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# American History from German Archives.

BY J. G. ROSENGARTEN.

(Read before the American Philosophical Society,  
April 16, 1900.)

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While a body of able historians, McMaster, Rhoades, Fisk, Schouler and others, are enriching the world by an admirable series of works on American history, there still remains another field for historical research of interest and value. There are in Germany many papers dealing with the services of the Germans who were here as soldiers under the British flag and took an active and important part in the War of American Independence. Bancroft and Lowell, Kapp and Ratterman have collected and used such material as they could gather. General Stryker, in his *History of the Battle of Trenton*, has added largely to our stock of material for a better knowledge of the contents of the German Archives, still carefully preserved at Marburg and Berlin; and other collections of German records. It was through Kapp's labors that Bancroft added to his own collections, now belonging to the New York Public Library, and deposited in the Lenox Library of that city. These include Steuben's letters, Riedesel's papers, the Anspach papers, the Brunswick papers, Ewald's *Feldzug der Hessen nach Amerika*, *Geschichte der Hessischen Yäger in Amerikanischen Kriege*, fourteen

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volumes of German MSS., diaries and journals of Wiederhold, Malzburg, the Lossberg Regiment, von Malsingen, Papet, Wiederhold, the Third Waldeck Regiment, Lotheisen, Reuber, Piel, Döhla, Ruffer, Dinklage, the Hessian Yäger Regiment and many volumes of reports on the battles of Long Island, Bennington, the Brandywine, and State papers relating to Prussia and America, Prussia and France, Prussia and Holland, Prussia and England and Washington and Frederick the Great, in all forty MS. volumes bearing on the American Revolution.

Sparks in his collection, now deposited in the Library of Harvard University, had a collection of papers of Steuben, the MS. of DeKalb's mission to America in 1768 (since printed in part in French), and the correspondence of Frederick the Great with his Ministers in London and Paris during the American War of Independence, procured in Berlin in 1844 by Wheaton, then American Minister there. In the *Magazine of American History* for 1877 there is a translation by A. A. Bierstadt of Bauermeister's *Narrative of the Capture of New York*, addressed to Captain von Wangenheim. This was part of the Bancroft collection. In the same volume is De Lancey's account of the capture of Fort Washington, with a map, from the original in Cassel, obtained by Prof. Joy for Mr. J. Carson Brevoort. The New York Historical Society has printed the journal of Krafft, a volunteer and corporal in Donop's regiment and a lieutenant in that of von Bose, who married in New York, became a clerk in the Treasury Department at Washington and died there in 1804. That Society has also printed the *Journal of General Rainsford*, the British commissary in charge of the German forces sent to this country by Great Britain. General Stryker obtained from the Archives at Marburg and Cassel many important papers freely and well used in his capital history of the *Battle of Trenton*. They include the court of inquiry of the Lossberg, Knyphausen and Rall regiments, lists of their officers and of those of the artillery and Yägers; maps by Wiederhold, Fischer and Piel; the letters of Donop and Rall, of the Elector of Hesse to Knyphausen; diaries of Piel, Mínnigerode, Wiederhold and Ewald; reports of Donop's spies; and altogether some twenty MSS., all dealing with the battle of Trenton.

Mr. Charles Gross gave, in the *New York Evening Post*, an account of his visit to the Marburg Archives, where he found the journal of the Hessian corps in America under General v. Heister;

reports of Heister and of his successor in command, v. Knyphausen, and many hundreds of unbound papers. In the Kriegs Archiv (the War Office) in Berlin there are many official reports and many papers not arranged or catalogued.

Frederick Kapp described the Marburg Archives as including ten folio volumes of paper relating to the part taken by the Hessian corps in the American Revolution, the negotiations of the Landgrave and his Minister, v. Schlieffen, with the English Government, the correspondence of the commanding officers, with reports of operations, maps, sketches, etc. There are three volumes of the proceedings of the court-martial on the battle of Trenton, a number of Hessian war records indexed by Colonel Sturmfeder and hundreds of letters written by officers to their families, who were directed by the Landgrave to send them to him for perusal—involuntary but very good and complete witnesses of what they saw in America. Mr. J. Edward Lowell, author of that capital book, *The Hessians in the American Revolution*, in a paper printed in the second volume, second series of *Massachusetts Historical Society's Proceedings*, speaks of thirty-seven regimental journals and twelve volumes of papers at Marburg, and twenty-five in Cassel, in addition to a large collection in Berlin, a fragment of a journal of the Waldeck regiment at Arolsen, and that of an officer of the Anspach regiment in the Anspach Library. In his *Hessians in America*, Mr. Lowell refers to a dozen diaries and journals in the collection at Cassel. A copy of one of these, that of Wiederhold, which I own, covers the period from October 7, 1776, to December 7, 1780, with seventeen colored maps, plans, etc. At the end there is a note that Wiederhold died in Cassel in 1805, when the original descended to his son, who died at Marburg in 1863. From him it passed to his son, who went to America in 1880, but since then has not been heard from, so that the original has been lost or is, at least, no longer accessible. Bancroft and Washington Irving used copies (without the maps, etc.) made for them and speak of it as very valuable. Bound up with my copy are extracts from letters of Henel and Henkelman and Ries, giving an account of the capture of Fort Washington and the order changing the name to Fort Knyphausen; a list of the Hessian regiments and their commanders, and a memorandum that each battalion was ordered to keep an exact journal in duplicate, of which one copy was to be filed in the State Archives; lists of the troops sent to America and their

organization and general and field officers; list of casualties at the capture of Fort Washington, signed by Knyphausen; a bibliography of German books on the share of the German troops in the American War of Independence, among them the memoirs of Ochs and Senden, who lived to be general officers; various magazine articles on the same subject; the diary of a Hessian officer, Lt. v. Heister, in the *Zeitschrift für Kunst des Krieges*, Berlin, 1828; a fragment of an apparently original diary of a soldier, a copy of that of Rechnagel; extracts from the journal of Donop, and from that of the court of inquiry on the battle of Trenton; with reports of the Lossberg, Knyphausen and Rall regiments in that affair, and of Schäffer, Matthaeus, Baum, Pauli, Biel, Martin, all dated Philadelphia, 1778, and the finding of the court, dated April 23, 1782, and a fragment of its report. The author of this diary, Andreas Wiederhold, was a lieutenant in Rall's regiment and afterwards captain in the Knyphausen regiment. Lowell, in his capital book on *The Hessians in America*, makes frequent use of this diary, and in a note says that Ewald mentions Wiederhold as distinguished in 1762, so that he could not have been a very young man when he served here. Lowell used a copy in the Cassel Library, and notes that "it was made from the original by the husband of Wiederhold's granddaughter, and contains several interesting appendices," so mine may be a counterpart.

