separation: and though that pamphlet has much to say respecting England, it has never been attacked in that country on the score of error or mistake, which scarcely would have happened had the writer known only one side of the water. Something of the same knowledge was necessary in answering the Abbé Raynal because he treated of the involved matters of both countries. An English historian, supposing him ever so dispossessed of prejudice or partiality will unavoidably err when he comes to treat of America; and an American historian will be subject to the same inconvenience when he enters on English matters.

Perhaps there is no history that ever required to be more carefully guarded than that of the present Revolution. The nations now separated and opposed have both the same language and the same freedom of the press, and therefore the history ought to be such as England cannot deny, the means for her doing it being so easy.

To give the present Revolution its full foundation and extent in the world, it seems necessary there should be three histories—one that should state fully all the leading principles, policy and facts of the revolution, so as not only to inform posterity but to confirm them in the true principles of freedom and civil government; a second, being rather an abstract of the first cast into easy and graceful language to be used as a standing school-book, and a third for Europe or the world. In this land all partiality to forms of government or defence of any one in preference to another should be omitted, and the facts of the revolution only attended to, with such reflections on them as may serve to promote the general good and peace of mankind without disturbing their modes of government. This last is the plan on which my answer to the Abbé Raynal is conducted. There is nothing respecting forms of government in it, for as I intended it for the purpose of setting forth the affairs and advocating the cause of America in Europe I was careful in attending to this point, and by so doing it became eligible to be translated into the European languages, and has already been printed in French at Paris.

So far as the committee of their own accord and opinion have thought me fit for the undertaking I present them my thanks. But the manner how any one is to be enabled to go through the work is a matter of nice consideration.

To leave the history of the Revolution to chance, to party, or partiality of any kind, or to be performed as a matter of profit, will subject the character of the present age to various and hazardous representations, and though it cannot be completed as it ought without the aid of, and a confidential communication with Congress, yet for Congress to reserve to themselves the least appearance of influence over an historian, by annexing thereto a yearly salary subject to their own control, will endanger the reputation of both of the historian and the history. And the experience I had in the affairs of Silas Deane while I was Secretary in the foreign department has taught me how uncertain dependence is.

Neither can a yearly salary answer the purpose. The expense of collecting materials and information from the different parts of America

and abroad (for a man cannot do it effectually unless he does it personally), the time it will take to digest and arrange them and the charge of printing the work and engraving the plates necessary or ornamental to it will amount to several thousand pounds before any part could be reimbursed. And I must question whether the sale in America would in any moderate length of time defray the charge; the printing and paper only of my letter to the Abbé Raynal cost me a hundred pounds besides fifteen pounds more for folding and binding.

The cold conduct of America towards me for my past services has disabled me from rendering those I would now wish to do. It is a treatment that is killing to public spirit, and while it serves to hold the character of America as unfavorable to letters and literary studies it likewise serves to banish genius to other countries. The literature of America is now sunk into, and comprised in newspapers, and though I am the only one whose writings have reached Europe it will very probably be my lot to follow them.

From one who have been the friend and not the servant of America, the helper and not the receiver, and whose heart is naturally bound to her cause, and whose wishes are for her happiness and character, these plain declarations, though perhaps not pleasing, will I hope be favorably received. It is the only representation I ever intend to make, and it is fit that I should do it effectually.

It may very probably have [been] supposed even by Congress, that my situation during this long period of the war was rendered convenient, either by the state I lived in or by some other means. From the state of Pennsylvania I have never received the least grain of assistance or favor, except the office of Clerk of the Assembly, and the committee are already informed of my motive for resigning it. That state always beheld me in the light of a continental man, and it is probable the continent supposed me as belonging to the State, till between the two my situation has been what I described it.

But as I have gone thus far into my narrative and have seen the beginning and the end of the war, and have contributed in some degree, to erect a new empire in the world founded on better principles than those of the old, I have now no wish or inclination to seek another citizenship elsewhere or be recognized as a member of any other country or community than that which I have helped to raise. I am induced to venture, nice as the matter is to me, to express to the committee, and through them to Congress, the following suggestion. Neither does it arise from:



any species of avarice because the part I acted, and the reputation which I cannot be insensible, I enjoy, both moral and literary, and of which this country cannot refuse her evidence, are, I presume, sufficient to make any liberal country in Europe a happier home to me, as a private individual, than America has been to me as a public one.

The committee have now before them my situation fully, and likewise some remarks on the proposition for appointing an Historiographer. They see that from a disposition to serve others, I neglected myself for years together. If, then, the part I have chosen and acted has been of any benefit to America, it remains unacknowledged; if it has not it requires none. Or if it is consistent with the honor and character of a country to receive favors from individuals she is fully welcome to what she has had from me.

But as to oblige and be obliged is fair and friendly, she has it in her choice, whether she will in return make my situation such, as I can with happiness to myself, and unconfined by dependence, remain in the rank of a citizen of America, or whether I must wish her well and say to her, Adieu.

If she chooses the first I wish it to have a retrospect to past services only, and not in the least combined with any particular service in prospect. My own disposition will of itself supply conditions and such the peculiar piety of literary service in public affairs, that conditions destroy both their spirit and effects.

If after this I undertake a history of the revolution it will be perfectly voluntary and with freedom to myself, and if Congress pleases to give me the appointment of Historiographer, as honorary, and without salary or conditions, it will facilitate the collection of materials and give the work the foundation of impartiality and clear it of all appearance or suspicion of influence.

I have now only to apologize to the committee for taking up so much of their time, and to request that the freedom of my observations may be received with the same good disposition with which they are given, and to subscribe myself to the committee—their

much obliged, and obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON[?] <sup>133</sup>

BORDENTOWN, Oct. 13th, 1783.

SIR:

I returned to this place last Saturday from Philadelphia, but not in a condition of health fit to wait on you at Rocky hill. I was taken with a severe attack of the fever last Wednesday while at Col. Biddle's, accompanied, as is usual in the complaint, with extreme pains in the back. But as the fever has been but of short duration with those who caught it late in the season, I am in hopes that a few days will terminate mine, as I feel less of it this morning, than at any time since I was first taken, and I shall be very happy when I find myself well enough to wait on you.

I am, your Excellency's Obligated and obedient Humble Servant,  
 THOMAS PAINE.

TO ROBERT MORRIS <sup>134</sup>

BORDENTOWN, Oct. 14, 1783.

. . . People keep in the habit of wondering why the definitive Treaty and Treaty of Commerce do not arrive, just as if foreign Nations would be so foolish to pay respect to our Confederated Government when we have set them the example of paying so little to it ourselves, for if it has not authority enough to regulate a commercial tax, it cannot be important enough for a Commercial Treaty, and Britain, finding this out, will regulate our carrying Trade by her own act of Parliament.

<sup>133</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. The recipient is not indicated, but it was undoubtedly sent to George Washington.—*Editor*.

<sup>134</sup> This excerpt from Paine's letter is reprinted from a copy in Catalogue No. 1275 Part II compiled and sale conducted by Stan V. Henkels (copy in Wisconsin State Historical Society).—*Editor*.

TO JAMES DUANE <sup>135</sup>

Dec. 3, 1783.

MY DEAR SIR:

As you and I have had conversations on the subject which this letter alludes to, and as your long continuance in Congress enables you to know how serviceable as well as how sincere and disinterested my public conduct has been, I should be glad of an opportunity, before I leave town, which will be in two or three days, to converse a little intimately with you on some affairs relative to myself.

You know how I am circumstanced with Congress. My own opinion is, that notwithstanding the wishes and endeavors of General Washington and many other friends, that nothing will be done, as it requires a concurrence of nine States, and there are one or two that will oppose everything relative to myself.

It has ever been my wish and intention to close the scene with a History of the Revolution, but the conduct of Congress puts it out of my power, and I have but two resources left, the one, is, to apply to the States individually, the other is, to go to Europe, for as matters are now circumstanced it is impossible I can continue here. Neither do I think there is an instance to be produced in the world of an individual (situated as I was) acting towards a country as I have done for years together and that country acting in return as this country has done by me. I am truly ashamed of it on her own account and conceal it out of kindness to her infant reputation.

But there is one thing I wish to speak freely to you upon, which is, that I have not yet a fixed residence in any state. Pennsylvania I have but little inclination to as it is the seat neither of science nor society. S[outh] Carolina is too remote as my wish is to be as central as I conveniently can. I should prefer a residence in the State of N[ew] Y[ork] to any other place, and as the State will have houses or situations to dispose of, she will have an opportunity of remembering a friend who has not yet been to America the expense of a private soldier.

Perhaps was any one state to make a beginning, it might have an effect on others, and as to myself, I candidly tell you I am tired of hav-

<sup>135</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the James Duane Papers through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society.

Duane, a pro-Tory member of the Continental Congress, was a prominent jurist and Mayor of New York City.—*Editor*.

ing no home, especially in a country where, everybody will allow, I have deserved one.

If you will take an opportunity of talking confidentially with two or three friends on this subject, and communicate to me your sentiments thereon, I shall be much obliged to you.

I am Dear Sir, Your obedient, humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE:

At Mrs. Hamilton's opposite Fraunces Tavern.

## TO GENERAL LEWIS MORRIS <sup>136</sup>

BORDENTOWN, Feb. 16th, 1784.

DEAR SIR:

I have been at this place almost three weeks waiting for a change of weather to come on to N[ew] York. As no passengers travel by the way of Bordentown and South Amboy, the water communication being stopped by the ice, we hear very little news from your quarter except the distressing account of the want of fire-wood. Valentine is got safe to school again. He is the best politician I have seen from N[ew] York for the month past. All the information I have had has been from him, and as he very gravely accompanies his news with his opinion upon matters I learn quite as much from him as I should from the general run of newspapers. Mr. Ellison is lately married, and Valentine tells me (Senator like) that "*he very much approves Mr. Ellison's choice.*" She has the reputation of a prudent careful woman and the school will be benefited as to the necessary attention to the children's clothes and dress.

Some time ago I showed Col. G. Morgan at Princeton a letter I received from a gentleman at Salisbury in England. He deferred me to leave it with him to show to you, which I did. It stated pretty fully the disposition of people in the country parts of England to emigrate from that country to this, and, as far as I am a judge, opened some useful hints to those who have lands either public or private to settle. I have since received a duplicate which I intend to show to you in case you

<sup>136</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the James Duane Papers through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society.

Lewis Morris, wealthy New York landed aristocrat and signer of the Declaration of Independence, had been appointed Brigadier-General by the Provincial Congress of New York.—*Editor.*

have not seen the original. I think it is on a subject which deserves attention, for it appears to me, as well from my own knowledge of England as from the writer's account, that were plans of new settlements laid out with conditions annexed, it would not be difficult to procure emigrants with money in the hands to settle them.

Valentine tells me of new Societies at [New] York, some with and some without care. As I intend to visit you in a little time I hope you will give me chance of partaking of your new amusements. I have had my share of care and wish to get rid of some of it. But there is one kind of Society which for the sake of public as well as private advantage and reputation I wish to see promoted and patronized in your State, and that is, a Philosophical Society. Pennsylvania with scarcely anybody in it who knows anything of the matter, except Mr. Rittenhouse and one or two more, is drawing to herself laurels and honors she does not deserve. The Philosophical Society established in Philadelphia is plausibly styled the "*American Philosophical Society*," and though there has not been a single experiment or improvement made by the Society for several years before the war nor since, yet the name of the thing has drawn to her the notice of the European Philosophical Societies and served to make Philadelphia appear in the world as the only seat of science in America, whereas it is as little, if not the least so of any in the Union, and owes all its reputation in that line to Dr. Franklin and Mr. Rittenhouse.

An attention to matters of this kind are attended with many advantages. The countries the most famous and the most respected of antiquity are those which distinguished themselves by promoting and patronizing science, and on the contrary those which neglected or discouraged it are universally denominated rude and barbarous. The patronage which Britain has shown to Arts, Science and Literature has given her a better established and lasting rank in the world than she ever acquired by her arms. And Russia is a modern instance of the effect which the encouragement of those things produces both as to the internal improvement of a country and the character it raises abroad. The reign of Louis the fourteenth is more distinguished by being the Era of science and literature in France than by any other circumstance of those days.

But in the present state of things in America, and especially in New York, where the enemy has lately left, and minds of people are discomposed, it would be exceeding good policy to draw their attention to

objects of public and agreeable utility, and to introduce as many subjects of easy and popular conversation as possible. And therefore a Philosophical Society as one of the means to this end would be a useful institution. The more the mind of the country can be taken off from party the quieter the seat of government will be; for it is impossible for a less party to govern a greater for any considerable length of time unless it can find out means to keep the latter in moderate temper, because if reason and good management do not prevail on the governing side, the numbers in opposition will, in the end, prevail against it. The hot-headed whigs of Pennsylvania, many of whom had very little merit to boast of, effectually worked themselves out by attempting too high a hand. Instead of increasing their strength by rendering themselves respectable, they endeavored to monopolize the government in order to be formidable, till at last they lost what they had. It is the misfortune of some whigs, as well those who have merit as those who have none (for there are whigs of all degrees) to expect more than can or ought to be done and which if attempted will probably undo the government and place it in other hands.

You see I write to you on any subject that comes across my thoughts. I am shut up here by the frost and if my letter is tedious attribute it to my want of amusement. The disagreeable party condition of Pennsylvania has given me a dislike to it. It is a place neither of science nor society and the most country retreat is to me preferable to Philadelphia. As I have yet my place of citizenship to fix, I had much rather it were in the State of New York than Pennsylvania, and if it can be ordered so, I should like to have a residence amongst you in preference to any place I have yet been in in America. But of this I will converse more freely when I have the pleasure of seeing you and the rest of my N[ew] York friends, to whom please to present my best wishes. Remember me to Mrs. Morris and family.

I am Dear Sir, Your humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

Valentine and Master Sears are well. Your old friend Button sends as many compliments as can be expected from a horse.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL  
WASHINGTON <sup>137</sup>

NEW YORK, April 28, 1784.

DEAR SIR:

As I hope to have in a few days the honor and happiness of seeing you well at Philadelphia, I shall not trouble you with a long letter.

It was my intention to have followed you on to Philadelphia, but when I recollected the friendship you had shown to me, and the pains you had taken to promote my interests, and knew likewise the untoward disposition of two or three Members of Congress, I felt an exceeding unwillingness that your friendship to me should be put to further trials, or that you should experience the mortification of having your wishes disappointed, especially by one to whom delegation is his daily bread.

While I was pondering on these matters, Mr. Duane and some other friends of yours and mine, who were persuaded that nothing should take place in Congress (as a single man when only nine states were present could stop the whole), proposed a new line which is to leave it to the States individually; and a unanimous resolution has passed the Senate of this State, which is generally expressive of their opinion and friendship. What they have proposed is worth at least a thousand guineas, and other States will act as they see proper. If I do but get enough to carry me decently through the world and independently through the History of the Revolution, I neither wish nor care for more; and that the States may very easily do if they are disposed to it. The State of Pennsylvania might have done it alone.

I present you with a new song for the Cincinnati; <sup>138</sup> and beg to offer you a remark on that subject. The intention of the name appears to me either to be lost or not understood. For it is material to the future freedom of the country that the example of the late army retiring to private life, on the principles of Cincinnatus, should be commemorated, that in

<sup>137</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the George Washington Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>138</sup> In June, 1783, shortly before the disbanding of the Continental Army, a society of its officers was suggested by General Knox. The organization, named after Cincinnatus, the Roman warrior, had as its objects the raising of a fund for the widows and children of those slain in the Revolutionary war and the achievement of a closer union of the States. The Society quickly aroused the antagonism of the Republicans who believed it was setting itself up as an aristocracy. For Paine's patriotic songs, see above pp. 1091–1095.—*Editor*.

future ages it may be imitated. Whether every part of the institution is perfectly consistent with a republic is another question, but the precedent ought not to be lost.

I have not yet heard of any objection in the Assembly of this State, to the resolution of the Senate, and I am in hopes there will be none made. Should the method succeed, I shall stand perfectly clear of Congress, which will be an agreeable circumstance to me; because whatever I may then say on the necessity of strengthening the union, and enlarging its powers, will come from me with a much better grace than if Congress had made the acknowledgment themselves.

If you have a convenient opportunity I should be much obliged to you to mention this subject to Mr. President Dickinson. I have two reasons for it, the one is my own interest and circumstances, the other is on account of the State, for what with their parties and contentions, they have acted to me with a churlish selfishness, which I wish to conceal unless they force it from me.

As I see by the papers you are settling a tract of land. I enclose you a letter I received from England on the subject of settlements. I think lands might be disposed of in that country to advantage.

I am, dear Sir, your much obliged, obedient, humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO HONORABLE GENERAL IRWIN, VICE PRESIDENT<sup>139</sup>

November 27th, 1784.

SIR:

The President has made me acquainted with a conversation which General Washington had with him at their last interview respecting myself, and he is desirous that I should communicate to you his wishes, which are that as he stands engaged on the General's request to recommend to the Assembly, as far as lies in his power, their taking into consideration the part I have acted during the War, that you would join your assistance with his in the measure. Having thus, Sir, opened the matter to you in general terms, I will take an opportunity at some time convenient to yourself to state it to you more fully, as there are many

<sup>139</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.—*Editor*.



parts in it that are not publicly known. I shall have the pleasure of seeing you at the President's today to dine, and in the meantime

I am Sir your obedient Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS<sup>140</sup>

NEW YORK, August 13, 1785.

HONORABLE SIRS:

As it is my intention after an absence of now almost eleven years to return to Europe, as soon as I have regulated my private affairs which will be in about two months, and as it is my wish to prevent any wrong impressions taking place either in my own mind, or in the mind of others, respecting my conduct towards America or hers to me in return, I am desirous before my departure to place sundry matters before Congress in which the honor and interest of Congress and their constituents, as well as my own reputation are concerned.

I do therefore request, that I may be admitted to communicate to Congress, or to a Committee thereof, the sundry matters I allude to and be personally examined touching the same.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO HONORABLE BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, ESQUIRE<sup>141</sup>

NEW YORK, Sept. 23, 1785.

MY DEAR SIR:

It gives me exceeding great pleasure to have the opportunity of congratulating you on your return home<sup>142</sup> and to a land of peace; and to express to you my heart-felt wishes that the remainder of your days may be to you a time of happy ease and rest.

Should fate prolong my life to the extent of yours, it would give me the greatest felicity to have the evening scene some resemblance of what you now enjoy.

<sup>140</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Continental Congress Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>141</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Benjamin Franklin Papers through the courtesy of the American Philosophical Society.—*Editor*.

<sup>142</sup> Franklin left France in July and arrived in Philadelphia on September 14, 1785.—*Editor*.

In making you this address, I have an additional pleasure in reflecting that so far as I have hitherto gone I am not conscious of any circumstance in my own conduct, that should give you one repentant thought for being my patron and introducer to America.

It would give me great pleasure to make a journey to Philadelphia on purpose to see you, but an interesting affair I have with Congress makes my absence at this time improper.

If you have time to let me know how your health is, I shall be much obliged to you. I am Dear Sir with the sincerest affection and respect your obedient humble servant

THOMAS PAINE.

### TO TEMPLE FRANKLIN <sup>143</sup>

NEW YORK, Sept. 23, 1785.

DEAR SIR:

With a great deal of pleasure I welcome your return to America, where, I hope you will meet with every circumstance to make you happy. Master Bache was too young when he went away to remember me; but do me the service to make him a sharer of my congratulations.

I shall be very glad to receive a line from you, and to hear how Mr. and Mrs. Williams and Mr. Alexander[s] family are, how our old friend the Marquis De la Fayette is, and such other matters as may occur to you.

I am Dear Sir, your sincere friend and obedient humble servant

THOMAS PAINE.

My address is Messrs. Lawrence & Morris, Merchants, New York

### TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES <sup>144</sup>

Sept. 27, 1785.

As there is now a report founded on a former resolve, depending before Congress, respecting a compensation to me for my service to the

<sup>143</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Franklin Papers through the courtesy of the American Philosophical Society.

Temple Franklin was Benjamin Franklin's grandson and secretary.—*Editor*.

<sup>144</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Continental Congress Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

States during the war and the progress of the revolution, I request leave, on this particular occasion, to address the following to Congress.

That my intention in coming to America was that of settling as a private gentleman; that the troubles of the country and the war commencing within four months after my arrival, I had the choice either of returning or sharing her fate; that impressed with the justice of her cause and the dangers of her situation I preferred the latter, and felt it a duty due to the common rights of mankind to render such service and assistance in my power, which I most faithfully did; that as I had no ambitious motives or views when I began, so have I none now.

If Congress will please to order my private expenses to be reimbursed me, which I have naturally incurred by my service to the States, I desire no more.

What those expenses are may easily be judged of by any gentleman present who has resided in any of the cities of America. During a period of nearly eleven years they cannot possibly have been less than six thousand dollars.

I likewise make it my request that this letter may be put on the journals of Congress, and that the matter of it may be proceeded on before the rising of Congress today.

Wishing Peace and Happiness to the United States, I remain,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES <sup>145</sup>

Sept. 28, 1785.

I enclose an account of the monies due me in the depreciation of my salary while Secretary to the Committee for Foreign Affairs. It is prior to the time to which the resolve of Congress for making up the depreciation in the Civil List extends, but if Congress will attend to the motives of my resignation, which the Committee (Mr. Gerry, Mr. King and Mr. Pates) can obtain there is I conceive every reason of justice and honor that the account should be discharged.

T. PAINE.

<sup>145</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Continental Congress Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

TO A COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS<sup>146</sup>

Sept. 1785.

I have applied to Mr. Milleghan's office where I am informed that it has always been the custom of that office, to settle the claims or accounts of the Civil List, by the Continental scale of Depreciation, for the whole time such persons have been in service, and to apply that relief to persons who had *not resigned before the 10th day of April, 1780*. That is, the Treasury office, have made the resolves of Congress of the 10th of April 1780 for settling the depreciation of the Army, *the rule for settling the Civil List depreciation day*.

My resignation is prior to this. I consider the case a special one for the following reasons, and therefore claim my depreciation as a matter of justice.

That, I did not seek the office or ever applied either directly or indirectly, for the appointment, or even knew of it till afterwards. It was a trust put upon me at a time when Congress scarcely knew who to trust, with the secrets of their affairs.

Secondly, my resignation was not a defection of the service on account of the depreciation of the Continental Money as will appear by my letters of Jan. 6, 7, 8th, 1779 which I enclose. My motive of resigning is well known to the Committee, and therefore the resolve of the 10th of April ought not to apply to me.

In addition to this I put a general reason that Congress ought to fulfill its engagements to me. When the Committee have decided with this business, I should like to confer with them again before the report is given in. If there is a way to save the credit of the Continent, from the obligation it lays under to me without injuring my own reputation I have no objection. But I must declare to the Committee that it hurts me exceedingly to find, that after a service of so many years, and through such a perilous scene, I am now treated and higgled with as if I had no feelings to suffer or honor to preserve.

It appears to me that the Committee if they do not wish immediately to refer to my claim, as founded on the depreciation of the money may report:

That there is due Mr. Thomas Paine for services as Secretary to the Committee of Foreign Affairs the sum of 948 dollars.

<sup>146</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Continental Congress Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

I will wait on Mr. Gerry in the evening, and I wish it could suit the Committee that I should see them tomorrow morning.

### TO MR. CLAYPOOLE <sup>147</sup>

December, 1785.

I have often observed paragraphs in your paper, in support or vindication of what always did appear to me a very wrong piece of policy, as well as an unconstitutional proceeding of the late Assembly—the violation of public faith in the repeal of the Bank charter.

I sent you last Friday a short paragraph on that subject, which you have not inserted. If it is the plan of your paper to make itself a party paper in the business I shall understand the reason of its not being put in. If it is not a party paper I do not see the reason why it is withheld.

Yours etc.

THO' PAINE.

### TO MR. CLAYPOOLE <sup>148</sup>

[January, 1786.]

I send you a head piece with my name to it to be prefaced to the piece I send you for publication. You told me that those pieces were contrary to your opinion, but as your opinion is perhaps contrary to that of the majority of the people of this city and of the State, and to a very great number who take your paper, you must see the impropriety of setting your own opinion up, as a Judge in the first instance of what shall be suppressed. If the freedom of the press, is to be determined by the judgment of the printer of a Newspaper in preference to that of the people, who when they read will judge for themselves, the freedom is on a very sandy foundation. If you do not choose to publish the piece tomorrow you will please return it to me, and I will publish it in a handbill with any reason you shall assign for that refusal or without it as you choose.

<sup>147</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Emmett Collection through the courtesy of the New York Public Library.

David C. Claypoole edited the *Pennsylvania Packet*. The article was one of several Paine wrote defending the Bank of North America. See above pp. 367ff.—*Editor*.

<sup>148</sup> This letter is printed from a copy in Catalogue No. 1015 compiled and sale conducted by Stan V. Henkels, pp. 69–70 (copy in Wisconsin State Historical Society).—*Editor*.

TO A MEMBER OF THE PENNSYLVANIA  
COUNCIL

June, 1786.

HONORABLE SIR:

I have sent to His Excellency, the President [Benjamin Franklin] two models for a Bridge, the one of wood, the other of cast-iron bars, to be erected over rivers, without piers. As I shall in a few days go to New York, and take them with me, I do myself the honor of presenting an invitation to Council to take a view of them before they are removed. If it is convenient to Council to see and examine their construction today, at the usual time of their adjournment, I will attend at the President's at half after twelve o'clock, or any other day or hour Council may please to appoint.

THOMAS PAINE.

TO DANIEL CLYMER, ESQ'R <sup>149</sup>

PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 1786.

OLD FRIEND:

I enclose you a publication of mine on the affairs of the State. It was my intention at the conclusion of the war to have laid down the pen, and satisfied myself with silently beholding the prosperity of the country, in whose difficulties I had borne my share, and in the raising of which, to an independent Empire, I had added my mite. But it is easier to wish than to obtain the object wished for, and we readily resolve on what is afterwards difficult to execute.

Instead of that tranquility which the country required and might have enjoyed, and instead of that internal prosperity which her independent situation put her in the power to possess, she has suffered herself to be rent into Factions, and sacrificed her interest to gratify her passions.

<sup>149</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Daniel Clymer was active in political movements in Pennsylvania.

Paine is referring in this letter either to his pamphlet, *Dissertations on Government, The Affairs of the Bank, and Paper Money*, which came of the press in February, 1786 or to his articles in the papers continuing his discussions of these issues. See above pp. 367-439.

—Editor.

The proceedings of the Legislature for these two years past are marked with such vehemence of party spirit and rancorous prejudice, that it is impossible any country can thrive or flourish under such manifest misconduct.

I have often been at a loss to account for the conduct of people where no visible interest appeared to direct them, and where it has been evident to me that the consequences of their own conduct would operate against themselves.

I can very easily account for a great part of the conduct of several of the distant back county members. They are not affected by matters which operate within the old settled parts of the State. They are not only beyond the reach and circle of that commercial intercourse which takes place between all the counties on this side the Susquehanna and Philadelphia, but they are entirely within the circle of commerce belonging to another State, that of Baltimore. Some of them may probably think that it would be no disadvantage to their situation if the Delaware, through which all the produce of the Counties east of Susquehanna must be exported, were shut up. Some parts of their conduct cannot be fully accounted for without taking this envious disposition into calculation. By attacking the Bank they have caused a considerable part of its cash to be drawn out and removed to Baltimore by the holders of Bank Notes at that place; and if they could affect a total dissolution of it at Philadelphia, and see one established at Baltimore it would then be all very well, you would hear no more of their complaints against Banks.

On this ground their conduct in this affair is easily accounted for. But on what ground the members of your county could join them in the business is very difficult to determine. Berks County can have no other channel through which her produce can be exported than through the Delaware, and no other market to draw hard money from than from Philadelphia. She cannot go to Baltimore. I have often been surprised that your members should not have discernment enough to perceive this. It is one of those matters you should see yourselves rather than be told of. It is a misfortune to the State that the commerce is subject to this division, but since it is so and cannot be otherwise, it is but fair that one part should see what the other is doing.

I have an aversion to touch on matters which have in themselves the nature of discord and division. But in this case it can be no otherwise than it is, and the best remedy is that you be on your guard.

I wish [*MS. mutilated*] to see all the counties of the State in full

prosperity. But I have a dislike to see one part privately and enviously working against the other and I would as readily do the same part towards them as I now do towards you did I see the same occasion.

I hope the ensuing elections will put an end to these matters, and if there can be no way found to reconcile parties, let them at least stand on fair and open ground with each other.

I am with respect and compliments to yourself and friends,

Your obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO JOHN HALL

BORDENTOWN, Sept. 22, 1786.

OLD FRIEND:

In the first place I have settled with Mr. Gordon for the time he has been in the house—in the second I have put Mrs. Read who, you know has part of our house Col. Kirkbride's but is at this time at Lancaster, in possession by putting part of her goods in it. By this means we shall have room at our house (Col. Kirkbride) for carrying on our operations. As Philadelphia is so injurious to your health and as apartments at Wm. Foulke's would not be convenient to you, we can now conveniently make room for you here. Mrs. Kirkbride mentioned this to me herself and it is by the choice of both her and Col. K. that I write it to you. I wish you could come up to-morrow (Sunday) and bring the iron with you. I shall be backward and forward between here and Philadelphia pretty often until the elections are over, but we can make a beginning here and what more iron we may want we can get at the Delaware Works, and if you should want to go to Mount Hope you can more conveniently go from here than from Philadelphia—thus you see I have done your business since I have been up. The enclosed letter is for Mr. Henry who is member for Lancaster County. I do not know where he lodges, but if William will be so good as to give it to the door keeper or Clerk of the Assembly it will be safe. Bring up the walnut strips with you. Your coming here will give an opportunity to Joseph to get acquainted with Col. K. who will very freely give any information in his power. Compliments in the family.

Your friend and Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.



TO GEORGE CLYMER, ESQUIRE <sup>150</sup>

BORDENTOWN, November 19th, 1786.

SIR:

I observe by the minutes that the Agricultural Society have presented a petition to the House for an act of incorporation for the purpose of erecting a bridge over the Schuylkill on a model in their possession. I hope this business will not be gone into too hastily. A bridge on piers will never answer for that river, they may sink money but they never will sink piers that will stand. But admitting that the piers do stand—they will cause such an alteration in the bed and channel of the river, as will most probably alter its course either to divide the channel, and require two bridges or cause it to force a new channel in some other part. It is a matter of more hazard than they are aware of the altering by obstructions the bed and channel of a river; the water must go somewhere—the force of the freshets and the ice is very great now but will be much greater then.

I am finishing as fast as I can my new model of an iron bridge of one arch which if it answers, and I have no doubt but it will, the whole difficulty of erecting bridges over that river, or others of like circumstances, will be removed, and the expense not greater (and I believe not so great), as the sum mentioned by Mr. Morris in the house, and I am sure will stand four times as long or as much longer as iron is more durable than wood. I mention these circumstances to you that you may be informed of them—and not let the matter proceed so far as to put the Agricultural Society in a difficult situation at last.

The giving a Society the exclusive right to build a bridge, unless the plan is prepared before hand, will prevent a bridge being built; because those who might afterwards produce models preferable to their own, will not present them to any such body of men, and they can have no right to take other peoples labors or inventions to complete their own undertakings by.

I have not heard any news since I came to this place. I wish you would give me a line and let me know how matters are going on. The stage boat comes to Bordentown every Wednesday and Sunday from the Crooked Billet Wharf.

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>150</sup> George Clymer was a prominent Pennsylvania political leader, a signer of the Declaration of Independence and a member of the Continental Congress.—*Editor*.

TO THE HONORABLE THOMAS  
FITZSIMMONS <sup>151</sup>

BORDENTOWN, November 19th, 1786.

SIR:

I write you a few loose thoughts as they occur to me. Next to gaining a majority is keeping it. This, at least (in my opinion), will not be best accomplished by doing or attempting a great deal of business, but by doing no more than is absolutely necessary to be done, acting moderately and giving no offence. It is with the whole as it is with the members individually, and we always see at every new election that it is more difficult to turn out an old member against whom no direct complaint can be made than it is to put in a new one though a better man. I am sure it will be best not to touch any part of the plan of finance this year. If it falls short, as most probably it will, it would be (I speak for myself) best to reduce the interest that the whole body of those who are styled public creditors may share it equally as far as it will go. If any thing can be saved from the Civil List expenses it ought not to be finally mortgaged to make up the deficiency; it may be applied to bring the creditors to a balance for the present year. There is more to be said respecting this debt than has yet been said. The matter has never been taken up but by those who are interested in the matter. The public has been deficient and the claimants exorbitant—neglect on one side and greediness on the other. That which is truly Justice may be always advocated. But I could no more think of paying six per cent interest in real money, in perpetuity, for a debt a great part of which is quondam than I could think of not paying at all. Six per cent on any part of the debt, even to the original holders is ten or twelve per cent, and to the speculators twenty or thirty or more. It is better that the matter rest until it is fuller investigated and better understood, for in its present state it will be hazardous to touch upon.

I have not heard a word of news from Philadelphia since I came to this place. I wrote a line to Mr. Francis and desired him to give me a little account of matters but he does not, perhaps, think it very necessary now.

I see by the papers that the subject of the Bank is likely to be renewed.

<sup>151</sup> Thomas Fitzsimmons (usually spelled FitzSimmons) was active in the Revolutionary movement in Pennsylvania, and was elected in 1782 to the new Congress established under the Articles of Confederation.—*Editor*.

I should like to know when it will come on, as I have some thought of coming down at that time, if I can.

I see by the papers that the Agricultural Society has presented a petition to the House respecting building a bridge over the Schuylkill—on a model prepared for that purpose. In this I think they are too hasty. I have already constructed a model of a bridge of cast iron, consisting of one arch. I am now making another of wrought iron of one arch, but on a different plan. I expect to finish it in about three weeks and shall send it first to Philadelphia. I have no opinion of any bridge over the Schuylkill that is to be erected on piers—the sinking of piers will sink more money than they have any idea of and will not stand when done. But there is another point they have not taken into their consideration; which is, that the sinking three piers in the middle of the river, large and powerful enough to resist the ice, will cause such an alteration in the bed and channel of the river that there is no saying what course it may take, or whether it will not force a new channel somewhere else.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO HIS EXCELLENCY BENJAMIN FRANKLIN <sup>152</sup>

March 31st, 1787.

DEAR SIR:

I mentioned in one of my essays of my design of going this spring to Europe. I intend landing in France and from thence to England, and that I should take the model with me. The time I had fixed with myself was May, but understanding (since I saw you yesterday) that no French packet sails that month, I must either take the April packet or wait till June. As soon as I can get ready by the April packet I intend not omitting the opportunity. My father and mother are yet living whom I am very anxious to see, and have informed them of my coming in the ensuing summer.

I propose going from hence by the stage on Wednesday for New York and shall be glad to be favored with the care of any letters of yours to France or England. My stay in Paris, when with Col. Laurens, was so short that I do not feel myself introduced there, for I was in no house but at Passy <sup>153</sup> and the hotel Col. Laurens was at. As I have taken a

<sup>152</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Benjamin Franklin Papers through the courtesy of the American Philosophical Society.—*Editor*.

<sup>153</sup> Passy was Franklin's residence in France.—*Editor*.

part in the Revolution and politics of this country, and am not an unknown character in the political world, I conceive it would be proper in my going to Paris, that I should pay my respects to Count Vergennes to whom I am personally unknown, and I shall be very glad if a letter from you to him affording me that opportunity or rendering my waiting on him easy to me, for it so often happens that men live to forfeit the reputation at one time they gained at another that it is prudent not to presume too much in one's self.

The Marquis LaFayette I am the most known to of any gentlemen in France. Should he be absent from Paris there are none I am much acquainted with. I am on exceeding good terms with Mr. Jefferson which will necessarily be the first place I go to.

As I had the honor of your introduction to America it will add to my happiness to have the same friendship continued to me on the present occasion.<sup>154</sup>

Respecting the model, I shall be obliged to you for a letter to some of the Commissioners in that department. I shall be glad to hear their opinion of it. If they will undertake the experiment of two Ribs, it will decide the matter and promote the work here. But this need not be mentioned.

The Assembly have appointed another committee consisting of Mr. Morris, Mr. Clymer, Mr. Fitzsimmons, Mr. Wheeler, Mr. Robinson to confer with me on the undertaking. The matter therefore will remain suspended till my return next winter. It is worth waiting this event because if a single arch to that extent will answer all difficulties in that river or others if the same condition are overcome at once. I will do myself the pleasure of waiting on you tomorrow and am

Dear Sir Your much obliged and obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>154</sup> For letters that Franklin wrote introducing Paine, see Smyth, editor, *The Writings of Benjamin Franklin*, vol. IX, pp. 565-567. To Comte D'Estaing, Franklin wrote: "The Bearer of this is Mr. Paine Author of the celebrated Pamphlet 'Common Sense,' by which the Revolution was greatly forwarded: He must be known to you by Reputation. Will you permit me to recommend him as a Friend of mine to those civilities you have so much pleasure in showing to Stranger of Merit."—*Editor*.

TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN <sup>155</sup>

PARIS, 22 June, 1787.

MY DEAR SIR:

We left New York on the 26th of April, and arrived at Havre de Grace on the 26th of May. I set off in company with M. Germon, a French gentleman, passenger from America, for Paris. I stayed one day at Rouen to take a view of the place from whence the kings of England date their origin. There are yet some remains of the palaces of the dukes of Normandy; but the Parliament House has such a resemblance to Westminster Hall, I mean the great hall as you enter, that, had I not known I had been in Normandy, I might have supposed myself at London. The breadth of the room is nearly seventy feet, and the roof is constructed exactly in the manner of that at Westminster. The country from Havre to Rouen is the richest I ever saw. The crops are abundant, and the cultivation in nice and beautiful order. Everything appeared to be in fulness; the people are very stout, the women exceedingly fair, and the horses of a vast size and very fat. I saw several at Havre that were seventeen hands high. I deposited the model of the bridge at the custom-house, the superintendent of which undertook to send it to Paris as soon as an order should be procured for that purpose, as he did not think himself authorized to do it without, it being an imported article.

I arrived at Paris on the 30th of May, and the next day began delivering the letters you were so kind as to honor me with. My reception here, in consequence of them, has been abundantly cordial and friendly. I have received visits and invitations from all who were in town. The Duke de Rochefoucauld and General Chastellux are in the country. I dined yesterday with an old friend of yours, M. Malesherbes, who is of the new Council of Finances, and who received me with a heartiness of friendship. It must have been a very strong attachment to America that drew you from this country, for your friends are very numerous and very affectionate.

Mr. Le Roy has been most attentively kind to me. As he speaks English, there is scarcely a day passes without an interview. He took me a few days ago to see an old friend of yours, M. Buffon, but we were informed by the servant that he was very ill, and under the

<sup>155</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Benjamin Franklin Papers through the courtesy of the American Philosophical Society.—*Editor*.

operation of medicine, on which we deferred our intention. In the evening he sent me an invitation to see an exhibition of fireworks of a new kind, made of inflammable air. It was done as an experiment. The exhibition was in a room. The performer had two large bladders of air, one under each arm, with pipes from them communicating with the figures to be represented, such as suns, moons, stars, flowers, architecture, and figures of moving machinery. By compressing the bladders and mixing the air, he produced the most beautiful and sudden transitions of light and colors, increased or diminished the motion, and exhibited the most pleasing scene of that kind that can be imagined.

The model from Havre is not yet arrived, but a letter received from thence yesterday informs me that it is on the road, and will be here in about eight days. There is a great curiosity here to see it, as bridges have lately been a capital subject. A new bridge is begun over the Seine, opposite the Palais de Bourbon and the Place de Louis Quinze. It is about the breadth of the Schuylkill, and the Abbe Morley tells me, will cost five millions of livres. It is on piers.

Your old friend, M. Terenet, the bridge architect, is yet living. I was introduced to him by M. Le Roy. He has taken a residence in the Elysian Fields for the purpose of being near the works. He has invited me to see his house at Paris, where all his drawings and models are. By the next packet I will write to you respecting the opinion of the Academy on the model. I shall be obliged to Mr. Clymer to send me some Philadelphia and American news. Please to present me with much respect to your family, and to all my good friends around you.

I am, dear sir, your affectionate and obedient servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES<sup>156</sup>

PARIS, July 21, 1787.

[Gentlemen:]

I have the honor to present to you the model for the construction of an American bridge. This bridge made of iron bars forming a single arch, is to be built over the Schuylkill River in Pennsylvania, where piles cannot be used.

<sup>156</sup> This letter is printed from a transcript in the Manuscript Division of the New York Public Library.—*Editor*.

The high opinion which the government of Pennsylvania, at whose head is my highly respected friend, Doctor Franklin, holds of the Royal Academy of Sciences has made him desire to have your opinion on the construction of this bridge before attempting to put it into execution, and the friendship which exists today between the two nations as well as your skill in rendering judgments which enlighten the whole scientific world, has led him to hope, gentlemen, that you would gratify his wishes and favor him with the judgment which he has the honor to ask of you. I enclose herewith the report of the Committee appointed by the Government of Pennsylvania, a literal transcript from its records.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO GEORGE CLYMER

PARIS, August 15, 1787.

SIR:

This comes by Mr. Derby, of Massachusetts, who leaves Paris today to take shipping at L'Orient for Boston. The enclosed for Dr. Franklin is from his friend Mr. Le Roy, of the Academy of Sciences, respecting the bridge, and the causes that have delayed the completing the report. An arch of 4 or 5 hundred feet is such an unprecedented thing, and will so much attract notice in the northern part of Europe, that the Academy is cautious in what manner to express their final opinion. It is, I find, their custom to give reasons for their opinion, and this embarrasses them more than the opinion itself. That the model is strong, and that a bridge constructed on the same principles will also be strong, they appear to be well agreed in, but to what particular causes to assign the strength they are not agreed in. The committee was directed by the Academy to examine all the models and plans for iron bridges that had been proposed in France, and they unanimously gave the preference to our own, as being the simplest, strongest, and lightest. They have likewise agreed on some material points.

THOMAS PAINE.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE THE MARQUIS  
OF LANSDOWNE <sup>157</sup>

THETFORD, NORFOLK, Sept. 21, 1787.

The Abbé Morellet your Lordship's very good friend and mine, desired me, on my leaving Paris to present you his respects. I am sorry I have not an opportunity of delivering them personally, with such other matters as arise in conversation between the Abbé and myself.

But I request your Lordship to be assured that independent of any commission of compliments from any person whatever, I should have been impelled by the respect I bear to the abilities and principles your Lordship showed in opposing the American war to have waited on you to express my thanks. I have not the honor of being personally known to you, but the signature I have used, Common Sense, will I presume bring my name and character to your recollection.

I must regret your Lordship's absence from Town. There are matters I should have been very happy in hearing your opinion upon, for to a man who considers the world as his home, and the good of it in all places as his object, I have long banished the contracted ideas, I was, like other people, brought up in. With respect to France I am certain the English entertain very wrong ideas. The people of that country are a different kind of people to what they have been represented here, and as it is the true interest of the two countries to agree and trade, instead of fight, with each other, I hope the time is not far distant when they will mutually see their true interest.

I am not unacquainted that your Lordship possesses more liberal principles on this head than are to be found in some of your contemporaries, but time and reason will effect great things, especially if a few good men in both countries will make a beginning.

Here is a clamor of war which nobody understands. There appears no object to the bulk of the people either to justify the measure or answer the expense. I joined in the defense of America, on the ground that a country invaded is in the condition of a house broke into, and on no other principle than this, can a reflective mind at least such as mine, justify war to itself. It is a matter worth considering that while the English boast of the freedom of their government, that government is the

<sup>157</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the William L. Clements Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan.—*Editor*.



oppressor of freedom in all other countries, and France its protectress.

A war in Europe that would involve England would be a pecuniary advantage to America. She would be the neutral flag and the trade would go into her hands, therefore in wishing peace to Europe my principles operate over my interest, for America is the country where my heart, and what property I have lie, and to which I shall return.

I am at present on a visit to some relatives and friends here. I shall return in about a week to London. If your Lordship should find leisure to favor me with a line it will be a pleasure to me to receive it. Mr. Palmer Controller General of the Post Office whom I saw in Paris with Lord Wycomb will take charge of any letters for me, and should it happen that I should return to Paris, on my way to America without the honor of seeing your Lordship, I request you to accept my thanks, and wishes for health and happiness.

I am Your Lordship's Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO GEORGE CLYMER, ESQUIRE

PARIS, December 29, 1787.

DEAR SIR:

I received your favor of . . . when at London, from which place I returned a fortnight since. I am obliged to you for the account you gave me of the steamboat, the bridge and the plan of the newly proposed Constitution. There are many excellent things in the new system. I perceive the difficulties you must have found in debating on certain points, such as trial by juries, because in some cases, such for instance, as that of the United States against any particular State, if the trial is to be held in the delinquent State, a jury composed from that State, would be a part of the delinquent, and consequently judges in their own case.

It seems a wish with all the Americans on this side the water, except Mr. John Adams, that the President-General has not been perpetually eligible. Mr. Adams, who has some strange ideas, finds fault because the President is not for life, and because the Presidency does not devolve by hereditary succession. Too long a continuance in the presidency would probably introduce some attempt at foreign influence, such as that in Poland and Holland.

The Academy of Sciences presented me their report on the model the twenty-ninth of August. I went to London the day after, and intended

sending you a copy from thence, as I shall reserve the original to bring with me. The Academy has given the same opinion as we formed in Philadelphia. The report recommends the execution of the work, with their reasons upon which that opinion is founded. While I was in London Mr. Beaumarchais has been applying for a patent or privilege for erecting an iron bridge over the Seine, opposite the King's Gardens, where the river is wider than at the middle.

The model is at present in London in charge of Sir Joseph Banks.<sup>158</sup>

But it is very possible that after all the pains I have taken, and the money I have expended, that some counterworking project will set itself up, and the hope of great gain, or great interest, will attempt schemes, that after some less pains will end in no bridge at all.

Just after I got to London the tumults of war began. The viciousness of that nation (Great Britain)—is inconceivable. They supposed France unprepared for war, and her attention engrossed by domestic circumstances. And this was reason enough for England to go to war!

But a great deal of this kind of cowardly bravery has disappeared since England has discovered that a treaty is in a probable train of execution between Russia, the Emperor (of Austria), France and Spain. The probability of this Quadruple Alliance already extends to retard the progress of a treaty proposed by England with Russia and Holland, so that it is likely John Bull will be at last left in the lurch.

I intend staying here until the Spring, and embarking for America in the April or May packet. This letter will probably reach you soon enough to send me a little news. Remember me with much affection to my friends around you.

Your much obliged and obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>159</sup>

LONDON, ENGLAND, Feb. 19th, 1788.

SIR:

I mentioned to you that I had some conversation with the Marquis de Lafayette respecting the Bridge, and his opinion is that it would be best to make some direct proposition to which either yes or no should be given. My principal object is to get the Bridge erected because until

<sup>158</sup> Sir Joseph Banks was a famous English naturalist.—*Editor*.

<sup>159</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

then all conversation upon the subject amount to but little. My chief expectation as to the money part was on Mr. Morris but his affairs appearing to be deranged lessens very considerably that dependence.<sup>160</sup> I am casting about to find some way to accomplish this point, or at least assist towards it before I return to America and the enclosed is on that subject. I shall be glad you would peruse it and give me your opinion, after which I will send it to the Marquis. If he and you concur in opinion respecting the propriety of it I will have it translated and presented to some of the Ministry—though perhaps it would be best to take some method to let it be first seen in order to know whether it will be agreeable that it should be presented. If you can return it to me tomorrow I will then send it to the Marquis.

Your obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>161</sup>

LONDON, Broad Street Buildings, No. 13,  
September 9, 1788.

DEAR SIR:

That I am a bad correspondent is so general a complaint against me, that I must expect the same accusation from you. But hear me first. When there is no matter to write upon, a letter is not worth the trouble of receiving and reading, and while anything which is to be the subject of a letter is in suspense, it is difficult to write and perhaps best to let it alone—*“least said is soonest mended,”* and nothing said requires no mending.

The model has the good fortune of preserving in England the reputation which it received from the Academy of Sciences. It is a favorite hobby horse with all who have seen it; and every one who has talked with me on the subject advised me to endeavor to obtain a Patent, as it is only by that means that I can secure to myself the direction and management. For this purpose I went, in company with Mr. Whiteside to the office which is an appendage to Lord Sydney’s—told them who I was, and made an affidavit that the construction was my own invention.

<sup>160</sup> About this time Robert Morris became deeply involved in land speculation, and soon afterwards lost his entire fortune.—*Editor.*

<sup>161</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor.*

This was the only step I took in the business. Last Wednesday I received a patent for England, the next day a patent for Scotland, and I am to have one for Ireland.

As I had already the opinion of the scientific judges both in France and England on the model, it was also necessary that I should have that of the practical iron men who must finally be the executors of the work. There are several capital iron works in this country, the principal of which are those in Shropshire, Yorkshire, and Scotland. It was my intention to have communicated with Mr. Wilkinson, who is one of the proprietors of the Shropshire Iron Works, and concerned in those in France, but his departure for Sweden before I had possession of the patents prevented me. The iron works in Yorkshire belonging to the Walkers near to Sheffield are the most eminent in England in point of establishment and property. The proprietors are reputed to be worth two hundred thousand pounds and consequently capable of giving energy to any great undertaking. A friend of theirs who had seen the model wrote to them on the subject, and two of them came to London last Friday to see it and talk with me on the business. Their opinion is very decided that it can be executed either in wrought or cast iron, and I am to go down to their works next week to erect an experiment arch. This is the point I am now got to, and until now I had nothing to inform you of. If I succeed in erecting the arch all reasoning and opinion will be at an end, and, as this will soon be known, I shall not return to France till that time; and until then I wish every thing to remain respecting my bridge over the Seine, in the state I left matters in when I came from France. With respect to the patents in England it is my intention to dispose of them as soon as I have established the certainty of the construction.

Besides the ill success of Blackfriars Bridge, two bridges built successively on the same spot, the last by Mr. Smeaton, at Hexham, over the Tyne in Northumberland, have fallen down, occasioned by quicksands under the bed of the river. If therefore arches can be extended in the proportion the model promises, the construction in certain situations, without regard to cheapness or dearness, will be valuable in all countries.

I enclose you a Philadelphia paper 10 of July having the account of the Procession of the 4th of that month.<sup>162</sup> An arrival from Philadelphia

<sup>162</sup> Paine is referring to the great Procession to honor the Fourth of July and to celebrate the ratification of the Federal Constitution. There is an excellent account of the Procession in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* of July 11, 1788.—*Editor*.

which left it the 26th [of] July brings nothing new. The Convention of New York was still sitting; but we have accounts, though I know not how they came, that the Convention of N[ew] York acceded on the 29th of July. I since hear that this account is brought by the *Columbine* in 29 days from N[ew] York, arrived at Falmouth, with wheat to Lisbon.

As to English news or politics, there is little more than what the public papers contain. The assembling the States General, and the reappointment of Mr. Neckar,<sup>163</sup> made considerable impression here. They overawe a great deal of the English habitual rashness, and check that triumph of presumption which they indulged themselves in with respect to what they called the deranged and almost ruinous condition of the finances of France. They acknowledge unreservedly that the natural resources of France are greater than those of England, but they plume themselves on the superiority of the means necessary to bring national resources forth. But the two circumstances above mentioned serve very well to lower this exaltation.

Some time ago I spent a week at Mr. Burke's, and the Duke of Portland's in Buckinghamshire.<sup>164</sup> You will recollect that the Duke was the Minister during the time of the coalition—he is now in the opposition, and I find the opposition as much warped in some respects as to Continental Politics as the Ministry. What the extent of the treaty with Russia is, Mr. B[urke] says that he and all the opposition are totally unacquainted with; and they speak of it not as a very wise measure, but rather tending to involve England in unnecessary continental disputes. The preference of the opposition is to a connection with Prussia if it could have been obtained. Sir George Staunton tells me that the interference with respect to Holland last year met with considerable opposition from part of the Cabinet. Mr. Pitt was against it at first, but it was a favorite measure with the King, and that the opposition at that crisis contrived to have it known to him that they were disposed to support his measures. This together with the notification of the 16th of September gave Mr. Pitt cause and pretence for changing his ground.<sup>165</sup>

<sup>163</sup> Jacques Necker was the Director General of France.—*Editor*.

<sup>164</sup> The Duke of Portland (Cavendish-Bentnick) was the recognized head of the Whig party, and first lord of the Treasury in the Cabinet.—*Editor*.

<sup>165</sup> Pitt was opposed to Russian influence in the Black Sea and the prospect of her conquest of Turkey and the seizure of Constantinople. The reference to Holland relates to the invasion of that country by Frederick William II, the new Prussian king, on the excuse that his sister had been arrested on her way to the Hague. Actually, the real reason for

The Marquis of Lansdowne is unconnected either with the Ministry or the opposition. His politics is distinct from both. His plan is a sort of armed neutrality which has many advocates. In conversation with me he reprobated the conduct of the Ministry towards France last year as operating to "*cut the throat of confidence*" (this was his expression) between France and England at a time when there was a fair opportunity of improving it.

The enmity of this country against Russia is as bitter as it ever was against America, and is carried to every pitch of abuse and vulgarity. What I hear in conversations exceeds what may be seen in the newspapers. They are sour and mortified at every success she acquires, and voraciously believe and rejoice in the most improbable accounts and rumors to the contrary. You may mention this to Mr. Simelin on any terms you please for you cannot exceed the fact.

There are those who amuse themselves here in the hopes of managing Spain. The notification which the Marquis del Campo made last year to the British Cabinet, is perhaps the only secret kept in this country. Mr. B[urke] tells me that the opposition knows nothing of it. They all very freely admit that if the combined fleets had had thirty or forty thousand land forces, when they came up the channel last war, there was nothing in England to oppose their landing, and that such a measure would have been fatal to their resources, by at least a temporary destruction of national credit. This is the point on which this country is most impressionable. Wars carried on at a distance, they care but little about, and seem always disposed to enter into them. It is bringing the matter home to them that makes them fear and feel, for their weakest part is at home. This I take to be the reason of the attention they are paying to Spain; for while France and Spain make a common cause and *start* together, they may easily overawe this country.

I intended sending this letter by Mr. Parker, but he goes by way of Holland, and as I do not choose to send it by the English post, I shall desire Mr. Bartholemey to forward it to you.

Remember me with much affection to the Marquis de Lafayette. This letter will serve for two letters. Whether I am in London or the country

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the invasion was that the Stadtholder, Prince of Orange, who was anti-French and pro-England had been forced out by a pro-French group, and the result of the war was that he was restored to power. England agreed to furnish 40 ships of the line to support the Prussian army during the invasion of Holland. See the *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. XV, p. 1258.—*Editor*.

any letter to me at Mr. Whiteside's, Merchant, No. 13 Broad Street Buildings, will come safe. My compliments to Mr. Short.<sup>166</sup>

I am, dear Sir, with great esteem your obliged Friend and obedient and humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THOMAS JEFFERSON<sup>167</sup>

LONDON, September 15 [1788].

DEAR SIR:

I have not heard of Mr. [Lewis] Littlepage since I left Paris, if you have, I shall be glad to know it. As he dined sometimes at Mr. Neckar's, he undertook to describe the Bridge to him. Mr. Neckar very readily conceived it. If you have an opportunity of seeing Mr. Neckar, and see it convenient to renew the subject, you might mention that I am going forward with an experiment arch. Mr. Le Couteulx desired me to examine the construction of the Albion Steam Mills erected by Bolton and Watt.<sup>168</sup> I have not yet written to him because I had nothing to write about. I have talked with Mr. Rumsey, who is here, upon this matter, and who appears to me to be master of that subject, and who has procured a model of the Mill, which is worked originally from the steam [*illegible*].

When you see Mr. Le Roy please to present my compliments. I hope to realize the opinion of the Academy on the Model, in which case I shall give the Academy the proper information. We have no certain accounts here of the arrangement of the new Ministry. The papers mention Count St. Priest for Foreign Affairs. When you see him please to present my compliments [*illegible*]. Please to present my compliments to M. and Madame de Corney.

<sup>166</sup> William Short was Jefferson's private Secretary and the Secretary of the American Legation in France.—*Editor*.

<sup>167</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>168</sup> James Watt, inventor of the steam engine, and Matthew Boulton, scientist and engineer, were business partners.—*Editor*.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON<sup>169</sup>

LONDON, December 16, 1788.

DEAR SIR:

I write you by Mr. Quesnay. I also wrote you a long letter of (I believe) 14 or 16 pages enclosing a Philadelphia Newspaper with the account of the Procession on the 4th of July. I requested Mr. Bartholemy to enclose it in his dispatches which he promised me to do. This is about ten weeks ago. I was then setting off to the Iron Works in Yorkshire to execute a small bridge. The work goes on with great success and in appearance exceeds both the model and the drawing. I come from thence about a fortnight ago, but shall return again.

That the King is insane is now old news. He yet continues in the same state, and the Parliament are on the business of appointing a Regent. The Dukes of York and Gloucester have both made speeches in the House of Peers. An embarrassing question, whether the Prince of Wales has a right in himself by succession during the incapacity of his father, or whether the right must derive through Parliament, has been agitated in both Houses. [*illegible*] and the speeches of York and Gloucester of avoiding the question. This day (Tuesday) is fixed for bringing the matter on in the House of Commons. A change of Ministry is expected, and I believe determined on. The Duke of Portland and his friends will in all probability come in.

I shall be exceedingly glad to hear from you, and to know if you have received my letters, and also when you intend setting off for America, or whether you intend to visit England before you go. In case of change of Ministry here there are certain matters I shall be glad to see you upon. Remember me to the Marquis de Lafayette. We hear good things from France, and I sincerely wish them all well and happy.

Your affectionate friend and obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. Remember me to Mr. Short and Mr. Mazzei.<sup>170</sup>

<sup>169</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>170</sup> Philip Mazzei, Italian physician, merchant and horticulturist, was a close friend of Thomas Jefferson. While in France he wrote several pamphlets on America.—*Editor*.



TO KITTY NICHOLSON FEW <sup>171</sup>

LONDON, January 6, 1789.

I sincerely thank you for your very friendly and welcome letter. I was in the country when it arrived and did not receive it soon enough to answer it by the return of the vessel.

I very affectionately congratulate Mr. and Mrs. Few on their happy marriage, and every branch of the families allied by that connection; and I request my fair correspondent to present me to her partner, and to say, for me, that he has obtained one of the highest prizes on the wheel. Besides the pleasure which your letter gives me to hear you are all happy and well, it relieves me from a sensation not easy to be dismissed; and if you will excuse a few dull thoughts for obtruding themselves into a congratulatory letter I will tell you what it is. When I see my female friends drop off by matrimony I am sensible of something that affects me like a loss in spite of all the appearances of joy: I cannot help mixing the sincere compliment of regret with that of congratulation. It appears as if I had outlived or lost a friend. It seems to me as if the original was no more, and that which she is changed to forsakes the circle and forgets the scenes of former society. Felicities are cares superior to those she formerly cared for, create to her a new landscape of life that excludes the little friendships of the past. It is not every lady's mind that is sufficiently capacious to prevent those greater objects crowding out the less, or that can spare a thought to former friendships after she has given her hand and heart to the man who loves her. But the sentiment your letter contains has prevented these dull ideas from mixing with the congratulation I present you, and is so congenial with the enlarged opinion I have always formed of you, that at the time I read your letter with pleasure I read it with pride, because it convinces me that I have some judgment in that most difficult science—a lady's mind. Most sincerely do I wish you all the good that heaven can bless you with, and as you have in your own family an example of domestic happiness you are already in the knowledge of obtaining it. That no condition we can enjoy is an exemption from care—that some shade will mingle itself with the brightest sunshine of life—that even our affections may become the in-

<sup>171</sup> Kitty Nicholson was the daughter of Commodore Nicholson of New York, a leader of the republican movement in the city. Paine was a close friend of the Nicholsons. Conway says of it: "Let those who would know the real Thomas Paine read this letter!" *Life of Thomas Paine*, vol. I, p. 246.—*Editor*.

struments of our sorrows—that the sweet felicities of home depend on good temper as well as on good sense, and that there is always something to forgive even in the nearest and dearest of our friends,—are truths which, though too obvious to be told, ought never to be forgotten; and I know you will not esteem my friendship the less for impressing them upon you.

