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LETTERS

TO AND FROM

RICHARD PRICE, D.D., F.R.S.

1767—1790



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1767—1790

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LETTERS.

AT a stated meeting of the MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY, held May 14, 1903, the President in the chair, Mr. NORTON presented a parcel of copies of letters, eighty-one in number, addressed to Rev. Dr. Price by various correspondents, and extending in date from 1767 to 1790. The larger part of these letters have, so far as is known, never been published, but many of them are of interest, not merely from the high distinction of the persons by whom they were written, but also as containing contemporary accounts of important events. In the parcel are several letters of Franklin, of Jefferson, of Rev. Dr. Chauncy, Professor Winthrop, and others. One of Dr. Chauncy's letters and one of those of Professor Winthrop are devoted to an account of the Battle of Bunker Hill. These copies of letters are presented to the Society for publication, if it choose, by Mr. Walter Ashburner (the son of the late Samuel Ashburner of Boston), now a barrister in London, who holds the originals as a direct descendant from Dr. Price's sister. Dr. Price himself had no children. In a memorandum sent to Mr. Norton, Mr. Ashburner writes :

“ Richard Price, D.D., F.R.S., to whom or by whom the letters now published were written, was a man of varied interests. He was by profession a Unitarian minister, but he was also an authority on questions of life assurance, and—in his latter years at any rate—he derived a considerable income from answering questions on subjects connected with the expectation of life. He was a voluminous writer—on religion, morals, politics, and mathematics. He was a strong liberal and a warm friend (as these letters show) to the American cause. Such a man necessarily carried on an extensive correspondence, but the greater part of it has perished.

"Dr. Price by his will, which bears date the 25th of May, 1789, gave his residue in equal shares to his nephews William Morgan and George Cadogan Morgan, and appointed them his executors. George Cadogan Morgan, also a Unitarian minister, intended to write his uncle's life, but died — in 1798 — before he had carried out his plan. William Morgan, the other nephew, published in 1815 a thin volume of memoirs of the life of Dr. Price. William Morgan was a distinguished mathematician and for many years actuary of the Equitable Assurance Society of London, but he was not a good biographer. Nor does he seem to have taken much care of Dr. Price's papers. It was very different with Miss Sara Travers, William Morgan's granddaughter, into whose possession the remains of the Price correspondence eventually came. Miss Travers was devoted to the memory of her eminent relative and of all his group of friends. She cherished whatever had any association with them; favoured guests were offered tea out of a teapot which Dr. Franklin had given to Dr. Price. Miss Travers united in a singular degree the keenest interest in the present with a respect for the past. She inherited the strong liberal tendencies of Dr. Price and his family. She inherited also the intelligence and the character which had gained for Dr. Price the affection and esteem of so wide a circle of friends. Miss Travers had solid learning and varied accomplishments without a trace of pedantry or vanity. Those who have had the happiness of knowing her will never forget either the intellectual vivacity which did not desert her in extreme old age, or the charm of her conversation, or her great kindness of heart.

"Miss Travers by her will left the Price papers to her cousin, Miss Caroline E. Williams, of 1 Vicarage Gate, London, who is the granddaughter of a sister of William and George Cadogan Morgan, and therefore (like Miss Travers) a great-grandniece of Dr. Price¹. Miss Williams has lately given the greater part of the Price papers to her cousin, the writer of these lines, who is himself a great-grandson of George Cadogan Morgan."

The papers were referred to the Standing Committee.²

¹ Miss Williams is author of a work, "A Welsh Family," which deals with the Price and Morgan families, and is based on family papers in her possession.

² Besides the letters now printed, and a few others which do not seem to be of sufficient importance for permanent preservation, there are in Mr. Ashburner's valuable gift copies of the following letters, which are printed in whole or in part, in William Morgan's "Memoir of the Life of the Rev. Dr. Price," — from Arthur Lee, Dec. 8, 1778; Benjamin Franklin, Oct. 22, 1767; Oct. 3, 1775; June 13, 1782; May 31, 1789; Benjamin Rush, April 24, 1790; John Clark, April, 1785; John Wheelock, August, 1785; in "Works of John Jay," his letter of Sept. 27, 1785, and in "Works of Thomas Jefferson," his letters of Aug. 7, 1785; Jan. 8, 1789; May 19, 1789 — Eds.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO RICHARD PRICE.

CRAVEN STREET, Saturday, Aug 1. —67.

REVⁿ AND DEAR SIR, — Last night I received a letter from D^r Robertson, acquainting me that the University of Edinburgh have on my recommendation conferr'd the degree of D^r in Divinity upon the Rev^d M^r Cooper of Boston; ¹ an event, that when I last had the pleasure of seeing you, you may remember I was desirous of waiting for, before I should be concern'd in any new application of the same kind. And indeed as I have made three already, I begin to feel a little unwilling to apply again immediately to the same University in favour of another, lest they should think me troublesome, tho' they have hitherto been very obliging. And recollecting that you mentioned your having a correspondence with the Principal of the College at Glasgow, I now purpose applying to that University for M^r Elliot's degree, ² if you approve of it, and will with M^r Radcliffe address your recommendation to the same place, to accompany mine. Please to present my respectful compliments to M^r Price and M^r Barker; and believe me, with sincere esteem, dear Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

M^r PRICE.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO RICHARD PRICE.

CRAVEN STREET, Sept 28, 1772

DEAR SIR, — Inclos'd I send you D^r Priestly's last letter, of which a part is for you, he says; but the whole seems as proper for you as for me. I did not advise him *pro* or *con*, but only explain'd to him my method of judging for myself in doubtful cases, by what I called *Prudential Algebra*.

If he had come to town, and preach'd here sometimes, I fancy Sir John P.³ would now and then have been one of his hearers; for he likes his theology as well as his philosophy. Sir John has ask'd me if I knew where he could go to hear a preacher of *rational* Christianity. I told him I knew several of them, but did not know where their churches were in town; out of town, I mention'd yours at Newington, and offer'd to go with him. He agreed to it, but said we should first let you know our intention. I suppose, if nothing in his profession

¹ Rev. Samuel Cooper, minister of the Brattle Street Church, received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from the University of Edinburgh in 1767. — Eds.

² Rev. Andrew Eliot, minister of the New North Church, received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from the University of Edinburgh in 1767. — Eds.

³ Sir John Pringle, an eminent physician in London, from 1772 to 1778 President of the Royal Society. See Dictionary of National Biography, vol. xlvi. pp. 386-388 — Eds.

prevents, we may come, if you please, next Sunday; but if you sometimes preach in town, that will be most convenient to him, and I request you would by a line let me know when and where. If there are dissenting preachers of that sort at this end of the town, I wish you would recommend one to me, naming the place of his meeting. And if you please, give me a list of several, in different parts of the town, perhaps he may encline to take a round among them. At present I believe he has no view of attending constantly anywhere, but now and then only as it may suit his convenience. All this to yourself.

My best respects to M^r Price and M^r Barker. With sincere wishes for your health and welfare, I am ever, my dear Friend,

Yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

D^r PRICE

CHARLES CHAUNCEY¹ TO RICHARD PRICE.

Boston, Oct. 5th, 1772

REVD. AND DEAR SIR, — Yours, with your book on "Annuities," &c., I have received, for which I return you my hearty thanks. I am not myself a capable judge of performances of this kind, not having had occasion to turn my thòts upon such subjects: I can, however, most obviously discern in that work the marks of a very superior pen, a pen which has set you above most writers, and of distinguish'd character too. Soon after the receipt of your book, I lent it to Mr Winthrop, Hollisian Professor of Mathematicks and Phylosophy at our College in Cambridge, and Fellow of the Royal Society in London, who red it with pleasure, and spake of you in such terms of honor as would look like flattery should I mention them to you. He has entertained an high opinion of your abilities.

The situation of political affairs in this Province, particularly, is very unhappy. In addition to our other grievances, our Governor and the Judges of our highest executive Court are made wholly independant of the people here, and so dependant on administration at home that we can expect no other conduct in them but what will be pleasing to those who are endeavouring to fasten on us the chains of slavery: and what aggravates our unhappiness is, that the money, by which these officers in the government are tempted to be tools to carry into execution the arbitrary designs of those who hate us, is unconstitutionally taken out of our pockets and wickedly made use of to annihilate our privileges by charter and rights as Englishmen. What may be the effect of having an absolute despot for our Governor, and Judges under a strong bias

¹ Minister of the First Church, Boston. He was born in Boston, Jan. 1, 1705, graduated at Harvard College in 1721, ordained in 1727, and died Feb. 10, 1787. See Ellis's History of the First Church, pp. 108-208. — Ens.

in favor of the measures of those who, with our money wrongfully taken from us, pay them for their judgments, time only will discover. People here of all sorts are greatly uneasy, loud complaints are uttered, both in the public prints and in private conversation, the Ministry at home are abhorred, and so are those who have the chief management of our political affairs here. The alternative now seems to be, a submission to slavery, or an exertion of our selves to be delivered from it. Which of these will take place, and in what way and manner, I know not. My great support is, that half a century will so increase our number and strength, as to put it in the power of New-England only to tell any tyrants in Great Britain in plain English, that they will be a free people, in opposition to all they can do to prevent it. But not to trouble you any longer with our political troubles.

The Doctrine of Fatalism, asserted and maintained in a book printed by Mr. Edwards, a minister in New-England, and reprinted in London a few years ago, has, by the assistance of some who were friends to these sentiments, unhappily taken a large spread, especially in the Colony of Connecticut. The book I herewith send you (which is the only one I have as yet been able to procure) contains the whole of what the Propagators of Fatalism have to say in its defence, as it is the product of all their heads put together.¹ I believe you never saw the Supreme Being, in any book, so explicitly and directly made the author and planner of moral evil. 'Tis to me astonishing that any man who professes a regard to the Deity, as these men do, should be able to speak of him as so ordering and disposing things as that moral evil should certainly be introduced into the world, and that it is desirable it should be, and for the greater good too, though great numbers on account of it shall suffer everlasting punishment. Nothing, as I imagine, could be said worse of the Prince of the power of the Air. I should be glad to have your thóts, when at leisure, upon this performance, especially that part of it which relates to the introduction of sin into the world, by the ordering and disposal of God, and for the good of the creation. This performance is supposed by too many to contain the truth, and to exhibit it in an unanswerable way.

I fear I have been too tedious; and shall therefore only add, that I am, with all due respect,

Your assured friend and humble servant,

CHARLES CHAUNCY.

Rev^d Dr. RICHARD PRICE.

¹ The reference is apparently to Rev. Stephen West's "Essay on Moral Agency: containing Remarks on a late anonymous publication entitled An Examination of the late Reverend President Edwards's Enquiry on Freedom of Will." The "Examination" was by Rev. James Dana, for many years minister at Wallingford, Conn., and afterward at New Haven. — Eds.

CHARLES CHAUNCY TO RICHARD PRICE

BOSTON, May 30th, 1774

REVD. AND DEAR SIR. Yours of last Novembr. I have received, for which I thank you. The inclosed pamphlet you might with good reason hope would have produced some good effect.¹ So far as I am capable of judging, (and my poor judgment perfectly agrees with the judgment of the most sensible men we have among us, to whom I have given opportunity of reading your book) you have clearly and demonstrably pointed out the way in which the nation may be saved from sinking under the heavy debt that lies upon them. I can attribute it to nothing but a spirit of infatuation in those who are entrusted with the management of your public affairs, that you are so evidently hastening to a state of ruin. And this, as I imagine, will be the case with respect to the American Colonies, should they tamely submit to the tyranny of those British ministers who are endeavouring to enslave us. But, I trust in God we have more virtue and resolution than to sit still and suffer chains to be fastened on us. The late act of Parliament, shutting up the port of Boston, and putting it out of the power of thousands of poor innocents to preserve themselves from starving, is so palpably cruel, barbarous, and inhumane, that even those who are called the friends of Government complain bitterly of it: nor do I know of any whose eyes are not opened to see plainly that despotism, which must end in slavery, is the plan to be carried into execution. This British edict, which, without all doubt, was an intended blow at the liberties of all the American Colonies, will, I believe, under the blessing of Providence, be the very thing which will bring salvation to us. The town of Boston, the Massachusetts-Province, and the other Colonies, far from being intimidated by the horrid severity and injustice of this Port-act, are rather filled with indignation, and more strongly spirited than ever to unite in concerting measures to render void its designed operation. We have found by experience, that no dependance can be had upon *merchants*, either at *home*, or in *America*, so many of them are so mercenary as to find within themselves a readiness to become slaves themselves, as well as to be accessory to the slavery of others, if they imagine they may, by this means, serve their own private separate interest. Our dependance, under God, is upon the *landed interest*, upon our freeholders and yeomanry. By not buying of the merchants what they may as well do without, they may keep in their own pockets two or three millions sterling a year, which would otherwise be exported to Great-Brittain. I have reason to think the effect of this barbarous Port-act will be an agreement among the freeholders and yeomanry of all the Colonies, not to purchase

¹ Probably the new edition of Price's pamphlet entitled "Appeal to the Public on the Subject of the National Debt." — Eds.

of the merchants any goods from England, unless some few excepted ones, till we are put into the enjoyment of our constitutional rights and priveleges. The plain truth is, we can in America live within ourselves, and it would be much for our interest not to import a great deal from England; and as things are now carrying on with such an high hand, I believe the Americans will see where their interest lies. We need only to pursue what is certainly our interest, and the nation at home will suffer a thousand times more than we shall in this part of the world; and I am ready to think they will find this to be a truth from their own perceptions in a little time. But I cannot enlarge, as I am at present much indisposed. I should not indeed on this account have wrote now, but that I knew not how long it would be before I could have another opportunity of writing.

I send you herewith "Observations on the Boston Port-bill" by a young lawyer, of a sprightly genius and strong powers.¹ They were penned in haste, but you will readily perceive that they are highly pertinent and spirited.

I am, wishing you all happiness, with great respect

Your friend and humble servant,

Rev'd. Dr. PRICE.

CHARLES CHAUNCY.

CHARLES CHAUNCY TO RICHARD PRICE.

BOSTON, July 18th, 1774

REV'D. AND DEAR SIR, — The inclosed letter of May 30th (with a pamphlet) would have come to you by Capt. Calf, but that he unexpectedly sailed the day before I went to his house to give it to him. In addition to what I then wrote, I would now say, tho' it must be in great haste, as I knew not of this opportunity but a few minutes since, and must deliver my letter to Capt. Folgier in two hours time at furthest. — there never was such an union in the Colonies as at this day. The cause for which we in this town are suffering, they look upon as the common cause of all North-America, their cause as truly as ours, tho' we are the more immediate sufferers. They sympathize with us, they offer us their help, and will chearfully join with us, as one, in such expedients as may be judged wise and proper to assist a redress of the grievances we are groaning under: nor do they satisfy themselves with mere words, but give us the highest assurance that they are in real earnest, for that they are, throughout the Continent, making provision for the support of the numerous sufferers in this town, which is the first object of ministerial vengeance. Their bountiful donations from one part of the country and another are daily flowing in upon us.

¹ The well-known pamphlet by Josiah Quincy, Jr., was published just before this letter was written. — Eds.

Waggons, loaded with grain, and sheep, hundreds in a drove are sent to us from one and another of the towns, not only in this, but the neighbouring Colonies. Two hundred and fifteen teices of rice, part of a thousand devoted to our service, are arrived at Salem from South-Carolina, where thousands of pounds sterling more (as we hear) are subscribed for our support, while firm in our refusals to be made slaves. We have authentic accounts from all the Colonies, that, in every country, in all the towns belonging to them, monies are collecting for our supply with provisions, and assurances given us that we shall not want, should we be continued in our suffering state. The indignation universally excited in all sorts of persons (a few commissioned or mercenary ones only excepted) throughout America, by means of the Boston-port-bill, almost exceeds belief; and 'tis so heightened, since the passing the two other parliamentary acts more immediately affecting the Massachusetts-Province, that the whole Continent is in readiness to exert themselves to the utmost in all reasonable ways to bring forward our deliverance. And it may be worthy of particular notice, the union of the Colonies and their intention of liberality in donations for our relief were the result of their own thóts, previous to any applications to them from this town or Province. They first wrote to us, remonstrating against the treatment we had met with, and looking upon what was done to us as a specimen of what would be done to them also, if not in some way or other prevented. South-Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, New-York, the Jerseys, New-Hampshire, tho' unchartered governments, exceed even the Massachusetts-Province in their resentments of what has been done against us; and in some of them there have been greater commotions and insurrections than any complained of in Boston, or the Province it belongs to, notwithstanding they are under a like form of government with that the Parliament, in their two late acts, would place us under, to the destruction of our charter-rights, the purchase of much treasure and blood. There will be a congress of all the Colonies, by their deputies at Philadelphia on the first day of September next, as I suppose; that being the day which was fixed on for this purpose by the Massachusetts-Assembly last month, for which reason more especially they were dissolved by the Governour. So far as I can learn, 'tis not in the intention of the Deputies going to the abovementioned Congress, or of any of the people in this, or the other Colonies, to contend with Great-Britain. Their view is to bear with patience their treatment of us, however hard and cruel; at the same time, making it a point they will firmly and sacredly abide by, to live within themselves, and save those millions that are annually exported to England for what we can live very comfortably without having. It would be highly grievous, and the last thing the Colonies would wish, to be obliged to stand upon their own defence against military force should it be used with them; but this,

should no other expedient be effectual, I believe, they certainly would do. All the Colonies desire is the full enjoyment of their rights and privileges; and should this be granted to them, Great Britain would hear of no commotions or disturbances, but that we were all united in love to the mother Country, and in a concern to promote the honor and welfare of the English nation: nor would his Majesty have, in any part of his extended dominions, any subjects who would more readily venture their fortunes and lives in defence of his crown and the support of his government. The use of force might be hurtful both to the nation at home as well as the Colonies here; but the Colonies increase so fast, that finally England must be the greatest sufferer by a contention with them. I suppose, by the additions yearly made to us from abroad with our own natural increase, we double in 15 years. But I cannot enlarge, as I gladly would have done. In the greatest hurry I subscribe, with all respect,

Your friend and humble servant,

CHARLES CHAUNCY.

REV. DR. RICHARD PRICE.

CHARLES CHAUNCY TO RICHARD PRICE.

BOSTON, Septemr. 13th, 1774

REVD. SIR,—I sent you sometime since two small packets, by Capt. Folgier, which I trust you have received; as he assured me he would deliver them with his own hand.

The bearer of this, Mr. Josiah Quincy, is a young gentleman of good powers, a sprightly genius, and thorow acquaintance with the constitution of the American Colonies: nor has any one a more perfect knowledge of what has happened in this part of the world, both previous to and consequent upon the late acts of the British-parliament respecting Boston and the Massachusetts-Province, of which it is the metropolis. You may from him, should you desire it, be let into a clear and full idea of the sad situation we are now in. He goes to England strongly disposed to serve his country wherein he may be able; and he will be the better able to do this, if he may by means of gentlemen of character at home have opportunity of conversing with those, either in or out of administration, who may have been led into wrong sentiments of the people in Boston and the Massachusetts-Province in these troublesome times. The favor I would ask of you is only this, that you would take so much notice of him as to introduce him, either yourself, or by the help of one or another of your friends, into the company of those who may have it in their power to be serviceable to the Colonies in general and this Province in particular; as it is the first, in the view of administration, to be reduced to a state of slavery.