For many years Germany showed a good deal of regret for the part played by its soldiers in the English service in our struggle for independence. With her own rise and growth in importance as a nation, she has begun to assert the value of the services of the German allies of the British army. Eelking wrote an exhaustive history of their achievements, and Kapp a valuable book on the subject. Not long since a Hessian, Treller, published quite a good historical novel, *Forgotten Heroes*, in which he paid tribute to the Germans who fought under the English flag in America. Recently, another German author, Moritz von Berg, printed a long historical romance on the same subject, dedicated to the great-grandson of General von Heister, the leader of the Hessian soldiers in America. The story is drawn largely from the papers of the times still preserved in the public offices and by private families in the country which sent its sons to fight here. The scenes described contrast the home-life of the Hessians at the time and the new country in which the young soldiers made their campaigns,



and the historical portion deals with the Elector of Hesse and his share in supplying soldiers to his cousin, the King of England, to help in reducing his rebellious subjects in America. The events of the American War of Independence are followed very closely, and in an appendix are a number of hitherto unprinted letters and some documents drawn from the Archives at Marburg and from Eelking and other historical sources.

The book has value and interest as showing that Germany to-day takes a curious pride in the share her sons played in the history of the United States. Of even greater interest is the diary of a Hessian officer at the time of the American War of Independence, recently printed at Pyritz, on the anniversary of the founding of the Royal Bismarck Gymnasium of that place. It is the journal of Captain von Dörnberg, preserved by his family at their home in Hesse. It covers the period from March, 1779, to June, 1781, and gives his letters home from the time he left with his command until his return on the staff of General Knyphausen. There is a brief historical sketch of the War of American Independence, intended for the use of the boys of the Gymnasium or High School, and a short sketch of the life of the writer, who, after serving in the war with Napoleon and later as Hessian Minister in London, died in Cassel in 1819. His diary, journal and letters are mostly written in French, for that was the court language of the day, and his clever pencil sketches served to heighten their interest for the home circle, while their preservation until their recent publication shows that his descendants are not ashamed of his share of that service, which at least made America better known to the people of Germany, while it gave them lessons of value for their own improvement in the art of war. Although the campaigns took him through both North and South, it is characteristic of the German fidelity to duty that his descriptions are limited to his own modest share in the business of soldiering, and that he nowhere gives the slightest intimation that he saw the future greatness of the new republic. In this respect he and his countrymen were greatly unlike the French, whose letters and descriptions were full of their anticipations of the country to whose independence they contributed alike in men and money. The Dörnberg diary, however, has the value of an original and hitherto unprinted addition to the contemporary records of the American Revolution by one who did his best to prevent its successful issue.

Then there are novels by Spielhagen and by Norden, dealing

with the adventures of the German soldiers serving in the English army in the American Revolution.

The editor of the Dörnberg diary, Gotthold Marseille, headmaster of the Gymnasium at Pyritz, speaks of a privately printed family history of the Schlieffens, belonging to the present head of the family living in Pyritz, with a full account of the negotiations of Count Martin von Schlieffen, as Minister of Landgraf Frederick II of Hesse Cassel, with Colonel Faucit as the representative of George III. He also refers to Ewald's book on *Light Infantry*, published in Cassel in 1785, on his return from America, where he had learned many useful lessons, afterwards put in practice in his reorganization of the German troops for service in the wars with Napoleon. The continuation of Dörnberg's diary will add another to the numerous list of original papers by those who actually served here.

Pausch's journal was printed by Stone as No. 14 of *Munsell's Historical Series*, Albany, 1887, and as he was chief of the Hanau artillery during Burgoyne's campaign it has, of course, special interest. General Stryker got through Mr. Pendleton, then Minister in Berlin, an order from the younger Bismarck, then an assistant to his father, to examine the records at Marburg, and through a German, long resident in Trenton, he procured about a thousand pages of MS., covering everything relating to the Hessians at Trenton. The substance of this is now published in General Stryker's admirable and exhaustive *History of the Battle of Trenton*, rich in its original material, reproduced in text and notes and appendices for students of history. Taking advantage of the fact that a nephew was studying at Marburg, I wrote to him that Lowell said a descriptive catalogue of the Archives there relating to the American War of Independence could be made for six hundred marks, and asked him to call on Dr. Konnicke, for many years in charge. In reply to questions on the subject, he said it would cost four or five thousand marks and take a long time, adding that Eelking was too biassed to be trustworthy and he (Konnicke) had no sympathy with Americans. He, however, showed his collection of *Berichte*, *Tagebücher*, registers, letters between the Landgraf and Knyphausen. An assistant was much more agreeable and ready to give all the help in his power, and I still think that such a catalogue of the American records at Marburg would be well worth getting. The renewed interest of the Hessians in the part their ancestors took

in the American War of Independence is shown in a lecture on the subject by Colonel v. Werthern, of the Hussar Regiment Hesse Homburg, delivered by him at the officers' Casino and printed at Cassel in 1895. He refers to Eelking and to von Pfister's unfinished work on the same subject, Cassel, 1864, and to letters printed in the *Preussische Militär Wochenblatt* in 1833, and in the second volume of the *Kurkessischen Zeitschrift*. Colonel v. Werthern says his special purpose is to enlist the interest of owners of letters and journals of those who took part in the war, some of which had been shown to him. The publication of the Dörnberg diary shows that good results have followed his appeal. He estimates the number who remained in America as about 4500, and no doubt many of them became good Americans. He mentions the fact that the young volunteer, Ochs, who has left a capital book on his experiences as a soldier in America, rose to be a general in the Hessian army, and left a son who served from 1836 to 1850, and finally was in command of the regiment which Colonel v. Werthern was addressing in 1895.

Not without interest is Popp's diary—he was a soldier in the Bayreuth Anspach regiment—who came to this country in his twenty-second year, an illiterate young fellow. He began his diary on June 26, 1777, and carried it on after his return home, adding some curious verses—Das Lied von Ausmarsch, and Gedenken über die Hergabe der beiden Markgrathümer Bayreuth u. Anspach in Franken an das Königliche Haus-Preussen—in which, with great patience and ingenuity, the left-hand column is a strong thanksgiving, but reading across the lines there is a right-hand column in which the Lord's Prayer is so divided as to change the sense into a bitter diatribe for this transfer of sovereignty. The original is preserved in the City Library of Bayreuth. It closes with some notes as late as 1796, and has some very good maps of the operations on the Hudson, on the Delaware and around Philadelphia. The copy of it which I own was made for me at Bayreuth, but the Librarian there said that he knew of no other material of the kind preserved in either public or private collections in that quaint old town so full of memories of the eighteenth century. In a little book of *Stories of Hessian War History*, by Freiherr v. Dittfürth—the name is of interest as it was that of one of the Hessian regiments which served here—there is a statement that from one Hessian village thirty men were sent with vari-

ous regiments to America, and twelve of them were heads of families. Reuber's diary shows that of these thirty only two died here and one remained in America. A large proportion of the so-called Hessians were volunteers from other parts of Germany, attracted by the high pay and the good care given by the British to their soldiers. In those days of distress and need, Germans were only too glad to escape compulsory military service in Prussia and other German States by volunteering in the regiments raised for the American war and its prospect of a new home.