Though I appear a sort of wanderer, the married state has not a sincerer friend than I am. It is the harbor of human life, and is, with respect to the things of this world, what the next world is to this. It is home; and that one word conveys more than any other word can express. For a few years we may glide along the tide of youthful single life and be wonderfully delighted; but it is a tide that flows but once, and what is still worse, it ebbs faster than it flows, and leaves many a hapless voyager aground. I am one, you see, that have experienced the fate I am describing. I have lost my tide; it passed by while every thought of my heart was on the wing for the salvation of my dear America, and I have now, as contentedly as I can, made myself a little bower of willows on the shore that has the solitary resemblance of a home. Should I always continue the tenant of this home, I hope my female acquaintance will ever remember that it contains not the churlish enemy of their sex, not the inaccessible cold hearted mortal, nor the capricious tempered oddity, but one of the best and most affectionate of their friends.

I did not forget the Dunstable hat, but it was not on wear here when I arrived. That I am a negligent correspondent I freely confess, and I always reproach myself for it. You mention only one letter, but I wrote twice; once by Dr. Derby, and another time by the Chevalier St. Triss—by whom I also wrote to Gen. Morris, Col. Kirkbride, and several friends in Philadelphia, but have received no answers. I had one letter from Gen. Morris last winter, which is all I have received from New York till the arrival of yours.

I thank you for the details of news you give. Kiss Molly Field for me and wish her joy,—and all the good girls of Bordentown. How is my favorite Sally Morris, my boy Joe, and my horse Button? pray let me know. Polly and Nancy Rogers,—are they married? or do they intend to build bowers as I have done? If they do, I wish they would twist their green willows somewhere near to mine.

I am very much engaged here about my bridge— There is one building of my construction at Messrs. Walker's Iron Works in Yorkshire,

and I have direction of it. I am lately come from thence and shall return again in two or three weeks.

As to news on this side the water, the King is mad, and there is great bustle about appointing a Regent. As it happens, I am in pretty close intimacy with the heads of the opposition—the Duke of Portland, Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke. I have sent your letter to Mrs. Burke as a specimen of the accomplishments of the American ladies. I sent it to Miss Alexander, a lady you have heard me speak of, and I asked her to give me a few of her thoughts how to answer it. She told me to write as I felt, and I have followed her advice.

I very kindly thank you for your friendly invitation to Georgia and if I am ever within a thousand miles of you, I will come and see you; though it be but for a day.

You touch me on a very tender part when you say my friends on your side the water “cannot be reconciled to the idea of my resigning my adopted America, even for my native England.” They are right. Though I am in as elegant style of acquaintance here as any American that ever came over, my heart and myself are 3000 miles apart; and I had rather see my horse Button in his own stable, or eating the grass of Borden-town or Morrisania, than see all the pomp and show of Europe.

A thousand years hence (for I must indulge in a few thoughts), perhaps in less, America may be what England now is! The innocence of her character that won the hearts of all nations in her favor may sound like a romance, and her inimitable virtue as if it had never been. The ruins of that liberty which thousands bled for, or suffered to obtain, may just furnish materials for a village tale or extort a sigh from rustic sensibility, while the fashionable of that day, enveloped in dissipation, shall deride the principle and deny the fact.

When we contemplate the fall of empires and the extinction of nations of the ancient world, we see but little to excite our regret than the mouldering ruins of pompous palaces, magnificent monuments, lofty pyramids, and walls and towers of the most costly workmanship. But when the empire of America shall fall, the subject for contemplative sorrow will be infinitely greater than crumbling brass or marble can inspire. It will not then be said, here stood a temple of vast antiquity,—here rose a Babel of invisible height, or there a palace of sumptuous extravagance; but here, ah painful thought! the noblest work of human wisdom, the grandest scene of human glory, the fair cause of freedom rose and fell!

Read this and then ask if I forget America— But I'll not be dull if I

can help it, so I leave off, and close my letter to-morrow, which is the day the mail is made up for America.

January 7th. I have heard this morning with extreme concern of the death of our worthy friend Capt. Reed. Mrs. Reed lives in a house of mine at Bordentown, and you will much oblige me by telling her how much I am affected by her loss; and to mention to her, with that delicacy which such an offer and her situation require, and which no one knows better how to convey than yourself, that the two years' rent which is due I request her to accept of, and to consider herself at home till she hears further from me.

This is the severest winter I ever knew in England; the frost has continued upwards of five weeks, and is still likely to continue. All the vessels from America have been kept off by contrary winds. The *Polly* and the *Pigeon* from Philadelphia and the *Eagle* from Charleston are just got in.

If you should leave New York before I arrive (which I hope will not be the case) and should pass through Philadelphia, I wish you would do me the favor to present my compliments to Mrs. Powell, the lady whom I wanted an opportunity to introduce you to when you were in Philadelphia, but was prevented by your being at a house where I did not visit.

There is a Quaker favorite of mine at New York, formerly Miss Watson of Philadelphia; she is now married to Dr. Lawrence, and is an acquaintance of Mrs. Oswald: be so kind as to make her a visit for me. You will like her conversation. She has a little of the Quaker primness—but of the pleasing kind—about her.

I am always distressed at closing a letter, because it seems like taking leave of my friends after a parting conversation.—Captain Nicholson, Mrs. Nicholson, Hannah, Fanny, James, and the little ones, and you my dear Kitty, and your partner for life—God bless you all! and send me safe back to my much loved America!

THOMAS PAINE—*et.* 52.  
or if you better like it  
Common Sense.

This comes by the packet which sails from Falmouth, 300 miles from London; but by the first vessel from London to New York I will send you some magazines. In the meantime be so kind as to write to me by the first opportunity. Remember me to the family at Morrisania, and all my friends at New York and Bordentown. Desire Gen. Morris to take

another guinea of Mr. Constable, who has some money of mine in his hands, and give it to my boy Joe. Tell Sally to take care of *Button*. Then direct for me at Mr. Peter Whiteside's London. When you are at Charleston remember me to my dear old friend Mrs. Lawrence, Col. and Mrs. L. Morris, and Col. Washington; and at Georgia, to Col. Walton. Adieu.

## TO THOMAS WALKER, ESQR.<sup>172</sup>

February 26th, 1789.

DEAR SIR:

Your favor of the 23d is just come to hand for which I thank you. I wrote to the President of the Board of Works last Monday, wishing him to begin making preparations for erecting the arch. I am so confident of his judgment that I can safely rely upon his going on as far as [he] pleases without me, and at any rate I shall not be long before I revisit Rotherham.

I had a letter yesterday from Mr. Foljambe, 'apologizing for his being obliged unexpectedly to leave town without calling on me, but that he should be in London again in a few days. He concludes his letter by saying:

"I saw the Pile of your Bridge. In point of elegance and beauty it far exceeded my expectations, and is certainly beyond anything I ever saw."

You will please inform the President what Mr. Foljambe says, as I think him entitled to participate in the applause. Mr. Fox of Derby called again on me last evening respecting the Bridge but I was not at home. There is a project of erecting a Bridge at Dublin which will be a large undertaking and as the Duke of Leicester and the other Deputies from Ireland are arrived, I intend making an opportunity of speaking to them on that business.

With respect to news and politics the King is certainly greatly amended but what is to follow from it is a matter of much uncertainty. How far the nation may be safe with a man of a deranged mind<sup>173</sup> at the head of it and who, ever since he took up the notion of quitting England and going to live in Hanover, has been continually planning to

<sup>172</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>173</sup> King George III became insane in November, 1788.—*Editor*.

entangle England with German connections, which if followed must end in a war, is a matter that will occasion various opinions. However unfortunate it may have been for the sufferer, the King's malady has been no disservice to the Nation. He was burning his fingers very fast in the German war and whether he is enough in his senses to keep out of the fire is a matter of doubt.

You mention the Rotherham address<sup>174</sup> as complimenting Mr. Pitt on the success of his administration *and for asserting and supporting the Rights of the People*. I differ exceedingly from you in this opinion, and I think the conduct of the opposition much nearer to the principles of the Constitution, than what the conduct of the Ministry was. So far from Mr. Pitt asserting and supporting the Rights of the people, it appears to me taking them away; but as a man ought not to make an assertion without giving his reasons I will give you mine.

The English Nation is composed of two orders of men—Peers and Commoners. By Commoners is properly meant every man in the Nation not having the title of Peer, and it is the existence of those two orders setting up distinct and opposite claims, the one hereditary and the other elective that makes it necessary to establish a third order or that known by the name of the Regal Power or the Power of the Crown.

The Regal Power is the Majesty of the Nation collected to a center and residing in the Person exercising the Regal Power. The Right, therefore, of a Prince is a Right standing on the Right of the whole Nation. But Mr. Pitt says it stands on the Right of Parliament. Is not Parliament composed of two houses one of which is itself hereditary and over which the people have no control and in the establishment of which they have no election, and the other house the representatives of only a small part of the Nation? How then can the Rights of the People be asserted and supported by absorbing them into an hereditary house of Peers? Is not one hereditary power or Right as dangerous as the other, and yet the addressers have all gone on the error of establishing power in the house of Peers over whom, as I have already said, they have no control for the inconsistent purpose of opposing it in the prince over whom they have some control.

It was one of those cases in which there ought to have been a National

<sup>174</sup> In his Rotherham address Pitt held that it was for Parliament to name a regent, and to impose such restrictions on him for a limited time as would enable the King, on his recovery, to resume his power without difficulties. Pitt knew that if the Prince of Wales became regent, he would have been dismissed in favor of Fox and his party. His point-of-view was adopted.—*Editor*.

Convention elected for the express purpose, for if government be permitted to alter itself, or any of the parts permitted to alter the other there is no fixed Constitution in the country. And if the Regal Power, or the person exercising the Regal Power, either as King or Regent, instead of standing on the universal ground of the Nation be made the mere creature of Parliament, it is, in my humble opinion, equally inconsistent and unconstitutional as if Parliament was the mere creature of the Crown.

It is a common idea in all countries that to take Power from the Prince is to give liberty to the people, but Mr. Pitt's conduct is almost the reverse of this. His is to take power from one part of the government to add it to another, for he has encreased the power of the Peers, not the Rights of the People. I must give him credit for his ingenuity, if I do not for his principles, and the less so because the object of his conduct is now visible, which was to [keep] themselves in pay after they should be out of [favor] by retaining, through an act of Parliament of their own making, between four and five hundred thousand pounds of the Civil List in their own hands. This is the key of the whole business, and it was for this and not for the Rights of the people, that he set up the Right of Parliament, because it was only by that means that the spoil could be divided. If the restriction [on the Prince Regent] had been that he should not declare war or enter into foreign alliance without the consent of Parliament, the object would have been National and have had some sense in them, but it is, that he should not have *all the money*. If Swift was alive he would say—"Spit on such Patriotism."

How they will manage with Ireland I have had no opportunity of learning as I have not been at the other end of the town since the commissioners arrived. Ireland will certainly judge for itself and not permit the English Parliament or Doctor's to judge for her.<sup>175</sup> Thus much for Politics.

I very sincerely congratulate you and the families on the probable recovery of Mr. Jonathan Walker and hope soon to have the pleasure of seeing you all hearty happy and well. I write by the return of the Post that it may come to hand before you receive the final orders of your loom mending officer, and as I have written it all off at a dash, and have

<sup>175</sup> The Irish Parliament invited the Prince of Wales to assume the regency in Ireland with full powers, but Pitt upheld Lord Lieutenant, the Marquis of Buckingham, in his refusal to present the address to the prince.—*Editor*.

to go out to dinner to the other end of the town, I do not hold myself accountable for errors. With sincere respect to all the families, and in hopes of seeing you in London before I set off to Rotherham, I am Sir, your sincere friend and humble servant.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>176</sup>

No. 13 BROAD STREET BUILDINGS  
February 26th, 1789.

DEAR SIR:

A few days ago I received a letter from Mr. Foljambe in which he says "I saw the Rib of your Bridge. In point of elegance and beauty it far exceeded my expectations, and is certainly beyond anything I ever saw."

My model and myself had many visitors while I was at the works. A few days after I got there, Lord Fitzwilliams, heir to the Marquis of Rockingham, came with Mr. [Edmund] Burke, and the former gave the workmen five guineas, and invited me to Wentworth House, a few miles distant from the works, where I went, and stayed a few days.

The bridge I expect will bring forth something greater, but in the meantime I feel like a bird from its nest, and wishing most anxiously to return; therefore as soon as I can bring anything to bear I shall dispose of the contract and bid adieu. I can very truly say that my mind is not at home.

I am very much rejoiced at the account you give me of the state of affairs in France. I feel exceedingly interested in the happiness of that nation. They are now got, or getting, into the right way, and the present reign will be more immortalized in France than any that ever preceded it; they have all died away, forgotten in the common mass of things, but this will be to France an *Anno Mundi*, or an *Anno Domini*.

The happiness of doing good, and the pride of doing great things, unite themselves in this business. But as there are two kinds of pride, the little and the great, the privileged orders will in some degree be governed by this division. Those of little pride (I mean little-minded pride) will be schismatical, and those of great pride will be orthodox

<sup>176</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.

The first part of this letter, dated February 16, 1789, is printed above in the section of Paine's scientific Writings. See pp. 1035-1040.



with respect to the States General. Interest will likewise have some share, and could this operate fully and freely it would arrange itself on the orthodox side. To enrich a nation is to enrich the individuals which compose it. To enrich the farmer is to enrich the farm—and consequently the landlord;—for whatever the farmer is the farm will be. The richer the subject, the richer the revenue, because the consumption from which taxes are raised are in proportion to the abilities of people to consume; therefore the most effectual method to raise both the revenue and the rental of a country is to raise the condition of the people, or that order known in France by the *Tiers État* [Third Estate]. But I ought to ask pardon for entering into reasoning in a letter to you. I only do it because I like the subject.

I observe in all the companies I go into the impression which the present circumstances of France have upon this country. *An internal alliance* [between the King and the people] in France is an alliance which England never dreamed of, and which she most dreads. Whether she will be better or worse tempered afterwards I cannot judge of, but I believe she will be more cautious in giving offense. She is likewise impressed with an idea that a negotiation is on foot between the King [Louis XVI] and the Emperor [of Germany] for adding Austrian Flanders to France.

This appears to me such a probable thing, and may be rendered [so] conducive to the interest of all parties concerned, that I am inclined to give it credit and wish it success. I hope then to see the Scheldt opened, for it is a sin to refuse the bounties of nature. On these matters I shall be glad of your opinion. I think the States General of Holland could not be in earnest when they applied to France for the payment of the quota to the Emperor. All things considered, to request it was meanness and to expect it absurdity. I am more inclined to think they made it an opportunity to find how they stood with France. Absalom (I think it was) set fire to his brother's field of corn to bring on a conversation.

March 12th. With respect to political matters here the truth is the people are fools. They have no discernment into principles and consequences. Had Mr. Pitt proposed a national convention at the time of the King's insanity, he had done right; but instead of this he has absorbed the right of the nation into a right of Parliament—one house of which (the Peers) is hereditary in its own right, and over which the people have no control (not as much as they have over their King); and the other elective by only a small part of the nation. Therefore he has lessened instead of increased the rights of the people; but as they have not

sense enough to see it, they have been huzzaing him. There can be no fixed principles of government, or anything like a Constitution, in a country where the government can alter itself, or one part of it supply the other.

Whether a man that has been so completely mad as not to be managed but by force and the mad shirt can ever be confided in afterwards as a reasonable man, is a matter I have very little opinion of. Such a circumstance, in my estimation, if mentioned, ought to be a perpetual disqualification.

The emperor I am told has entered a caveat against the Elector of Hanover (not the electoral vote) for king of the Romans. John Bull, however, is not so mad as he was, and a message has been manufactured for him to Parliament in which there is nothing particular. The treaty with Prussia is not yet before Parliament but is to be.

Had the regency gone on and the new administration been formed I should have been able to communicate some matters of business to you, both with respect to America and France; as an interview for that purpose was agreed upon and to take place as soon as the persons who were to fill the offices should succeed. I am the more confidential with those persons, as they are distinguished by the name of the Blue and Buff—a dress taken up during the American war, and the undress uniform of General Washington with lapels, which they still wear. But at any rate I do not think it worth while for Congress to appoint any minister to this Court.

The greater distance Congress observes on this point, the better. It will be all money thrown away to go to any expense about it—at least during the present reign. I know the nation well, and the line of acquaintance I am in enables me to judge better than any other American can judge, especially at a distance. If Congress should have any business to state to the government here, it can be easily done through their Minister at Paris; but the seldomer the better.

I believe I am not so much in the good graces of the Marquis of Lansdowne as I used to be. I do not answer his purpose. He was always talking of a sort of reconnection of England and America, and my coldness and reserve on this subject checked communication. I believed he would be a good Minister for England with respect to a better agreement with France.

Should anything occur worth communicating, while I am here and you in France, I will inform you of it. If nothing comes to you, you may

conclude there is nothing and that matters stand as at the time of writing this letter. As soon as the weather will permit which is still very cold and uncomfortable, I shall set off for the iron works. I received a letter this morning from the Proprietors informing me that Sir Thomas Blackat was to dine with them and to see our pontifical works, as he wanted a bridge on his estate. Mr. Rumsey called at my lodgings last evening (but I was out) to inform me of his immediately setting off for France. In case he should not set off till this evening this letter will be presented to you by him. He appears to me perfectly master of the subject of steam, and is a very agreeable man. I am now going to the other end of the town to inquire after him.

Remember me to the Marquis de Lafayette, Mr. Le Roy, Mr. De Corney. Please to inform me if anything further has been done about the bridge; and likewise how the new bridge in your neighborhood goes on.

I am, dear sir, with much respect, Your sincere friend, and obedient humble servant

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO BENJAMIN WEST <sup>177</sup>

March 8, 1789.

DEAR SIR:

I have informed James of the matter which you and I talked of on Saturday, and he is much rejoiced at an opportunity of showing his gratitude to you for the permission you indulged him with in attending Mr. [John] Trumbull at your rooms. As I have known his parents upwards of twenty years, and the manners and habits he has been educated in, and the disposition he is of, I can with confidence to myself undertake to vouch for the faithful discharge of any trust you may repose in him; and as he is a youth of quick discernment and a great deal of silent observation he cannot be easily imposed upon, or turned aside from his attention, by any contrivance of workmen. I will put him in a way of keeping a diary of every day's work he sees done, and of any observations he may make, proper for you to be informed of, which he can send once or twice a week to you at Windsor; and any directions you may have to

<sup>177</sup> Benjamin West, famous historical painter, was born in Springfield, Pennsylvania, and at the time this letter was written was official painter for George III. There is no further information available about Paine's *protégé* James.—*Editor*.

give him in your absence can be conveyed through Mr. Trumbull, or what other method you please, so that James is certified they come from you.

James has made a tender of his service to Mr. Trumbull, if it should be of any use, when his picture is to be exhibited; but that will probably not be till nearly the time the impressions will be struck off. James need not entirely omit his drawing while he is attending the plates. Some employment will, in general, fix a person to a place better than having only to stand still and look on. I suppose they strike off about three impressions in an hour, and as James is master of a watch he will find their average of works,—and also how fast they can work when they have a mind to make haste,—and he can easily number each impression, which will be a double check on any being carried off. I intend visiting him pretty often, while he is on duty, which will be an additional satisfaction to yourself for the trust you commit to him.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO ANONYMOUS <sup>178</sup>

PARIS, March 16, 1789.

[DEAR SIR:]

I leave this place to-morrow for London. I go expressly for the purpose of erecting an iron bridge, which Messrs. Walkers of Rotherham, Yorkshire, and I have constructed, and is now ready for putting together. It is an arch of one hundred and ten feet span, and five feet high, from the chord line. It is as portable as common bars of iron, and can be put up and taken down at pleasure, and is, in fact, rendering bridges a portable manufacture.

With respect to the French revolution, be assured that every thing is going on right. Little inconveniences, the necessary consequences of pulling down and building up, may arise; but even these are much less than ought to have been expected. Our friend, the Marquis [Lafayette], is like his patron and master, General Washington, acting a great part. I take over with me to London the key to the Bastile, which the Marquis

<sup>178</sup> This letter, entitled "To A Friend in Philadelphia," is reprinted from *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays on Various Subjects by Thomas Paine*, London, 1819, p. 43.

The concluding paragraph of the letter reveals how strongly Paine felt on the subject of Negro slavery, and his understanding of the importance of activity by the Negro people themselves in the struggle to overthrow the system of human bondage in America.—*Editor*.

entrusts to my care as his present to General Washington, and which I shall send by the first American vessel to New York. It will be yet some months before the new Constitution will be completed, at which time there is to be a procession, and I am engaged to return to Paris to carry the American flag.

In England the ministerial party oppose every iota of reformation: the high beneficed clergy and bishops cry out that the Church is in danger, and all those who were interested in the remains of the feudal system join in the clamor. I see very clearly that the conduct of the British government, by opposing reformation, will detach great numbers from the political interests of that country; and that France, through the influence of principle and the divine right of men to freedom, will have a stronger party in England than she ever had through the Jacobite bugbear of the divine right of kings in the Stuart line.

I wish most anxiously to see my much loved America. It is the country from whence all reformation must originally spring. I despair of seeing an abolition of the infernal traffic in Negroes. We must push that matter further on your side of the water. I wish that a few well instructed could be sent among their brethren in bondage; for until they are enabled to take their own part, nothing will be done.

I am, with many wishes for your happiness,  
Your affectionate friend,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>179</sup>

LONDON, April 10, 1789.

DEAR SIR:

Mr. Parker and Rumsey having set off for Paris prevented me the opportunity of sending you the former part. Your favor of March 17th came safe to hand for which I am obliged to you. The King continues in his amended state, but Dr. Willis, his son, and attendants are yet about his person. He has not been to Parliament, nor made any public appearance, but he has fixed April 23 for a public thanksgiving, and he is to go in great parade to offer up his devotions at St. Paul's on that

<sup>179</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

day. Those about him have endeavored to dissuade him from this ostentatious pilgrimage, most probably from an apprehension of some effect it may have upon him, but he persists. The treaty with Prussia has been laid before Parliament but nothing has been said upon it. The acts for regulating the trade with America are to be continued as last year. A paper from the Privy Council respecting the American fly is before Parliament. I had some conversations with Sir Joseph Banks upon this subject, as he was the person whom the Privy Council referred to. I told him that the Hessian fly attacked only the green plants, and did not exist in dry grain. He said that with respect to the Hessian fly, they had no apprehension, but it was the weevil they alluded to. I told him the weevil had always more or less been in the wheat countries of America, and that if the prohibition was on that account it was as necessary fifty or sixty years ago as now; that I believe it was only a political maneuver of the ministry to please the landed interest, as a balance for prohibiting the exportation of wool, to please the manufacturing interest. He did not reply, and as we are on very sociable terms I went farther by saying—The English ought not to complain of the non-payment of debts from America while they prohibit the means of payment.

I suggest to you a thought on this subject. The debts due before the war, ought to be distinguished from the debts contracted since, and all and every mode of payment and remittance under which they *have* been discharged at the time they were contracted ought to accompany those debts, so long as any of them shall continue unpaid; because the circumstances of payment became united with the debt, and cannot be separated by subsequent acts of one side only. If this was taken up in America, and insisted on as a right co-eval with and inseparable from those debts, it would force some of the restrictions here to give way.

You speak very truly of this country when you say “that they are slumbering under a half reformation of politics and religion, and cannot be excited by anything they hear or see to question the remains of prejudice.” Their ignorance on some matters, is unfathomable, for instance the Bank of England discounts bills at 5 per cent, but a proposal is talked of for discounting at  $4\frac{1}{2}$ ; and the reason given is the vast quantity of money, and that money of the good houses discounts at  $4\frac{1}{2}$ ; from this they deduce the great ability and credit of the nation. Whereas the contrary is the case. The money is all in paper, and the quantity is greater than the object to circulate it upon, and therefore shows that the market is glutted, and consequently the ability for farther paper

exertions is lessened. If a war should ever break out between the countries again, this is the spot where it ought to be prosecuted. They neither feel nor care for anything at a distance, but are frightened and spiritless at everything which happens at home. The combined fleet coming up the Channel, Paul Jones, and the Mob of 1738, are the dreadful eras of this country. But for national puffing none equals them. The addresses which have been presented are stuffed with nonsense of this kind. One of them published in the *London Gazette* and presented by a Sir William Appleby begins thus,—“Britain, the Queen of Isles, the pride of Nations, the Arbitress of Europe, perhaps of the world.”

The exceeding bad weather has delayed my return to the Iron Works, as a new experiment especially needs all the advantages of fine weather. Next Monday or Tuesday I set off and leave this in the care of Mr. Mason, who is returning to Paris on his way to Bordeaux. On the receipt of your last I went to Sir Joseph to inform him of your having heard from Ledyard,<sup>180</sup> from Grand Cairo, but found he had a letter from him of the same date. Sir Joseph is one of the society for promoting that undertaking. He has an high opinion of Ledyard, and thinks him the only man fitted\* for such an exploration. As you may probably hear of Ledyard by accounts that may not reach here, Sir Joseph will be obliged to you to communicate to him any matters respecting him that may come to you (Sir Joseph Banks, Bart., Soho Square).

The rumors respecting a negotiation for the Austrian Netherlands are at a stand, and the English papers have sent the Prince of Nassau to Madrid to push forward the Quadruple Alliance, to which Denmark is to accede.

The Slave Trade is to come in the 27th of April. Mr. Wilberforce has given notice that he shall move for a total abolition of the traffic.<sup>181</sup> It will pass the Commons, and probably stop in [the] House of Peers.

While writing this I am informed that the Minister has had a conference with some of the American creditors, and proposed to them to assume the debts and give them ten shillings on the pound—the conjecture is that he means, when the new Congress is established, to demand the payment. If you are writing to General Washington, it may

<sup>180</sup> John Leydard, noted American traveller who accompanied Captain Cook in the *Resolution*, travelled to the East of Asia in 1787 and undertook a journey of exploration in Africa on behalf of the African Association. He died at Cairo.—*Editor*.

<sup>181</sup> William Wilberforce was the parliamentary leader of the movement in England for the abolition of slavery. He moved his resolutions for the abolition of the slave trade in 1789, but his bill was shelved, and victory was not gained until 1807.—*Editor*.

not be amiss to mention this—and if I hear farther on the matter I will inform you. But, as being a money matter it cannot come forward but through Parliament, there will be notice given of the business. This would be a proper time to show that the British Acts since the Peace militate against the payment by narrowing the means by which those debts might have been paid when they were contracted, and which ought to be considered as constituent parts of the contract.

April 13. *The New York Packet* arrived on Friday—brought nothing new. It started the 4th March on which day the new Congress met. Mr. Rumsey came yesterday (Sunday). I set off this evening for my Iron Works.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO ANONYMOUS

ROTHERHAM, May 1, 1789.

SIR:

We have erected our experiment rib, and struck the center. The Messrs. Walker join me in compliments, and an invitation to you to come and survey our handiwork. Please favor me with a line when we may expect you, that I may not be out of the way.

I am, Sir, Your obedient Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>182</sup>

LONDON, May, 1789.

Explanatory Circumstances [relating to the Deane affair]

First: The lost dispatches are dated October 6th and October 7th. They were sent by a private hand, that is, they were not sent by the post. Capt. Folger had the charge of them. They were all under one cover containing five separate packets. Three of the packets were on commercial matters only; one of these was to Mr. R[obert] Morris, chairman of the commercial committee; one to Mr. Hancock (private

<sup>182</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.



concerns), another to Barneby Deane, S[ilas] Deane's brother. Of the other two packets, one of them was to the secret committee, then styled the Committee of Foreign Affairs; the other was to Richard H. Lee. These two last packets had nothing in them but blank white French paper.

Second: In September preceding the date of the dispatches, Mr. [Edward] B[ancroft] sent Mr. Francis to Congress to press payment to the amount mentioned in the official letter of Oct. 6. Mr. F—— brought a letter signed only by S[ilas] Deane. The Captain of the vessel (*Landais*) brought another letter from Deane; both of these letters were to enforce Mr. B—— demand. Mr. F—— arrived with his letter and demand. The official dispatches (if I may say so) arrived blank. Congress had therefore no authoritative information to act by. About this time Mr. D—— was recalled, and arrived in America in Count D'Estain's fleet. He gave out that he had left his accounts in France.

With the treaty of alliance came over the duplicates of the lost dispatches. They came into my office not having been seen by Congress, and as they contained an injunction not to be concealed by Congress, I kept them secret in the office because at that time the foreign committee were displaced and new members not appointed.

On the fifth of December, 1778 Mr. D published an inflam[m]atory piece against Congress. As I saw it had an exceeding ill effect out of doors, I made some remarks upon it, with a view of preventing people running wild. This piece was replied to by a piece under the signature of Plain Truth, in which it was stated that Mr. D—— though a stranger in France and to the language, and without money had by himself procured 30,000 stand of arms, 30,000 such of clothing and more than 200 pieces of brass cannon. I replied that these supplies were in a train of execution before he was sent to France, that Mr. Deane's private letters, and his official dispatches jointly with the other two commissioners contradicted each other.

At this time I found that Deane had made a large party in Congress, and that a motion had been made but not decided upon for dismissing me from the foreign affairs with a kind of censure.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON<sup>183</sup>

LONDON, June 17, 1789.

DEAR SIR:

I received your last to the 21st May. I am just now informed of Messrs. Parker and Cutting setting off tomorrow morning for Paris by whom this will be delivered to you. Nothing new is showing here. The trial of Hastings,<sup>184</sup> and the examination of evidence before the House of Commons into the Slave Trade still continue.

I wrote Sir Joseph Banks an account of my Experiment Arch. In his answer he informs me of its being read before the Royal Society who expressed "great satisfaction at the Communication." "I expect," says Sir Joseph, "many improvements from your Countrymen who think with vigor, and are in a great measure free from those shackles of Theory which are imposed on the minds of our people before they are capable of exerting their mental facilities to advantage." In the close of his letter he says: "We have lost poor Ledyard. He had agreed with certain Moors to conduct him to Sennar. The time for their departure was arrived when he found himself ill, and took a large dose of emetic tartar, burst a blood-vessel in the operation, which carried him off in three days. We sincerely lament his loss, as the papers we have received from him are full of those emanations of spirit, which taught you to construct a bridge without any reference to the means used by your predecessors in that art."

I have wrote to the Walkers and proposed to them to manufacture me a complete bridge and erect it in London, and afterwards put it up to sale. I do this by way of bringing forward a bridge over the Thames—which appears to me the most advantageous of all objects. For, if only a fifth of the persons, at a half penny each, pass over a new bridge as now pass over the old ones the tolls will pay 25 per cent besides what will arise from carriage and horses. Mrs. Williams tells me that her letters from America mention Dr. Franklin as being exceedingly ill.

If you go to America this year I hope you will advise Congress not to send any Minister to this country. It would be all money thrown away. The greater distance America keeps at the better.

<sup>183</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>184</sup> The impeachment of Warren Hastings on the charge of corruption and cruelty in his Indian administration, was followed by a trial before the Lords which opened in Westminster Hall on February 13, 1788 and lasted 145 days. Hastings was acquitted.—*Editor*.

I shall be glad you would give me a line when you set off for America so that I can write to you before your departure.

I have been to see the Cotton Mills, the Potteries, the steel furnaces, tin plate manufacture, white lead manufacture. All those things might be easily carried on in America. I saw a few days ago part of a hand bill of what was called a geometrical wheelbarrow, but cannot find where it is to be seen. The idea is one of those that needed only to be thought of, for it is very easy to conceive that if a wheelbarrow, as it is called, be driven round a piece of land, a sheet of paper may be placed in it, so as to receive by the tracings of a pencil, regulated by a little mechanism, the figure and content of the land—and that neither Theodolite nor chain are necessary.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>185</sup>

LONDON, June 18th, 1789.

DEAR SIR:

I wrote you last night by Mr. Parker. I this morning received the following from Sir Joseph Banks:

“Sir Jos. Banks sends his compts. to Mr. Paine and has the honor for his and Mr. Jefferson’s information to enclose the particulars of Mr. Ledyard’s death which have been received by the Association for investigating the interior of Africa.”

“June 18th, 1789.

“Mr. Beusay presents his complts to Sir Joseph Banks, and is much concerned that he cannot manage the hope which Mr. Jefferson entertains that there is not truth in the report of Mr. Ledyard’s death. The letter which Mr. Beusay received from Mr. Baldwin, the British Consul at Cairo, and which is dated Alexandria, March 4th, 1789 informs him that a day was fixed for Mr. Ledyard’s departure as he was prepared and seemed anxious to set off. But bad weather or other causes occasioned delay as happens to most caravans. Mr. Ledyard took offence at the delay and threw himself into a violent rage with his conductors which deranged something in his system that he thought to curb by an emetic, but he took the dose so strong as at the first or second effect of its

<sup>185</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

operations to break a blood vessel. In three days he was suffocated and died.

“This account is confirmed by a letter from the Compté de Rosetta, the Venetian Resident at Cairo, to Mr. Hunter, an English merchant who had lived in great intimacy with Mr. Ledyard from the time of their travelling together from Alexandria to Cairo to that of Mr. Hunter’s departure for England. This letter is dated Cairo 27th January, 1789 and tells Mr. Hunter ‘that seventeen days ago poor Mr. Ledyard went to his eternal rest. He suffered himself to be transported to anger against the persons who had engaged to conduct him to [*illegible*] because they delayed setting out on their voyage for want (as they said) of a fair wind. He was seized with a pain in his stomach occasioned by bile and understood to cure himself. Excessive vomiting ensued, in consequence of which he broke a blood vessel and died in six days.’

“From the general correspondence of those two accounts Mr. Beausay apprehends that no doubt can be entertained of the melancholy fact which they announce.

Great George Street  
June 16th, 1789”

Thus far Sir Joseph’s and Mr. Beausay’s letters. They were sent to me in answer to an extract from your letter which I gave to Sir Joseph. Ledyard was a great favorite with the Society. They consider him as falling a sacrifice to integrity and lament him with an affectionate sorrow. [*illegible*] They at first considered him a bold but deliberate adventurer. That man, said Sir Joseph one day to me, “was all mind.”

I wish I could have sent you a better account, but I fulfill your request by sending such as it is.

Your affectionate friend and obliged and humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>186</sup>

ROTHERHAM, YORKSHIRE, July 13 [1789].

DEAR SIR:

I have not yet received my answer to my two last, the one by Messrs Parker & Cutting, the other by Post with the particulars of Ledyard’s death from Sir Joseph Banks and Mr. Bailey.

<sup>186</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

The Messrs Walkers and I have agreed on a plan and terms for executing and erecting a complete bridge which we hope to finish by October 20. Several bridges are wanted by as every one waits for some one to begin, we have resolved to begin ourselves. Our plan and terms are as follows. The arch is to be 110 feet span versed sine or arrow 5 feet and to consist of five ribs at least. The Walkers are to find all the materials, and fit and frame them ready for erecting, put them on board a vessel and send them to London. I am to undertake all expense from that time and to complete the erecting. We intend first to exhibit it and afterwards put it up to sale, or dispose of it by private contract, and after paying the expenses of each party the remainder to be equally divided—one half theirs, the other mine. My principal object in this plan is to open the way for a Bridge over the Thames, which will be more readily accomplished by erecting the Bridge at London than in any other part. When I proposed the before mentioned terms (by letter) to the Walkers, I asked, if it would be agreeable to them to take in one or two other Iron Works with us. They answered—"As our Works are large and capable of dispatching a considerable Bridge in a short space of time we would not choose to be concerned with any other Iron Works in this undertaking."

I shall now have occasion to draw upon some funds I have in America. I have one thousand dollars stock in the Bank of Philadelphia, and two years interest due upon it last April, £180 in the hands of General Morris; £40 with Mr. Constable of New York; a house at Bordentown, and a farm at New Rochelle. The stock and interest in the Bank, which Mr. Willing manages for me, is the easiest negotiated, and full sufficient for what I shall want. On this fund I have drawn fifteen guineas payable to Mr. Trumbull, though I shall not want the money longer than till the Exhibition and sale of the Bridge. I had rather draw than ask to borrow of anybody here. If you go to America this year, I shall be very glad if you can arrange this matter for me, by giving me credit for two hundred pounds, on London, and receiving that amount of Mr. Willing. I am not acquainted with the method of negotiating money matter, but if you can accommodate me in this, and will direct me how the transfer is to be made I shall be much obliged to you.

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

THOMAS PAINE.

P.S. Please direct to me under cover to Mr. Trumbull. I have some thoughts of coming over to France for two or three weeks, as I shall have little to do here until the Bridge is ready for erecting.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON<sup>187</sup>

LONDON, September 15, 1789.

DEAR SIR:

By some accident your favor of the 23 July did not come to hand till a few days ago. It had lain at Mr. Clagget's in America Square. On my return to London Mr. Morris and Mr. Parker were set off, the former for France, the latter for Holland. They are both expected to return here in a few days.

My Bridge goes excellently on, and my Partners (the Walkers) who are at all the expense except the erecting it in London, which is my part, have full as much confidence in the work as myself. About three fourths of it are already finished. We have erected two of the Ribs at the works, and our intention is to erect the whole there that we may be certain of all the parts fitting before we bring it to London. Not a single mistake has hitherto occurred. When I left Paris I was to return with the model, but I could now bring over a complete bridge. Though I have a slender opinion of myself for executive business, I think, upon the whole that I have managed this matter tolerably well. With no money to spare for such an undertaking I am the sole patentee here, and connected with one of the first and best established houses in the nation. But absent from America I feel a craving desire to return and I can scarcely forbear weeping at the thoughts of your going and my staying behind.

Accept, my dear Sir, my most hearty thanks for your many services and friendship. Remember me with an overflowing affection to my dear America—the people and the place. Be so kind to shake hands with them for me, and tell our beloved General Washington, and my old friend Dr. Franklin how much I long to see them. I wish you would spend a day with General [Lewis] Morris of Morrisania, and present best wishes to all the family. But I find myself wandering into a melancholy subject that will be tiresome to read,—so wishing you a prosperous passage, and a happy meeting with all your friends and mine

I remain yours affectionately, etc.

THOMAS PAINE.

I shall be very glad to hear from you when you arrive. If you direct for me to the care of Mr. Benjamin Vaughn it will find me. Please present

<sup>187</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

my friendship to Captain Nicholson and family of New York, and to Mr. and Mrs. Few.

## TO THOMAS JEFFERSON<sup>188</sup>

LONDON, ENGLAND, Sept. 18, 1789.

DEAR SIR:

I this moment received yours of 7, 13, and which being past night affords me the welcome opportunity of acknowledging it. I wrote you on the 13th by post, but I was so full of the thoughts of America and my American friends that I forgot France. The people of this country speak very differently on the affairs of France. The mass of them so far as I can collect say that France is a much freer country than England. The press, the Bishops etc., say the National Assembly has gone too far. There is yet in this country very considerable remains of the feudal system which people did not see before the revolution in France place it before their eyes. While the multitude here could be terrified with the cry and apprehension of arbitrary power, wooden shoe, popery, and such like stuff, they thought themselves by comparison extraordinary free people. But the bug-bear now loses its force, and they appear to me to be turning their eyes toward the aristocrats of their own nation. There is a new mode of conquering and I think it will have its effect.

I am looking out for a place to erect my bridge; within some of the Squares would be very convenient. I had thought of Lake Square, where Sir Joseph Banks lives, but he is now in Lancashire. I expect it will be ready for erecting in London by the latter end of October. Whether I shall then sell it in England or bring it over to Paris and erect it there I have not determined in my mind. In order to bring any kind of contract forward for the Seine, it is necessary it should be seen, and as economy will now be a principle in the government it will have a better chance than before.

If you should pass through Bordentown in Jersey which is not out of your way from Philadelphia to N[ew] Y[ork], I shall be glad you would enquire out my particular friend Col. Kirkbride. You will be very much pleased with him. His house is my hearth in that part of the country, and it was there that I made the model of my bridge. If you

<sup>188</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

can drop me a line when at the port to inform me by what vessel you sail, I shall be glad to receive it.

Your affectionate friend,  
THOMAS PAINE.

## TO ANONYMOUS

No. 31 KING STREET, Tuesday morning [1789.]

MY DEAR FRIEND:

On my return home last night I received your favor of Saturday. I was yesterday in the City, and called at your house in the evening. Had I known of your writing to me, I should have stayed or called again. From your house I went to Mr. Gregory, but he was not at home.

You ask if I am not a little severe in my strictures upon England. I confess I have no partiality for what is called or understood by, the National Character of England. Had you been in America you would have seen it in a different point of view to what presents itself to you here.

It appears to me that the Government has no good manners, and less principle. It acts wrong and it acts that wrong vulgarly. A Nation is only a great individual, and that which is good or bad character for an individual is good or bad character for a Nation. Make them an individual of the same disposition which marks the National character, and you will not admire him for a neighbor.

I will, with much pleasure, contribute my services to the business Mr. Forbes' agency is upon to France. After writing this I go to my lodgings, where I remain for the day.

I expect some part of the bridge will be erected before Mr. Forbes' return, and I wish him to see it, as he will most probably be asked some questions concerning it by my friends on the other side of the water. I will call on you tomorrow evening about eight o'clock.

Yours sincerely,  
THOMAS PAINE.



TO THOMAS JEFFERSON<sup>189</sup>

[1789.]

[DEAR SIR:]

After I got home, being alone and wanting amusement, I sat down to explain to myself (for there is such a thing) my ideas of national and civil rights, and the distinction between them. I send them to you to see how nearly we agree.

Suppose twenty persons, strangers to each other, to meet in a country not before inhabited. Each would be a Sovereign in his own natural right. His will would be his law, but his power, in many cases, inadequate to his right; and the consequence would be that each might be exposed, not only to each other, but to the other nineteen. It would then occur to them that their condition would be much improved, if a way could be devised to exchange that quantity of danger into so much protection; so that each individual should possess the strength of the whole number. As all their rights in the first case are natural rights, and the exercise of those rights supported only by their own natural individual power, they would begin by distinguishing between those rights they could individually exercise, fully and perfectly, and those they could not. Of the first kind are the rights of thinking, speaking, forming and giving opinions, and perhaps are those which can be fully exercised by the individual without the aid of exterior assistance; or in other words, rights of personal competency. Of the second kind are those of personal protection, of acquiring and possessing property, in the exercise of which the individual natural power is less than the natural right.

Having drawn this line they agree to retain individually the first class of Rights, or those of personal competency; and to detach from their personal possession the second class, or those of defective power, and to accept in lieu thereof a right to the whole power produced by a condensation of all the parts. These I conceive to be civil rights, or rights of com-

<sup>189</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.

The letter has been sometimes attributed to Thomas Jefferson because it was discovered among the Jefferson manuscripts. However, there is no question that it was written by Thomas Paine. Gilbert Chinard, the eminent Jeffersonian scholar, at first believed it to be written by Jefferson, and so stated in the first edition of his *Thomas Jefferson, The Apostle of Americanism*, but in his second edition he admitted his error. ". . . I still believe," he added, "that it sums up so concisely the early philosophy of Thomas Jefferson that it may not be out of place to reproduce it again."—*Editor*.

pact, and are distinguishable from natural rights because in the one we act wholly in our own person, in the other we agree not to do so, but act under the guarantee of society.

It therefore follows that the more of those imperfect natural rights or rights of imperfect power we give up, and thus exchange, the more security we possess; and as the word liberty is often mistakenly put for security, Mr. Wilson has confused his argument by confounding the terms. But it does not follow that the more natural rights of *every kind* we assign the more security we possess, because if we resign those of the first class we may suffer much by the exchange; for where the right and the power are equal with each other in the individual, naturally, they ought to rest there.

Mr. Wilson must have some allusion to this distinction, or his position would be subject to the inference you draw from it.

I consider the individual sovereignty of the States retained under the act of confederation to be of the second class of right. It becomes dangerous because it is defective in the power necessary to support it. It answers the pride and purpose of a few men in each State, but the State collectively is injured by it.

[THOMAS PAINE.]

## TO ANONYMOUS <sup>190</sup>

No. 31 KING STREET, LONDON, 178-?

SIR:

Since seeing you yesterday I have learned the reason why the English ships were seized and the American vessels not. The former went to make a settlement, the latter only to Trade. This affair has been known in Paris nearly two months. As I had not the pleasure of seeing you this morning when I called, I thought this communication, by note, might not be unacceptable, as it points out the reason why the distinction was made.

Your much obliged and obedient Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>190</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of Yale University Library. The name of the recipient is not indicated.—*Editor*.

## TO ANONYMOUS

LONDON, April 16, 1790.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

To begin with our journey, we had a very pleasant one. We got to Boulogne on Saturday about five o'clock—(left Paris Thursday about the same time) passed from Boulogne to Dover in three hours and a half, and got to London Monday evening. Sent all your packets to W. Corvie, and though we have alternately called on each other have not yet met. For three or four days after our arrival I missed the little box for Mr. Macpherson which gave me exceeding great concern, and it appeared to me that I had rather have lost my portmanteau. Neither Mr. Rutledge nor I could divine what had become of it, when, to our great satisfaction it appeared, as of itself! I know not how, for, going one evening into my room, it presented itself to me on the table. "Thou little runaway; where hast thou been, and why hast thou plagued me so?" It had, I suppose, slipped into some corner, and the girl in putting the room to rights, had found it!

The morning after my arrival I went first to Debrets, bookseller, Piccadilly; (he is the opposition bookseller). He informed me that Mr. Burke's pamphlet was in the press (he is not the publisher), that he believed Mr. Burke was much at a loss how to go on; that he had revised some of the sheets, six, seven, and one nine times! I then made an appointment with Lord Stanhope, and another with Mr. Fox.<sup>191</sup> The former received me with saying "have I the pleasure of shaking hands with the author of *Common Sense*?" I told him of the condition of Mr. Burke's pamphlet, and that I had formed to myself the design of answering it, if it should come out at a time when I could devote myself to it. From Lord Stanhope I went to Mr. Fox,<sup>191</sup> but how was I disappointed to find that he had not received my letter from Paris. That letter (as you will recollect the contents of it), laid down all the principal points with respect to the French Revolution, the Test Act, etc., which I intended for subjects for conversation when we met. You will recollect that I expressed some surprise to you at the postage which the servant took for it, and I cannot avoid suspecting that he never put the letter in

<sup>191</sup> Lord Stanhope, statesman and man of science, had advocated cessation of the war against America, and was a leading champion of Parliamentary reform. He was chairman of the "Revolution Society," and published an answer to Burke's bitter attack upon the French Revolution. Later he moved to acknowledge the French Republic.

Charles James Fox had opposed the war against America, and took exceptions to Burke's attack on the French Revolution.—*Editor*.

the office. I mention this that you may question him about it, and be on your guard with respect to your own letters. I always reproach myself for trusting letters by a servant: I sent one to the post-office in London to go by packet to America. The servant brought me 17 shillings out of a guinea, but the letter never arrived.

The conversation with Mr. Fox was chiefly on European politics. There will be no peace, said he, between the Russians, Austrians and Turks, if the King of Prussia can prevent it. I replied that the Turks must be exceedingly unwise, indeed, not to see that Prussia would keep the Turks forever at war with Russia and Austria, if he could, because it took two powerful enemies off his hands, whom he would dread if that peace was concluded, and rather than have it concluded, he would probably join in the war, from an apprehension that if peace was now made with the Turks, Russia and Austria would both attack him. On this Mr. Fox agreed. I then spoke of the reports which were circulated when that war first broke out, that the English Court had spirited up that war on an expectation of drawing France to the support of the Turks; that the policy, besides being wicked, was exceedingly ill-judged, for the effect of the policy went to do France a favor by setting her free from a connection which, by the change of circumstances on the continent since that connection was formed had not now one Article remaining which induced the connection, nor any new ones to supply their place, that the dissolution of it opened the way to a connection between France and Russia, which was an event the English Cabinet appeared to me not to have sense enough to foresee.

Mr. Fox replied that the English Ministry had always denied the accusation of spiriting up that war, but that, for his part, he believed they were not so clear of the charge as they wished to appear. I talked to him of Mr. Burke's pamphlet, and said that I believed I should reply to it. I afterwards saw Sir George Staunton, to whom I mentioned the same thing. I told him of a letter I saw from Mr. B. to a gentleman at Paris, the contents of which surprised me. He asked me if it was not to Mr. Christie, and spoke of you in very handsome terms. He afterwards told me of a letter from a gentleman at Paris to Mr. Burke. Perhaps, thought I, it is my friend Christie, but I did not ask.

But I am now inclined to think that after all this vaporing of Mr. B., he will not publish his pamphlet. I called yesterday at Debrets, who told me that he has stopped the work. (I had not called on Mr. Burke, and shall not, until his pamphlet comes out, or he gives it up.) I met Dr. Lawrence, an intimate friend of Mr. Burke, a few days ago, to whom

I said, "I am exceedingly sorry to see a friend of ours so exceedingly wrong." "Time," says he, "will show if he is." He is, said I, already wrong with respect to time past.

One of the Messrs. Walker, from Rotherham, has come to London, and we have sent a person down to conduct at the Bridge. I hope if Mr. Burke intends to publish, it will be before I am too much engaged. Apropos, I should have told you that Mr. Burke's letter is to be addressed to Lally Tollendal.

I shall in a few days write to my dear friend, the Marquis de Lafayette. In the meantime I wish you to call upon him and tell him my intention. I shall send it in the Marquis de la Lucerne's despatches. Forget not to remember me to him very affectionately, and also to Madame de Lafayette. Shake hands for me with my old friend, Mr. Mazzei. Call upon our friends at No. 36 Palais Royal, and forget me not among the rest of our acquaintances. And if there is anything I can serve you in here, or elsewhere, the greatest favor you can do me is to inform me of it.

I am, my Dear Friend,

Yours very affectionately,

THOMAS PAINE.

Tomorrow I dine at Mr. Vaughn's with Dr. Price.

Direct to me, No. 31 King Street, near Soho Square.

We have had very cold weather—snow and rain for a week past!

If you have an opportunity of seeing the Duke de la Rochefoucault, remember me to him, and to his very kind and good family. Compliments to Mr. Short, M. de Condorcet and Mr. Le Roy.

Did you deliver Mr. Mazzei's letter to Dr. Gern?

Send letters for agent at Philadelphia, M. D' Erembourg.

## TO HIS EXCELLENCY GEORGE WASHINGTON<sup>192</sup>

LONDON, 1 May, 1790.

SIR:

Our very good friend, the Marquis de Lafayette, has intrusted to my care the key of the Bastille, and a drawing handsomely framed, repre-

<sup>192</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the George Washington Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

senting the demolition of that detestable prison,<sup>193</sup> as a present to your Excellency, of which his letter will more particularly inform. I feel myself happy in being the person through whom the Marquis has conveyed this early trophy of the spoils of despotism, and the first ripe fruits of American principles transplanted into Europe, to his master and patron. When he mentioned to me the present he intended you, my heart leaped with joy. It is something so truly in character, that no remarks can illustrate it, and is more happily expressive of his remembrance of his American friends, than any letters can convey. That the principles of America opened the Bastille is not to be doubted; and therefore the key comes to the right place.

I beg leave to suggest to your Excellency the propriety of congratulating the King and Queen of France (for they have been our friends) and the National Assembly, on the happy example they are giving to Europe. You will see, by the King's speech, which I inclose, that he prides himself on being at the head of the revolution; and I am certain that such a congratulation will be well received, and have a good effect.

I should rejoice to be the direct bearer of the Marquis's presents to your Excellency, but I doubt I shall not be able to see my much-loved America till next spring. I shall therefore send it by some American vessel to New York. I have permitted no drawing to be taken here, though it has been often requested, as I think there is a propriety that it should first be presented. But Mr. West wishes Mr. Trumbull to make a painting of the presentation of the key to you.

I returned from France to London, about five weeks ago; and I am engaged to return to Paris, when the Constitution shall be proclaimed, and to carry the American flag in the procession. I have not the least doubt of the final and complete success of the French Revolution. Little ebbs and flowings, for and against, the natural companions of revolutions, sometimes appear, but the full current of it is, in my opinion, as fixed as the Gulf Stream.

I have manufactured a bridge (a single arch), of one hundred and ten feet span, and five feet high from the chord of the arch. It is now on board a vessel, coming from Yorkshire to London, where it is to be erected. I see nothing yet to disappoint my hopes of its being advantageous to me. It is this only which keeps me in Europe; and happy shall I be, when I shall have it in my power to return to America. I have not heard of Mr. Jefferson since he sailed, except of his arrival. As I have

<sup>193</sup> The Bastille was captured on July 14, 1789.—*Editor*.

always indulged the belief of having many friends in America, or rather no enemies, I have nothing else particularly to mention, but my affectionate remembrances to all; and am, Sir, with the greatest respect,

Your most obliged and obedient, humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. If any of my friends are disposed to favor me with a letter, it will come to hand by addressing it to the care of Benjamin Vaughan, Esquire, Jeffries Square, London.

## TO HIS EXCELLENCY GEORGE WASHINGTON <sup>194</sup>

LONDON, May 31, 1790.

SIR:

By Mr. James Morris, who sailed in the *May Packet*, I transmitted you a letter from the Marquis de Lafayette, at the same time informing you that the Marquis had entrusted to my charge the key of the Bastille, and a drawing of that prison, as a present to your Excellency. Mr. J. Rutledge, jun'r, had intended coming in the ship *Marquis de Lafayette*, and I had chosen that opportunity for the purpose of transmitting the present; but, the ship not sailing at the time appointed, Mr. Rutledge takes his passage on the packet, and I have committed to his care that trophy of liberty which I know it will give you pleasure to receive. The French Revolution is not only complete but triumphant, and the envious despotism of this nation is compelled to own the magnanimity with which it has been conducted.

The political hemisphere is again clouded by a dispute between England and Spain,<sup>195</sup> the circumstances of which you will hear before

<sup>194</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the George Washington Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>195</sup> Paine is referring to the Nootka Sound controversy. A number of English merchants had established a settlement at Nootka Sound, off Vancouver's island, for trade in furs and ginseng with China. In April, 1789 one of their ships with cargo was seized by a Spanish frigate and others were seized soon after this incident. Satisfaction was demanded by the English government, which was refused by Spain on the ground that all lands on the West Coast of America as far as 60 north latitude were under the dominion of Spain, and that Nootka belonged to Spain, because it had been discovered and occupied by a Spanish captain four years before Captain Cook visited those coasts. The English claimed that the king's subjects had a right to navigate and fish in those waters and settle on unoccupied lands. Both countries prepared for war, but the controversy was finally settled peacefully

this letter can arrive. A messenger was sent from hence the 6th inst. to Madrid with very peremptory demands, and to wait there only forty-eight hours. His return has been expected for two or three days past. I was this morning at the Marquis del Campo's but nothing is yet arrived. Mr. Rutledge sets off at four o'clock this afternoon, but should any news arrive before the making up the mail on Wednesday June 2, I will forward it to you under cover.

The views of this court as well as of the nation, so far as they extend to South America, are not for the purpose of freedom, but conquest. They already talk of sending some of the young branches to reign over them, and to pay off their national debt with the produce of their mines. The bondage of those countries will, as far as I can perceive, be prolonged by what this court has in contemplation.

My bridge is arrived and I have engaged a place to erect it in. A little time will determine its fate, but I yet see no cause to doubt of its success, though it is very probable that a war, should it break out, will as in all new things, prevent its progress so far as regards profits.

In the partition in the box, which contains the key of the Bastille, I have put up half a dozen razors, manufactured from cast-steel made at the works where the bridge was constructed, which I request you to accept as a little token from a very grateful heart.

I received about a week ago a letter from Mr. G[eorge] Clymer. It is dated the 4th February, but has been travelling ever since. I request you to acknowledge it for me and that I will answer it when my bridge is erected. With much affection to all my friends, and many wishes to see them again, I am,

Your much obliged and obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.<sup>196</sup>

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on October 28, 1790 when a treaty was signed by which Spain yielded to the demands of the British and restored the disputed territory to England. At the root of the controversy was Spain's fear of English activities in trading with her Latin American colonies.—*Editor*.

<sup>196</sup> Washington replied thanking Paine for his "three agreeable letters" (October 16, 1789, May 1, and 31, 1790), and for the key of the Bastille. The new government established under the Constitution, he added, "answers its purposes as well as could have been reasonably expected." He left it to Colonel David Humphreys, who was sent as special secret agent to obtain information for the American government during the Nootka Sound Controversy, to explain in detail what was happening in America. *Washington Mss.* Library of Congress.—*Editor*.



TO WILLIAM SHORT <sup>197</sup>

LONDON, KING STREET No. 31, SOHO, JUNE 1ST, 1790.

DEAR SIR:

Mr. Rutledge set off yesterday afternoon for Falmouth to go by the Packet. He received your letter of the 26th, the Contents of which impressed me very much,<sup>198</sup> yet I cannot bring myself to infer the same Consequences from the Tumults as you apprehend, and I think that this, like the affair of Versailles, will serve to confirm the well earned popularity of the Marquis de la Fayette. You say those Mobs may at any time be excited by Money. The Question then is: from whom do the money come? I would sooner, at this moment, suspect that it came from this Court or some Emissaries of theirs than from any Quarter. Any tumult, from any cause, no matter what, serves now the purpose of this Court, for let the cause or the pretence be what it may, the effect is the same. This Court is now what the French Court used to be. It is conducted with Mystery and intrigue. It is maneuvering every where and every how. I find I am not the only one here who has these suspicions, and I am certain there is some cause. Here is a courtly and an aristocratical hatred against the principles of the French Revolution, but besides this, here is another cause which operates more immediately and more universally. It is that of disabling France at this moment from making the necessary naval preparation even for her own security. They, the English, begin to apprehend that if a war break out with Spain, that France will not be so inactive as they had calculated upon.

No news or answer is yet arrived from Spain, but the preparations for war continue as much as ever. They begin to parcel out Peru and Mexico and to send some of the young Cubs to reign over them, and to pay off their National debt out of the Mines. As to the family compact I hold it as nothing, but certain I am that France ought not to permit those Sources of wealth, from which Europe is supplied, to fall into the hands

<sup>197</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the William Short Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress. For Short's replies to Paine's letters printed below, see *Journal of Modern History*, vol. XIII, September, 1941, pp. 357-374.—*Editor.*

<sup>198</sup> In this letter to John Rutledge, Jr., of South Carolina, the son of an associate justice of the United States Supreme Court, Short had recounted the attempt of Lafayette to suppress a riot in the Faubourg St. Antoine and the difficulties he had encountered. The original of this letter is in the Gilpin Papers in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.—*Editor.*

of the English. Such a transfer of property and Dominion would even prolong the bondage of those Countries, and until they assert their own Independence, it is better for themselves and the World, that they remain as they are. There are so many great interests to combine France and Spain as Nations, that the Family Compact is not the Question.

France has nothing to do but to equip a Navy. Whatever views the English Court may have it will not send out its Fleet on any distant expedition and leave France mistress of the Channel and all the home Seas. With respect to Navies, they are of a Nature different in their operation to Armies. They are limited to the Sea. They cannot be employed to the purposes of internal despotism. They can neither make nor overturn revolutions. They are Fishes, and though a whale might swallow a Jonah at Sea it could not hurt a pismire at land.

I have written five letters to the Marquis de la Fayette. In the last I enclosed one for you.<sup>199</sup> I have not a line from him, not so much as to inform me if he received them. The first letter I sent was under Cover to M<sup>r</sup> Christee of May 4th informing him of what would happen. This was before the Press warrants and the King's message to Parliament. The other letters were sent in M. de la Lucerne's despatches.<sup>200</sup> Be so kind as to show him this letter and let me hear from you by the next opportunity.

Your affectionate friend etc.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO WILLIAM SHORT<sup>201</sup>

LONDON, June 4th, 1790.

DEAR SIR:

This is the third letter I have written you and I begin it before I know what the News of the day is. You will hear something about the return of the English Messenger, but you are to understand this is not the Messenger who was sent on the 6th of May with the peremptory demand. His name is Basilico. This is Flint who was sent off some days

<sup>199</sup> The letter to Short mentioned here is not to be found among the Short Papers, and I have not been able to locate the five letters to Lafayette.—*Editor*.