I could greatly enlarge upon our political affairs; but I purposely avoid it, as you may have it much better done, viva voce, by Mr. Quincy.

Be pleased to accept the inclosed small pamphlet;¹ which has been well received here. I am, Revd. Sir, with all due respect,

Your friend and humble servant,

CHARLES CHAUNCY.

Dr RICHARD PRICE

JOHN WINTHROP² TO RICHARD PRICE

CAMBRIDGE, NEW ENGLD, Sept. 20, 1774.

REVEREND SIR,³— I am very sensible I ought to make an apology for addressing a gentleman of your distinction in the learned world. Indeed, the great satisfaction and instruction I have derived from your excellent writings, and your goodness to me in communicating your curious papers on the *Aberration*, thro' the hands of our common friend Dr. Franklin, merit my most grateful acknowledgements, yet I should scarcely have adventured to trouble you with a letter, on account of any thing that related merely to myself. 'Tis a much more important cause, Sir, that urges me on to the freedom I now take. It is the cause of distressed America, groaning under the hand of an oppressive power which threatens its ruin. The fate of millions is now at stake. The measures pursued by Administration for ten years past, evidently designed to abridge the Colonists of their liberties, one after another, were truly alarming and of the most dangerous tendency. But they appear to be trifles, when compared with the acts passed in the last session of Parliament; which, I believe, are not to be parallel'd in the British annals. The Act for *Shutting up the Port of Boston* struck every body with astonishment; that cruel Act which, by putting a stop to the trade on which the town wholly depended, must immediately have starved or driven away almost all the inhabitants, had they not been supported by the very generous contributions of our sister Colonies, even in the farthest part of the Continent. But this Act, shocking as it was, seemed to be swallowed up in another which quickly followed it, of more extensive and more fatal operation, — the Act for *better regulating* the government of the Province of the Massachusetts Bay which has, in fact, dissolved the government. It has mutilated the Charter, so as to leave only an empty phantom remaining; and, by depriving the people

¹ Probably an anonymous pamphlet, by Dr. Chauncy, entitled "A Letter to a Friend, giving a concise, but just, representation of the hardships and sufferings the town of Boston is exposed to, and must undergo in consequence of the late act of the British Parliament," etc — Ems.

² Hollis Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy in Harvard College, born in Boston Dec. 19, 1711; died in Cambridge May 3, 1779 — Ems.

³ A strip of paper has been pasted over the address — Ems.

of every privilege, has erected an absolute despotism in the Province. The Councillors, who, by Charter, were to be elected annually by the General Court, (subject, however, to the Governor's negative) are to be appointed by Mandamus from the King; the Judges, who before were paid by the General Court, are now made totally dependent on the Crown for their salaries as well as their commissions: all other civil officers, as Justices of the Peace, Sheriffs, &c., are removable by the Governor at his sole pleasure, even without the advice or consent of this Mandamus Council: the Juries for trials, whose names were before drawn out of a box at a town-meeting, in the manner of a lottery, which effectually precluded all design or collusion, are now to be returned by the Sheriff. By this arrangement, it is evident, the Governor has it in his power to command what verdict he pleases in any case. To crown all, the third Act was passed, entitled for the *more impartial* administration of justice in this Province: but, in reality, to prevent the administration of justice. By this Act, any of the soldiers who should kill the inhabitants may, at the Governor's pleasure, be sent to any other Colony or to Great Britain for trial. The manifest design of which is, to empower the military to kill the inhabitants without danger or fear of punishment.

The Governor insists on acting according to this new plan: The people are determined to adhere to the old one; so that we have neither legislative nor executive powers in the Province. Things are running fast into confusion; and it seems as if it were designed to irritate the people into something which might be called rebellion. At all events, the people will never submit to the new system. Their minds are universally agitated, to a degree not to be conceived by any person at a distance; and they are determined to abide all extremities, even the horrors of a civil war, rather than crouch to so wretched a state of vassallage. And these are the sentiments, not of a contemptible faction, as has been represented, nor of this Province only, but of every Colony on the Continent. They all consider Boston as suffering in a common cause, and themselves as deeply interested in the event. For tho' the vengeance is immediately directed against Boston and this Province, they all expect the same treatment in their turn, unless they tamely submit to the exorbitant power lately claimed by Parliament over them; which they will never be brought to do. To submit to such a power would be to hold their lives, liberties and properties by the precarious tenure of the will of a British Minister. The sanction of Parliament, in their apprehension, makes no difference in the case; they know full well in what manner Parliamentary affairs are managed. Besides, they do not acknowledge the Commons of Great Britain as their Representatives. If the Ministry are resolved to push their schemes, nothing but desolation and misery is to be expected.

I have given but a slight sketch of the present situation of affairs

here, omitting many matters of great moment. Mr. Quincy, who will have the honor to wait upon you with this letter, can give you a much more distinct account than I can pretend to do by writing. He is a gentleman of the law, and eminent in his profession, and is making a voyage to England, with hopes of doing some service to his native country; and I humbly hope you will be pleased to favor him with your countenance.

I cannot but persuade myself, that a gentleman of so enlarged an understanding and so benevolent an heart as the author of the Dissertation on Providence, &c., will excuse the freedom of this application; which, I am sure, proceeds from an unexceptionable motive, — the love of my country, and that he will be ready to use the influence which his high reputation justly gives him, as far as he can with propriety, in favor of the oppressed.

With sentiments of the highest esteem and respect, I am, Reverend Sir,

Your most humble servant.¹

EARL OF SHELBURNE TO RICHARD PRICE.

Bowood Park, 26 Decr., 1774

DEAR DR. PRICE, — I have this moment read your letter to Dr. Priestley, in which I find overkind mention of me, as I am us'd to from you. I shall be very glad to see Mr. Quincy, or any friend of yours.

I have been so taken up with my private business, that I have not had time to return you the inclos'd, since you return'd to me the books mention'd in it.

I have read with attention, however, the last paper, which you were so good to give me, and intend to read it 3 or 4 times more before I have the pleasure of seeing you. In the mean time there is only one particular observation which occurs to me. Is it not to be wish'd th' nothing sh^d be left to the discretion of the Commissioners, and that they could be made merely ministerial? It's a vast object to ensure the gradual diminution of our debts, but it will lessen the excellence of this measure, if it admits of that intolerable evil, stockjobbing. Wherever discretion is left, I conceive that must follow, and surely the nature of our debt is such that all possibility of jobbing might be prevented by prescribing the order in which they should be discharg'd, — which being publick, every body w^d have an equal advantage, and no secret could avail.

What has come from the American Congress opens a new and important field for discussion, by separating regulations of trade from the con-

¹ A strip of paper has been pasted over the signature, but the letter is docketed in Dr. Price's hand "Professor Winthrop" — Eds.

sideration of a revenue, how far the riches and prosperity of a country need such regulations as we have been accustomed to see enforced by custom house officers, at a great expence, and occasioning great corruption. This is one I conceive of many subjects, which must now be decided, however indispos'd the Ministry may be for obvious reasons. I hear from London that the American Secretary has given for answer to those that presented the petition transmitted by the Congress, that it was receiv'd very graciously, and would be laid before both Houses. This gives me pleasure, so far as it indicates a change of measures. As to a change of men, I don't myself know, whether it would not be better that the present sh^d continue. The rage for Ministry is so universal, and the consideration attach'd to it so much beyond the mark, that it requires a change of ideas to take place. Nor can it be expected that any man will be for lessening a power to-day, which to-morrow he expects to be in possession of. There is only one evil I foresee attending it, and that you'll say exists already in the minds of the people, who have long since lost all confidence in their representatives. I write to you upon my knee in the midst of the children's noise, a very unfit situation to write upon such serious subjects. In every situation and in every temper, believe me, however,

Y^r & M^r Price's affectionate friend and servant,

SHELBURNE.

EARL OF SHELBURNE TO RICHARD PRICE.

[Jan., 1775 ']

DEAR DR. PRICE, — I send you the short notes, which I wish you may be able to understand. I should not, indeed, think them worth your attention, if it was not for the distracted situation of our councils, which makes me take more upon me than suits my disposition or the diffidence of my temper.

I am myself so confident, from reading over and over the petition in question, from twelve years intimate connection with America, and as attentive an observation of their publick acts and their character, that I would willingly risque my head on their proving themselves, upon these terms, what they say of themselves, not only faithful subjects but *faithfull colonists to the parent state*.¹ Very extensive words, which in able hands admit of everything we could desire.

There is nothing in these Notes deserving your attention except the proposition itself, which from the degree of approbation it met with under circumstances of great disadvantage, makes me think it not with-

¹ The Address to the King, to which reference is here made, was adopted by the Continental Congress Oct. 26, 1774, and is printed in Force's American Archives, fourth series, vol. i. cols. 934-937. The Earl of Shelburne was appointed First Commissioner of Trade and Plantations in April, 1763. — Eds.

out its use, to prevent its being entirely forgot, and that it may be remember'd beyond the moment of its being made. What use it may be of hereafter, or how far practicable when things advance is altogether another question. The times are dark, and in my idea, the most that can be done is to prevent bad opinions being lodg'd with the publick, a fresh injustice being done to the principles and intentions of our American brethren.

As to ourselves you may depend upon my never losing sight of what you know I consider as our political salvation, and that all my aim finally terminates there.

I am going out of town, and write in haste. As soon as I return, I will be happy to ride out to you to talk more fully upon these matters.

Y^r ever,

SHELburnE.

Wed^y - Morn^g.

CHARLES CHAUNCY TO RICHARD PRICE.

Boston, Jan^y. 10th, 1775

REVD. AND DEAR SIR, — Yours of Octr. 8th, with the inclosed pamphlets, I have received, for which I heartily thank you. 'Tis strange nothing which has happened among us from Sept^r. 2d to the day of the date of your letter, should have been known in England. 'Tis easie to conceive that the news conveyed to the ministry by the Scarborough should be secreted, but not so easie to be accounted for that the private letters which went by her should be profoundly silent also.

What came into event here before the 26th of Sept^r., when Mr. Quincy embarked for London, I shall say nothing about, as you have doubtless had opportunity of hearing from him an exact and true account of facts till that time. Since then the fortifications at the only entrance into Boston by land have, at no small expence, been completed; the troops which were at New-York, New-Jersey, Philadelphia, and Canada sent for and brôt to town, in addition to those that were here before; making in all eleven regiments, besides several companies of the artillery. You can't easily imagine the greatness of our embarishment, especially, if it be remembered that the town, while filled with troops, is at the same time encompassed with ships of war, and the harbour so blocked up as that an intire stop is put to trade, only as it is carried on at the amazing charge of transporting every thing from Salem, not less than 28 miles by land. Can it in reason be thôt that Americans, who were freeborn, will submit to such cruel tyranny? They will sooner lose their heart's blood. Not fears, but the livery of the troops among us, pointing them out as subjects of the same sovereign with ourselves, is the true and only reason they were either suffered to come, or to continue

here, without molestation. Had they been French or Spanish troops they would have been cutt off long before now, as they easily might have been. It is given out by the tools of government, that more ships of war and more regiments will soon be sent to humble or destroy us. The Colonists are not intimidated by such threatenings, neither would they be should they be carried into execution. They are sensible, that contending with Great-Britain would be like a mouse's contending with a lyon, could her ships of war sail upon the land as they do upon the water. But in a contest with America her ships can annoy none of our inland towns, and but a few only of our towns upon the sea-coast for want of depth of water. And should they even destroy these, England would suffer more than America, as a greater debt than the worth of all these places would, by that means, be at once cancelled.

The people in England have been taught to believe that five or six thousand regular troops would be sufficient to humble us into the lowest submission to any parliamentary acts however tyrannical. But we are not so ignorant in military affairs and unskilled in the use of arms as they take us to be. A spirit for martial skill has strangely catched from one to another throughout at least the New-England Colonies. A number of companies, in many of our towns, are already able to go thro' the military exercise in all its forms with more dexterity and a better grace than some of the regiments which have been sent to us; and even all our men from 20 to 60 years of age are either formed or forming into companies and regiments under officers of their own chusing, to be steddily tutord in the military art. It is not doubted, but by next spring we shall have at least one hundred thousand men well qualified to come forth for the defence of our liberties and rights, should there be a call for it. We have besides in the New-England Colonies only a much greater number of men who, the last war, were made regulars by their services than your troops now in Boston. I can't help observing to you here that we have in this town a company of boys, from about 10 to 14 years of age, consisting of 40 or 50, who, in the opinion of the best judges, can go thro' the whole military exercise much more dexterously than a very great part of the regulars have been able to do since they have been here.

I would not suggest by any thing I have said, that we have the least disposition to contend with the parent-states. Tis our earnest universal desire to be at peace and to live in love and harmony with all our fellow-subjects. We shall not betake ourselves to the sword, unless necessarily obliged to it in self-defence; but in that case, so far as I can judge, tis the determination of all North America to exert themselves to the utmost, be the consequence what it may. They chuse death rather [than] to live in slavery, as they must do, if they submit to that despotic government which has been contrived for them.

The accounts I have seen in some of the London newspapers, affirming that Governour Gage and Lord Piercy have been killed, and that a number of houses have been pulled down, are without the least foundation in truth, and must be numbered among the many abominable falsehoods which are continually transmitting home by those detestable inhabitants here, to whose lies it is owing that we have been brot into our present distressing circumstances.

The result of the Continental Congress I should have sent you, but that it has probably reached home by this time, or doubtless will long before a copy of it would, was it to go by this opportunity. I cannot but look upon it an occurrence in our favor truly extraordinary, that so many Colonies, so distant from one another, and having each their separate interest, should unite in sending delegates to meet in one general body upon the present occasion, and that those delegates (52, I think) should, upon a free and full debate among themselves, be so united in what they have done. I have been assured by our Massachusetts delegates, since their return from Philadelphia, that there was in no article more than one or two dissentients, and in almost every one perfect unanimity. And tis as extraordinary that the doings of the Congress should be so universally adopted as a rule of conduct strictly to be adhered to. Effectual care has been taken in all the Colonies, counties, and towns that the *non-consumption agreement*, in special, be punctually complied with, and committees of inspection are constituted to see that this is done; and their care upon this head has been the more earnest as they are universally sensible that no non-importation agreement among merchants will signify any thing, unless they are obliged to keep to it by not being able to sell their goods, should they send for them. You may receive it as a certain fact, that, in conformity to one of the articles agreed to by the continental congress, all the merchandise that has arrived from Great Britain since the 1st of December has been sold, or is now selling, at vendue, and whatever it fetches beyond the prime cost and charges, is to relieve the Boston-sufferers under their present distresses; and it may be depended on, that whatever goods come after the 1st of February will be sent back without being opened. You can't easily conceive the universality and zeal of all sorts of persons in all the Colonies to carry fully into effect whatever the Congress have recommended in order to put an intire stop to our commerce with England, till the acts we complain of are repealed.

Those who call themselves the friends of Government, but are its greatest enemies, are continually endeavouring, in all the ways they can devise, to foment divisions among the people, and to lead them, in particular, into an ill opinion of the result of the grand Congress; but they labor in vain. It is the opinion of some here that there are among us those who are employed upon the hire of unrighteousness to

do all that lies in their power to effect a submission to the late acts which would enslave us; but whether this be so, or not, you may rely on it as the truth of fact that, notwithstanding all their efforts, the inhabitants of these Colonies, one it may be in an hundred excepted, are firmly united in their resolution to defend themselves against any force which may be used with them to deprive them of the rights they have a just claim to, not only as men made of one blood with the rest of the human species, but as Englishmen, and Englishmen born heirs to a royal grant of Charter rights and privileges.

We are told (perhaps to affrighten us) by those who joyn with the ministry in carrying their plan of despotism into effect, that every port on the continent will be blocked up next spring by English ships of war. But this we know cannot be done, as the sea-coast on this continent is of such large extent, and we have so great a number of harbours, rivers, and inlets, inaccessible by any ships of war so as to do us harm. Besides, administration, by such a conduct as this, would in the most effectual manner co-operate with the American congress in putting a stop to all commerce with Great Britain, which would, perhaps, be more hurtful to you than to us; for we should, notwithstanding, have all the necessaries and most of the comforts of life, and be far more happy than we could be were we to be enslaved.

I can't help assuring you as an evidence that the Colonies continue united in supporting the common cause, that they are almost daily sending to this town for its relief, flower, indian corn, beef, pork, mutton, butter, cheese, and in a word every thing necessary for the comfort as well as support of life; and we have all the encouragement we can desire to depend upon their going on to do thus while our circumstances are such as to require their help.

I fear I have tired your patience; but I must, notwithstanding, add this further that a most malignant fever rages among the troops. Three, four, and five have sometimes been buried in a day. Many of them are now sick. There is no abatement of the disease. Blessed be God, few or none of the town-people have taken the infection. The troops, by desertion and death, are amazingly lessend, w^{ch} we certainly know, notwithstanding the care of the officers to hide it fm us.

I am, Dear Sir, wth all due respect,

Your friend [and] humble serv^t.

DR. RICHARD PRICE.

CHARLES CHAUNCY.

RICHARD PRICE TO CHARLES CHAUNCY.

NEWINGTON, Feb^y 25th, 1775.

DEAR SIR, — I cannot avoid embracing the opportunity offer'd me by Mr. Quincy's return of writing to you. I am very sorry for the

bad state of health into which Mr. Quincy has fallen. This has render'd him incapable of carrying into execution some of the views with which he came here. But he is now better; and I hope will be restored in health to his family. He is indeed an able, faithful, and zealous friend to his country; and I have been happy in my acquaintance with him. He can inform you of what is passing here; and of my sentiments with respect to the public affairs which now engage so much attention. But neither my sentiment, nor those of persons of more weight, can be of much importance to you. It is from *themselves* that our brethren in America must look for deliverance. They have, in my opinion, infinitely the advantage in this dispute. If they continue firm and unanimous it must have a happy issue, nothing being more certain than that the consequences of the present coercive measures must in a year or two be so felt in this kingdom as to rout the present despotic ministry, and to bring in new men who will establish the rights and liberties of the colonies on a plan of equity, dignity and permanence. In such circumstances, if the Americans relax, or suffer themselves to be intimidated or divided, they will indeed deserve to be slaves. For my own part, were I in America I would go barefoot: I would cover myself with skins and endure any inconveniencies sooner than give up the vast stake now depending; and I should be encouraged in this by knowing that my difficulties would be temporary, and that I was engaged in a last struggle for liberty, which perseverance would certainly crown with success. I speak with earnestness, because thoroughly convinced that the authority claimed by this country over the Colonies is a despotism which would leave them none of the rights of freemen; and because also I consider America as a future asylum for the friends of liberty here, which it would be a dreadful calamity to lose.