Ditfürth demonstrates the utter falsity of the pretended letter of the Prince of Hesse Cassel, dated Rome, February 8, 1778, now accepted as one of Franklin's characteristic and clever bits of satire directed against Great Britain and its allies. It seems to have been revived in the German press in 1847 through an American "historian," Eugene Regnaud, of the *St. Louis Reuille*, and printed by Dr. Franz Löher, Professor and Member of the Royal Bavarian Academy of Sciences, in his *History of Germans in America*, Leipsic and Cincinnati, 1847, as an interesting, if doubtful, contribution to the contemporary documents of the American Revolution. A careful answer was supplied in the *Grenzboten* of 1858 (No. 29) by the Keeper of the Archives at Cassel, in copies or extracts from the MS. correspondence of the Landgraf Frederick II with Heister and Knyphausen in reference to the Hessian losses at Trenton. In fact, the regiments that suffered most there now make that battle part of their record of honor. It is one of their traditions that Ewald first threw aside the powdered queues and heavy boots of the Hessians, clothing his Yäger battalion in a fashion suited to American climate and conditions, and thus set the example followed with great advantage in the Napoleonic wars. Other Hessian officers who had served here, notably Münchhausen, Wiederhold, Ochs, Emmerich, Ewald and others, applied the lessons they had learned here and became distinguished among the soldiers who showed great ability in restoring to Germany its independence of French mastery. The reputation brought home by the Hessians who served in America led Frederick the Great of Prussia to try to secure for his army the services of their officers, particularly of the Light Infantry and Yägers. Many of them won distinction in the wars with Napoleon against the French officers who had also served against them in America. The army lists of France, Germany and England are full of the names of those who

had learned useful lessons in the art of war in the American Revolution. Even the pay, clothing, food and allowances of the Hessian soldiers were increased in order to secure something like the advantageous conditions under which officers and men served under the British flag in America and in the other wars and expeditions that were carried on largely by German allied troops.

Of the German diaries and journals now accessible in print there are :

1. Melsheimer, printed in Montreal from a copy furnished by Stone.
2. Papet, in *Pennsylvania Magazine of History*.
3. Döhla, printed by Ratterman in *Deutsch. Amerik. Magazin*, Vol. i, No. 1, October, 1866.
4. Pausch, printed by Stone in *Munsell's Series*.
5. Baurmeister, in *Mag. of Amer. History*, 1877, by Bierstadt, of the N. Y. Historical Society.
6. Riedesel's *Letters, in His Life* by Eelking, reprinted in a translation by Stone.
7. Madame von Riedesel's *Letters*, first printed in Berlin in 1801, and since then in several editions both in Germany and in this country.
8. Schubert v. Senden's Journal (an extract was printed in 1839 in Vol. xlvii of the *Journal for Art, Science and History of War*, Berlin, Mittler).

Of others not yet printed there are MSS.:

1. Malsburg, mentioned by Eelking as in his possession in Meiningen in 1862. Of it Bancroft's collection (now in the Lenox Library, N. Y.) has a copy in two volumes, made by Kapp's direction, with his note that "Malsburg was a superficial observer and reporter," as well as of:—
2. Reuter's, of Rall's regiment, 1776-83.
3. Lotheisen's Journal of the Leib (Body Guard) Regiment, 1776-84, with a description of Philadelphia in 1777-7. Eelking notes that he had compared the original signed by Lotheisen, Marburg, August 1, 1784, with the copy.
4. Piel, Lossberg Regiment, 1776-83, Vol. i, includes Diary of Voyage, 1782, and Extracts from Trenton Court of Inquiry.
5. Steuernagel, Waldeck Regiment, 1776-83.
6. Wiederhold, Diary.
7. Ewald, *Feldzög der Hessen in Amerika*, copied from Ephemeriden, Marburg, 1785.

8. Journal of Lowenstein Regiment.
9. That of Plattes Battalion by Bauer.
10. That of Lossberg Regiment by Heusser.
11. That of Huyn Regiment by Kleinschmidt.
12. That of the Feldjäger Corps.
13. That of the Trumbach Regiment.
14. That of the Knoblauch Regiment.
15. That of the Mirbach Regiment.
16. Reports of Knyphausen and Riedesel.

Of printed books by Germans who served here, many are noteworthy, for instance, Friedrich Adolph Julius von Wangenheim, first lieutenant and later captain on the staff; came in 1777 from the ducal Gotha service into the Hessian Yäger Corps, and remained in it after the war. He published in Göttingen in 1781 a *Description of American Trees*, with reference to their use in German forests, and this little volume, dated at Staten Island, was, after his return, reprinted in 1787 in a handsome illustrated folio. He afterwards entered the Prussian forestry service and established near Berlin a small collection of American trees, still preserved with pride by his successors in office in charge of it and named "America."

Dr. Johann David Schöpf was a military surgeon in the German forces serving here during the American Revolution, and he printed in 1781 an account of his medical experiences, which was translated and reprinted in Boston in 1875. He also printed in 1787 a *Materia Medica Americanis Septentrionalis Potissimum Regni Vegetabilis*, in which he used material supplied to him by G. H. E. Muhlenberg, of Lancaster. Later he returned here and his *Travels*, published in 1788, are well known, and he did even greater service by making American botanists and men of other scientific pursuits better known to those of Germany by exchange of letters, etc.

In 1817 General Baron von Ochs published in Cassel his observations on *Modern Art of War*, containing much of his personal experiences during his service in this country as a subaltern. His *Life* has a very good account of his services in this country.

In 1796 Ewald, then a lieutenant-colonel in the Danish service, published in Schleswig his *Service of Light Infantry*, already printed in Hesse Cassel in 1784; it is full of references to his personal experiences in America, and it is significant of the man

that, after carrying off from the Hopkinson house at Bordentown, N. J., the volume edited by Provost Smith of the College of Philadelphia, containing young Hopkinson's Prize Essay, he returned it with thanks, and the book is still in the possession of the Hopkinson family as one of their rare treasures. In his little book he reports what General Howe told him of his personal experience during the old French War in America, and confirms it by his success with light troops in the American War of Independence. He gives a curious picture of Philadelphia in 1778, when Colonel von Wurmb had charge of the expeditions sent out to bring in supplies. He divided his force into three parties: one went out on the Lancaster road, another out the Marshall road, and the third out the Darby road—these three roads being parallel and only a half hour's march apart—the woods that lined them being thoroughly searched by patrols, so that the enemy, in spite of Washington and Morgan, could never reach the foragers. He speaks of the success of the Americans in their attacks on small and large English forces not properly protected by light infantry outposts. His own experience in the Seven Years' War in Europe was of service to him in America, and that again increased his efficiency in the war with France and Germany. He describes Pulaski's failure at Egg Harbor, and Donop's at Red Bank, and Arnold's in Virginia, and Armand's at Morristown, and Tarleton's success, and his own, as examples of what light infantry can do or fail in, just as they are well or badly led. He criticises Howe's failure to follow up his success at Brandywine, and calls it building a golden bridge for the enemy thus to neglect to drive him with fresh troops when he is in retreat. In the Jerseys, on Rhode Island, at Germantown, in Virginia, he saw just such examples of the neglect to use light infantry to advantage, and he points out many instances in which their value was shown on both sides. Ewald also printed at Schleswig, in 1798, 1800 and 1803, three small volumes, *Belehrungen über den Krieg*, with anecdotes of soldiers from Alexander and Pompey to Frederick the Great and Napoleon, and some of his own personal experience in America.