<sup>200</sup> Anne-César de la Luzerne was the French minister to the United States from 1779 to 1783 and ambassador to Great Britain from 1788 to 1791.—*Editor*.

<sup>201</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the William Short Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress. The letter is not signed by Paine.—*Editor*.

previous to B—— with dispatches overland to Gibraltar. Flint, I believe, passed through Madrid on his return while B—— was there but nothing transpires from anything which Flint has brought. The Stocks rose upon the return of F—— and a report was immediately circulated that Spain had signed an *unconditional Submission*. They fell again (one 7s. 6d.) yesterday. The total inability of France to take any Part is yet in everybody's mouth, but I believe some of them begin to fear or think otherwise.

The Statement delivered in by M. Necker has given me infinite pleasure.<sup>202</sup> I never had any doubt upon the final Success of the French finances. National wealth may be created by opinion as in England. But in France where there are mines of real resources, time and good management cannot fail to bring them forth.

The preparations for war here goes on. It signifies not doing things by halves, and therefore till France and Spain exert themselves fully England will ever be an insolent neighbor, bullying first one, and then the other. Yet were a combined fleet now to come up the Channel, this City (London) would be in the most perfect consternation, for they have lived so long without being molested at home, that they are become Bullies abroad and Cowards at home.

Doctor Franklin has finished his Career. He died the Saturday before [e] the 27th of April. Congress goes into Mourning a Month on the Occasion. Old Mr. Vaughn who writes the letter from Philadelphia says that his funeral procession was attended by the greatest Concourse of people he ever saw except the Coronation at London. Not only the streets, windows, and roofs but the tops of the chimneys were covered with people.

Mr. Casertir showed me a letter from Boyd and Carr house, Paris, which says that the Prussian Treasury is à sec (dry). The letter is from Furguson. I imagine that the King of Prussia has collected an Army too unwieldy for his resources.

Adieu. Let me hear from you some how or other. If you do not choose to write by M. de la Lucerne's dispatches, write to me under Cover to Mr. Parker No. 18 Leicester Square.

Yours truly

There is much talk that the fleet preparing here about 12 or 14 Sail of the Line will go into the Baltic.

<sup>202</sup> Paine is referring to Necker's report to the National Assembly, presented on May 29, 1790.—*Editor*.

TO WILLIAM SHORT<sup>203</sup>

LONDON, June 22, 1790.

DEAR SIR:

The paper No. 1 is the beginning of the letter which I mentioned in the few lines which I wrote you by Mr. Hushinson. I now send it because it contains some soft reproaches to the M. de la Fayette which I wish him to know of.

But the principal subject of that letter I have thrown into another form and it contained in the Paper No. 2.<sup>204</sup> My design in doing this is that it may be translated into French and published. It will make a little pamphlet such as they sell for three or four Sous in Paris. When it is published in French it may be published here as a translation, but you will see by the purport of it that it cannot come out here as an English production. But I wish you first to take it to the M. de la Fayette and closet yourself for half an hour with him and read and talk over the contents, and do not forget to tell him at the same time that I have appointed you my Minister Plenipo to reproach him for his inattention to me for the letters I have written to him, which were merely for his service and not for my own.

I know the character of this Country so well that nothing but carrying a high-hand can manage them. Yet they are the greatest Cowards on Earth as all Bullies are, if you impress them rightly. Unaccustomed to wars at home or on their own coast, they have no idea of a War but at a distance, and that they are only to read the accounts of it in the newspaper. Of this sort of war they make a mere trade and ever will.

If the present dispute is in negotiation or is to be negotiated it will be of use to impress them with what France and Spain can do for the Ministry here have committed themselves so fully that unless more reasons can be shown than what the Ministry will like to give out themselves, they will be surely afraid to close the business, and on the other hand if they intend a war the contents of the enclosed will operate to detain their fleets at home, for such will be the fears and clamors of the John Bulls that the Coast must be guarded at the risk of all other enterprises, and whether their views are to the Baltic, the West Indies or else where the same event will follow, that is, the fleet must keep at home.

<sup>203</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the William Short Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>204</sup> Neither Paper No. 1 nor Paper No. 2 are to be found in the Short Papers.—*Editor*.

If France could now have the combined fleets in the Channel and Paul Jones in the North Sea frightened the Bulls' last war, she would know at once how to manage this perverse Country.

As the Bulls never talk but of one thing at a time, the whole talk now is Electione[er]ing. When that is over they will talk again about Peace and War. I believe the utmost force that this Country could now put to Sea is not 20 Ships of the line, and which has no Land Troops on Board worth mentioning. She cannot man her fleet but under a great length of time because the greatest part of her seamen are abroad. Therefore France and Spain gain nothing by delay.

Last Sunday Evening I was at the Marquis de la Lucerne's and I shall dine there on Thursday next. M. le Portier, who is a great Revolutionist and who lived in M. Noailles' family when ambassador here and is a great Champion for the Marquis de la Fayette, is uneasy for consequences on the 14th of July. He hears all that passes among the Duke of Luxemburgh who, he says, is an outrageous Aristocrat and the rest of that Tribe. The Duke's Sons had gone to Falmouth to take the Packet for Lisbon but were recalled and returned to London. He tells me they are all set off again, he knows not where, and he is afraid they have mischief in their hearts.

If on consultation it should be concluded to translate and publish the enclosed I must desire you to send me some of the publications *and also the original which I shall publish here as a translation for I have no time to make a copy*, it being now near five o'Clock and it goes off at Six. But you must put these under Cover to me and send in M. Lucerne's dispatches. The Porter will take care that they come safe to me.

The American Papers mention that the Exports of Flour, Grain, Rice, Corn last year was 15 Millions of Dollars. The clearances from Philadelphia last year was 1258 Free; it never amounted to 800 before the revolution. This is great encouragement to promote the principle of Revolution.

Yours affectionately

THO. PAINE.

TO WILLIAM SHORT<sup>205</sup>

June 24th &amp; 25 [1790].

[DEAR SIR:]

Matters remain here as in my last with respect to Peace and War. The Press-Gangs are not so busy as they were<sup>206</sup> but that perhaps is either owing to policy, to allure the seamen to appear more publicly, or on account of the elections for the new Parliament.

The Ministry have got rid of the old Parliament at a very convenient time, for the Government being now entirely executive, it has the cover of five or six weeks' Secrecy to carry on its Plans unquestioned. Nothing appears here to justify even an opinion of the destination of the fleet. It probably has none and is waiting circumstances. The utmost force now ready for Sea is 20 Ships of the Line. From appearances it is but ill-provided with Seamen, for the press-gangs have taken whatever they could pick up and a very great part are country landmen who never saw the Sea. It is clear to me that the English ministry calculated on the inability and neutrality of France and not finding this likely to be the Case, their plans, if they had any, are deranged. They talk here of a Dutch fleet of 12 Sail of the line coming to join the Fleet at Spithead, but everything is so over-done, and over-said that nothing can be believed.

As the Treaty between France and Holland is still in Existence, notwithstanding the Treaty with England, and acknowledged so by the Dutch, who since the latter Treaty, have in their official communications with France addressed France as their ally, it would I should think be a good maneuver in France to demand of Holland the stipulated succors in case of a war as England has done. The Dutch from the Nature of its Trade want Neutrality and of consequence they want a Pretence for it. This would afford it, as in any case it would enable France to judge of the designs of Holland. From circumstances there appear cause to suspect a good deal of intrigue and management with respect to the Dutch Fleet. The House of Hope had loaned a sum of money to Russia, and to account for its being taken, is only to suppose

<sup>205</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the William Short Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress. Both the salutation and signature are missing.—*Editor*.

<sup>206</sup> On May 3, 1790 an Order in Council was passed in England for pressing seamen in every port in the kingdom.—*Editor*.

that this was contrived between the loaners and the King of Sweden who should engage to repay it in case Russia did not. This contrivance would answer three purposes: first to disappoint Russia, secondly to assist Sweden, and thirdly to make the contrived capture a pretence for fitting out a fleet without attracting the Notice of France. The two first of these circumstance[s] is generally credited here and I have added the last as a probable inference.

I began this letter yesterday, Thursday.

Friday afternoon—Two of the Morning Papers of today says that the Dutch fleet is arrived at Spithead, another (the Herald) says it is sailed toward the Baltic and is not to act in conjunction with the British fleet. There is no country in the world that equals this for *intentional* Lying.

The press-gangs are at work again and the preparations for war are not slackened. The thing that will be the most likely to prevent a War will be a spirited interference on the part of France. She is now the umpire, but to act with effect she must be well prepared and resolute. Doing things by halves will answer no purpose but that of encreasing her expences in the end.

In my former I mentioned the Channel, and every thing I hear and see convinces me that this is the only place to operate with effect. There is no instance I believe to be found in which the English fully risk an action at Sea but when they have the superiority of Ships. In every case of inferiority or equality they either avoid an action or fight shy. They make it a rule to wait the chances of the Seas and to attack only when they have a decided advantage. By the combined fleet acting in a body and not in detachments, these chances are prevented.

The *Pigou* in 23 days is arrived from Philadelphia in the Channel but I hear of no letters from her yet.

I have just seen a concise account of the deputation from the foreigners to the National Assembly, of pulling down the odious figures at the Place de Victoire and the suppression or extinction of Nicknames (titles). All those things are right. The latter is in my opinion raising Man to his proper rank for nick names serve to diminish him.

I have a very longing desire to see the 14th of July in Paris. If I should come for a short time can you contrive to give me House room.

Yours very affectionately

[THOMAS PAINE.]

TO WILLIAM SHORT<sup>207</sup>

LONDON, June 28th, 1790.

DEAR SIR:

The talk and opinion of War is considerably renewed here since my last of last Friday p. m. de la Lucerne's dispatches. Another Messenger arrived here from Madrid on Friday or Saturday last, but as nothing transpires it may be concluded that he did not bring very welcome tidings. The English fleet, from every appearance, have received sailing orders and it is expected it will sail this day. Its utmost force is 22 Ships of the line. They still talk of the Dutch fleet of 12 Ships, but it does not positively appear that any have yet joined. No direct opinion is formed of the destination of the English fleet. It may probably only be a short Cruise by way of seasoning the Men as a great part a[re] landsmen. It is said they have 12 Regiments on Board, but this I give as report. My chief apprehension is that it is to look out for some detachment of the Spanish fleet *for this is the English mode of carrying on Naval War, and the Policy by which they succeed and therefore ought to be the most principally guarded against, and where ever you go into Company, especially where it may be of use I wish you would impress this strongly and be assured that if they can meet with an advantageous opportunity they will not stand upon ceremonies.*

We have accounts of a Naval action between the Russian and Swedish Fleets in the Baltic. Such accounts have certainly arrived but not authoritatively. The probability however is strongly in favor of the report which is that the action commenced on the 2<sup>d</sup> Inst. and was renewed on the 4<sup>th</sup> at which time the Russian fleet was reinforced by the fleet from Revel and that the Swedish Fleet was so disabled that few of them were expected to get back to Carlsecrone. The English Funds fell one per ct. upon this news yesterday.<sup>208</sup>

General Washington has been very Ill and Dr. Jones has been to attend him. Later reports are that he is better.

I have seen Philadelphia Papers to the 18th of May—every thing going

<sup>207</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the William Short Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor.*

<sup>208</sup> The Swedish fleet was blockaded at the entrance of the Gulf of Viborg by the Russians at the time this letter was written. On July 9 the Swedes attempted to break through the blockade, and lost a part of their fleet. A little while later, however, the Russians in their attack on the Swedish fleet at Svensksund suffered a greater loss.—*Editor.*



on well. Exchange at Philadelphia 14 & 15 p. Cent Sterling against London. In the United States Gazette, about the middle of May is a Bill said to be intended to be brought into Congress to prohibit all goods, wares, merchandise coming from Rhode Island by Land or by Water entering any part of the United States or any vessel putting into any port except in distress.

Although there are not yet more than 22 Ships of the line, more are put into Commission and getting ready for Sea. Admiral Barrington has the command at present, but Howe (alias Lord Howe) will probably have the command finally.

There are those here who are inclined to believe that the intended destination is the Baltic but I think the probabilities are against it. If the British Ministry intended the Baltic it was the worst of all policy to alarm by a haughty and threatening message the powers to the southward, whose preparations in consequence of that, would prevent her operation to the Northward. The only policy, if it can be so called, to account for this absurdity upon, is to suppose that Mr. Pitt, elevating himself upon the humbling of France in 1787, imagined he might play the same game over again and go afterwards to the Baltic. He is in my opinion a wretched hand in the affairs of foreign Politics. His forte is that of a Party Man and his success even in this he owes more to the disgust the nation took at the Coalition than to any thing in himself.

Yours very affectionat[e]ly

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>209</sup>

LONDON, Sept. 28, 1790.

DEAR SIR:

I enclose you a few observations on the establishment of a Mint. I have not seen your report on that subject <sup>210</sup> and therefore cannot see how nearly our opinions run together, but as it is by thinking upon and talking subjects over that we approach towards truth there may probably be something in the enclosed that may be of use.

<sup>209</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>210</sup> For Jefferson's report on the establishment of a Mint, see Philip S. Foner, editor, *The Basic Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, New York, 1944, pp. 174 ff. For Paine's plan, see above pp. 901-908.—*Editor*.

As the establishment of a Mint combines a portion of Politics with a knowledge of the Arts and a variety of other matters it is a subject I shall very much like to talk with you upon.

I intend at all events to be in America in the Spring and it will please me much to arrive before you have gone [far in] this arrangement.

I am dear Sir, with much esteem, Your obedient and humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

As I do not know by what means this will arrive or when it will go, I put nothing in it but the subject I write upon.

## TO MESSIEURS CONDORCET, NICOLAS DE BONNEVILLE AND LANTHENAS<sup>211</sup>

PARIS, June, 1791.

GENTLEMEN:

I have been informed by M. Duchâtelet that it is the purpose of certain persons to begin the publication of a work entitled *Le Républicain*.

Being the citizen of a land that recognizes no majesty but that of the people, no government except that of its own representatives, and no sovereignty except that of the laws, I tender you my services in helping forward the success of those principles which honor a nation and contribute to the advancement of the entire world; and I tender them not only because my country is bound to yours by the ties of friendship and gratitude, but because I venerate the moral and political character of those who have taken part in the present enterprise, and feel proud of being their associate. Unfortunately all my productions have been composed in English, and can be of slight advantage to the cause, except through the medium of translation, so that, I suppose, the services I would render can never be commensurate with my desires. Moreover, I shall have to spend a portion of this summer in England and Ireland.

The public are generally aware that I subscribe the words COMMON SENSE to whatever I publish, and, therefore, I shall use this pen-name in my contributions to your work, so that no one may commit the error of attributing to me productions in which I have had no share. At the same time, I shall try to render my opinions on the political situation so

<sup>211</sup> Nicolas de Bonneville was a prominent French publicist and litterateur; Antoine-Nicolas de Condorcet was an eminent French philosopher, mathematician and liberal, and M. Lanthenas later translated Paine's *Rights of Man* into French—*Editor*.

self-evident that their tendency cannot be mistaken. If such definiteness of expression be always desirable, it is especially necessary in the present circumstance, because we are confronting a situation concerning which there should be no possibility of misunderstanding our ideas. For this reason the title of your publication gives me much satisfaction. The words "The Republican" imply that it is solely concerned about the *Res-publica*, namely, the interests of the state, and that includes all the ideas we should entertain of government in general.

The very word "Monarchy" signifies, in its primary meaning, the *despotic rule of one individual*, though that individual be a madman, a tyrant, or a hypocrite; kings and courtiers have, indeed, succeeded in giving it a gentler meaning but, for all that, the very term is in itself an insult to a people, for it is susceptible of no other significance than that which I have attached to it. In this relation, then, France is not a monarchy, and to style it so is to insult her. The abject servitude which is the concomitant of monarchical government no more exists in France now than it does in America, and therefore she should regard it as a thing to be scorned.

One of the absurd notions which the dishonesty or the ignorance of the supporters of monarchy have scattered through the world is that, while the republican form of government may be suited to a small country, the monarchical is the only one that harmonizes with a large one. But this opinion, though by the agencies of courts it has been spread broadcast through monarchical countries, is in accordance neither with principle nor with experience.

No government can be considered to have completely fulfilled its functions if it is not thoroughly acquainted with all the varied interests and all the different parts of the nation. For this reason it might be said that monarchy is adapted rather to a small country in which the monarch may easily become familiar with the affairs of the entire population. On the other hand, how can a single individual become familiar with the affairs of an extensive territory embracing a multiplicity of diverse interests? His helpless ignorance of matters that affect the people must necessarily lead to the establishment of a tyrannical form of government. As evidence of the truth of this proposition, we have only to point to Spain, Russia, Germany, Turkey and the whole of Asia. That I may live to see the freedom of these lands is my ardent desire.

In fact, the only system of government that can insure anything like

adequate attention to every portion of an extended territory is the government that has its source in popular representation.

Such representation is the most potent and vigorous organ of the opinion of a nation. It acts so powerfully on the minds of citizens that they approve of it even without knowing why. Every part of France, no matter how far away it may be from its center, is aware that that center constitutes France, and that in its center it has its integral being. This is the feeling of the citizen, however remote may be his abode: he knows that his rights are protected, and, if he is a soldier, he is assured that he is not enslaved by a tyrant, but that he is the citizen of a free nation, and, therefore, bound to defend it.

It is true that certain countries, such as Holland, Berne, Genoa, Venice, etc., call themselves Republics; but these countries do not merit such a designation. All the principles upon which they are founded are in direct contradiction to every republican sentiment, and they are really in a condition of absolute servitude to an aristocracy.

During the early period of a revolution mistakes are likely enough to be committed—mistakes in principle or in practise; or perhaps, mistakes both in principle and practise. When men are in the early stage of freedom, they are not all sufficiently instructed to be able to inform one another mutually of their several opinions, and so they become the victims of a sort of timidity that hinders them from reaching at a single bound that elevation which they have the *right* to attain. We have witnessed symptoms of this imperfection at the beginning of the present Revolution. Fortunately, they were manifested before the Constitution was fully established, so that whatever defects were apparent could be corrected.

*Hereditary succession* is never founded on *right*; consequently, it has no real existence. To sanction such a fallacy is to sanction the fallacy of the right of certain individuals, either now born or about to be born, to the possession of human beings as their property! It is to declare that our posterity is to be classed with the animal creation, destitute alike of will and of right! Such a conception debases human nature and should forever be effaced from the soul of that humanity which it dishonors.

Nay, so opposed to the rights of man is hereditary succession that even if we, instead of our descendants, should at some future period return to life, we should not then have the right to abdicate those rights which would be our own peculiar possession. On what argument, therefore, can we base our claim to rob of their rights children who will one day

become men? How is it we are unable to see the wrong we inflict upon our posterity when we attempt to prolong the rule of those infamous despots the continuance of whose vices, and of whose vices alone, we can surely foretell?

Only when the French Constitution conforms to the *Declaration of Rights* can France be justly entitled to be called a *civic empire*; because then only will its government be the empire of laws based upon the grand republican principles of Elective Representation and the Rights of Man. On the other hand, Monarchy and Hereditary succession are totally inconsistent with the very fundamental principles of constitutional government.

I venture to think that the preceding opinions will show you that I am a sound Republican. Indeed, my conviction of the stability of these principles is so firm that I look forward to their triumph in France as well as in America. The pride of human nature will emphasize their truth, contribute to their success and inspire mankind with a feeling of shame at the thought of the very existence of Monarchy.

I remain, Messieurs, with great respect, Your friend

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO HIS EXCELLENCY GEORGE WASHINGTON<sup>212</sup>

LONDON, July 21, 1791.

DEAR SIR:

I received your favor of last August by Col. [David] Humphries since which I have not written to or heard from you. I mention this that you may know no letters have miscarried. I took the liberty of addressing my late work *Rights of Man*, to you;<sup>213</sup> but though I left it at that time to find its way to you, I now request your acceptance of fifty copies as a token of remembrance to yourself and my friends. The work has had a run beyond anything that has been published in this country on the subject of government, and the demand continues. In Ireland it has had a much greater. A letter I received from Dublin, 10th of May, mentioned that the fourth edition was then on sale. I know not what number of

<sup>212</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the George Washington Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>213</sup> See Volume I, page 244 of the present edition.—*Editor*.

copies were printed at each edition, except the second, which was ten thousand. The same fate follows me here as I *at first* experienced in America, strong friends and violent enemies, but as I have got the ear of the country, I shall go on, and at least show them, what is a novelty here, that there can be a person beyond the reach of corruption.

I arrived here from France about ten days ago. M. de Lafayette is well. The affairs of that country are verging to a new crisis, whether the government shall be monarchical and hereditary or wholly representative? I think the latter opinion will very generally prevail in the end. On this question the people are much forwarder than the National Assembly.

After the establishment of the American Revolution, it did not appear to me that any object could arise great enough to engage me a second time. I began to feel myself happy in being quiet; but I now experience that principle is not confined to time or place, and that the ardor of Seventy-six is capable of renewing itself. I have another work on hand which I intend shall be my last, for I long much to return to America. It is not natural that fame should wish for a rival, but the case is otherwise with me, for I do most sincerely wish there was some person in this country that could usefully and successfully attract the public attention, and leave me with a satisfied mind to the enjoyment of quiet life: but it is painful to see errors and abuses and sit down a senseless spectator. Of this your own mind will interpret mine.

I have printed sixteen thousand copies; when the whole are gone of which there remain between three and four thousand I shall then make a cheap edition, just sufficient to bring in the price of the printing and paper, as I did by *Common Sense*.

Mr. Green who will present you this, has been very much my friend. I wanted last October to draw for fifty pounds on General Lewis Morris who has some money of mine, but as he is unknown in the commercial line, and American credit not very good, and my own expended, I could not succeed, especially as Gov'r Morris was then in Holland. Col. Humphries went with me to your agent Mr. Walsh, to whom I stated the case, and took the liberty of saying that I knew you would not think it a trouble to receive it of Gen. Morris on Mr. Walsh's account, but he declined it. Mr. Green afterwards supplied me and I have since repaid him. He has a troublesome affair on his hands here, and is in danger of losing thirty or forty thousand pounds, embarked under the flag of the United States is East India property. The persons who have

received it withhold it, and shelter themselves under some law contrivance. He wishes to state the case to Congress, not only on his own account, but as a matter that may be nationally interesting.

The public papers, will inform you of the riots and tumults at Birmingham,<sup>214</sup> and of some disturbances at Paris, and as Mr. Green can retail them to you more particularly than I can do in a letter I leave those matters to his information.

I am Sir, with affectionate concern for your happiness and Mrs. Washington Your much obliged humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO WILLIAM SHORT<sup>215</sup>

November 2, 1791.

DEAR SIR:

I received your favor conveying a letter from Mr. Jefferson and the answers to *Publicola*<sup>216</sup> for which I thank you. I had John Adams in my mind when I wrote the pamphlet and it has hit as I expected.

M. Lenobia who presents you this is come to pass a few days at Paris. He is a bon republican and you will oblige me much by introducing him among our friends of bon foi. I am again in the press but shall not be out till about Christmas, when the Town will begin to fill. By what I can find, the Government Gentry begin to threaten. They have already tried all the under-plots of abuse and scurrility without effect; and have managed those in general so badly as to make the work and the author the more famous; several answers also have been written against it which did not excite reading enough to pay the expence of printing.

<sup>214</sup> When the friends of the French Revolution in Birmingham arranged to hold a dinner on July 14, 1791 to celebrate the fall of the Bastille, a mob, instigated by Royalists, attacked the homes of prominent democrats and, among other things, destroyed the library, scientific apparatus and papers of Joseph Priestley. The riots lasted for two days and were finally quelled by the dragoons.—*Editor*.

<sup>215</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.—*Editor*.

<sup>216</sup> The essays signed "Publicola" were written by John Quincy Adams in criticism of Paine's *Rights of Man*.

The letter of Jefferson referred to is dated July 29, 1791. In it Jefferson expresses his happiness over the publication of *Rights of Man*, and adds that it "has been much read here [the United States], with avidity and pleasure." He also writes: "Your observations on the subject of a copper coinage have satisfied my mind on that subject, which I confess had wavered before between difficulties." Jefferson *Mss.*, Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

I have but one way to be secure in my next work which is, to go further than in my first. I see that *great rogues* escape by the excess of their crimes, and, perhaps, it may be the same in honest cases. However, I shall make a pretty large division in the public opinion, probably too much so to encourage the Government to put it to issue, for it will be rather like begging them than me.

By all the accounts we have here, the French emigrants are in a hopeless condition abroad; for my own part I never saw anything to fear from foreign courts—they are more afraid of the French Revolution than the revolution needs to be of them, and the same caution which they take to prevent the French principles getting among their armies, will prevent their sending armies among the principles.

We have distressing accounts here from St. Domingo. It is the natural consequence of Slavery and must be expected every where. The Negroes are enraged at the opposition made to their relief and are determined, if not to relieve themselves to punish their enemies.<sup>217</sup> We have no new accounts from the East Indies, and people are in much doubt.

I am, affectionately yours,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO JOHN HALL

LONDON, Nov. 25, 1791.

MY OLD FRIEND:

I am very happy to see a letter from you, and to hear that our Friends on the other side of the water are well. The Bridge has been put up, but being on wood butments they yielded, and it is now taken down. The first rib as an experiment was erected between two steel furnaces, which supported it firmly; it contained not quite three tons of iron, was ninety feet span, height of the arch five feet; it was loaded with six tons of iron, which remained upon it a twelve month.

At present I am engaged on my political Bridge. I shall bring out a new work (Second part of the *Rights of Man*) soon after New Year. It will produce something one way or other. I see the tide is yet the

<sup>217</sup> Shortly after the French Revolution began, the Negroes in St. Domingo petitioned the National Assembly for civil and political rights. These were unequivocally denied in 1790, but a year later were finally granted them. When the whites in St. Domingo resisted the government decrees, the Negroes rose up in revolt.—*Editor*.



wrong way, but there is a change of sentiment beginning. I have so far got the ear of John Bull that he will read what I write—which is more than ever was done before to the same extent. *Rights of Man* has had the greatest run of anything ever published in this country, at least of late years—almost sixteen thousand has gone off—and in Ireland above forty thousand—besides the above numbers one thousand printed cheap are now gone to Scotland by desire of some of the [friends] there. I have been applied to from Birmingham for leave to print ten thousand copies, but I intend, after the next work has had its run among those who will have handsome printed books and fine paper, to print an hundred thousand copies of each work and distribute them at sixpence a-piece; but this I do not at present talk of, because it will alarm the wise mad folks at St. James. I have received a letter from Mr. Jefferson who mentioned the great run it has had there. It has been attacked by John Adams, who has brought an host about his ears from all parts of the Continent. Mr. Jefferson has sent me twenty five different answers to Adams who wrote under the signature of Publicola. A letter is somewhere in the city for me from Mr. Laurens of S[outh] Carolina. I hope to receive it in a few days. I shall be glad at all times to see, or hear from you. Write to me (under cover) to Gordon, Booksellers N: 166 Fleet Street, before you leave Leicester. How far is it from thence to Rotherham?

Yours sincerely,

THOMAS PAINE.

P.S. I have done you the compliment of answering your favor the inst. I received it which is more than I have done by any other—were I to answer all the letters I receive—I should require half a dozen clerks.

## TO THOMAS JEFFERSON, SECRETARY OF STATE <sup>218</sup>

LONDON, February 13, 1792.

DEAR SIR:

Mr. Kenedy who brings this to N[ew] York, is on the point of setting out. I am therefore confined to time. I have enclosed six copies of my

<sup>218</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress. Jefferson was appointed Secretary of State in Washington's Cabinet in September, 1789.—*Editor*.

work for yourself in a parcel addressed to the President, and three or four for my other friends, which I wish you take the trouble of presenting.

I have just heard of Gouverneur Morris's appointment.<sup>219</sup> *It is a most unfortunate one*, and as I shall mention the same thing to him when I see him, I do not express it to you with the injunction of confidence.

He is just now arrived in London, and this circumstance has served, as I see by the French papers, to increase the dislike and suspicion of some of that nation and the National Assembly against him.

Your affectionate friend,

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. In the present state of Europe it would be best to make no appointments.

## TO GEORGE WASHINGTON, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES <sup>220</sup>

LONDON, Feb. 13th, 1792.

SIR:

An opportunity immediately offering, I have had a dozen copies of my new work <sup>221</sup> put up for the purpose (the work being not yet published), to present to you and Mr. Jefferson. I hope the fifty copies of my former work, which were sent to Portsmouth (England), to the care of Mr. Greene, have come safe to your hands.

Wishing you every happiness, I remain, Your much obliged obedient  
Humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>219</sup> Early in 1792 President Washington named Gouverneur Morris as Minister to France. At the very time his appointment was being debated in the Senate, Morris, who was in Europe, drafted and urged the carrying out of a plan for the rescue of the king from the Tuileries. Had the Senators known of this his nomination would undoubtedly not have been ratified. As it was Morris barely squeezed through, the vote being 16 to 11.—*Editor.*

<sup>220</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the George Washington Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor.*

<sup>221</sup> Paine is referring to *Rights of Man, Part II*, published on February 17, 1792.—*Editor.*

TO J. S. JORDAN <sup>222</sup>

February 16, 1792.

SIR:

For your satisfaction and my own, I send you the enclosed though I do not apprehend there will be any occasion to use it. If, in case there should, you will immediately send a line for me under cover to Mr. Johnson, St. Paul's Church-Yard, who will forward it to me, upon which I shall come and answer personally for the work. Send also to Mr. Horne Tooke.

T. P.

February 16, 1792.

SIR:

Should any person, under the sanction of any kind of authority, enquire of you respecting the author and publisher of the *Rights of Man*, you will please to mention me as the author and publisher of that work, and show to such person this letter. I will, as soon as I am made acquainted with it, appear and answer for the work personally.

Your humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SOCIETY FOR  
PROMOTING CONSTITUTIONAL  
KNOWLEDGE <sup>223</sup>

LONDON, May 12, 1792.

[DEAR SIR:]

The honorable patronage which the Society for Constitutional Information has repeatedly given to the works entitled *Rights of Man* renders it incumbent on me to communicate to them whatever relates to the progress of those works.

A great number of letters from various parts of the country have come to me expressing an earnest desire that the first and second parts of

<sup>222</sup> Jordan was the publisher of the second part of *Rights of Man*. The original printer (Chapman) refused to publish the book because of what he called its "dangerous tendencies."—*Editor*.

<sup>223</sup> This Society was formed in 1784 to advance the cause of liberal reforms in England.—*Editor*.

*Rights of Man* be rendered more generally useful by printing them in a cheaper manner than they have hitherto been. As these requests were from persons to whom the purchase at the present price was inconvenient, I took the proper means for complying with their request.

I am since informed that the Ministry intends bringing a prosecution, and as a Nation (as well the poor as the rich) has a *right* to know what my works are that are made the subject of a prosecution, the getting out a cheap edition is, I conceive, considered more necessary than before, as a means towards supporting that right; and I have the pleasure of informing the Society that I am proceeding with the work.

I am, Sir, with great respect, Your obedient and Humble Servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

Author of *Common Sense* and of the *Rights of Man*, parts first and second.

## TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CONSTITUTIONAL KNOWLEDGE

LONDON, May, 1792.

[DEAR SIR:]

It is now upwards of eight years since I was a resident inhabitant of the town of Lewes. My situation among you as an officer of the revenue, for more than six years, enabled me to see into the numerous and various distresses which the weight of taxes even at that time of day occasioned; and feeling, as I then did, and as it is natural for me to do, for the hard condition of others, it is with pleasure I can declare, and every person then under my survey, and now living, can witness the exceeding candor, and even tenderness, with which that part of the duty that fell to my share was executed. The name of Thomas Paine is not to be found in the records of the Lewes justices, in any one act of contention with, or severity of any kind whatever towards, the persons whom he surveyed, either in the town or in the country; of this Mr. Fuller and Mr. Shelley, who will probably attend the meeting, can, if they please, give full testimony. It is, however, not in their power to contradict it. Having thus indulged myself in recollecting a place where I formerly had, and even now have, many friends, rich and poor, and most probably some enemies, I proceed to the import of my letter. Since my departure from

Lewes, fortune or providence has thrown me into a line of action which my first setting out in life could not possibly have suggested to me. . . . Many of you will recollect, that while I resided among you, there was not a man more firm and open in supporting the principles of liberty than myself, and I still pursue, and ever will, the same path.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO BENJAMIN MOSLEY <sup>224</sup>

PARIS, Oct. 1, 1 Year of the Republic.

You have before this time heard that the *National Convention* met punctual to the day appointed. The Members verified their powers on the 20th and met in Convention the 21st ult. The first business done was to abolish the bagatelle of Royalty which was decreed unanimously. This day the Convention will appoint a Committee of Constitution to consist of nine Members, who are to bring in a plan of the new Constitution. Affairs are turning round fast, the Prussian Army with Frederic and Brunswick at its head are about fourteen miles from Verdun, on the road towards Chilons. They are now very nearly in the condition that Burgoyne was in, in America. The King of Prussia has proposed to negotiate. It is I believe over with him as to any further operations. He says that he has been deceived by the Emigrants, expresses his astonishment at the vast Armies that surrounded him, and I believe, would think himself well off to get back again. Show this to our friend Fitzgerald.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE FRENCH NATIONAL CONVENTION

October 27, 1792.

CITIZEN PRESIDENT:

In the name of the deputies of the department of Pas de Calais, I have the honor of presenting to the Convention the felicitations of the General Council of the Commune of Calais on the abolition of royalty.

<sup>224</sup> This letter is reprinted from a copy in Catalogue No. 1143 compiled and sale conducted by Stan V. Henkels, pp. 22-23 (copy in Wisconsin State Historical Society).

Royalty was abolished and the French Republic proclaimed in September, 1792.—*Editor*.

Amid the joy inspired by this event, one can not forbear some pain at the folly of our ancestors, who have placed us under the necessity of treating seriously (*solemnellement*) the abolition of a phantom.

THOMAS PAINE, Deputy.

## TO JOHN KING

January 3, 1793.

DEAR KING:

I don't know anything, these many years, that surprised and hurt me more than the sentiments you published in the *COURTLY HERALD*, the 12th December, signed John King, Egham Lodge.<sup>225</sup> You have gone back, from all you ever said. When I first knew you in Ailiffestreet, an obscure part of the city, a child, without fortune or friends, I noticed you; because I thought I saw in you, young as you was, a bluntness of temper, a boldness of opinion, and an originality of thought, that portended some future good. I was pleased to discuss with you, under our friend Oliver's lime-tree, those political notions which I have since given the world in my *Rights of Man*.

You used to complain of abuses as well as me. What, then, means this sudden attachment to *Kings*? this fondness of the English Government, and hatred of the French? If you mean to curry favor, by aiding your Government, you are mistaken; they never recompense those who serve it; they buy off those who can annoy it, and let the good that is rendered it be its own reward. Believe me, King, more is to be obtained by cherishing the rising spirit of the People, than by subduing it. Follow my fortunes, and I will be answerable that you shall make your own.

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>225</sup> King also wrote several replies to Paine's letter which were printed in the *Morning Herald* of January 11, February 11, and April 17, 1793. In the last letter, he declared: "If the French kill their king, it will be a signal for my departure, for I will not abide among such sanguinary men." These, Mr. Paine, were your words at our last meeting; yet after this you are not only with them, but the chief modeller of their new Constitution."—*Editor*.

TO DOCTOR JAMES O'FALLON <sup>226</sup>

PASSY, NEAR PARIS, February the 17, 1793.

DEAR SIR:

I had the pleasure of your favor from Kentucky, which came in the French Resident's dispatches, with which the offers and propositions of General G[eorge] R[ogers] Clarke, for an expedition against Louisiana, etc. had arrived, and were received by the Provisionary Executive Council of the Republic with satisfaction.<sup>227</sup>

I should have replied sooner; but waited a few days, that I may see what the Resident had reported, and after using my best exertions in behalf of your friend's design, to discover what was likely to be done, in the event of a Spanish war. I have only to inform you, at this early stage of the business, that the General's offers and propositions are actually under consideration; and a doubt exists not with myself, should a Spanish war take place, but that every, or the greater part of his terms will be complied with. In my private opinion, a Spanish war is inevitable. You may, therefore, in all human probability, expect very soon to hear of the General's nomination to the post and command solicited by him. The knowledge which report hath brought me of his character, Mr. Jefferson's private sentiments respecting him, which the Resident has, as I understand, transmitted, and the reliance I have in your narrative, which confirms the whole, will excite every exertion on part, to have the expedition promoted as you wish. In a week or two hence, a war against Spain will, in all likelihood, be declared. All we

<sup>226</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Lyman Copeland Draper Collection through the courtesy of the Wisconsin State Historical Society.

James O'Fallon was an Irish adventurer who had been active in the Revolutionary movement in North Carolina. After the war he turned to land speculation and engaged in intrigues with the Spanish, but during the summer of 1791 advocated taking possession of lands which had been granted by the State of Georgia to the South Carolina Yazoo Company over which Spain claimed jurisdiction. George Rogers Clark, hero of the Northwest during the American Revolution, was to lead an expedition of one thousand armed men to seize this land which extended from the mouth of the Yazoo River along the Mississippi to an area close to Natchez. The expedition was halted when President Washington issued a proclamation forbidding the project. O'Fallon had married Clark's daughter, but by the time Paine's letter reached the United States the two men were on anything but friendly terms.—*Editor*.

<sup>227</sup> Paine's statement proves that Clark suggested to the French authorities late in 1792 that they support his plan to lead a filibustering expedition to recover Louisiana, held by Spain, for France, and that his proposal received favorable consideration. The French resident at Philadelphia in 1792, referred to by Paine, was Col. J. B. Ternant. He had been appointed by the king in the spring of 1791.—*Editor*.

fear is, that the intrigues of certain personages in the American cabinet, who are friends of Britain, and the votaries of Kings, may obstruct the General, in his plans of raising men, and procuring officers. The principal characters among the French inhabitants of Louisiana, have already petitioned this convention, for the reduction of that country from the vile servitude under which it actually groans.

This expedition, if successful, will probably promote every end of your Agency, the purposes of which Gouverneur Morris of New York, the present American Minister at Paris, has, long since, unfolded to me. I therefore submit it to your consideration, whether you ought not, in person, to accompany this expedition, to promote it with all your might, and even to act in it as a French officer. Such friendly exertions in favor of the enterprise, will most certainly recommend you, and the Company you represent to the notice and grateful esteem of our magnanimous free nation. In the hoped for contingency, that the arms of the Republic shall prove victorious in this expedition, and dislodge the Spaniard from all the posts which he holds within the three Grants of Georgia; the lands, in the first instance, will be considered, by the Republic, as the conquest of Spanish territory. In such case, I make not the least doubt, but that the Georgia Grants, the lowest down at least, will be confirmed to the companies that shall have been assistants in the expedition, by themselves or their Agents. This, My dear Sir, I only offer, as the sentiments of a private man. Should the Georgia Grant, or Grants ever revert to the United States; it must be by treaty, or exchange; and then even, the actual possessors, under this Republic, will infallibly become confirmed in their rights, under some clause in the deed of cession.

Your instructive correspondence shall ever be pleasing to me. Give me every intelligence and, write often. Please to direct under cover of the Ambassador, Mr. Genêt's address. He is my sincere friend, and your name is already made known to him by me. He is to set out for America speedily.<sup>228</sup> The rulers of this Republic hold him in very high estimation.

<sup>228</sup> Edmond-Charles-Édouard Genêt, wealthy representative of the Girondins, went as French minister to the United States. His conduct in this country played right into the hands of the reactionary Federalists who hated the French Revolution. For one thing, he organized expeditions on American soil against Spanish Louisiana and British Florida. For another, he threatened an "appeal to the people" over Washington's head to gain financial and military support for France. Genêt was removed when the Jacobins replaced the Girondists in France. The proposed expedition against Louisiana failed when Washington demanded that Genêt should be recalled, and when the President added to this a proclamation which forbade any American citizen to enlist in such a project.—*Editor*.



If as yet in the habits of writing; this, My Dear Doctor, is your precious time. Never was there a cause so deserving of your pen. I have tried the force of mine, and with some success. The first characters in Europe are in arms; some with the bayonet, some with the pen, and some with the two-edged sword of Declamation, in favor of Liberty. The tyrants of the earth are leagued against France; but with little effect. Although single-handed and alone, she still stands unshaken, unsubdued, unsubdueable, and undaunted: for our brave men fight not, as the troops of other nations, like Slaves chained to the oar of compulsory power. They fight freely, and for conscience sake. The nation will perish to a man, or be free. France can never fall; but by misapplying her own strength.

This being Sunday, and at my little retreat, a few miles from Paris, where I expect some American friends to dinner; I must defer what more I had to say. This letter is risked by a private hand, who proceeds immediately to New York, and is charged to have it conveyed to you with all the security possible. Fail not to write to me, and believe me to be, with unfeigned sincerity, and best wishes for your health and prosperity.

Dear Sir Your true friend and wellwisher

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>229</sup>

PARIS, April 20, 1793.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

The gentleman (Dr. Romer) to whom I entrust this letter is an intimate acquaintance of Lavater; but I have not had the opportunity of seeing him, as he had set off for Havre prior to my writing this letter, which I forward to him under cover from one of his friends, who is also an acquaintance of mine.

We are now in an extraordinary crisis, and it is not altogether without some considerable faults here. Dumouriez, partly from having no fixed principles of his own, and partly from the continual persecution of the Jacobins, who act without either prudence or morality, has gone

<sup>229</sup> This letter is printed from the original letter in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

off to the enemy, and taken a considerable part of the army with him.<sup>230</sup> The expedition to Holland has totally failed and all Brabant is again in the hands of the Austrians.

You may suppose the consternation which such a sudden reverse of fortune has occasioned, but it has been without commotion. Dumouriez threatened to be in Paris in three weeks. It is now three weeks ago; he is still on the frontier near to Mons with the enemy, who do not make any progress. Dumouriez has proposed to re-establish the former Constitution, in which plan the Austrians act with him. But if France and the National Convention act prudently this project will not succeed. In the first place there is a popular disposition against it, and there is force sufficient to prevent it. In the next place, a great deal is to be taken into the calculation with respect to the enemy. There are now so many powers accidentally jumbled together as to render it exceedingly difficult to them to agree upon any common object.

The first object, that of restoring the old monarchy, is evidently given up by the proposal to re-establish the late Constitution. The object of England and Prussia was to preserve Holland, and the object of Austria was to recover Brabant; while those separate objects lasted, each party having one, the Confederation could hold together, each helping the other; but after this I see not how a common object is to be formed. To all this is to be added the probable disputes about opportunity, the expense, and the projects of reimbursements. The enemy has once adventured into France, and they had the permission or the good fortune to get back again. On every military calculation it is a hazardous adventure, and armies are not much disposed to try a second time the ground upon which they have been defeated.

Had this Revolution been conducted consistently with its principles, there was once a good prospect of extending liberty through the greatest part of Europe; but I now relinquish that hope. Should the enemy by venturing into France put themselves again in a condition of being captured, the hope will revive; but this is a risk that I do not wish to see tried, lest it should fail.

As the prospect of a general freedom is now much shortened, I begin to contemplate returning home. I shall await the event of the proposed

<sup>230</sup> General Charles-François Dumouriez deserted to the enemy on April 5, 1793, announced his determination to restore the monarchy and made an attempt to lead his army against Paris for this purpose. For an excellent account of his treason and the reasons that led to it, see Albert Mathiez, *The French Revolution*, Chapter VIII, "The Treason of Dumouriez," pp. 296-303.—*Editor*.

Constitution, and then take my final leave of Europe. I have not written to the President, as I have nothing to communicate more than in this letter. Please to present to him my affection and compliments, and remember me among the circle of my friends. Your sincere and affectionate friend,

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. I just now received a letter from General Lewis Morris, who tells me that the house and barn on my farm at N. Rochelle are burnt down. I assure you I shall not bring money enough to build another.

## TO CITIZEN BARRÈRE <sup>231</sup>

September 5, 1793.

[DEAR SIR:]

I send you the papers you asked me for.

The idea you have to send Commissioners to Congress, and of which you spoke to me yesterday, is excellent, and very necessary at this moment. Mr. Jefferson, formerly Minister of the United States in France, and actually Minister for Foreign Affairs at Congress, is an ardent defender of the interests of France. Gouverneur Morris, who is here now, is badly disposed towards you. I believe he has expressed the wish to be recalled. The reports which he will make on his arrival will not be to the advantage of France. This event necessitates the sending direct of Commissioners from the Convention. Morris is not popular in America. He has set the Americans who are here against him, as also the Captains of that Nation who have come from Bordeaux, by his negligence with regard to the affair they had to treat about with the Convention. *Between us* he told them: "That they had thrown themselves into the lion's mouth, and it was for them to get out of it as best they could." I shall return to America on one of the vessels which will start from Bordeaux in the month of October. This was the project I had formed, should the rupture not take place between America and England; but now it is necessary for me to be there as soon as possible. The Congress will require a great deal of information, independently of this. It will soon be seven years that I have been absent from America, and

<sup>231</sup> This letter is printed from a photostat of the original manuscript in the French Archives through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Barrère was a member of the Committee of Public Safety.—*Editor.*

my affairs in that country have suffered considerably through my absence. My house and farm buildings have been entirely destroyed through an accidental fire.

Morris has many relations in America, who are excellent patriots. I enclose you a letter which I received from his brother, General Lewis Morris, who was a member of the Congress at the time of the Declaration of Independence. You will see by it that he writes like a good patriot. I only mention this so that you may know the true state of things. It will be fit to have respect for Gouverneur Morris, on account of his relations, who, as I said above, are excellent patriots.

There are about 45 American vessels at Bordeaux, at the present moment. If the English government wished to take revenge on the Americans, these vessels would be very much exposed during their passage. The American captains left Paris yesterday. I advised them, on leaving, to demand a convoy of the Convention, in case they heard it said that the English had begun reprisals against the Americans, if only to conduct as far as the Bay of Biscay, at the expense of the American government. But if the Convention determines to send Commissioners to Congress, they will be sent in a ship of the line. But it would be better for the Commissioners to go in one of the best American sailing vessels, and for the ship of the line to serve as a convoy; it could also serve to convey the ships that will return to France charged with flour. I am sorry that we cannot converse together, but if you could give me a rendezvous, where I could see Mr. Otto, I shall be happy and ready to be there. If events force the American captains to demand a convoy, it will be to me that they will write on the subject, and not to Morris, against whom they have grave reasons of complaint.

Your friend, etc.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>232</sup>

October 20, 1793.

DEAR SIR:

I wrote you by Captain Dominick who was to sail from Havre about the 20th of this month. This will probably be brought you by Mr. [Joel]

<sup>232</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

Barlow or Col. Oswald. Since my letter by Dominick I am every day more convinced and impressed with the propriety of Congress sending Commissioners to Europe to confer with the Ministers of the Jesuitical Powers on the means of terminating the war. The enclosed printed paper will show there are a variety of subjects to be taken into consideration which did not appear at first, all of which have some tendency to put an end to the war. I see not how this war is to terminate if some intermediate power does not step forward. There is now no prospect that France can carry revolutions through Europe on the one hand, or that the combined powers can conquer France on the other hand. It is a sort of defensive War on both sides. This being the case how is the War to close? Neither side will ask for peace though each may wish it. I believe that England and Holland are tired of the war. Their Commerce and Manufactures have suffered most exceedingly—and besides this it is to them a war without an object. Russia keeps herself at a distance. I cannot help repeating my wish that Congress would send Commissioners, and I wish also that yourself would venture once more across the Ocean as one of them. If the Commissioners rendezvous at Holland they would then know what steps to take. They could call Mr. Pinckney to their Councils, and it would be of use, on many accounts, that one of them should come over from Holland to France. Perhaps a long truce, were it proposed by the neutral Powers, would have all the effects of a Peace, without the difficulties attending the adjustment of all the forms of Peace.

Yours affectionately,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO CITIZEN BARRÈRE[?] <sup>233</sup>

[1793.]

[DEAR SIR:]

You mentioned to me that saltpetre was becoming scarce. I communicate to you a project of the late Captain Paul Jones, which, if successfully put in practice, will furnish you with that article.

All the English East India ships put into St. Helena, off the coast of

<sup>233</sup> This letter is printed from a photostat of the original manuscript in the French Archives through the courtesy of the Library of Congress. It is undated and the recipient is not indicated, but in a letter to James Monroe, October 20, 1794, Paine points out that it was sent to Barrère late in 1793. See below, p. 1366.—*Editor*.

Africa, on their return from India to England. A great part of their ballast is saltpetre. Captain Jones, who had been at St. Helena, says that the place can be very easily taken. His proposal was to send off a small squadron for that purpose, to keep the English flag flying at port. The English vessels will continue coming in as usual. By this means it will be a long time before the Government of England can have any knowledge of what has happened. The success of this depends so much upon secrecy that I wish you would translate this yourself, and give it to Barrère.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO GEORGE JACQUES DANTON <sup>234</sup>

PARIS, May sixth, Second year of the Republic [1793].

CITOYEN DANTON:

As you read English, I write this letter to you without passing it through the hands of a translator. I am exceedingly disturbed at the distractions, jealousies, discontents and uneasiness that reign among us, and which, if they continue, will bring ruin and disgrace on the Republic. When I left America in the year 1787, it was my intention to return the year following, but the French Revolution, and the prospect it afforded of extending the principles of liberty and fraternity through the greater part of Europe, have induced me to prolong my stay upwards of six years. I now despair of seeing the great object of European liberty accomplished, and my despair arises not from the combined foreign powers, not from the intrigues of aristocracy and priestcraft, but from the tumultuous misconduct with which the internal affairs of the present Revolution are conducted.

All that now can be hoped for is limited to France only, and I agree with your motion of not interfering in the government of any foreign country, nor permitting any foreign country to interfere in the government of France. This decree was necessary as a preliminary toward terminating the war. But while these internal contentions continue, while the hope remains to the enemy of seeing the Republic fall to pieces, while not only the representatives of the departments but representation

<sup>234</sup> Danton was the leader of the more conservative wing of the Jacobin party. He followed Paine to prison and was executed on April 6, 1794 on the charge of Royalism.—*Editor.*

itself is publicly insulted, as it has lately been and now is by the people of Paris, or at least by the tribunes, the enemy will be encouraged to hang about the frontiers and await the issue of circumstances.

I observe that the confederated powers have not yet recognized Monsieur, or D'Artois, as regent, nor made any proclamation in favor of any of the Bourbons; but this negative conduct admits of two different conclusions. The one is that of abandoning the Bourbons and the war together; the other is that of changing the object of the war and substituting a partition scheme in the place of their first object, as they have done by Poland. If this should be their object, the internal contentions that now rage will favor that object far more than it favored their former object.

The danger every day increases of a rupture between Paris and the departments. The departments did not send their deputies to Paris to be insulted, and every insult shown to them is an insult to the departments that elected and sent them. I see but one effectual plan to prevent this rupture taking place, and that is to fix the residence of the Convention, and of the future assemblies, at a distance from Paris.

I saw, during the American Revolution, the exceeding inconvenience that arose by having the government of Congress within the limits of any municipal jurisdiction. Congress first resided in Philadelphia, and after a residence of four years it found it necessary to leave it. It then adjourned to the state of Jersey. It afterwards removed to New York; it again removed from New York to Philadelphia, and after experiencing in every one of these places the great inconvenience of a government, it formed the project of building a town, not within the limits of any municipal jurisdiction, for the future residence of Congress. In any one of the places where Congress resided, the municipal authority privately or openly opposed itself to the authority of Congress, and the people of each of these places expected more attention from Congress than their equal share with the other States amounted to. The same thing now takes place in France, but in a far greater excess.

I see also another embarrassing circumstance arising in Paris of which we have had full experience in America. I mean that of fixing the price of provisions. But if this measure is to be attempted it ought to be done by the municipality. The Convention has nothing to do with regulations of this kind; neither can they be carried into practise. The people of Paris may say they will not give more than a certain price for provisions,

but as they cannot compel the country people to bring provisions to market the consequence will be directly contrary to their expectations, and they will find dearth and famine instead of plenty and cheapness. They may force the price down upon the stock in hand, but after that the market will be empty.

I will give you an example. In Philadelphia we undertook, among other regulations of this kind, to regulate the price of salt; the consequence was that no salt was brought to market, and the price rose to thirty-six shillings sterling per bushel. The price before the war was only one shilling and sixpence per bushel; and we regulated the price of flour (farina) till there was none in the market, and the people were glad to procure it at any price.

There is also a circumstance to be taken into the account which is not much attended to. The assignats are not of the same value they were a year ago, and as the quantity increases the value of them will diminish. This gives the appearance of things being dear when they are not so in fact, for in the same proportion that any kind of money falls in value articles rise in price. If it were not for this the quantity of assignats would be too great to be circulated. Paper money in America fell so much in value from this excessive quantity of it, that in the year 1781 I gave three hundred paper dollars for one pair of worsted stockings. What I write you upon the subject is experience, and not merely opinion. I have no personal interest in any of these matters, nor in any party disputes. I attend only to general principles.

As soon as a constitution shall be established I shall return to America; and be the future prosperity of France ever so great, I shall enjoy no other part of it than the happiness of knowing it. In the meantime I am distressed to see matters so badly conducted, and so little attention paid to moral principles. It is these things that injure the character of the Revolution and discourage the progress of liberty all over the world. When I began this letter I did not intend making it so lengthy, but since I have gone thus far I will fill up the remainder of the sheet with such matters as occur to me.

There ought to be some regulation with respect to the spirit of denunciation that now prevails. If every individual is to indulge his private malignancy or his private ambition, to denounce at random and without any kind of proof, all confidence will be undermined and all authority be destroyed. Calumny is a species of treachery that ought to be pun-



ished as well as any other kind of treachery. It is a private vice productive of public evils; because it is possible to irritate men into disaffection by continual calumny who never intended to be disaffected.

It is therefore equally as necessary to guard against the evils of unfounded or malignant suspicion as against the evils of blind confidence. It is equally as necessary to protect the characters of public officers from calumny as it is to punish them for treachery or misconduct. For my own part I shall hold it a matter of doubt, until better evidence arises than is known at present, whether Dumouriez has been a traitor from policy or resentment. There was certainly a time when he acted well, but it is not every man whose mind is strong enough to bear up against ingratitude, and I think he experienced a great deal of this before he revolted.

Calumny becomes harmless and defeats itself when it attempts to act upon too large a scale. Thus the denunciation of the sections [of Paris] against the twenty-two deputies [Girondists] falls to the ground. The departments that elected them are better judges of their moral and political characters than those who have denounced them. This denunciation will injure Paris in the opinion of the departments because it has the appearance of dictating to them what sort of deputies they shall elect. Most of the acquaintances that I have in the Convention are among those who are in that list, and I know there are not better men nor better patriots than what they are.

I have written a letter to Marat <sup>235</sup> of the same date as this but not on the same subject. He may show it to you if he choose.

Votre Ami,  
THOMAS PAINE.

## TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS

LUXEMBOURG, February 24, 1794.

SIR:

I received your letter enclosing a copy of a letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs. You must not leave me in the situation in which this letter places me.<sup>236</sup> You know I do not deserve it, and you see the un-

<sup>235</sup> Paine's letter to Jean-Paul Marat cannot be located.—*Editor*.

<sup>236</sup> Deforgues, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, wrote to Morris: "Born in England, this ex-deputy [Paine] has become successively an American and a French citizen. In accepting

pleasant situation in which I am thrown. I have made an essay in answer to the Minister's letter, which I wish you to make ground of a reply to him. They have nothing against me—except that they do not choose I should be in a state of freedom to write my mind freely upon things I have seen. Though you and I are not on terms of the best harmony, I apply to you as the Minister of America, and you may add to that service whatever you think my integrity deserves. At any rate I expect you to make Congress acquainted with my situation, and to send to them copies of the letters that have passed on the subject. A reply to the Minister's letter is absolutely necessary, were it only to continue the reclamation. Otherwise your silence will be a sort of consent to his observations.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE FRENCH NATIONAL CONVENTION <sup>237</sup>

LUXEMBOURG, August 7, 1794.

### CITIZEN REPRESENTATIVES:

If I should not express myself with the energy I used formerly to do, you will attribute it to the very dangerous illness I have suffered in the prison of the Luxembourg. For several days I was insensible of my own existence; and though I am much recovered, it is with exceeding great difficulty that I find power to write you this letter.

But before I proceed further, I request the Convention to observe: that this is the first line that has come from me, either to the Convention, or to any of the Committees, since my imprisonment,—which is approaching to eight months. Ah, my friends, eight months' loss of liberty seems almost a life-time to a man who has been, as I have been, the unceasing defender of Liberty for twenty years.

I have now to inform the Convention of the reason of my not having written before. It is a year ago that I had strong reason to believe that Robespierre was my inveterate enemy, as he was the enemy of every man of virtue and humanity. The address that was sent to the Conven-

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this last title, and in occupying a place in the Legislative Corps, he submitted himself to the laws of the Republic, and has *de fait* renounced the protection which the right of the people and treaties concluded with the United States could have assured him." "I am ignorant," Deforgues added, "of the motives of his detention, but I must presume they are well founded." For Paine's account of his imprisonment, see volume I, p. 512.—*Editor*.

<sup>237</sup> This letter is printed from a photostat of the original in the French Archives through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

tion some time about last August from Arras, the native town of Robespierre, I have always been informed was the work of that hypocrite and the partisans he had in the place. The intention of that address was to prepare the way for destroying me, by making the people declare (though without assigning any reason) that I had lost their confidence; the address, however, failed of success, as it was immediately opposed by a counteraddress from St. Omer which declared the direct contrary. But the strange power that Robespierre, by the most consummate hypocrisy and the most hardened cruelties, had obtained rendered any attempt on my part to obtain justice not only useless but even dangerous; for it is the nature of Tyranny always to strike a deeper blow when any attempt has been made to repel a former one. This being my situation I submitted with patience to the hardness of my fate and waited the event of brighter days. I hope they are now arrived to the nation and to me.

Citizens, when I left the United States in the year 1787, I promised to all my friends that I would return to them the next year; but the hope of seeing a Revolution happily established in France, that might serve as a model to the rest of Europe, and the earnest and disinterested desire of rendering every service in my power to promote it, induced me to defer my return to that country, and to the society of my friends, for more than seven years. This long sacrifice of private tranquillity, especially after having gone through the fatigues and dangers of the American Revolution which continued almost eight years, deserved a better fate than the long imprisonment I have silently suffered. But it is not the nation but a faction that has done me this injustice, and it is to the national representation that I appeal against that injustice. Parties and factions, various and numerous as they have been, I have always avoided. My heart was devoted to all France, and the object to which I applied myself was the Constitution. The Plan which I proposed to the Committee, of which I was a member, is now in the hands of Barrère, and it will speak for itself.

It is perhaps proper that I inform you of the cause assigned in the order of my imprisonment. It is that I am "a foreigner"; whereas, the *foreigner* thus imprisoned was invited into France by a decree of the late national Assembly, and that in the hour of her greatest danger, when invaded by Austrians and Prussians. He was, moreover, a citizen of the United States of America, an ally of France, and not a subject of any country in Europe, and consequently not within the intentions of

any of the decrees concerning foreigners. But any excuse can be made to serve the purpose of malignity when it is in power.

I will not intrude on your time by offering any apology for the broken and imperfect manner in which I have expressed myself. I request you to accept it with the sincerity with which it comes from my heart; and I conclude with wishing fraternity and prosperity to France, and union and happiness to her representatives.

Citizens, I have now stated to you my situation, and I can have no doubt but your justice will restore me to the Liberty of which I have been deprived.

THOMAS PAINE.

Luxembourg, Thermidor 19th, 2d year of the  
French Republic, one and indivisible.

## TO JAMES MONROE <sup>238</sup>

LUXEMBOURG, August 17th, 1794:

MY DEAR SIR:

As I believe none of the public papers have announced your name right I am unable to address you by it, but a *new* minister from America is joy to me and will be so to every American in France.

Eight months I have been imprisoned, and I know not for what, except that the order says that I am a Foreigner. The illness I have suffered in this place (and from which I am but just recovering) had nearly put an end to my existence. My life is but of little value to me in this situation though I have borne it with a firmness of patience and fortitude.