By the governm^t which our ministers *endeavour* to establish in New England, and that which they *have* established in Canada, we see what sort of govern^t they wish for in this country; and as far as they can succeed in America, their way will be paved for success here. Indeed the influence of the crown has already in effect subverted liberty here; and should this influence be able to establish itself in America, and gain an accession of strength from thence, our fate would be sealed, and all security for the sacred blessing of liberty would be destroy'd in every part of the British dominions. These are sentiment^s that dwell much upon my heart, and I am often repeating them.

You must have been informed before this time that L^d Chatham introduced into the House of Lords about three weeks ago a bill containing a Plan of Pacification, which was rejected at the first reading in a manner the most unprecedented and contemptuous. In a few days after this, both Houses in an Address to his Majesty declared the Prov-

ince of Massachuset's Bay in rebellion, petitioned for an enforecem^t of the late Acts, and offer'd to stand by his Majesty with their lives and fortunes. But at the beginning of last week, to the amazen^t of everybody, the ministry took a new turn; and, tho' they had repeatedly declared that their object was not to draw money from the Colonies, yet on the 20th of last month, a motion was made in the House by L^d North to the following purport -- "That it was the *opinion* of that House, that when any of his Majesty's colonies shall make provision, according to their several circumstances, for contributing their proportion towards the *common* defence and the support of their respective Governm^t (such proportion to be raised by their own Assemblies and disposable by Parliam^t) it will be proper, if such proposal should be approved by Parliam^t, and for so long as it shall be so approved, to forbear in respect of such colonies imposing upon them or levying any taxes." By this Resolution L^d North said he hoped the horrors of a civil war might be avoided, and yet more gained from the Colonies than could be gained by any coercion of them. After a debate of near seven hours, (during which some of the members chose to amuse themselves with cards in one of the rooms adjoining to the House) the motion was agreed to by a majority of 274 to 88: and it was reported and confirmed last Monday; but is not to be formed into a bill. At the same time, the hostile plan before adopted is to go on. No firelock, as the Solicitor-General said in the House, is to be taken from a gun or rudder from a ship; the Bill now in Parliam^t for destroying the New-England Fishery is to pass; none of the Acts of last spring are to be repealed; and General Gage's re-inforcem^t, consisting of eight regim^{ts}, besides dragoons, marines and ships of war, is to embark. I am told also that two bills more ag^t New-England are intended, one for destroying the Connecticut, Rhode-Island, and New-Hampshire charters, and another for attainting some of the leading men in your Province.

These are measures that want no comment. L^d North's motion, tho' called a concession, is certainly, consider'd in all its circumstances, more properly an insult. An armed robber who demands my money might as well pretend he makes a concession, by suffering me to take it out of my own pocket, rather than search there for it himself. I cannot imagine, therefore, that this motion will have any other effect on the colonies than to render them more united and determined.

With respect to the people in Massachuset's Bay, were they inclined to *trust* this *opinion* of the House of Commons by consenting to pay such contributions as the House shall require, they could not be benefited by it without giving up their old Charter and together with it their whole right of legislation; for it is only from an Assembly under the New Charter that any proposals can be received.

Were there not so many melancholy instances of the pliability of the House of Commons, it would be wonderful that the same House that had one day declared *war* ag^t the Colonies, should almost the next day, on a sudden fright in the Cabinet, agree to a proposal supposed conciliatory. You may learn from hence our condition; and what that power is which claims a right to make laws for America that shall bind it in all cases whatever. The design of the ministry by this step is to produce differences among the Colonies; or, as L^d North said in the House of Commons, to break at least *one* link in the chain; in consequence of which he thinks the whole may fall to pieces. New-York, in particular, the ministry have in view; and they imagine that they have reason to depend on succeeding there. But frantic must that Colony be that will suffer itself to be so ensnared. Indeed our ministers have all along acted from the persuasion that you are all fools and cowards. I have said that the design of L^d North's motion is to disunite. I must add, that it is intended also to create delays and gain time; for as with you all depends on *losing no time*, so with us all depends on *gaining time* (to corrupt and divide.)

But I must conclude. Forgive your oppressors. I believe they know not what they do; but at the same time make them know that you *will* be free. My heart bleeds for the sufferings of your Province; but, if it be not your own fault, all will end well. God is on the side of liberty and justice.

With the best wishes and the greatest regard, I am, dear Sir,

Your sincere friend and very humble servant.

I have been long waiting with impatience for a letter from you. I writ in Dec^r last to Mr. Winthrop in answer to a letter with which he favoured me by Mr. Quincy. Be so good as to deliver my best respects to him. Dr. Franklin tells me that he shall write by this conveyance. America cannot have an abler or better friend.

EZRA STILES¹ TO RICHARD PRICE.

NEWPORT, Apr 10, 1775

REV^d AND DEAR SIR, — The letter I had the pleasure of receiving from you last year inclosed in Mr. Marchant's, most exactly expressed my sentiments respecting Bishops — "they have hitherto shewn them-

¹ Rev. Dr. Stiles, afterward President of Yale College, was at the time this letter was written minister of the Second Congregational Church in Newport, Rhode Island. He remained there about a year longer, when he was obliged to leave in consequence of the dispersion of his congregation, owing to the exposed situation of the town — Eds

selves enemies to *Truth* and *Liberty*; and there is no reason to expect that their natures will be changed in America." They have greatly dishonored themselves in two capital instances lately; in their combination against your petition for a relief from subscription to the XXXIX Articles; and in voting for the Quebec Bill for establishing the Romish Idolatry over two thirds of the territories of the British Empire, and thereby exciting a Jubilee in Hell and throughout [the] Pontificate. Much will Bp. Newton in particular have to answer at the tribunal of Jesus, for having with his eyes open joyued with an apostate Church and taken part with the Mother of Harlots and Abominations in the Earth, and this with the direct view and design of employing the arms of Papists as such against Protestant Puritans more abhorred than even Roman Catholics by the English Episcopacy. This obliging token of friendship from the bench of Bishops will not be very soon forgotten by the Puritans in America.

But I suppose the American Episcopate is for the present suspended, waiting the decision of the present momentous controversy, with which it must stand or perhaps fall. Unhappily the die is now cast, and a Ministry devoid of policy with a controll'd Parliament have precipitated the decision of points which (of how much importance soever for us to have defined and ascertained yet) it would have shewn the sagacity and wisdom of an English Minister long to have kept out of sight, and as untouched as many important exertions of the royal prerogative which would suffer by discussion.

We last week received the resolutions of Parliament (to 11th Febr.) to enforce their system of domination. This has a solid and weighty effect; instead of being damp't or depressed the Spirit of Liberty rises and will burn with an inextinguishable ardor. In the Punie Wars the Italians fought side by side as allies with the Romans. When Rome was attacked by the Carthaginian power, this attack *united* the otherwise divided nations of all Italy. The Romans took all the glory of conquest to themselves and dispised the Socii; tho' the latter could raise three quarters of a million while the Roman census was short of 300 Thousands. Hence the Bellum Sociale, which kindled into a flame from a trifling incident and spread thro' Italy with an incredible celerity. Two armies met to dispute a point of honor and nominal dignity, but stop'd their fire in full volley and pacificated all by agreeing to share in equal liberty, the Roman blood accepting the Italian in *deditione civitatis*. America now exasperated does not dread to meet her brethren in *bello sociali*, if Great Britain persists in seizing and annihilating our dearest rights. Massachusetts will resume her old Charter of 1628 or assume a new police, and elect magistrates, appoint and commission Judges of Courts, and raise taxes, &c., this summer, if before the usual election we have nothing more favorable from

London. The *instructed* Governors and *Moudamus* Councillors in the other Provinces are fallen into such disrepute, as being mere creatures of a venal Ministry and enemies to American Liberty, that the Colonies are nearly ripe to let them fall into desuetude, while the more just and equal representations of the people in the Colony Congresses acquire more and more weight, and feel more liberty to act for the public good unchecked by an arbitrary Governor. The Maryland Congress has already proceeded to levy taxes for an armament. S^r Carolina Congress have shut up the Courts. The system proceeds, and may terminate in an intirely new Colony Police, erecting the Congresses into Legislatures, with an annual Continental or Imperial Congress for deliberating matters of universal moment. I do not say whether this change would be the wisest and best: but this I say, the measures of administr^{tn} and Parl^t precipitate such a revolution and if not desisted and departed from will very soon terminate in this. If there be no relaxation speedily, a continental army will soon be raised, and under repeated supposed defeats will survive and perpetuate itself till such a system of Polity shall be eventually established.

You will receive this by Fra. Dana, Esq., of Cambridge, whom I commend to your notice. I am, D^r Sir,

Your affectionate Brother,

EZRA STILES.

Rev. D^r PRICE, London.

JOHN WINTHROP TO RICHARD PRICE.

CAMBRIDGE, N ENGL^d, April 10, 1775

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR, — Your favor of Dec^r 19th last, which came to hand but last week, gave me the highest satisfaction. I most heartily thank you for the expressions of your kindness towards me, for the honor you have done my letter, and for the farther honor of admitting me to your future correspondence; — an indulgence I highly prize and shall not fail to make use of.

All America is greatly indebted to you for the sympathetic concern you express for their distresses, and for your exertions in their behalf; and I have no doubt would be happy, if it were in your power to make them so. But it is one of the principal sources of human misery, and one of the greatest mysteries of Providence, that the powers of this world are almost always in very different hands; are lodged with persons who have very different modes of thinking and very different objects of pursuit. Were the case otherwise, were no persons advanced to power but such as had ability to comprehend and a disposition to persue the proper means for promoting the great end of government, the good of the people, there would be no grievances to complain of,

and this world would soon become a kind of paradise. But this is too much to be expected till the *millennial* state; or till, by the universal prevalence of Christ's heavenly doctrine, the virtue, and by consequence the liberty, peace and happiness of mankind are established upon a solid foundation.

The kind reception you gave my friend Mr. Quincy, emboldens me to recommend to your notice another friend and near neighbor of mine, Francis Dana, Esq. He is a sensible, ingenious, modest gentleman, who was in the practice of the law, but can now have no employment in that way; and has always appeared a true friend to Liberty. He will be able to give you full satisfaction as to the situation of affairs here, and inform you of many particulars which I cannot so well do in writing. But to shew my readiness to obey your commands, I shall give the best account I can.

The people of Boston pass'd tolerably well thro' the winter, by the help of the generous donations of this and the other Colonies. I am well informed that not less than 7000 persons depend on these donations for their daily bread; and there is a multitude of others, who, having something beforehand, and yet being cut off from their business, are now spending their all, and must quickly be reduced to poverty. The people thro' the Province, ever since so many of the Mandamus Councillors resigned their places, have had as little disturbance among them as in any of the Colonies, altho' there has been a total suspension of government. Our executive Courts are shut up, and we have no Legislature. What supplies the place of this, in some measure, is, a Provincial Congress, composed of delegates chosen by the several towns, in the manner of a House of Representatives. Tho' they assume no authority, their *Recommendations* have the same regard paid to them by the body of the people, as used to be paid to laws enacted in form. All this while we were willing to flatter ourselves, that the papers sent home by the Continental Congress would make some impression, and incline the Ministry to accommodate this unhappy controversy upon equitable terms. I have the satisfaction to find, that their address to the people of England meets with your approbation; and, I hope, that to the K. does so likewise. But the last Address of the two Houses has extinguished every spark of hope. The M—y have stopped their ears to the voice of reason and justice, and steeled their hearts against the feelings of humanity. Having been fairly foiled in the field of argument, and tried, as it is said, the force of bribery and corruption in America, which has been so successfully practised at home, they have now recourse to the *ratio ultima*, and we have nothing in prospect but the horrors of war. The people of Boston, notwithstanding repeated insults from the soldiery, were willing to suppose that the works which the General threw up last fall at the only entrance into the town, were

designed merely for his own *defence*. But he has been making preparations since, which indicate *offensive* war. He has provided a great number of waggons and other military implements, which can be of no use but for a march into the country. But what his particular operations will be, can be known only by the execution of them. The people of Boston are quitting the town in great numbers, so that the first city in America is likely soon to be in a great measure deserted, or inhabited chiefly by regiments and those who arrogate to themselves the title of *friends of government*; — and one of the finest harbors in the world has for some time been rendered useless. The military gentry, it is said, despise, or affect to despise, the Americans as cowards. They say, the Americans will never have courage to fight, but will immediately disperse on the first appearance of regular troops. In this they may probably find themselves mistaken, to their cost. This single Province can, upon occasion, bring more men, and those pretty well disciplined, into the field than the whole military establishment of Great Britain; and those that can be spared upon an emergency from other employm^t joined with those of the neighboring colonies will form an army which the General will not find it easy to subdue. They have no design of attacking the K.'s troops; but are determined, 19 in 20, I am told, upon the lowest computation, to stand upon their own defence, and the defence of their charter government, if attacked, and have prepared themselves accordingly. And indeed their ardor is such that it is found difficult to restrain it within due bounds. Consider, Sir, what must be the feelings of men, descended from ancestors who fled hither as to a safe retreat from tyrannical power 150 years ago, while it was a perfect wilderness inhabited only by savages, and settled it *at their own expence*, without the least charge to the Crown or nation, and whose descendents have ever since been employed, with immense toil and danger, in turning this wilderness into a fruitful field, and the present generation possessed of fair inheritances, — when they see themselves treated like a parcel of slaves on a plantation, who are to work just as they are ordered by their masters, and the profit of whose labors is to be appropriated just as their masters please, — and then judge whether it be likely that such men will give up every thing dear and valuable to them without a struggle. What the event will be, can be known with certainty only by Him *who seeth all things from the beginning to the end*. We trust, we have a righteous cause, and we can cheerfully commit our cause to Him *who judgeth righteously*. We know that we are not the aggressors, and that we are only striving to maintain our just rights. And I humbly hope, Sir, that we shall be remembered in your addresses to the throne of grace. May a gracious God avert these dreadful evils! But whatever the events of war may be, they must prove ruinous to Great Britain as well as to the Colonies.

A horrid carnage is the first thing to be expected; and if it once begins, it may continue for a length of time, till the Colonies are so exhausted and impoverished, that they will not have the ability, even if it could be supposed they would have the inclination, to purchase British manufactures. What then will become of the American trade? Will it be any compensation to the nation for the loss of this trade, that the M—y are in possession of a few fortified towns on the sea-coast, where garrisons must be constantly maintained at a vast expence? But you, Sir, have already anticipated the consequences, and had reason to say that their conduct is little short of insanity.

As soon as I had received your letter, I went to deliver your respects to Dr. Chauncy, and to inquire whether he had received yours of the 8th of Octr. He told me, he had; and desired me to present his respects to you, and inform you that he had writ an answer, and sent with it a large packet of papers, which he thinks went from hence about the middle of February. I hope they are come to your hand before this time.

I have the happiness, intirely to fall in with the sentiments of your letter, that this contest may prove beneficial in the event to one, if not both countries, and hope I shall be excused if I publish (with the proper cautions) some extracts from it. I should think myself wanting in my duty to my countrymen, if I should confine within the narrow circle of my particular acquaintance, what is so excellently fitted to direct them in the true line of conduct they ought to persue. And I have Dr. Chauncy's authority, in a similar case, to justify me.

I write also by Mr. Dana to our excellent friend Dr. Franklin, the Friend of Liberty, of America and of Mankind.

With my most ardent wishes for your happiness, and long-continued usefulness, I am, with the highest respect, Sir,

Your most humble serv^t,

JOHN WINTHROP.

P. S. I must beg pardon for the interlineations. I have not time to transcribe it, the messenger being now waiting.

RICHARD PRICE TO JOSIAH QUINCY, JR.

[April or May, 1775.]

DEAR SIR, — I send you enclosed the account which I promised you of the taxes of this kingdom, and particularly the excises. It is with particular concern I think of the bad state of health with which you left England. I hope the voyage has been of service to you, and that you are now returned well and happy to Mrs. Quincy and your

family and friends. Things continue here in much the same state in which you left them. The stocks are higher than they were a year ago. No particular stagnation of trade is yet felt. The spirits of the merchants are kept up by the belief that the Americans cannot go on long with their Non-importation and Non-exportation Agreement^b, that the trade will be soon opened again, and that the issue of the quarrel will be the establishm^t of the authority of this country over the Colonies, and consequently gaining in the end a more secure and advantageous trade. Our rulers trust in their power to corrupt, divide, and intimidate. They believe that either the Americans will not fight, or that if they should, they are a mere rabble who will be easily subdued by a disciplined army. The ministry have taken their measures under this persuasion; and the officers in the army now going to America have in general no other apprehension; and therefore go with good spirits, and in full expectation that all will be soon over. Nothing could be more provoking than the manner in which L^d Sandwich lately spoke in the House of Lords of your countrymen. I was in the House and heard him. "Have we not, said he, (in answer to L^d Camden) conquered the French and the Spaniards; and shall we be afraid of a body of *fanatics* in New-England, who will bluster and swell when danger is at a distance, but when it comes near, will like all other mobs throw down their arms and run away?" He then gave an account of the behaviour of the New-Englanders at the siege of Louisburg, and assured the House that S^t Peter Warren has represented it to him as in the highest degree dastardly. They had been order'd to attack a battery, but fled as soon as they approached it. S^t Peter, however, he said, thought it necessary to disguise his sentim^t; and in order to keep up their spirits commended them and called them *Romans*. After this he went on to compare your countrymen to the poor *Indians* in *Bengal*, whom we have so miserably and infamously plundered and oppressed. "They, he said, are also fanatics; but it is well-known that a few of our troops will rout the greatest number of them: and were I (he added,) in General Gage's situation and heard that 20,000 New-England-men were coming against me, I should wish that they were rather thirty or forty thousand."

I can assure you that such apprehensions as these are common among us, and I look upon them as a melancholy proof of that infatuation with which Heaven has visited us. I am in hopes of hearing some time or other that your countrymen have wiped off these aspersions from their characters; and proved to the confusion of their vile slanderers that they deserve to be *free* by shewing themselves *brave*.

Dr. Franklin is returned to Philadelphia, and will, I suppose, attend the Congress. I have lost by his departure a friend that I greatly loved and valued. He talked of coming back in the beginning of next

winter ; but I do not much expect to see him again. It is a trouble to me that I don't hear from Dr. Chauncy and Mr. Winthrop. Deliver my best respects to them. I hope you will be so good as to write to me. I have friends in both Houses of Parliam^t who, you know, are some of the first friends of America ; and I wish to be able to give them the best intelligence. M^r Gordon sends very good accounts. Should you fall into company with him, deliver to him my respects. I shall wait with great impatience till I hear whether you have got home safe, and are restored to your former health. Your life, I think, of much importance to your country.

Wishing you and M^r Quincy all possible happiness, I am, dear Sir,
Your most obedient and humble servant.