Seume, a well-known German writer, wrote at Halifax in 1782 his account of his experience in the Hessian service; it was first printed in Archenholz' Journal in 1789, and a translation is in the *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* for November, 1887; it is also found in his Autobiography, published in his col-

lected works, and the changes between this and the earlier version have been unfavorably commented on.

Schlözer's *Briefwechsel*, ten volumes, 1776-1782, and his *Staats Anzeigen*, a continuation, in eighteen volumes, contain many papers of interest relating to the American War of Independence, notably a series of letters from an officer who served under Burgoyne, and dragged out weary months as a prisoner of war in Cambridge and later in Virginia. The Frankfort *Neuesten Staatsbegebenheiten* published letters by German officers describing the battle of Long Island.

v. Senden, *Tagebuch*, in *Zeitschrift für Geschichte des Krieges*, Berlin, Mittler, 8th and 9th parts, 1839. He too was a general officer at the time of his death.

v. Heister, *Diary*, in *Zeitschrift für Kunst des Krieges*, Berlin, Mittler, Vol. xii, No. 3, 1828.

Reimer, *Amerikanisches Archiv.*, 3 vols., Brunswick, 1777-8.

Melsheimer, *Tagebuch*, Minden, 1776.

Riedesel, Mme., *Die Berufsreise nach Amerika*, Berlin, 1801 (and frequently reprinted). One of the most charming books that can be found—full of womanly heroism.

Leiste, *Beschreibung des Britischen Amerika*, Wolfenbüttel, 1778.

Schlieffen, *Von den Hessen in Amerika*, 1782.

*Brunswick Magazine*, a Hessian journal reprinted in translation in the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, and a letter from the Duke to Riedesel advising all supernumerary officers and sick and wounded and men under punishment to remain in America.

*Der Hessische Officier in Amerika*, a comedy, Göttingen, 1783, has no great literary value or importance, but some local interest, as the scene is laid in Philadelphia during its occupancy by the British, and Indians, Quakers, British and German soldiers and native citizens are among the *dramatis persone*. If it was not written by some one who had been here, it shows at least considerable familiarity with the conflicting parties during the Revolution.

Of recent works dealing with the German soldiers in the British army during the American War of Independence, the most notable are :

Max von Eelking, *Die Deutschen Hilfstruppen im Nordamerikanischen Befreiungskriege, 1776 bis 1783*. Hanover, 1863, 2 vols. (An abridged translation was printed by Munsell in Albany in 1893.)



Eelking, *Leben und Wirken des Herzoglich Braunschweigschen General Lieutenants Friedrich Adolph von Riedesel*, Leipzig, 1856, 3 vols. (Stone's translation was printed by Munsell in Albany.) Esbeck, *Zweibrücken*, 1793.

Friedrich Kapp, *Der Soldatenhandel Deutschen Fürsten nach Amerika*, Berlin, 1864, and a second edition, 1874. His *Life of Steuben* and that of *De Kalb* were printed, the former in Berlin, 1858, and the latter in Stuttgart in 1862, and both in English in New York subsequently. His *Geschichte der Deutschen in Staate New York*, N. Y., 1869. His *Friedrich der Grosse und die Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika*, Leipzig, 1871.

Ferdinand Pfister, *Der Nordamerikamsche Unabhängigkeits Krieg*, Kassel, 1864.

An anonymous pamphlet, *Friedrich II und die neuere Geschichte Schreiben*, etc., Melsungen und Kassel, 1879, was translated (in an abridged form) and printed, with portraits of the two Electors of Hesse Cassel, father and son, who sent their soldiers to America under treaty with Great Britain, in *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* in July, 1899. Besides its defense of the Hessian princes on the ground that their alliance was in conformity with their traditional and historical coöperation with Great Britain, and a desperate and successful war in behalf of Protestant liberty against French tyranny and Romanism and the free-thinking Voltairianism of Frederick the Great of Prussia, it is of interest from its demonstration of the falsity of Seume's Autobiography, and from its denial of the authenticity of the pretended letter of the Elector of Cassel, urging his general not to cure sick and wounded Hessian soldiers, as the dead ones returned more profit to their Landesvater! It is somewhat odd that this very letter should be claimed for Franklin as one of his literary burlesques by Tyler in his *Literary History of the American Revolution* (see Vol. ii, pp. 377, 8-80), while Bigelow in his *Life of Franklin* (Vol. ii, p. 393) and in his *Works of Franklin* (Vol. v, pp. 224 and 243, and Vol. vi, pp. 4-8), says it was written by Franklin not long after his arrival in France, in the latter part of 1776, and "is in some respects the most powerful of all the satirical writings of Franklin, equaled only by Swift in evolving both the horror and the derision of mankind." Franklin, in a letter to John Winthrop, sends from Paris on May 1, 1777, "one of the many satires that have appeared on this occasion"—*i. e.*, the sale of soldiers by German princes.

This pretended letter of Count de Schaumburg is dated Rome, February 18, 1777, but is not printed in Sparks, or any of the authorized editions of Franklin's works. It still remains a question of when and where and how it was first printed and published,—it does not appear in Ford's *Franklin Bibliography*, which prints most of Franklin's clever *jeux d'esprit* that were printed on his press at Passy and soon found their way into print in Europe and America, but Ford printed it in his *Many-Sided Franklin*, p. 244; Bigelow says it appears in a French version in *Lescure Correspondence inédite secrète sur Louis XVI* (Vol. i, p. 31), Paris, but with no allusion to Franklin. No copy of it is found in the American Philosophical Society's collection of the imprints of the Passy Press, although Ford accepts Sparks' and Bigelow's attribution of the authorship to Franklin, and the internal evidence fully confirms the statement; it would be of interest to fix the time and place of its first publication, its fortune in being virulently attacked, and its use in exciting justifiable indignation against the Hessian princes who shared, with other German petty sovereigns, in the sale of subjects to fight under a foreign flag in a war which, as Frederick the Great said, was none of their business,—for these things have given it a value and importance far beyond the other satirical letters produced by Franklin at his busy Passy Press.