I enclose you a copy of a letter (as well the translations as the English), which I sent to the Convention after the fall of the Monster Robespierre—for I was determined not to write a line during the time of his detestable influence. I sent also a copy to the Committee of Public Safety—but I have not heard any thing respecting it. I have now no expectation of delivery but by your means—*Morris has been my inveterate enemy, and I think he has permitted something of the national character of America to suffer by quietly letting a Citizen of*

<sup>238</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the James Monroe Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

*that Country remain almost eight months in prison without making every official exertion to procure him justice,—for every act of violence offered to a foreigner is offered also to the Nation to which he belongs.*

The gentleman, Mr. Beresford, who will present you this has been very friendly to me.<sup>239</sup> Wishing you happiness in your appointment, I am your affectionate friend and humble servant.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO JAMES MONROE<sup>240</sup>

LUXEMBOURG, August 18th, 1794.

DEAR SIR:

In addition to my letter of yesterday (sent to Mr. Beresford to be conveyed to you but which is delayed on account of his being at St. Germain) I send the following memoranda.

I was in London at the time I was elected a member of this Convention. I was elected a *Deputé* in four different departments without my knowing any thing of the matter, or having the least idea of it. The intention of electing the Convention before the time of the former Legislature expired was for the purpose of reforming the Constitution, they prepared the way by voting me a French Citizen (they conferred the same title on General Washington and certainly I had no more idea than he had of vacating any part of my real Citizenship of America for a nominal one in France, especially at a time when she did not know whether she would be a Nation or not, and had it not even in her power to promise me protection). I was elected (the second person in number of Votes, the *Abbé Sieyès* being first) a member for forming the Constitution, and every American in Paris as well as my other acquaintance knew that it was my intention to return to America as soon as the Constitution should be established. The violence of Party soon began to show itself in the Convention, but it was impossible for me to see upon what principle they differed—unless it was a contention for power. I acted however as I did in America, I connected myself with no Party, but considered myself altogether a Na-

<sup>239</sup> A friendly lamp-lighter, mentioned in Paine's *Letter to Washington*, carried this letter to Mr. Beresford.—*Editor*.

<sup>240</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the James Monroe Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

tional Man—but the case with Parties generally is that when you are not with one you are supposed to be with the other.

I was taken out of bed between three and four in the morning on the 28 of December last, and brought to the Luxembourg—without any other accusation inserted in the order than that I was a foreigner; a motion having been made two days before in the Convention to expel Foreigners therefrom. I certainly then remained, even upon their own tactics, what I was before, a Citizen of America.

About three weeks after my imprisonment the Americans that were in Paris went to the bar of the Convention to reclaim me, but contrary to my advice, they made their address into a Petition, and it was miscarried. I then applied to G. Morris, to reclaim me as an official part of his duty, which he found it necessary to do, and here the matter stopped. I have not heard a single line or word from any American since, which is now seven months. I rested altogether on the hope that a new Minister would arrive from America. I have escaped with life from more dangers than one. Had it not been for the fall of Robespierre and your timely arrival I know not what fate might have yet attended me. There seemed to be a determination to destroy all the Prisoners without regard to merit, character, or any thing else. During the time I laid at the height of my illness they took, in one night only, 169 persons out of this prison and executed all but eight. The distress that I suffered at being obliged to exist in the midst of such horrors, exclusive of my own precarious situation, suspended as it were by the single thread of accident, is greater than it is possible you can conceive—but thank God times are at last changed, and I hope that your Authority will release me from this unjust imprisonment.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO JAMES MONROE <sup>241</sup>

LUXEMBOURG, August 25, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR:

Having nothing to do but to sit and think, I will write to pass away time, and to say that I am still here. I have received two notes from Mr. Beresford which are encouraging (as the generality of notes and

<sup>241</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the James Monroe Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

letters are that arrive to persons here) but they contain nothing explicit or decisive with respect to my liberation, and *I shall be very glad to receive a line from yourself to inform me in what condition the matter stands*. If I only glide out of prison by a sort of accident America gains no credit by my liberation, neither can my attachment to her be increased by such a circumstance. She has had the services of my best days, she has my allegiance, she receives my portion of Taxes for my house in Bordentown and my farm at New Rochelle, and she owes me protection both at home and through her Ministers abroad, yet I remain in prison, in the face of her Minister, at the arbitrary will of a committee.

Excluded as I am from the knowledge of everything and left to a random of ideas, I know not what to think or how to act. Before there was any Minister here (for I consider Morris as none) and while the Robespierrian faction lasted, I had nothing to do but to keep my mind tranquil and expect the fate that was every day inflicted upon my comrades, not individually but by scores. Many a man whom I have passed an hour with in conversation I have seen marching to his destruction the next hour, or heard of it the next morning; for what rendered the scene more horrible was that they were generally taken away at midnight, so that every man went to bed with the apprehension of never seeing his friends or the world again.

I wish to impress upon you that all the changes that have taken place in Paris have been sudden. There is now a moment of calm, but if through any over complaisance to the persons you converse with on the subject of my liberation, you omit procuring it for me *now*, you may have to lament the fate of your friend when its too late. The loss of a Battle to the Northward or other possible accident may happen to bring this about. I am not out of danger till I am out of Prison.

Yours affectionately,

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. I am now entirely without money. The Convention owes me 1800 livres salary which I know not how to get while I am here, nor do I know how to draw for money on the rent of my farm in America. It is under the care of my good friend General Lewis Morris. I have received no rent since I have been in Europe.

TO JAMES MONROE <sup>242</sup>

PRISON OF THE LUXEMBOURG, Sept. 10th, 1794.

I ADDRESS this memorial to you, in consequence of a letter I received from a friend, 18 Fructidor (September fourth), in which he says, "Mr. Monroe has told me, that he has no orders [meaning from the American Government] respecting you; but I am sure he will leave nothing undone to liberate you; but, from what I can learn, from all the late Americans, you are not considered either by the Government, or by the individuals, as an American citizen. You have been made a French citizen, which you have accepted, and you have further made yourself a servant of the French Republic; and, therefore, it would be out of character for an American Minister to interfere in their internal concerns. You must therefore either be liberated out of compliment to America, or stand your trial, which you have a right to demand."

This information was so unexpected by me, that I am at a loss how to answer it. I know not on what principle it originates; whether from an idea that I had voluntarily abandoned my citizenship of America for that of France, or from any article of the American Constitution applied to me. The first is untrue with respect to any intention on my part; and the second is without foundation, as I shall show in the course of this memorial.

The idea of conferring honor of citizenship upon foreigners, who had distinguished themselves in propagating the principles of liberty and humanity, in opposition to despotism, war and bloodshed, was first proposed by me to Lafayette, at the commencement of the French Revolution, when his heart appeared to be warmed with those principles. My motive in making this proposal, was to render the people of different nations more fraternal than they had been, or then were. I observed that almost every branch of science had possessed itself of the exercise of this right, so far as it regarded its own institution.

Most of the academies and societies in Europe, and also those of America, conferred the rank of honorary member, upon foreigners eminent in knowledge, and made them, in fact, citizens of their literary or scientific republic, without affecting or anyways diminishing their rights of citizenship in their own country or in other societies: and why the

<sup>242</sup> This Memorial addressed to James Monroe, Minister from the United States of America to the French Republic, is printed from the original manuscript in the James Monroe Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor.*



science of government should not have the same advantage, or why the people of one nation should not, by their representatives, exercise the right of conferring the honor of citizenship upon individuals eminent in another nation, without affecting *their* rights of citizenship, is a problem yet to be solved.

I now proceed to remark on that part of the letter, in which the writer says, that *from what he can learn from all the late Americans, I am not considered in America, either by the Government or by the individuals, as an American citizen.*

In the first place I wish to ask, what is here meant by the Government of America? The members who compose the Government are only individuals, when in conversation, and who, most probably, hold very different opinions upon the subject. Have Congress as a body made any declaration respecting me, that they now no longer consider me as a citizen? If they have not, anything they otherwise say is no more than the opinion of individuals, and consequently is not legal authority, nor anyways sufficient authority to deprive any man of his citizenship. Besides, whether a man has forfeited his rights of citizenship, is a question not determinable by Congress, but by a court of judicature and a jury; and must depend upon evidence, and the application of some law or article of the Constitution to the case. No such proceeding has yet been had, and consequently I remain a citizen until it be had, be that decision what it may; for there can be no such thing as a suspension of rights in the interim.

I am very well aware, and always was, of the article of the Constitution which says, as nearly as I can recollect the words, that "any citizen of the United States, who shall accept any title, place, or office, from any foreign king, prince, or state, shall forfeit and lose his right of citizenship of the United States."<sup>243</sup>

Had the article said, that *any citizen of the United States, who shall be a member of any foreign convention, for the purpose of forming a free constitution, shall forfeit and lose the right of citizenship of the United States*, the article had been directly applicable to me; but the idea of such an article never could have entered the mind of the American Convention, and the present article is altogether foreign to the case

<sup>243</sup> The reference is to Article I, Section 9, and the actual wording is: "No Title of Nobility shall be granted by the United States: And no Person holding any Office of Profit or Trust under them, shall, without the Consent of Congress, accept of any present, Emolument, Office, or Title, of any kind whatever, from any King, Prince, or foreign State."  
—*Editor.*

with respect to me. It supposes a government in active existence, and not a government dissolved; and it supposes a citizen of America accepting titles and offices under that government, and not a citizen of America who gives his assistance in a convention chosen by the people, for the purpose of forming a government *de nouveau* founded on their authority.

The late Constitution and Government of France was dissolved the tenth of August, 1792. The National Legislative Assembly then in being, supposed itself without sufficient authority to continue its sittings, and it proposed to the departments to elect not another legislative assembly, but a convention for the express purpose of forming a new constitution. When the Assembly were discoursing on this matter, some of the members said, that they wished to gain all the assistance possible upon the subject of free constitutions; and expressed a wish to elect and invite foreigners of any nation to the Convention, who had distinguished themselves in defending, explaining and propagating the principles of liberty.

It was on this occasion that my name was mentioned in the Assembly. (I was then in England.) After this, a deputation from a body of the French people, in order to remove any objection that might be made against my assisting at the proposed convention, requested the Assembly, as their representatives, to give me the title of French citizen; after which, I was elected a member of the Convention, in four different departments, as is already known.

The case, therefore, is, that I accepted nothing from any king, prince or state, nor from any government: for France was without any government, except what arose from common consent, and the necessity of the case. Neither did *I make myself a servant of the French Republic*, as the letter alluded to expresses; for at that time France was not a republic, not even in name. She was altogether a people in a state of revolution.

It was not until the Convention met that France was declared a republic, and monarchy abolished; soon after which a committee was elected, of which I was a member, to form a constitution, which was presented to the Convention [and read by Condorcet, who was also a member] the fifteenth and sixteenth of February following, but was not to be taken into consideration till after the expiration of two months, and if approved of by the Convention, was then to be referred to the people for their acceptance, with such additions or amendments as the Convention should make.

In thus employing myself upon the formation of a constitution, I certainly did nothing inconsistent with the American Constitution. I took no oath of allegiance to France, or any other oath whatever. I considered the citizenship they had presented me with as a honorary mark of respect paid to me not only as a friend to liberty, but as an American citizen. My acceptance of that, or of the deputyship, not conferred on me by any king, prince or state, but by a people in a state of revolution and contending for liberty, required no transfer of my allegiance or of my citizenship from America to France. There I was a real citizen, paying taxes; here, I was a voluntary friend, employing myself on a temporary service. Every American in Paris knew that it was my constant intention to return to America, as soon as a constitution should be established, and that I anxiously waited for that event.

I know not what opinions have been circulated in America. It may have been supposed there that I had voluntarily and intentionally abandoned America, and that my citizenship had ceased by my own choice. I can easily [believe] there are those in that country who would take such a proceeding on my part somewhat in disgust. The idea of forsaking old friendships for new acquaintances is not agreeable. I am a little warranted in making this supposition by a letter I received some time ago from the wife of one of the Georgia delegates in which she says "Your friends on this side the water cannot be reconciled to the idea of your abandoning America."

I have never abandoned her in thought, word or deed; and I feel it incumbent upon me to give the assurance to the friends I have in that country and with whom I have always intended and am determined, if the possibility exists, to close the scene of my life. It is there that I have made myself a home. It is there that I have given the services of my best days. America never saw me flinch from her cause in the most gloomy and perilous of her situations; and I know there are those in that country who will not flinch from me. If I have enemies (and every man has some) I leave them to the enjoyment of their ingratitude.<sup>244</sup>

<sup>244</sup> I subjoin in a note, for the sake of wasting the solitude of a prison, the answer that I gave to the part of the letter above mentioned. It is not inapplicable to the subject of this Memorial; but it contains somewhat of a melancholy idea, a little predictive, that I hope is not becoming true so soon.

"You touch me on a very tender point when you say that my friends on your side the water cannot be reconciled to the idea of my abandoning America. They are right. I had rather see my horse Button eating the grass of Borden-Town or Morrisania than see all the pomp and show of Europe.

"A thousand years hence (for I must indulge a few thoughts) perhaps in less, America

It is somewhat extraordinary that the idea of my not being a citizen of America should have arisen only at the time that I am imprisoned in France because, or on the pretense that, I am a foreigner. The case involves a strange contradiction of ideas. None of the Americans who came to France while I was in liberty had conceived any such idea or circulated any such opinion; and why it should arise now is a matter yet to be explained. However discordant the late American Minister G. M. [Gouverneur Morris] and the late French Committee of Public Safety were, it suited the purpose of both that I should be continued in arrestation. The former wished to prevent my return to America, that I should not expose his misconduct; and the latter, lest I should publish to the world the history of its wickedness. While that Minister and the Committee continued I had no expectation of liberty. I speak here of the Committee of which Robespierre was member.

I ever must deny, that the article of the American Constitution already mentioned, can be applied either verbally, intentionally, or constructively, to me. It undoubtedly was the intention of the Convention that framed it, to preserve the purity of the American Republic from being debased by foreign and foppish customs; but it never could be its intention to act against the principles of liberty, by forbidding its citizens to assist in promoting those principles in foreign countries; neither could it be its intention to act against the principles of gratitude.

France had aided America in the establishment of her revolution, when invaded and oppressed by England and her auxiliaries. France in her turn was invaded and oppressed by a combination of foreign despots.

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may be what Europe now is. The innocence of her character, that won the hearts of all nations in her favor, may sound like a romance and her inimitable virtues as if it had never been. The ruin of that liberty which thousands bled for or struggled to obtain may just furnish materials for a village tale or extort a sigh from rustic sensibility, while the fashionable of that day, enveloped in dissipation, shall deride the principle and deny the fact.

"When we contemplate the fall of Empires and the extinction of the nations of the Ancient World, we see but little to excite our regret than the mouldering ruins of pompous palaces, magnificent museums, lofty pyramids and walls and towers of the most costly workmanship; but when the Empire of America shall fall, the subject for contemplative sorrow will be infinitely greater than crumbling brass and marble can inspire it. It will not then be said, here stood a temple of vast antiquity; here rose a babel of invisible height; or there a palace of sumptuous extravagance; but here, Ah, painful thought; the noblest work of human wisdom, the grandest scene of human glory, the fair cause of Freedom rose and fell. Read this, and then ask if I forget America."—*Author*.

This excerpt from Paine's letter to Kate Nicholson Few, London, January 6, 1789, is also, quoted in his *Letter to Washington*. For the entire text, see pp. 1274-1278.—*Editor*.

In this situation, I conceived it an act of gratitude in me, as a citizen of America, to render her in return the best services I could perform.

I came to France (for I was in England when I received the invitation) not to enjoy ease, emoluments and foppish honors, as the article supposes; but to encounter difficulties and dangers in defense of liberty; and I must question whether those who now malignantly seek (for some I believe do) to turn this to my injury, would have had courage to have done the same thing. I am sure Gouverneur Morris would not. He told me the second day after my arrival (in Paris), that the Austrians and Prussians, who were then at Verdun, would be in Paris in a fortnight. "I have no idea," said he, "that seventy thousand disciplined troops can be stopped in their march by any power in France."

Besides the reasons I have already given for accepting the invitations to the Convention, I had another that has reference particularly to America, and which I mentioned to Mr. Pinckney the night before I left London to come to Paris: "That it was to the interest of America that the ~~system~~ of European governments should be changed and placed on the same principle with her own." Mr. Pinckney agreed fully in the same opinion. I have done my part toward it.

It is certain that governments upon similar systems agree better together than those that are founded on principles discordant with each other; and the same rule holds good with respect to the people living under them. In the latter case they offend each other by pity, or by reproach; and the discordancy carries itself to matters of commerce. I am not an ambitious man, but perhaps I have been an ambitious American. I have wished to see America the *Mother Church* of government, and I have done my utmost to exalt her character and her condition.

I have now stated sufficient matter to show that the article in question is not applicable to me; and that any such application to my injury, as well in circumstances as in right, is contrary both to the letter and intention of that article, and is illegal and unconstitutional. Neither do I believe that any jury in America, when they are informed of the whole of the case, would give a verdict to deprive me of my rights upon that article. The citizens of America, I believe, are not very fond of permitting forced and indirect explanations to be put upon matters of this kind.

I know not what were the merits of the case with respect to the person who was prosecuted for acting as prize master to a French privateer,

but I know that the jury gave a verdict against the prosecution. The rights I have acquired are dear to me. They have been acquired by honorable means, and by dangerous service in the worst of times, and I cannot passively permit them to be wrested from me. I conceive it my duty to defend them, as the case involves a constitutional and public question, which is, how far the power of the Federal Government extends, in depriving any citizen of his rights of citizenship, or of suspending them.

That the explanation of national treaties belongs to Congress is strictly constitutional; but not the explanation of the Constitution itself, any more than the explanation of law in the case of individual citizens. These are altogether judiciary questions. It is, however, worth observing, that Congress, in explaining the article of the treaty with respect to French prizes and French privateers, confined itself strictly to the letter of the article. Let them explain the article of the Constitution with respect to me in the same manner, and the decision, did it appertain to them, could not deprive me of my rights of citizenship, or suspend them, for I have accepted nothing from any king, prince, state or government.

You will please observe that I speak as if the Federal Government had made some declaration upon the subject of my citizenship; whereas the fact is otherwise; and your saying that you have no order respecting me is a proof of it. Those therefore who propagate the report of my not being considered as a citizen of America by Government, do it to the prolongation of my imprisonment, and without authority; for Congress, *as a government*, has neither decided upon it, nor yet taken the matter into consideration; and I request you to caution such persons against spreading such reports. But be these matters as they may, I cannot have a doubt that you will find and feel the case very different, since you have heard what I have to say, and known what my situation is [better] than you did before your arrival.

But it was not the Americans only, but the Convention also, that knew what my intentions were upon that subject. In my last discourse delivered at the Tribune of the Convention, January 19, 1793, on the motion for suspending the execution of Louis XVI, I said (the Deputy Bancal read the translation in French):

“It unfortunately happens that the person who is the subject of the present discussion, is considered by the Americans as having been the friend of their revolution. His execution will be an affliction to them, and

it is in your power not to wound the feelings of your ally. Could I speak the French language I would descend to your bar, and in their name become your petitioner to respite the execution of the sentence.

“As the Convention was elected for the express purpose of forming a Constitution, its continuance cannot be longer than four or five months more at furthest; and, if after my *return to America*, I should employ myself in writing the history of the French Revolution, I had rather record a thousand errors on the side of mercy than be obliged to tell one act of severe justice.

“Ah citizens! give not the tyrant of England the triumph of seeing the man perish on a scaffold who had aided my much-loved America.”

Does this look as if I had abandoned America? But if she abandons me in the situation I am in, to gratify the enemies of humanity, let that disgrace be to herself. But I know the people of America better than to believe it, though I undertake not to answer for every individual.

When this discourse was pronounced, Marat launched himself into the middle of the hall and said that “I voted against the punishment of death because I was a Quaker.” I replied that “I voted against it both morally and politically.”

I certainly went a great way, considering the rage of the times, in endeavoring to prevent that execution. I had many reasons for so doing. I judged, and events have shown that I judged rightly, that if they once began shedding blood, there was no knowing where it would end; and as to what the world might call *honor*, the execution would appear like a nation killing a mouse; and in a political view, would serve to transfer the hereditary claim to some more formidable enemy. The man could do no more mischief; and that which he had done was not only from the vice of his education, but was as much the fault of the nation in restoring him after he had absconded June 21, 1791, as it was his.

I made the proposal for imprisonment until the end of the war and perpetual banishment after the war, instead of the punishment of death. Upwards of three hundred members voted for that proposal. The sentence for absolute death (for some members had voted the punishment of death conditionally) was carried by a majority of twenty-five out of more than seven hundred.

I return from this digression to the proper subject of my memorial.

Painful as the want of liberty may be, it is a consolation to me to believe that my imprisonment proves to the world that I had no share

in the murderous system that then reigned. That I was an enemy to it, both morally and politically, is known to all who had any knowledge of me; and could I have written French as well as I can English, I would publicly have exposed its wickedness and shown the ruin with which it was pregnant. They who have esteemed me on former occasions, whether in America or in Europe, will, I know, feel no cause to abate that esteem, when they reflect the *imprisonment with preservation of character is preferable to liberty with disgrace*.

I here close my memorial and proceed to offer you a proposal that appears to me suited to all the circumstances of the case; which is that you reclaim me conditionally, until the opinion of Congress can be obtained on the subject of my citizenship of America; and that I remain in liberty under your protection during that time.

I found this proposal upon the following grounds:

First, you say you have no orders respecting me; consequently, you have no orders *not* to reclaim me; and in this case you are left discretionary judge whether to reclaim or not. My proposal therefore unites a consideration of your situation with my own.

Secondly, I am put in arrestation because I am a foreigner. It is therefore necessary to determine to what country I belong. The right of determining this question cannot appertain exclusively to the Committee of Public Safety or General Surety; because I appeal to the Minister of the United States, and show that my citizenship of that country is good and valid, referring at the same time, through the agency of the Minister, my claim of right to the opinion of Congress. It being a matter between two governments.

Thirdly, France does not claim me for a citizen; neither do I set up any claim of citizenship in France. The question is simply whether I am or am not a citizen of America. I am imprisoned here on the decree for imprisoning foreigners because, say they, I was born in England.

I say in answer that, though born in England, I am not a subject of the English Government any more than any other American who was born, as they all were, under the same government, or than the citizens of France are subjects of the French monarchy under which they were born. I have twice taken the oath of abjuration to the British King and Government and of allegiance to America—once as a citizen of the State of Pennsylvania in 1776, and again before Congress, administered to me by the President, Mr. Hancock, when I was appointed Secretary in the office of Foreign Affairs in 1777.



The letter before quoted in the first page of this memorial, says, "It would be out of character for an American Minister to interfere in the internal affairs of France." This goes on the idea that I am a citizen of France, and a member of the Convention, which is not the fact. The Convention have declared me to be a foreigner; and consequently the citizenship and the election are null and void. It also has the appearance of a decision, that the article of the Constitution, respecting grants made to American citizens by foreign kings, princes or states, is applicable to me; which is the very point in question, and against the application of which I contend.

I state evidence to the Minister, to show that I am not within the letter or meaning of that article; that it cannot operate against me; and I apply to him for the protection that I conceive I have a right to ask and to receive. The internal affairs of France are out of the question with respect to my application or his interference. I ask it not as a citizen of France, for I am not one:

I ask it not as a member of the Convention, for I am not one; both these, as before said, have been rendered null and void; I ask it not as a man against whom there is any accusation, for there is none; I ask it not as an exile from America, whose liberties I have honorably and generously contributed to establish; I ask it as a citizen of America, deprived of his liberty in France, under the plea of being a foreigner; and I ask it because I conceive I am entitled to it upon every principle of constitutional justice and national honor.

But though I thus positively assert my claim because I believe I have a right to do so, it is perhaps most eligible, in the present situation of things, to put that claim upon the footing I have already mentioned; that is, that the Minister reclaims me conditionally until the opinion of Congress can be obtained on the subject of my citizenship of America, and that I remain in liberty under the protection of the Minister during that interval.

(Signed)

THOMAS PAINE.

N.B. I should have added that as Gouverneur Morris could not inform Congress of the cause of my arrestation, as he knew it not himself, it is to be supposed that Congress was not enough acquainted with the case to give any directions respecting me when you came away.

T. P.

TO JAMES MONROE <sup>245</sup>

LUXEMBOURG, 14 EM Vendémiaire, old style, October 4, 1794.

DEAR SIR:

I thank you for your very friendly and affectionate letter of the eighteenth of September which I did not receive till this morning.<sup>246</sup> It has relieved my mind from a load of disquietude. You will easily suppose that if the information I received had been exact, my situation was without hope. I had in that case neither section, department nor country, to reclaim me; but that is not all; I felt a poignancy of grief, in having the least reason to suppose that America had so soon forgotten me who had never forgotten her.

Mr. Labonadaire, in a note of yesterday, directed me to write to the Convention. As I suppose this measure has been taken in concert with you, I have requested him to show you the letter, of which he will make a translation to accompany the original.

(I cannot see what motive can induce them to keep me in prison. It will gratify the English Government and afflict the friends I have in America. The supporters of the system of terror might apprehend that if I was in liberty and in America I should publish the history of their crimes, but the present persons who have overset that immoral system ought to have no such apprehension. On the contrary, they ought to consider me as one of themselves, at least as one of their friends. Had I been an insignificant character I had not been in arrestation. It was the literary and philosophical reputation I had gained in the world that made them my enemies; and I am the victim of the principles and, if I may be permitted to say it, of the talents, that procured me the esteem of America. My character is the *secret* of my arrestation.)

If the letter I have written be not covered by other authority than my own it will have no effect, for they already know all that I can say. On

<sup>245</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the James Monroe Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>246</sup> Monroe's letter was in reply to Paine's Memorial. In his letter, dated September 18th, Monroe wrote: "It is unnecessary for me to tell you how much all your countrymen, I speak of the great mass of the people, are interested in your welfare. . . . You are considered by them, as not only having rendered important services in your own revolution, but as being on a more extensive scale, the friend of human rights, and a distinguished and able advocate in favor of public liberty. To the welfare of Thomas Paine the Americans are not and cannot be indifferent. . . . To liberate you, will be an object of my endeavors. . . ."—*Editor*.

what ground do they pretend to deprive America of the service of any of her citizens without assigning a cause, or only the flimsy one of my being born in England? Gates, were he here, might be arrested on the same pretense, and he and Burgoyne be confounded together.

It is difficult for me to give an opinion, but among other things that occur to me, I think that if you were to say that, as it will be necessary to you to inform the Government of America of my situation, you require an explanation with the Committee upon that subject; that you are induced to make this proposal not only out of esteem for the character of the person who is the personal object of it, but because you know that his arrestation will distress the Americans, and the more so as it will appear to them to be contrary to their ideas of civil and national justice, it might perhaps have some effect.

If the Committee [of Public Safety] will do nothing, it will be necessary to bring this matter openly before the Convention, for I do most sincerely assure you, from the observations that I hear and I suppose the same are made in other places, that the character of America lies under some reproach.

All the world knows that I have served her, and they see that I am still in prison; and you know that when people can form a conclusion upon a simple fact they trouble not themselves about reasons. I had rather that America cleared herself of all suspicion of ingratitude, though I were to be the victim.

You advise me to have patience, but I am fully persuaded that the longer I continue in prison the more difficult will be my liberation. There are two reasons for this: the one is that the present Committee, by continuing so long my imprisonment, will naturally suppose that my mind will be soured against them, as it was against those who put me in, and they will continue my imprisonment from the same apprehensions as the former Committee did; the other reason is, that it is now about two months since your arrival, and I am still in prison. They will explain this into an indifference upon my fate that will encourage them to continue my imprisonment.

When I hear some people say that it is the Government of America that now keeps me in prison by not reclaiming me, and then pour forth a volley of execrations against her, I know not how to answer them otherwise than by a direct denial which they do not appear to believe.

You will easily conclude that whatever relates to imprisonments and liberations makes a topic of prison conversation; and as I am now the

oldest inhabitant within these walls, except two or three, I am often the subject of their remarks, because from the continuance of my imprisonment they augur ill to themselves. You see I write you everything that occurs to me, and I conclude with thanking you again for your very friendly and affectionate letter, and am with great respect

Yours affectionately,

THOMAS PAINE.

Today is the anniversary of the action of Germantown.<sup>247</sup> Your letter has enabled me to contradict the observations before mentioned.

### TO JAMES MONROE <sup>248</sup>

LUXEMBOURG PRISON, October 13, 1794.

DEAR SIR:

On the twenty-eighth of this month (October) I shall have suffered ten months' imprisonment, to the dishonor of America as well as of myself, and I speak to you very honestly, when I say that my patience is exhausted. It is only my actual liberation that can make me believe it. Had any person told me that I should remain in prison two months after the arrival of a new Minister, I should have supposed that he meant to affront me as an American. By the friendship and sympathy you express in your letter you seem to consider my imprisonment as having connection only with myself, but I am certain that the inferences that follow from it have relation also to the national character of America. I already feel this in myself, for I no longer speak with pride of being a citizen of that country. Is it possible, sir, that I should, when I am suffering unjust imprisonment under the very eye of her new Minister?

While there was no Minister here (for I consider Morris as none) nobody wondered at my imprisonment, but now everybody wonders. The continuance of it under a change of diplomatic circumstances subjects me to the suspicion of having merited it, and also to the suspicion of having forfeited my reputation with America; and it subjects her at the same time to the suspicion of ingratitude, or to the reproach of wanting national or diplomatic importance.

<sup>247</sup> The Germantown action referred to in this letter occurred on October 4, 1777.—*Editor*.

<sup>248</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the James Monroe Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

The language that some Americans have held of my not being considered as an American citizen, though contradicted by yourself, proceeds, I believe, from no other motive than the shame and dishonor they feel at the imprisonment of a fellow-citizen, and they adopt this apology, at my expense, to get rid of that disgrace.

Is it not enough that I suffer imprisonment, but my mind also must be wounded and tortured with subjects of this kind? Did I reason from personal considerations only, independent of principles and the pride of having practised those principles honorably, I should be tempted to curse the day I knew America. By contributing to her liberty I have lost my own, and yet her Government beholds my situation in silence.

Wonder not, Sir, at the ideas I express or the language in which I express them. If I have a heart to feel for others I can feel also for myself, and if I have anxiety for my own honor, I have it also for a country whose suffering infancy I endeavored to nourish and to which I have been enthusiastically attached. As to patience I have practised it long—as long as it was honorable to do so, and when it goes beyond that point it becomes meanness.

I am inclined to believe that you have attended to my imprisonment more as a friend than a Minister. As a friend I thank you for your affectionate attachment. As a Minister you have to look beyond me to the honor and reputation of your Government; and your countrymen, who have accustomed themselves to consider any subject in one line of thinking only, more especially if it makes a strong [impression] upon them, as I believe my situation has made upon you, do not immediately see the matters that have relation to it in another line; and it is to bring these two into one point that I offer you these observations. A citizen and his country, in a case like mine, are so closely connected that the case of one is the case of both.

When you first arrived, the path you had to pursue with respect to my liberation was simple. I was imprisoned as a foreigner; you knew that foreigner to be a citizen of America, and you knew also his character, and as such you should immediately have reclaimed him. You could lose nothing by taking strong ground, but you might lose much by taking an inferior one; but instead of this, which I conceive would have been the right line of acting, you left me in their hands on the loose intimation that my liberation would take place without your direct interference, and you strongly recommended it to me to wait the issue. This is more than seven weeks ago and I am still in prison. I suspect

these people are trifling with you, and if they once believe they can do that, you will not easily get any business done except what they wish to have done.

When I take a review of my whole situation—my circumstances ruined, my health half destroyed, my person imprisoned, and the prospect of imprisonment still staring me in the face, can you wonder at the agony of my feelings? You lie down in safety and rise to plenty; it is otherwise with me; I am deprived of more than half the common necessities of life; I have not a candle to burn and cannot get one. Fuel can be procured only in small quantities and that with great difficulty and very dear, and to add to the rest, I am fallen into a relapse and am again on the sick list.

Did you feel the whole force of what I suffer, and the disgrace put upon America by this injustice done to one of her best and most affectionate citizens, you would not, either as a friend or minister, rest a day till you had procured my liberation. It is the work of two or three hours when you set heartily about it, that is, when you demand me as an American citizen, or propose a conference with the Committee upon that subject; or you may make it the work of a twelve-month and not succeed. I know these people better than you do.

You desire me to believe that “you are placed here on a difficult theater with many important objects to attend to, and with but few to consult with, and that it becomes you in pursuit of these to regulate your conduct with respect to each, as to manner and time, as will in your judgment be best calculated to accomplish the whole.”

As I know not what these objects are I can say nothing to that point. But I have always been taught to believe that the liberty of a citizen was the first object of all free governments, and that it ought not to give preference to, or be blended with, any other. It is that public object that all the world can see, and which obtains an influence upon public opinion more than any other.

This is not the case with the objects you allude to. But be those objects what they may, can you suppose you will accomplish them the easier by holding me in the background, or making me only an accident in the negotiation? Those with whom you confer will conclude from thence that you do not feel yourself very strong upon those points, and that you politically keep me out of sight in the meantime to make your approach the easier.

There is one part in your letter that it is equally as proper should be

communicated to the Committee as to me, and which I conceive you are under some diplomatic obligation to do. It is that part which you conclude by saying that "*to the welfare of Thomas Paine the Americans are not and cannot be indifferent.*" As it is impossible the Americans can preserve their esteem for me and for my oppressors at the same time, the injustice to me strikes at the popular part of the Treaty of Alliance.

If it be the wish of the Committee to reduce the treaty to a mere skeleton of government forms, they are taking the right method to do it, and it is not improbable they will blame you afterward for not informing them upon the subject. The disposition to retort has been so notorious here, that you ought to be guarded against it at all points.

You say in your letter that you doubt whether the gentleman who informed me of the language held by some Americans respecting my citizenship of America conveyed even his own ideas clearly upon the subject.<sup>249</sup> I know not how this may be, but I believe he told me the truth.

I received a letter a few days ago from a friend and former comrade of mine in which he tells me, that all the Americans he converses with say that I should have been in liberty long ago if the Minister could have reclaimed me as an American citizen. When I compare this with the counter-declarations in your letter I can explain the case no otherwise than I have already done, that it is an apology to get rid of the shame and dishonor they feel at the imprisonment of an American citizen, and because they are not willing it should be supposed there is want of influence in the American Embassy. But they ought to see that this language is injurious to me.

On the second of this month Vendémiaire I received a line from Mr. Beresford in which he tells me I shall be in liberty in two or three days, and that he has this for good authority. On the twelfth I received a note from Mr. Labonadaire, written at the Bureau of the Concierge, in which he tells me of the interest you take in procuring my liberation, and that after the steps that had been already taken that I ought to write to the Convention to demand my liberty *purely* and *simply* as a citizen of the United States of America. He advised me to send the letter to him, and he would translate it. I sent the letter, inclosing at the same time a letter to you. I have heard nothing since of the letter to the Convention.

On the seventeenth I received a letter from my former comrade Vanhuele, in which he says, "I am just come from Mr. Russell, who had

<sup>249</sup> Paine is referring to the letter he received from Peter Whiteside which inspired his Memorial to Montoe.—*Editor.*

yesterday a conversation with your Minister and your liberation is certain—you will be in liberty to-morrow." Vanhuele' also adds, "I find the advice of Mr. Labonadaire good, for though you have some enemies in the Convention, the strongest and best part are in your favor."

But the case is, and I felt it while I was writing the letter to the Convention that there is an awkwardness in my appearing, you being present; for every foreigner should apply through his Minister, or rather his Minister for him.

When I thus see day after day and month after month, and promise after promise, pass away without effect, what can I conclude but that either the Committees are secretly determined not to let me go, or that the measures you take are not pursued with the vigor necessary to give them effect; or that the American national character is without sufficient importance in the French Republic? The latter will be gratifying to the English Government. In short, Sir, the case is now arrived to that crisis, that for the sake of your own reputation as a Minister you ought to require a positive answer from the Committee.

As to myself, it is more agreeable to me now to contemplate an honorable destruction, and to perish in the act of protesting against the injustice I suffer, and to caution the people of America against confiding too much in the Treaty of Alliance, violated as it has been in every principle, and in my imprisonment though an American citizen, than remain in the wretched condition I am. I am no longer of any use to the world or to myself.

There was a time when I beheld the Revolution of the tenth Thermidor<sup>250</sup> with enthusiasm. It was the first news my comrade Vanhuele communicated to me during my illness, and it contributed to my recovery. But there is still something rotten at the center, and the enemies that I have, though perhaps not numerous, are more active than my friends. If I form a wrong opinion of men or things it is to you I must look to set me right. You are in possession of the secret. I know nothing of it. But that I may be guarded against as many wants as possible I shall set about writing a memorial to Congress, another to the State of Pennsylvania, and an address to the people of America; but it will be difficult for me to finish these until I know from yourself what applications you have made for my liberation, and what answers you have received.

Ah, Sir, you would have gotten a load of trouble and difficulties off your hands that I fear will multiply every day had you made it a point

<sup>250</sup> Paine is referring to the fall of Robespierre.—Editor.



to procure my liberty when you first arrived, and not left me floating on the promises of men whom you did not know. You were then a new character. You had come in consequence of their own request that Morris should be recalled; and had you then, before you opened any subject of negotiation that might arise into controversy, demanded my liberty either as a civility or as a right I see not how they could have refused it.

I have already said that after all the promises that have been made I am still in prison. I am in the dark upon all the matters that relate to myself. I know not if it be to the Convention, to the Committee of Public Safety, of General Surety, or to the deputies who come sometimes to the Luxembourg to examine and put persons in liberty, that applications have been made for my liberation. But be it to whom it may, my earnest and pressing request to you as Minister is that you will bring this matter to a conclusion by reclaiming me as an American citizen imprisoned in France under the plea of being a foreigner born in England; that I may know the result, and how to prepare the memorials I have mentioned, should there be occasion for them.

The right of determining who are American citizens can belong only to America. The Convention have declared I am not a French citizen because she has declared me to be a foreigner, and have by that declaration cancelled and annulled the vote of the former assembly that conferred the title of citizen upon citizens or subjects of other countries. I should not be honest to you nor to myself were I not to express myself as I have done in this letter, and I confide and request you will accept it in that sense and in no other.

I am, with great respect, your suffering fellow-citizen,

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S.—If my imprisonment is to continue, and I indulge very little hope to the contrary, I shall be under the absolute necessity of applying to you for a supply of several articles. Every person here have their families or friends upon the spot who make provision for them. This is not the case with me; I have no person I can apply to but the American Minister, and I can have no doubt that if events should prevent my repaying the expense Congress or the State of Pennsylvania will discharge it for me.

To-day is twenty-two Vendémiaire, Monday, October thirteenth, but you will not receive this letter till the fourteenth. I will send the bearer to you again on the fifteenth, Wednesday, and I will be obliged to you to send me for the present, three or four candles, a little sugar of any

kind, and some soap for shaving; and I should be glad at the same time to receive a line from you and a memorandum of the articles. Were I in your place I would order a hogshead of sugar, some boxes of candles and soap from America, for they will become still more scarce. Perhaps the best method for you to procure them at present is by applying to the American consuls at Bordeaux and Havre, and have them up by the diligence.

### TO JAMES MONROE <sup>251</sup>

[October, 1794.]

DEAR SIR:

As I have not yet received any answer to my last, I have amused myself with writing you the enclosed memoranda. Though you recommend patience to me I cannot but feel very pointedly the uncomfortableness of my situation, and among other reflections that occur to me I cannot think that America receives any credit from the long imprisonment that I suffer. It has the appearance of neglecting her citizens and her friends and of encouraging the insults of foreign nations upon them and upon her commerce. My imprisonment is as well and perhaps more known in England than in France, and they (the English) will not be intimidated from molesting an American ship when they see that one of her best citizens (for I have a right to call myself so) can be imprisoned in another country at the mere discretion of a committee, because he is a foreigner.

When you first arrived everybody congratulated me that I should soon, if not immediately, be in liberty. Since that time about two hundred have been set free from this prison on the applications of their sections or of individuals—and I am continually hurt by the observations that are made—"that a section in Paris has more influence than America."

It is right that I furnish you with these circumstances. It is the effect of my anxiety that the character of America suffer no reproach; for the world knows that I have acted a generous duty by her. I am the third American that has been imprisoned. Griffiths nine weeks, Haskins

<sup>251</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the James Monroe Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress. It is undated but was written sometime between October 13 and October 20, 1794.—*Editor*.

about five, and myself eight [months] and yet in prison. With respect to the two former there was then no Minister, for I consider Morris as none; and they were liberated on the applications of the Americans in Paris. As to myself I had rather be publicly and honorably reclaimed, though the reclamation was refused, than remain in the uncertain situation that I am. Though my health has suffered my spirits are not broken. I have nothing to fear unless innocence and fortitude be crimes.

America, whatever may be my fate, will have no cause to blush for me as a citizen; I hope I shall have none to blush for her as a country.

If, my dear Sir, there is anything in the perplexity of ideas I have mistaken, only suppose yourself in my situation, and you will easily find an excuse for it. I need not say how much I shall rejoice to pay my respects to you without-side the walls of this prison, and to inquire after my American friends. But I know that nothing can be accomplished here but by unceasing perseverance and application.

Yours affectionately,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO JAMES MONROE <sup>252</sup>

LUXEMBOURG PRISON, October 20, 1794.

DEAR SIR:

I received your friendly letter of the twenty-sixth Vendémiaire on the day it was written, and I thank you for communicating to me your opinion upon my case. Ideas serve to beget ideas, and as it is from a review of everything that can be said upon a subject, or is any ways connected with it, that the best judgment can be formed how to proceed, I present you with such ideas as occur to me. I am sure of one thing, which is that you will give them a patient and attentive perusal.

You say in your letter that "I must be sensible that although I am an American citizen, yet if you interfere in my behalf as the minister of my country you must demand my liberation only in case there be no charge against me; and that if there is I must be brought to trial previously, since no person in a *private* character can be exempt from the laws of the country in which he resides." This is what I have twice attempted to do. I wrote a letter on the third Sans Culottodi to the deputies, members of

<sup>252</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the James Monroe Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

the Committee of Surety General, who came to the Luxembourg to examine the persons detained. The letter was as follows:

“Citizens Representatives: I offer myself for examination. Justice is due to every man. It is justice only that I ask.—THOMAS PAINE.”

As I was not called for examination, nor heard anything in consequence of my letter the first time of sending it, I sent a duplicate of it a few days after. It was carried to them by my good friend and comrade Vanhuele, who was then going in liberty, having been examined the day before. Vanhuele wrote me on the next day and said: “Bourdon de l’Oise <sup>253</sup> is the most inveterate enemy you can have. The answer he gave me when I presented your letter put me in such a passion with him that I expected I should be sent back again to prison.” I then wrote a third letter but had not an opportunity of sending it, as Bourdon did not come any more till after I received Mr. Labonadaire’s letter advising me to write to the Convention. The letter was as follows:

“Citizens, I have twice offered myself for examination, and I chose to do this while Bourdon de l’Oise was one of the commissioners. This deputy has said in the Convention that I intrigued with an ancient agent of the Bureau of Foreign Affairs. My examination therefore while he is present will give him an opportunity of proving his charge or of convincing himself of his error. If Bourdon de l’Oise is an honest man he will examine me, but lest he should not I subjoin the following. That which B[ourdon] calls an intrigue was at the request of a member of the former Committee of Salut Public; last August was a twelve-month. I met the member on the Boulevard. He asked me something in French which I did not understand and we went together to the Bureau of Foreign Affairs, which was near at hand. The agent (Otto, whom you probably knew in America) served as interpreter.

“The member (it was Barrère) then asked me first, if I could furnish him with the plan of Constitution I had presented to the Committee of Constitution, of which I was member with himself, because, he said, it contained several things which he wished had been adopted: secondly, he asked me my opinion upon sending commissioners to the United States of America: thirdly, if fifty or an hundred ship loads of flour could be procured from America.

“As verbal interpretation was tedious, it was agreed that I should give him my opinion in writing, and that the agent [Otto] should translate it, which he did. I answered the first question by sending him the plan,

<sup>253</sup> Bourbon de l’Oise was one of the examining deputies.—*Editor.*

[of a constitution] which he still has. To the second, I replied that I thought it would be proper to send commissioners, because that in revolutions circumstances change so fast that it was often necessary to send a better supply of information to an ally than could be communicated by writing; and that Congress had done the same thing during the American war; and I gave him some information that the commissioners would find useful on their arrival.

"I answered the third question by sending him a list of American exports two years before, distinguishing the several articles by which he would see that the supply he mentioned could be obtained. I sent him also the plan of Paul Jones, giving it as his, for procuring saltpeter, which was to send a squadron (it did not require a large one) to take possession of the Island of St. Helen's, to keep the English flag flying at the port, that the English East India ships coming from the East Indies, and that ballast with saltpeter, might be induced to enter as usual; and that it would be a considerable time before the English Government could know of what had happened at St. Helen's. See here what Bourdon de l'Oise has called an intrigue.

"If it was an intrigue it was between a Committee of Salut Public and myself, for the agent was no more than the interpreter and translator, and the object of the intrigue was to furnish France with flour and saltpeter."

I suppose Bourdon had heard that the agent and I were seen together talking English, and this was enough for *him* to found his charge upon.

You next say that "I must likewise be sensible that although I am an American citizen that it is likewise believed there [in America] that I am become a citizen of France, and that in consequence this latter character has so far [*illegible*] the former as to weaken if not destroy any claim you might have to interpose in my behalf."

I am sorry I cannot add any new arguments to those I have already advanced on this part of the subject. But I cannot help asking myself, and I wish you would ask the Committee, if it could possibly be the intention of France to *kidnap* citizens from America under the pretense of dubbing them with the title of French citizens, and then, after inviting or rather inveigling them into France, make it a pretense for detaining them? If it was (which I am sure it was not, though they now act as if it was), the insult was to America, though the injury was to me, and the treachery was to both. Did they mean to kidnap General Washing-

ton, Mr. Madison, and several other Americans whom they dubbed with the same title as well as me?

Let any man look at the condition of France when I arrived in it—invaded by Austrians and Prussians and declared to be in danger—and then ask if any man who had a home and a country to go to, as I had in America, would have come amongst them from any other motive than of assisting them. If I could possibly have supposed them capable of treachery I certainly would not have trusted myself in their power. Instead therefore of your being unwilling or apprehensive of meeting the question of French citizenship, they ought to be ashamed of advancing it, and this will be the case unless you admit their arguments or objections too passively. It is a case on their part fit only for the continuations of Robespierre to set up.

As to the name of French citizen, I never considered it in any other light, so far as regarded myself, than as a token of honorary respect. I never made them any promise nor took any oath of allegiance or of citizenship, nor bound myself by any act or means whatever to the performance of anything. I acted altogether as a friend invited among them as I supposed on honorable terms. I did not come to join myself to a government already formed, but to assist in forming one *de nouveau*, which was afterwards to be submitted to the people whether they would accept it or not, and this any foreigner might do. And strictly speaking there are no citizens before this is a government. They are all of the people. The Americans were not called citizens till after government was established, and not even then until they had taken the oath of allegiance. This was the case in Pennsylvania.

But be this French citizenship more or less, the Convention have swept it away by declaring me to be a foreigner, and imprisoning me as such; and this is a short answer to all those who affect to say or to believe that I am [a] French citizen. A citizen without citizenship is a term nondescript.

After the two preceding paragraphs you ask—"If it be my wish that you should embark in this controversy (meaning that of reclaiming me) and risk the consequences with respect to myself and the good understanding subsisting between the two countries, or, without relinquishing any point of right, and which might be insisted on in case of extremities, pursue according to your best judgment and with the light before you, the object of my liberation?"

As I believe from the apparent obstinacy of the Committees that circumstances will grow toward the extremity you mention, unless prevented beforehand, I will endeavor to throw into your hands all the lights I can upon the subject.

In the first place, reclamation may mean two distinct things. All the reclamations that are made by the sections in behalf of persons detained as *suspect* are made on the ground that the persons so detained are patriots, and the reclamation is good against the charge of "suspect" because it proves the contrary.

But my situation includes another circumstance. I am imprisoned on the charge (if it can be called one) of being a foreigner born in England. You know that foreigner to be a citizen of the United States of America, and that he has been such since the fourth of July, 1776, the political birthday of the United States, and of every American citizen, for before that period all were British subjects, and the States, then provinces, were British dominions.

Your reclamation of me therefore as a citizen of the United States (all other considerations apart) is good against the pretense for imprisoning me, or that pretense is equally good against every American citizen born in England, Ireland, Scotland, Germany or Holland, and you know this description of men compose a very great part of the population of the three states of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and make also a part of Congress, and of the state legislatures.

Every politician ought to know, and every civilian does know, that the Law of Treaty of Alliance, and also that of Amity and Commerce, knows no distinction of American citizens on account of the place of their birth, but recognizes all to be citizens whom the Constitution and laws of the United States of America recognize as such; and if I recollect rightly there is an article in the Treaty of Commerce particular to this point. The law therefore which they have here, to put all persons in arrestation born in any of the countries at war with France, is, when applied to citizens of America born in England, Ireland, Scotland, Germany or Holland, a violation of the treaties of Alliance and of Commerce, because it assumes to make a distinction of citizens which those treaties and the Constitution of America know nothing of. This is a subject that officially comes under your cognizance as Minister, and it would be consistent that you expostulated with them upon the case.

That foolish old man Vadier, who was president of the Convention and of the Committee of Surety General when the Americans then in

Paris went to the bar of the Convention to reclaim me, gave them for answer that my being born in England was cause sufficient for imprisoning me. It happened that at least half those who went up with that address were in the same case with myself.

As to reclamations on the ground of patriotism it is difficult to know what is to be understood by patriotism here. There is not a vice, and scarcely a virtue, that has not as the fashion of the moment suited been called by the name of patriotism. The wretches who composed the revolutionary tribunal of Nantes were the patriots of that day and the criminals of this. The Jacobins called themselves patriots of the first order, men up to the height of the circumstances, and they are now considered as an antidote to patriotism. But if we give to patriotism a fixed idea consistent with that of a republic, it would signify a strict adherence to the principles of moral justice, to the equality of civil and political rights, to the system of representative government, and an opposition to every hereditary claim to govern; and of this species of patriotism you know my character.

But, Sir, there are men on the Committee who have changed their party but not their principles. Their aim is to hold power as long as possible by preventing the establishment of a Constitution, and these men are and will be my enemies, and seek to hold me in prison as long as they can. I am too good a patriot for them. It is not improbable that they have heard of the strange language held by some Americans that I am not considered in America as an American citizen, and they may also have heard say, that you had no orders respecting me, and it is not improbable that they interpret that language and that silence into a conivance at my imprisonment.

If they had not some ideas of this kind would they resist so long the civil efforts you make for my liberation, or would they attach so much importance to the imprisonment of an individual as *to risk* (as you say to me) *the good understanding that exists between the two countries?* You also say that *it is impossible for any person to do more than you have done without adopting the other means*, meaning that of reclaiming me. How then can you account for the want of success after so many efforts, and such a length of time, upwards of ten weeks, without supposing that they fortify themselves in the interpretation I have just mentioned?

I can admit that it was not necessary to give orders, and that it was difficult to give direct orders, for I much question if Morris had in-



formed Congress or the President of the whole of the case, or had sent copies of my letters to him as I had desired him to do. You would find the case here when you came, and you could not fully understand it till you did come, and as Minister you would have authority to act upon it. But as you inform me that you know what the wishes of the President are, you will see also that his reputation is exposed to some risk, admitting there to be ground for the supposition I have made.

It will not add to his popularity to have it believed in America, as I am inclined to think the Committee believe here, that he connives at my imprisonment. You say also that *it is known to everybody that you wish my liberation*. It is, Sir, because they know your wishes that they misinterpret the means you use. They suppose that those mild means arise from a restriction that you cannot use others, or from a consciousness of some defect on my part of which you are unwilling to provoke the inquiry.

But as you ask me if it be my wish that you should embark in this controversy and risk the consequences with respect to myself, I will answer this part of the question by marking out precisely the part I wish you to take. What I mean is a sort of middle line above what you have yet gone, and not up to the full extremity of the case, which will still lie in reserve. It is to write a letter to the Committee that shall in the first place defeat by anticipation all the objections they might make to a simple reclamation, and at the same time make the ground good for that object. But, instead of sending the letter immediately, to invite some of the Committee to your house and to make that invitation the opportunity of showing them the letter, expressing at the same time a wish that you had done this from a hope that the business might be settled in an amicable manner without your being forced into an official interference that would excite the observations of the enemies of both countries, and probably interrupt the harmony that subsisted between the two Republics.

But as I cannot convey the ideas I wish you to use by any means so concisely or so well as to suppose myself the writer of the letter I shall adopt this method and you will make use of such parts or such ideas of it as you please if you approve the plan. Here follows the supposed letter:

**CITIZENS:** When I first arrived among you as Minister from the United States of America I was given to understand that the liberation of Thomas Paine would take place without any official interference on my part. This was the more agreeable to me as it would not only supersede

the necessity of that interference, but would leave to yourselves the whole opportunity of doing justice to a man who, as far as I have been able to learn, has suffered much cruel treatment under what you have denominated the system of terror. But as I find my expectations have not been fulfilled I am under the official necessity of being more explicit upon the subject than I have hitherto been.

Permit me, in the first place, to observe that as it is impossible for me to suppose that it could have been the intention of France to seduce any citizens of America from their allegiance to their proper country by offering them the title of French citizen, so must I be compelled to believe that the title of French citizen conferred on Thomas Paine was intended only as a mask of honorary respect toward a man who had so eminently distinguished himself in defense of liberty, and on no occasion more so than in promoting and defending your own Revolution. For a proof of this I refer you to his two works entitled *Rights of Man*. Those works have procured to him an addition of esteem in America, and I am sorry they have been so ill rewarded in France. But be this title of French citizen more or less, it is now entirely swept away by the vote of the Convention which declares him to be a foreigner, and which supersedes the vote of the Assembly that conferred that title upon him, consequently upon the case superseded with it.

In consequence of this vote of the Convention declaring him to be a foreigner the former committees have imprisoned him. It is therefore become my official duty to declare to you that the foreigner thus imprisoned is a citizen of the United States of America as fully, as legally, as constitutionally as myself, and that he is moreover one of the principal founders of the American Republic.

I have been informed of a law or decree of the Convention which subjects foreigners born in any of the countries at war with France to arrestation and imprisonment. This law when applied to citizens of America born in England is an infraction of the Treaty of Alliance and of Amity and Commerce, which knows no distinction of American citizens on account of the place of their birth, but recognizes all to be citizens whom the Constitution and laws of America recognize as such. The circumstances under which America has been peopled requires this guard on her treaties, because the mass of her citizens are composed not of natives only but also of the natives of almost all the countries of Europe who have sought an asylum there from the persecutions they experienced in their own countries.

After this intimation you will without doubt see the propriety of modeling that law to the principles of the treaty, because the law of treaty in cases where it applies is the governing law to both parties alike, and it cannot be infringed without hazarding the existence of the treaty.

Of the patriotism of Thomas Paine I can speak fully, if we agree to give to patriotism a fixed idea consistent with that of a republic. It would then signify a strict adherence to moral justice, to the equality of civil and political rights, to the system of representative government, and an opposition to all hereditary claims to govern. Admitting patriotism to consist in these principles, I know of no man who has gone beyond Thomas Paine in promulgating and defending them, and that for almost twenty years past.

I have now spoken to you on the principal matters concerned in the case of Thomas Paine. The title of French citizen which you had enforced upon him, you have since taken away by declaring him to be a foreigner, and consequently this part of the subject ceases of itself. I have declared to you that this foreigner is a citizen of the United States of America, and have assured you of his patriotism.

I cannot help at the same time repeating to you my wish that his liberation had taken place without my being obliged to go thus far into the subject, because it is the mutual interest of both Republics to avoid as much as possible all subjects of controversy, especially those from which no possible good can flow.

I still hope that you will save me the unpleasant task of proceeding any further by sending me an order for his liberation, which the injured state of his health absolutely requires. I shall be happy to receive such an order from you and happy in presenting it to him, for to the welfare of Thomas Paine the Americans are not and cannot be indifferent.

This is the sort of letter I wish you to write, for I have no idea that you will succeed by any measures that can, by any kind of construction, be interpreted into a want of confidence or an apprehension of consequences. It is themselves that ought to be apprehensive of consequences if any are to be apprehended. They, I mean the committees, are not certain that the Convention or the nation would support them in forcing any question of extremity that might interrupt the good understanding subsisting between the two countries; and I know of no question [so likely] to do this as that which involves the rights and liberty of a citizen.

You will please to observe that I have put the case of French citizen-

ship in a point of view that ought not only to preclude, but to make them ashamed to advance anything upon this subject; and this is better than to have to answer their counter-reclamation afterwards. Either the citizenship was intended as a token of honorary respect, or it was intended to deprive America of a citizen or to seduce him from his allegiance to his proper country. If it was intended as an honor they must act consistently with the principle of honor. But if they make a pretense for detaining me, they convict themselves of the act of seduction.

Had America singled out any particular French citizen, complimented him with the title of Citizen of America, which he without suspecting any fraudulent intention might accept, and then after having invited or rather inveigled him into America made his acceptance of that title a pretense for seducing or forcing him from his allegiance to France, would not France have just cause to be offended at America? And ought not America to have the same right to be offended at France? And will the committees take upon themselves to answer for the dishonor they bring upon the national character of their country?

If these arguments are stated beforehand they will prevent the committees going into the subject of French citizenship. They must be ashamed of it.

But after all the case comes to this, that this French citizenship appertains no longer to me because the Convention, as I have already said, have swept it away by declaring me to be a foreigner, and it is not in the power of the committees to reverse it. But if I am to be citizen and foreigner, and citizen again, just when and how and for any purpose they please, they take the Government of America into their own hands and make her only a cipher in their system.

Though these ideas have been long with me they have been more particularly matured by reading your last communication, and I have many reasons to wish you had opened that communication sooner. I am best acquainted with the persons you have to deal with and the circumstances of my own case. If you choose to adopt the letter as it is, I send you a translation for the sake of expediting the business. I have endeavored to conceive your own manner of expression as well as I could, and the civility of language you would use, but the matter of the letter is essential to me.

If you choose to confer with some of the members of the Committee at your own house on the subject of the letter it may render the sending it unnecessary; but in either case I must request and press you not to give

away to evasion and delay, and that you will fix positively with them that they shall give you an answer in three or four days whether they will liberate me on the representation you have made in the letter, or whether you must be forced to go further into the subject. The state of my health will not admit of delay, and besides, the tortured state of my mind wears me down.

If they talk of bringing me to trial (and I well know there is no accusation against me and that they can bring none) I certainly shall summon you as an evidence to my character. This you may mention to them either as what I intend to do or what you intend to do voluntarily for me.

I am anxious that you undertake this business without losing time, because if I am not liberated in the course of this decade, I intend, if in case the seventy-one detained deputies are liberated, to follow the same track that they have done, and publish my own case myself. I cannot rest any longer in this state of miserable suspense, be the consequences what they may.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO JAMES MONROE <sup>254</sup>

November 2, 1794 [?]

DEAR SIR:

I need not mention to you the happiness I received from the information you sent me by Mr. Beresford. I easily guess the persons you have conversed with on the subject of my liberation—but matters and even promises that pass in conversation are not quite so strictly attended to here as in the country you come from.

I am not, my dear Sir, impatient from anything in my disposition, but the state of my health requires liberty and a better air; and besides this, the rules of the prison do not permit me, though I have all the indulgences the concierge can give, to procure the things necessary to my recovery, which is slow as to strength. I have a tolerable appetite but the allowance of provision is scanty. We are not allowed a knife to cut our

<sup>254</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the James Monroe Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress. It is undated, but Monroe's endorsement, "2nd. Luxembourg," indicates that it was written on November 2. Two days later Paine was released from prison.—*Editor*.

victuals with, nor a razor to shave; but they have lately allowed some barbers that are here to shave.

The room where I am lodged is a ground floor level with the earth in the garden and floored with brick, and is so wet after every rain that I cannot guard against taking colds that continually cheat my recovery. If you could, without interfering with or deranging the mode proposed for my liberation, inform the Committee that the state of my health requires liberty and air, it would be good ground to hasten my liberation.