JOHN WINTHROP TO RICHARD PRICE

NEW ENGLAND, June 6, 1775.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR, — I wrote you the 10 April by my friend, Mr. Dana, who I hope has arrived before this time. The apprehensions I expressd in that letter, of our being involved in the horrors of war, were but too well founded, and were very soon dreadfully realized. The blow has been struck, the sword is drawn, and I suppose the scabbard thrown away. On the 19 April hostilities comunced, and there was a smart engagement, in which numbers fell on both sides. Before now, you have received two very different accounts of this affair, which have been published here, and, I suppose, in London too. The first was by the General, and sent by him to the Gov^t of Connecticut ;¹ and the same, or a similar one, was doubtless sent by him to England in a man of war which he dispatched a day or two after the action. This, I conceive, does not give a just representation of the matter, tho' it may be agreeable to the accounts he received from his officers, who, he says, were men of unquestionable honor, but mentions not their names. They endeavor to throw the blame of being the aggressors on the Provincials. The other account is sent home by our Provincial Congress, with a short address to the inhabitants of Great Britain.² It contains the depositions of sundry persons, both Provincials and Regulars, who were in the eugagement, relative to that point. It will be easy, I conceive, to form a proper judgment of the credit due to each of these accounts. To me it appears perfectly

¹ General Gage's letter to Governor Trumbull is printed in Force's American Archives, fourth series, vol. ii. cols. 434-436 — Eds

² Printed in Force's American Archives, fourth series, vol. ii. cols. 486-501. — Eds.

incredible, that a few Provincials, certainly under 100, should begin an attack on a body of Regulars of at least ten times their number. I shall only add, that the relation in the depositions is essentially the same as I heard on the day of battle, and always heard from several who were in the engagement before either of these accounts appeared in print. These depositions will give you a just idea of the proceedings on that day; but it may be some farther satisfaction to you, to know the train of events which brought on that important action.

When the Act was passed for altering the civil government of this Province, the people were universally, with very few exceptions, determin'd never to submit to it. The new Mandamus Counsellors, except six or seven who refused, were sworn in about the beginning of August; but nothing material was done in that month, by way of opposition, more than the shutting up the court houses in some of the remote counties. About the end of August, the G——l dispatched a party of soldiers very secretly in the night, and took away 250 barrels of powder belonging to the Province, which were deposited in a magazine about 4 miles from Boston. This gave a great alarm; and on the 2d of September, a large body of people assembled at Cambridge, tho' without arms, and obliged as many of the Mandamus Counsellors as they could meet with to resign their places; and the officers of the executive Courts to engage not to act upon the new plan of government. Immediately upon this, the G——l began to fortify himself in Boston, and levied a number of cannon in different places. As this seemed to threaten war, the people tho't it necessary to provide for their own defence. Accordingly, in Octr. or November, they began to collect stores of all the necessary kinds, in different parts of the country. A principal magazine was at Concord, about 18 miles from Boston. During the winter, the G——l frequently, and openly in the daytime, marched large bodies of his troops 8 or 10 miles into the country, who went and returned without the least molestation from the inhabitants. But on the 18 of April, about ten at night, a body, said to be about 8 or 900 men, were secretly conveyed across the bay from Boston to Cambridge, and marched as silently as possible thro' by-ways till they got into the high road to Concord; with what design, could not admit of a doubt. But all their motions were watched, and the alarm flew like lightning thro' all the neighbouring towns. The people immediately began to muster, in order to defend their property. About sunrise, the troops arrived at Lexington, a town that lies on the Concord road, 11 miles from Boston. For what followed, I beg leave to refer you to the depositions before mentioned; and shall only say in short that a body of less than 100 of our people being assembled at Lexington, the Regulars without any provocation fired upon them, killd 8 upon the spot, wounded several others, and then persued their march

to Concord, where they destroyed what stores they could meet with, and fired on another party of Provincials, and killed some of them; but the Provincials returning the fire killed some of the Regulars. This was the first opposition they met with. Upon this they retreated towards Lexington, where they were joined by a large reinforcement of about 1200 men, sent from Boston to support them; and then, the whole body returned together towards Charlestown. They were followed all the way by our people, who were now collecting from different quarters in considerable numbers; tho' I have been assured by several who were in the action, that not more than 300 of our people were engaged at any one time. There was, however, a hot engagement, which lasted all the afternoon, during their whole retreat. In their return, they behaved much in the manner of the Cossacks, firing into some houses, whereby some aged people were killed; entering others, and destroying or pillaging whatever they could lay their hands on; and some they burnt to the ground. I have seen some houses they fired upon, in which were only women who had fled thither for shelter. At sunset they arrived at Charlestown within a mile of Boston, to which they were carried over in the night by the men-of-war's boats. Thus ended this memorable day, a day that will never be forgotten in America.

As to the loss sustained on each side, I have seen what is said to be a complete list of the Provincials who fell in battle, which amounted to 50; and 5 or 6 were taken prisoners. It is more difficult to come at the knowledge of the loss on the other side, which they have industriously concealed, as much as possible. But I believe it is certain they had upwards of 100 kill'd, and more wounded; several of whom, and some that were officers, have since died of their wounds. Several that were wounded were taken prisoners.

The next day, the G——I shut up the town of Boston, and suffered no person to go out; and then none of the country people would go in to carry provisions. This continued about 10 days; but upon repeated applications he consented that the inhabitants should remove out *with their effects*, upon condition they would deliver up their arms. When this was complied with, the people began to remove. But he quickly clogg'd their removal with new restrictions;—none were to go out without his permit, then, only a certain number of cart or boat loads of goods were to go out in a day, then, no merchandize was to be carried out, then, no provisions of any kind, not so much as a basket, then, permits to be granted only certain hours of the day, and some days none at all. However, they continued to move out as fast as they could amidst so many obstructions, every trunk, &c., being searched by officers. 'Tis judged, that about two-thirds of the inhabitants are now removed. As many would be obliged to leave almost all their property

behind them, some choose to stay, to prevent, if possible, its being rifled by the soldiers, who, 'tis said, enter into every house they find uninhabited.

Ever since the battle, the G——l has kept himself, his troops and the Tories (as they are called) within the town, which is surrounded by a large army of Provincials. The communication with the country being cut off, they are reduced to live almost wholly on salted meats; which has occasioned their stripping some of the islands in the harbor, of all their live-stock. This lead the Provincials to take off the live-stock from the other islands. A smart skirmish happened on this account the 27 ult, in which we had not one man killed, and but 4 wounded, and not one of them mortally; but there is the strongest reason to believe that the loss on the side of the Regulars was very considerable. There seemed to be a remarkable interposition of Providence in this affair; but it must be observed that the action happened in the night.

Soon after my last, I received an unsealed letter directed to Dr. Chauncy, and in his absence to me. It was brought, I suppose, by Mr. Quiney, who died on board the vessel just after her arrival, being too ill to be removed on shore; so that his friends had no opportunity to see him. We lament his death as a public loss. This letter was delivered to me, while Dr. Chauncy was shut up in Boston. As soon as I heard of his getting out, I sent it to him. I have quitted my house, and reside in the country, at a considerable distance. The College is all dispersed; there being a large army of Provincials posted in the town, and my house is filled with soldiers.

Our excellent friend Dr. Franklin is arrived at Philadelphia, and, to the joy of America, time enough to be chosen a member of the Continental Congress. We derive great hopes from his presence and assistance in that body.

May heaven pour down the choicest of its blessings upon you. With the sincerest esteem and respect I am, ever, dear Sir,

Your most obedient humble serv^t.

Jer. v. 9.¹

[No signature.]

30 June

All direct communication between you and us is now cut off, so that I am obliged to send my letters by the way of Philadelphia thro' the hands of our good friend Dr. F., who has kindly offered to take care of them. And having no opportunity till now to send thither, I set down to give you a brief account of what has happened since I wrote the above.

All accommodation seems now at a greater distance than ever.

¹ The passage in the Prophet Jeremiah to which Mr. Winthrop refers is this: "Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?" — Eds

Both parties, I suppose, have gone too far to think of retreating. An imaginary dignity of government on the one hand, essential rights and privileges on the other, and inflamed passions on both, will render a reconciliation very difficult. War now rages here in all its fury, bloody battles fought, one maritime town already laid in ashes, and others threatened with the same fate. If the 19 of April did not give full conviction to the ministry that the Americans can fight and will fight, the 17 of June, I presume, will remove all their doubts; and enable them to judge, whether the accounts they received from the servants of the Crown here, or those from the friends of Liberty, were best founded. On that day there was a hot engagement at Charlestown, which lies opposite to Boston, on the other side of the river. A large body of regulars were carried over thither, to attack an entrenchment which our people had begun to throw up on a hill there the night before. To cover their approach they set the town on fire, which, consisting wholly of wooden houses, a great part of them contiguous to each other and very dry, was quickly reduced to ashes; but, it is said, the smoke, which blew directly in their faces, annoyed them more than it served them. Our people defended the entrenchment with great resolution till their ammunition was almost spent, and then retreated, leaving the regulars in possession of the hill, where they have since entrenched themselves. They purchased this advantage very dearly. A few more such conquests would ruin their army. But the best account I am at present able to give you of the loss on each side is in the enclosed paper.

Such is the tenderness of the Mother Country! This, the method of securing and extending the commerce of Great Britain! These, the inducements to submit to a power which claims to be despotic over us in all cases whatsoever! What figure will this expedition make when it comes to be told in history? May gracious heaven interpose to prevent farther evils.

It will always give me the sincerest pleasure to hear of your welfare.

EDWARD WIGGLESWORTH¹ TO RICHARD PRICE.

CAMBRIDGE, June 12, 1775.

REVD. SIR, — The warmth of my affections for an amiable young gentleman, who was formerly my pupil, and has for a year past been connected with me in the instruction and government of the College in

¹ Rev. Edward Wigglesworth, D.D., grandson of the author of "The Day of Doom," and second Hollis Professor of Divinity in Harvard College, was born Feb 7, 1731-2, and died June 17, 1794. See Bond's Genealogies of Watertown, p 171. — Eds.

this place, must serve as my apology for addressing you at this time. My friend is Mr. Isaac Smith, who is descended from ancestors truly respectable for their piety towards God and benevolence to mankind. His father is an eminent merchant in Boston of the same name, well known in his commercial character on the exchange of London. The affluence of the father's circumstances, in conjunction with a disposition to qualify the son for discharging the offices of manhood with extensive usefulness and reputation, gave my friend the opportunity of visiting Great Britain and France, soon after he had finished his academical studies; an advantage enjoyed but by few of the ministers in this Province. Mr. Smith, while but a youth, determined to devote his abilities to the service of God in the Gospel of his Son; from which determination he has not been diverted, either by the importunity of some of his connections, or by the prospect of those distinguished advantages for accumulating wealth which would have arisen from entering into trade with a father well versed in every branch of American commerce. Soon after his return from England, where he formed an acquaintance with the late excellent Dr. Amory as well as some other eminent dissenting clergymen, he was introduced to the desk by the ministers of Boston or its vicinity. Those of his discourses which I have had the pleasure of hearing have been rational, practical and serious, and delivered with that gravity and solemnity which became their importance. His pulpit performances have done honour to the College in which he received his education; and been well accepted, in those parishes where he has occasionally ministered, by those of his brethren whose piety has been rational and not tinged with superstition or enthusiasm. And should Providence open a door for the exercise of his ministerial gifts, while he takes up his residence in Britain, I can't but persuade myself he will do honour to the country which gave him birth, and be happily instrumental in advancing the interest of the Redeemer's Kingdom.

I should have addressed you by Mr. Smith, had not the convulsions into which this vicinity was thrown by the commencement of hostilities at Concord prevented my writing before his embarkation. To him I must refer you for a particular state of our public affairs at the time he left New England. Since his departure the provincial troops have taken the live-stock from four islands in the harbour of Boston; which they effected without the loss of a single man, notwithstanding those islands lay exposed to the fire of the British fleet, and in one instance they had to withstand the fire of a detachment both from the army and navy. Govr. H——'s letter-book has fallen into the hands of our provincial Congress, and some of his letters have been communicated to the public through the channel of the Essex Gazette. By means of the same paper his other letters to the British Ministry will be submitted to the

inspection of the friends of that once excellent constitution of government which gave happiness to Britains and Americans. Mr. Smith's father will forward him our papers, as opportunities of conveyance present, which will put him into a capacity of making our friends in London fully acquainted with the state of this Province and with the temper of the Continent.

With my most ardent desires that the present unnatural contest between the parent state and these Colonies may be speedily and amicably terminated, and that the freedom of both may be established on a sure and lasting foundation, I am, Rev^d and Hou^d Sir,

Your obedient, humble servant.

EDWARD WIGGLESWORTH,
Hollis Professor of Divinity.

Rev^d. Dr PRICE.¹

CHARLES CHAUNCY TO RICHARD PRICE.

MEDFIELD, July 18th, 1775.

REV^d. AND DEAR SIR, — Yours of April 29th I have received, and return you my hearty thanks for it. Yours also to Mr. Josiah Quincey is come into my hands, as he was gone from our world to be here no more. None of his relatives nor friends had the opportunity of seeing him, as the vessel he came in went into Cape-Ann harbour, thirty miles from Boston, from whence he was put on shore, but died the next day. We are ready to wish God had spared his valuable life. He might have been of great service to us in these calamitous times; but we would meekly bear this public loss, as it comes from the alwise, righteous, and holy Governor of the world. Notwthstanding Mr. Quincey's desire, Mr. Bromfield, I believe, would be justified should he open the packets sent to him, and not return them to America, as they might contain some articles of important intelligence proper to be known in England.

The three generals you speak of have been in Boston a considerable time, wth the reinforcements, but are, there is reason to think, both disappointed and disheartned. The goods and tea brot over in the King's ships will be of no service to any merchant either at home or here, nor will they be hurtful to us, as they must be stored for want of buyers. Not a shilling's worth of them will be sold except to the Tories in Boston, who have at present other things to mind than that of purchasing English commodities.

The account of a defection at New-York was one of the many false-

¹ By a curious oversight this letter was addressed on the outside "To the Rev^d Thomas Price, D.D., London" Wigglesworth was evidently thinking of his correspondent's uncle, Thomas Price, an eminent dissenting minister in London at an earlier period. — EDs.

hoods the friends of government (as they call themselves) have endeavoured to propagate here as well as in England. The people in that Colony are in general as firmly attached to the cause of liberty as in the other Colonies; which, I suppose, is well known in London by this time.

The hope of the ministry, and the dread of our friends, respecting the cooling of the hearts of people here, the increase of disunion, and the impossibility of carrying our commercial plan into execution, have no solid basis. Our spirits continually rise in warmth, our union is daily growing in strength and vigor, and such care is taken throughout the Colonies to bring into event the commercial plan, that, humanely speaking, there is not the least probability of a failure.

Your merchants, we believe, are very hollow. Had they acted like men sincerely concerned for the prosperity of their American friends, we should not have suffered to the degree we have done. They may be assured, the Colonies have no expectation from them, as thinking they would willingly see them all enslaved, if their private interest might thereby be promoted. Perhaps some of them (I could mention their names) will never more have the advantage of commercial dealing wth any of the Colonies.

General Gage, we had heard, had orders sent him to seize some of our leading men, and he had often opportunities to do it, but dare not. His endeavouring to take possession of the magazines has been the more immediate occasion of the war that is now commenced between him and all the Colonies, who are united as one in carrying it on. Our generals are constituted by the Continental Congress, the stile of our army is, the American Army, the expence is defrayed by the Colonies in common. The cause contended for is not looked upon as the cause of Boston or the Massachusets-Province, but of the whole American continent, who are as firmly united and determined as men ever were to risque both their fortunes and lives in defence of their rights and privileges.

I shall now, with as much brevity as I can, give you an account of *facts* as they have happened, previous to the present *civil war* and since it began to this day. And you may rely upon what I write as the real truth, notwithstanding you may probably have quite different accounts from those who are enemies to us, for they will, the most of them, speak falsely with as bold a face as thõ they declared the real truth.

Col^l Lesly, about the latter end of March, was ordered by the General to go with about an hundred men to Marblehead in a transport that had been provided for them, and to go secretly by night; and from Marblehead he was to go by land to Salem, about 4 miles, and to bring off a number of canon our people had there. He went nearly to the

place where the canon lay, but was obstructed in his passage by the drawing up of a bridge, made for the convenience of vessels passing through ; and after about an hour's continuance at this pass was obliged to return to Marblehead, and get his men into the transport that brot them as soon as he could. Had he attempted to take the canon by force, he and his men would surely have been cut off.

You must have heard before this reaches you of the battel at Concord. It was wholly occasioned by those who are seeking our ruin. The night before the 19th of April, about a thousand regulars were ordered, with as great secrecy as you can imagine, to go to Concord to seize or destroy our magazine there. They arrived at Lexington, six miles short of Concord, about sunrise, when our men, having had some previous notice of their coming, began to collect together in order to watch their motions. They found nearly an hundred of our people in arms, and ordered them to disperse, which they accordingly did, but while they were dispersing, the King's troops fired upon them, killed six or seven upon the spot, and wounded some others. They then steered their course towards Concord. It has been pretended that our people gave the first fire, and I suppose such an account has been sent home. But tis a notorious falsehood. Some scores of persons then and there present, have given their affidavits under oath, that the King's troops killed six or seven of our men, and wounded others, before a gun was fired on our side. The same troops began the fire at Concord, but were soon obliged to retreat, thô attacked by not more than between two and three hundred of our men; for no more had as yet got together. When they had retreated as far back as Lexington, they were joined by Lord Percy with about 900 regulars sent by the General as a reinforcement. By this time our men were increased in number, from one and another of the neighbouring towns, and behaved with such resolution and fortitude, that Lord Percy's troops in common with the others were speedily obliged to be upon the retreat, and on they went retreating till they got back to Charlestown. It may be worthy of note here in favor of the King's troops, that two regiments from Salem, Marblehead, and some other towns that way, did not come soon enô by half an hour to fall upon them in the rear as they were retreating. Had they been able to do this, they must have been cutt off, or taken prisoners. We know that 240 of the King's troops were killed and wounded. How many more met with the like fate we cannot say with certainty; but tis generally said and believed, that the number was not less than 450. In less than 24 hours after this engagement many thousands of our men were got together at Cambridge and Roxbury; and we have now an army in these places of twenty thousand, as likely, able men as you would desire to look upon, in readiness to engage in any enterprise in defence of our rights and liberties. By means of this army

all communication between the King's troops and the country is cut off: and as no fresh provisions have from that time been permitted to go into Boston, the troops there are in suffering circumstances, and must continue to be so till they can make their way into the country, which they will find to be impracticable. The day after the Concord fight the passages from Boston into the country were by the General's order shut; insomuch that no person could go out of the town. What his special design in this was, we cannot with certainty say; but in a few days of his own meer motion he sent for the selectmen of Boston, and made this proposal to them, that if the inhabitants would consent to put their arms into their custody they shd. have liberty to go out of town with their effects. The town was called together upon this occasion, and for the sake of their wives and children, and that they might secure their effects, they consented to deliver up their arms, and accordingly did it. But what followed hereupon? The Governor, who is also the General, proved himself to be void of all faith as well as honor. He broke thro' his own proposal in which he engaged to let the inhabitants go out of town with their effects. For a while he suffered the inhabitants to go, but not without a pass from him, which soon became so difficult to obtain that but few comparatively could get out; nor were any suffered to go out without being searched, and sent back, if there was found with them provisions of any kind, or any merchandise. The whole merchandise of the people in trade is to this day in Boston; for what end I cannot say. The merchants in England are hereby greatly injured; for tis impossible their debts should be paid, while the possessors of their goods can make no use of them in a way of sale. And tis probable, they will soon be the plunder of the troops. Mr. Gage has rendered himself the object of universal hatred and contempt, by his perfidy, cruelty, and oppressive conduct.