Bancroft tells us that Frederick the Great encouraged France to enter into the alliance with America—a counter stroke of vast importance, far outweighing in its advantages for the struggling young republic any benefit gained for Great Britain by its costly purchase of German soldiers. His hostility to England, however, did not lead him to fulfill his implied promise to join France in its active and substantial support of the Americans—no doubt rebellion and independence were more than he could encourage, little as he liked the British effort to crush them. It is curious that Lowell should speak of Franklin's smart satire as a clumsy forgery. Kapp, in his *Soldatenhandel* (Berlin, 1864), prints the letter in the Appendix 29, on p. 267, from Vol. No. 600 of the pamphlets in the Library of the Historical Society of New York, and described as printed on six octavo pages, without place of publication, but in very large type. He reproduces the original French with all its typographical mistakes; he prints on pp. 196-7 of his book a German version of the letter, and speaks of it as one of a flood of pamphlets, of which a very characteristic example was Mirabeau's

*Avis aux Hessois et autres Peuples de l'Allemagne, Vendus par leurs Princes à l'Angleterre*, à Cleves chez Bertol, 1777, which is now very rare, Kapp says, because the Elector of Cassel bought up all the copies he could find. It is very characteristic of the two, Mirabeau and Franklin, that the latter refers to his now famous letter only once, and that in sending it to his friend Winthrop, as one of the issues of the press then current, it nowhere appears in his printed works or correspondence, but in the *Life of Mirabeau*, by his son, it is said that the first work written by Mirabeau in Amsterdam was the pamphlet *Avis aux Hessois*, pp. 12, 1775, that it was translated into five languages, and reprinted twice by Mirabeau, in *L'Espion dévalisé*, chap. 16, pp. 195-209, and in *L'Essai sur le despotisme*, pp. 509-18, Paris, Le Gay, 1792, and Mirabeau himself speaks of it in his *Lettres de Vincennes* on March 14, 1784, and March 24, 1786. A reply to it, *Conseils de la raison*, was published in Amsterdam in 1777, by Smidorf, supposed to be inspired by the Minister of the Elector of Hesse Cassel, Schlieffen; to it Mirabeau replied in return in his *Réponse aux Conseils de la Raison*. All of these and other pamphlets, such as Raynal's on the side of the Americans, are now forgotten, but Franklin's clever skit continues to be reprinted and read, and to keep alive the feeling against the German princes who sent their soldiers to fight in a war which, as Frederick the Great said, was none of their business. However, the fact remains that it was through these Germans that America got many good citizens from their ranks, and better still, many of those who went home wrote of this country in a way that quickened emigration, in which, indeed, some of them took their part later on.

To this and similar attacks the Elector, through his Minister, Schlieffen, made answers in the Dutch newspapers, then the most largely sold; because they were free from censorship. Abbé Raynal, then an accepted historical authority, supported Mirabeau's attack by one that was met by Schlieffen in 1782. Kapp says Franklin himself both inspired and drew from this flood of French pamphlets against Great Britain and its German allies; but Kapp attributes this Hohendorff letter not to Franklin but to some French pamphleteer of Mirabeau's circle, and says it was revived by Löher at the time of the Know-Nothing agitation, and attributed to a St. Louis paper, although its falsity was shown in an article printed in the *New Military Journal*, Darmstadt, 1858, No. 14.

It was, as Bancroft tells us, a Count Schaumburg who acted as the go-between of the British Ministry, who made unsuccessful offers of pay for troops to the Duke of Saxe Weimar, dated Nov. 26, 1777: was that known to Franklin when he wrote his letter in the name of Count Schaumburg? No doubt he chose it in full consciousness that it would be familiar to his European readers, who would thoroughly enjoy seeing the English agent thus serving as a thin disguise for the Hessian prince, and the indignation excited by this clever and effective bit of satire would be directed alike against master and man, against prince and agent, together trading for soldiers.

In the French service under Rochambeau there were many German soldiers, and Ratterman in *Der Deutsche Pionier*, Vol. xiii, 1881, gives an account of them, notably the Zweibrücken regiment, of which two princes or counts of that name were respectively colonel and lieutenant-colonel. It is worth noting that Lafayette wrote to Washington of a visit to them in Zweibrücken long after the American war, when he met "Old Knyp" and officers who had served both with and against him there. There was a battalion from Trier in the Saintonge regiment under Custine, himself from Lothringen. There were Alsations and Lothringers in light companies attached to the Bourbonnais and Soissonais regiments. There were many Germans in the Duke de Lauzun's cavalry legion, whose names are printed from the records preserved in Harrisburg. In the army that made part of d'Estaing's expedition against Savannah, in the autumn of 1779, there was an "Anhalt" regiment, 600 strong; of individual German officers with Rochambeau there were Count Fersen, his chief of staff, Freiherr Ludwig von Closen Haydenburg, his adjutant, Capt. Gau, his chief of artillery, and a Strasburg Professor Lutz, his interpreter. The Count of Zwei-Brücken (Deux-Ponts) published his *American Campaigns* in Paris in 1786, and his pamphlet was translated and reprinted by Dr. Green, of the Massachusetts Historical Society. Count Stedingk and Count Fersen both took service with Sweden, the latter to fall a victim to a popular outbreak, the former to take part in the Peace of Paris in 1814.

Von Closen returned to Europe, became an officer of the household of Marie Antoinette, and died in 1830, at Zweibrücken. Custine rose to high command in the French Revolution only to end his days on the guillotine; his biography has been printed

both in French and German. Ratterman thinks at least one-third of Rochambeau's army at Yorktown consisted of Germans, Alsations, Lothringers and Swiss. Gen. Weedon, he says, was born in Hanover, served in the Austrian War, 1742-81, and for his services at Dettingen was promoted first to ensign and next to lieutenant, coming in that rank to America in the Royal American Regiment under Bouquet. He became a captain in the Third Virginia, and colonel of the First Virginia, and later a brigadier-general of the Continental army. The Germans under Ewald were driven back by the Germans under Armand at Gloucester, Va., and in the siege of Yorktown, Deux-Ponts led his Germans in the attack on a redoubt defended by Hessians, and at several points commands were given on both sides in German. Washington and the King of France both commended the valor of the Zweibrücken regiment. German soldiers held the trenches on both sides when the surrender was finally made. German regiments under the French and American flags received the surrender of German regiments—Anspach, Hessian, serving under the British flag—and the officers and men joined in warm greetings; the Anspachers offered to serve with their countrymen in Lauzun's Legion, an offer declined as a violation of the terms of capitulation. The German novelist Sealsfield, in his story *Morton*, Stuttgart, 1844, describes Steuben's share in this crowning victory. Mr. J. F. Sachse has drawn from his large store of material a letter written by the Duke of Brunswick on February 8, 1783, to Gen. Riedesel, in view of the return of his force to Germany, in which he says that as not half of his officers and subordinates can remain in active service at home, while many of them must be reduced in rank and more discharged altogether, all who can had better remain in America, as he would not burthen his people and his war budget with pensions for young and able-bodied men; he therefore authorizes and recommends the discharge of officers, especially those of the staff, with six months' pay out of the regimental funds; non-commissioned officers, too, should be encouraged to take their discharge and stay in America, so that companies may be reduced to fifty in the infantry and thirty-six in the dragoons, and these must all be natives of Brunswick; all men under punishment or charged with offenses or physically unfitted must be left behind. Chaplains, paymasters, surgeons, etc., who can make their living in America, were recommended to stay here. In this way, and with those who died in the service or deserted,

the force returning to Brunswick was greatly reduced. This letter is printed in the *Brunswick Magazine* of June 4, 1825; the same and earlier numbers contain extracts from Papet's diary, which was then in possession of his son-in-law, Captain Heusler, in Brunswick. It was not until April 29, 1783, that peace was officially pronounced to the troops, and they sailed from Quebec on August 1st for a six weeks' voyage home.