The length of my imprisonment is also a reason, for I am now almost the oldest inhabitant of this uncomfortable mansion, and I see twenty, thirty and sometimes forty persons a day put in liberty who have not been so long confined as myself. Their liberation is a happiness to me; but I feel sometimes, a little mortification that I am thus left behind.

I leave it entirely to you to arrange this matter. The messenger waits.

Yours affectionately,

T. P.

I hope and wish much to see you. I have much to say. I have had the attendance of Dr. Graham (physician to General O'Hara, who is prisoner here) and of Dr. Makouski, house physician, who has been most exceedingly kind to me. After I am at liberty I shall be glad to introduce him to you.

## TO SAMUEL ADAMS <sup>255</sup>

March 6, 1795.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

Mr. Mozard, who is appointed Consul, will present you this letter. He is spoken of here as a good sort of man, and I can have no doubt that you will find him the same at Boston. When I came from America it was my intention to return the next year, and I have intended the same every year since. The case I believe is that, as I am embarked in the Revolution, I do not like to leave it till it is finished, notwithstanding the dangers I have run. I am now almost the only survivor of those who began this Revolution, and I know not how it is that I have escaped. I know, however, that I owe nothing to the government of America. The

<sup>255</sup> This letter to Samuel Adams, one of the most important Revolutionary patriots, is printed from the original manuscript in the Samuel Adams Papers through the courtesy of the New York Public Library.—*Editor*.

executive department has never directed either the former or the present Minister to enquire whether I was dead or alive, in prison or in liberty, what the cause of the imprisonment was, and whether there was any service or assistance it could render. Mr. Monroe acted voluntarily in the case, and reclaimed me as an American citizen; for the pretence for my imprisonment was that I was a foreigner, born in England.

The internal scene here from the 31st of May, 1793, to the fall of Robespierre has been terrible. I was shut up in the prison of the Luxembourg [almost] eleven months, and I find by the papers of Robespierre that have been published by the Convention since his death, that I was designed for a worse fate. The following memorandum is in his own handwriting: "Démander que Thomas Paine soit décrété d'accusation pour les intérêts de l'Amérique autant que de la France."<sup>256</sup>

You will see by the public papers that the successes of the French arms have been and continue to be astonishing, more especially since the fall of Robespierre, and the suppression of the system of Terror. They have fairly beaten all the armies of Austria, Prussia, England, Spain, Sardinia and Holland. Holland is entirely conquered, and there is now a revolution in that country.

I know not how matters are going on your side the water, but I think everything is not as it ought to be. The appointment of G. Morris to be Minister here was the most unfortunate and the most injudicious appointment that could be made. I wrote this opinion to Mr. Jefferson at the time, and I said the same to Morris. Had he not been removed at the time he was I think the two countries would have been involved in a quarrel, for it is a fact, that he would either have been ordered away or put in arrestation; for he gave every reason to suspect that he was secretly a British Emissary.

What Mr. Jay is about in England I know not; but is it possible that any man who has contributed to the Independence of America, and to free her from the tyranny of the British Government, can read without shame and indignation the note of Jay to Grenville? That the *United States has no other resource than in the justice and magnanimity of his Majesty*, is a satire upon the Declaration of Independence, and exhibits [such] a spirit of meanness on the part of America, that, were it true, I should be ashamed of her. Such a declaration may suit the spaniel char-

<sup>256</sup> "To ask that Thomas Paine be decreed guilty in the interests of America as well as France."—*Editor*.

acter of Aristocracy, but it cannot agree with the manly character of a Republican.

Mr. Mozard is this moment come for this letter, and he sets off directly. God bless you, remember me among the circle of our friends, and tell them how much I wish to be once more among them.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN BACHE <sup>257</sup>

PARIS, August 5, 1795.

SIR:

I have lately published a small tract entitled *Dissertations upon first Principles of Government*. As the press was set in English as well as in French I have struck off an additional quantity. You will receive a package containing 5000 about three hundred of which are French. Please to advertise them at not more than twenty cents and wholesale according what the custom is with you. If there are more than you have occasion for send some to Mr. Fellows <sup>258</sup> of New York.

The package was sent from the Printers to the care of Mr. Skipwith American Consul at Paris. Two other packages which belong to the printer, Mr. Stine, were sent at the same time, intended for Mr. John Vaughn, Philadelphia. I believe that the clerk at Mr. Skipwith's has put your address on all three. Should this be the case, please to rectify the mistake, and send the packages that do not contain the publications that are mine to Mr. Vaughn. I have enclosed you a letter in the Package. I do not yet learn what vessel they are shipped in, but the packages were sent to Havre. I hope to be in America before next spring.<sup>259</sup>

Your Friend, etc.,

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>257</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the American Philosophical Society and the Henry E. Huntington Library. Evidently Paine made a copy of the original letter.—*Editor*.

<sup>258</sup> John Fellows of New York, military officer, editor, Freemason and deist, was Paine's intimate friend after he returned to the United States.—*Editor*.

<sup>259</sup> Benjamin Franklin Bache died in the yellow fever epidemic of 1798, four years before Paine returned to the United States.—*Editor*.



TO JAMES MADISON <sup>260</sup>

PARIS, Sept. 24, 1795.

SIR:

I have borrowed two hundred and fifty French Crowns of Mr. Monroe at Paris and agreeably to my arrangement with him the money is to be repaid into your hands in America and I have given an order to Mr. Benj[ami]n Franklin Bache to pay that sum to you upon my account.

It was my intention to have returned to America the latter end of the present year (1795) but the illness I now suffer prevents me. I owe this illness (from which I have not much prospect of recovering) partly to Robespierre and partly to Mr. Washington. This perhaps may surprise you but I have good reason for saying it.

The present convention of France was elected for the express purpose of forming a Constitution, and they invited by a public decree the Assistance of Foreigners of any Nation. To me they were more particular, by electing me a Member of the Convention, and giving me, as they have done to some others, the honorary compliment of French Citizen. But they required no Oath of Allegiance, nor of any other kind, from me, nor have I taken any. I consider a Constitution as a thing distinct from Laws and from the Government that is to issue from it, and that a Man of any Nation may assist in such work without any transfer of allegiance from the country to which he belongs. It would be otherwise if he became a part of the Government afterwards, because in that case an oath of allegiance would be necessary or would be required. My intention was to continue in France no longer than until a Constitution should be formed and then return to America.

Of the violent measures that followed, what is here called, the revolution of the 31 May, 1793, you cannot be uninformed. Towards the latter end of Dec[embe]r of that year a motion was made and carried to exclude foreigners from the Convention in consequence of which I was excluded. A decree had been passed some time before for putting all foreigners in arrestation who were born in any of the countries at war with France. It was on the ground of this decree that I was im-

<sup>260</sup> This letter is printed from a facsimile of the original manuscript through the courtesy of the New York Public Library.

James Madison, fourth President of the United States, was one of Jefferson's closest friends and an associate of James Monroe.—*Editor*.

prisoned having been born in England. I had no other defence against the effect of this decree than that of being reclaimed as a citizen of America. The Americans then in Paris went to the Bar of the Convention for this purpose but did not succeed. I believe, however that their interference stopped, at least for a time, any further measures against me. But when six or seven months had passed away and Robespierre saw that the American Government took no interest upon my account but silently connived at my imprisonment he ventured to go a step farther and to propose a decree of accusation against me *for the interest of America as well as of France*, as you will see by the second part of the *Age of Reason* to which I refer you.

The violent illness I was seized with in the Luxembourg where I was imprisoned rendered the execution of this intended accusation impossible, for I was not in a condition to be removed. This preserved me until the arrival of Mr. Monroe which happened a few days after the fall of Robespierre. The fever was then just beginning to leave me, but in too weak a state to sit up when I was informed of the arrival of Mr. Monroe.

I expected to be soon in liberty, but you will judge of my surprise when I was informed by a letter from Mr. Whiteside late of Philadelphia that Mr. Monroe had no instructions from the President either verbally or in writing, nor any kind of authority whatever from him for reclaiming me as a citizen of the United States, nor for taking any interest upon my account, nor even enquire anything about me—that the want of this authority obliged him (Mr. Monroe) to proceed with caution, lest if he hazarded a reclamation, the committee (which was still composed of the Robespierre Party) should reject it upon discovering that he was not authorized to make it. This prolonged my imprisonment from the time of Mr. Monroe's arrival the beginning of August till the 4th of November following when I was liberated as a citizen of the United States. In the meantime from the want of everything that was necessary to promote a state of recovery, and from the approaching cold season and the want of fuel in the prison, an abscess began to form itself on the left side which has continued ever since. About two months ago I had considerable hopes of a cure and intended returning to America but since then it has taken a malignant turn accompanied with a fever that confines me to my chamber. I know that nature is ingenious in cures, but seeing that at the end of the year I am becoming worse instead of better, I do not entertain much hopes of being able to return to Amer-

ica. I have however the consolation of having held up long enough to finish the Second Part of the *Age of Reason* and a small piece entitled *Dissertations on the First Principles of Government*.

It would be agreeable to me to live, but if it is not to be so I can quit Life with as much tranquility as any man that ever passed that scene for I have done an honest part in the World. But it is not agreeable to me to remember that I owe part of my present condition to the ungrateful neglect of a country, at least of its Government, from which I had a right to expect better things. Mr. Washington has not served America with greater zeal, nor with more disinterestedness than myself, and I know not that he has done it with better effect. He may perhaps console himself on the cold and callous line of office and say—that Mr. Paine was a French citizen and therefore he, as President, had nothing to do in the case. But he ought to have informed himself if this was the case or not, and had he made the enquiry he ought to have done, he would have found it was not the case, for I was imprisoned as a foreigner born in England and that foreigner was a citizen of America; but had it been otherwise it would not acquit him of ingratitude. He ought to have said to somebody—enquire into the case of Mr. Paine and see if there is anything we can do for him; but Mr. Washington has not as so much as done this and his not doing it has been interpreted by Robespierre into connivance at my imprisonment and would have been fatal to me if had he lived but a few weeks longer. I ought not have suspected Mr. Washington of treachery but he has acted towards me the part of a cold blooded traitor. Whether he has done this to gratify the English Government or to let me fall into destruction in France that he and his faction might exclaim the louder against the French Revolution or whether he hoped by my extinction he might meet with less opposition in mounting up the American Government, I trouble not myself to know. It is sufficient to me that I know the fact, and any reason he may give will involve him in reproach he will not easily shake off.

When I was released from Luxembourg as Citizen of the United States, Mr. Monroe invited me to his house where I have been ever since. I wrote Mr. Washington a letter by Mr. Letombe French Consul but on the request of Mr. Monroe I withdrew it. I was the more easily prevailed upon to do this as it was then my intention to return to America the latter end of the present year (1795). I should, had I re-

turned, have applied to Mr. Washington and Mr. Randolph<sup>261</sup> for copies of any letter respecting me which they may have written, though I very well know they have not a scrap to give. As the state of my disorder prevents my return I have written to Mr. Washington to send me copies of such letters if he has any, and that I may not be prevailed upon a second time to withdraw the letter I have sent it off unknown to any person here under cover to Mr. Bache for though my residence in Mr. Monroe's house makes a delicacy in the case I cannot abridge myself of my independence upon that account. He therefore knows nothing of that letter or this otherwise than respects the repayment of money. As there was occasion I should write to you upon that account, I have filled up the whole sheet with what you would not otherwise have been troubled with; but I have long felt a wish to make somebody acquainted with the case for I know that when men have done injustice, as I conceive Mr. Washington has done by me, that they are apt to do more to justify the first.

As to your National Affairs I mean those contrived and conducted in the dark chamber of the American Government, there will I think be an explosion by and by. They do not conduct matters with that candor and righteousness that is necessary to secure and preserve National Character. America is falling fast into disesteem. The Ministers of the Neutral Powers that are here I mean those of Sweden and Denmark speak of her with reproach, as having no stable character. I know not how France will construe the Treaty of Mr. Jay but the prevailing opinion is that it is an attempt to throw America into the scale of the Coalized Powers.<sup>262</sup> I think the states will see the necessity of shortening the time of the Senate and new modeling the Executive Department. It is too much on the plan of European Courts and Mr. Washington appears to be to[o] fond of playing the old Courtier.

Remember me to Mr. Jefferson.

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>261</sup> Edmund Randolph, prominent Virginia statesman, was Attorney General under President Washington and succeeded Jefferson as Secretary of State in the cabinet.—*Editor*.

<sup>262</sup> By refusing to enforce, in the face of Great Britain, the rules of international law accepted in the Franco-American treaty of 1778, the United States aroused considerable indignation in France.—*Editor*.

TO GILBERT WAKEFIELD, A.B.<sup>263</sup>

PARIS, November 19, 1795.

DEAR SIR:

When you prudently chose, like a starved apothecary, to offer your eighteen penny antidote to those who had taken my two-and-sixpenny Bible-purge, you forgot that although my dose was rather of the roughest, it might not be the less wholesome for possessing that drastic quality; and if I am to judge of its salutary effects on your infuriate polemic stomach, by the nasty things it has made you bring away, I think you should be the last man alive to take your own panacea. As to the collection of words of which you boast the possession, nobody, I believe, will dispute their amount, but every one who reads your answer to my *Age of Reason* will wish there were not so many scurrilous ones among them; for though they may be very useful in emptying your gall-bladder they are too apt to move the bile of other people.

Those of Greek and Latin are rather foolishly thrown away, I think, on a man like me, who, you are pleased to say, is "*the greatest ignoramus in nature*"; yet I must take the liberty to tell you, that wisdom does not consist in the mere knowledge of language, but of things.

You recommend me to *know myself*, a thing very easy to advise, but very difficult to practice, as I learn from your own book; for you take yourself to be a meek disciple of Christ, and yet give way to passion and pride in every page of its composition.

You have raised an ant-hill about the roots of my sturdy oak, and it may amuse idlers to see your work; but neither its body nor its branches are injured by you; and I hope the shade of my Civic Crown may be able to preserve your little contrivance, at least for the season.

When you have done as much service to the world by your writings, and suffered as much for them, as I have done, you will be entitled to dictate: but although I know you to be a keener politician than Paul, I can assure you from my experience of mankind, that you do not much commend the Christian doctrines to them by announcing that it requires the labor of a learned life to make them understood.

May I be permitted, after all, to suggest that your truly vigorous

<sup>263</sup> Gilbert Wakefield, formerly a Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, had broken with the Anglican Church and become a prominent Unitarian. In 1792 he published a volume attacking slavery and Pitt's conduct towards France, but he turned against Paine after the publication of the *Age of Reason*.—*Editor*.

talents would be best employed in teaching men to preserve their liberties exclusively, leaving to that God who made their immortal souls the care of their eternal welfare.

I am, dear Sir, your true well-wisher,

THO. PAINE.

TO DANIEL ISAACS EATON[?] <sup>264</sup>

PARIS, December 4, 1795.

SIR:

I have seen advertised in the London papers the second Edition of the *Age of Reason* printed, the advertisement says, from the *Author's Manuscript*, and entered at Stationers Hall. I have never sent any manuscript to any person. It is therefore a forgery to say it is printed from the author's manuscript; and I suppose is done to give the Publisher a pretence of Copy Right, which he has no title to.

I send you a printed copy, which is the only edition I have sent to London. I wish you to make a cheap edition of it. I know not by what means any copy has got over to London. If any person has made a manuscript copy I have no doubt but it is full of errors. I wish you would talk to Mr. — upon this subject as I wish to know by what means this trick has been played, and from whom the publisher has got possession of any copy.

T. PAINE.

TO MINISTER —[?]

VERSAILLES, August 13, 1796.

CITIZEN MINISTER:

The citizen Robert Smith, a very particular friend of mine, wishes to obtain a passport to go to Hamburg, and I will be obliged to you to do him that favor. Himself and family have lived several years in France, for he likes neither the government nor the climate of England. He has large property in England, but his Banker in that country has refused sending him remittances. This makes it necessary for him to go to Hamburg, because from there he can draw his money out of his Banker's

<sup>264</sup> The recipient of this letter is not indicated, but it was undoubtedly sent to Daniel Isaacs Eaton, a London publisher.—*Editor*.

hands, which he cannot do whilst in France. His family remains in France.

Salut et fraternité.

THOMAS PAINE.

TO COLONEL JOHN FELLOWS[?] <sup>265</sup>

PARIS, January 20, 1797.

SIR:

Your friend Mr. Caritat being on the point of his departure for America, I make it the opportunity of writing to you. I received two letters from you with some pamphlets a considerable time past, in which you inform me of your entering a copyright of the first part of the *Age of Reason*: when I return to America we will settle for that matter.

As Dr. Franklin has been my intimate friend for thirty years past you will naturally see the reason of my continuing the connection with his grandson. I printed here (Paris) about fifteen thousand of the second part of the *Age of Reason*, which I sent to Mr. F[ranklin] Bache. I gave him notice of it in September 1795 and the copy-right by my own direction was entered by him. The books did not arrive till April following, but he had advertised it long before.

I sent to him in August last a manuscript letter of about 70 pages, from me to Mr. Washington to be printed in a pamphlet. Mr. Barnes of Philadelphia carried the letter from me over to London to be forwarded to America. It went by the ship *Hope*, Cap[tain] Harley, who since his return from America told me that he put it into the post office at New York for Bache. I have yet no certain account of its publication. I mention this that the letter may be enquired after, in case it has not been published or has not arrived to Mr. Bache. Barnes wrote to me, from London 29 August informing me that he was offered three hundred pounds sterling for the manuscript. The offer was refused because it was my intention it should not appear till it appeared in America, as that, and not England was the place for its operation.

You ask me by your letter to Mr. Caritat for a list of my several works, in order to publish a collection of them. This is an undertaking I have always reserved for myself. It not only belongs to me of right, but nobody but myself can do it; and as every author is accountable (at least in

<sup>265</sup> The recipient of this letter is not indicated but it was undoubtedly sent to Colonel Fellows who copyrighted Part I of the *Age of Reason*.—*Editor*.

reputation) for his works, he only is the person to do it. If he neglects it in his life-time the case is altered. It is my intention to return to America in the course of the present year. I shall then [do] it by subscription, with historical notes. As this work will employ many persons in different parts of the Union, I will confer with you upon the subject, and such part of it as will suit you to undertake, will be at your choice. I have sustained so much loss, by disinterestedness and inattention to money matters, and by accidents, that I am obliged to look closer to my affairs than I have done. The printer (an Englishman) whom I employed here to print the second part of the *Age of Reason* made a manuscript copy of the work while he was printing it, which he sent to London and sold. It was by this means that an edition of it came out in London.

We are waiting here for news from America of the state of the federal elections. You will have heard long before this reaches you that the French government has refused to receive Mr. Pinckney as minister.<sup>266</sup> While Mr. Monroe was minister he had the opportunity of softening matters with this government, for he was in good credit with them though they were in high indignation at the infidelity of the Washington Administration. It is time that Mr. Washington retire, for he has played off so much prudent hypocrisy between France and England that neither government believes anything he says.

Your friend, etc.,  
THOMAS PAINE.

## TO ANONYMOUS <sup>267</sup>

PARIS, March 4, 1797.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

I just write you a line to tell you that I am in existence after a thousand dangers. I am always intending to return to America, and something

<sup>266</sup> Charles Cotesworth Pinckney succeeded Monroe as Minister to France. He had been sympathetic to the French Revolution from 1789 until 1793, but his sympathies ceased after the execution of the king and the establishment of the French Republic. He arrived in Paris in December, 1795, but the Directory declined to recognize his official status. He remained in France until February, 1796 when he was notified by the police that unless he secured a permit he was liable to arrest.

James Monroe was recalled from France in 1796.—*Editor*.

<sup>267</sup> This letter is printed from a copy in the Bancroft Transcripts, America 1780, vol. II, p. 252, in the New York Public Library. I am indebted to Professor Harry Hayden Clark of the University of Wisconsin for calling my attention to this letter.—*Editor*.



is always happening to prevent me; the case I believe is that, as I have embarked in this Revolution, I do not like to leave it till it is finished. The internal scene for the last year and half, until the fall of Robespierre, has been terrible. I am almost the only survivor of those who begun this Revolution, and my escape is difficult to account for. At present, I suffer a good deal of pain from an abscess in my left side, that came in consequence of a fever I had in the Luxembourg, where I was shut up eleven months by the faction of Robespierre; in other respects, I am in good health.

The success of the French Arms has been, and continues to be, astonishing. They have fairly beaten all the armies of Austria, Prussia, England, Spain, Sardinia and Holland. Holland is entirely conquered, and there is now a revolution in that country. Remember me in your family and in the circle of our friends. The letter will be presented to you by Mr. Roxier, who is appointed Consul at New York. He has the reputation of a good sort of man.

Yours affectionately,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>268</sup>

HAVRE DE GRACE, FRANCE, April 1, 1797.

DEAR FRIEND:

I left Paris about ten days ago and came to this place intending to take passage in the *Dublin Packet* for New York, but the vessel being crowded I shall wait another opportunity. Mr. Monroe, whom I left at Paris, intended going by the way of Bordeaux. Four American vessels have arrived since I have been here, one from Savannah and from Charleston, one from Wilmington, N. Car. and one from N[ew] Y[ork]—which are the only arrivals from America for several weeks past. American vessels are not employed as carriers by France; that trade ever since Mr. Jay's *treaty of surrender* is [in the] hands of the Danes and Swedes. That neutral ships [*MS. mutilated*] properly must be a general principle, or not at all. [*MS. mutilated*] surrenders the principle, by treating it merely as a [*MS. mutilated*]; and that without

<sup>268</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress. The manuscript is sadly mutilated.—*Editor.*

perceiving, that through the [*MS. mutilated*] second article in the treaty of commerce with France [*MS. mutilated*] [cir]cumstances is surrendered also. You can have but little conc[ep]tion how low the character of the American government is sunk in Euro[pe]. The neutral powers despise her for her meanness, and her desertion of a common interest; England laughs at her imbecility, and France is enraged at her ingratitude, and sly treachery! Such is the condition into which Mr. Washington's administration has brought America, and what makes it worse is, that John Adams has not character to do any good. Some of the American papers speak of Mr. Madison's coming as envoy extraordinary. As that character is only temporary, and his reputation stands well here, he would, I believe, be received, though it was refused to Mr. Pinckney, as a resident Minister. The recall of Mr. Monroe cut everything asunder, for though here they were enraged at the American government, they were not enraged at him. They had an esteem for him, and a good opinion of him; they would listen to him, and he could soften them. But to recall him and to send in his place the brother of the man who was concerned in forming Jay's treaty was stupidity and insult both. If Mr. Madison should come you must not expect too much.

About the time this letter comes to hand you will hear that the Bank of England stopped payment on the 27th of February and continues shut up. Several people who affected to laugh at my *Decline and Fall of the English System of Finance* now see it in another light.<sup>269</sup> That little work was translated into French and sent by the French government to all their foreign agents and was also translated into German, low Dutch, Swedish and Italian. It demolished the credit of the English funds in those countries, and caused a great [pu]lling out. It spread all over England, for it was sold as low as [*MS. mutilated*] coppers, and at Newcastle at two. The farmers became [*MS. mutilated*] of paper. They run upon the country banks with the [*MS. mutilated*] notes they took at market. The country banks collect [*MS. mutilated*] they could of the Bank of England, and run upon [*MS. mutilated*] for cash. The people

<sup>269</sup> When the run on the Bank of England developed the directors appealed to Pitt who called the king to London; a meeting of the privy council was held and an order was issued suspending cash payments at the bank until the will of Parliament was expressed. On May 3, 1797 a bill was passed prohibiting the bank from issuing cash, except in sums below £1, until six months after the end of the war. Cash payments were not resumed until 1819.

Paine's *Decline and Fall of the English System of Finance* is printed above, pp. 651-674.—*Editor*.

of London began to the s[ame] [and] the whole complicated machine knocked up at once. The Bank of England is now stopped. For my own part I cannot see how it is possible the Bank of England should ever open again. Were it to open tomorrow the run upon it would be so immense, they would be obliged to shut it up immediately. They are now emitting 20 shilling and forty shilling notes, and as it is easy to see that a shopkeeper will not give change in cash for a twenty shilling note, they will be obliged to emit ten shilling and five shilling notes and so on. I much question if England has gained anything by trade for an hundred years past; that is, ever since the funding system began. She has pushed her manufactures about the world at great risk and often at loss, and the bustle it made gave her the opportunity of pushing forth a vast quantity of paper at home, which the commercial idiots mistook for gain and wealth; but now she comes to wind up her affairs she finds she has not so much money as she had an hundred years ago. The quantity of money at this time in England is less than it was at the revolution in 1688. It is not estimated now at more than twelve millions sterling. It never was more than twenty and if the public papers speak truth not less than ten millions have [been] sent out in foreign subsidies, foreign loans, and expeditions in the continent.

In France nothing is seen but money. Paper is entirely gone. The quantity of money in France must be great, since the whole of trade and of taxes is carried on entirely upon money, and there is always a sufficiency of it wherever there is an object to employ it.

Every article of provision (not foreign) is cheaper, better, and more abundant than before the [revolu]tion. Bread is two coppers and an half per pound. Beef and mutton eight coppers.

[MS. mutilated] peace I am not able to give you any opinion upon it. It [see]ms to be at a greater distance than it did four or five mo[n]ths ago. [MS. mutilated] two of the coalized powers, Austria and England are now [MS. mutilated] is now defeated everywhere. Bonaparte carries [MS. mutilated] these last few days he has beaten the Arch-Duke [MS. mutilated] taken five thousand prisoners, 1400 in one action and 5600 [in an]other. The government of England is in a state of bankruptcy and her total downfall is probable. It will be a good thing when this happens, for it is the most mischievous, surly and ill willed government in the world. In this state of things France is not in a hurry about peace; for of what use would be a peace that would be war again in a short time? Four times have the English government been running into

war, or upon the brink of it, since the American war. Once on account of Holland; again on account of Russia, again on account of Nootka Sound, and now to support the Cubberty Junto, called crowned heads.

How America will scuffle through I know not. The mean, ungrateful, and treacherous conduct of her administration, helped on by the political ignorance of a considerable body of her merchants, have ruined her character, and from being the favorite she is become the scoff of the world. It is very disagreeable to me to write truths of this kind, but it can do you no service to disbelieve them. For my own part, wherever I go, I curse the conduct of the American government to save the character of the country. I hope you will accept the Vice-Presidency,<sup>270</sup> w[ere] it only to keep an eye upon John Adams, or he will commit some blund[er] that will make matters worse. He has a natural disposition to blunder and to offend, and War Secretary Pickering is of the same [kind]. When John Adams was in Holland, he published a small work in favor of republicanism as if purposely to offend France; and when he was in England he wrote in support of what he called the English institution as if to offend republics. He is a man entirely under the government of a bad [Con]gress without having anything manly in his manner of acting it [*MS. mutilated*]. [The] government of France appeared to be very unwilling to [exchange] committees with America. The injury which Gouverneur M[orris] [did] was repaired by Mr. Monroe, and as they hated the idea [*MS mutilated*] ment between Republics, they enjoyed the return of cons[*MS. mutilated*]. [When] Jay's treaty appeared, it is easy to suppose the impression it made. They began to suspect that Mr. Monroe was sent for the purpose of amusing them while Jay was to act a contrary part in England. They waited however to see if the President would ratify it; then, what notice Congress would take of it, and it was only till after the last chan[ce] was passed that they broke out. They then told Mr. Monroe they had rather have the government of America for an open enemy than a treacherous friend. It is evident that if the two treaties, that with France and that with England, could exist together, that France would be injured by the independence of America which cost her so much to support. Before that time the American flag was not a neutral when England was at war, and if it is now to be a neutral to protect English property and English merchandise from capture, whilst it gives no protection to those of France, it would be better to France that America was still under the English government; for

<sup>270</sup> Jefferson was elected Vice-President in 1796.—*Editor.*

that neutrality would be more beneficial to England and more injurious to France, than what America, considered merely in the scale of naval or military power, could be to either. You ought not to be surprised if in the issue of this business, France should demand reimbursement for the expense she was at in supporting the independence of America, for she feels herself most rascally treated for that support, and unless John Adams is watched his surly manners and those of Timothy Pickering<sup>271</sup> will give some new opportunity to provoke it. At the time the cringing treaty was formed with England, Timothy Pickering as Secretary of State, wrote officially to Mr. Monroe, in an insulting manner towards France. "The American government," says Timothy, "is the comp[lete] [g]uardian of everything which concerns her national ho[nor] [*MS. mutilated*], and it will not ask the opinion nor the [*MS. mutilated*] advice of any nation." What are ministers sent for, [if] [not] [*MS. mutilated*] and consult, especially between nation's supposed [*MS. mutilated*]. The language of Timothy is the language of a [*MS. mutilated*] and were it said directly to France, she might be provoked to [reply]: There was a time when you were glad to ask our advice and [our] money too; pay us what we have expended for you and get about your business. In the same letter Timothy calls those who oppose the English treaty by the name of *disaffected* persons. "From the movements," says he, "of *disaffected persons* etc." You will observe that I write this part only to you. Should Mr. Monroe arrive while Congress is sitting it ought to call, or invite him, before them to know the state of their affairs. They will neither do justice to the country, to themselves, nor to him if they do not. It is only through the medium of the House of Representatives that the breach can be healed, and further mischief avoided. Your Executive, John Adams, can do nothing but harm. You see that France has made every power pay that insulted or injured her. Yet those powers had not received former favors from her as America had done. The ignorance in which your former executive has kept Congress and the country, with respect to the state of their foreign affairs, is equal to any assumption of the same kind ever acted by any despot.

For my own part I was always opposed and ever shall be, to the plan of working government up to an individual, and in all my publications I have written against it. In America, the place was made for the man, and, at that time, it was not easy to prevent it. I hope it will be altered

<sup>271</sup> Timothy Pickering, reactionary New England Federalist and leader of the ultra-conservative "Essex Junto" was a member of John Adams's cabinet.—*Editor*.

now, and my principle [mo]tive for wishing you might be president, was, that [you] [might] the better promote that alteration. The whole [*MS. mutilated*] is the president, and the part called the executive [*MS. mutilated*] in a plurality, as in the French Constitution. Mr. Monroe has written a series of letters to the Secretary of State. He might as well have written them to the sepulchre. An individual President will never be anything more than the chief of a party, and the conductor of its politics. All contrary information goes for nothing.

With respect to the ships of neutral powers (which makes the difficulty that America is now in), there were two ways to have restrained if not totally to have prevented the depredation. The one was for the neutral powers to have united for the protection of their rights. Sweden and Denmark sent proposals to America for this purpose, but no attention was paid to them. And as to Jay, he never held any communication with the ministers of those powers when in England. The other was, for France to have made a declaration to England that if England molested neutral ships coming to, or going from France, that France would take the cargoes of all neutral ships going to or coming from England. England would then have seen that she would lose far more than she could gain. It was the forbearance of France that encouraged the depredations of England, for now that England sustains the reaction of her own politics, she seems disposed to let neutral ships pass. Had France made the declaration at first, the consequence would have been that either she would not have molested neutral ships, or she must have insured all cargoes going and coming and sustained the loss of all. The neutral ships would not have been her [carriers], nor traded with her, on any other condition than being [insur]ed. I pressed the Minister DelaCroix to make a declaration [of this] kind to England when the British agent, Malmsburg [was in] Paris. I added, if you do not choose to act upon the [*MS. mutilated*] the effect of it. He wrote to me in answer that he would [*MS. mutilated*] all his possibles to have it done. I wish it had been done first; for it is the bold politics of France that must secure the neutrality of the American flag since her government has surrendered it.

My health is much improved, but the abscess in my side still continues but with very little pain.

THOMAS PAINE.

TO CITIZEN SKIPWITH <sup>272</sup>

HAVRE 5 Florial 5 year [April 26, 1797].

DEAR FRIEND:

The *Nouvelles Politiques* of the 3rd which arrived today says that Mr. Madison arrived at Paris the 2, but I do not find that any letters from Paris mention the same. I will be obliged to you to inform me if he is arrived. A vessel from Boston which left 10 March says that it was expected Mr. Madison would be sent. I have seen Boston papers to the 9th March. It was not then known that Mr. Pinckney had been refused. Russel's Tory paper says that such a report was circulated, but affected to treat it as a fabrication.

In the Boston *Independent Chronicle*, is an official letter of Timothy Pickering to Mr. Pinckney, a copy of which was sent to Congress accompanying a message from the President to Congress January 19. The letter is long and continued through several papers. It is of a piece with the rest of the malignant and blundering politics of that administration, and can answer no other purpose than to widen the breach between America and France. The letter says—"We are under no obligation to France for her services during the war, and so far from her being entitled to our gratitude on that account her conduct, always limited within the bounds of her own interest, deserves our resentment for its insidious tendency with respect to us." After a declaration like this what is it that Mr. Madison can do? It is necessary that he proceed cautiously and endeavor to learn what France expects before he venture to say much.

By the papers of today which contains the armistice, it is probable that Peace with the Emperor will arrive by the time this reaches you, or soon after.<sup>273</sup> Only England will then be left. France will, I think, soon settle matters with her, and talk to America afterwards. The rascality of Washington has brought America into a more wretched situation than she is aware of. Remember me to our friend Martin. I

<sup>272</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Fulwar Skipwith was the American Consul at Paris.—*Editor*.

<sup>273</sup> On April 13, 1797 Napoleon received the plenipotentiaries sent to him by the Austrian government and five days later the preliminaries of peace were concluded.—*Editor*.

shall be glad to hear from him. If Mr. Madison is arrived present him my respects.<sup>274</sup>

THOMAS PAINE.

I received your favor in answer to my last. Direct for me at M. Mitchel's Rue Bombardé No. 6—Havre.

## TO JAMES MADISON <sup>275</sup>

HAVRE 8th Florial 5 year [April 27, 1797].

MY DEAR FRIEND:

As the Paris papers and some private letters from thence mention your arrival, I take it for granted, and congratulate you upon it; but at the same time I cannot flatter you with much hopes of success. Mr. Monroe's departure before your arrival will prevent your being informed of many things that would be convenient to you to know, but this, in a great part, can be supplied by Mr. Skipwith. Individually, as Mr. Madison, you will be welcome; but as the French government now know that Mr. Monroe was sent with a lie in his mouth, they will suspect that this is a second trick of the same kind, or, what amounts to the same thing, that it is a measure forced by the necessity of circumstances against the grain. I know not what your instructions are, neither would I choose to know, but if they are the least petulant, and you act upon them, my opinion is they will send you away.

Had you been here through the whole course of affairs you would have seen how unwilling they were that a rupture should appear between the two republics, and how much they hated the idea of it, but that difficulty being once got over, as it now is by the publicity of a rupture, resentment feels a disposition to act without restraint. Had the mercantile wise-acres of America elected Mr. Jefferson, instead of John Adams, it would have carried the appearance that the majority of the country retained its remembrance of the services it received from France in the American Revolution, which was the thing the French government wished to know, and which it would have been gratifying to her to have been assured of. In that case, matters might have been easily accom[m]odated, and your coming would then have been a *consistent*

<sup>274</sup> James Madison did not go to Europe in 1797.—*Editor*.

<sup>275</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.—*Editor*.



thing. But the election of John Adams is for the purpose of supporting the British treaty, and your coming under such circumstances, shows that the American government is attempting to play contrary games at the same time.

For a long time the American administration seemed to suppose that France must take everything which that administration pleased to do, and be thankful it was no worse. From treachery it proceeded to insolence, to which the clownish manners of Timothy Pickering is well adopted; for of all the clowns that ever were entrusted to write public despatches, he is the greatest. Had Mr. Monroe followed the course of Timothy's letters he would have been turned out of the country long ago.

It was my intention to have set off for America by the ship *Dublin Packet* that sailed about three weeks ago for N[ew] York. But I liked neither the Captain nor the company, and besides this, the English cruisers are always at this Port, and as I have lost all confidence in the American government, and had none in the Captain, I did not choose to expose myself to the hazard of being taken out of the vessel. It is no credit to the American government when a man who has acted towards that country as I have done, finds himself obliged to say this.

Had I sailed and could I have arrived in America before Congress adjourned, it was my intention to have suggested to some members of the House of Representatives to call Mr. Monroe before them to inquire into the state of their affairs in France, a full explanation of which might have led to some resolutions of that House that might have become the groundwork of compromising the present differences; for the House of Representatives is the only part of the American government that has any reputation in France. Soon after my coming to Havre I heard, by some American vessels that came in, the probability of your mission to France, and this made me the less anxious to get to America, because it is probable that what I had contemplated to do there might clash with what you were to do here. I wrote however my opinion to Mr. Jefferson and I mentioned it to Mr. Monroe, who expressed a wish that the House of Representatives would call him up.

Several important events, such as the unexpected successes in Italy and the breaking of the Bank of England were not, I presume, known in America when you sailed, and the submission of the Emperor would meet you on your arrival. In the disposition that the American administration and the French government are in towards each other, those successes will increase the difficulty of a compromise, for a man must be

a blind politician not to see that the American administration reposed itself upon England. My opinion of the present state of things is that if they make peace with the Emperor, they will march upon Portugal, after which they will bend all their force against England, and talk to America last of all. You see that their plan is to settle matters with only one at a time. By this, they not only break up the present coalition but they break up the *system of coalitions*. In this view of the case, were there a general peace in Europe, America would not be out of the scrape, and I should not wonder (since the administration of America, disclaims the idea of being under any obligation to France for her services in the American war) if France should demand a reimbursement of the expenses she was at in that war, and then tell America that she is at full liberty to join which side she pleases or neither. France has now so many great objects on her hands that America will appear of less consequence to her every day.

You see that I write you my opinion freely, but I have no desire to know yours. If there is any information I can give you you are welcome to it, and as I have yet some friends in America, I shall be glad to hear from you on such matters as you may choose to write. I am mortified at the fall of the American character. It was once respectable even to eminence; now it is despised; and did I not feel my own character as an individual, I should blush to call myself a citizen of America.

My health (no thanks to that chief of scoundrels Washington, for he resigned me to the prison and the guillotine) has been improving for some time past, and since I have been at Havre it seems fully reestablished except that the abscess in my side continues. The present prosperous state of things (America out of the question) serves me as a Physician, and should a revolution begin in England I intend to be among them. The news of the Peace is just arrived here.

Your affectionate friend,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO ANONYMOUS <sup>276</sup>

PARIS, May 12, 1797.

DEAR SIR:

In your letter of the 20th of March you give me several quotations from the Bible, which you call the Word of God, to show me that my opin-

<sup>276</sup> This letter was originally printed in *The Prospect* of April 12, 1804.—*Editor*.

ions on religion are wrong, and I could give you as many from the same book to show that yours are not right; consequently, then, the Bible decides nothing, because it decides any way and every way one chooses to make it.

But by what authority do you call the Bible the Word of God? for this is the first point to be settled. It is not your calling it so that makes it so, any more than the Mahometans calling the Koran the Word of God makes the Koran to be so. The Popish Councils of Nice and Laodicea, about 350 years after the time the person called Jesus Christ is said to have lived, voted the books that now compose what is called the New Testament to be the Word of God. This was done by *yeas* and *nays*, as we now vote a law.

The Pharisees of the second temple, after the Jews returned from captivity in Babylon, did the same by the books that now compose the Old Testament, and this is all the authority there is, which to me is no authority at all. I am as capable of judging for myself as they were, and I think more so, because, as they made a living by their religion, they had a self-interest in the vote they gave.

You may have an opinion that a man is inspired, but you cannot prove it, nor can you have any proof of it yourself, because you cannot see into his mind in order to know how he comes by his thoughts; and the same is the case with the word *revelation*. There can be no evidence of such a thing, for you can no more prove revelation than you can prove what another man dreams of, neither can he prove it himself.

It is often said in the Bible that God spake unto Moses, but how do you know that God spake unto Moses? Because, you will say, the Bible says so. The Koran says that God spake unto Mahomet. Do you believe that too? No.

Why not? Because, you will say, you do not believe it; and so because you *do*, and because you *don't* is all the reason you can give for believing or disbelieving except that you will say that Mahomet was an impostor. And how do you know Moses was not an impostor?

For my own part, I believe that all are impostors who pretend to hold verbal communication with the Deity. It is the way by which the world has been imposed upon; but if you think otherwise you have the same right to your opinion that I have to mine, and must answer for it in the same manner. But all this does not settle the point, whether the Bible be the Word of God or not. It is therefore necessary to go a step further. The case then is:—

You form your opinion of God from the account given of Him in the Bible; and I form my opinion of the Bible from the wisdom and goodness of God manifested in the structure of the universe and in all works of creation. The result in these two cases will be that you, by taking the Bible for your standard, will have a bad opinion of God; and I, by taking God for my standard, shall have a bad opinion of the Bible.

The Bible represents God to be a changeable, passionate, vindictive being; making a world and then drowning it, afterwards repenting of what he had done, and promising not to do so again. Setting one nation to cut the throats of another, and stopping the course of the sun till the butchery should be done. But the works of God in the creation preach to us another doctrine. In that vast volume we see nothing to give us the idea of a changeable, passionate, vindictive God; everything we there behold impresses us with a contrary idea—that of unchangeable and of eternal order, harmony and goodness.

The sun and the seasons return at their appointed time, and everything in the creation proclaims that God is unchangeable. Now, which am I to believe, a book that any impostor might make and call the Word of God, or the creation itself which none but an Almighty Power could make? For the Bible says one thing, and the creation says the contrary. The Bible represents God with all the passions of a mortal, and the creation proclaims him with all the attributes of a God.

It is from the Bible that man has learned cruelty, rapine and murder; for the belief of a cruel God makes a cruel man. That bloodthirsty man, called the prophet Samuel, makes God to say, (I Sam. xv. 3) “Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and *spare them not, but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.*”

That Samuel or some other impostor might say this, is what, at this distance of time, can neither be proved nor disproved, but in my opinion it is blasphemy to say, or to believe, that God said it. All our ideas of the justice and goodness of God revolt at the impious cruelty of the Bible. It is not a God, just and good, but a devil under the name of God that the Bible describes.

What makes this pretended order to destroy the Amalekites appear the worse is the reason given for it. The Amalekites, four hundred years before, according to the account in Exodus xvii (but which has the appearance of fable from the magical account it gives of Moses holding up his hands), had opposed the Israelites coming into their country, and

this the Amalekites had a right to do, because the Israelites were the invaders, as the Spaniards were the invaders of Mexico. This opposition by the Amalekites, *at that time*, is given as a reason that the men, women, infants and sucklings, sheep and oxen, camels and asses, that were born four hundred years afterward, should be put to death; and to complete the horror, Samuel hewed Agag, the chief of the Amalekites, in pieces, as you would hew a stick of wood. I will bestow a few observations on this case.

In the first place, nobody knows who the author, or writer, of the book of Samuel was, and, therefore, the fact itself has no other proof than anonymous or hearsay evidence, which is no evidence at all. In the second place, this anonymous book says that this slaughter was done by the *express command of God*: but all our ideas of the justice and goodness of God give the lie to the book, and as I never will believe any book that ascribes cruelty and injustice to God, I therefore reject the Bible as unworthy of credit.

As I have now given you my reasons for believing that the Bible is not the Word of God, that it is a falsehood, I have a right to ask you your reasons for believing the contrary; but I know you can give me none, except that *you were educated to believe the Bible*; and as the Turks give the same reason for believing the Koran, it is evident that education makes all the difference, and that reason and truth have nothing to do in the case.

You believe in the Bible from the accident of birth, and the Turks believe in the Koran from the same accident, and each calls the other *infidel*. But leaving the prejudice of education out of the case, the unprejudiced truth is that all are infidels who believe falsely of God, whether they draw their creed from the Bible, or from the Koran, from the Old Testament, or from the New.

When you have examined the Bible with the attention that I have done (for I do not think you know much about it), and permit yourself to have just ideas of God, you will most probably believe as I do. But I wish you to know that this answer to your letter is not written for the purpose of changing your opinion. It is written to satisfy you, and some other friends whom I esteem, that my disbelief of the Bible is founded on a pure and religious belief in God; for in my opinion the Bible is a gross libel against the justice and goodness of God, in almost every part of it.

THOMAS PAINE.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>277</sup>

HAVRE, May 14th, 1797.

DEAR SIR:

I wrote to you by the ship *Dublin Packet*, Captain Clay, mentioning my intention to have returned to America by that Vessel, and to have suggested to some Member of the House of Representatives the propriety of calling Mr. Monroe before them to have enquired into the state of their affairs in France. This might have laid the foundation for some resolves on their part that might have led to an accommodation with France, for that House is the only part of the American Government that have any reputation here. I apprised Mr. Monroe of my design, and he wishes to be called up.

You will have heard before this reaches you that the Emperor has been obliged to sue for peace, and to consent to the establishment of the new republic in Lombardy. How France will proceed with respect to England, I am not, at this distance from Paris, in the way of knowing, but am inclined to think she meditates a descent upon that Country, and a revolution in its Government. If this should be the plan, it will keep me in Europe at least another year.

As the British party has thrown the American commerce into wretched confusion, it is necessary to pay more attention to the appointment of Consuls in the ports of France, than there was occasion to do in time of peace; especially as there is now no Minister, and Mr. Skipwith, who stood well with the Government here, has resigned. Mr. Cutting, the Consul for Havre, does not reside at it, and the business is altogether in the hands of De la Motte, the Vice Consul, who is a Frenchman [and] cannot have the full authority proper for the office in the difficult state matters are now in. I do not mention this to the disadvantage of Mr. Cutting, for no man is more proper than himself if he thought it an object to attend to.

I know not if you are acquainted with Captain Johnson of Massachusetts—he is a staunch man and one of the oldest American Captains in the American employ. He is now settled at Havre and is a more proper man for a Vice Consul than La Motte. You can learn his character from Mr. Monroe. He has written to some of his friends to have

<sup>277</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

the appointment and if you can see an opportunity of throwing in a little service for him, you will do a good thing. We have had several reports of Mr. Madison's coming. He would be well received as an individual, but as an Envoy of John Adams he could do nothing.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO CITIZEN PRESIDENT <sup>278</sup>

No. 4 Rue du théâtre français, 24 Germinal 6 year

CITIZEN PRESIDENT:

In a letter to the Director Revelliere le Peaux a few days past, I mentioned that I had reasons for believing that the orders of the Directory were made a trade of. I am now assured of the fact. The Citizen Connolly born in Ireland, but who has lived more than 32 years in America, and served as Captain and Major in the American Revolution, is one of the persons from whom money has been extorted. He went from Paris to Havre, on his commercial affairs, was put in arrestation, taken to prison, and liberated for 4800 livres (200 louis d'ors). They asked 15, or 16,000 livres. The duty I owe to justice and to friendship makes it incumbent on me to state this case to the Directory. Connolly lives at the Coffee Boston Rue Vivienne, and I am told that the Secretary of the Judge du Paix is now in Paris. I do not send the written account which Connolly has given to me, because the Directory can order that his deposition be taken.

Salut et respect

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO M. TALLEYRAND <sup>279</sup>

Rue théâtre français No. 4 [6 year]

CITIZEN MINISTER:

I send you the letter to Washington. In two or three days I will give you some thoughts upon American affairs. I presume you do not mean

<sup>278</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Chamberlain Collection through the courtesy of the Boston Public Library.—*Editor*.

<sup>279</sup> This letter is printed from a photostat of the original manuscript in the French Archives through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord was the French Minister of Foreign Affairs under the Directory.—*Editor*.

to assure the commissioners of anything at the first interview.<sup>280</sup> It will be best to receive them with a *civil signification* of reproach. Mr. Pinckney has a good deal committed himself in his correspondence with Pickering, which this last has been foolish enough to publish. Do you know Montfloreus (Chancel[1]or to the Consulship). If he should visit you on any occasion it will be best to keep him at a distance. He is the confidential intrigant of Pinckney.

Salut et respect  
THOMAS PAINE.

### TO M. TALLEYRAND<sup>281</sup>

Rue théâtre français No. 4, 9 Vendemaire 6 year

CITIZEN MINISTER:

I promised you some observations on the state of things between France and America. I divide the case into two parts. First, with respect to some method that shall effectually put an end to *all* interruptions of the American commerce. Secondly, with respect to settlement for the captures that have been made on that commerce.

As to the first case (the interruptions of the American commerce by France) it has its foundation in the British Treaty,<sup>282</sup> and it is the continuance of that treaty that renders the remedy difficult. Besides, the American administration has blundered so much in the business of treaty making, that it is probable it will blunder again in making another with France. There is however one method left, and there is but one, that I can see, that will be effectual. It is a *non-importation convention*: that America agrees not to import from any nation in Europe who shall interrupt her commerce on the seas, any goods, wares, or merchandise whatever, and that all her ports shall be cut against the nation that gives offense. This will draw America out of her difficulties with respect to her treaty with England.

But it would be far better if this non-importation were to be a general

<sup>280</sup> Paine is undoubtedly referring to the American Commissioners Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, John Marshall and Elbridge Gerry who had their first interview with Talleyrand on October 8th. These men were involved in the "X,Y,Z Affair."—*Editor*.

<sup>281</sup> This letter is printed from a photostat of the original manuscript in the French Archives through the courtesy of the Library of Congress. It is classified under the heading Paris, Aff. Etr, Cor, Polit, Etats Unis, 48 no. 273.—*Editor*.

<sup>282</sup> Paine is referring to Jay's Treaty.—*Editor*.



convention of nations acting as a whole. It would give better protection to neutral commerce than the armed neutrality could do. I would rather be a neutral nation under the protection of such a convention, which costs nothing to make it, than be under the protection of a navy equal to that of Britain. France should be the patron of such a convention and sign it. It would be giving both her consent and her protection to the Rights of neutral nations. If England refuse[s] to sign it, she will nevertheless be obliged to respect it or lose all her commerce.

I enclose you a plan I drew up about four months ago when there was expectation that Mr. Madison would come to France.<sup>283</sup> It has lain by me ever since.

Of the second part, that of settlement for the captures, I will make the subject of a future correspondence.

Salut et Respect  
THOMAS PAINE.

## TO CITIZEN BARRAS <sup>284</sup>

December 29, 1797.

CITIZEN PRESIDENT:

A very particular friend of mine, who had a passport to go to London upon some family affairs and to return in three months, and whom I had commissioned upon some affairs of my own (for I find that the English government has seized upon a thousand pounds sterling which I had in the hands of a friend), returned two days ago and gave me the memorandum which I enclose. The first part relates only to my publication on the event of the 18 Fructidor, and to a letter to Erskine <sup>285</sup> (who had been counsel for the prosecution against a former work of mine the *Age of Reason*) both of which I desired my friend to publish in London. The other part of the memorandum respects the state of affairs in that country, by which I see they have little or no idea of a descent being made upon them; tant mieux—but they will be guarded in Ireland, as they expect a descent there.

I expect a printed copy of the letter to Erskine in a day or two. As this is in English, and on a subject that will be amusing to Citizen Revel-

<sup>283</sup> This plan is printed above pp. 940-945.—*Editor*.

<sup>284</sup> Paul Jean François Barras was a former friend of Danton and a leader of the group that overthrew Robespierre.—*Editor*.

<sup>285</sup> See above pp. 595ff., 727ff.—*Editor*.

lière Le Peaux, I will send it to him. The friend of whom I speak was a pupil of Dessault the surgeon, and whom I once introduced to you at a public audience in company with Captain Cooper on his plan respecting the Island of Bermuda.

Salut et Respect.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE COUNCIL OF FIVE HUNDRED

PARIS, January 28, 1798.

### CITIZENS REPRESENTATIVES:

Though it is not convenient to me, in the present situation of my affairs, to subscribe to the loan toward the descent upon England, my economy permits me to make a small patriotic donation. I send a hundred livres, and with it all the wishes of my heart for the success of the descent, and a voluntary offer of any service I can render to promote it.

There will be no lasting peace for France, nor for the world, until the tyranny and corruption of the English government be abolished, and England, like Italy, become a sister Republic. As to those men, whether in England, Scotland, or Ireland, who, like Robespierre in France, are covered with crimes, they, like him, have no other resource than committing more. But the mass of the people are the friends of liberty: tyranny and taxation oppress them, but they deserve to be free.

Accept, Citizens Representatives, the congratulations of an old colleague in the dangers we have passed and on the happy prospect before us.

Salut et Respect.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO GENERAL BRUNE <sup>286</sup>

DIEPPE 8 Brumaire, 8 year [November, 1799].

[DEAR SIR:]

I congratulate you, my dear and brave general, on your happy and glorious success in Holland. It is a death blow to the coalition and to the

<sup>286</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Paine Miscellaneous Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Marshall Guillaume Brune had just scored a significant victory for the French in Holland.—*Editor*.

politics of the English government. I see that general Knox is to remain a hostage till the articles are fulfilled on the part of the enemy. That government is not very faithful in fulfilling articles of capitulation. When the Duke of Cumberland (son of George 2d) commanded the army of observation in Hanover in the year 1757, he signed articles of capitulation (the convention of Closterseven) to the Duke of Richelieu which the English government refused to fulfill, and a similar case occurred in the American war when the English general Burgoyne signed articles of capitulation to the American general Gates at Saratoga. If the English government (after their army is relanded in England) can find any pretence to avoid fulfilling the articles they will do it. But whether they fulfill them or not, it is a glorious conquest. There is now no more new coalition to be raised. Every Nation in Europe (except Denmark) has entered in coalitions against republican France and France has defeated them all. When I look back to three or four months, and compare the glorious state of things now, with the wretched state of things then, I feel astonishment. The brave Dewinter I understand is with you, please to present to him my respects and my congratulations. I hope to see him again at the head of a Batavian Navy, and the days of Van Trumpt renewed.

England is certainly powerful at sea, but in the American war she was inferior to the combined fleets of France, Spain, and Holland, and will be so again. There will be no safety on the ocean till that tyrannical power be reduced, or a revolution affected in that country. In military tactics they have neither skill nor experience. There is not an English general that knows how to command more than ten thousand men. As I have always intended to write a history, in English, of the revolutions I have seen I shall with double pleasure record this glorious exploit in Holland, and that I may do it full justice, I will at some future day, when you have leisure, ask you for some particulars.

As the Batavians will now have to raise a new Navy, and can not confide in the officers that surrendered the fleet to the enemy, they will, of consequence, have a new corps of officers to raise. I have a friend, an American, who has been bred up to sea from his infancy, and is very desirous of serving under Admiral Dewinter. He is in the prime of life, brave, and a complete seaman. He has purchased national property in France, sufficient to live upon at land, but his element is the sea. He is an intimate acquaintance of General Olivier who is returned to Paris from Italy in good health, but with the loss of a leg.

I am much concerned at the fate of an old friend of mine, Napper

Tandy, delivered to the English by the Senate of Hamburg, at the instigation of Paul. Should any circumstances put it in your power to befriend him I confide in your patriotism to do it.

I have been passing some time at this place at the house of a friend who lives here. I shall stay here two or three months. It was my intention to have come to Holland if the war had continued. Nothing would have given me more pleasure than to have seen the John Bulls (les Jean Taureaux) defeated. However I live in hopes of seeing a descent upon England. If you find a moment to spare it will give me great pleasure to receive a line from you. Direct to me at Bonneville's N. 4 Rue Théâtre Français, Paris who will forward it to me. Sincerely wishing you a continuance of your health happiness and success, I remain your affectionate friend,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO CITIZEN SKIPWITH <sup>287</sup>

PARIS Prairial 13 8th year

DEAR FRIEND:

I received your favor with the information I had asked for which I am obliged to you. On my return to Paris I received letters from America with a postscript as late as the 23 March. They are on private affairs and contain no news, except that they were written in December and were to have been sent by the *Washington Frigate*, which, the postscript says, was to be sent for the purpose of bringing off the American commissioners. If you compare things and dates you will see, that in December the American government would know only of the success of the Russians and Austrians, and of the *then* promising expedition to Holland, and [the] failure of the expedition to Holland. In that state of things John Adams was pompously calling away the commissioners, but as the defeat of the Prussians at Zurich and their defection from the coalition would arrive soon after that time, the *Washington* was not sent. The letters I believe came by the frigate to Havre. I will take a morning's walk when the weather is better to Putaux. In the meantime I shall be glad you would give me a call at Rue du Théâtre français.

Your affectionate friend,

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>287</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of Yale University Library.—*Editor*.

TO ANONYMOUS <sup>288</sup>

Rue du Théâtre français, 12 Thermidor, year 8.

DEAR SIR:

I send you a sketch of a Plan that I believe is new in this country.<sup>289</sup> *The idea originated with Franklin.* This is sufficient to procure it attention. I have done no more than apply it to the circumstances France is now in. The letter addressed to Sir Robert Smith is in answer to one he wrote to Mr. Millbank respecting the Iron Bridge at Sunderland. I send it because it is referred to in the plan and also a perspecting painting of the Bridge.

As for myself I have no object in view in this Country otherwise than I crave its prosperity. My intention is to return to America as soon as I can cross the sea in safety. The letter to Sir Robt. and the view of the Bridge I shall want again. The plan I make you a present of wishing you would endeavor to bring it into practice, which is the only motive I have in sending it.

Yours with esteem,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>290</sup>

PARIS, October 1, 1800.

DEAR SIR:

I wrote to you from Havre by the ship *Dublin Packet* in the year 1797. It was then my intention to return to America; but there were so many British frigates cruising in sight of the port, and which after a few days knew that I was at Havre waiting to go to America, that I did not think it best to trust myself to their discretion, and the more so, as I had no confidence in the captain of the *Dublin Packet* (Clay). I mentioned to you in that letter, which I believe you received through the hands of Colonel [Aaron] Burr, that I was glad since you were not President that you had accepted the nomination of Vice-President.

<sup>288</sup> This letter is reprinted from a copy in Stan V. Henkel's Catalogue No. 1262, p. 122 (copy in Wisconsin States Historical Society).—*Editor.*

<sup>289</sup> The four page sketch was entitled "Plan for encouraging internal prosperity." I have not been able to locate this Plan.—*Editor.*

<sup>290</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor.*

The commissioners, Ellsworth and company, have been here about eight months, and three more useless mortals never came upon public business.<sup>291</sup> Their presence appears to me to have been rather an injury than a benefit. They set themselves up for a faction as soon as they arrived. I was then in Belgium. Upon my return to Paris I learned they had made a point of not returning the visits of Mr. Skipwith and Barlow, because, they said, they had not the confidence of the Executive. Every known Republican was treated in the same manner.

I learned from Mr. Miller of Philadelphia, who had occasion to see them upon business, that they did not intend to return my visit, if I made one. This, I supposed, it was intended I should know, that I might not make one. It had the contrary effect. I went to see Mr. Ellsworth. I told him I did not come to see him as a commissioner, nor to congratulate him upon his mission; that I came to see him because I had formerly known him in Congress.

"I mean not," said I, "to press you with any questions, or to engage you in any conversation upon the business you are come upon, but I will nevertheless candidly say that I know not what expectations the Government or the people of America may have of your mission, or what expectations you may have yourselves, but I believe you will find you can do but little. The treaty with England lies at the threshold of all your business. The American Government never did two more foolish things than when it signed that treaty and recalled Mr. Monroe, who was the only man could do them any service."

Mr. Ellsworth put on the dull gravity of a judge, and was silent. I added, "You may perhaps make a treaty like that you have made with England, which is a surrender of the rights of the American flag; for the principle that neutral ships make neutral property must be general or not at all." I then changed the subject, for I had all the talk to myself upon this topic, and inquired after Samuel Adams (I asked nothing about John), Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Monroe and others of my friends; and the melancholy case of the yellow fever—of which he gave me as circumstantial an account as if he had been summing up a case to a jury.

Here my visit ended, and had Mr. Ellsworth been as cunning as a

<sup>291</sup> On February 25, 1799, President John Adams, seeking peace with France after the "X,Y,Z Affair," sent Oliver Ellsworth, chief justice of the United States Supreme Court and Patrick Henry, late Governor of Virginia, as "envoys extraordinary and ministers plenipotentiary" to France. This action was bitterly opposed by those Federalists who clamored for a war with France. Paine's bitter criticism of Adams at this juncture was definitely unwarranted.—*Editor*.

statesman, or as wise as a judge, he would have returned my visit that he might appear insensible of the intention of mine.