The 27th of May another battle came on between the King's troops and ours. About three hundred of our men were sent to take from Hog-Island (about 3 miles from Boston) the sheep, lambs, and cattle which were there: upon which a sloop, a schooner, and it may be an hundred boats filled with men were ordered by the General or Admiral or both to counteract our people in their design. This brôt on a terrible engagement. It lasted between two and three hours. The issue was, our taking the schooner, driving away the sloop and boats, and carrying off from the just mentioned island all the sheep, &c. It is acknowledged by the regulars themselves that a considerable number of their men were killed and wounded. We know not how many; but tis generally said and thot that they lost nearly as many as at the Concord fight. We did not lose a single man and had but three wounded, and neither of them mortally. I heard General Putnam say, who had the command of our detachment, that the most of the time he and his men

were fighting there was nothing between them and the fire of the enemy but pure air. They stood upon Chelsea-shore within reach of the enemy's shot for some hours, and yet not a man of them was killed; tho' they killed a considerable number of those that came against them. This can't be accounted for but by recurring to a remarkable interposition of Providence. The regular officers themselves acknowledge this was a fair fight, and that they were fairly defeated.

The night before the 17th of June about fifteen hundred of our men were sent to Bunker Hill, in Charlestown, to throw up a breastwork and dig an entrenchment there. They began the work between 10 and 11 at night. By the dawn of the next morning they were fired upon from a battery at Coops-Hill in Boston, which had some time before been erected by the General, and the fire was perpetual till about three thousand troops were landed from Boston on the north side of said Bunker's hill. Upon this there ensued a most terrible combat between the King's troops and ours. The King's troops retreated twice. The third time they came on much against their inclination. In very truth, they would never have ventured up the hill again had they not been urged to it by the swords of their officers pricking them along. They now got over the breastwork, such as it was, and our men retreated, and went down the hill on the south side. The loss on our side was nearly 80 or 90 men killed, and it may be an hundred and fifty wounded, not more than two or three mortally. By all accounts from those who have come out of Boston since this battle, not less than a thousand of the King's troops were killed, and nearly five hundred wounded, including officers with the privates. It is credibly said that not less than 92 commissioned officers were killed and wounded. When I relate to you some facts you will be able to judge whether the account of the enemy's slain and wounded is exagger[at]ed, as also whether our men are such dastardly creatures as Lord Sandwich represented them to be in the House of Lords. The poor were ordered out of the public almshouse in Boston by General Gage, and sent into the country, to make way for his wounded soldiers. The same was done by the people in the workhouse there. Both these houses will contain four hundred people. Soon after the Bunker-Hill battle, orders were dispatched by General Gage in a cutter to New-York, commanding all the troops that were coming there to proceed to Boston with all speed. I suppose they are all there by this time. These facts are not to be accounted for, unless his loss had been nearly as has been represented. The circumstances under which our men fought will demonstrate that they are not such cowards as they are said to be in England. Not more than 15 hundred fought with three thousand, and killed and wounded one half of the whole. On the north side of the hill on which the combat was, the regulars had a number of floating-batteries, which continually fired on

our men. On the south side of the hill, and in coming to it, or going from it, they were annoyed by a number of the King's ships who were so anchored as greatly to endanger our men. In front of the hill, there was Coops-Hill battery, which kept up a continual fire. Besides all this, soon after the fight began the regulars in an inhuman cruel manner set fire to the town of Charles-town, which they wholly burnt down, to the unspeakable loss of hundreds of families there. Under such circumstances did our men fight, and with not more than half the number the enemy had. And after all, they would not have retreated, but that they had spent their ammunition, thô they came out well stocked with it. Some of our people fired at the enemy twenty times, some thirty, and some till their guns were so heated, that they dared not to charge them any more. The King's troops, both officers and privates, now say that our men will fight like devils. So far as I can learn there is universal dejection and discouragement among the troops at Boston. Our army wish they would come out; but tis not probable they will, thô they have a reinforcement from the troops designed for New-York.

Our people in all the Colonies are firmly united and resolutely fixt to defend their rights, whatever opposition they meet with. And instead of being disheartened by what is done against them, they rise continually in the strength of their determination to die rather than live slaves. 'Tis remarkable, notwithstanding the sufferings of the town of Boston, and other towns, and the general oppression all the Colonies are groaning under, I have never heard one who was not a Tory, so much as lipse, — Let us submit to the Parliamentary acts.

I could have easily enlarged; but have been obliged to write what I have done in a great hurry, as I am this afternoon going from this place, which is twenty miles from Boston, about 16 or 18 miles upon some special business. And Mr. Green, whose vessel this comes in, is going to Dartmouth before I shall see him again, from whence the vessel is to sail for London. He promises me the letter shall be delivered by the master himself with his own hands.

Mr. Winthrop lives now at Andover, about 27 miles from Boston. I saw him last week at his new-habitation. He is well, and would have undoubtedly wrote you, had he known of this opportunity.

Next Wednesday, agreeably to the advice of the Continental Congress, this Province, having made choice of representatives, will meet in order to chuse counsellors, and to transact public business; the Council acting in the place of the Governour, as they are allowed to do by our Charter when there is no Governor nor Lt. Governour, as is apprehended to be the ease at present. None of the Colonies look upon Governor Gage or Lt. Governour Oliver as constitutional officers, and think we may constitutionally act without them.

The following day, which is Thursday, will be observed by all the

Colonies as a day of fasting and prayer, on account of our present circumstances. 'Twas recommended to be observed by the Continental Congress. I pray God it may be observed in a truly Christian manner, and so as that it may be acceptable to heaven.

I shall add no more. but that I am, with all due regards,
Your assured friend and humble servt.

Dr. RICHARD PRICE.

[*No signature.*]

I know not when I shall be able to write to you again; but should be glad you would write to me as often as you can. Direct your letters to me at Medfield, and they will come safely.

I shall send a number of late newspapers to Mr. Hyslop, who will give you the reading of them should you desire it. Mr. Bromfield can inform you of him.

CHARLES CHAUNCY TO RICHARD PRICE.

MEDFIELD, NEAR BOSTON, July 22d, 1775.

REVD. AND DEAR SIR, — In addition to what I wrote you in the utmost hurry by this same vessel, I would now say, having opportunity for it by Mr. Green's not going to Dartmouth so soon as he intended, a few things it may be gratifying to you to know. Our Continental Congress have published a declaration, setting forth "the reasons why they have taken up arms." They have likewise sent a Petition to the King, and an Address to the People of England; all which you will probably have opportunity of seeing before this reaches you. Roxbury and Cambridge, the places in which our army is encamped, are so strongly fortified that were the King's troops three times as many as they are we should not be in the least fear of them. Our soldiers are continually wishing they would come out; but there is, as I imagine, no probability of this. It is intended our army shall be increased to thirty thousand; besides which, our minute-men are so numerous, that upon an alarm fifty thousand of them might come to the help of the army, should necessity call for it, in two or three days. We have a sufficiency of powder, notwithstanding the endeavours of the ministry to prevent it; and before next year we shall have a full supply within ourselves. We can make what cannon, shot, shells, bombs, &c., we want. We have at present as many in these kinds as we have occasion for. The King's troops in Boston are very sickly, great numbers die daily; and no wonder, for they are confined wthin the narrow limits of Boston, not having fresh provisions or vegetables of any kind. They are indeed in a very pitiful, miserable, suffering condition, as is the unhappy case of our own people also who are yet in Boston, thrô the perfidy of Govr. Gage. I expect the troops in Boston will most of them be car-

ried off by sickness before the winter, unless they can come out into the country, which, I believe, they will find altogether impracticable; and this tho' more reinforcements should be sent to them. They will die the faster, should their numbers be increased. Most of the ministers and churches in Boston, as well as its other inhabitants, are scattered into all parts of the country, and thousands of them totally undone as to this world. 'Tis astonishing to us that the people in England are so blind as not to see that every thing that is done against us is done against them. They may be ruined; but this will not be our case, tho' we may suffer greatly. The ministry may imagine we can't live wthout commerce wth England, but they are greatly mistaken. We have all the necessaries, and many of the comforts and conveniences of life wthin ourselves; and shall perhaps be better able to go thro' the war than they are. You may rely upon it as truth that, instead of discord and faintheartedness, the Colonies are all united and courageously resolute to suffer death, rather than submit to arbitrary, despotic government. I'm ready to think by appearances in our army that it will not be long before some great enterprise will be engaged in; and should it be succeeded, as I trust it will, an end will be put to the war for this year at least. Our representatives have chosen Counsellors, and will soon appoint Judges, and all civil officers necessary to our becoming a constitutionally governed people. Our late Govr. Hutchinson, being left of God, was so infatuated as to leave in his house at Milton his trunk of letters coming down to 1773, which has fallen into the hands of our late Provincial Congress, and by a remarkable providence. These letters are now printing in our news-papers, and make such a discovery of the perfidy, treachery, and villainy of the man, that his once best friends now give him up as a traitor to his country. It appears from these letters that for a course of years he has been carrying on one uniform design of enslaving his country. The ministry have all along taken their measures from him. But I must not enlarge. I fear I have tried your patience. I am, wishing you the best of blessings,

Your assured friend and humble servt.

[*The signature has been cut off.*]

EARL OF SHELBURNE TO RICHARD PRICE.

LIMERICK, 5 Sept^r, 1775

DEAR D^r PRICE, — I should have written to you in Wales, but I had nothing new to send you, and was letterally very much hurried, as well as very much stupified, which I always am with a month's good living. I have here still less to entertain you from this out of the way country, but I flatter myself that you and Mrs. Price will not be sorry

to hear that I am well. Look upon the map, and you'll see a little Isle call'd *Valentia* in the S. Western corner of the Old World. Opposite to this I have been this fortnight, where I found the lands in a state of nature, the people worse, the result of poverty and the Popery laws, which are subversive of all morality, publick or private confidence, and industry. I found these poor people under a degree of oppression scarcely conceivable. The head tenants have no idea of drawing their subsistence from cultivating the ground, but from racking the poor people, which goes sometimes four or five deep, till you find the real occupier very little remov'd from the brute creation in appearance, food, dress, or state of mind. They have refin'd to such a degree upon this system, that I found a considerable tenant letting his land in *ounces*, a new measure, containing I suppose half a rood. The clergy are the worst landlords of all, and what mortifies me, who do not feel rich as you do, is that they shall demand tythe the very first year upon land which I give amongst the poor rent free for 20 year.

I find all classes in this kingdom much more animated about America than in England. In every Protestant or Dissenter's house, the establish'd toast is success to the Am^{ans}. Among the Roman Catholicks they not only talk but act very freely on the other side. They have in different parts enter'd into Associations, and subscrib'd largely to levye men against America, avowing their dislike of a constitution here or in America, of which they are not allow'd to participate. On the other hand the Parl^t pretend to no will but that of the Minister. I have no time to make reflections on this state of things, or what it may produce, nor is it necessary to you, so well able to form his own judgements. I ride here sometimes 13 hours out of the 24, by which means I hope to finish my business by the beginning of next month, when it will be great pleasure to me to find you and Mrs Price as well as I wish you both. Till then, dear D^r Price, adieu.

[*No signature.*]

WILLIAM GORDON¹ TO RICHARD PRICE.

The best chronicle of facts, that can be communicated at present by one of the former directors of the London Annuity Society.

¹ Rev. William Gordon, D.D., was an Englishman by birth, and came to this country in 1770. In 1772 he was ordained minister of the church in Jamaica Plain. During the Revolution he took an active part in public affairs, and at one time was chaplain to the Provincial Congress. In 1786 he returned to England, and in 1788 he published his "History of the Rise, Progress, and Establishment of the Independence of the United States." He married a daughter of John Field, an apothecary in extensive practice in Newgate Street, London, and died in Ipswich, England, in 1807. See 6 Mass. Hist. Coll. vol. iii p. 151 n; Dictionary of National Biography vol. xviii pp. 405, 406; vol. xxiii p. 235 — Eds

The officers of Gage's army had been toasting *to the 17th of June*, for near a fortnight or better. What particular expedition they had planned cannot learn; but apprehend some grand one, and that it was disconcerted by the Bunker's hill affair.

Charles Town was not burnt thro' necessity, to cover the approach of the regulars, or to dislodge any provincials that were in and fired from the houses, that not being a fact; but in consequence of a previous resolution of Gen. Gage's. A married lady of my acquaintance (Mrs. Miller, a daughter of Mr. Cary of Charles Town) informed me Monday 3 weeks, Au' 21, at Cambridge, that before she left Boston, being alone with Lady Gage in her dressing room for an hour together, Lady Gage pressed her to remain there as the place of greatest safety, but finding her determined to quit the town, she desired her not to stay in Charles Town, for that the General was fixed upon destroying it, as soon as the provincials attempted to throw up any works on that side. This was confirmed to Mrs. Miller by three or four officers who told her the same.

Mistakes on both sides. The provincials were directed by the proper powers to entrench on Bunker's hill; by some inferior authority they were ordered to do it on Breed's hill, which was exposed to Gage's cannon on Copse Hill in Boston and the fire of the ships, which the first hill was not, being differently situated and at a greater distance. Had not the ground marked out, nor the tools in readiness so as to begin working, till a quarter before twelve at night. Never relieved the next morning, nor refreshed with a supply of provision, but had to fight the enemy after all the preceding fatigue. The number that were engaged about a thousand; the weight of the engagement lay upon about 300. Killed 120, wounded 300, died since of their wounds about 30. Made prisoners 30, all wounded. The wounded who were not prisoners had the advantage of fresh provision, good care, &c., so that very few of them died.

The whole brigade under Gen. Howe was three thousand. Instead of landing and marching so as to escape the front of the entrenchment, and come upon the back of the provincials that were in it, they marched in front and attacked the entrenchment. Whether for want of knowing the ground, or out of military bravery, or for some other reason, know not. They advanced too slowly, which kept them the longer exposed to our fire; were repulsed twice. A provincial was over-heard crying out, What shall we do? our powder is gone. They returned and carried the *embryo* of an entrenchment, for it was no better. They buried upon the ground, officers and men, five hundred or more. Had wounded 800, and have lost out of them about five hundred. I give whole, even numbers, instead of broken. With killed upon the spot, and that have since died of their wounds, they have lost full a thou-

sand of their best troops. The action lasted five and thirty minutes by the watch of a gentleman who noted its continuance on the other side of the river or ferry, at or about Chelsea. Thro mistake twelve pound cartridges were brought for their nine pounders, or nine for six. I can't say which. The provincials lost some brave officers, among which was my friend Dr., then Genl., Warren, the regulars a great many. After the engagement the regulars began to entrench on Bunker's Hill, the provincials on Winter's Hill and Prospect Hill (that division of them that was stationed at and about Cambridge) to prevent Gage's troops penetrating into the country from the way of Charles Town. Another part of the provincials that lay below my house, about Roxbury street, at the head of Boston Neck, began to add to the natural strength of their post by throwing up entrenchments, redoubts, &c. The provincials had a great advantage by the peasantry's poring in armed from the country immediately upon the Bunker's hill engagement, so as to be ready to support them the next day in case of any fresh attack from the regulars, who had suffered too much to attempt doing it. Had all our officers behaved with courage, the regulars would not have got possession of the entrenchment; but one Col. Gerrish proved cowardly, for which he has been since cashier'd. There is one of the same name in our new constitutional Council, chose by the assembly, but it is not the same person. Entrenching and fortifying has been a great part of the business on both sides ever since. There have been small expeditions by the provincials of various kinds, in all which they have succeeded beyond what could have been expected. The provincial army has been regulatng, since the arrival of Gen^l Washington, Lee, Gates, &c., who were upon the road when Bunker's hill affair happened, and is become 25 p ct. stronger than before. By next spring it will be far more formidable, unless some unexpected event should turn up. We have been in great want of powder, but our main difficulty as to that article is, I apprehend, at an end. About a month back the provincial army had not nine rounds a man, for I suppose near a fortnight. We have erected salt-petre works in many parts of the continent which succeed well. We shall be able to supply ourselves with a sufficiency by this time twelve month, if not before. The Saturday evening, before I sat off, the left wing of the army under Gen. Lee detached a corps to entrench on what is called Ploughed Hill, an advanced station towards Bunker's. Twas expected that Gen. Howe would have attempted dislodging them, and that that attempt would have brought on a pritty general engagement on that side; the provincials prepared and wished for it, but the regulars contented themselves with cannonading, which did very little mischeif. The whole Lord's day they killed but two men, and wounded two others, one of whom is since dead. The provincials used to be much afraid of cannon balls and bombs, but find-

ing they do so little mischief, they grow hardened and pay small attention to them.

The Continental Congress is now sitting. Am acquainted with many of the delegates, and shall soon be acquainted with most. They appear to be fixed and resolute; and articles of confederacy for the united colonies are in contemplation, and will be come into, should the ministry persist. Heard one of the Georgia delegates, Dr. Zubly (who drew up the Georgia Congress to his Majesty, a Swiss) preach an excellent discourse last Sabbath from the 5 of Eph. 15.

The provincials and regulars must shortly betake themselves to barracks. Gen. Howe's brigade, having burnt Charles Town which otherwise might have served for barracks, must shortly retreat, I apprehend, to Boston, for they will not get materials for building. The regulars have suffered much by the dysentery and bloody flux, common at this season of the year, not having fresh provisions, vegetables, milk, &c. The provincials have had the like complaint, but not in such numbers, nor has it been attended with any great mortality. They had not buried, I believe, more than two hundred and fifty when I came away from Jamaica Plain, Au' 28, and then they were growing more healthy. They have plenty of all kinds of provision cheap. We shall be in no danger of wanting. God has graciously given us abundance, while the regulars are under great inconveniences. The stoppage of all exports will be much to our advantage. It commenced on Saturday night, 12 o'clock. From the greatest hurry in this port on Saturday, we are fallen into the profoundest inactivity. We can make as much paper money as we please, which will be a good circulation among ourselves. Our affairs are ripening like all others in America with an amazing velocity; and the world will be soon astonished with a growing formidable power that they had scarce any notion of.