Papet says that the deserters had a price put on their heads, and many of them were arrested and brought back, so that the Duke's orders were not very literally obeyed. On their return to Brunswick the division was reduced to an infantry regiment of two battalions and a small dragoon regiment. Among them were some black men enlisted by Gen. Riedesel as drummers. Until 1806 the dragoons served as guard of the palace—a sort of recognition of their services. Riedesel named one daughter "Canada," she died in Canada; and another "America," who died in 1856. Eelking adds to his *Life of Riedesel* a list of officers, and among them Chaplain Melsheimer figures as a deserter, in 1779; while Paymaster Thomas remained in America after the peace of 1783, and so did Lieut. v. Reizenstein, Lieut. v. König, Ensign Langerjahn, Ensign Kolte, Lieut. Bielstein, Lieut. Conradi, Lieut. v. Pui-seger, and Ensign Specht, while some of those reported "deserters" and "missing" no doubt remained in America. It is curious that in Riedesel's *Life*, with its voluminous correspondence with the Duke of Brunswick, there is no mention of the letter recommending that his officers and men should be encouraged to remain in America. It looks very much as if Eelking thought it indiscreet to print it, as likely to invite hostile criticism, a caution that does not seem to have deterred the editor of the *Brunswick Magazine* in 1825, a time when the censor kept a sharp eye on anything that might lessen the respect for the Landesvater. In its way it fully justifies Franklin's clever skit at the Elector of Hesse in the fictitious letter to his commander in America. There must still remain in Marburg and Cassel and Berlin and Brunswick, and in the private families of Germany, much interesting and valuable material throwing light on the Germans who served under the British flag in the War of American Independence. Is it not well worth while to get a complete descriptive catalogue of the papers in the Marburg Archives? The expense would not be great, and that once secured, it would not be difficult to have similar catalogues made for other

public collections. In the meantime efforts could be made to print such items of these catalogues as are new, and to enlist the help of private owners of papers of the kind in securing copies to use in printing in part or in whole for historical students.

There is no better example of the interest in such material than the letters of Mme. Riedesel. Printed in Berlin in 1800, and again in 1801, they first became known to English readers through portions of them printed by Gen. Wilkinson in his *Memoirs*, and reprinted in Silliman's *Tour in Canada*. In Germany they were reprinted in 1827, and again in 1881.

The original edition was intended only for the family, and Gen. Riedesel himself died in 1800, before it appeared. His widow survived until 1808. Her daughters "Canada" and "America" perpetuate in their names their place of birth. The only son died in 1854, and with a grandson the last of the family ended. American readers will always find interest in Mme. Riedesel's simple narrative of her life here. Mme. Riedesel's *Letters* were first issued in 1799 in a privately printed edition for the family and their friends, and regularly published in 1800; the latest German edition is that published in Tübingen in 1881, in which the letters of Riedesel, together with brief biographies of husband and wife, and an account of their children are given. It is stated in the Preface that of the 4300 Brunswick soldiers led by Riedesel from Germany to America only 2600 returned home with him. Of the 1700 lost to their native country many were of course a gain for America. Riedesel died on January 5, 1800, after a harsh experience in the Napoleonic wars. His wife died on March 29, 1808; their only son died in 1854, and the daughter "Canada" died in childhood; the daughter "America" married and left children.

General Stryker in the Appendix to his *History of the Battle of Trenton* prints (on pp. 396, etc.) the pretended letter from the Landgraf of Hesse, in which there is mention of the losses at Trenton, and at p. 401 Gen. Heister's report of that battle, and on p. 403 the real letter written by the Prince of Hesse to Knyphausen, dated Cassel, 16th June, 1777, in which he speaks of the painful shock of the news, and directs a court of inquiry to investigate and a court-martial to try those responsible, and another of April 23, 1779, insisting on a detailed explanation of the captains and others as to the finding of the original court; these proceedings continued and a final verdict was arrived at in New York in Jan-

uary, 1782, accompanied by a petition for mercy for those inculped but surviving. Rall and Dechow had paid the penalty with their lives. This was signed (among others) by Schlieffen in April, 1782, and thus that incident was closed by the Elector's pardon to the survivors from the penalty imposed by the court-martial. The actual correspondence consisted of Gen. v. Heister's report, dated New York, January 5, 1777, answered by the Elector on April 7, regretting that Rall should have been entrusted with a post to which he was not entitled by seniority or service. That Kapp is mistaken in crediting the pretended letter to Mirabeau is best shown by comparing his wordy *Avis aux Hessois* with the short, sharp, pungent letter that bears internal evidence of Franklin's master hand. Reprinted by Ford and Stryker and Bigelow and Tyler, it is easily accessible, while the *Avis aux Hessois* of Mirabeau is much less known, and a reprint of it may be of interest as one of the forgotten pamphlets of the man who later on played such a leading part in the French Revolution, yet failed to do for his country a tithe of the good that Franklin did for America. Still, it must not be forgotten that Mirabeau was one of the earliest French advocates of American independence, and that his *Avis aux Hessois* was a warning note, the opening of a war of words, of a long-drawn-out battle of pamphlets, in which the American cause was fought for by French allies on the one side, and on the other by Germans in the pay of English and Hessian authorities. Undoubtedly Mirabeau's influence led Beaumarchais to his best efforts to supply men and provisions and munitions of war for the American cause, culminating, largely, no doubt, through Franklin's efforts, in the alliance which played so great a part in the final result.

Of even greater value, however, is Schiller's eloquent protest in his *Kabale und Liebe* against the sale of German soldiers to Great Britain to be used against America. Frederick the Great denounced his cousin of Hesse for selling his subjects to the English as one sells cattle to be dragged to the shambles. Napoleon made it one of his reasons for overthrowing the house of Hesse Cassel and making the country part of the Kingdom of Westphalia, over which his brother reigned. Lowell praises Mirabeau's pamphlet as an eloquent protest against the rapacity of the German princes who sold their subjects to Great Britain, and a splendid tribute to the patriotism of the Americans. Fortunately the large number of Germans who served in the American army on the patriot side,



from Steuben and De Kalb down to the humblest soldiers, greatly helped to secure American independence. Although Franklin's letter is printed in both Ford and Bigelow's lives and books of Franklin, it may not be without interest to reproduce the original French and the pamphlet by Mirabeau, *Avis aux Hessois*, the first of a long series of pamphlets, notably those by Schlieffen on the German side and by Raynal on the American side, for in their day these were most effective weapons in that war of pamphlets and books which greatly strengthened the American cause abroad. These copies I owe to the kindness of Mr. Wilberforce Eames, of the Lenox Branch of the New York Public Library; the originals are part of the wealth of original papers and pamphlets and books collected by Mr. Bancroft as material for his history and now owned by the Lenox Library. Their free use for students of American history is one of the advantages of this present generation.

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 APPENDIX.

## I.

 LETTRE DU LANDGRAVE DE HESSE, AU COMMANDANT DE SES  
 TROUPES EN AMERIQUE.