I now come to the affairs of this country and of Europe. You will, I suppose, have heard before this arrives to you of the battle of Marengo in Italy, where the Austrians were defeated—of the armistice in consequence thereof, and the surrender of Milan, Genoa, etc., to the French—of the successes of the French Army in Germany—and the extension of the armistice in that quarter—of the preliminaries of peace signed at Paris—of the refusal of the Emperor [of Austria] to ratify these preliminaries—of the breaking of the armistice by the French Government in consequence of that refusal—of the “gallant” expedition of the Emperor to put himself at the head of his army—of his pompous arrival there—of his having made his will—of prayers being put in all his churches for the preservation of the life of this hero—of General Moreau announcing to him, immediately on his arrival at the army, that hostilities would commence the day after the next at sunrise unless he signed the treaty or gave security that he would sign within forty-five days—of his surrendering up three of the principal keys of Germany (Ulm, Philipsburg, and Ingolstadt) as security that he would sign them.

This is the state things are now in, at the time of writing this letter; but it is proper to add that the refusal of the Emperor to sign the preliminaries was motivated upon a note from the King of England to be admitted to the Congress for negotiating peace, which was consented to by the French upon the condition of an armistice at sea, which England, before knowing of the surrender the Emperor had made, had refused.

From all which it appears to me, judging from circumstances, that the Emperor is now so completely in the hands of the French, that he has no way of getting out but by a peace. The Congress for the peace is to be held at Lunéville, a town in France. Since the affair of Rastadt the French commissioners will not trust themselves with the Emperor’s territory.

I now come to domestic affairs. I know not what the commissioners have done, but from a paper I inclose to you, which appears to have some authority, it is not much. The paper as you will perceive is considerably prior to this letter. I know that the commissioners before this piece appeared intended setting off. It is therefore probable that what they have done is conformable to what this paper mentions, which certainly will not atone for the expense their mission has incurred, neither

are they, by all the accounts I hear of them, men fitted for the business.

But independently of these matters there appears to be a state of circumstances rising, which if it goes on, will render all partial treaties unnecessary. In the first place I doubt if any peace will be made with England; and in the second place, I should not wonder to see a coalition formed against her, to compel her to abandon her insolence on the seas. This brings me to speak of the manuscripts I send you.

The piece No. 1, without any title, was written in consequence of a question put to me by Bonaparte. As he supposed I knew England and English politics he sent a person to me to ask, that in case of negotiating a peace with Austria, whether it would be proper to include England. This was when Count St. Julian was in Paris, on the part of the Emperor negotiating the preliminaries:—which as I have before said the Emperor refused to sign on the pretense of admitting England.

The piece No. 2, entitled *On the Jacobinism of the English at Sea*, was written when the English made their insolent and impolitic expedition to Denmark, and is also an auxiliary to the politic of No. 1. I showed it to a friend<sup>292</sup> who had it translated into French and printed in the form of a pamphlet, and distributed gratis among the foreign ministers and persons in the government. It was immediately copied into several of the French journals, and into the official paper, the *Moniteur*. It appeared in this paper one day before the last despatch arrived from Egypt; which agreed perfectly with what I had said respecting Egypt. It hit the two cases of Denmark and Egypt in the exact proper moment.

The piece No. 3, entitled *Compact Maritime*, is the sequel of No. 2, digested in form. It is translating at the time I write this letter, and I am to have a meeting with the Senator Garat upon the subject. The pieces 2 and 3 go off in manuscript to England, by a confidential person, where they will be published.

By all the news we get from the North there appears to be something meditating against England. It is now given for certain that Paul has embargoed all the English vessels and English property in Russia till some principle be established for protecting the rights of neutral nations, and securing the liberty of the seas.

The preparations in Denmark continue, notwithstanding the convention that she has made with England, which leaves the question with respect to the right set up by England to stop and search neutral vessels undecided. I send you the paragraphs upon the subject.

<sup>292</sup> The friend referred to was M. de Bonneville.—*Editor*.



The tumults are great in all parts of England on account of the excessive price of corn and bread, which has risen since the harvest. I attribute it more to the abundant increase of paper, and the non-circulation of cash, than to any other cause. People in trade can push the paper off as fast as they receive it, as they did by Continental money in America; but as farmers have not this opportunity they endeavor to secure themselves by going considerably in advance.

I have now given you all the great articles of intelligence, for I trouble not myself with little ones, and consequently not with the commissioners, nor anything they are about, nor with John Adams, otherwise than to wish him safe home, and a better and wiser man in his place.

In the present state of circumstances and the prospects arising from them, it may be proper for America to consider whether it is worth her while to enter into any treaty at this moment, or to wait the event of those circumstances which if they go on will render partial treaties useless by deranging them.

But if, in the meantime, she enters into any treaty it ought to be with a condition to the following purpose: Reserving to herself the right of joining in an association of nations for the protection of the rights of neutral commerce and the security of the liberty of the seas.

The pieces 2, 3, may go to the press. They will make a small pamphlet and the printers are welcome to put my name to it. (It is best it should be put.) From thence they will get into the newspapers. I know that the faction of John Adams abuses me pretty heartily. They are welcome. It does not disturb me, and they lose their labor; and in return for it I am doing America more service, as a neutral nation, than their expensive commissioners can do, and she has that service from me for nothing. The piece No. 1 is only for your own amusement and that of your friends.

I come now to speak confidentially to you on a private subject. When Mr. Ellsworth and Davie return to America, Murray will return to Holland,<sup>293</sup> and in that case there will be nobody in Paris but Mr. Skipwith that has been in the habit of transacting business with the French Government since the Revolution began.

He is on a good standing with them, and if the chance of the day should place you in the Presidency you cannot do better than appoint

<sup>293</sup> William Van Murray was American minister to the Netherlands, and served as a member of the mission to France with Oliver Ellsworth and Patrick Henry. He remained at the Hague until September 2, 1801.—*Editor*.

him for any purpose you may have occasion for in France. He is an honest man and will do his country justice, and that with civility and good manners to the government he is commissioned to act with; a faculty which that Northern Bear, Timothy Pickering, wanted, and which the Bear of that Bear, John Adams, never possessed.

I know not much of Mr. Murray, otherwise than of his unfriendliness to every American who is not of his faction, but I am sure that Joel Barlow is a much fitter man to be in Holland than Mr. Murray. It is upon the fitness of the man to the place that I speak, for I have not communicated a thought upon the subject to Barlow, neither does he know, at the time of my writing this (for he is at Havre), that I have intention to do it.

I will now, by way of relief, amuse you with some account of the progress of iron bridges. The French Revolution and Mr. Burke's attack upon it, drew me off from any pontifical works. Since my coming from England in '92, an Iron Bridge of a single arch 236 feet span, versed sine 34 feet, has been cast at the Iron Works of the Walkers where my Model was, and erected over the river Wear at Sunderland in the county of Durham in England. The two members in Parliament for the County, Mr. Bourdon and Mr. Milbank, were the principal subscribers; but the direction was committed to Mr. Bourdon. A very sincere friend of mine, Sir Robert Smyth, who lives in France, and whom Mr. Monroe well knows, supposing they had taken their plan from my model wrote to Mr. Milbank upon the subject. Mr. Milbank answered the letter, which answer I have by me and I give you word for word the part concerning the Bridge. "With respect to the Bridge over the river Wear at Sunderland it certainly is a work well deserving admiration both for its structure and utility, and I have good grounds for saying that the first idea was taken from Mr. Paine's bridge exhibited at Paddington. But with respect to any compensation to Mr. Paine, however desirous of rewarding the labors of an ingenious man, I see not how it is in my power, having had nothing to do with the bridge after the payment of my subscription, Mr. Bourdon being accountable for the whole. But if you can point out any mode by which I can be instrumental in procuring for Mr. Paine compensation for the advantages which the public may have derived from his ingenious model, from which certainly the outlines of the Bridge at Sunderland was taken, be assured it will afford me great satisfaction."

I have now made two other models. One is of pasteboard, five feet

span and five inches of height from the cords. It is in the opinion of every person who has seen it one of the most beautiful objects the eye can behold. I then cast a model in metal following the construction of that in pasteboard and of the same dimensions. The whole was executed in my own chamber. It is far superior in strength, elegance and readiness in execution to the model I made in America, and which you saw in Paris. I shall bring those models with me when I come home, which will be as soon as I can pass the seas in safety from the piratical John Bulls.

I suppose you have seen, or have heard of the Bishop of Llandaff's answer to my second part of *The Age of Reason*. As soon as I got a copy of it I began a third part,<sup>294</sup> which served also as an answer to the Bishop; but as soon as the clerical Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge knew of my intention to answer the Bishop, they prosecuted, as a society, the printer of the first and second parts, to prevent that answer appearing.

No other reason than this can be assigned for their prosecuting at the time they did, because the first part had been in circulation above three years and the second part more than one, and they prosecuted immediately on knowing that I was taking up their champion.

The Bishop's answer, like Mr. Burke's attack on the French Revolution, served me as a background to bring forward other subjects upon, with more advantage than if the background was not there. This is the motive that induced me to answer him, otherwise I should have gone on without taking any notice of him. I have made and am still making additions to the manuscript, and shall continue to do so till an opportunity arrive for publishing it.

If any American frigate should come to France, and the direction of it fall to you, I will be glad you would give me the opportunity of returning. The abscess under which I suffered almost two years is entirely healed of itself, and I enjoy exceeding good health. This is the first of October, and Mr. Skipwith has just called to tell me the commissioners set off for Havre to-morrow. This will go by the frigate but not with the knowledge of the commissioners. Remember me with much affection to my friends and accept the same to yourself.

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>294</sup> See above pp. 764-787.—*Editor*.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>295</sup>

October 1, 1800.

[DEAR SIR:]

In the present crisis of politics a question naturally suggests itself, which is, whether in a treaty of peace with Austria, any measures should be taken, on the part of France, towards a peace with England? The answer to this question, in all its cases, is the monosyllable NO. But as a positive decision affirmative or negative, ought to be the result of all the reasons for and against, I go to give the reason for this decision.

Because it is evident from all the conduct of the British government that it pins itself for safety upon Austria, and therefore, if in the final event, a peace is to be concluded with England it can be done better when that country has no ally on the continent that whilst she has.

Because taking England into consideration as a party, at the time a peace is in treaty with Austria, will embarrass the peace with Austria. It is clear that the British makes use of Austria, at this moment, for no other purpose than to get terms for herself at the expense of Austria, and Austria is foolish if she does not see this.

But independently of these considerations the internal state of England, at this moment, is such, as makes it impolitic for France to press her on the subject of peace. There is, to my knowledge, a great change in the political principles of that country. Besides the aversion which many of them have to the Hanover family, there are much greater numbers who have an aversion to hereditary succession, and wish to establish government by representation. This idea never occurred to them before.

Another case is, a change in their system of finance. Ever since the Bank stopped payment in cash, because it had not cash to pay, there circulates in England nothing but paper, and as paper can be multiplied at pleasure the quantity is already too great. The nominal high price of the necessaries of life in England is owing to this excess of paper.

Mr. Pitt in making up his account of the revenue which was laid before Parliament 31 July (see *Moniteur* 23 Thermido) says, "Article 22: Supposing that the war should finish in 1800, that the lowest price of 3 per cent cons. should remain for three years after the peace at 80, and

<sup>295</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

that in the end the income tax should produce 7 millions a year, then the capital of 56,444,000 sterling and the interest would be repurchased in the course of the year 1808."<sup>296</sup>

The direct inference from this is, that as all hope of conquering France has vanished, Pitt is now amusing the nation with the prospect of peace this present year, to take off the impression which the idea of a separate peace with Austria would have upon his paper system. The credit of paper is suspicion asleep. When suspicion wakes the credit vanishes as the dream would do.

England never was before in the situation she is in today as to revenue concerns. The whole is paper. It used to be said in England that "*money was the sinews of war;*" but this cannot be said of paper, which resting altogether upon circumstance, accident, and opinion has no sinews. And as to commerce, of which Mr. Pitt boasts so much, there must be something rotten at the center where a great commerce procures nothing but paper. The same case has happened at Hamburg. That place has been the center of commerce and is now the center of bankruptcy.

England has a large navy and the expense of it leads to her ruin. The profits of all the commerce of the world is not equal to the expense which such a navy costs. If the expense of protecting commerce is to be subtracted from the profits of it, it is evident that England loses by commerce because the expense is greater than the profits and the deficiency is filled up with paper.

As the finances of England are in the state I have described, I come to speak of the matters that will make the most impression upon this paper system, to which the British cabinet has retreated as its last resource, and beyond which it has not another.

It is evident from experience that no defeat of the Austrians that has yet happened, nor the defeat of the English at Helder, has made any, or not much, impression on this paper system. On the contrary I have often observed that it rose after such an event. It did so upon the defeat of Milas at Maring's, and the reason is, that as the Nation is tired of the war, and wishing for an end to it, and for peace, and as it feels from the temper of the parties that an end will not arrive 'till one or other of them on the continent be totally defeated (believing at the same time, its ownself secure, by its distance from the theatre of war, and its insular situation) it calculates upon defeat as it would upon victory.

It must then be something nearer home that will make any serious im-

<sup>296</sup> The original is in French.—*Editor*.

pression, and that something is within the power of France to do, or at least to make preparation for doing, and the preparation itself would have some effect.

The weak part of England is the coast on the North Sea from the mouth of the Thames to Scotland. It is this that makes the British cabinet so opposed to the union of Belgia to France. It is opposite to that weak part, Dunkirk which was formerly the most northerly port that France had on the North Sea, and it was thought important enough to the British cabinet to stipulate for the demolition of it in a former treaty of peace. It is not so much the quantity of Belgic territory that troubles England; it is the situation of it for as she cannot but know her own weak part, and that Belgia is opposite to it, she knows that it is from Belgia, and more so with the aid of Holland, that a descent upon England can best be made and that without a navy.

The English coast on the North Sea is not only weak but can never be made strong. The whole of its extent for about 120 leagues is a flat, clean, dry, sandy shore where a boat can land, and where a ship of the line cannot approach; neither is there a port in it where a ship of the line can enter.

A plan for a descent upon this coast was given to Boissy D'Anglas to be given to the Citizen Carnot when he was president of the Directory. The same plan, in English, was given to Praveliere Lepeaux (who understands English) when he was President of the Directory, after the Peace of Campo Tornaio. The Directory adopted the plan, but whether really or only as a feint to cover the expedition to Egypt, which was then preparing, themselves know best. The plan was to build a thousand gun-boats each carrying a 24 pounder in the bow, and about an hundred men and to be rowed by oars. The boats would not have cost more than four ships of the line would cost, and the British cabinet would apprehend more danger from them as to a descent, than from any navy that France can raise for many years to come. About 250 boats were built and the plan abandoned; since which the British cabinet has been under the apprehension of a descent and its paper credit has kept up in consequence of it.

It may be recalled that about a year and half ago the British made a descent at Ostine, where about 2000 of them were made prisoners. I doubt if the object of that expedition be known to the French government to this day. It was in search of the gun-boats and to cut the dykes to prevent their being assembled. I had this from the President of the

municipality of Bruges, Joseph Vanhuile, an old acquaintance of mine when I was at Bruges last winter. Himself had it from the officers who commanded the expedition.

Whenever a descent be made upon England it must be from the Belgic coast to the opposite coast. It is an opportunity which the union with Belgia gives to France, and she must improve that opportunity as a substitute for the loss of her navy, which was always an expense without doing her any, or but little, service. It is the situation and natural condition of the two shores that point out the opportunity I am speaking of. Were the English shore on the North Sea as bold, and as capable of defence as the shore on the channel, and had ports in it, like Portsmouth and Plymouth, England would fear no more from Belgia than she now fears from Picardy, Normandy and Britainy.

Supposing then a peace to take place with Austria, leaving England out of the question, what are the means that France should employ to accomplish any object necessary to her safety against England? It will take many years to raise a navy and still more to rear up sailors to man it. A navy is a thing of slow growth, and that which France is something which can be done in a little time and at a small expense, and in which but few sailors are necessary. The most effectual plan therefore will be to go on with the plan of gun-boats and to complete the number first intended. There are but two ways to arrive in England. The one by defeating the English navy; the other by alluding it. The former is the business of ships of the line, the other of gun-boats, and the chance of the latter in the North Sea, is much greater than that of the former in the channel.

At the time the gun-boats are preparing to depart there should be an expedition from Brest, or better from Rochelle, having on board about 150,000 men. The expedition should stand out far to the west or south-west, then steering North, keeping far to the west of Ireland, and land in the north of Scotland. The French revolution has many friends in that country, and the destination will not be suspected. This is the only part of the plan that is necessary to keep secret. The descent that was made there in 1745 had nearly proved fatal to the Anglo-Hanoverian government of England. That small force, with its partisans penetrated to the center of England and then retreated.

If the descent by gun-boats and the expedition to Scotland do but arrive, the fate of the Government of England is decided.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>297</sup>

PARIS, Oct. 4, 1800.

DEAR SIR:

I understand there is an Article in the Treaty <sup>298</sup> to the following purport, that the duties payable upon Articles brought from America into France shall not go to the revenue, but shall be appropriated as a fund to pay such of the condemned cargoes as shall be proved to American property. If you should be in the chair, but not otherwise, I offer myself as one upon this business, if there should be any occasion to appoint any. It will serve to defray my expenses until I can return, but I wish it may be with the condition of returning. I am not tired of working for nothing but I cannot afford it. This appointment will aid me in promoting the object I am now upon that of a law of nations for the protection of neutral commerce.

Salut et respect  
THOMAS PAINE.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>299</sup>

Oct. 6, 1800.

DEAR SIR:

I enclose you a piece to serve as an introduction to two other pieces which you will receive by the same conveyance. I observe the Consul Le Brun at the entertainment given to the American envoys gave for his toast:

“To the union of America with the Powers of the world in order to guarantee the freedom of the seas.” <sup>300</sup>

T. P.

<sup>297</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>298</sup> Paine is referring to the treaty between the United States Commissioners and the French Commissioners signed on October 1, 1800.—*Editor*.

<sup>299</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>300</sup> The original is in French.—*Editor*.



TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>301</sup>

PARIS, 24 Vendemaire year 9 [October 16, 1800].

DEAR SIR:

As the wind at one time and the tides at another prevented the commissioners sailing at the time they intended it gives me the opportunity of sending you an addition to the other pieces. We have nothing new since the date of my last. I send you a paragraph from a paper of yesterday, 15th October—23 Vendemaire.

The arrangement between Denmark is but temporary. The first article is: the question respecting the right of visiting neutral ships going without convoy is sent to an ulterior discussion.

“3 art—In order to prevent similar meetings from again causing disputes of the same nature, S. M. Danoisa will stop his convoys until *later explanations* of the same subject will have been able to effect a definite understanding.” <sup>302</sup>

Copenhagen, Aug, 1800.

“The politics of the Northern Powers is developing further. The article published by the Petersburg newspaper of Sept. 15th, six days after the arrival of the Danish Courier (bearer of the news that the differences between England and Denmark had been ironed out) today confirms positively what was speculated two weeks ago, that is, that the execution of the plan directed against England’s ambition has only been postponed by the three Northern Powers. If Paul 1st’s anger had been soothed by the convention of August 29th he would certainly not have made public on September 15th, that *certain political circumstances lead S. M. to believe that a break with England may take place.*

“A remarkable circumstance, one which seems to prove that our court will not take an active part in this quarrel, is the kind of reserve with which the court newspaper has omitted this menacing passage, when transcribing the Petersburg paper.” <sup>303</sup>

This is by way of Berlin, and is the latest news we have from Russia.

The translation of all the pieces I have sent you are in the press and I expect will be printed by tomorrow.

Salut et respect,

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>301</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor.*

<sup>302</sup> The original is in French.—*Editor.*

<sup>303</sup> The original, a newspaper clipping attached to Paine’s letter, is in French.—*Editor.*

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>304</sup>

PARIS, June 9th, 1801.

DEAR SIR:

Your very friendly letter by Mr. Dawson <sup>305</sup> gave me the real sensation of happy satisfaction, and what served to increase it was that he brought it to me himself before I knew of his arrival. I congratulate America on your election.<sup>306</sup> There has been no circumstance, with respect to America, since the times of her revolution, that has excited so much general attention and expectation in France, England, Ireland and Scotland, as the pending election for president of the United States, nor any of which the event has given more general joy.

I thank you for the opportunity you give me of returning by the *Maryland*, but I shall wait the return of the vessel that brings Mr. Livingston.<sup>307</sup>

With respect to the general state of politics in Europe, I mean such as are interesting to America, I am at a loss to give any decided opinion. The coalition of the north, which took place within a few weeks after the publication of the Maritime Compact, is, by the *untimely* death of Paul, in a state of suspense. I do not believe it is abandoned, but it is so far weakened that some of the ports of the North are again open to the English commerce, as are also the Elba and the Wesar; and Hamburg is evacuated by the Danes. That the business is not yet settled you will see by Nelson's letter and the accounts from Stöckholm which I enclose. The English government has sent Lord St. Helens to Petersburg but we have no news of the event of his embassy.

Nothing from Egypt since the battle of the 21 March. The event, however, admits of calculation, which is, that if the English get footing enough in that country to hold themselves those, they will finally suc-

<sup>304</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>305</sup> Jefferson's letter, delivered by Beau Dawson, an eminent Virginia Congressman, invited Paine to return to the United States.—*Editor*.

<sup>306</sup> After a heated controversy Jefferson was elected President by the House of Representatives to which body the decision had been relegated when none of the candidates received a majority of the electoral votes.—*Editor*.

<sup>307</sup> Paine's determination not to return to America in the *Maryland* was prompted by a paragraph he saw in a Baltimore paper, headed "Out at Last," which stated that he had written to the President, expressing a desire to return by a national vessel, and that "permission was given." The Federalists raised the cry that Jefferson had sent a national ship to Europe solely for the purpose of bringing Paine home, and rather than give them ammunition Paine decided not to return in a national vessel.—*Editor*.

ceed; because they can be reinforced and the French cannot. It is said that England has made proposals of an armistice to France, one of the conditions of which is that both parties shall evacuate Egypt. I know not the fact but it has the appearance of probability. It comes from Marbois.

The only relief that France could have given to Egypt, and the only, or most effectual aid, she could have given to the coalition of the North (since she has no operative navy) would have been to have kept a strong fleet of gun-boats on the Belgic coast, to be rowed by oars, and capable of transporting an hundred thousand men over to the English coast on the North Sea. Had this been done, England could not have left her coast unguarded in the manner she has done to make the expedition to the Baltic and to Egypt; and if she had done it, the descent could have been made without scarcely any risk. I believe the government begins now to see it, and talk of doing it, but it ought to have been done a year ago. It was the point I endeavored to press the most in my Memorial to Bonaparte of which you have a copy.

That vessels under convoy shall not be visited will answer very well for the powers of the North, because as those vessels must all pass the sound they can all take a convoy from thence and sail in fleets, but it does not answer for America whose vessels start singly from different points of a long line of coast. It was this that made me throw out the idea in the Maritime Compact (without hinting at the circumstance that suggested it) that the flag of each nation ought to be regarded as its convoy, and that no vessel should hoist any other flag than its own.

The treaty is not yet ratified. Murray has been here about ten days, and had not seen the French commissioners two days ago. Mr. Dawson intended going round among them to learn all he could before he sent off the vessel. Murray, as I understand, for I do not know him, is more a man of etiquette than of business; and if there is any intention here to delay the ratification his standing upon disputable ceremonies gives opportunities to that delay.

I will suggest a thought to you, for which I have no other foundation than what arises in my own mind, which is, that the treaty was formed under one state of circumstances and comes back for ratification under another state of circumstances. When it was formed the powers of the North were uniting in coalition to establish the principle generally and *perpetually* that free ships make free goods, and the treaty with America was formed upon that ground; but the coalition of the North being in a great measure weakened, and the event of the dispute between them

and England not yet known, I am inclined to suspect that France is waiting to know that event before she ratifies a treaty that will otherwise operate against herself, for if England cannot be brought to agree that the neutral powers shall carry for France, I see not how France can agree they shall carry for England.

As to the explanation put upon this article by Jay and Pickering that it refers to different wars in which being neutral one party is to carry for an enemy in one war, and the other party when neutral to carry for an enemy in another war, it appears to me altogether a sophism. It never could be the intention of it as a principle. Instead of such a treaty being a treaty of amity and commerce, it is a treaty of reciprocal injuries. It is like saying you shall break my head this time by aiding my enemy, and I will break your head next time by aiding your enemy; besides which, it is repugnant to every sentiment of human wisdom, human cunning, and human selfishness, to make such a contract. There is neither nation nor individual that will voluntarily consent to sustain a present injury upon the distant prospect of an uncertain good; and even that good, if it were to arrive, would be but a bare equivalent for the injury; whereas it ought to be the double of it upon the score of credit, and the uncertainty of repayment. It is better that such an article should not be inserted in a treaty than that such an unprincipled explanation and which in its operation must lead to contention, should be put upon.

You will observe that in the beginning of the preceding paragraph I have said that when the treaty was formed the powers of the North were uniting in coalition to establish the principle generally and *perpetually* that free ships make free goods. The Senate has limited the duration of the treaty to eight years, and consequently upon the explanation which the government gave to the same article in the former treaty with France (see Pickering's long letter to Mr. Monroe) this article in the present treaty can have no reciprocity. It is limited in its operation to the present war and the benefit of it is to England. The article as containing a principle should have been exempt from the limitations or had some condition annexed to it that preserved the principle. The Senate by its contrivances has furnished with the opportunity of non-ratification, in case she finds, by the change of circumstances that the treaty is to her injury.

As these ideas arise out of circumstances which, by my being upon the spot, I became acquainted with before they can be known in America, I request you to accept them on that ground.

Should the treaty be ratified would it not afford a good opportunity

(supposing the war to continue) to state to England, that as America, since her treaty with England, had formed a treaty with her enemy which stipulated for the right of carrying English property unmolested by that enemy, it was become necessary to make a new arrangement with England as an equivalent for the advantages England derives in consequence of that treaty. I throw this out for your private reflection. Should you see it in this light and commission it to be done, no person would be more proper than Mr. Livingston, and the more so, as all the knowledge necessary to the execution of it would rest within himself, and thereby prevent any confusion that might otherwise arise as was the case with Jay's treaty. Besides which it is prudent to lessen the expense of European missions, and to condense two or three into one.

As the unsettled state in which European politics now are will be the state in which they will appear to you when you receive this letter, I suggest to you whether it would not be best to order the vessel, that is to bring out Mr. Livingston, to L'Orient, Nanez, or Bourdeaux, rather than to come up the channel. The *Maryland* has been visited in entering into [*illegible*] and it is best to avoid an affront when it can be done consist[*tly*] especially in the present unsettled state of things.

The Spaniards have entered Portugal and taken some forts and have orders to march on, unless Portugal, as a preliminary to an armistice, shuts her ports against the English.

The French have again taken possession of several forts on the right shore of the Rhine, but I believe this measure is in concert with Austria to force the states of the Empire to fini[*sh*] the indemnifications. However, this unsettled state of things makes some impression here, and the funds have considerably fallen. England begins to awake to the apprehensions of a descent. If it be true that she has made preparations for an armistice, this may be one of the causes of it.

I now leave the embarrassed field of politics, for which if I have any talent, I have no liking, and come to the quiet sc[*ene*] of civil life. You may recollect that I mentioned to you at Paris an idea I had of constructing carriage wheels by concentric circles in preference to the present method in which the pieces that compose the rim, or wheel, are cut cross the grain. This last winter I made three models. Two of them eighteen inches diameter, the other two feet. I have succeeded both as to solidity and beauty beyond my expectation. They are equally as firm as if they were a natural production and handsomer than any wheels ever yet made. But the machinery I invented, and the means I used, to bring

them to this perfection I cannot describe in a letter. Had matters gone on in America in the same bad manner they went on for several years past my intention was to have taken out a patent for them in France and made a business of it. I shall bring them with me to America and also my bridges and make a business of them there, for it is best for me to be on the broad floor of the world and follow my own ideas. What I mention to you concerning the wheels I repose with your self only till I have the happiness to meet you.

I am with wishes for your happiness and that of our country your much obliged friend

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>308</sup>

PARIS, JUNE 25, 1801.

DEAR SIR:

I write this merely to say there is nothing new to inform you of. Mr. Dawson, whom I saw this morning when I gave him my letter on mechanics for you,<sup>309</sup> tells me that the treaty is not ratified, and that he should stand off the sloop the next day. You will easily conclude from this delay in the ratification that something is the cause of it. It is however time the vessel should depart. If she lose this spring tide, she must wait a fortnight longer. Havre is a very inconvenient post for anything more than common merchant vessels to enter it, besides which the British know every day what is going on at Havre, and who goes in every vessel. They learn this by the fishermen. This is an additional reason for sending the next vessel to some port on the Atlantic. The *Parliamentaire* from America to Havre was taken in going out and carried into England. The pretence, as the papers say, was that a Swedish minister was on board for America. If I had happened to have been there I suppose they would have made no ceremony in conducting me on shore. Havre, however, is, in form, a blockaded port. As I only catch a few minutes to write this scroll, and to say there is no news, you will excuse the insignificance of it.

Your much obliged fellow citizen

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>308</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>309</sup> See above pp. 1047-1050.—*Editor*.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON<sup>310</sup>

[October, 1801.]

DEAR SIR:

The ratification of the treaty at last gives me another opportunity of writing to you. The coalition of the North has vanished almost to nothing. There is no certain news from Egypt either in France or England. Admiral Gantheame has returned without being able to land in Egypt the reinforcement he took with him. He has taken the *Swiftsure* an English 74, and another 74 the *Hanibal* has been taken in the Bay of Algeciras; but afterwards two Spanish ships of the line attacked each other in the night by mistake and both perished. The general talk is now of the descent upon England, and the English Government has some alarms upon the case. Preparations for this ought to have been made last year immediately after signing the peace with Austria. In the Memoir I sent to B[arras] in answer to the question he sent to me at that time (a copy of which you have) I endeavored to press this point strongly upon him. Had the preparation been set about then neither the expedition of the English to the Baltic, nor to Egypt could have taken place. They could not have left their coast unfurnished, nor sent their best troops abroad as they have done. I believe the peace with Portugal is not ratified by France, but be it, or be it not, if France does not make preparations for a descent, I feel persuaded the English will send an expedition against the Portuguese settlements in S[outh] America. A thousand gun-boats proper for a descent would not cost more than four or five ships of the line would cost, and they would do. Boats do not require to be manned by sailors as ships do, and need no other kind of naval stores than are produced in France. The Secretary-General of Marines who speaks English ask[ed] me a few days ago, to give a Memoir on the descent which [he] himself would translate for the Minister, which I did. But from the short interview I had with the Minister he did not appear to me much disposed to promote a descent by Boats. He is a Naval architect, and reckoned capital in his line, and I suppose would rather build ships than boats. I think the French Government would do well were it to divide the Marine office into two


<sup>310</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.

The second part of the letter deals with technical matters connected with construction of houses. For other observations on this subject, see above pp. 1057-1059.—*Editor*.

parts and separate the construction and direction of the boat-marine from that of ships. The boat-marine it is probable, would then be carried on with ambition and energy, which, I see, will not be the case while the two are blended together. If preparations for a descent go forward, it will of consequence hold England in check and alarm, perhaps more so than the coalition of the North did, and in that case she will be cautious how she conducts herself towards America.

I have been observing for some days past the manner of finishing the outside of houses in Paris. They appear to be stone fronts, but are not so; and except some costly buildings the walls are built of rough stone and plastered or stuccoed. In America no plastered or stuccoed work will stand the breaking up of the frost. In Paris it stands perfectly, and I have seen some winters nearly as severe here as in America. The difference is in the material and not in the workmanship. In America the plaster or stucco is made of lime mortar. In Paris it is made of plaster of paris, which has not any quality of lime stone in it. I know not if you have observed it, but about a third of this stone in the natural state is water in a fixed state. When it is burnt, or rather roasted, about 10 or 12 hours in a large heap, the watery part is expelled. It is then pounded, for it will not, after being burnt, dissolve in water like lime, nor produce any heat. It is then sifted, and mixed with water to about the thickness of whitewash which in a few minutes will become fixed. In this state, that is, before it becomes hard, it is plastered upon the rough stone and marked into squares resembling stone. It is then white washed with the same material sifted finer. I observe they throw the first coating on, after it is a little stiff, with the hand to make it adhere the better, and smooth it with the trowel. They begin at the top. The cornish is made of this plaster. They finish as they go. When they have plastered about four or five feet downward and before the plaster got hard, they draw the lines with a tool like a graver which cuts out the joints resembling stone. To make the lines straight they use a long rule, and they put the last washing on before the first coating is dry. These fronts resist wet and are not injured by frost, but bricks absorb a great quantity of wet. If a pint of water be thrown against a brick wall in a hot day scarcely any of it will reach the ground; and as to plastered fronts in America made of lime mortar they fall to pieces with the breaking up of the frost. There is plenty of this stone in Nova Scotia, and I think it would be a useful material in houses in America. Were I to build a brick house in America I would have the bricks made large



and of the shape of the capital letter . There would then be so many hollows from the top to the bottom of the wall that I question if the wet would get through. I know not why we follow the English statute measure of 9 inches by 4.

The priests begin again to put up their heads, as you will see by the enclosed publication of the Minister of Police.

T. P.

## TO ELIHU PALMER <sup>311</sup>

PARIS, February 21, 1802, since the Fable of Christ.

DEAR FRIEND:

I received, by Mr. Livingston, the letter you wrote me, and the excellent work you have published.<sup>312</sup> I see you have thought deeply on the subject, and expressed your thoughts in a strong and clear style. The hinting and intimating manner of writing that was formerly used on subjects of this kind, produced skepticism, but not conviction. It is necessary to be bold. Some people can be reasoned into sense, and others must be shocked into it. Say a bold thing that will stagger them, and they will begin to think.

There is an intimate friend of mine, Colonel Joseph Kirkbride of Bordentown, New Jersey, to whom I would wish you to send your work. He is an excellent man, and perfectly in our sentiments. You can send it by the stage that goes partly by land and partly by water, between New York and Philadelphia, and passes through Bordentown.

I expect to arrive in America in May next. I have a third part of the *Age of Reason* to publish when I arrive, which, if I mistake not, will make a stronger impression than anything I have yet published on the subject.

I write this by an ancient colleague of mine in the French Convention, the citizen Lequinio, who is going [as] Consul to Rhode Island, and who waits while I write.

Yours in friendship,

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>311</sup> Elihu Palmer, militant deist, founded the "Society of Druids," and worked closely with Paine after the latter's arrival in the United States.—*Editor*.

<sup>312</sup> Paine is referring to Palmer's *Principles of Nature; or, a Development of the Moral Causes of Happiness and Misery among the Human Species*, published in 1802. Like the *Age of Reason* it became a text-book of the deistic societies.—*Editor*.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON<sup>313</sup>

PARIS, March 17, 1802.

DEAR SIR:

I wrote to you while Mr. Dawson was here that I would wait the arrival of the *Trysie* that was to bring Mr. Livingston, and return by it to America, in preference to the *Maryland* which you offered me, but the frigate being ordered to the Mediterranean prevented me that opportunity. As it is now peace, though the definitive treaty is not yet signed,<sup>314</sup> I shall set off by the first opportunity from Havre or Dieppe after the equinoxial gales are over.

Your discourse to Congress has drawn a great deal of attention both here and in England, and has been printed in a pamphlet in both countries, that in France with a French translation annexed. I sent some copies to a very intimate and old acquaintance of mine and also an acquaintance of Mr. Monroe, Sir Robert Smyth, and I transcribe to you an extract from his answer by which you will see the opinion the patriots form of it on this side the water.

“With respect to Mr. Jefferson’s speech it is a masterpiece of simple and unaffected eloquence, and of clear honest political statement. There is no state paper, except the celebrated one of Count Bernstoff of Denmark upon the French Revolution to be compared with it. It confirms the opinion I always had of Mr. Jefferson, and I always lamented that my return to England in 1787, to attend Parliament, prevented my cultivating his acquaintance. I had then an excellent opportunity from my residing at Challiot and sometimes visiting Dr. Franklin who lived at Passy very near me, and Mr. Jefferson took the beautiful villa at the Barriere where I once saw him in company with Mr. Humphries, Mr. Smith and some other American gentlemen. It is certainly a curious phenomenon to hear the executive magistrate complain of having too much power and too much revenue.<sup>315</sup> The Tories in England say the king

<sup>313</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>314</sup> The preliminaries of peace between England and France were signed at London on October 1, 1801 and the final treaty was concluded at Amiens on the 27th of March, 1802.—*Editor*.

<sup>315</sup> The particular paragraph in Jefferson’s message to Congress which Smyth refers to reads: “In our care, too, of the public contributions intrusted to our direction, it would be prudent to multiply barriers against their dissipation, by appropriating specific sums to every specific purpose susceptible of definition; by disallowing all applications of money

has neither revenue nor power enough to govern with effect, although the management of the public revenue, the prerogative of the Crown, and the influence he has over Parliament render him all powerful."

I have introduced an acquaintance between Mr. Livingston and Sir R. which is become very agreeable to both, as they are men of the same habits and the same principles.

The negotiations at Amiens still hangs in the wind, what the impediments are I do not know. But viewing the matter in mass I can find no disposition to believe that the negotiation will be broken off, and hostilities renewed. There appears to me no object to justify such a measure in the opinion of thinking men in either country, especially after the first difficulties are gotten over, that of signing the preliminaries. I suppose the embarrassment, if there is any, may be guessed at, by supposing a truce between two armies in which one complains that the other has altered his position during the truce.

I see that the dispute with Tripoly <sup>316</sup> still remains unsettled. I will throw out an idea upon this subject. There are but few places in Europe where ministers from America can be of much use. But I think if one could be sent and well received at Constantinople it would be of considerable advantage towards the security of our commerce in the Mediterranean. The Porte has on account of its religion considerable influence over the Barbary states and those states would, I think, be much checked in their avidity and insolence for war with us if we were on a good standing at Constantinople.

A daughter of Sir Robert Smyth is married to an intimate friend of mine, Mr. Este, a young man of promising abilities, great industry, and considerable acquired property. Sir Robert has brought him forward by establishing a banking house at Paris under the firm of Sir R. Smyth and Company, and I see the business done at it will be great. I recollect that Mr. La Grand an acquaintance of Doctor Franklin was a Banker for the United States during the American war. He is since dead, and the concerns for the United States have since that been done at Amster-

*varying from the appropriation in object, or transcending it in amount; by reducing the undefined field of contingencies, and thereby circumscribing discretionary powers over money; and by bringing back to a single department all accountabilities of money where the examination may be prompt, efficacious, and uniform.*"—*Editor.*

<sup>316</sup> Along with most European powers the United States made annual payments to the piratical Barbary states, Morocco, Algiers, Tripoli and Tunis for unmolested transit of merchant vessels through the Mediterranean. In 1801 Tripoli declared war on the United States and seized several Americans and their vessels. The war lasted until June 4, 1805 when the Bey sued for peace.—*Editor.*

dam. But as you have now no minister there, you may find it convenient to remove it again to Paris, in which case you cannot place it or some part of it better than in the house I am speaking of, but I will talk more about this when I have the happiness of seeing you which I hope will be soon after your receipt of this letter. I continue in excellent health, which I know your friendship will be glad to hear of.

Wishing you and America every happiness, I remain your former fellow laborer and much obliged fellow citizen,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO CONSUL ROTH

PARIS, July 8, 1802.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

The bearer of this is a young man that wishes to go to America. He is willing to do anything on board a ship to lessen the expense of his passage. If you know any captain to whom such a person may be useful I will be obliged to you to speak to him about it.

As Mr. Otte was to come to Paris in order to go to America, I wanted to take a passage with him, but as he stays in England to negotiate some arrangements of commerce, I have given up that idea. I wait now for the arrival of a person from England whom I want to see,<sup>317</sup> after which, I shall bid adieu to restless and wretched Europe. I am with affectionate esteem to you and Mrs. Roth.

Yours,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THOMAS JEFFERSON<sup>318</sup>

BALTIMORE, November, 1802.

DEAR SIR:

I arrived here on Saturday from Havre, after a passage of sixty days. I have several cases of models, wheels, etc., and as soon as I can get them

<sup>317</sup> Paine is probably referring to Thomas Clio Rickman in whose English home he wrote the second part of *Rights of Man* and his *Letter to the Addressers*.—*Editor*.

<sup>318</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Paine landed at Baltimore on October 30th and sent this letter soon afterwards. The exact date is not indicated.—*Editor*.

from the vessel and put them on board the packet for Georgetown I shall set off to pay my respects to you.

Your much obliged fellow-citizen,

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. I have a letter for you from Mr. Dublois respecting the Consulship of Havre.

## TO MADAME BONNEVILLE <sup>319</sup>

WASHINGTON, November 15, 1802.

MY DEAR MADAME AND MY DEAR BOYS:

I this moment received your letter with great pleasure, for I was anxious for your safety on the passage, as the weather with us was several times stormy. You enclose me a bill for £22: 10s. sterling, payable to Capt. Stanley, for the balance of your passage. I will be obliged to Capt. Stanley to tell me in what manner I shall remit the money to him, and it shall be done immediately. I have written to Col. Kirkbride, of Bordentown, in the State of New Jersey, who will expect your coming there, and from whom you will receive every friendship. I expect to be there myself in about a month or five weeks. If you are in want of money to continue your journey to Bordentown, I will be obliged to any of my friends in Norfolk to supply you, and I will remit it to them as soon as I am informed of it. I can depend on your economy in the use of it, and you and the poor boys can rest upon my friendship. I am not personally acquainted with Col. Newton, of Norfolk, but I find he is a friend of Mr. [James] Madison, the Secretary of State, and if Col. Newton will be so kind as to supply you with what money you may want, I will repay it immediately into the hands of Mr. Madison, or remit it to him through the Postmaster.

I suppose your best way will be to come up the bay by the packet to Baltimore, and from thence to Philadelphia and Bordentown. If you should have to stay two or three days at Baltimore, enquire for Capt.

<sup>319</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the Thomas Paine National Historical Association.

Although Nicolas de Bonneville could not accompany Paine to America, his wife, Madame Bonneville, and their three children, Benjamin, Thomas and Louis, arrived in the United States soon after Paine. Benjamin, whose pet name was Bebia, later became a general in the United States Army. His journal of an exploring expedition to the Rocky Mountains was edited by Washington Irving.—*Editor*.

Clark, Bond street, No. 102. He is the captain of the ship in which I came. I shall write to Mrs. Clark to inform her of your coming.

The letter you have from Mr. Mercier for Mr. Jefferson you can enclose under cover to me, either from Norfolk, or more conveniently from Baltimore, if you come that way. Mr. Murray, a merchant, who several times called upon me at your house in Paris, lives now in Baltimore, but I do not know his address. Embrace the poor boys for me and tell them they will soon see me at Bordentown. I shall write again to Col. Kirkbride to inform him of your arrival.

Your sincere affectionate friend,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>320</sup>

SENT TO THE PRESIDENT, CHRISTMAS DAY, 1802.

[DEAR SIR:]

Spain has ceded Louisiana to France, and France has excluded Americans from New Orleans, and the navigation of the Mississippi. The people of the Western Territory have complained of it to their Government, and the Government is of consequence involved and interested in the affair. The question then is—What is the best step to be taken? <sup>321</sup>

The one is to begin by memorial and remonstrance against an infraction of a right. The other is by accommodation—still keeping the right in view, but not making it a ground-work.

Suppose then the Government begin by making a proposal to France to repurchase the cession made to her by Spain, of Louisiana, provided it be *with the consent of the people of Louisiana, or a majority thereof.*

By beginning on this ground anything can be said without carrying

<sup>320</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor.*

<sup>321</sup> By the Treaty of San Ildefonso, October 1, 1800, and the Convention of Aranjuez, March 21, 1801, Napoleon acquired Louisiana from Spain in return for placing the Prince of Parma, son-in-law of the Spanish king, on the newly-erected throne of Etruria. By the Treaty of San Lorenzo, Spain, in 1795, had granted American citizens the privilege of depositing their goods at New Orleans for reshipment in ocean-going vessels. On October 16, 1802 Juan Ventura Morales, the acting intendant of Louisiana, revoked this right of deposit and failed to provide another site, as the treaty required. It was assumed in America at this time that France was responsible for the revocation, but all available evidence indicates that the action was taken by Spain alone.

The day after receiving this letter, Jefferson told Paine that "measures were already taken in that business."—*Editor.*

the appearance of a threat. The growing power of the Western Territory can be stated as a matter of information, and also the impossibility of restraining them from seizing upon New Orleans, and the equal impossibility of France to prevent it.

Suppose the proposal attended to, the sum to be given comes next on the carpet. This, on the part of America, will be estimated between the value of the commerce and the quantity of revenue that Louisiana will produce.

The French treasury is not only empty, but the Government has consumed by anticipation a great part of the next year's revenue. A monied proposal will, I believe, be attended to; if it should, the claims upon France can be stipulated as part of the payment, and that sum can be paid here to the claimants.

I congratulate you on *The Birthday of the New Sun*, now called Christmas Day; and I make you a present of a thought on Louisiana.

T. P.

## TO THE EDITOR OF THE *NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER*<sup>322</sup>

FEDERAL CITY, January 1, 1803.

SIR:

Toward the latter end of last December I received a letter from a venerable patriot, Samuel Adams, dated Boston, November thirtieth. It came by a private hand, which I suppose was the cause of the delay. I wrote Mr. Adams an answer, dated January first, and that I might be certain of his receiving it, and also that I might know of that reception, I desired a friend of mine at Washington to put it under cover to some friend of his at Boston, and desire him to present it to Mr. Adams.

The letter was accordingly put under cover while I was present, and given to one of the clerks of the post-office to seal and put in the mail. The clerk put it in his pocket-book, and either forgot to put it into the mail, or supposed he had done so among other letters. The post-master-general, on learning this mistake, informed me of it last Saturday, and

<sup>322</sup> This letter was printed originally in the *National Intelligencer* of February 2, 1803.—*Editor*.

as the cover was then out of date, the letter was put under a new cover, with the same request, and forwarded by the post.

I felt concern at this accident, lest Mr. Adams should conclude I was unmindful of his attention to me; and therefore, lest any further accident should prevent or delay his receiving it, as well as to relieve myself from that concern, I give the letter an opportunity of reaching him by the newspapers.

I am the more induced to do this, because some manuscript copies have been taken of both letters, and therefore there is a possibility of imperfect copies getting into print; and besides this, if some of the Federalist printers (for I hope they are not all base alike) could get hold of a copy, they would make no scruple of altering it and publishing it as mine.<sup>323</sup> I therefore send you the original letter of Mr. Adams,<sup>324</sup> and my own copy of the answer.

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>323</sup> When Paine's letter to Samuel Adams was printed in London as one of a series of ten letters addressed to "The Citizens of the United States," Clio Rickman, the editor, cut out whole passages, fearing that the original letter might involve him in difficulties with the government. He had already been prosecuted for his part in the publication of the *Rights of Man*.—*Editor*.

<sup>324</sup> Samuel Adams's letter to Paine was dated Boston, November 30, 1802, and went:

"Sir: I have frequently with pleasure reflected on your services to my native and your adopted country. Your 'Common Sense' and your 'Crisis' unquestionably awakened the public mind, and led the people loudly to call for a declaration of our national independence. I therefore esteemed you as a warm friend to the liberty and lasting welfare of the human race. But when I heard that you had turned your mind to a defense of infidelity, I felt myself much astonished and more grieved that you had attempted a measure so injurious to the feelings and so repugnant to the true interest of so great a part of the citizens of the United States.

"The people of New England, if you will allow me to use a Scripture phrase, are fast returning to their first love. Will you excite among them the spirit of angry controversy at a time when they are hastening to unity and peace? I am told that some of our newspapers have announced your intention to publish an additional pamphlet upon the principles of your 'Age of Reason.'

"Do you think that your pen or the pen of any other man can unchristianize the mass of our citizens, or have you hopes of converting a few of them to assist you in so bad a cause? We ought to think ourselves happy in the enjoyment of opinion without the danger of persecution by civil or ecclesiastical law.

"Our friend, the President of the United States, has been calumniated for his liberal sentiments, by men who have attributed that liberality to a latent design to promote the cause of infidelity. This and all other slanders have been made without a shadow of proof. Neither religion nor liberty can long subsist in the tumult of altercation, and amidst the noise and violence of faction.

"Felix qui cautus.

"Adieu.

"Samuel Adams."

—*Editor*.



TO SAMUEL ADAMS<sup>325</sup>

FEDERAL CITY, January 1, 1803.

MY DEAR AND VENERABLE FRIEND, SAMUEL ADAMS:

I received with great pleasure your friendly and affectionate letter of November thirtieth, and I thank you also for the frankness of it. Between me in pursuit of truth, and whose object is the happiness of man both here and hereafter, there ought to be no reserve. Even error has a claim to indulgence, if not respect, when it is believed to be truth.

I am obliged to you for your affectionate remembrance of what you style my services in awakening the public mind to a declaration of independence, and supporting it after it was declared. I also, like you, have often looked back on those times, and have thought that if independence had not been declared at the time it was, the public mind could not have been brought up to it afterwards.

It will immediately occur to you, who were so intimately acquainted with the situation of things at that time, that I allude to the black times of *Seventy-six*; for though I know, and you my friend also know, they were no other than the natural consequence of the military blunders of that campaign, the country might have viewed them as proceeding from a natural inability to support its cause against the enemy, and have sunk under the despondency of that misconceived idea. This was the impression against which it was necessary the country should be strongly animated.

I come now to the second part of your letter, on which I shall be as frank with you as you are with me.

"But (say you), when I *heard* you had turned your mind to a defense of *infidelity* I felt myself much astonished, etc."—What, my good friend, do you call believing in God infidelity? for that is the great point maintained in "The Age of Reason" against all divided beliefs and *allegorical* divinities. The Bishop of Llandaff (Doctor Watson) not only acknowledges this, but pays me some compliments upon it (in his answer to the second part of that work). "*There is* (says he) *a philosophical sublimity in some of your ideas when speaking of the Creator of the Universe.*"

<sup>325</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Samuel Adams Papers through the courtesy of the New York Public Library.—*Editor.*

What then (my much esteemed friend, for I do not respect you the less because we differ, and that perhaps not much in religious sentiments), what, I ask, is this thing called *infidelity*? If we go back to your ancestors and mine three or four hundred years ago, for we must have had fathers and grandfathers or we should not be here, we shall find them praying to Saints and Virgins, and believing in purgatory and transubstantiation; and therefore all of us are infidels according to our forefathers' belief. If we go back to times more ancient we shall again be infidels according to the belief of some other forefathers.

The case, my friend, is that the world has been over-run with fable and creeds of human invention, with sectaries of whole nations against all other nations, and sectaries of those sectaries in each of them against each other. Every sectary, except the Quakers, has been a persecutor. Those who fled from persecution persecuted in their turn, and it is this confusion of creeds that has filled the world with persecution and deluged it with blood.

Even the depredation on your commerce by the Barbary powers sprang from the crusades of the Church against those powers. It was a war of creed against creed, each boasting of God for its author, and reviling each other with the name of infidel. If I do not believe as you believe, it proves that you do not believe as I believe, and this is all that it proves.

There is however one point of union wherein all religions meet, and that is in the first article of every man's creed, and of every nation's creed, that has any creed at all: *I believe in God*. Those who rest here, and there are millions who do, cannot be wrong as far as their creed goes. Those who choose to go further *may be wrong*, for it is impossible that all can be right, since there is so much contradiction among them. The first therefore are, in my opinion, on the safest side.

I presume you are so far acquainted with ecclesiastical history as to know, and the bishop who has answered me has been obliged to acknowledge the fact, that the books that compose the New Testament were voted by *y eas* and *nays* to be the Word of God, as you now vote a law, by the popish Councils of Nice and Laodicea about one thousand four hundred and fifty years ago. With respect to the fact there is no dispute, neither do I mention it for the sake of controversy. This vote may appear authority enough to some, and not authority enough to others. It is proper however that everybody should know the fact.

With respect to "The Age of Reason," which you so much condemn, and that I believe without having read it, for you say only that you *heard* of it, I will inform you of a circumstance, because you cannot know it by other means.

I have said in the first page of the first part of that work that it had long been my intention to publish my thoughts upon religion, but that I had reserved it to a later time of life. I have now to inform you why I wrote it and published it at the time I did.

In the first place, I saw my life in continual danger. My friends were falling as fast as the guillotine could cut their heads off, and as I every day expected the same fate, I resolved to begin my work. I appeared to myself to be on my death-bed, for death was on every side of me, and I had no time to lose. This accounts for my writing it at the time I did; and so nicely did the time and the intention meet that I had not finished the first part of that work more than six hours before I was arrested and taken to prison. Joel Barlow was with me and knows the fact.

In the second place, the people of France were running headlong into atheism, and I had the work translated and published in their own language to stop them in that career, and fix them to the first article (as I have before said) of every man's creed who has any creed at all, *I believe in God*.

I endangered my own life, in the first place, by opposing in the Convention the execution of the King, and by laboring to show they were trying the monarchy and not the man, and that the crimes imputed to him were the crimes of the monarchical system; and I endangered it a second time by opposing atheism; and yet *some* of your priests, for I do not believe that all are perverse, cry out, in the war-whoop of monarchical priest-craft, What an infidel, what a wicked man, is Thomas Paine! They might as well add, for he believes in God and is against shedding blood.

But all this *war-whoop* of the pulpit has some concealed object. Religion is not the cause, but is the stalking horse. They put it forward to conceal themselves behind it. It is not a secret that there has been a party composed of the leaders of the Federalists, for I do not include all Federalists with their leaders, who have been working by various means for several years past to overturn the Federal Constitution established on the representative system, and place government in the New World on the corrupt system of the Old.

To accomplish this a large standing army was necessary, and as a pretense for such an army the danger of a foreign invasion must be bellowed forth from the pulpit, from the press and by their public orators.

I am not of a disposition inclined to suspicion. It is in its nature a mean and cowardly passion, and upon the whole, even admitting error into the case, it is better, I am sure, it is more generous, to be wrong on the side of confidence than on the side of suspicion. But I know as a fact that the English Government distributes annually fifteen hundred pounds sterling among the Presbyterian ministers in England and one thousand among those of Ireland; and when I hear of the strange discourses of some of your ministers and professors of colleges, I cannot, as the Quakers say, find freedom in my mind to acquit them. Their anti-revolutionary doctrines invite suspicion even against one's will, and in spite of one's charity to believe well of them.

As you have given me one Scripture phrase I will give you another for those ministers. It is said in Exodus xxii. 28, "*Thou shalt not revile the Gods nor curse the ruler of thy people.*" But those ministers, such I mean as Dr. Emmons, curse ruler and people both, for the majority are, politically, the people, and it is those who have chosen the ruler whom they curse. As to the first part of the verse, that of *not reviling the Gods*, it makes no part of my scripture. I have but one God.

Since I began this letter, for I write it by piecemeal as I have leisure, I have seen the four letters that passed between you and John Adams. In your first letter you say, "Let divines and philosophers, statesmen and patriots, unite their endeavors to *renovate the age* by inculcating in the minds of youth *the fear and love of the Deity and universal philanthropy.*"<sup>326</sup>

Why, my dear friend, this is exactly *my* religion, and is the whole of it. That you may have an idea that "The Age of Reason" (for I believe you have not read it) inculcates this reverential fear and love of the Deity I will give you a paragraph from it.

Do we want to contemplate His power? We see it in the immensity of the creation. Do we want to contemplate His wisdom: We see it in the unchangeable order by which the incomprehensible whole is governed. Do we want to contemplate His munificence? We see it in the

<sup>326</sup> For the full text of this letter, see Henry Alonzo Cushing, editor, *The Writings of Samuel Adams*, New York, 1908, vol. IV, pp. 340-344.—*Editor*.

abundance with which He fills the earth. Do we want to contemplate His mercy? We see it in His not withholding that abundance even from the unthankful.

As I am fully with you in your first part, that respecting the Deity, so am I in your second, that of *universal philanthropy*; by which I do not mean merely the sentimental benevolence of wishing well, but the practical benevolence of doing good. We cannot serve the Deity in the manner we serve those who cannot do without that service. He needs no service from us. We can add nothing to eternity. But it is in our power to render a service *acceptable* to Him, and that is not by praying, but by endeavoring to make his creatures happy.

A man does not serve God when he prays, for it is himself he is trying to serve; and as to hiring or paying men to pray, as if the Deity needed instruction, it is, in my opinion, an abomination. One good schoolmaster is of more use and of more value than a load of such persons as Dr. Emmons and some others.

You, my dear and much respected friend, are now far in the vale of years; I have yet, I believe, some years in store, for I have a good state of health and a happy mind, and I take care of both by nourishing the first with temperance and the latter with abundance. This, I believe, you will allow to be the true philosophy of life.

You will see by my third letter to the citizens of the United States<sup>327</sup> that I have been exposed to, and preserved through, many dangers; but instead of buffeting the Deity with prayers as if I distrusted Him, or must dictate to Him, I reposed myself on His protection; and you, my friend, will find, even in your last moments, more consolation in the silence of resignation than in the murmuring wish of a prayer.

In everything which you say in your second letter to John Adams, respecting our rights as men and citizens in this world, I am perfectly with you. On other points we have to answer to our Creator and not to each other. The key of heaven is not in the keeping of any sect, nor ought the road to it be obstructed by any.

Our relation to each other in this world is as men, and the man who is a friend to man and to his rights, let his religious opinions be what they may, is a good citizen, to whom I can give, as I ought to do, and as every other ought, the right hand of fellowship, and to none with more hearty good will, my dear friend, than to you.

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>327</sup> See above pp. 918-923.—*Editor*.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>328</sup>

January 12, 1803.

[DEAR SIR:]

I will be obliged to you to send back the Models, as I am packing up to set off to Philadelphia and N[ew] York. My intentions in bringing them here in preference to sending them from Baltimore to Philadelphia, was, to have some conversation with you on those matters and others I have not informed you of. But you have not only shown no disposition towards it, but have, in some measure, by a sort of shyness, as if you stood in fear of federal observation, precluded it. I am not the only one, who makes observations of this kind.

THOMAS PAINE.

TO THOMAS CLIO RICKMAN <sup>329</sup>

NEW YORK, March 8, 1803.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

Mr. Monroe, who is appointed Minister Extraordinary to France, takes charge of this, to be delivered to Mr. Este, banker, in Paris, to be forwarded to you.

I arrived at Baltimore on the 30th October, and you can have no idea of the agitation which my arrival occasioned. From New Hampshire to Georgia (an extent of 1500 miles), every newspaper was filled with applause or abuse.

My property in this country has been taken care of by my friends, and is now worth six thousand pounds sterling; which put in the funds will bring me £400 sterling a year.

Remember me in friendship and affection to your wife and family, and in the circle of our friends.

<sup>328</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Jefferson immediately replied to this letter assuring Paine that he was mistaken in his views and only the fact that he had been busy had prevented their meeting. He had openly declared in conversation, he continued, "the duty of showing our respect to you and of defying federal calumny in this as in other cases by doing what is Right."—*Editor*.

<sup>329</sup> This letter is reprinted from *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays on Various Subjects by Thomas Paine*, p. 23.

While outwardly friendly to Paine, Colonel Bosville, mentioned at the end of the letter, had secretly spread stories denouncing his personal conduct and branding him as a drunkard.—*Editor*.

I am but just arrived here, and the minister sails in a few hours, so that I have just time to write you this. If he should not sail this tide I will write my good friend Col. Bosville, but in any case I request you to wait on him for me.

Yours in friendship,  
THOMAS PAINE.

### TO CHARLES W. PEALE <sup>330</sup>

BORDENTOWN, July 29th, 1803.

DEAR FRIEND:

I received your favor per packet. I enclose you the invoice. The two long cases 2 and 3 contain the models of the Bridge. These I wish you to open. The one is a model in paste-board, the other, in cast metal. They are made fast in the cases by screws in the sides near to the bottom. The screws must be drawn before the models can be lifted out. The other cases contain tools and instruments which need not be opened. Please to preserve the screws and the cases, as they will be wanted when the model be removed. The model to be viewed in a proper position should be placed as high as the eye. With respect to the Schuylkill Bridge, it should have been constructed in a single arch. It would then have been an honor to the state.

Yours in friendship  
THOMAS PAINE.