We have been before hand with the ministry, and have secured the friendship of the Indians, by kindling the fire and brightening the chain. The Canadians wish us success, and countenance an expedition now carrying on against the regulars at St. Johns, in the way to Montreal, and we have reason to think will rejoice in finding themselves freed from under Carleton's government and at liberty to join us. Major Skeen told several of my friends in this city, that Lt. Dartmouth offered him money to take off, alias bribe, the leaders. Col. Guy Johnson told the Revd. Mr. Kirkland that his Lordship had ordered him to suffer no Presbyterian ministers to go among the Indians, for that they were not friendly to government, and to encourage Episcopalians only; and upon this direction the Revd. Mr. Kirkland was detained by him a prisoner for a fortnight. Since Col. Johnson has been obliged to fly the country,

The post in; no news from the camp.

PHILADELPHIA Sept. 12, 1775

You may communicate the contents to whom, and as you please. Let Mr. Field of Newgate street and Mr. Field, stationer, see it. Have no time to read it over. We have got the news of the Irish rejoicings on account of the Bunker's hill.

Dr. Chauncy well, Monday fortnight. Dr. Franklin well.

EARL OF SHELBURNE TO RICHARD PRICE.

B[OWOOD] P[ARK], 15 Oct, 1775.

DEAR D^R PRICE, — I came here last night, and take the first opportunity of transmitting you the inclos'd from Lady Arbella Denny.

What a dreadful crisis are our publick affairs reduc'd to? I look upon the Colonies as lost, no exertions can prevent it, and the consequence will be, that he will be the happiest who can live upon the least. I do not say it to excuse myself, for I am prepar'd to acquit myself. But nothing will do with a Court so determin'd and a people so indifferent. I am always affectionately yrs.

[A dash in place of signature.]

RICHARD PRICE TO CHARLES CHAUNCY.

N[EWINGTON], Dec. [1775.]

DEAR SIR, — I take this opportunity to return you my best thanks for the letters of the 18th and 22d of July last with which you have favoured me. I have also received a very agreeable letter from Dr. Winthrop dated the 6th and 30th of June for which I beg you would deliver to him my acknowledgem^t. I hope he has received a letter I writ to him about 5 or 6 weeks ago. The times are growing more and more serious; but I will not touch upon political affairs, because it is not possible to know into what hands any letters may fall, or what use may be made of them. I have mentioned to Mr. D—— and Mr. S—— some things I would wish to say to you, and they will inform you how things go on here. Dr. Pr——y has a book just printed containing his farther Discoveries on Air, which he wishes to convey to Dr. Winth—p, but he does not know how to do it. Should Dr. Franklin ever come in your way, or in Dr. W——p's, be so good as to deliver to him my most affectionate and respectful remembrances. He has lately, I find, been to visit the camp near Boston. His letter to Dr. P——y, dated the 3d of Oct., has been received. There is no one whom we talk of with more regard and pleasure. Tell him I writ to him in Sept. by a person who, I believe, has been ejaled. Any intelligence you can get any

opportunity for sending me will be extremely wellcome. It is a sad calamity that all communication between the two countries is now so much cut off. I continue to think as I allways did. A letter from Dr Wiggle—th was some time ago delivered to me by Mr. Smith of Cambridge. Acquaint him, if you please, that I think myself much oblig'd to him for it. Mr. Br——d has lately sent you a full collection of most of our newspapers for some time past, and they will inform you, if they arrive, of the principal events that have lately happened here.

May Heaven favour and bless you.

I am, dear Sir, with the sincerest respect,

Your very humble servt.

Yesterday I received an anonymous letter dated Philadelphia Sept. 12th. It contains a chronicle of facts many of them important and interesting; and informs me that you and Dr. Fr——n were then well. I am much obliged to the writer for directing this account to me; and I shall, as desired, communicate it to Mr. Field, and others of my acquaintance. I suppose the writer is Mr. Gordon, to whom I beg you would deliver my respects.

EARL OF SHELBRNE TO RICHARD PRICE.

[Dec., 1775 ']

DEAR DR. PRICE, — When I came here I left with Le Fevre at Shelburne House my Book of Exports and Imports to fill up out of Mr. Morris's. He was to go to his house to do it, and I should suppose must by this time have finish'd it, and you may find it in his hands, as I remember you told me you wanted to see the last years. I need not, I am sure, remind you, that all office informations require certain managements in the use that's made of them, least it should be trac'd to the individual who gives them, and who may be liable to suffer very unjustly.

The American cause gains ground daily in the country. Ld. Mansfield's last speech, which was very accurately publish'd, has done them great service.¹ I have seen very authentick letters from thence, which mention their marine as an augmenting one, and that by next spring they will [have] 30 frigates and sloops well mann'd and arm'd.²

¹ The reference is probably to the speech of Lord Mansfield, Nov. 15, 1775, on the Duke of Grafton's motion respecting the British forces in America. See Parliamentary History, vol. xviii cols. 955-958. — Eds.

² Congress showed great activity during the latter part of 1775 in providing for and equipping an American fleet, from which time the origin of the American navy may very properly date. See Force's American Archives, fourth series, vol. iii. cols. 1896-1957, *passim*. — Eds.

I should detain you too [long] if I was to give you all the compliments of your friends where we make a large society, agreeing in nothing more than in very sincere comp^s to Dr. Price.

I beg mine to Mrs. Price, and am, dr. Sr., most cordially
Yours, SHELburnE.

ARTHUR LEE¹ TO RICHARD PRICE.

PARIS, April 20th, 1777

DEAR SIR, — I beg you will accept my thanks for the favour of your pamphlet, than which I never in my life read any thing with more satisfaction.²

But alas! the decree is gone forth, and we are one no more. Providence, by inspiring the same hardness of heart that delivered the children of Israel from their oppressors, has delivered us. A series of the most undistinguishing and inhuman barbarities by the German and British soldiery, together with Gen^l Howe's order to put all persons to the sword who should be found in arms without an officer, have planted in the minds of all men an utter detestation of the British government.

Congress have appointed a Committee to enquire into the cruelties that have been committed; that if there be any distinction among the perpetrators, the punishment may fall where it is most deserved. The 17th Reg^t, which had behaved with remarkable cruelty, fought with such desperate valour at Princeton that they were almost entirely cut to pieces. And such was their brutal ferocity, that even during the action, which had various turns, if any American fell into their hands they murdered him with the most savage inhumanity. This was the fate of General Mercer, a very brave and worthy officer from the State to which I have the honour to belong.

These, Sir, are the lamentable fruits of Scotch principles and politics. But the calamity which they meant solely for us has fallen heavy upon them and their adherents. Elevated with the first appearance of success, and unmindful of the lenity which had spared and protected them, they openly and in all parts began to agitate the ruin of the people. This at once produced a distinction and a necessity of expel-

¹ Arthur Lee was born in Westmoreland County, Virginia, Dec. 20, 1740, and was educated in England and Scotland. Returning to America, he practised as a physician in Virginia, and after a short time went again to England, studied law, and was admitted to the bar. In 1770 he was appointed agent in England of the Massachusetts House of Representatives. Subsequently he served in various diplomatic capacities on the continent of Europe. He died in Virginia Dec. 12, 1792. — EDs.

² It was entitled "Additional Observations on the Nature and Value of Civil Liberty and the War with America." — EDs.

ling them, which was effecting by proclamation, and with every degree of lenity which the nature of the thing will admit of. In Virginia they are allowed to sell their property and depart in peace. But where the war presses and the enemy is invading, the necessity of the situation would not admit of more indulgence than time to remove their families.

The new governments, in the different States, are well established; and that of the Congress deeply rooted.

Amid these wonderful events, it is a source of infinite satisfaction to me, that I have the honour of being numberd with you and others as having earnestly and sincerely laboured to avert this calamity from England, and to persuade those in whose power it was to send forth the spirit of peace, and re-unite us upon terms of equal liberty.

If any one can save a nation so press'd within and threatend without it is our friend Lord Shelburne. At least he is the only man of his rank whom I have the honour of knowing, whose virtues and abilities seem equal to the arduous task of retrieving a public overwhelmed with so many evils as that of England now is. Indeed, in my opinion, it woud require a people of more virtue than the world ever yet produced, or than human nature will admit of, to resist the contagion of Scotch principles, to be united with Scotland, and not be undone. I mean as to its morals and public principles. The conduct of these people after their emigration to America proves the inveteracy of their national character. They had fled from the tyranny and exactions of their chiefs. In America, they found refuge and relief. Yet at the call of those very chiefs they took up arms to destroy their benefactors, or reduce them, and return themselves under that domination of which they had had such bitter experience. A striking instance how impossible it is to wean them from the principles of perfidy, slavery and ingratitude which are native to them; and which mark them as a people, *hostis humani generis*.

To form a nation upon the principles of equal justice and permanent liberty is perhaps little less difficult than to retrieve one from its degeneracy. That task is ours. So many various spirits are put in motion during a civil war, so many opportunities offer to the daring and the vicious, the sweets of power and pre-eminence are so necessarily tasted by so many, that it must be fortunate indeed if some of them do not attempt to augment and extend the enjoyment of them beyond the limits prescribed by a system of equal liberty. But it may be well hoped that these attempts will be frustrated by the checks of so many republics; and the vigilance of those who are aware of such consequences. Rome perished because the people mistook the spirit of faction for that of liberty, and because the collection of the whole into one head left no check, and rendered its corruption fatal to the whole.

May your lights and labours, Sir, reform the degeneracy of the

times, and re-inspire the spirit of liberty into the people of England. May the example of her children teach her how invincible that spirit is where it really operates! The unworthy conduct of the Scotch government, to which she has submitted, has not so utterly extinguish'd the love I bore her as to prevent me from wishing her most sincerely the full enjoyment of that liberty, which she has at least countenanc'd the Scots in their base and brutal endeavours to wrest from us.

I must beg the favor of you to make my best respects to Ld. Shelburne, Col. Barré, Dr. Priestley, and all those of our acquaintance who yet do me the honour of their remembrance, and remain unterrify'd and uneduc'd from the cause of truth and Liberty.

I have the honour to be, with the most sincere respect and esteem,
dear Sir,

Yr. most obedt. servt.,

ARTHUR LEE.

RICHARD PRICE TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

NEWINGTON GREEN, June 15th, 1777.

The writer of this presents his best respects and wishes to Dr. Franklin, whom he always thinks of with particular regard. He begs the favour of him to convey the inclosed letters to the persons to whom they are directed. He supposes Dr. Franklin has frequent opportunities for sending to New-England; and therefore has taken the liberty to trouble him with the care of the letter to Dr. Winthrop.

The general talk here of military men and of the ministry is that Philadelphia will be taken, and the war with the Americans decided this summer. Distrest by the loss of their magazines; disappointed in their views from Europe; discouraged by disunion and desertion among themselves, and threaten'd by an invasion from Canada under Burgoyne, all, it is said, is over with them. Such is the confidence with which this is given out that many of those who are least disposed to credit such assertions are stagger'd. So certain do the Bishops in particular think the speedy conquest of America that they have formed a committee for taking into consideration measures for settling Bishops in America agreeably to an intimation at the conclusion of the Archbishop of York's sermon in Feb^r last to the Society for propagating the Gospel.

RICHARD PRICE TO ARTHUR LEE.

NEWINGTON, June 15th, 1777.

DEAR SIR, — Accept my best thanks for the very kind and obliging letter with which you have favoured me. It gave me indeed great pleasure; and I am particularly happy in the approbation you express

of my late publication. I have drawn upon myself a torrent of opposition and abuse; but the satisfaction I feel in the consciousness of having endeavoured to promote the cause of liberty and justice makes me abundant amends. Having done the little in my power, I have taken my leave of politics; and am now in the situation of a silent spectator waiting with inexpressible anxiety the issue of one of the most important struggles that ever took place among mankind. Your letter has been communicated to the persons you mention at the conclusion of it. They are all well, but now out of town. I know you have a great share of their particular regard. We are much in the dark here; and I am continually longing for some method of coming at truth amidst the numberless stories that are circulated here, and the mutilated accounts given out by the ministry. I should be much more large and explicit in answering your letter, were I not obliged to be very cautious. You will, I doubt not, consider this; and make allowances for me. Under a grateful sense of your kind remembrance of me, and with sentiments of warm and affectionate respect, I am, dear Sir, your very obedient and humble serv^t.

RICHARD PRICE TO JOHN WINTHROP.

LONDON, June 15th, 1777.

DEAR S^r. — It is scarcely possible for me to tell you what gratitude I feel for the two letters I have lately received from you, and for the trouble you have given yourself about Mr. Parker's affair. The pieces of news-papers also which accompany'd your first letter were extremely welcome. Indeed every thing that can come to me from America is at present particularly interesting to me. I have wished much to be able to put into your hands some pamphlets which I have lately published on the war with America. By these publications I have drawn upon myself a vast deal of abuse; but the comfort I derive from the consciousness of having in this instance satisfied my judgment and endeavoured to act the part of a good citizen, makes me abundant amends. Having done the little in my power, I am now in the situation of a silent spectator waiting, with inexpressible anxiety, the issue of a most important struggle. God grant that it may prove favourable to the interest of general liberty and justice. I have lately received a very kind letter from Mr. Gordon. What he says about Mr. Parker's affair has been communicated to him. It is exceeding kind in you to give him your aid in managing this business. Deliver my respects to him, and inform him, that I think myself greatly obliged to him for his letters. I would write to him a general letter of acknowledgm^t; but the short notice I have received of the opportunity wh^{ch} now offers itself does not

allow me time. I am become a person so marked and obnoxious that prudence requires me to be very cautious. So true is this, that I avoid all correspondence with Dr. Franklin, tho' so near me as Paris. For this reason I cannot give Mr. Gordon the assistance he desires in writing the History of the present war. There are publications here, such particularly as the Annual Register printed for Dodsley and the Remembrancer printed for Mr. Almon, w^{ch} would give him a good deal of help in such a work. Remember me with all possible affection and respect to good Dr. Chauncy. Any accounts w^{ch} you can send me will be always very acceptable. There is less danger in receiving than sending accounts. Your letters to me and to Dr. P——ly in 1776 were received. Dr. P——ly is at a distance from me in the country. He was very well when I heard from him; and as anxious as I am.

May Heaven unite us in that world of peace and righteousness where the wicked shall cease from troubling, and oppression be never known. With the most perfect respect and affection, I am, dear Sir,

Your obliged friend and most humble servant.

EARL OF SHELBURNE TO RICHARD PRICE.

BOWOOD PARK, 24 Sept, 1777.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — It's a long time since I have had the pleasure of hearing from you. It therefore gave me great satisfaction to find that you and Mrs. Price were well by your letter to Dr. Priestley. I should have been in London before now, if the indolence of my life here, where I sit under the shade of trees of my own planting, and the seat of government having little inviting in a time of such publick calamity, had not insensibly detain'd me. I was inclin'd to write to you frequently, if I did not apprehend the fidelity of the conveyance, as long as you were at any distance of London. I wish'd to tell you of letters which I receiv'd from both armies, especially as those from Canada were quite necessary to form a right judgement of what had pass'd there, after the high colouring of the General of the King's troops. The most material particulars I find since in Gen^l St. Clair's letter publish'd by the Congress; my accounts contain nothing more than that 50 Americans had not join'd them by the 12th of July, 5 days after their boasted victory. I hear accounts of the same nature from Gen^l Howe's army, who have found the country universally hostile, nothing but women remaining in the houses, no intelligence to be had, at the same time that Gen^l Washington was instantly inform'd of every motion of the King's troops. That Gen^l Washington had not above 10,000 troops with him, how many other corps were afoot, and

what numbers, they were ignorant, but wherever they turn'd they were sure to meet an enemy. These accounts made the army despond of conquering the country, and certain that nothing decisive would take place this campaign. I hear the avow'd displeasure of Administration towards Gen^l Carleton was his not employing the Indians sooner. In this state of things, America is safe, but, my dear friend, what will become of England? I just hear of some extraordinary orders given by Government, which mark something more than common apprehensions, for arming more ships, &c. When I write to you my heart and pen go together. But as it may affect others, and we have all to deal with a wicked Administration, I beg you'll not mention your authority for the above honest opinions from America, lest those who gave them should suffer for them.

I have read with great pleasure L^d Abington's pamphlet.¹ I hope all partys in the City will join in doing justice to his spirit, and to his sentiments.

I hope to be in London by Saturday sennight if not before, and shall not have more pleasure in any thing, than in assuring you that I am,

Most truly y^r.

SHELburnE.

P. S. I beg my best comp^{ts} to Mrs. Price.

BARON VAN DER CAPELLEN² TO RICHARD PRICE.

Zwol, Decem^r 14th, 1777.

SIR, — I am so much interested in the affairs of the United Colonies, and entertain, without having the honor of being known to him, so much regard for the illustrious Author of the *Observations on Civil Liberty*, and of the *Additional Observations*, that I hope to be excused

¹ Lord Abington's pamphlet, "Thoughts on Mr. Burke's Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol on the Affairs of America," was published shortly before the date of this letter. It attacked Burke for a supposed lack of zeal in opposing the war with the Colonies, and attracted the notice of all political parties. Within a few months after its first appearance it passed through five editions, and was revised and reprinted in 1780. — EDS.

² Johan Derk van der Capellen, Seigneur du Pol, was a noble of Overyssel and an eminent Dutch statesman. He was born at Tiel Nov. 2, 1741, and died suddenly at Zwol June 6, 1784. During our Revolutionary period he warmly espoused the American cause, and was a frequent correspondent of John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, William Livingston, Jonathan Trumbull, and other prominent men. (See A. J. van der Aa, *Biographisch Woordenboek der Nederlanden*, vol. iii pp 148-152.) A collection of letters to and from him was published at Utrecht in 1879, under the editorial care of Mr. W. H. de Beaufort, in an octavo volume of more than eight hundred and fifty pages. — EDS.

the liberty which I now take, and which I beg you would consider as the effect of the highest esteem and of a desire to be acquainted with a man who has deserved so well from his country and from mankind in general.

You know, Sir, that his Majesty the King of Great Britain thought fit two years ago to avail himself of the influence of the Prince Stadholder in order to obtain from the Republic, *as a pure mark of friendship and without any ways being obliged in virtue of former treaties, the Scotch brigade which is in our service, to be employ'd during the troubles in America.*

In quality of a member of the body of nobles of Overyssel, one of our seven provinces, I was obliged to vote in this difficult affair. All my colleagues were of opinion to grant the brigade. An opinion which prevailed also in all the other provinces; so that his Majesty might have had it, if he had chosen to accept it on condition of *not employing it out of Europe*; — a restriction, which was made after long deliberations for many weeks by one or two cities in the province of Holland, particularly Amsterdam. There was only myself who thought this step full of danger, contrary to the interests of my country, and to those of mankind. Among other expressions on this occasion I made use nearly of the following, — “ If our troops are not employed directly, they are at least indirectly, to quell what some have been pleased to call a rebellion of the Colonists in America. But I sh^d prefer seeing Janissaries hired for this purpose rather than the troops of a free state. There is nothing so horrible as this unnatural war among brethren; and in which even the savages would not interfere, if we may believe the public papers. It would then be very strange that a people should do this who have been slaves themselves, who have also borne the name of *Rebels*, and who have gained their liberties by force of arms. But this step grieves me particularly, as I consider the Americans to be brave men who defend in a moderate, pious, courageous manner the rights which they hold as being men, not from the legislative power of England but from God himself; who defend, I say, these rights in a manner which I hope will serve as a model to all people whose priviledges shall be attacked, and who shall be so happy as to have it in their power to make some effort either to preserve or recover them.”