Monsieur le Baron de Hogendorf je ne puis assés vous témoigner combien la Relation que vous m'avez Envoyé m'a comble de joye—l'a conduite de mes hessois qui sont fait Immoles si heroiquement pour une cause qui nous est si Etrangere, confirme toute l'opinion que j'avois de leurs bravoure, & Justifie l'Espoir que j'avois fondée sur leur attachement à mes Interêts—mais je ne puis pardonner aux novellistes Anglois d'avoir diminué si fort, le nombre de nos morts—pourquoy n'avoir, pas à vouée franchement, qu'aulieu de neuf cent nous en avons perdu 1700! En veritié je ne trouverois Guère mon Compte a ce calcule, & je ne puis l'attribuer qu-a un motif très Interresse de leurs part—ces Messieurs Croyent-ils donc, que trentes Guinnés de plus, ou de mois me sont Indifferents! & cela, après un voiage aussi couteux, que celuy que je viens de faire, & qui, m'a fait contracter tant de nouvelles dettes . . . non, mon cher, que votre Zèle pour mon service, & vos desirs, pour contribuer a mes plaisirs Redoublent defforts en secondant par tous les moiens possibles, toutes les Occasion qui pourois se presenter pour animer, de plus en plus mes fideles sujets a se sacrifier *Jusqu'au dernier même*. Pour Repondre à des vués aussi légitime, que necessaries.

Temoignés bien de m'apart au Colonel M—— combien je suis mécontent de la conduite qu'il a tenu jusqu-ici,—quoy? Le seul de tous nos corps qui n'a perdue qu'un seul homme jusqu'a présent —c'est, ce couvrir de honte, & Redoubler mes peines;—la Signora F—— que je viens, d'Engager en *Italie* va me couter au de la de Cinq cents Guinées par an, & puis ces Anglois, voudroient encore mechicaner sur les blessés, & les estro piés—mais non ils me les payeront selon le même Tarif fixé pour les morts—si non, j'aime mieux, quils Imitent l'Exemple de ceux qui se sont laissés prendre à Trenton—en effets—à quoy meserviroient ses miserables! ici? Ils ne sont plus a bon à Rien; d'ailleurs, ces maudits Rebelles qui, tirent toujours si bas, les auront sans doute Rendus Impuissants, mais quant à céla, les Jesuites que j'ai envie d'appéller dans mes etats, s'en acquitteront mille, & mille fois mieux, & Répareront bientôt, toute la de population, qui ne s'y manifeste déjà que trop, c'est un Expedient que m'a donné a Rome, le Cardinal T—— qui m'a promis de me menager cette affaire avec toute la dextérité Imaginable,—Vous ne sauriez croire (matil dit;) combien la vuë de tant de bellés Guinées Ranime la vigeur. Or quoy qu'il en arrive jouissons du présent & ne nous mettons pas en peine du Reste; sur ce, je prie Dieu, qu'il vous tienne Monsieur le Baron de Hogendorf, en sa sainte, & bonne Garde, à Cassel, 1777.

## II.

AVIS AUX HESSEIS ET AUTRES PEUPLES DE L'ALLEMAGNE  
VENDUS PAR LEURS PRINCES À L'ANGLETERRE.

À CLEVES. CHEZ BERTOL. 1777.

*Quis furor iste novus? quo nunc, quo tenditis?—  
Heu! miseri cives! non hostem, inimicaque castra;  
... Vestræ spes uritis.*—VIRG.

Intrépides Allemands! quelle flétrissure laissez vous imprimer sur vos fronts généreux! quoi! c'est à la fin du dix-huitième siècle, que les peuples du centre de l'Europe sont les satellites mercenaries d'un odieux Despotisme! *quoi!* ce sont ces valeureux Allemands, qui défendirent avec tant d'acharnement leur liberté contre les vainqueurs du monde, & braverent les armées Romaines, qui, semblables aux vils Africains, sont vendus & courent verser leur sang dans la cause des tyrans! ils souffrent qu'on fasse chez eux LE COMMERCE DES HOMMES! qu'on dépeuple leurs villes, qu'on épuise leurs campagnes, pour aider d'insolens dominateurs à ravager un autre hemisphère! . . . Par-tageres vous, longtems encore, le stupide aveuglement de vos maîtres

. . . . vous, respectables soldats ! fidèles & redoutables soutiens de leur pouvoir ! de ce pouvoir qui ne leur fut confié que pour protéger leurs sujets ! . . . . vous êtes vendus ! . . . . Eh ! pour quel usage ! justes dieux ! . . . . Amoncelés comme des troupeaux dans des navires étrangers, vous parcourez les mers : vous volez à travers les écueils & les tempêtes, pour attaquer des peuples qui ne vous ont fait aucun mal ; qui défendent la plus juste cause, qui vous donnent le plus noble des exemples. Eh ! que ne les imitez vous, ces peuples courageux, au lieu de vous efforcer de les détruire ! ils brisent leurs fers : ils combattent pour maintenir leurs droits naturels, & garantir leur liberté : ils vous tendent les bras : ils sont vos frères : ils sont doublement : la nature les fit tels, & des liens sociaux ont confirmé ces titres sacrés : plus de la moitié de ce peuple est composée de vos compatriotes, de vos amis, de vos parens. Ils ont fui la tyrannie aux extrémités du monde ; & la tyrannie les y a poursuivis : des oppresseurs, également avides & ingrats, leur ont forgé des fers ; & les respectables Américains ont aiguisé ces fers, pour repousser leurs oppresseurs. . . . Le nouveau monde va donc vous compter au nombre des monstres, affamés d'or & de sang, qui l'ont ravagé ! Allemands, dont la loyauté fut toujours le caractère distinctif, ne frémissez vous pas d'un tel reproche ? A ces motifs, faits pour toucher des hommes, faut-il joindre ceux d'un intérêt également pressant pour des esclaves & des citoyens libres ?

Savez vous quelle nation vous allez attaquer ? Savez vous ce que peut le fanatisme de la liberté ? C'est le seul qui ne soit pas odieux : c'est le seul respectable ; mais c'est aussi le plus puissant de tous. . . . Vous ne le savez pas, ô peuples aveugles ! qui vous croyez libres, en rampant sous le plus odieux des Despotismes : celui qui force au crime ! Vous ne le savez pas, vous que le caprice ou la cupidité d'un Despote peuvent armer contre des hommes, qui méritent de l'humanité entière, puis qu'ils défendent sa cause, & lui préparent un asile ! . . . . ô guerriers mercenaires ! ô satellites des tyrans ! ô Européens énervés ! vous allez combattre des hommes, plus forts, plus industrieux, plus courageux, plus actifs, que vous ne pouvez l'être : un grand intérêt les anime : un vil lucre vous conduit : ils défendent leur propriété, & combattent pour leurs foyers : vous quittez les vôtres, & ne combattez pas pour vous : c'est au sein de leur pais, c'est dans leur climat natal, c'est aidé de toutes les ressources domestiques qu'ils font la guerre contre des bandes, que l'océan a vomies, après avoir préparé leur défaite. Les motifs les plus puissans & les plus saints excitent leur valeur, & appellent la victoire sur leurs pas. Des chefs, qui vous méprisent, en se servant de vous, opposeront de vaines harangues à l'éloquence irrésistible de la liberté, du besoin, de la nécessité. Enfin, & pour tout dire en un mot, la cause des Américains est juste : le ciel & la terre réprouvent celle que vous ne rougissez pas de soutenir : . . . .