Please to pay the [*illegible*] the expenses and send me an account of it.

### TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>331</sup>

BORDENTOWN ON THE DELAWARE, Aug. 2, 1803.

DEAR SIR:

I enclose a letter for Mr. Breckenridge, but as I knew not his residence in Kentucky I will be obliged to you [to] fill up the Direction and forward it to him. After putting [*illegible*] in it I send it to you open as it relates to the order of the day, Louisiana.

<sup>330</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Charles W. Peale was a prominent American artist. He painted two portraits of Paine. —*Editor.*

<sup>331</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.

The letter for Mr. Breckenridge mentioned by Paine follows immediately after this letter.

I know not what are your ideas as to the mode of beginning government in the ceded country; but as we have thought alike on several subjects I make you a present of mine.

I take it for granted that the present inhabitants know little or nothing of election and representation as constituting government. They are therefore not in an immediate condition to exercise those powers, and besides this they are perhaps too much under the influence of their priests to be sufficiently free.

I should suppose that a *Government provisoire* formed by Congress for three, five, or seven years would be the best mode of beginning. In the meantime they may be initiated into the practice by electing their Municipal government, and after some experience they will be in train to elect their State government.

I think it would not only be good policy but right to say, that the people shall have the right of electing their Church Ministers, otherwise their Ministers will hold by authority from the Pope. I do not make it a compulsive article, but to put it in their power to use it when they please. It will serve to hold the priests in a style of good behavior, and also to give the people an idea of elective rights. Anything, they say, will do to learn upon, and therefore they may as well begin upon priests.

The present prevailing language is French and Spanish, but it will be necessary to establish schools to teach English as the laws ought to be in the language of the Union.

As soon as you have formed any plan for settling the Lands I shall be glad to know it. My motive for this is because there are thousands and tens of thousands in England and Ireland and also in Scotland who are friends of mine by principle, and who would gladly change their present country and condition. Many among them, for I have friends in all ranks of life in those countries, are capable of becoming monied purchasers to any amount.

If you can give me any hints respecting Louisiana, the quantity in square miles,<sup>332</sup> the population, and amount of the present Revenue I will find an opportunity of making some use of it. When the formalities of the cession are completed, the next thing will be to take possession, and I think it would be very consistent for the President of the United States to do this in person.

<sup>332</sup> Actually Jefferson himself did not know what the exact territorial extent of the Louisiana Purchase was, the treaty with France having been made deliberately vague by Napoleon on this very point. It was to remain for some time a bone of contention between the two countries.—*Editor*.



What is Dayton gone to New Orleans for? Is he there as an Agent for the British as Blount was said to be? <sup>333</sup>

As there will be but little time from the 17 October to the completion of the six months it will require dispatch to be strictly in form. I know not your manner of communicating with Congress, but as both houses have already acted upon the business I would think it would be right to send a copy of the cession to each of them. This is not done in the case of Treaty; but as the instrument of the cession is not of the nature of a Treaty, because it does not connect us with a foreign government which Treaties always does, the communication of it by Congress should keep clear of all the formalities of a Treaty. The federal papers appear disposed to throw some stumbling block in the way and I see none they can lay hold of but that of construing it into a Treaty and rejecting it by a minority.

Report says that Mr. Monroe is gone to Madrid to negotiate for the Floridas.<sup>334</sup> If it be so and is not a government secret I should be glad to know it.

Yours in friendship,

THOMAS PAINE.

I will be obliged to you to let your servant take the enclosed to Mr. Coleman.

TO JOHN C. BRECKENRIDGE <sup>335</sup>

BORDENTOWN, Aug. 2, 1803.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

Not knowing your place of Residence in Kentucky I send this under cover to the President desiring him to fill up the direction.

<sup>333</sup> Jonathan Dayton, Congressman from New Jersey, visited New Orleans in July, 1803, and after this trip favored the purchase of Louisiana. He was later indicted for participation in Burr's Conspiracy.

Around 1796 William Blount, territorial governor of and United States Senator from Tennessee became involved in a plan to attack, in cooperation with a British fleet, Spanish Florida and Louisiana for the purpose of transferring the control of these provinces to Great Britain. A letter of Blount's on the subject was disclosed and caused his expulsion from the Senate.—*Editor*.

<sup>334</sup> In 1804 James Monroe went to Madrid to negotiate and secure the cession of the eastern portion of the Floridas.—*Editor*.

<sup>335</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the William L. Clements Library.

John C. Breckenridge, lawyer and Kentucky statesman, was elected to the United States Senate in 1801. He was active in the movement to secure the Mississippi and Louisiana for the United States.—*Editor*.

I see by the public papers and the Proclamation for calling Congress, that the cession of Louisiana had been obtained. The papers state the purchase to be 11,250,000 dollars in the six per cents and 3,750,000 dollars to be paid to American claimants who have furnished supplies to France and the French Colonies and are yet unpaid, making on the whole 15,000,000 dollars.

I observe that the faction of the Feds who last Winter were for going to war to obtain possession of that country and who attached so much importance to it that no expense or risk ought to be spared to obtain it,<sup>336</sup> have now altered their tone and say it is not worth having, and that we are better without it than with it. Thus much for their consistency. What follows is for your private consideration.

The second section of the 2d article of the Constitution says, the "President shall have power by and with the consent of the Senate to make Treaties provide two thirds of the Senators present concur."

A question may be supposed to arise on the present case, which is, under what character is the cession to be considered and taken up in Congress, whether as a treaty, or in some other shape? I go to examine this point.

Though the word, Treaty, as a Word, is unlimited in its meaning and application, it must be supposed to have a defined meaning in the constitution. It there means Treaties of alliance or of navigation and commerce—Things which require a more profound deliberation than common acts do, because they entail on the parties a future reciprocal responsibility and become afterwards a supreme law on each of the contracting countries which neither can annull. But the cession of Louisiana to the United States has none of these features in it. It is a sale and purchase. A sole act which when finished, the parties have no more to do with each other than other buyers and sellers have. It has no future reciprocal consequences (which is one of the marked characters of a Treaty) annexed to it; and the idea of its becoming a supreme law to the parties reciprocally (which is another of the characters of a Treaty) is inapplicable in the present case. There remains nothing for such a law to act upon.

I love the restriction in the Constitution which takes from the Executive the power of making treaties of his own will: and also the clause

<sup>336</sup> These Federalists had hoped to win Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio, and Georgia by calling for a war against France to secure the Mississippi for the United States. When Jefferson obtained even more territory peacefully, they denounced the President and opposed the Purchase. For excellent background material, see Arthur P. Whitaker, *The Mississippi Question, 1795-1803*, New York, 1934, pp. 215-20.—*Editor*.

which requires the consent of two thirds of the Senators, because we cannot be too cautious in involving and entangling ourselves with foreign powers; but I have an equal objection against extending the same power to the senate in cases to which it is not strictly and constitutionally applicable, because it is giving a nullifying power to a minority. Treaties, as already observed, are to have future consequences and whilst they remain, remain always in execution externally as well as internally, and therefore it is better to run the risk of losing a good treaty for the want of two thirds of the senate than be exposed to the danger of ratifying a bad one by a small majority. But in the present case no operation is to follow but what acts itself within our own Territory and under our own laws. We are the sole power concerned after the cession is accepted and the money paid, and therefore the cession is not a Treaty in the constitutional meaning of the word subject to be rejected by a minority in the senate.

The question whether the cession shall be accepted and the bargain closed by a grant of money for the purpose (which I take to be the sole question) is a case equally open to both houses of congress, and if there is any distinction of *formal right*, it ought according to the constitution, as a money transaction, to begin in the house of Representatives.

I suggest these matters that the Senate may not be taken unawares, for I think it not improbable that some Fed, who intends to negative the cession, will move to take it up as if it were a Treaty of Alliance or of Navigation and Commerce.

The object here is an increase of territory for a valuable consideration. It is altogether a home concern—a matter of domestic policy. The only real ratification is the payment of the money, and as all verbal ratification without this goes for nothing, it would be a waste of time and expense to debate on the verbal ratification distinct from the money ratification. The shortest way, as it appears to me, would be to appoint a committee to bring in a report on the President's Message, and for that committee to report a bill for the payment of the money. The French Government, as the seller of the property, will not consider anything ratification but the payment of the money contracted for.

There is also another point, necessary to be aware of, which is, to accept it in toto. Any alteration or modification in it, or annexed as a condition is so far fatal, that it puts it in the power of the other party to reject the whole and propose new Terms. There can be no such thing as ratifying in part, or with a condition annexed to it and the ratifica-

tion to be binding. It is still a continuance of the negotiation.

It ought to be presumed that the American ministers have done to the best of their power and procured the best possible terms, and that being immediately on the spot with the other party they were better Judges of the whole, and of what could, or could not be done, than any person at this distance, and unacquainted with many of the circumstances of the case, can possibly be.

If a treaty, a contract, or a cession be good upon the whole, it is ill policy to hazard the whole, by an experiment to get some trifle in it altered. The right way of proceeding in such case is to make sure of the whole by ratifying it, and then instruct the minister to propose a clause to be added to the Instrument to obtain the amendment or alteration wished for. This was the method Congress took with respect to the Treaty of Commerce with France in 1778. Congress ratified the whole and proposed two new articles which were agreed to by France and added to the Treaty.

There is according to newspaper account an article which admits French and Spanish vessels on the same terms as American vessels. But this does not make it a commercial Treaty. It is only one of the Items in the payment: and it has this advantage, that it joins Spain with France in making the cession and is an encouragement to commerce and new settlers.

With respect to the purchase, admitting it to be 15 million dollars, it is an advantageous purchase. The revenue alone purchased as an annuity or rent roll is worth more—at present I suppose the revenue will pay five per cent for the purchase money.

I know not if these observations will be of any use to you. I am in a retired village and out of the way of hearing the talk of the great world. But I see that the Feds, at least some of them, are changing their tone and now reprobating the acquisition of Louisiana; and the only way they can take to lose the affair will be to take it up as they would a Treaty of Commerce and annul it by a Minority; or entangle it with some condition that will render the ratification of no effect.

I believe in this state (Jersey) we shall have a majority at the next election. We gain some ground and lose none anywhere. I have half a disposition to visit the Western World next spring and go on to New Orleans. They are a new people and unacquainted with the principles of representative government and I think I could do some good among them.

As the stage-boat which was to take this letter to the Postoffice does not depart till to-morrow, I amuse myself with continuing the subject after I had intended to close it.

I know little and can learn but little of the extent and present population of Louisiana. After the cession be completed and the territory annexed to the United States it will, I suppose, be formed into states, one, at least, to begin with. The people, as I have said, are new to us and we to them and a great deal will depend on a right beginning. As they have been transferred backward and forward several times from one European Government to another it is natural to conclude they have no fixed prejudices with respect to foreign attachments, and this puts them in a fit disposition for their new condition. The established religion is roman; but in what state it is as to exterior ceremonies (such as processions and celebrations), I know not. Had the cession to France continued with her, religion I suppose would have been put on the same footing as it is in that country, and there no ceremonial of religion can appear on the streets or highways; and the same regulation is particularly necessary now or there will soon be quarrells and tumults between the old settlers and the new. The Yankees will not move out of the road for a little wooden Jesus stuck on a stick and carried in procession nor kneel in the dirt to a wooden Virgin Mary. As we do not govern the territory as provinces but incorporated as states, religion there must be on the same footing it is here, and Catholics have the same rights as Catholics have with us and no others. As to political condition the Idea proper to be held out is, that we have neither conquered them, nor bought them, but formed a Union with them and they become in consequence of that union a part of the national sovereignty.

The present Inhabitants and their descendants will be a majority for some time, but new emigrations from the old states and from Europe, and intermarriages, will soon change the first face of things, and it is necessary to have this in mind when the first measures shall be taken. Everything done as an expedient grows worse every day, for in proportion as the mind grows up to the full standard of sight it disclaims the expedient. America had nearly been ruined by expedients in the first stages of the revolution, and perhaps would have been so, had not *Common Sense* broken the charm and the Declaration of Independence sent it into banishment.

Yours in friendship,  
THOMAS PAINE.

Remember me in the circle of your friends.

TO JAMES MADISON <sup>337</sup>

BORDENTOWN ON THE DELAWARE, August 6, 1803.

I wrote a few days ago to Mr. Breckenridge of Kentucky on the subject of Louisiana, or rather on the manner of bringing it before Congress. I put the letter under cover to Mr. Jefferson who, as I since see by the papers, is gone to Monticello. After I had sent off the letter a report was circulated that the British government had notified to our government, by way of caution, not to pay any of the purchase money, for that she (Britain) intended to take possession of Louisiana. That the British government is insolent and desperate enough to do this I have no doubt, but as this does not prove the fact I will be obliged to you to tell me, so far as you find yourself at liberty to do it, whether it be true or not. I can without making use of the fact make some use of the knowledge. . . .

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>338</sup>

STONINGTON, CONN., Sept. 23, 1803.

DEAR SIR:

Your two favors of the 10 and 18 ult. reached me at this place on the 14th inst.; also one from Mr. Madison. I do not suppose that the framers of the Constitution thought anything about the acquisition of new territory, and even if they did it was prudent to say nothing about it, as it might have suggested to foreign nations the idea that we contemplated foreign conquest. It appears to me to be one of those cases with which the Constitution has nothing to do, and which can be judged only by the circumstances of the times when such a case shall occur. The Constitution could not foresee that Spain would cede Louisiana to France or to England, and therefore it could not determine what our conduct should be in consequence of such an event. The cession makes no alteration in the Constitution; it only extends the principles of it over a larger territory, and this certainly is within the morality of the Constitution, and not contrary to, nor beyond, the expression or intention of any of

<sup>337</sup> This excerpt is printed from a copy in the Frank B. McGuire Collection, American Art Association, No. 111: President Madison's Correspondence (copy in Wisconsin State Historical Society). The signature was cut out by Mrs. Madison.—*Editor*.

<sup>338</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

its articles. That the idea of extending the territory of the United States was always contemplated, whenever the opportunity offered itself is, I think, evident from the commencement of the revolution that Canada would, at some time or other, become a part of the United States; and there is an article neither in the treaty with France (I have not the treaty by me) or in some correspondence with that government that in case of a conquest of Canada by the assistance of France, Canada should become part of the United States, and therefore the cession of Louisiana says no more than what was said before with respect to Canada. The only difference between the two cases, for with respect to the Constitution there is none, is, that the first, that of Canada, was generous; and the stipulation that *the Louisian[i]ans shall come into our Union* was politic. It precluded us from selling the territory to another power that might become the enemy of France or Spain or both. It was like saying I will sell the territory to you for so much *on condition* that it is for yourselves, but not as land-jobbers to sell it again. It is an item in the purchase with which the Constitution has nothing to do, and it would only confuse and puzzle the people to know why it was questioned. I was very glad to see by your second letter that the idea was given up, and I hope that my remarks upon it will be acceptable.

Were a question to arise it would apply, not to the Cession because it violates no article of the Constitution, but to Ross and Morris's motion.<sup>339</sup> The Constitution empowers Congress to *declare* war, but to make war without declaring it is anti-constitutional. It is like attacking an unarmed man in the dark. There is also another reason why no such question should arise. The English Government is but in a tottering condition and if Bonaparte succeeds, that Government will break up. In that case it is not improbable we may obtain Canada, and I think that Bermuda ought to belong to the United States. In its present condition it is a nest for piratical privateers. This is not a subject to be spoken of, but it may be proper to have it in mind.

The latest news we have from Europe in this place is the insurrection in Dublin.<sup>340</sup> It is a disheartening circumstance to the English Govern-

<sup>339</sup> Senator James Ross, Federalist Senator from Pennsylvania, introduced a resolution in February, 1803 in the United States Senate, authorizing the President to call out the armed forces of the United States to seize an area in New Orleans for a place of deposit.—*Editor*.

<sup>340</sup> During the war between England and France, which broke out again in 1803, Robert Emmett led an insurrection, known as "Emmett's Rebellion," in Dublin, to coincide with Napoleon's impending landing in England. The rebellion was crushed and Emmett was publicly beheaded for his role in the movement.—*Editor*.

ment, as they are now putting arms into the hands of people, who but a few weeks before they would have hung had they found a pike in their possession. I think the probability is in favor of the descent, and I form this opinion from a knowledge of all the circumstances combined with it. I know that Bonaparte put his whole upon making good his landing, and as he can choose his place of landing, for the English coast on the North Sea is an open flat sandy beach for more than 200 miles, to wit, the counties of Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk and Lancashire, and as about 36 hours will carry them over by rowing the probability is that he will arrive. If this should take place it will throw a temptation in my way to make another passage cross the Atlantic to assist in forming a Constitution for England.

I shall be employed the ensuing winter in cutting two or three thousand Cords of Wood on my farm at New Rochelle for the New York market distant twenty miles by water. The Wood is worth  $3\frac{1}{2}$  dollars per load as it stands. This will furnish me with ready money, and I shall then be ready for whatever may present itself of most importance next spring. I had intended to build myself a house to my own taste, and a workshop for my mechanical operations, and make a collection, as authors say, of my works, which with what I have in manuscript will make four, or five octavo volumes, and publish them by subscription, but the prospects that are now opening with respect to England hold me in suspense.

It has been customary in a President's discourse to say something about religion. I offer you a thought on this subject. The word, religion, used as a word *en masse* has no application to a country like America. In Catholic countries it would mean exclusively the religion of the romish church; with the Jews, the Jewish religion; in England, the Protestant religion; with the Deists it would mean Deism; with the Turks, Mahometism, etc., etc. As well as I recollect it is *Lego, Relego, Relegio, Religion*, that is say, tied or bound by an oath or obligation. The French use the word properly; when a woman enters a convent, she is called a novitiate; when she takes the oath, she is a *religieuse*, that is she is bound by an oath. Now all that we have to do, as a Government with the word religion, in this country, is with the civil rights of it, and not at all with its *creeds*. Instead therefore of using the word religion, as a word *en masse*, as if it meant a creed, it would be better to speak only of its civil rights; *that all denominations of religion are equally protected, that none are dominant, none inferior, that the rights of conscience are*



*equal to every denomination and to every individual and that it is the duty of Government to preserve this equality of conscientious rights.* A man cannot be called a hypocrite for defending the civil rights of religion, but he may be suspected of insincerity in defending its creeds.

I suppose you will find it proper to take notice of American seamen by the Captains of British vessels, and procure a list of such captains and report them to their government. This pretence of searching for British seamen is a new pretence for visiting and searching American vessels.<sup>341</sup>

I think it probable that Bonaparte will attempt a descent in November. All the preparation he wants is the boats and he must by this time have more than a thousand besides the cut down vessels and smaller craft he will get from Holland. Accounts say that 500 have been built up the Rhine and floated down to Flushing [the waters of the Schelt. I believe the war has taken a turn very different [to] what the English government expected. It is however a subject, and in such a state of crisis that it is best for us to say nothing about it. Mr. Washington gave a great deal of offense by lugging the affairs of Europe into his discourses. I wish that Bonaparte may overthrow the English Government as a necessary step towards the putting an end to Navies, and if he does one I hope he will do the other, but in the present state of things it would not be prudent to say it.

I am passing some time at this place at the house of a friend till the wood cutting time comes on, and I shall engage some cutters here and then return to New Rochelle. I wrote to Mr. Madison concerning the report that the British Government had cautioned ours not to pay the purchase money for Louisiana, as they intended to take it for themselves. I have received his [negative] answer, and I pray you make him my compliments.

We are still afflicted with the yellow fever, and the Doctors are disputing whether it is an imported or a domestic disease. Would it not be a good measure to prohibit the arrival of all vessels from the West Indies from the last of June to the middle of October. If this was done this session of Congress, and we escaped the fever next summer, we should always know how to escape it. I question if performing quarantine is a sufficient guard. The disease may be in the cargo, especially that part which is barrellled up, and not in the persons on board, and when that cargo is opened on our wharfs, the hot steaming air in contact with the ground imbibes the infection. I can conceive that infected air can be bar-

<sup>341</sup> Of the 10,000 persons estimated to have been impressed from American ships during this era, only one-tenth proved to be British subjects.—*Editor*.

relled up, not in a hogshead or rum, nor perhaps sucre, but in a barrel of coffee.

I am badly off in this place for pen and ink, and short of paper.

Accept my best wishes.

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. I heard yesterday from Boston that our old friend S[am] Adams was at the point of death.

## TO CITIZEN SKIPWITH <sup>342</sup>

NEW YORK, March 1st, 1804.

DEAR FRIEND:

I have just a moment to write you a line by a friend who is on the point of sailing for Bordeaux. The republican interest is now completely triumphant. The change within this last year has been great. We have now 14 states out of 17—N[ew] Hampshire, Mass[achusetts], and Connecticut stand out. I much question if any person will be started against Mr. Jefferson. Burr is rejected for the vice presidency; he is now putting up for governor of N[ew] York. Mr. [George] Clinton will be run for vice-president. Morgan Lewis, chief justice of the state of N[ew] Y[ork], is the republican candidate for governor of that state.

I have not received a line from Paris, except a letter from Este, since I left it. We have now been nearly 80 days without news from Europe. What is [Joel] Barlow about? I have not heard any thing from him except that he is *always* coming. What is Bonneville about? Not a line has been received from him.

Yours in friendship

THOMAS PAINE.

Respectful compliments to Mr. Livingston and family.

## TO MR. HYER <sup>343</sup>

NEW YORK, March 24, 1804.

DEAR SIR:

I received your letter by Mr. Nixon, and also a former letter, but I have been so unwell this winter with a fit of gout, though not so bad as I

<sup>342</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.—*Editor*.

<sup>343</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society.—*Editor*.

had at Bordentown about twenty years ago, that I could not write, and after I got better I got a fall on the ice in the garden where I lodge that threw me back for above a month. I was obliged to get a person to copy off the letter to the people of England, published in the *Aurora*, March 7,<sup>344</sup> as I dictated it verbally, for all the time my complaint continued. My health and spirits were as good as ever. It was my intention to have cut a large quantity of wood for the New York market, and in that case you would have had the money directly, but this accident and the gout prevented me from doing anything. I shall now have to take up some money upon it, which I shall do by the first of May to put Mrs. Bonneville into business, and I shall then discharge her bill. In the meantime I wish you to receive a quarter's rent due on the 1st of April from Mrs. Richardson, at \$25 per ann., and to call on Mrs. Read for 40 or 50 dollars, or what you can get, and to give a receipt in my name. Col. Kirkbride should have discharged your bill, it was what he engaged to do. Mrs. Wharton owes for the rent of the house while she lived in it, unless Col. Kirkbride has taken it into his accounts. Samuel Hileyar owes me 84 dollars lent him in hard money. Mr. Nixon spoke to me about hiring my house, but as I did not know if Mrs. Richardson intended to stay in it or quit it I could give no positive answer, but said I would write to you about it. Israel Butler also writes me about taking at the same rent as Richardson pays. I will be obliged to you to let the house as you may judge best. I shall make a visit to Bordentown in the spring, and I shall call at your house first.

There have been several arrivals here in short passages from England. P[eter] Porcupine, I see, is become the panegyrist of Bonaparte. You will see it in the *Aurora* of March 19, and also the message of Bonaparte to the French legislature. It is a good thing.

Mrs. Bonneville sends her compliments. She would have wrote, but she cannot yet venture to write in English. I congratulate you on your new appointment.

Yours in friendship.

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>344</sup> See above pp. 675-683.—*Editor*.

## TO COL. JOHN FELLOWS

NEW ROCHELLE, July 9, 1804.

FELLOW CITIZEN:

As the weather is now getting hot at New York, and the people begin to get out of town, you may as well come up here and help me settle my accounts with the man who lives on the place. You will be able to do this better than I shall, and in the meantime I can go on with my literary works, without having my mind taken off by affairs of a different kind. I have received a packet from Governor [George] Clinton enclosing what I wrote for. If you come up by the stage you will stop at the postoffice, and they will direct you the way to the farm. It is only a pleasant walk. I send a piece for the *Prospect*; if the plan mentioned in it is pursued, it will open a way to enlarge and give establishment to the deistical church; but of this and some other things we will talk when you come up, and the sooner the better.

Yours in friendship,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>345</sup>

NEW ROCHELLE, January 1, 1805.

DEAR SIR:

I have some thoughts of coming to Washington this winter, as I may as well spend a part of it there as elsewhere. But lest bad roads or any other circumstance should prevent me I suggest a thought for your consideration, and I shall be glad if in this case, as in that of Louisiana, we may happen to think alike without knowing what each other had thought of.

The affair of Domingo <sup>346</sup> will cause some trouble in either of the cases in which it now stands. If armed merchantmen force their way through the blockading fleet it will embarrass us with the French Gov-

<sup>345</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>346</sup> On January 27, 1801, Touissant l'Overture, the heroic Negro leader of Santo Domingo, took possession of the capital with his troops. Napoleon sent an expedition to the island, consisting of a fleet with a well-equipped army of 25,000 under his brother-in-law, General Le Clerc. Yellow fever decimated the French army and, on January 1, 1804, the independent Negro Republic of Hayti was proclaimed.—*Editor*.

ernment; and, on the other hand, if the people of Domingo think that we show a partiality to the French injurious to them there is danger they will turn Pirates upon us, and become more injurious on account of vicinity than the barbary powers, and England will encourage it, as she encourages the Indians. Domingo is lost to France either as to the Government or the possession of it. But if a way could be found out to bring about a peace between France and Domingo through the mediation, and under the guarantee of the United States, it would be beneficial to all parties, and give us a great commercial and political standing, not only with the present people of Domingo but with the West Indies generally. And when we have gained their confidence by acts of justice and friendship, they will listen to our advice in matters of Civilization and Government, and prevent the danger of their becoming pirates, which I think they will be, if driven to desperation.

The United States is the only power that can undertake a measure of this kind. She is now the Parent of the Western world, and her knowledge of the local circumstances of it gives her an advantage in a matter of this kind superior to any European Nation. She is enabled by situation, and grow[ing] importance to become a guarantee, and to see, as far as her advice and influence can operate, that the conditions on the part of Domingo be fulfilled. It is also a measure that accords with the humanity of her principles, with her policy, and her commercial interest.

All that Domingo wants of France, is, that France agree to let her alone, and withdraw her forces by sea and land; and in return for this Domingo to give her a monopoly of her commerce for a term of years,—that is, to import from France all the utensils and manufactures she may have occasion to use or consume (except such as she can more conveniently procure from the manufactories of the United States), and to pay for them in produce. France will gain more by this than she can expect to do even by a conquest of the Island, and the advantage to America will be that she will become the carrier of both, at least during the present war.

There was considerable dislike in Paris against the Expedition to Domingo; and the events that have since taken place were then often predicted. The opinion that generally prevailed at that time was that the commerce of the Island was better than the conquest of it,—that the conquest could not be accomplished without destroying the Negroes, and in that case the Island would be of no value.

I think it might be signified to the French Government, yourself is the

best judge of the means, that the United States are disposed to undertake an accommodation so as to put an end to this otherwise endless slaughter on both sides, and to procure to France the best advantages in point of commerce that the state of things will admit of. Such an offer, whether accepted or not, cannot but be well received, and may lead to a good end.

There is now a fine snow, and if it continues I intend to set off for Philadelphia in about eight days, and from thence to Washington. I congratulate your constituents on the success of the election for President and Vice-President.

Yours in friendship,  
THOMAS PAINE.

## TO WILLIAM CARVER

NEW ROCHELLE, January 16, 1805.

ESTEEMED FRIEND:

I have received two letters from you, one giving an account of your taking Thomas to Mr. Foster—the other dated Jany. 12—I did not answer the first because I hoped to see you the next Saturday or the Saturday after. What you heard of a gun being fired into the room is true. Robert and Rachel were both gone out to keep Christmas Eve and about eight o'clock at night the gun were fired. I ran immediately out, one of Mr. Deane's boys with me, but the person that had done it was gone. I directly suspected who it was, and I halloed to him by name; that he *was discovered*. I did this that the party who fired might know I was on the watch. I cannot find any ball, but whatever the gun was charged with passed through about three or four inches below the window making a hole large enough to a finger to go through. The muzzle must have been very near as the place is black with the powder, and the glass of the window is shattered to pieces. Mr. Shute after examining the place and getting what information could be had, issued a warrant to take up Derrick, and after examination committed him.

He is now on bail (five hundred dollars) to take his trial at the Supreme Court in May next. Derrick owes me forty-eight dollars for which I have his note, and he was to work it out in making stone fence which he has not even begun and besides this I have had to pay forty two pounds eleven shillings for which I had passed my word for him

at Mr. Pelton's store. Derrick borrowed the gun under pretence of giving Mrs. Bayeaux a Christmas gun. He was with Purdy about two hours before the attack on the house was made and he came from thence to Dean's half drunk and brought with him a bottle of Rum, and Purdy was with him when he was taken up.

I am exceedingly well in health and shall always be glad to see you. Hubbs tells me that your horse is getting better. Mrs. Shute sent for the horse and took him when the first snow came but he leaped the fences and came back. Hubbs say there is a bone broke. If this be the case I suppose he has broke or cracked it in leaping a fence when he was lame on the other hind leg, and hung with his hind legs in the fence. I am glad to hear what you tell me of Thomas. He shall not want for anything that is necessary if he be a good boy for he has no friend but me. You have not given me any account about the meeting house. Remember me to our Friends.

Yours in friendship.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>347</sup>

NEW YORK, January 25th, 1805.

DEAR SIR:

I wrote you on the 1st January from N[ew] Rochelle and mentioned spending part of the winter at Washington. But as the present state of the weather renders the passage of the rivers dangerous and travelling precarious I have given up the intention. Mr. Levi Lincoln and Mr. Wingate <sup>348</sup> called on me at N[ew] York, where I happened to be when they arrived from Washington to the Eastward. I find by Mr. Lincoln that the Louisiana Memorialists will have to return as they came and the more decisively Congress put an end to this business the better. The Cession of Louisiana is a great acquisition; but great as it is it would be an incumbrance on the Union were the prayer of the petitioners to be granted, nor would the lands be worth settling if the settlers are to be under a French jurisdiction. If they have a mind to have a Chamber of Commerce, or a Court of Arbitration, to settle their own private affairs

<sup>347</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor.*

<sup>348</sup> Levi Lincoln was attorney-general in Jefferson's cabinet. Paine Wingate was United States Senator from New Hampshire and judge of Superior Court in that state.—*Editor.*

with each other, in their own language, perhaps no inconvenience may arise to us from it; but with respect to government and legal jurisdiction they must for several years yet to come be under the same laws of Congress which the Americans themselves are under who settle in Louisiana. It will never answer to make French Louisiana the legislators of the new settlers. Perhaps no inconvenience would arise by permitting the two territories to have each of them two representatives in Congress one of which to be an American. The Cession of Louisiana is a new case not provided for in the Constitution and must be managed by prudence and justice. When the emigrations from the United States into Louisiana become equal to the number of French inhabitants it may then be proper and right to erect such part where such equality exists into a constitutional state; but to do it now would be sending the American settlers into exile. I think (for I write just what thoughts come in my mind) Congress would do right to divide the country into states as far as it is known, as was formerly done in the case of the western territory, subject to such revision as a future survey of the country shall show to be necessary and to give names to them as in the former case. The arm of the Louisian[i]ans appear to me to be that of governing *Louisiana in the lump* and this will put a stop to that expectation. If Congress cannot do this in the present session it might give directions so as to have something like a map or a survey ready against the next session, and to frame a form of internal government for them to continue till they arrived at a state of population proper for constitutional government. When this be done the country will be in a condition to be settled and the settlers will know beforehand the government and the laws they are to be under. For my own part, I wish the name of Louisiana to be lost, and this may in a great measure be done by giving names to the new states that will serve as descriptive of their situation or condition. France has lost the names and almost the remembrance of provinces by dividing them into departments with appropriate names.

Next to the acquisition of the territory and the Government of it is that of settling it. The people of the Eastern States are the best settlers of a new country, and of people from abroad the German peasantry are the best. The Irish in general are generous and dissolute. The Scotch turn their attention to traffic, and the English to manufactures. These people are more fitted to live in cities than to be cultivators of new lands. I know not if in Virginia they are much acquainted with the importation of German redemptioners, that is, servants indented for a term of years.



The best farmers in Pennsylvania are those who came over in this manner or the descendants of them. The price before the war used to be twenty pounds Pennsylvania currency for an indented servant for four years, that is, the ship owner, got twenty pounds per head passage money, so that upon two hundred persons he would receive after their arrival four thousand pounds paid by the persons who purchased the time of their indentures which was generally four years. These would be the best people, of foreigners, to bring into Louisiana—because they would grow to be citizens. Whereas bringing poor Negroes to work the lands in a state of slavery and wretchedness, is, besides the immorality of it, the certain way of preventing population and consequently of preventing revenue. I question if the revenue arising from ten Negroes in the consumption of imported articles is equal to that of one white citizen. In the articles of dress and of the table it is almost impossible to make a comparison.

These matters though they do not belong to the class of principles are proper subjects for the consideration of Government; and it is always fortunate when the interests of Government and that of humanity act unitedly. But I much doubt if the Germans would come to be under a French Jurisdiction. Congress must frame the laws under which they are to serve out their time; after which Congress might give them a few acres of land to begin with for themselves and they would soon be able to buy more. I am inclined to believe that by adopting this method the Country will be more peopled in about twenty years from the present time than it has been in all the times of the French and Spaniards. Spain, I believe, held it chiefly as a barrier to her dominions in Mexico, and the less it was improved the better it agreed with that policy; and as to France she never showed any great disposition or gave any great encouragement to colonizing. It is chiefly small countries, that are straitened for room at home, like Holland and England, that go in quest of foreign settlements.

I have again seen and talked with the gentleman from Hamburg. He tells me that some Vessels under pretence of shipping persons to America carried them to England to serve as soldiers and sailors. He tells me he has the Edict or Proclamation of the Senate of Hamburg forbidding persons shipping themselves without the consent of the Senate, and that he will give me a copy of it, which if he does soon enough I will send with this letter. He says that the American Consul has been spoken to respecting this kidnapping business under American pretences, but

that he says he has no authority to interfere. The German members of Congress, or the Philadelphia merchants or ship-owners who have been in the practice of importing German redemptioners, can give you better information respecting the business of importation than I can. But the redemptioners thus imported must be at the charge of the Captain or ship owner till their time is sold. Some of the Quaker Merchants of Philadelphia went a great deal into the importation of German servants or redemptioners. It agreed with the morality of their principles that of bettering people's condition, and to put an end to the practice of importing slaves. I think it not an unreasonable estimation to suppose that the population of Louisiana may be increased ten thousand souls every year. What retards the settlement of it is the want of laborers, and until laborers can be had the sale of the lands will be slow. Were I twenty years younger, and my name and reputation as well known in European countries as it is now, I would contract for a quantity of land in Louisiana and go to Europe and bring over settlers.

I think you will see the propriety of taking some measures upon this affair, for besides being injurious to us and to the American character it is a wicked piece of business. Perhaps it may afford an opportunity of saying something that may be acceptable to the Senate of Hamburg, for where a civil thing can be said on good principles it is always worth saying.

I also send you a letter I lately received from an old revolutionary soldier in Kentucky. It is much better written than one would expect from a person of that standing. Perhaps some of the Kentucky members may know him.

It is probable that towards the close of the session I may make an excursion to Washington. The piece on Gouverneur Morris's Oration on Hamilton and that on the Louisiana Memorial are the last I have published;<sup>349</sup> and as everything of public affairs is now on a good ground I shall do as I did after the War, remain a quiet spectator, and attend now to my own affairs.

I intend making a collection of all the pieces I have published, beginning with *Common Sense*, and of what I have by me in manuscript, and publish them by subscription. I have deferred doing this till the presidential election should be over, but I believe there was not much occasion for that caution. There is more of hypocrisy than bigotry in America. When I was in Connecticut the summer before last, I fell in

<sup>349</sup> See above pp. 957-968.—*Editor*.

company with some Baptists among whom were three ministers. The conversation turned on the election for President, and one of them who appeared to be a leading man said, "They cry out against Mr. Jefferson, because they say he is a Deist. Well, a Deist may be a good man and if he think it right it is right to him." "For my own part," said he, "I had rather vote for a Deist than for a blue skin presbyterian." "You judge right," said I, "for a man that is not of any of the sectaries will hold the balance even between all; but give power to a bigot of any sectary and he will use it to the oppression of the rest, as the blue-skins do in connection." They all agreed in this sentiment, and I have always found it assented to in any company I have had occasion to use it.

I judge the collection I speak of will make five volumes octavo of four hundred pages each at two dollars a volume to be paid for on delivery; and as they will be delivered separately as fast as they can be printed and bound, the subscribers may stop when they please. The three first volumes will be political and each piece will be accompanied with an account of the state of affairs whether in America, France or England, at the time it was written which will also show the occasion of writing it. The first expression in the first No. of the *Crisis* published the 19th. December '76 is, "*These are the times that try men's souls.*" It is therefore necessary as explanatory to the expression in all future times to show what those times were. The two last volumes will be theological and those who do not choose to take them may let them alone. They will have the right to do so by the conditions of the subscription. I shall also make a miscellaneous volume of correspondence, essays and some pieces of poetry which I believe have some claim to originality.

I have again seen and canvassed with the gentleman from Hamburg. He occupies the store of the house where I lodge. He is a wholesale merchant in dry goods, has been several times backward and forward from Hamburg to New York, and in one of his voyages came with 175 German redemptioners. He says he will engage them and have them indented to him for four years and deliver them together with their indentures to some merchant or agent at New Orleans and receive upon the delivery of them 12 guineas (56 dollars) per head. That merchant or agent will sell the time of their indentures, four years which will at least be worth eighty dollars, or I may say one hundred. It will fetch more than that in New York.

As the person who buy their time will have to find them in clothes, he must not turn them naked upon the world; and therefore the cus-

tom in Pennsylvania was, and I believe it was provided for by law that their master at the end of their time furnished them with two covering suits, that is two of everything and if Congress, as I before said, were to give each of them twenty acres of land, they would soon become cultivators for themselves and other redemptioners would arrive to supply their places, and the present French inhabitants would soon be a minority and the sooner the better for they give symptoms of being a troublesome set.

This appears to me to be the best and quickest method of peopling, cultivating and settling Louisiana and we shall gain by it a useful industrious set of citizens. The ten dollars bounty money I spoke of in the former part of this case become unnecessary.

There is too much detail in this business to bring it immediately before Congress, neither is there information enough at present to make a law that shall exactly fit the case. The best and shortest way will be for Congress to empower the President to devise and employ means for bringing cultivators into Louisiana from any of the European countries who after the expiration of the time of their indentures will more than pay the expense. I suppose it will be necessary to appoint an agent to whom they are to be delivered at N[ew] Orleans who will account for the monies paid and received. When this business is once set agoing it will go on of itself. But I think Congress ought to make the first adventure to give encouragement to it.

While this letter was in hand I fell in company with a N[ew] York captain of a Vessel, who was lately at N[ew] Orleans. He says that the number of Americans, including the garrison, is about equal to the number of French inhabitants in the *town* of N[ew] Orleans. This is an additional reason for not admitting the French memorialists to be legislators in their own language. Could they get the power of legislation and government in their hands they would probably appoint courts to judge of claims, and you would find some of the best lands in Louisiana covered with claims. I think it not an unreasonable suspicion that this is one of their objects. I observed in the French revolution that they always proceeded by stages and made each stage a stepping stone to another. The convention, to amuse the people, voted a Constitution, and then voted to suspend the practical establishment of it till after the war and in the meantime to carry on a revolutionary government. When Robespierre fell they proposed bringing forward the suspended constitution, and apparently for this purpose appointed a committee to

frame what they called *organic laws* and those organic laws turned out to be a new constitution (the Directory constitution which was in general a good one). When Bonaparte overthrew this constitution he got himself appointed *pro consul* for ten years, then for life; and now Emperor with an hereditary succession. As to myself they first voted me out of the convention for being a foreigner, then imprisoned me on the ground of being a foreigner, then voted me in again by annulling the vote that declared me a foreigner. There will be no end to the claims of these Memorialists if you once begin to make a distinction in their favor between them and the American settlers. They must all be governed by the same law as of Congress till there are a sufficient number of American settlers to be trusted with constitutional powers. They might I think have a representation in Congress one of which as before mentioned to be an American.

I find by the Captain above mentioned that several Liverpool ships have been at New Orleans. It is chiefly the people of Liverpool that employ themselves in the slave trade and they bring cargoes of those unfortunate Negroes to take back in return the hard money and the produce of the country. Had I the command of the elements I would blast Liverpool with fire and brimstone. It is the Sodom and Gomorrah of brutality.

I have now written you a long letter. The subjects it treats of and the reasons given in support of them are more proper for private communication than for publication. It is that which distinguishes this letter from my answer to the Louisiana Memorial. The letter to you on the Domingo business is of the same kind. Now I am on the subject of public and private communication I will explain something to you regarding the note I sent you two years ago the first of last January when I was at Washington with respect to obtaining the Cession of Louisiana. The idea occurred to me without knowing it had occurred to another person and I mentioned it to Dr. Lieb<sup>350</sup> who lived in the same house (Lovells) and as he appeared pleased with it I wrote the note and showed it to him before I sent it. The next morning you said to me that measures were already taken in that business. When Lieb returned from Congress I told him of it. I knew that said he. Why then, said I, did you not tell me so, because in that case I would not have sent the note. That

<sup>350</sup> Dr. Michael Leib had been a surgeon in the Revolutionary army and was elected as a Jeffersonian Democrat to Congress on March 4, 1799. He remained in Congress until February 14, 1806.—*Editor*.

is the reason, said he, I would not tell you because two opinions concurring on a case strengthen it.

I do not however like Dr. Lieb's motion about Banks. Congress ought to be very cautious how it gives encouragement to this speculating project of banking, for it is now carried to an extreme. It is but another kind of striking paper money. I expect some of them will blow up, for they have already banked away the hard money. Were Dr. Lieb's motion to take place, it would, I suppose, make some additional clerks necessary at the treasury, because it would derange the simplicity of collecting the revenue. I view the Doctor's motion as an unwise attempt at popularity among those interested in [*illegible*] banks.

Neither do I like the motion respecting the recession of the (Cession). The cession was made to the United States, and not to the *representatives* of the states, and if alteration be made it should be made by the consent of the state legislatures as in the case of altering any article of the constitution, for the seat of government ought to be considered as a part of the constitution. It was because the states had no place where their representatives in Congress could rightfully assemble, for Congress has not the right to place itself within the jurisdiction of any state, that [*illegible*] was made. I know that when I was clerk of the general assembly of Pennsylvania there was, upon some disagreement between the assembly as to Congress, a strong disposition in the assembly to signify to Congress to quit the state. The union has now a territory independent of any state belonging governmentally to all, yet some of the representatives of the states are assuming to fritter away the rights of their constituents. There is no foreseeing what occasion future Congresses in future times may have for territory, nor do I know if the dock be without or within the limits of the city. Somehow or other it happens by a comparison of things that Congress appears little to the generality of people when it sits in a little place. It is like a dwarf governing a mole-hill.

I am just informed (January 24) there is a run on the Manhattan bank in this city occasioned by some difference between that and what is called the Merchants bank. Manhattan is the Indian name of N[ew] York island. If instead of Dr. Lieb's motion, the motion had been, that a certain proportion of the revenue should be collected in hard money and the rest in notes of the Bank of the United States, it would, I think, have been much wiser, because it would restrain the merchants in sending away the hard cash and fitting the chasm up with paper.

I recollect when in France that you spoke of a plan of making the

Negroes tenants on a plantation, that is, allotting each Negro family a quantity of land for which they were to pay to the owner a certain quantity of produce. I think that numbers of our free Negroes might be provided for in this manner in Louisiana. The best way that occurs to me is for Congress to give them their passage to New Orleans, then for them to hire themselves out to the planters for one or two years; they would by this means learn plantation business, after which to place the men on a tract of land as before mentioned. A great many good things may now be done, and I please myself with the idea of suggesting my thoughts to you.

Old Captain Landais who lives at Brooklyn on Long Island opposite N[ew] York calls sometimes to see me. I knew him in Paris. He is a very respectable old man. I wish something had been done for him in Congress on his petition, for I think something is due to him. Nor do I see how the statute of limitations can consistently apply to him. The law in John Adams's administration which cut off all commerce and communication with France, cut him off from the chance of coming to America to put in his claim. I suppose that the claims of some of our merchants on England, France, and Spain is more than of 6 or 7 years' standing yet no law of limitation, that I know of, takes place between nation, or between individuals of different nations. I consider a statute of limitation to be a domestic law and only have a [*illegible*]. Dr. Miller one of the New York Senators in Congress knows Landais and can give you an account of him.

Concerning my former letter on Domingo, I intended had I come to Washington to have talked with Pichon <sup>351</sup> about it if you had approved that method, for it can only be brought forward in an indirect way. The two *Emperors* are at too great a distance in objects and in color to have any intercourse but by fire and sword, yet something I think might be done. It is time I should close this long epistle.

Yours in friendship,

THOMAS PAINE.

Any letters directed to me to the care of the Post Master N[ew] York will come to hand.

<sup>351</sup> Pichon was the French charge in Washington.—*Editor*.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>352</sup>

NEW ROCHELLE, N[ew] Y[ork], April 20, 1805.

DEAR SIR:

I wrote you on 1st January from N[ew] Rochelle mentioning my intention of spending part of the winter at Washington; but the severity of the winter and the bad condition of the roads and rivers prevented me and I stayed at N[ew] York. I wrote you from that place a second letter of more than nine pages on a variety of subjects accompanied with a *Hamburgh Gazette* and a letter from a revolutionary sergeant at Kentucky. On the 10th February which I judge was about a fortnight after my second letter was sent. I received a letter from you of the *fifteenth January* acknowledging the receipt of my first letter of January 1st., but of the second letter enclosing the *Hamburgh Gazette* and also proposals from a Hamburgh merchant to bring German redemptioners to New Orleans I have heard nothing. I did not put the letter into the post office myself but I sent it by a friend who assures me he delivered it.

The enclosed half sheet marked No. 1 <sup>353</sup> is part of a letter which I began the latter part of last summer but as I then intended to make further experiments I suspended finishing it, for I do not permit the *whole* of my mind, nor ever did, to be engaged or absorbed by one object only. When I was in France and in England since the year 1787, I carried on my political productions, religious publications, and mechanical operations, all at the same time, without permitting one to disturb or interfere with the other.

The piece No. 2 is part of a third letter which I began after the receipt of yours of January 15th. This confusion and interference of dates arise from the uncertainty I am in with respect to the fate of my second letter.<sup>354</sup>

I intend continuing my letters addressed "To the Citizens of the United States." The last, No. 7, published the summer before the last was chiefly on the affairs of New Orleans. I distinguish those letters from others of a less public character, as the remarks on Gouverneur Morris's

<sup>352</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>353</sup> See above pp. 1057-1059.—*Editor*.

<sup>354</sup> See above pp. 1456-1464.—*Editor*.



funeral oration on Hamilton, that on the Ana Memorial, and the piece to Hulbert.<sup>355</sup>

The reflections which Hulbert threw out with respect to your letter to Mr. Dawson arose from some half equivocal qualifying paragraphs which appeared I believe in the *National Intelligencer* before my arrival. Dr. Eustis<sup>356</sup> wrote me from Washington more than two years ago: "*Those paragraphs and which are supposed to be under Mr. Jefferson's direction, have embarrassed Mr. Jefferson's friends in Massachusetts. They appeared like a half denial of the letter or as if there was something in it not proper to be owned, or that needed an apology.*" I was [most] offended by one which I saw while in Paris and which determined me not to come by a national ship. It was copied from the *National Intelligencer*, a Baltimore federal newspaper, and introduced into that paper with the words in capitals "Out at Last." It owned the receipt of a letter from me in which I pressed a wish to return by a national ship and the paragraph concluded thus, "*permission was granted,*" as if the giving it was an act of charity, or of great [illegible] had the appearance of apologizing. Hulbert introduced the letter by way of convicting you of something you had appeared to disown, or given cause to your friends to disown. I have given Hulbert the [illegible] he deserved, and you the credit the letter merits, but had no equivocation [illegible] made of the letter Hulbert could not have made the use of it he did.

Yours in friendship

THOMAS PAINE.

<sup>355</sup> See above pp. 957-968, 975-979.—*Editor*.

<sup>356</sup> Dr. William Eustis, formerly a student of Dr. Joseph Warren, the eminent Revolutionary physician, was a staunch follower of Jefferson. He was a member of the House of Representatives.

Jefferson wrote to Paine on June 5, 1805: "Dr. Eustis' observation to you that 'certain paragraphs in the *National Intelligencer*' respecting my letter to you, 'supposed to be under Mr. Jefferson's direction, had embarrassed Mr. Jefferson's friends in Massachusetts; that they appeared like a half denial of the letter, or as if there was something in it not proper to be owned, or that needed an apology,' is one of those mysterious half confidences difficult to be understood. That tory printers should think it dangerous to identify me with that paper, the *Aurora*, etc., in order to obtain ground for abusing me, is perhaps fair warfare. But that any one who knows me personally should listen one moment to such an insinuation, is what I did not expect. I neither have, nor ever had, any more connection with those papers than our antipodes have; nor know what is to be in them until I see it in them, except proclamations and other documents sent for publication. The friends in Massachusetts who could be embarrassed by so weak a weapon as this, must be feeble friends indeed. With respect to the letter, I never hesitated to avow and to justify myself to contradict anything which is said. At that time, however, there were certain anomalies in the motions of some of our friends, which events have at length reduced to regularity. *Jefferson Mss.*, Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

## TO JOHN FELLOWS

NEW ROCHELLE, April 22, 1805.

CITIZEN:

I send this by the N[ew] Rochelle boat and have desired the boatman to call on you with it. He is to bring up Bebia and Thomas and I will be obliged to you to see them safe on board. The boat will leave N[ew] Y[ork] on Friday.

I have left my pen knife at Carver's. It is, I believe, in the writing desk. It is a small French pen knife that slides into the handle. I wish Carver would look behind the chest in the bed room. I miss some papers that I suppose are fallen down there. The boys will bring up with them one pair of the blankets Mrs. Bonneville took down and also my best blanket which is at Carver's. I send enclosed three dollars for a ream of writing paper and one dollar for some letter paper, and portorage to the boat. I wish you to give the boys some good advice when you go with them, and tell them that the better they behave the better it will be for them. I am now their only dependence, and they ought to know it.

Yours in friendship,

THOMAS PAINE.

All my Numbers of the *Prospect*, while I was at Carver's, are left there. The boys can bring them. I have received no No. since I came to New Rochelle.

TO ELISHA BABCOCK <sup>357</sup>

NEW ROCHELLE, July 2, [18]05.

CITIZEN:

In your paper of June 27, in a piece containing remarks on a paragraph in the *Norwich Centinel* the writer of the remarks speaking of what several of the feds had said, adds the dissemination of these sentiments was only a preliminary measure to the acceptance of the proposal made by Great Britain and circulated secretly among the most influential federalists, Hamilton for one, viz, "That Great Britain should cede Canada to the United States on condition that the Duke of Clarence should be placed on the American throne and recognized as the monarch

<sup>357</sup> This letter is printed from a facsimile in the Manuscript division of the New York Public Library.

Elisha Babcock was a printer in Hartford, Connecticut.—*Editor*.

of America." This might have been easily answered by saying *We have blackguards enon of our own.*

I will, however, be obliged to you if you can give me any information respecting this proposal as it may be traced to some source. You will recollect that Oliver Ellsworth after his mission expired in France, went over to England, and I informed you nearly two years ago that he had declared himself a monarchist in a company of 10 or 12 persons and I gave you the name of the gentleman who told me of it and who was one of the company but you made no use of the information.

My last letter (the 8th) is the most important of any I have published.<sup>358</sup> I have been disappointed in not seeing it in your paper. I have reason to believe the matters therein stated will be taken up at the next meeting of Congress, and the inquiry at that time, will not be sufficiently understood by those who had not an opportunity of seeing that letter. I know the feds want to keep that letter out of sight.

Yours in friendship

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO JOHN FELLOWS

NEW ROCHELLE, July 9, 1805.

CITIZEN:

I inclose you two pieces for Cheetham's paper,<sup>359</sup> which I wish you to give to him yourself. He may publish one No. in one daily paper, and the other number in the next daily paper, and then both in his country paper. There has been a great deal of anonymous abuse thrown out in the federal papers against Mr. Jefferson, but until some names could be got hold of it was fighting the air to take any notice of them. We have now got hold of two names, your townsman Hulbert, the hypocritical Infidel of Sheffield, and Thomas Turner of Virginia, his correspondent. I have already given Hulbert a blasting with my name to it, because he made use of my name in his speech in the Mass[achusetts] legislature. Turner has not given me the same cause in the letter he wrote (and evidently) to Hulbert, and which Hulbert (for it could be no other person), has published in the Repertory to vindicate himself.

<sup>358</sup> See above pp. 949-957.—*Editor.*

<sup>359</sup> James Cheetham, English revolutionary who came to America in 1791, started the *American Citizen* on May 1, 1801. It was published in New York City.—*Editor.*

Turner has detailed his charges against Mr. Jefferson, and I have taken them up one by one, which is the first time the opportunity has offered for doing it; for before this it was promiscuous abuse. I have not signed it either with my name or signature (Common Sense) because I found myself obliged, in order to make such scoundrels feel a little smart, to go somewhat out of my usual manner of writing, but there are some sentiments and some expressions that will be supposed to be in my style, and I have no objection to that supposition, but I do not wish Mr. Jefferson to be *obliged* to know it is from me.

Since receiving your letter, which contained no direct information of anything I wrote to you about, I have written myself to Mr. Barrett accompanied with a piece for the editor of the *Baltimore Evening Post*, who is an acquaintance of his, but I have received no answer from Mr. B., neither has the piece been published in the *Evening Post*.<sup>360</sup> I will be obliged to you to call on him and to inform me about it. You did not tell me if you called upon Foster;<sup>361</sup> but at any rate do not delay the enclosed. I do not trouble you with any messages or compliments, for you never deliver any.

Yours in friendship.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO JOHN FELLOWS<sup>362</sup>

N[EW] ROCHELLE, July 31, '05.

CITIZEN :

I received yours of the 26 Inst. in answer to mine of the 19th. I see that Cheetham has left out the part respecting Hamilton and Mrs. Reynolds but for my own part I wish it had been in.<sup>363</sup> Had the story never been publicly told I would not have been the first to tell it; but Hamilton has told it himself and therefore it was no secret. But my motive in introducing it was because it was applicable to the subject I was upon, and to show the revilers of Mr. Jefferson that while they are affecting a morality of horror at an unproved and unfounded story about Mr. Jefferson

<sup>360</sup> The piece was published in the *Post* of July 8, 1805. See above p. 684.—*Editor*.

<sup>361</sup> Paine is referring to John Foster one of the men associated with the Deist movement in America.—*Editor*.

<sup>362</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.—*Editor*.

<sup>363</sup> See above pp. 980–988.—*Editor*.

they had better look at home, and give vent to the horror, if they had any at a real case of their own Dragon and his Delilah of a thousand dollars. It was not introduced to expose Hamilton for Hamilton had exposed himself, and that from a bad motive, a disregard of private character. "I do not (said Hamilton to Mrs. Harris), *"I do not care a damn about my private character. It is my public character only that I care about."* The man who is a *good* public character from *craft*, and not from moral principle, if such a character can be called *good*, is not much to be depended on. Cheetham might as well have put the part in, as put in the reasons for which he left it out. Those reasons leave people at liberty to suspect that the part suppressed related to some new discovered criminality in Hamilton, worse than the old story.

I am glad that Palmer and Foster have got together. It will greatly help the cause on. I enclose a letter I received a few days since from Groton in Connecticut. The letter is well written and with a good deal of sincere enthusiasm. The publication of it would do good but there is an impropriety in publishing a man's name to a private letter. You may show the letter to Palmer and Foster. It is very likely they may know the writer, as Groton is about five or six miles from Tonington where Mr. Foster lived, and where, I believe, Mr. Palmer has some relations. As there is not an expression in the letter that renders it unfit for publication provided the name be omitted, or the initials J— C— be put in the room of it, I, for one, agree to the publication of it. It will serve to give confidence to those who are not strong enough in the *true faith* to throw off the mask of hypocrisy, as is the case in Connecticut, and there is no one vice that is more destructive to morals than this yanky-town vice, hypocrisy, is. If the concluding paragraph be omitted, and the address at the top be in the plain style as I have put it, it will lose the appearance of a private letter. I have put out the word *Sir* in three or four places. Cheetham can have no reasonable objection against publishing it. It is a letter without offence, and he has some atonement to make for what was in his paper the winter before last, about the *"mischievous writings of Thomas Paine."* If you give the letter to Cheetham, I wish him to return it to you after he has used it, or you to call for it.

I am glad you have seen Mr. Barrett; but it is very extraordinary that you had not seen him before, for certainly a man in business is always to be found though he may not be always at home the first time. Your

former letter might have been interpreted to signify that he *kept out of sight*, for you had called at least a dozen times.

It is certainly best that Mrs. Bonneville go into some family, as a teacher, for she has not the least talent of managing affairs for herself. She may send Bebee up to me. I will take care of him for his own sake and his fathers, but this is all I have to say.

Remember me to my much respected friend Carver and tell him I am sure we shall succeed if we hold on. We have already silenced the clamor of the priests. They act now as if they would say, let us alone and we will let alone. You do not tell me if the *Prospect* goes on. As Carver will want hay he may have it of me, and pay when it suits him, but I expect he will take a ride up some Saturday afternoon and then he can choose for himself.

I am master of an empty house or nearly so. I have six chairs and a table, a straw-bed, a feather-bed and a bag of straw for Thomas, a tea kettle, an iron pot, an iron baking pan, a frying pan, a gridiron, cups, saucers, plates and dishes, knives and forks, two candlesticks and a pair of snuffers. I have a pair of fine oxen and an ox-cart, a good horse, a chair, and a one-horse cart, a cow, and a sow and 9 pigs. When you come you must take such fare as you meet with, for I live upon tea, milk, fruit pies, plain dumplings, and a piece of meat when I get it. But I live with that retirement and quiet that suit me. Mrs. Bonneville was an encumbrance upon me all the while she was here, for she would not do anything, not even make an apple-dumpling for her own children. If you can make yourself up a straw bed, I can let you have blankets and you will have no occasion to go over to the tavern to sleep.

As I do not see any federal papers, except by accident, I know not if they have attempted any remarks, or criticisms on my 8th letter, the piece on Constitutions, government and charters, the two numbers on Turner's letter, and also the piece to Hulbert. As to anonymous paragraphs it is not worth noticing them. I consider the generality of such editors only as a part of their press and let them pass.

I want to come to Morrisan[i]a, and it is probable I may come on to N[ew] York, but I wish you to answer this letter first.

Yours in friendship

THOMAS PAINE.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>364</sup>

NEW ROCHELLE [N. Y.], Sept. 30, '05.

DEAR SIR:

I write you this letter entirely on my own account, and I begin it without ceremony.

In the year '84 or '5 a motion was made in the legislature of Virginia for making an acknowledgement to me for voluntary services during the revolution. The bill, as I am informed, for that purpose, passed two readings and was lost on the third reading by three votes. The acknowledgement proposed to be given was a tract of land, called, as I have been told, the secretary's tract, which I suppose is since disposed of, but I wish the matter to be brought over again and I think it ought to be.

After the state of Rhode Island had refused complying with the five per cent duty recommended by Congress and the state of Virginia had repealed the act she had passed to grant it, I saw no possibility of going on otherwise than by authorizing Congress to make laws for the union in all cases that were to extend equally over all the states, and I wrote to Chancellor Livingston, minister for foreign affairs, and Robert Morris, minister of finance, in the winter of '81-2 on the subject. The proposal in the letter, was, to add a continental legislature to Congress. The idea took with them at once. But as this would be called increasing the power of Congress, and as I intended taking up the subject when I should see the country wrong enough to be put right, it was best, on that account, to leave it to the states individually to make me what acknowledgement they pleased, and it was on this ground that the state of New York made me a present of a farm worth at that time about a thousand pounds (York currency) and the state of Pennsylvania voted me five hundred pounds, but the state of Virginia having negatived the grant she had proposed to make me, on the recommendation of General Washington, the matter went no further with any of the states.