And that I might not appear to have opposed myself out of a spirit of contradiction, I caused my memorial, which was written in great haste, to be inserted in the Journals of the Assembly, reserving besides to myself a Protest against the Resolution taken from a plurality of voices in such a case as this, which absolutely requires the unanimous consent of all the members of the State. An open opposition against the declared intention of a Court which sovereignly disposes of the

army, of employments, &c., &c., &c., in fine which, according to the known proverb, *appoints and deposes its lords and masters*, was a phenomenon which could not fail making some noise in the world. My memorial has appeared in print at many different times (a circumstance very rare and almost criminal in a country where the ideas of civil government, the rights of the people, and the duties of the magistrates are still altogether so confused); it has been printed in the foreign gazettes; but in those of my own country they have taken care not to have any thing to do with it. The *Courier of the Lower Rhine* was highly taken with it; but in 15 days after he was obliged to retract all the good things he had said of it. This littleness of mind in the person who thought himself offended, has afforded me a great deal of entertainment. And in order to prevent the effects which my memorial might have produced, anonymous and probably hired writers were employ'd to abuse me without reserve, and to accuse me, among other crimes, of having dared to decide in a quarrel between England and her Colonies, which according to my antagonists did not concern me, and with which they thought me as little acquainted as they were, in reality, themselves.

At last in the following Diet the ruling States of my province began to perceive that this *memorial* contained *indecent* expressions, and that they were under the necessity of not suffering it to continue any longer in the journals of the Assembly: (from whence they derived this discovery is a secret, their High Mightinesses having thought proper to seal all the papers relating to this fine affair with the seal of the province and to place them among the arcana of the state) and at the same time they took the resolution of erasing my memorial and of giving me the *permission* of inserting another, in which I should omit all that was *offensive*, and that did not *directly* belong to the subject of deliberation. This last clause related to the *military jurisdiction* (*forum privilegiatum militare*) an invention of our Stadholders, which I had called a *monster*, and which I did not imagine to be foreign to a deliberation, which might directly occasion an augmentation of troops, and of the disorders produced by them; for I doubt not that the concealed design was, to replace the brigade with German troops, and notwithstanding this, to recall also the brigade, as soon as the King of England sh^d have no further use for them. The two detachments sent to Surinam and Berbice a few years ago and changed since into permanent regiments justify my suspicions on this subject. You will perceive, Sir, that having by my birth the right of voting in the Assembly of the States, and of supporting my opinion by arguments which *myself* and not my colleagues thought agreeable, I was not obliged to accept from my equals a *permission* that I did not want: therefore I rejected it with disdain, waiting only for an opportunity of defending myself in

public, and of informing posterity of the unworthy manner in which I had been treated. This opportunity soon offer'd itself. One of my principal crimes, as I have already had the honor of informing you, was my decision in favor of the Americans. It was with difficulty understood (tho' a very simple case) that it was not lawful for us to lend our troops to destroy our fellow-creatures without being either obliged to it or having examined by what right this was done; and that all the blood which was shed in consequence of this conduct would inevitably be placed to our account. I was then delighted, Sir, to see your incomparable *Observations on Civil Liberty* make their appearance, since I was persuaded that I could not better justify my sentiments and my conduct with regard to this point than in giving a translation of them. This I accordingly did, and had the satisfaction of seeing it pass thro' two editions in less than a year, although a French translation, executed in haste by a person ignorant both of the languages and the subject, had preceded it some months. I take the liberty of laying a specimen before you.

After having said something in the preface respecting the motives which led me to become a translator, an office altogether new to me, I have endeavor'd to render you known and esteemed among my countrymen, (as you are amongst all honest men in England,) and to prove how much you have been wrong'd in being accused of founding a new and *dangerous* system; that you taught the same truths which great men, among others the celebrated Hutcheson, had long taught before; and in order the better to convince the Hollanders of the solidity of your assertions I have taken from our own history (and I think myself the first who has had the boldness to consider the revolutions in 1672 and 1742 under this point of view) an *argumentum ad hominem* (as it is called) which reduces us to the alternative, either of agreeing to what you have said with regard to the right of the people to model their own government as they please, or of owning that ours is only the effect of violence and imposture. I have finish'd this preface with some remarks on the unlimited liberty of the press; a liberty which is still disputed amongst us!

With respect to the *Additional Observations*: In order, in some degree, to obviate the impressions produced by the publication of M. Goodricke, which has been translated here, I have, without entering into controversy, begun with a passage of the formidable Locke, in which he demonstrates, I think beyond all refutation, that the power of making and executing laws for civil society, does by no means imply the power of disposing of the property of citizens *without their consent, given either in person or by their representatives*. After which I have added an extract from Mr. Hutcheson, in which this friend of mankind treats of the reciprocal rights of mother-countries and their colonies.

I have next inserted Dr. Franklin's¹ three letters to Governor Shirley which contain an abridgement of the principal arguments in favor of the American cause. I have then given long extracts from the *Political Disquisitions* by which I prove that the Americans have acted perfectly right in not submitting to a constitution so degenerate as that of England, a case which, according to Mr. Hutcheson, authorises the colonies to provide for their own security. After all this I have further inserted a passage from the *System of Moral Philosophy* (Vol. 2, pag. 273) to give an idea of the extent which this author (whose character I have delineated in a note, from Mr. Leechman's portrait of him) has allowed to the rights of the people beyond those of their governors. I have likewise added a sentence respecting the danger a people is exposed to, of being sooner or latter oppress'd by their own magistrates, if they do not share in the government by such an assembly of representatives as you have required in order to form a good government (an opinion not in the least understood in this country, where the most zealous patriots always seek for liberty in an aristocracy). I have given another sentence respecting the effects of this doctrine upon *the repose of civil society*, the war-horse of all the protectors of absolute power, — and I have closed all with explaining the end I had in view in translating this second piece, making no difficulty in declaring, that *whatever may be its success I shall always esteem it honorable and glorious to have, so openly and in the quality of a magistrate, protected the cause of the Americans, which I shall ever consider as the cause of all mankind.*

The liberty which I have taken in retrenching the *Additional Observations* will I hope meet with your approbation when you are informed that the known taste of the generality of my readers led me to think that this might be done without injuring the work, or the effects I wish'd it to produce: at least, Sir, I beg you w^d not be offended at it. Upon this plan I have omitted almost all the *second* part. On the contrary I have only left out of the *third* part from pag. 125 to pag. 116 inclusive. Very few here trouble themselves with *political economy*, and those who apply themselves to this kind of study have already read you in English, for which reason I thought it w^d not be improper to proceed as I have done.

With regard to the COLLECTION OF PIECES relating to a Memorial which I presented in the month of February last to the Assembly of the Estates of Overyssel concerning the preservation of the *fundu-*

¹ How charmed sh^d I be to have some correspondence with this worthy man. If you could possibly, Sir, procure it for me, you w^d afford me a sensible pleasure. My situation is truly deplorable in being obliged to seek for true patriots out of my own country, where I am considered and treated as a person anathematized.

mental laws of our constitution (if it be allowed that we have one!) and a copy of which I have the honor of presenting to you; it owes its publication to the indiscretion of some persons who circulated, under hand, copies of a speech which I was obliged to make at the Assembly the 27th of March when they persisted in refusing me a place in their Journals for the *Memorial* in question, and in making it a subject of deliberation. My patience was push'd to an extreme. I thought I had just reason to complain of the unworthy manner in which I had been every way treated. I avail'd myself, therefore, of this opportunity *freely to retrace all the hardships I had suffer'd for having dared to say those things, during the deliberations on ceding the Scotch brigade, which I should have thought a crime to have been silent upon*; and it is thus that this speech (which you will find in the 6th pag. of the *Collection*, and which I have not written with the design of having it perpetuated, but only to be *master of my own expressions*) is connected to the *Memorial* above-mentioned (which you will see at the end of this *Collection*, &c.) and to my preface on the *Observations on Civil Liberty*.

I dare say, Sir, that you have some friend who understands Dutch, and who can give you an account of many particulars, which I cannot enter upon without falling into the terms of a translation, and which would not indeed be my business. I really write in no other language than my maternal one. The little I know of any other has been acquired by reading, and I have only read for my amusement, without having ever foreseen that I sh^d be called upon to appear in public. I can therefore assure you, Sir, that I am become a politician against my will.

Monsieur Van Effen, the Minister of the Dutch Church in London, with whom I suppose you are acquainted, will recollect, perhaps, that he knew me at the University of Utrecht, and may be able to give you any information you can wish for. In this case I beg you would present him with my respects.

I hope, Sir, that the warm expressions, which are the effects of a patriotic fire you cannot condemn, and which I have made use of in this *Memorial* with regard to your nation, in treating of the wrongs which I think mine has received on many occasions, will be no obstacle to an acquaintance which I have long wished to cultivate, and which I should rejoice to make the foundation of a friendship that I shall endeavor to merit with an ardor proportioned to the high idea I have of your talents, but above all of your character, and with which I have the honor to be, in asking your pardon for having tired you with a letter whose enormous length makes me blush.

Sir, your very humble and very obed^t serv^t.

J: D: VAN DER CAPELLEN.

P. S. Should you be pleased to honor me with an answer, the following is my address. It is not that I live at Rotterdam. My residence is at Zwol, a city of my Province. But Mons^r Valek will take care to convey whatever shall be address'd to me.

“Monsieur le Baron *Vau Der Capellen*, Seigneur du Pol, Membre du Corps des Nobles de la Province d'Overyssel. a Rotterdam chez Monsieur Valek sur Le Leuvenhave.”

CHARLES CHAUNCY TO RICHARD PRICE.

BOSTON, May 20th, 1779.

REV^d AND DEAR SIR, — As the Hon^{ble} M^r Temple is going to Holland, and may have it in his power to convey a letter to you wth safety, I could not excuse myself from writing by so favorable an opportunity. What I have in view is to assure you, that the situation of our public affairs is not as has been represented by Governor Johnson and the Commissioners sent wth him to America. They were confined to Philadelphia and New-York the whole time of their continuance here, and had, nor could have had, no other information respecting the Congress, or the circumstances of these states, than what they received from British officers, and refugees who had taken part wth them. The ministry therefore could, by their accounts, have no true knowledge of the state of things in this part of the world; and so far as they might be disposed to act upon principles grounded on these accounts, they must act upon the foot of misrepresentation, not to say direct falsehood. Governor Johnson by his conduct while here has proved himself to be nothing better than a ministerial tool, and is universally held in contempt. By his speeches in Parliament relative to America, he appears to have known nothing of its real state, or to have given a notoriously wrong representation of it. A very great part of what he delivered there, as we have had it in the newspapers, is wholly beside the truth, and indisputably so. We pity the man, but much more the ministry in giving so much credit to his accounts as in any measure to govern their conduct by it. 'Tis indeed acknowledged, our paper-currency has sunk in its value to a great degree, wth has occasioned the price of the necessaries of life to rise to an enormous height; but this has not been disadvantageous to us *collectively* considered. None have suffered on this account but salary men, those who depended on the value and interest of their money for a subsistence, and the poor among us. As to the rest, whether merchants, farmers, manufacturers, tradesmen, and day-laborers, the rise of their demands has all along been in proportion to the depreciation of the currency and the rise of the necessaries of

life thereupon. It may seem strange, but 'tis a certain fact, that the American States, notwithstanding the vast depreciation of their paper currency, and the excessive high price of provisions of all kinds, are *richer now in reality*, and not in *name only*, than they ever were in any former period of time, and they are much better able to carry on the war than when they began it. One great fault they are justly chargeable wth. It is this; they have almost universally been too attentive to the getting of gain, as there have been peculiar temptations hereto since the commencement of the present contest. They would otherwise, I have no doubt, have cleared the land of British troops long before this time; and nothing is now wanting (under the smiles of Providence) to effect this, but such exertions of the King's forces as would generally alarm the country. There would then appear a sufficiency of strength to do by them as was done by Burgoin and his army. While they suffer themselves to be, as it were, imprisoned in New-York and Rhode-island, and go not forth unless to steal sheep and oxen and plunder and burn the houses of poor innocent people by surprize, it makes no great noise here, whatever, by pompous exaggeration, it may do in London. Our people want only to be roused, it would then be seen what they could do. I may add here, our freeholders and farmers, by means of the plenty of paper money have cleared themselves of debts, and got their farms enlarged and stocked beyond what they could otherwise have done, and rather than give up their independency, or lose their liberties, would go forth to a man in defence of their country, and would do it like so many Lyons. The British administration hurt themselves more than they do us as a people by continuing the war, and they must bring it to a conclusion, or they will ruin themselves instead of us. The longer they protract the war, the more difficult it will be to obtain such terms of peace as they might have had, and perhaps may still have. These States will soon lose that little confidence they may now place in the British ministry. None of the minority in Parliament have a worse opinion of them than is generally entertained here. A valuation of the Massachusetts-State has lately been made in order to its being properly layed; and 'tis found, notwithstanding the vast number of cattle w^h have been slain for the army, as well as inhabitants, that they are more numerous now than in any period of time since the settlement of the country. In the County of Worcester only, wth wthin my remembrance had but a very few inhabitants, there appears to have been more than forty thousand head of cattle, and sheep in proportion. No longer ago than the year 1721 I rode thro' Worcester, now as well and largely inhabited a town as almost any in this State, and it was in as perfectly wilderness a condition as any spot between Boston and Canada, not an house or inhabitant to be seen there. I have mentioned this only to point out to you the internal source of pro-

vision we have, should the war be continued ever so long. But I may not enlarge.

Your good friend Mr. Professor Wintrop died about 12 days ago. I am also grown infirm as well as old, and very unable to write, for wth reason you will excuse the blots, as well as almost illegible writing of the present letter; for I could not transcribe it to send it to you.

If I sh^d live to see a settled state of things, I will, if I sh^d have strength, write you very largely upon our affairs. I am with all due respect,

Your friend and humble serv^t.

[*No signature.*]

P. S. Congress are as firmly united as ever in their attachment to the liberties and independence of America, and the people place as intire confidence in them as from the beginning, notwthstanding all that Johnson and the other commissioners ridiculously (to me) endeavour to make people believe on your side the water. And notwthstanding the depreciation of our currency, and the high price of provisions, the people are more averse than ever to submission to Great Britain, and would rather die than come into it. Mr. Temple¹ has been from New York to Boston, and from Boston to Philadelphia, and from Philadelphia back again to Boston. He went thro' most of the more populous towns between these two places, and as he had opportunity of seeing and conversing wth the first and best gentlemen we have in these States, he can, should he go to England, give you a more just and true account of our political affairs than you have yet had. And I believe you may depend upon his giving you an honest account of things among us.

EARL OF SHELBURNE TO RICHARD PRICE.

BOWOOD PARK, 7th Octob^r, 1784.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — I take the earliest opportunity of acquainting you that I hope I have found in the Anabaptist preacher at Calne a person capable of forwarding the schemes I had regarding the poor. He is a man of an excellent private character, of a serious disposition, and has a manner of preaching and lecturing which takes I find with many of 'different sects who have been to hear him, without bordering even upon Methodism. It will be a great comfort to me, if he answers the purpose. The difficulty of finding a teacher shews the want there is of teaching, and I can never reconcile myself to living in the midst of so great a number of my fellow creatures, who are to my own knowledge more neglected in point of education and religion than they would be

¹ Afterward Sir John Temple, son-in-law of Governor Bowdoin. — Eds.

under any government in Europe, except it may be Russia. I have thoughts of adopting the Chatechism you sent me of Dr Watts, but I wish it still shorten'd and simplified. I should be very glad that at any leisure time you could look it over with this view. My idea is to inculcate the ordinary duties of a country life under the hope of reward and fear of punishment in the plainest and most direct language possible. I will take the liberty of sending you the other particulars of our plan, as soon as we shall be able to compleat it.

I take it for granted that you have seen the edict just now publish'd in France adopting your principles into their finance, as far as comes within the power of their government, without overturning the principles of it. If you have not, I can send it to you. I likewise see they have establish'd free ports, and are likewise taking several other very important steps which mark their foresight, activity and wisdom. It's very mortifying at the same time to see our time spent with faction, and the impression which our misfortunes made upon us turn'd to no account. I know no more of what is passing in London than I do of what is doing at Constantinople, but I hope Government is forming some vigorous plan of finance and regulations of trade, which may bring back some of our wealth, excite a fresh spirit of industry, and check the disposition universally gaining ground to dissipation and corruption. I am in daily expectation of seeing the Abbé Morellet here, who takes the opportunity of L^d Fitzmaurice's return to make us another visit. It would give Lady Shelburne and me great pleasure if you could spend some days with him here, but I have too much respect and regard for M^r Price to think of proposing it. I beg to be kindly remember'd to her.

I am with sincere regard y^t affec^{te} and oblig^d h^{ble} ser^t,

SHELburne.

WILLIAM HAZLITT¹ TO RICHARD PRICE.

DEAR SIR, — I have wished to write to you almost every week, since my first arrival in this country, but was restrained by this consideration, that I had nothing satisfactory to communicate respecting myself. The same reason might still induce me to throw away my paper. But I can no longer deny myself the satisfaction of addressing you.

I can convey to you no intelligence, concerning the civil and political state of this country, which has not already reached you from other hands.

¹ An English clergyman of Irish parentage, father of the essayist. He spent three or four years in this country, and then went back to England, where he died in 1820. See 5 Mass. Hist. Coll., vol. ii. pp. 358, 370, 371; vol. iii. p. 168; 6 Mass. Hist. Coll., vol. iv. pp. 274, 275, 285, 308. — Eds.

I learn, that you express a wish, in your letter to Mr. Clark, that the subject of Dr. Chauncy's book had never been started at Boston, apprehensive of its unpromising influence upon the morals of the people.¹ But I believe it will have an effect contrary to what you imagine. There is another doctrine circulating in this country, and received with great avidity by many persons, which the Doctor's book will have a tendency to overthrow. The doctrine, I mean, is published in different places, and with greater success than could be supposed, by one Murray, a man of some popular talents, and a disciple of Reieley's of London.² This reference will fully acquaint you what this doctrine is.

In twenty or thirty years, there will probably be here as much freedom of thinking upon religious subjects as there is at present amongst the Dissenters in England. Dr. Mayhew, with the noble spirit of a man conscious of the dignity and importance of truth, led the way to this. The late war, which helped to dissolve the attachment of the people to their old systems, afforded some others an opportunity of pursuing it. The majority of the Boston ministers, and a great number of those who are dispersed through the country, are already Arians, but are yet generally afraid to avow their sentiments. I am very acceptable as a preacher in this part of America, and have some dark prospect of a settlement. Dr. Chauncy, and many others, treat me with great civility and friendship. Your favourable mention of me to the Doctor, in your next letter, would do me an essential service. I am afraid that that busy bigot Dr. Gordon endeavours to injure me.