O Allemands! qui donc a soufflé, parmi vous, cette soif de combattre, cette frénésie barbare, cet odieux dévouement à la tyrannie?

Non: je ne vous comparerai pas à ces fanatiques Espagnols, qui détruisoient pour détruire, qui se baignoient dans le sang, quand la nature épuisée forçoit leur insatiable cupidité à faire place à une passion plus atroce. Des sentimens plus nobles, des erreurs plus excusables vous égarent. Cette fidélité pour vos chefs, qui distingua les Germains vos ancêtres, cette habitude d'obéir, sans calculer qu'il est des devoirs plus sacrés que l'obéissance, & antérieurs à tous les sermens, cette crédulité qui fait suivre l'impulsion d'un petit nombre d'insensés ou d'ambitieux; voilà vos torts; mais ils seront des crimes, si vous ne vous arrêtez au bord d'abîme . . . déjà ceux de vos compatriotes, qui vous ont précédés, reconnoissent leur aveuglement; ils désertent; & les bienfaits de ces peuples, qu'ils égorgoient n'aguère, & qui les traitent en frères, aujourd'hui qu'ils ne leur voient plus en main le glaive des bourreaux, aggravent leur remords, & doublent leur repentir.

Profitez de leur exemple, ô Soldats! pensez à votre honneur: pensez à vos droits: . . . n'en avez vous donc pas comme vos chefs? . . . Qui: sans doute: on ne le dit point assez: les hommes passent avant les Princes, qui pour le plupart, ne sont pas dignes d'un tel nom: laissez à d'infâmes courtisans, à d'impies blasphémateurs, le soin de vanter la prérogative royale: & ses droits illimités: mais n'oubliez point que TOUS ne furent pas faits pour UN: qu'il est un autorité supérieure à toutes les autorités: que celui qui commande un crime, ne doit point être obéi: & qu'ainsi votre conscience est le premier de vos chefs. . . .

Interrogez la cette conscience: elle vous dira, que votre sang ne doit couler que pour votre patrie: qu'il est atroce de recevoir de l'argent pour aller égorger, à plusieurs milliers de lieues des hommes, qui n'ont d'autres relations avec vous que celles, qui doivent leur concilier votre bienveillance.

Elle prétend faire une guerre légitime, cette Métropole, qui s'épuise pour ruiner ses enfans! elle réclame ses droits, & ne veut les discuter qu'avec la foudre des combats! . . . mais fussent-ils réels, ces droits, les avez vous examinés? Est-ce à vous à juger ce procès? Est-ce à vous à prononcer l'arrêt? Est-ce à vous à l'exécuter? . . . Eh! qu'importent après tout ces vains titres si problématiques & si contestés? L'homme, dans tous les pays du monde, a le droit d'être heureux. Voilà la première des loix: voilà le premier des titres: des colonies ne vont point fertiliser des terres nouvelles, augmenter la gloire & la puissance de la mère-patrie, pour en être opprimées . . . le sont-elles? Elles ont le droit de secouer le joug: parce que le JOUG n'est pas fait pour l'homme.

¶ Mais, qui vous a dit que les Anglois avoient signé l'arrêt de proscription lancé contre les Américains? . . . Braves Allemands! on vous a

trompé. N'avilissez pas par un tel soupçon une nation qui a produit de grands hommes & de belles loix, qui nourrit longtems dans son sein le feu sacré de la liberté, & mérite, à ces titres, du respect & des égards . . . Hélas ! dans les isles Britanniques, comme dans le reste de l'univers, un petit nombre d'ambitieux agite le peuple & produit les calamités publiques. Le moment de crise est arrivé. L'Angleterre n'est divisée, malheureuse, en guerre contre ses frères, que parce que le Dèspotisme lutte depuis quelques années avec avantage contre la liberté. Ne croyez donc pas défendre la cause des Anglois : vous combattez pour l'accroissement de l'autorité de quelques ministres qu'ils abhorrent & méprisent.

Les voulez vous connoître, les véritables motifs qui vous mettent les armes à la main ?

Un vain luxe, des dépenses meprisables ont ruiné les finances des Princes qui vous gouvernent ; leurs spoliations ont tari leurs ressources ; ils ont trop souvent trompé la confiance de leurs voisins, pour y recourir encore. Il faudroit donc renoncer à ce faste excessif, à ces fantaisies sans cesse renaissantes, qui sont leur occupation la plus importante ; ils ne peuvent s'y résoudre ; ils ne le feront pas ; l'Angleterre épuisée d'hommes & d'argent, achete à grands frais de l'argent & des hommes Vos Princes saisissent avidement cette ressource momentanée & ruineuse : ils levent des Soldats : ils les vendent : ils les livrent : voilà l'emploi de vos bras : voilà à quoi vous étiez destinés, Votre sang sera le prix de la corruption, & le jouet de l'ambition. Cette argent, qu'on vient d'acquérir, en commerçant de vos vies, paiera des debtes honteuses, ou aidera à en contracter de nouvelles. Un avide usurier, une méprisable Courtisane, un vil histrion, vont recevoir ces guinées données en échange de votre existence.

O dissipateurs aveugles ! qui vous jouez de la vie des hommes, & prodiguez les fruits de leurs travaux, de leurs sueurs, de leurs substance, un repentir tardif, des remords déchirans seront vos bourreaux, mais ne soulageront pas ces peuples que vous foulez ; vous regretterez vos laboureurs & leurs moissons, vos Soldats, vos sujets ; vous pleurerez sur les malheurs, dont vous mêmes aurez été les artisans, & qui vous envelopperont avec tout votre peuple. Un voisin formidable sourit de votre aveuglement, & s'apprête à en profiter ; il forge déjà les fers, dont-il méдите de vous charger : vous gémirez sous le poids de vos chaînes, fussent-elles d'or ; & votre conscience, alors plus juste que votre cœur ne fut sensible, sera la furie vengeresse des maux que vous aurez faits.

Et vous peuples trahis, vexés, vendus, rougissez de votre erreur : que vos yeux se dessillent : quittez cette terre souillée du dèspotisme : traversez les mers : courez en Amérique ; mais embrassez y vos frères ; défendez ces peuples généreux, contre l'orgueilleuse rapacité de leurs persécuteurs : partagez leur bonheur : doublez leurs forces : aidez-les



de votre industrie : appropriiez vous leurs richesses en les augmentant tel est le but de la société : tel est le devoir de l'homme, que la nature a fait pour aimer ses semblables, & non pas pour les égorger : apprenez des Américains l'art d'être libre, d'être heureux, de tourner les institutions sociales au profit de chacun des individus qui composent la société : oubliez dans le respectable asile, qu'ils offrent à l'humanité souffrante, les délires, dont vous fûtes les complices & les victimes : connoissez la vraie grandeur : la vraie gloire : la vraie félicité : que les nations Européennes vous envient, & bénissent la modération des habitans du nouveau monde, qui dédaigneront de venir les punir de leurs forfaits, & de conquérir les terres dépeuplées, que foulent des tyrans à oppresseurs & qu'arroscent de leurs larmes des esclaves opprimés.

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