I suggest another idea, which is, that as only two of the states have made me any acknowledgement, that Congress take up the subject for the whole (I suppose the two states who have made me an acknowledgement will not object to this) and grant me a tract of land that I can make something of. Had it not been for the economy and extreme fru-

<sup>364</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

gality with which I have lived I should at this time of life be in an unpleasant situation. But I wish you to be assured that whatever event this proposal may take it will make no alteration in my principles or my conduct. I have been a volunteer to the world for thirty years without taking profits from anything I have published in America or in Europe. I have relinquished all profits that those publications might come cheap among the people for whom they were intended.

Yours in friendship,

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. If any further explanation be wanted I will communicate it.

## TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>365</sup>

NEW ROCHELLE, January 30, 1806.

DEAR SIR:

I have not seen nor heard anything respecting the subject I wrote to you upon and also to the vice-president [George Clinton] after his arrival at Washington. His letter, however, is on a different subject, and which I introduce without meaning that the one should interfere with the other.

The affairs of Europe are now reaching a crisis that merits and demands the attention of the United States. If ever a law of nations shall be established and the freedom and safety of the seas secured it must be in a crisis like the present. In the course of this letter I intend to make you an offer on this subject, but I will first detail, as concisely as I can, my opinion of the present state of things and their probable event.

Bonaparte has done what required no gift of prophecy to foresee; that is, that he would attack the Austrians before the Russians arrived; and secondly that if he defeated the Austrians the Russians would not fight.

At the time of beginning this letter we have news from Paris to the 20th November and from Bordeaux to the 26th. Bonaparte was then on the point of entering Vienna. This I think will terminate the war on the continent. The question in this case will be, what will Bonaparte do with respect to England? Will he make a general peace by a congress for the purpose that shall include England, or will he make a continental peace and leave England out? My opinion is that he will do the latter and I

<sup>365</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.



hope he will. This is what he did in the last treaty of peace with Austria and what is best for him to do now. The matters he has to settle with England, in whatever way it may be done, whether by a descent or by harassing the English government out by continual alarms and expense, are of a nature different to the affairs of the continent and ought not to be blended with them. The one regards the sea; the other the land. But I think England will try to make it a congressional affair and that Har-ronby is gone to the continent to lie by for that purpose. It is the last use the English government can make of the coalition it has been at the expense of raising.

But the case with Bonaparte will be, that if he defeats the present coalition which I have every moral certainty that he will, and dictate a peace to Austria, for he cares nothing about Russia, he will have it more in his power to act against England than he had before. Pitt is a poor, short-sighted politician—a man of expedients instead of system. It is easy to see that this coalition was formed to ward off from England the meditated invasion, but then Pitt ought to have taken into the calculation what the event and consequences would be if it failed. It was a measure of great and certain expense with uncertain and shadowy prospects of advantage, and very perilous consequences if it miscarried. A general is a fool and a politician is the same, who fights a battle he might avoid, and where the disasters if he is beaten far outweighs the advantages if he succeeds. This inclines me sometimes to think that the plan, in forming this coalition, was not actual war, but that it was to hang on the rear of Bonaparte and to harass, alarm and frighten him into a peace that England should dictate. If this was the scheme Mack was a fit instrument of intrigue for the purpose, but if it was actual war he was the poorest creature they could choose, and in either case, it shows that Pitt was not a judge of the character and constitution of his enemy, for Bonaparte is not a man to be frightened or cajoled or deterred from the pursuance of his object by apprehension of danger and difficulties. I think he will be at Boulogne again in the spring and put the English government in a terrible fright. He will then have no enemy hanging on his rear.

I am not certain if you know that the plan for a descent upon England by gunboats was proposed by myself. I wrote the whole plan at Mr. Skip-with's house in the country and showed it first to Mr. Monroe. Lathenas a friend of ours and member of the convention translated it into French and I sent it with the original in English to the directory who immediately set about building the boats. They then appointed Bonaparte com-

mander in chief of the army of England (l'armée d'angleterre) and by an agreement between him and me at his own home I was to accompany him. I know his opinion upon that expedition. He puts the whole upon landing. His expression to me was, "*Only let us land.*" If he makes the descent I think he will give the command of it to his brother in law Murat and that he is training him up for the purpose. Nelson's victory,<sup>366</sup> as the English papers call it, will have no influence on the campaign nor on the descent. It never was intended to employ ships of the line on that expedition.

I have already spoken my opinion of what Bonaparte will do with respect to peace, that is, he will make a continental peace and leave England out, I have some lights to go by in forming this opinion. As Bonaparte paid me the compliment of supposing that I knew more about England and the plans and politics of its government than people in France generally did, he sent a person to me when the last treaty of peace with Austria was to begin, with the following question: Whether in negotiating a treaty of peace with Austria it will be policy in France to enter into a treaty of peace with England? I gave him my answer fully and explicitly in the negative with the reasons upon which that decision was founded and I sent you a copy of that answer with several other papers, by the return of the vessel that brought Mr. Elsworth to France. I suppose Bonaparte had a mind to hear how I would answer the question, but had formed his own conclusion before he sent it. Be this however as it may I gave him several reasons which could not occur to him from the want of the local knowledge of England I possessed myself.

After the treaty of peace with Austria was concluded, and the war with England still continuing, I wrote and published my plan of an *Unarmed Neutrality* for the protection of commerce. I had thrown out some general outlines of this plan in a publication of mine on the events of 18 Brumaire 1796 but in that which I published in 1801 of which I sent you a manuscript copy in English I reduced it to a regular system. My letters to you which accompanied the plan showed the progress it was making, which the assassination of Paul of Russia put a stop to.<sup>367</sup> I had sent him two copies in French by the hands of a person who was going to Petersburg and who desired to be the bearer of them.

<sup>366</sup> In the battle of Trafalgar, October 21, 1805, Lord Nelson destroyed the naval force of France and all but ruined Napoleon's project of an invasion. Nelson died before the battle was over.—*Editor*.

<sup>367</sup> See above pp. 940-945, 1409-1410.—*Editor*.

Bonaparte has declared in several of his proclamations that his object, so far as respects foreign commerce, is *the freedom and safety of the seas*, and as it is an object that suits with the greatness of his ambition and with the temper of his genius which is cast for great exploits, and also with the interest of France, I believe him. This also is an object that merits the attention of the United States; but before I speak more particularly to this point I will state the situations Bonaparte will soon be in and out of which his future politics will grow.

In the first place; inferring what he will do, from what he has done, he will make a continental peace and undertake England afterwards. In this case he will either dictate a peace on his own terms, or make a descent, and the conduct itself of the English government demonstrates that it looks on a descent as a practicable thing. If he make a descent and succeed he will hold the power of both nations, by sea and land in his own hands, and very probably will annihilate the present government of England and form a new one, and put one of his brothers or his brother-in-law, Murat, at the head of it. This will put an end to naval wars, and consequently to the pretense of capturing vessels of commerce, and so far the world will be the better for it. The dynasty of the Guelphs have continued ninety two years which is somewhat longer than the dynasty of the Stuarts continued.

If instead of a descent he makes a treaty of peace the question is, how is the freedom of the seas to be made secure? The short answer is, that inability to do mischief is the best security against mischief. In the second part of *Rights of Man* I spoke of France and England coming to an agreement to reduce the navies of both nations and to oblige all other nations to do the same, and in the appendix to my letter to the Abbé Raynal 1782 (I have not the work by me) I have spoken of the folly of increasing navies.<sup>368</sup>

Every victory at sea is a victory of loss. The nation who loses the ships in an action is eased of the expense of supporting them and the nation who takes them is additionally burdened with it. I observed that the annual naval expenses of England in her last war increased as her naval conquests increased. The last naval estimate for that year that I saw was upwards of fourteen millions dollars, which is equal to the amount of all the land-tax in England for seven years. The annual land-tax in England is two millions sterling stationary. Every county pays its annual quota of that sum.

<sup>368</sup> See volume I, pp. 404, 419 and pp. 260ff. above.—*Editor*.

This proposal for a mutual reduction of navies was popular in England because I applied it as one of the principal means for reducing taxes. There ought to be no such vessels as ships of the line, and the number of frigates should be limited. It is because one nation has ships of the line that another nation has them; whereas if neither had them the balance would be even and the world's high sea, the ocean, be less interrupted. This would be the best naval victory that Bonaparte could make and the world would be the better for it.

In the treaty of peace between France and England in 1783 one of the articles was that only six ships of the line should be kept in commission by either nation and commissioners were appointed by each party to see the article carried into execution. Why not go the whole length and say there shall be no ships of the line in existence, and that the number of frigates shall be limited. If a measure of this kind could be carried a law of nations could the more easily be established because the means of violating that law would be very much lessened. The rights of the seas ought to be under the guarantee of all nations.

You will know by the month of April or May what the state of things are between France and England, for in the event either of a treaty of peace if it includes the freedom of the seas and the abolition of all assumed sovereignty over them or of a successful descent upon England, the United States cannot consistently remain a silent inactive spectator. They must do something to meet the new order of circumstances and to give them some claim to be heard on the subject of rights. I was pleased at the bill brought in by Mr. Wright respecting the impressments.<sup>369</sup>

Congress have now before them a Memorial from the merchants of New York. It seems to me to have been extorted from them by their losses rather than by their patriotism. However, as far as it goes it affords ground for Congress to act upon. There is nothing will make an impression on the government of England but a suspension of commerce with that country; a non-importation and I am persuaded Congress would do right to pass an act for this purpose empowering the executive to put it in execution when he shall judge proper and to send information of it to the American minister at London to be communicated to the English government. It ought also to be sent to the American minister at Paris. Bonaparte will then see we are taking measures that are in concert with

<sup>369</sup> On January 20, 1806, Robert Wright, Democratic Senator from Maryland, introduced a bill in the Senate for the protection and indemnification of American seamen.—*Editor.*

his declarations, and it is always good policy to stand well with the conquerer if it can be done on a good principle.

If he makes a descent and succeed (and it is as probable he will be in London in six months as it was six months ago that he would be in Vienna, and that his brother George will have to run for it as his brother Francis has done) he will have it in his power to make his own law of nations, in doing which he ought to remember, I hope, at least he will not forget, that he owes the project of a descent to an American citizen.

I have now given you a summary of some of the principal matters that have comè to my knowledge while in France and in which I have been an actor, and I have also stated to you my opinion of the consequences that will follow. I think you will find it proper, perhaps necessary, to send a person to France in the event either of a treaty of peace or of a descent, and I make you an offer of my services on that occasion to join Mr. Monroe. I do this because I do not think there is a person in the United States that can render so much service on the business that will come on as myself; and as I have had a considerable, I might say, a principle share in bringing forward the great matters that now occupy the theatre of politics it will be agreeable to me to have some share in the conclusion of them; for though we cannot now make *countries* free, it will be a great point gained to make the *seas* free.

We have no news yet (January 27) of the entry of Bonaparte into Vienna. The latest news is that by the highland Mary of Norfolk. I think that when he enters Vienna he will make a handsome proclamation to the people of that city, and as it will be republished and read by the people of England he may make it serve the purpose of a proclamation to them. I expect he will curtail the Austrian Emperor's dominions and disable him from breaking any more treaties, and then he will considerably enlarge his kingdom of Italy out of the territories he relinquished to Austria at the last peace.

If Bonaparte succeed in a descent (and all things are now possible) he will put an end to the English East India company. In that case will he throw the trade open or will he make a monopoly of it for France and his new government of England? I think he will let Holland in for a share, but will he let the United States in is a matter worth thinking about, and also the West India trade. If reports of him are true he will not make peace with England without shutting her and Russia out of the Mediterranean. In the new order of things which the present war has provoked into existence many new circumstances will arise which by being

foreseen may be guarded against or turned to advantage. As I think that letters from a friend and to a friend have some claim to an answer it will be agreeable to me to receive an answer to this, but without any wish that you should commit yourself, neither can you be a judge of what is proper or necessary to be done till about the month of April or May. In the meantime you have my offer. Please to present my respects to Governor Clinton.

Yours in friendship,  
THOMAS PAINE.

## TO JOHN INSKEEP, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

February, 1806.

SIR:

I saw in the *Aurora* of January the 30th a piece addressed to you and signed Isaac Hall.<sup>370</sup> It contains a statement of your malevolent conduct in refusing to let him have Vine St. Wharf after he had bid fifty dollars more rent for it than another person had offered, and had been unanimously approved of by the Commissioners appointed by law for that purpose. Among the reasons given by you for this refusal, one was, that "*Mr. Hall was one of Paine's disciples.*" If those whom you may choose to call my disciples follow my example in doing good to mankind, they will pass the confines of this world with a happy mind, while the hope of the hypocrite shall perish and delusion sink into despair.

I do not know who Mr. Inskeep is, for I do not remember the name of Inskeep at Philadelphia in "*the time that tried men's souls.*" He must be some mushroom of modern growth that has started up on the soil which the generous services of Thomas Paine contributed to bless with freedom; neither do I know what profession of religion he is of, nor do I care, for if he is a man malevolent and unjust, it signifies not to what class or sectary he may hypocritically belong.

<sup>370</sup> In the course of his letter to Mayor Inskeep, Isaac Hall wrote: "I do remember when Paine's ideas and principles were the favorite principles of this land—that his writings electrified all America, and if they did not actually ensure the success of the revolution, that they contributed more to its success than the hypocritical canting of the thousand such men as the mayor of Philadelphia would contribute to the support of any honest cause."

Paine's letter was printed in the Philadelphia *Aurora* of February 10, 1806.—*Editor.*

As I set too much value on my time to waste it on a man of so little consequence as yourself, I will close this short address with a declaration that puts hypocrisy and malevolence to defiance. Here it is: My motive and object in all my political works, beginning with *Common Sense*, the first work I ever published, have been to rescue man from tyranny and false systems and false principles of government, and enable him to be free, and establish government for himself; and I have borne my share of danger in Europe and in America in every attempt I have made for this purpose. And my motive and object in all my publications on religious subjects, beginning with the first part of the *Age of Reason*, have been to bring man to a right reason that God has given him; to impress on him the great principles of divine morality, justice, mercy, and a benevolent disposition to all men and to all creatures; and to excite in him a spirit of trust confidence and consolation in his creator, unshackled by the fable and fiction of books, by whatever invented name they may be called. I am happy in the continual contemplation of what I have done, and I thank God that he gave me talents for the purpose and fortitude to do it. It will make the continual consolation of my departing hours whenever they finally arrive.

THOMAS PAINE.

*"These are the times that try men's souls."* Crisis No. 1, written while on the retreat with the army from Fort Lee to the Delaware and published in Philadelphia in the dark days of 1776 December the 19th, six days before the taking of the Hessians at Trenton.

## TO ANONYMOUS <sup>371</sup>

NEW ROCHELLE, March 20, 1806.

SIR:

I will inform you of what I know respecting General Miranda, with whom I first became acquainted at New York, about the year 1783. He is a man of talents and enterprise, and the whole of his life has been a life of adventures.

I went to Europe from New York in April, 1787. Mr. Jefferson was then Minister from America to France, and Mr. Littlepage, a Virginian (whom Mr. Jay knows), was agent for the king of Poland, at Paris. Mr.

<sup>371</sup> This letter bearing the title, "To a Gentleman in Philadelphia," was printed in the Philadelphia *Aurora* of April 3, 1806.—*Editor*.

Littlepage was a young man of extraordinary talents, and I first met with him at Mr. Jefferson's house at dinner. By his intimacy with the king of Poland, to whom also he was chamberlain, he became well acquainted with the plans and projects of the Northern Powers of Europe. He told me of Miranda's getting himself introduced to the Empress Catharine of Russia, and obtaining a sum of money from her, four thousand pounds sterling; but it did not appear to me what the object was for which the money was given; it appeared a kind of retaining fee.

After I had published the first part of the *Rights of Man* in England, in the year 1791, I met Miranda at the house of Turnbull and Forbes, merchants, Devonshire Square, London. He had been a little before this in the employ of Mr. Pitt, with respect to the affair of Nootka Sound, but I did not at that time know it; and I will, in the course of this letter, inform you how this connection between Pitt and Miranda ended; for I know it of my own knowledge.

I published the second part of the *Rights of Man* in London, in February, 1792, and I continued in London till I was elected a member of the French Convention, in September of that year; and went from London to Paris to take my seat in the Convention, which was to meet the 20th of that month. I arrived in Paris on the 19th. After the Convention met, Miranda came to Paris, and was appointed general of the French army, under General Dumouriez. But as the affairs of that army went wrong in the beginning of the year 1793, Miranda was suspected, and was brought under arrest to Paris to take his trial. He summoned me to appear to his character, and also a Mr. Thomas Christie, connected with the house of Turnbull and Forbes. I gave my testimony as I believed, which was, that his leading object was and had been the emancipation of his country, Mexico, from the bondage of Spain; for I did not at that time know of his engagements with Pitt. Mr. Christie's evidence went to show that Miranda did not come to France as a necessitous adventurer; but believed he came from public-spirited motives, and that he had a large sum of money in the hands of Turnbull and Forbes. The house of Turnbull and Forbes was then in a contract to supply Paris with flour. Miranda was acquitted.

A few days after his acquittal he came to see me, and in a few days afterwards I returned his visit. He seemed desirous of satisfying me that he was independent, and that he had money in the hands of Turnbull and Forbes. He did not tell me of his affair with old Catharine of Russia, nor did I tell him that I knew of it. But he entered into conversation with



respect to Nootka Sound, and put into my hands several letters of Mr. Pitt's to him on that subject; amongst which was one which I believe he gave me by mistake, for when I had opened it, and was beginning to read it, he put forth his hand and said, "O, that is not the letter I intended"; but as the letter was short I soon got through with it, and then returned it to him without making any remarks upon it. The dispute with Spain was then compromised; and Pitt compromised with Miranda for his services by giving him twelve hundred pounds sterling, for this was the contents of the letter.

Now if it be true that Miranda brought with him a credit upon certain persons in New York for sixty thousand pounds sterling, it is not difficult to suppose from what quarter the money came; for the opening of any proposals between Pitt and Miranda was already made by the affair of Nootka Sound. Miranda was in Paris when Mr. Monroe arrived there as Minister; and as Miranda wanted to get acquainted with him, I cautioned Mr. Monroe against him, and told him of the affair of Nootka Sound, and the twelve hundred pounds.

You are at liberty to make what use you please of this letter, and with my name to it.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO WILLIAM DUANE <sup>372</sup>

NEW ROCHELLE, April 23, 1806.

MR. DUANE:

I see by the English papers, that some conversations have lately taken place in parliament in England, on the subject of repealing the act that incorporated the members elected in Ireland with the parliament elected in England so as to form only one parliament.

As England could not domineer Ireland more despotically than it did through the Irish parliament, people were generally at a loss (as well they might be) to discover any motive for that union, more especially as it was pushed with unceasing activity against all opposition. The following anecdote, which was known but to few persons, and to none, I believe in England except the former minister, will unveil the mystery:

<sup>372</sup> This letter appeared originally in the Philadelphia *Aurora* of April 26, 1806. William Duane was the militant pro-Jeffersonian editor of the *Aurora*.—*Editor*.

When Lord Malmsbury arrived in Paris, in the time of the directory government, to open a negotiation for a peace, his credentials ran in the old style of, "George, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, *France* and Ireland, king." Malmsbury was informed that though the assumed title of *king of France* in his credentials would not prevent France opening a negotiation, yet that no treaty of peace could be concluded until that assumed title was renounced. Pitt then hit on the union bill under which the assumed title of king of France was discontinued.

THOMAS PAINE.

### TO ANDREW DEAN <sup>373</sup>

NEW YORK, August 15, 1806.

RESPECTED FRIEND:

I received your friendly letter, for which I am obliged to you. It is three weeks ago to-day (Sunday, August fifteenth) that I was struck with a fit of an apoplexy that deprived me of all sense and motion. I had neither pulse nor breathing, and the people about me supposed me dead. I had felt exceedingly well that day, and had just taken a slice of bread and butter for supper, and was going to bed. The fit took me on the stairs, as suddenly as if I had been shot through the head; and I got so very much hurt by the fall that I have not been able to get in and out of bed since that day, otherwise than being lifted out in a blanket, by two persons; yet all this while my mental faculties have remained as perfect as I ever enjoyed them. I consider the scene I have passed through as an experiment on dying, and I find that death has no terrors for me. As to the people called Christians, they have no evidence that their religion is true. There is no more proof that the Bible is the Word of God, than that the Koran of Mahomet is the Word of God. It is education makes all the difference. Man, before he begins to think for himself, is as much the child of habits in *Creeeds* as he is in plowing and sowing. Yet creeds, like opinions, prove nothing.

Where is the evidence that the person called Jesus Christ is the begotten Son of God? The case admits not of evidence either to our senses or our mental faculties; neither has God given to man any talent by which such a thing is comprehensible. It cannot therefore be an object for faith

<sup>373</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of Harvard College Library.—*Editor*.

to act upon, for faith is nothing more than an assent the mind gives to something it sees cause to believe is fact. But priests, preachers and fanatics put imagination in the place of faith, and it is the nature of the imagination to believe without evidence.

If Joseph the carpenter dreamed (as the book of Matthew chap. 1st says he did), that his betrothed wife, Mary, was with child by the Holy Ghost, and that an angel told him so, I am not obliged to put faith in his dreams; nor do I put any, for I put no faith in my own dreams, and I should be weak and foolish indeed to put faith in the dreams of others.

The Christian religion is derogatory to the Creator in all its articles. It puts the Creator in an inferior point of view, and places the Christian Devil above him. It is he, according to the absurd story in Genesis, that outwits the Creator in the Garden of Eden, and steals from Him His favorite creature, man, and at last obliges Him to beget a son, and put that son to death, to get man back again; and this the priests of the Christian religion call redemption.

Christian authors exclaim against the practise of offering up human sacrifices, which, they say, is done in some countries; and those authors make those exclamations without ever reflecting that their own doctrine of salvation is founded on a human sacrifice. They are saved, they say, by the blood of Christ. The Christian religion begins with a dream and ends with a murder.

As I am now well enough to sit up some hours in the day, though not well enough to get up without help, I employ myself as I have always done in endeavoring to bring man to the right use of the reason that God has given him, and to direct his mind immediately to his Creator, and not to fanciful secondary beings called mediators, as if God was superannuated or ferocious.

As to the book called the Bible, it is blasphemy to call it the Word of God. It is a book of lies and contradictions, and a history of bad times and bad men. There are but a few good characters in the whole book. The fable of Christ and his twelve apostles, which is a parody on the sun and the twelve signs of the zodiac, copied from the ancient religions of the eastern world, is the least hurtful part. Everything told of Christ has reference to the sun. His reported resurrection is at sunrise, and that on the first day of the week; that is, on the day anciently dedicated to the sun, and from thence called Sunday—in Latin *Dies Solis*, the day of the sun; as the next day, Monday, is Moon-day. But there is no room in a letter to explain these things.

While man keeps to the belief of one God, his reason unites with his creed. He is not shocked with contradictions and horrid stories. His Bible is the heavens and the earth. He beholds his Creator in all His works, and everything he beholds inspires him with reverence and gratitude. From the goodness of God to all, he learns his duty to his fellowman, and stands self-reproved when he transgresses it. Such a man is no persecutor.

But when he multiplies his creed with imaginary things, of which he can have neither evidence nor conception, such as the tale of the Garden of Eden, the Talking Serpent, the Fall of Man, the Dreams of Joseph the Carpenter, the pretended Resurrection and Ascension, of which there is even no historical relation—for no historian of those times mentions such a thing—he gets into the pathless region of confusion, and turns either fanatic or hypocrite. He forces his mind, and pretends to believe what he does not believe. This is in general the case with the Methodists. Their religion is all creed and no morals.

I have now, my friend, given you a *facsimile* of my mind on the subject of religions and creeds, and my wish is that you make this letter as publicly known as you find opportunities of doing.

I am glad to hear that Thomas is a good boy. It will always give me pleasure to know that he goes on well. You say that he begins to want a pair of trousers, shirt and a hat. You can take the horse and chair and take Thomas with you and go to the store and get him some strong stuff for a pair of trousers, hempen linnen for two shirts, and a hat. He shall not want for anything if he be a good boy and learn no bad words.

I have taken lodgings at Corlears Hook but I am not well enough to be removed, yet I continue tolerably well in health. What I suffer is pain and want of strength occasioned by the fall I got by the fit and fall, for I find I went headlong over the bannisters as suddenly as I had been shot through the head.

You speak of coming to N[ew] York. When you come take Thomas with you. You can come with the horse and chair. If I am not at Carver's he will tell you where I am. When you go to the store, go on to the landing and read this letter to Mr. Deltor. When you see Mr. Somerville present my respects. You and Thomas might take a walk there some Saturday afternoon, and call at Mr. Jonathan Wards. Take the letter with you.

Yours in friendship,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO JAMES MADISON <sup>374</sup>

NEW YORK, May 3, 1807.

SIR:

When Mr. Monroe came Minister from the United States to the French Government I was still imprisoned in the Luxembourg by the Robespierre party in the convention. The fall of Robespierre took place a few days before Mr. Monroe reached Paris,<sup>375</sup> and as soon as Mr. Monroe could make his own standing good, which required time on account of the ill conduct of his predecessor Gouverneur Morris, he reclaimed me as an American citizen, for the case was, I was excluded from the convention as a foreigner and imprisoned as a foreigner. I was liberated immediately on Mr. Monroe's reclamation.

Mr. Monroe wrote an official account of this to the secretary of state, Mr. Randolph, and also an account of what he had done for Madame LaFayette who was also imprisoned, distinguishing the one to be done officially, and the other, that for Madame LaFayette,<sup>376</sup> to be done in friendship. In Mr. Randolph's official answer to Mr. Monroe's letter, he says as nearly as I recollect the words, "The President [Mr. Washington] approves what you have done in the case of Mr. Paine." My own opinion on this matter is, that as I had not been guillotined Washington thought it best to say what he did.

I will be obliged to you for an attested copy of Mr. Monroe's letter and also of Mr. Randolph's official answer so far as any parts of them relate to me. The reason for this application is as follows,

Last year 1806 I lived on my farm at New Rochelle, State of New York; a man of the name Elisha Ward was supervisor that year. The father of this man and all his brothers joined the British in the war; but this one being the youngest and not at that time old enough to carry a musket remained at home with his mother.

When the election (at which the supervisor for the time being presides) came on at New Rochelle last year for Members of Congress and Members of state assemblies, I tendered my tickets separately distinguishing

<sup>374</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>375</sup> Robespierre was executed on July 28, 1794.—*Editor*.

<sup>376</sup> See "The imprisonment of Madame Lafayette during the terror," in Charles F. McCombs, editor, *New York Public Library. Bookmens Holiday, notes and studies . . . in tribute to Harry Miller Lydenberg*, New York, 1943, pp. 362-94.—*Editor*.

which was which, as is the custom; each of which Ward refused, saying to me "You are not an American Citizen." Upon my beginning to remonstrate with him, he replied, "Our minister at Paris, Gouverneur Morris, would not reclaim you as an American Citizen when you were imprisoned in The Luxembourg at Paris, and General Washington refused to do it."

I accordingly commenced a prosecution against him last fall and the court will set the 20th of this May. Mr. Monroe's letter to the secretary and the secretary's official answer are both published by Mr. Monroe in his views of the conduct of the executive printed by Benjn Franklin Bache. But as a printed book is not sufficient evidence an attested copy from your office will be necessary.

As to Gouverneur Morris, the fact is, that he did reclaim me on my application to him as Minister, but his reclamation of me did me no good, for he could hardly keep himself out of prison, neither did he do it out of any good will to me.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO GEORGE CLINTON <sup>377</sup>

NEW YORK, May 4, 1807.

RESPECTED FRIEND:

Elisha Ward and three or four other Tories who lived within the British lines in the Revolutionary war, got in to be inspectors of the election last year at New Rochelle. Ward was supervisor. These men refused my vote at the election, saying to me: "You are not an American; our minister at Paris, Gouverneur Morris, would not reclaim you when you were imprisoned in the Luxembourg prison at Paris, and General Washington refused to do it." Upon my telling him that the two cases he stated were falsehoods, and that if he did me injustice I would prosecute him, he got up, and calling for a constable, said to me, "I will commit you to prison." He chose, however, to sit down and go no farther with it.

I have written to Mr. Madison for an attested copy of Mr. Monroe's letter to the then Secretary of State Randolph, in which Mr. Monroe

<sup>377</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript through the courtesy of the New York Public Library.

George Clinton, former governor of New York, was Vice-President of the United States.—*Editor*.

gives the government an account of his reclaiming me and my liberation in consequence of it; and also for an attested copy of Mr. Randolph's answer, in which he says: "The President approves what you have done in the case of Mr. Paine." The matter I believe is, that, as I had not been guillotined, Washington thought best to say what he did. As to Gouverneur Morris, the case is that he did reclaim me; but his reclamation did me no good, and the probability is, he did not intend it should. Joel Barlow and other Americans in Paris had been in a body to reclaim me, but their application, being unofficial, was not regarded. I then applied to Morris. I shall subpoena Morris, and if I get attested copies from the Secretary of State's office it will prove the lie on the inspectors.

As it is a new generation that has risen up since the declaration of independence, they know nothing of what the political state of the country was at the time the pamphlet *Common Sense* appeared; and besides this there are but few of the old standers left, and none that I know of in this city.

It may be proper at the trial to bring the mind of the court and the jury back to the times I am speaking of, and if you see no objection in your way, I wish you would write a letter to some person, stating, from your own knowledge, what the condition of those times were, and the effect which the work *Common Sense*, and the several members of the *Crisis* had upon the country. It would, I think, be best that the letter should begin directly on the subject in this manner: Being informed that Thomas Paine has been denied his rights of citizenship by certain persons acting as inspectors at an election at New Rochelle, etc.

I have put the prosecution into the hands of Mr. Riker, district attorney, who can make use of the letter in his address to the Court and Jury. Your handwriting can be sworn to by persons here, if necessary. Had you been on the spot I should have subpoenaed you, unless it had been too inconvenient to you to have attended.

Yours in friendship,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO JOEL BARLOW

NEW YORK, May, 4, 1807.

DEAR SIR:

I have prosecuted the Board of Inspectors for disfranchising me. You and other Americans in Paris went in a body to the Convention to re-

claim me, and I want a certificate from you, properly attested, of this fact. If you consult with Gov. Clinton he will in friendship inform you who to address it to.<sup>378</sup>

Having now done with business I come to meums and tuums. What are you about? You sometimes hear of me but I never hear of you. It seems as if I had got to be master of the feds and the priests. The former do not attack my political publications; they rather try to keep them out of sight by silence. And as to the priests, they act as if they would say, let us alone and we will let you alone. My examination of the passages called prophecies is printed, and will be published next week. I have prepared it with the Essay on Dream. I do not believe that the priests will attack it, for it is not a book of opinions but of facts. Had the Christian Religion done any good in the world I would not have exposed it, however fabulous I might believe it to be. But the delusive idea of having a friend at court whom they call a redeemer, who pays all their scores, is an encouragement to wickedness.

What is Fulton about? Is he taming a whale to draw his submarine boat? I wish you would desire Mr. Smith to send me his country *National Intelligencer*. It is printed twice a week without advertisement. I am somewhat at a loss of want of authentic intelligence.

Yours in friendship,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE HONORABLE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES<sup>379</sup>

New York, January 21, 1808.

**T**HE purpose of this address is to state a claim I feel myself entitled to make on the United States, leaving it to their representatives in Congress to decide on its worth and its merits. The case is as follows:

Towards the latter end of the year 1780, the continental money had become so depreciated, a paper dollar not being more than a cent, that it seemed next to impossible to continue the war.

As the United States were then in alliance with France, it became

<sup>378</sup> In July, 1945, after 139 years, New Rochelle restored to Thomas Paine "full citizenship and the rights thereof of this city."—*Editor*.

<sup>379</sup> This memorial is reprinted from *American State Papers*, Selected and Edited by Walter Lowrie and Walter S. Franklin, Class IX, Claims, Washington, 1834, pp. 357-358.—*Editor*.



necessary to make France acquainted with our real situation. I therefore drew up a letter to Count de Vergennes, stating undisguisedly the true case: and concluding with the request, whether France could not, either as a subsidy or a loan, supply the United States with a million sterling, and continue that supply, annually, during the war.

I showed the letter to Mr. Marbois, secretary to the French minister. His remark upon it was, that a million sent out of the nation exhausted it more than ten millions spent in it. I then showed it to Mr. Ralph Isard, member of Congress for South Carolina. He borrowed the letter of me, and said, "We will endeavor to do something about it in Congress."

Accordingly Congress appointed Colonel John Laurens, then aid[e] to General Washington, to go to France and make representation of our situation, for the purpose of obtaining assistance. Colonel Laurens wished to decline the mission, and that Congress would appoint Colonel Hamilton; which Congress did not choose to do.

Colonel Laurens then came to state the case to me. He said he was not enough acquainted with political affairs, nor with the resources of the country, to undertake the mission; "but," said he, "if you will go with me, I will accept it"; which I agreed to do, and did so.

We sailed from Boston in the *Alliance* frigate, Captain Barry, the beginning of February, 1781, and arrived at L'Orient the beginning of March. The aid obtained from France was six millions livres as a present, and ten millions as a loan, borrowed in Holland, on the security of France. We sailed from Brest in the French *Resolve* frigate the 1st of June, and arrived at Boston the 25th of August, bringing with us two millions and a half of livres in silver, and convoying a ship and a brig laden with clothing and military stores. The money was transported in sixteen ox teams to the National Bank at Philadelphia, which enabled the army to move to Yorktown to attack, in conjunction with the French army under Rochambeau, the British army under Cornwallis. As I never had a cent for this service, I feel myself entitled, as the country is now in a state of prosperity, to state the case to Congress.

As to my political works, beginning with the pamphlet *Common Sense*, published the beginning of January, 1776, which awakened America to a declaration of independence, as the President and Vice President both know, as they were works done from principle, I cannot dishonor that principle by asking any reward for them. The country has been benefited by them, and I make myself happy in the knowledge

of it. It is, however, proper to me to add, that the mere independence of America, were it to have been followed by a system of Government, modelled after the corrupt system of the English Government, it would not have interested me with the unabated ardor it did. It was to bring forward and establish the representative system of Government, as the work itself will show, that was the leading principle with me in writing that work, and all my other works during the progress of the revolution. And I followed the same principle in writing the *Rights of Man*, in England.

There is a resolve of the old Congress, while they sat at New York, of a grant of three thousand dollars to me. The resolve is put in handsome language, but it has relation to a matter which it does not express. Elbridge Gerry was chairman of the committee who brought in the resolve. If Congress should judge proper to refer this memorial to a committee, I will inform that committee of the particulars of it.

I have also to state to Congress, that the authority of the old Congress was become so reduced towards the latter end of the war, as to be unable to hold the States together. Congress could do no more than recommend, of which the States frequently took no notice; and, when they did, it was never uniformly.

After the failure of the five per cent. duty recommended by Congress, to pay the interest of a loan to be borrowed in Holland, I wrote to Chancellor Livingston, then Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Robert Morris, Minister of Finance, and proposed a method for getting over the whole difficulty at once; which was, by adding a continental Legislature to Congress, who should be empowered to make laws for the Union, instead of recommending them; so the method proposed me their full approbation. I held myself in reserve, to take the subject up whenever a direct occasion occurred.

In a conversation afterwards with Governor Clinton, of New York, now Vice President, it was judged that, for the purpose of going fully into the subject, and to prevent any misconstruction of my motive or object, it would be best that I received nothing from Congress, but leave it to the States individually to make me what acknowledgment they pleased.

The State of New York made me a present of a farm, which, since my return to America, I have found it necessary to sell; and the State of Pennsylvania voted me five hundred pounds, their currency. But none of the States to the east of New York, or the south of Philadelphia,

ever made the least acknowledgment. They had received benefits from me, which they accepted, and there the matter ended. This story will not tell well in history. All the civilized world know[s] I have been of great service to the United States, and have generously given away talent that would have made me a fortune.

I much question if an instance is to be found in ancient or modern times of a man who had no personal interest in the cause he took up, that of independence and the establishment of a representative system of Government, and who sought neither place nor office after it was established, that persevered in the same undeviating principles as I have done, for more than thirty years, and that in spite of difficulties, dangers, and inconveniences, of which I have had my share.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE COMMITTEE OF CLAIMS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES<sup>380</sup>

NEW YORK, February, 14, 1808.

### CITIZEN REPRESENTATIVES:

In my memorial to Congress of the 21st of January, I spoke of a resolve of the old Congress of three thousand dollars to me, and said that the resolve had relation to a matter it did not express; that Elbridge Gerry was chairman of the committee that brought in that resolve; and that if Congress referred the memorial to a committee, I would write to that committee, and inform them of the particulars of it. It has relation to my conduct in the affair of Silas Dean and Beaumarchais. The case is as follows:

When I was appointed secretary to the Committee of Foreign Affairs, all the papers of the secret committee, none of which had been seen by Congress, came into my hands. I saw, by the correspondence of that committee with persons in Europe, particularly with Arthur Lee, that the stores which Silas Dean and Beaumarchais pretended they had purchased were a present from the Court of France, and came out of the King's arsenals. But, as this was prior to the alliance, and while the English ambassador (Stormont) was at Paris, the Court of France

<sup>380</sup> This letter was printed in the *Annals of Congress*, 10th Congress, Second Session, 1808-1809, pp. 1781-1783.—*Editor*.

wished it not to be known, and therefore proposed that "a small quantity of tobacco, or some other produce, should be sent to the Cape (Cape François) to give it the air of a mercantile transaction, repeating over and over again that it was for a cover only, and not for payment, as the whole remittance was gratuitous." (See Arthur Lee's letters to the secret committee; see also Benjamin Franklin's.)

Knowing these things, and seeing that the public were deceived and imposed upon by the pretensions of Dean, I took the subject up, and published three pieces in Dunlap's Philadelphia paper, headed with the title of "Common Sense to the Public on Mr. Dean's affairs." John Jay was then President of Congress, Mr. Laurens having resigned in disgust.

After the third piece appeared, I received an order, dated Congress, and signed John Jay, that "Thomas Paine do attend at the bar of this House immediately," which I did.

Mr. Jay took up a newspaper, and said, "Here is Mr. Dunlap's paper of December 29. In it is a piece entitled 'Common Sense to the Public on Mr. Dean's affairs'; I am directed by Congress to ask you if you are the author." "Yes, sir, I am the author of that piece." Mr. Jay put the same question on the other two pieces, and received the same answer. He then said, you may withdraw.

As soon as I was gone, John Penn, of North Carolina, moved that "Thomas Paine be discharged from the office of secretary of the Committee for Foreign Affairs," and prating Gouverneur Morris seconded the motion; but it was lost when put to the vote, the States being equally divided. I then wrote to Congress, requesting a hearing, and Mr. Laurens made a motion for that purpose, which was negatived. The next day I sent in my resignation, saying, that "as I cannot, consistently with my character as a freeman, submit to be censured unheard, therefore, to preserve that character and maintain that right, I think it my duty to resign the office of secretary to the Committee for Foreign Affairs, and I do hereby resign the same."

After this I lived as well as I could, hiring myself as a clerk to Owen Biddle, of Philadelphia, till the Legislature of Pennsylvania appointed me clerk of the General Assembly. But I still went on with my publications on Dean's affairs, till the fraud became so obvious, that Congress were ashamed of supporting him, and he absconded. He went from Philadelphia to Virginia, and took shipping for France, and got over to England, where he died. Doctor Cutting told me he took poison. Gouverneur Morris, by way of making apology for his conduct in that

affair, said to me, after my return from France with Colonel Laurens, "Well! we were all duped, and I among the rest."

As the salary I had as secretary to the Committee of Foreign Affairs was but small, being only \$800 a year, and as that had been fretted down by the depreciation to less than a fifth of its nominal value, I wrote to Congress, then sitting at New York (it was after the war), to make up the depreciation of my salary, and also for some incidental expenses I had been at. This letter was referred to a committee, of which Elbridge Gerry was chairman.

Mr. Gerry then came to me, and said that the committee had consulted on the subject, and they intended to bring in a handsome report, but that they thought it best not to take any notice of your letter or make any reference to Dean's affair or your salary. They will indemnify you, said he, without it. The case is, there are some motions on the Journal of Congress, for censuring you with respect to Dean's affair, which cannot now be recalled, because they have been printed. Therefore, we will bring in a report that will supersede them, without mentioning the purport of your letter.

This, citizen representatives, is an explanation of the resolve of the old Congress. It was an indemnity to me for some injustice done me, for Congress had acted dishonorably to me. However, I prevented Dean's fraudulent demand being paid, and so far the country is obliged to me; but I became the victim of my integrity.

I preferred stating this explanation to the committee rather than to make it public in my memorial to Congress.

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE HONORABLE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES <sup>381</sup>

NEW YORK, PARTITION ST., No. 63,

February 28, 1808.

SIR:

I addressed a memorial to Congress dated January 21, which was presented by George Clinton, junior, and referred to the Committee of Claims. As soon as I knew to what committee it was referred, I wrote to

<sup>381</sup> This letter was printed in the *Annals of Congress*, 10th Congress, Second Session, 1808-1809, pp. 1783-1784.—*Editor*.

that committee, and informed them of the particulars respecting a vote of the old Congress of \$3,000 to me, as I mentioned I would do in my memorial; since which I have heard nothing of the memorial or of any proceedings upon it.

It will be convenient to me to know what Congress will decide on, because, it will determine me whether, after so many years of generous services, and that in the most perilous times, and after seventy years of age, I shall continue in this country, or offer my services to some other country. It will not be to England, unless there should be a revolution.

My request to you is, that you will call on the Committee of Claims to bring in their report, and that Congress would decide upon it. I shall then know what to do.

Yours, in friendship,

THOMAS PAINE.

## TO THE HONORABLE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES <sup>382</sup>

NEW YORK, March 7, 1808.

SIR:

I wrote you a week ago, prior to the date of this letter, respecting my memorial to Congress, but I have not yet seen an account of any proceedings upon it.

I know not who the Committee of Claims are, but if they are men of younger standing than "the times that tried men's souls," and, consequently, too young to know what the condition of the country was at the time I published *Common Sense* (for I do not believe independence would have been declared had it not been for the effect of that work), they are not capable of judging of the whole of the services of Thomas Paine. The President and Vice President can give you information on those subjects, so also can Mr. Smilie, who was a member of the Pennsylvania Legislature at the times I am speaking of. He knows the inconveniences I was often put to, for the old Congress treated me with ingratitude, they seemed to be disgusted at my popularity, and acted towards me as a rival instead of a friend.

The explanation I sent to the committee respecting a resolve of the old

<sup>382</sup> This letter was printed in the *Annals of Congress*, 10th Congress, Second Session, 1808-1809, pp. 1783-1784.—*Editor*.

Congress while they sat at New York should be known to Congress, but it seems to me that the committee keep everything to themselves, and do nothing. If my memorial was referred to the Committee of Claims, for the purpose of losing it, it is unmanly policy. After so many years of service my heart grows cold towards America.

Yours, in friendship,

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. I repeat my request, that you would call on the Committee of Claims to bring in their report, and that Congress would decide upon it.

### TO THOMAS JEFFERSON <sup>383</sup>

July 8, 1808.

DEAR SIR:

On the 21st of January I presented a Memorial to Congress and after waiting a considerable time and hearing nothing of it, I wrote to George Clinton junior who presented the Memorial to Congress desiring some information of it.<sup>384</sup> In his answers of March 19 he says, "I am desired by Mr. Holmes chairman of the Committee of Claims to inform you that the business of the Memorial is progressing and that as soon as they received certain information from the President and Vice President a report would be made." No report however has been made,<sup>385</sup> and I

<sup>383</sup> This letter is printed from the original manuscript in the Thomas Jefferson Papers through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor*.

<sup>384</sup> In his letter to the Chairman of the Committee on Claims, March 23, 1808, George Clinton wrote: "From the information I received at the time, I have reason to believe that Mr. Paine accompanied Colonel Laurens on his mission to France in the course of the Revolutionary war, for the purpose of negotiating a loan, and that he acted as his secretary on that occasion; but although I have no doubt of the truth of this fact, I cannot assert it from my own actual knowledge." *Annals of Congress*, 10th Congress, Second Session, p. 1784.—*Editor*.

<sup>385</sup> The Committee of Claims submitted its report on Paine's memorial on February 1, 1809. It rejected Paine's request for compensation on the grounds that his memorial had been "unaccompanied with any evidence in support of the statement of facts"; that the Journals of Congress revealed no evidence that Paine "was in any manner connected with the mission of Colonel Laurens," and that while Paine did accompany Colonel Laurens on his mission, it did "not appear that he was employed by the Government, or even solicited by any officer thereof to aid in the accomplishment of the mission with which Colonel Laurens was intrusted, or that he took any part whatever, after his arrival in France, in forwarding the negotiation. . . ." The Committee, however, added: "That Mr. Paine rendered great and eminent services to the United States, during their struggle for liberty and independence, cannot be doubted by any person acquainted with his

write this letter to request you to inform Mr. Holmes or the Committee of Claims have made any application to you on this subject.

I now pass on from this disagreeable affair to what I like much better—Public Affairs. The British ministry have outskemed themselves. It is not difficult to see what the motive and object of that Ministry were in issuing the Orders of Council. They expected those orders would force all the commerce of the United States to England, and then, by giving permission to such cargoes as they did not want for themselves to depart for the Continent Europe to raise a revenue out of those countries and America. But instead of this they have lost the revenue they used to receive from American imports, and instead of gaining all the commerce they have lost it all.

This being the case with the British Ministry it is natural to suppose they would be glad to tread back their steps, if they could do it without too much exposing their ignorance and obstinacy. The Embargo law<sup>386</sup> empowers the President to suspend its operation whenever he shall be satisfied that our ships can pass in safety. It therefore includes the idea of empowering him to use means for arriving at that event. Suppose the President were to authorize Mr. Pinckney to propose to the British Ministry that the United States would negotiate with France for rescinding the Milan Decree, on condition the English Ministry would rescind their Orders of Council; and in that case the United States would recall their Embargo. France and England stand now at such a distance that neither can propose anything to the other, neither are there any neutral powers to act as mediators. The U[nited] S[tates] is the only power that can act.

Perhaps the British Ministry if they listen to the proposal will want to add to it the Berlin decree, which excludes English commerce from the continent of Europe; but this we have nothing to do with, neither has it anything to do with the Embargo. The British Orders of Council and the Milan decree are parallel cases, and the cause of the Embargo.

Yours in friendship,

THOMAS PAINE.

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labors in the cause, and attached to the principles of the contest. Whether he has been generously requited by his country for his meritorious exertions, is a question not submitted to your Committee, or within their province to decide." *Annals of Congress*, 10th Congress, Second Session, 1808-1809, pp. 1780-1781.—*Editor*.

<sup>386</sup> On December 17, 1807, Jefferson learned of Napoleon's determination to enforce the Berlin Decree and of the new British Orders in Council. After discussing the problem with his cabinet, he sent his famous Embargo message to Congress advocating that American commerce with Europe should be totally suspended.—*Editor*.



## THE WILL OF THOMAS PAINE

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, BY THE GRACE OF GOD, FREE  
AND INDEPENDENT, TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME, OR  
MAY CONCERN, SEND GREETING:

**K**NOW YE, That the annexed is a true copy of the will of  
THOMAS PAINE, deceased, as recorded in the office of the  
surrogate, in and for the city and county of New York. In testimony  
whereof, we have caused the seal of office of our said surrogate to be  
hereunto affixed. Witness, Silvanus Miller, Esq., surrogate of said  
county, at the city of New York, the twelfth day of July, in the year of  
our Lord one thousand eight hundred and nine, and of our independ-  
ence the thirty-fourth.

SILVANUS MILLER.

### THE WILL

The last Will and Testament of me, the subscriber, Thomas Paine, reposing confidence in my Creator, God, and in no other being, for I know of no other, nor believe in any other. I, Thomas Paine, of the State of New York, author of the work entitled "Common Sense," written in Philadelphia, in 1775, and published in that city the beginning of January, 1776, which awaked America to a declaration of independence on the fourth of July following, which was as fast as the work could spread through such an extensive country; author also of the several numbers of the "American Crisis," thirteen in all; published occasionally during the progress of the Revolutionary War—the last is on the peace; author also of "Rights of Man," parts the first and second, written and published in London, in 1791 and 1792; author also of a work on religion, "Age of Reason," parts the first and second—N. B. I have a third part

by me in manuscript, and an answer to the Bishop of Llandaff; author also of a work, lately published, entitled "Examination of the Passages in the New Testament, Quoted from the Old, and called Prophecies concerning Jesus Christ, and showing there are no Prophecies of any such Person"; author also of several other works not here enumerated, "Dissertations on First Principles of Government—Decline and Fall of the English System of Finance—Agrarian Justice, etc., etc., make this my last will and testament, that is to say:

I give and bequeath to my executors hereinafter appointed, Walter Morton and Thomas Addis Emmet, thirty shares I hold in the New York Phœnix Insurance Company, which cost me fourteen hundred and seventy dollars, they are worth now upwards of fifteen hundred dollars, and all my movable effects, and also the money that may be in my trunk or elsewhere at the time of my decease, paying thereout the expenses of my funeral, IN TRUST as to the said shares, movables, and money, for Margaret Brazier Bonneville, wife of Nicholas Bonneville, of Paris, for her own sole and separate use, and at her own disposal, notwithstanding her coverture.

As to my farm in New Rochelle, I give, devise, and bequeath the same to my said executors, Walter Morton and Thomas Addis Emmet, and to the survivor of them, his heirs and assigns forever, IN TRUST nevertheless, to sell and dispose of the north side thereof, now in the occupation of Andrew A. Dean, beginning at the west end of the orchard, and running in a line with the land sold to — Coles, to the end of the farm, and to apply the money arising from such sale as hereinafter directed.

I give to my friends Walter Morton, of the New York Phœnix Insurance Company, and Thomas Addis Emmet, counselor at law, late of Ireland, two hundred dollars each, and one hundred dollars to Mrs. Palmer, widow of Elihu Palmer, late of New York, to be paid out of the money arising from said sale; and I give the remainder of the money arising from that sale, one-half thereof to Clio Rickman, of High or Upper Mary-le-Bone Street, London, and the other half to Nicholas Bonneville, of Paris, husband of Margaret B. Bonneville, aforesaid: and as to the South part of the said farm, containing upwards of one hundred acres, in trust to rent out the same, or otherwise put it to profit, as shall be found most advisable, and to pay the rents and profits thereof to the said Margaret B. Bonneville, in trust for her children, Benjamin Bonneville, and Thomas Bonneville, their education and maintenance, until they come to the age of twenty-one years, in order that she may

bring them well up, give them good and useful learning, and instruct them in their duty to God, and the practise of morality; the rent of the land, or the interest of the money for which it may be sold, as hereinafter mentioned, to be employed in their education.

And after the youngest of the said children shall have arrived at the age of twenty-one years, in further trust to convey the same to the said children, share and share alike, in fee simple. But if it shall be thought advisable by my executors and executrix, or the survivors of them, at any time before the youngest of the said children shall come of age, to sell and dispose of the said south side of the said farm, in that case I hereby authorize and empower my said executors to sell and dispose of the same, and I direct that the money arising from such sale be put into stock, either in the United States Bank stock, or New York Phœnix Insurance Company stock, the interest or dividends thereof to be applied as is already directed for the education and maintenance of the said children, and the principal to be transferred to the said children, or the survivor of them, on his or their coming of age.

I know not if the Society of people called Quakers, admit a person to be buried in their burying ground, who does not belong to their Society, but if they do, or will admit me, I would prefer being buried there; my father belonged to that profession, and I was partly brought up in it. But if it is not consistent with their rules to do this, I desire to be buried on my own farm at New Rochelle.

The place where I am to be buried, to be a square of twelve feet, to be enclosed with rows of trees, and a stone or post and rail fence, with a headstone with my name and age engraved upon it, author of "Common Sense." I nominate, constitute, and appoint Walter Morton, of the New York Phœnix Insurance Company, and Thomas Addis Emmet, counselor at law, late of Ireland, and Margaret B. Bonneville, executors and executrix to this my last will and testament, requesting the said Walter Morton and Thomas Addis Emmet, that they will give what assistance they conveniently can to Mrs. Bonneville, and see that the children be well brought up. Thus placing confidence in their friendship, I herewith take my final leave of them and of the world.

I have lived an honest and useful life to mankind; my time has been spent in doing good, and I die in perfect composure and resignation to the will of my Creator, God. Dated the eighteenth day of January, in the

year one thousand eight hundred and nine; and I have also signed my name to the other sheet of this will, in testimony of its being a part thereof.

THOMAS PAINE.

Signed, sealed, published, and declared by the testator, in our presence, who, at his request, and in the presence of each other, have set our names as witnesses thereto, the words "published and declared" first interlined.

WM. KEESE, JAMES ANGEVINE, CORNELIUS RYDER.

### ADDENDA

The first letter printed below was made available too late for it to be included in its proper chronological place in the correspondence section. It is printed from the original manuscript in the Du Simitière Papers through the courtesy of the Library Company of Philadelphia. The second letter was originally published in the third volume of *The Writings of Thomas Paine*, edited by Moncure D. Conway, but the time required to check its authenticity prevented its inclusion in its proper place in the correspondence section.—*Editor*.

#### TO ANONYMOUS

Amboy, Aug. 16th, '76

DEAR SIR: There is a report of a French fleet gone at the River St. Lawrence, on which I remark, that should the French possess themselves of Canada, they will claim according to the extension made by the British Crown. Query. Ought not the Congress to make a reclaim from the British Crown while Canada remains under *that government*, otherwise the claim will be made from the French, whereas it ought to be made from the English. Yours with great respect, T. PAINE[E]

A great number has deserted—yet I hope we shall do well at last. The 2d batallion of Phil[adelphia] Associators march'd this morning for New York, except Capt. Weeds (not Wade's) Company who run away to a man.

#### TO CITIZEN LE BRUN, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Auteuil, Friday, the 4th December, 1792.

I enclose an Irish newspaper which has been sent me from Belfast. It contains the Address of the Society of United Irishmen of Dublin (of which Society I am a member) to the volunteers of Ireland. None of the English newspapers that I have seen have ventured to republish this Address, and as there is no other copy of it than this which I send you, I request you not to let it go out of your possession. Before I received this newspaper I had drawn up a statement of the affairs of Ireland, which I had communicated to my friend General Ducâtelet at Auteuil, where I now am. I wish to confer with you on that subject, but as I do not speak French, and as the matter requires confidence, General Duchâtelet has desired me to say that if you can make it convenient to dine with him and me at Auteuil, he will with pleasure do the office of interpreter. I send this letter by my servant, but as it may not be convenient to you to give an answer directly, I have told him not to wait. THOMAS PAINE.

The following letters to James Monroe were secured too late to be included in their proper place in the correspondence section. They are printed from the original manuscripts through the courtesy of the Library of Congress.—*Editor.*

Versailles, 28 Thermidor 4 year [August 15, 1795].

DEAR SIR: I am spending some days at the house of a friend at this place with whom I shall make an arrangement to stay some weeks. But I am out of cash and I know no method of supplying myself, but by having recourse to your friendship, the money to be repaid in America, as before. I have again hopes that the complaint in my side is disposing itself to a cure. I am better, and have more strength than I have had for a year past. I went in the stage boat from Paris to Sevres and walked from Sevres to Versailles.

I see by the papers that you will have a visit from Mr. Hammond if the Directoire will permit him to come to Paris which I think is doubtful. In this state of things one cannot help reflecting on the conduct of the American governm[en]t that of soliciting a dishonorable treaty with a governm[en]t that is now soliciting peace on any terms. I hope to see you in Paris in three or four days. Yours in friendship, THOMAS PAINE.

[1795]

DEAR SIR: I thank you for your kindness. I have desired Mr. Gilston to enquire if there is room at the Hotel where Mr. Barlow lodges. I will be obliged to you to remind him of it in case he has not yet done it. The plan I had of going to Hartley's is deranged, the project of the printing office is fallen through—I believe in want of money. I shall stay here a few days longer as I have something in hand I wish to finish before I move, but it must be in the course of this decade. I observe in the Redacteur of [illegible] that they are building Gun-boats at Brussels. THOMAS PAINE.

LOUISIANA

[July, 1803]

All the business, with respects to the settlement of Louisiana, has been arranged at the Bureau of the Minister of Marine and the colonies, and the greater part, if not the whole, so far as it respects the settlement of it as a French colony, has passed through the hands of Madget, whom you knew. He was directed by the Minister of Marine to collect all the information he could from those who had local knowledge of the place, and present it to him to be laid before the first consul.

I am enough persuaded that Madget had not any idea that what he was undertaking was disagreeable to us, for he appeared to me to suppose that we should like the French for neighbors better than the Spaniards. Some of our friends had made the same mistake once before. They reasoned on our preference of them as people; without considering that in this case, we wished for neither as a power, and preferred Spain as the weakest of the two.

Long Fulton has been very profuse in his information. He wanted to get from France, and also wanted an employment. He sailed with the expedition to St. Domingo, in order to pass from thence to New Orleans, where I believe he is with the appointment of colonel. When Madget had finished his budget he applied to me to draw up a constitution for Louisiana. I easily got rid of this, by saying, that it was impossible to draw up a constitution for a people and a country that one knew nothing of. He was very desirous of getting my name to something, which I always found an easy way of avoiding.

I mention these things as a clue by which you may come at a knowle[d]ge of the grounds on which they have been acting in forming this establishment, and which I am persuaded you will find very fallacious, and a knowle[d]ge of this will be useful to you.

Madget and I are on very friendly terms and I shall write him a friendly letter without any politics in it. I shall mention your arrival, in consequence of which he will come to pay his compliments to you.

Madget considers me a sort of anchor hold in case any new storms should arise in France. I told him one day and I repeated it to him at coming away, that as he was growing old, and his own country, Ireland, was no place of refuge for him, that if any new convulsion should take place in France that should render his situation unfortunate, I would pay the expence of his passage to the Captain that brought him, in case he could not do it himself, and make his old age easy to him. It is probable he may mention this to you, or you may say, if you see it proper, that you have heard me say it in America. It will serve to make him more confidential with you.

Madget is not a man of whom it is necessary to ask questions; only give him the opportunity of telling, and he will make a merit of it, and the more so, if he joins to it the idea that you come on the good mischief of preventing mischief.

In viewing this subject to a distance of time beyond the present state of things, it will, I think, be a measure of precaution to get Spain to sign or attest the cession, even if cost something as a compliment.

I feel it difficult to believe that the present state of things in France is very durable, and should a change take place there is no foreseeing what that change may be. In all the changes that have succeeded every other since the overthrow of the monarchy, the treaties made under the monarchy, being considered as national, were respected. But if a total going back to the ancient regime should take place, the power that then succeed[s] will consider every [thing] done since the overthrow of the Monarchy as done under a usurpation, and that nothing then done is binding. It is for this reason that I think the signature of Spain to the treaty of cession will be a good precaution. T.P.

Broome Street, New York, Dec. 30 '07

DEAR SIR: I congratulate and welcome you very sincerely on your return home. The British Government is mad and every thing [they] do or attempt to do prove them to be so. I received a letter from London dated Oct[ober] 15 which I have sent for publication to the Philadelphia Aurora. The writer says, "It is believed here (London) that war with America is resolved on."

I have numerous friends in England, and perhaps you are acquainted with some of them. Do you know Sir Francis Burdett, or Col. Bosville of Wilbeck Street. They came to Paris a short time before I left it for America and I received great attention and friendship from them. They are strong Rights of Man's Men.

If I recollect right some Bankers at Brussels, I think Baron Walkers was one, made you an offer when you were at Paris of a loan of money for the United States. Should we get into trouble with the unprincipled government of England a resource of this kind may be useful. I remind you of it that you may, if you see it proper, mention it to the President.

If you have any information respecting the condition of England or the policy and plans of its government that I can make a good use of without saying how I came by it, I will be obliged to you for it. Is there any talk of a descent upon England? I wish to see that corrupt, unprincipled and oppressive government pulled down.

I hold my health very well, but I am a great deal disabled in my powers of walking. Present my compliments and respects to Mrs. Monroe. Yours in Friendship, THOMAS PAINE.

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