You have been told, I presume, by others, that I lived a considerable time at Philadelphia, and how I succeeded there, and that I was seized with a fever in Maryland last year, which rendered me useless, whilst I was groaning under a great expence, almost six months.

If you have any enquiries to make concerning America in general, or any part of it in particular, I will endeavour to give you all the satisfaction in my power.

In the mean time, I wish greatly to know the complexion of the times, and the whole state of things amongst you.

When you have leisure to favour me with a line, be pleased to direct to me to the care of the Revd. Mr. Latrop, Boston.

Wishing you all happiness that can be possibly enjoyed, in this

¹ The reference is to Dr. Chauncy's well known work, printed in London in 1781, entitled "The Mystery hid from Ages and Generations, made manifest by the Gospel-Revelation — or, the Salvation of all Men the grand thing aimed at in the Scheme of God, as opened in the New Testament Writings, and entrusted with Jesus Christ to bring into Effect" — EDS.

² James Rely. See Dictionary of National Biography, vol. xlviii pp. 7, 8 — EDS.

world, and that better world, which is approaching, I am, dear Doctor, with the utmost esteem and affection, your often obliged and very humble servant,

W. HAZLITT.

Boston, 19 Octr., 1784.

JOHN WHEELLOCK¹ TO RICHARD PRICE

DARTMOUTH COLLEGE, 25th January, 1785.

DEAR SIR, — I deferred writing till this time to give you the satisfaction of knowing that your donation arrived yesterday in safety, of which some time since an account was received in your obliging letter of July 25th. The Trustees desire that their most sincere thanks may be accepted. The books will be preserved in the library as a monument of virtue, patriotism, and a system of political œconomy. What a contradiction of scenes, my dear Sir, does the theatre of human life display! what guides in philosophy and jurisprudence, but how few followers! Eminent lessons of civil policy are acknowledged by all, while in republics most are attached (and ostensibly too) to the interest of themselves or their party. In regard to the last these States have three happy barriers. Equality of property, especially in the north, prevents the idea of undue influence; being without a redundancy of wealth the people have no leasure for partial combinations; while the spirit of industry and gain triumphs over the spirit of faction.

I am sorry that the indisposition of your lady continues. May nature in the hand of God afford a better remedy than the art of physic. The pains of our friends excite commiseration, and sometimes an anxiety, which even rouses the stoic from his apathy, and much more moves the heart of a true humane philosopher.

The College is in a prosperous way; and I cannot but hope that, under a divine providence, the wishes of the good respecting it will be greatly answered.

I am much obliged, Sir, by your kind attention to Mr. Rowland's plan. It is needless to say how much we should have valued the strictures and emendations of so great a judge. History is subjected to that uncertainty which proceeds from ignorance, inattention, or prejudice, large sources of error. And, the farther we trace back the annals, the greater is the doubt. This operates as to facts, but more strongly as to dates. But I will desist, before my pen misguides me too far, by

¹ Second President of Dartmouth College. He was born in Lebanon, Connecticut, Jan. 28, 1754, became President of the College in 1779, and died in Hanover, New Hampshire, April 4, 1817. — Eds.

only begging that you would accept of the highest regard and esteem for yourself and your works of a very respectful friend.

I am, Sir,

Your most obliged, obedient and humble servant,

J.^{no} WHEELLOCK.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO RICHARD PRICE.

PARIS, Feb 1, 1785.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — I received duly your kind letter of Oct. 21. and another before with some of your excellent pamphlets of Advice to the United States. My last letters from America inform me that every thing goes on well there; that the new elected Congress is met, and consists of very respectable characters with excellent dispositions; and the people in general very happy under their new governments. The last year has been a prosperous one for the country; the crops plentiful and sold at high prices for exportation, while all imported goods, from the great plenty, sold low. This is the happy consequence of our commerce being open to all the world, and no longer a monopoly to Britain. Your papers are full of our divisions and distresses, which have no existence but in the imaginations and wishes of English newswriters and their employers.

I sent you sometime since a little piece intitled, *Testament de M. Fortuné Ricard*, which exemplifies strongly and pleasantly your doctrine of the immense powers of compound interest. I hope you receiv'd it. If not, I will send you another. I send herewith a new work of M^r Necker's on the Finances of France. You will find good things in it, particularly his chapter on War. I imagine Abbé Morellet may have sent a copy to Lord Lansdowne. If not, please to communicate it. I think I sent you formerly his *Conte rendu*. This work makes more talk here than that, tho' that made abundance. I will not say that the writer thinks higher of himself and his abilities than they deserve, but I wish for his own sake that he had kept such sentiments more out of sight.

With unalterable esteem and respect, I am ever, my dear Friend,

Yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

THOMAS JEFFERSON TO RICHARD PRICE¹

PARIS, Feb 1, 1785

SIR, — The copy of your Observations on the American Revolution which you were so kind as to direct to me came duly to hand, and I

¹ A short extract from this letter is printed in Miss Williams's "Welsh Family." — Eds

should sooner have acknowledged the receipt of it but that I awaited a private conveyance for my letter, having experienced much delay and uncertainty in the posts between this place and London. I have read it with very great pleasure, as have done many others to whom I have communicated it. The spirit which it breathes is as affectionate as the observations themselves are wise and just. I have no doubt it will be reprinted in America and produce much good there. The want of power in the federal head was early perceived, and foreseen to be the flaw in our constitution which might endanger its destruction. I have the pleasure to inform you that when I left America in July the people were becoming universally sensible of this, and a spirit to enlarge the powers of Congress was becoming general. Letters and other information recently received shew that this has continued to increase, and that they are likely to remedy this evil effectually. The happiness of governments like ours, wherein the people are truly the mainspring, is that they are never to be despaired of. When an evil becomes so glaring as to strike them generally, they arouse themselves, and it is redressed. He only is then the popular man and can get into office who shews the best dispositions to reform the evil. This truth was obvious on several occasions during the late war, and this character in our governments saved us. Calamity was our best physician. Since the peace it was observed that some nations of Europe, counting on the weakness of Congress and the little probability of a union in measure among the States, were proposing to grasp at unequal advantages in our commerce. The people are become sensible of this, and you may be assured that this evil will be immediately redressed, and redressed radically. I doubt still whether in this moment they will enlarge those powers in Congress which are necessary to keep the peace among the States. I think it possible that this may be suffered to lie till some two States commit hostilities on each other, but in that moment the hand of the union will be lifted up and interposed, and the people will themselves demand a general concession to Congress of means to prevent similar mischiefs. Our motto is truly "nil desperandum." The apprehensions you express of danger from the want of powers in Congress, led me to note to you this character in our governments, which, since the retreat behind the Delaware, and the capture of Charlestown, has kept my mind in perfect quiet as to the ultimate fate of our union; and I am sure, from the spirit which breathes thro your book, that whatever promises permanence to that will be a comfort to your mind. I have the honour to be, with very sincere esteem and respect, Sir,

Your most obedient and most humble serv^t.

TH: JEFFERSON.

JONATHAN JACKSON¹ TO RICHARD PRICEBoston, 8th Aug^l, 1785

DEAR SIR, — After a short passage in the month of May I had the pleasure to find my family and friends all well. My chest and other baggage which I had ordered from Bristol to Cork did not reach there before I embarked, and coming without them I came without the last packets you entrusted to my care for several of your friends here: this disappointment to them may be attended I hope with no great inconvenience to you. I mentioned to Dr. Chauncy and to President Willard that if I recollected right you had charged me with a packet to each of them; the direction of the others I have forgot. My chest, &c., have not yet come from Cork, but I expect them by the first vessel. When I left London I had to travel by land thro' a considerable part of England and Ireland, or I would have found a place in my portmanteau for your packets. The late edition of your pamphlet which you did me the honor to send me just before my departure, I handed to our new Governor, Mr. Bowdoin, for his perusal and he lately returned it me with thanks, being much pleased with the additions you have made to the last. Our people in the late choice of their Governor have discovered a discernment which does them credit; we have a good deal to expect from his prudence and his integrity. The complection of our affairs in general, of our commerce in particular, is gloomy enough. I wish to see less connection with your country in the way of traffic, in the importation at least of unnecessary and useless articles, and more connection in friendly intercourse and good offices, provided your administration becomes well managed and we can meet you upon equal terms and to mutual benefit. The appointment by Congress of a Minister to your Court, I hope will soon be followed by a like appointment from you to us; such measures will lead more than any other to restore harmony and an association of interests between the two countries, and which I am persuaded might be made highly beneficial to both. The appointment of Mr. Adams which is here considered a very judicious one, I hope may soon lead to a liberal treaty of commerce, which may give to this country greater facility in paying the debts already contracted with yours, tho' in some instances they were injudiciously contracted on both sides, the like of which it is to be hoped will not soon again take place, but such a treaty will also tend to soften the minds of people here and remove prejudices on

¹ Jonathan Jackson was born in Boston, June 4, 1743, graduated at Harvard College in 1761, and became a merchant. He was treasurer of Massachusetts from 1802 to 1806, and treasurer of the College from 1807 to his death. He died in Boston March 5, 1810. See Appleton's *Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, vol. iii, p. 389. — Ens.

both sides, which the sooner they are done away will the sooner bring us to such good offices as to forget we have quarrelled, and that so foolishly.

When our federal government will be reinforced and braced up so as better to answer the purposes of its institution it is impossible to tell; the conviction seems to be general that something is needed, but what from an ill founded jealousy, as I think, of delegating too much power to the supreme head, and from a supposition of contrary interests in the different States, not so well founded, if we are to make one Republic, and that a respectable one, nothing yet is matured, and I fear it will be some time before any thing effectual is done. Necessity however must finally lead to it. A reform such as might be projected for a supreme legislative, judicial and executive to manage the federal union, or rather I would say to manage our large family, dropping the distinction of separate sovereignties, by which reform an equal representation might now be introduced and always kept up, and such a representation is perhaps a *sine qua non* to the continuance of liberty under any government, — this, and perhaps one more reform in our manners or rather fashions only, that of confining ourselves to an uniform habit thro'out our republic, changed only as the seasons change, we being subject thro' all our climates in some measure to both extremes of heat and cold, these alone, it appears to me, would secure to us peace, liberty and happiness, as far as societies can enjoy it together. The last mentioned reform would cut off one half, if not more, of the useless fopperies we import from Europe, and for which we make ourselves slaves to that country. It would not only abate the attention of the younger part of the community, at least to what are the greatest trifles in nature, and which fixes in many of them trifling habits all their lives perhaps, but it would in time, if not immediately, lead to a reform in sentiments and manners very beneficial to our forms of government. But these reveries of the closet and the pillow can seldom be introduced into practice; this I have been obliged to learn several years since and that one must only indulge themselves in them among their friends.

I wished to see your friend Mr. J. H. Brown before I left England, and called for that purpose one of the last days I was in London, but was not fortunate enough to meet him. I hope that he gave himself no uneasiness that I did not meet Mr. Pitt. I daresay it was no fault of Mr. Brown's, and that the Minister's engagements were such then, what with Irish affairs and a Parliamentary Reform, he had no time to attend to less concerns, as he might think those which related to America to be; for your Administration since the Earl of Shelburne quitted it have at least affected to hold us in an unimportant and diminutive light, a strange reverse of what was held up to the nation of our

importance when they were endeavouring to subjugate us. It might have been perhaps no disservice to me personally to have seen Mr. Pitt or some of your Administration while I remained in England, provided a communication and free intercourse should ever again take place between our two countries, and any supplies should be needed from hence for your fleets or forces which may at any time be stationed in our neighbourhood at Nova Scotia or Newfoundland, more especially if the same Administration should continue, as I think it would not have been difficult for me while in England, and might not now be, to give them full assurance that my partner, Mr. Higginson, and myself had as many facilities to serve them, and would do it as faithfully as they might find any others here to do it. The gloomy appearance here of commerce in general leads me to seek some such safe business, if I could find it, to provide for a large and increasing family, it having been the business I was bred to. In the mercantile phrase our firm is — Jackson & Higginson, at Boston. We are both well known to Mr. Adams whom I have no doubt if enquired of, would affirm to our rep[ut]ations being fair. I made an acquaintance last year with Mr. S. Smith, Member of Parliament who lives in Bloomsbury Square, and with whom I flatter myself that I left some favourable impressions.

Should affairs between us be coming round in the accommodating way and any public contracts or commissions for supplies should be sent this way, if you, my good Sir, when you may be in the Minister's closet, which I suppose is sometimes the case, should see no impropriety in it, and could just drop our names as fit persons here, it may essentially serve me, and I dare aver as a man of truth and honor that no one here shall more faithfully do any business of the kind mentioned if committed to us than Mr. Higginson and myself, a reasonable commission or allowance being made us for our trouble. My expectations are not very sanguine that such accommodations will come round as to lead to any opening of this kind, and still less but that other seekers more importunate and greater favourites will get the employ I have turned your attention to. You will therefore please to excuse my taking up your time upon a matter so little promising.

I should be much gratified if your correspondents are not already too numerous to have your communications, now and then as your leisure will permit, upon such speculative subjects as you think may be useful to our rising States, or upon any movements in the political line which are taking place, or like to, and which have a view to us. I am sensible this is asking almost too much of a man whose daily labours must be considerable in his own profession, and upon whom the public has learnt to make so great claims. If I request too much you must not hesitate to refuse me.

I wish that Heaven may continue your health and usefulness and re-

store that of Mrs. Price's; tho' personally unknown to her please to present my respects to her and to the lady who presided at your table when I had the pleasure of being there.

Your friend Dr. Chauncy appears to be in good health for an old gentleman past eighty; he complains however of having arrived to his second dotage, and perhaps he is not mistaken, for he has been lately, since my return, paying his addresses to a widow of forty, to whom he would have given his hand had not she and her friends been possessed of more discretion. This communication is to excite you to a little merriment.

I am, as I left England, with warm impressions of your favourable attentions to me while there, with great respect and esteem, my good Sir,

Your sincere friend and obliged servant,

JON^S JACKSON.

Rev^d Doct^r R. PRICE.

EDWARD WIGGLESWORTH TO JOSEPH WILLARD

CAMBRIDGE, October 6th, 1785.

REV^l SIR, As the ministers in this Commonwealth, and the President and Professors of the University in this place, have had it in contemplation, for some time past, to establish a fund for granting annuities to their widows; and as they have a bill now pending in the General Court for incorporating a Society to conduct the same, I thought it would be a matter of some importance to them to determine with as much accuracy as possible,

“Whether the ministers, President and Professors are subjected to the same rate of mortality, which pervades the whole body of the people in any place, where regular Bills of Mortality have been kept.”

The employments and mode of living of the ministers, President and Professors expose them to those diseases which are peculiar to persons leading sedentary and contemplative lives; at the same time that they exempt them from others to which different classes of the people from their particular occupations are incident. How far the situation of the clergy is favourable or prejudicial to health and life, can be determined only by comparing the rate of their mortality with the rate of mortality amongst the body of the people, in all the various classes in society. And till this is done, it will be a matter of great uncertainty, how far any tables already calculated from any Bills of Mortality, will be applicable to the purposes of such a Society. For I do not find any of the Reverend Doctor Price's Tables, formed from such a class of men.

Had there been kept, for a century past, an exact register of the ages of the ministers at the time of their decease, the rate of their mortality might have been determined with the greatest precision. But as our ancestors were not apprised of the importance of such registers, this hath not been done. For this reason some other method must be taken to determine the point.

The method which appears to me the most likely to effect it with the greatest possible exactness is, by endeavouring to trace out the rate of mortality among those persons who have received the honours of the University.

Upon reviewing the catalogue of graduates, for this purpose, it appears that 2400 persons had been admitted to them from 1711 to the year 1781 inclusive; of whom 1342 were alive at the republication of it in 1785; namely,

from 1711 to 1720 - 156 persons were graduated	5 of whom were living, at the Commencement in 1785.
1721 - 1730 - 371	57
1731 - 1740 - 315	97
1741 - 1750 - 261	134
1751 - 1760 - 306	205
1761 - 1770 - 436	347
1771 - 1780 - 419	366
1781 - 1784 - 136	131
2400	1342

As the number of graduates has been different in different years, it will be necessary to reduce to the same standard the classes of the several divisions in the above distribution of the catalogue. To this end some number must be assumed as the *radix* of the calculation; which number may be taken at pleasure. But for rendering the calculation as easy as possible, 100 has been assumed as the *radix* of it. Of consequence the following computations are made on supposition that 100 persons have annually received the honours of the University.

On this supposition the proportion of the living in any period into which the catalogue has been distributed, to the whole number of graduates in the same period, may be determined by theorem 1st.

- Let n = the numbers of years in any period.
- G = the number of graduates in the same period.
- H = the number of them still living.
- R = the radix of the calculation.
- L = the number that would have been living, had each class consisted of 100 graduates or the *radix*.

Then,

Theorem 1st. As $G : H :: Ru : L$. — Hence it is evident that the proportions are as follows,

In the 1 st period,	As $Ru = 1000$: $L = 32$
2 nd	1000	: - 153
3 rd	1000	: - 308
4 th	1000	: - 513
5 th	1000	: - 670
6 th	1000	: - 795
7 th	1000	: - 873
8 th	400	: - 385

From these elements, the probability of the continuance, the decrement and the expectation of the lives of the Cambridge graduates, may be calculated by the following theorems.

Let n and L be as before. And m = the radix in the first instance; afterwards = the number of graduates living in the year immediately preceeding the period, of which the *ratio* of the annual decrement of life is sought.

Theorem 2nd. $\frac{2mn - 2L}{n + 1 \times n} = r$ = the ratio of the annual decrement of life, supposing the decrement equal in each year of the period.

Theorem 3rd. $m - nr = N$ = the number of graduates living of the standing required.

For $m - r$ = the number of them in the first year of the period:

$m - 2r$ = the number of them in the second year. And by continuing to subtract the ratio n times, the number of them in the n^{th} year is obtained.

That expectation of a graduate of any standing may be found by Theorem 4th

Let N = the number of graduates living of the same standing with the person whose expectation is sought.

P = the sum of all the graduates living of every standing more advanced than that of the person whose expectation is required. Then,

Theorem 4th. $\frac{N + P}{N} = .5$, or half unity, is equal to the expectation sought.

This is the general rule, given by the Rev^d D^r Price, for finding the expectations of all single lives by a table of observations.

The following table is adapted to the *radix* of 100 graduates, and will give the probability, decrement and expectation of their lives, with accuracy; as long as the proportions of the living to the dead, in the several periods, remain the same they are at present.

THE TABLE.

Years Standing	Graduates Living	Decrement	Expectation	Years Standing	Graduates Living	Decrement	Expectation	Years Standing	Graduates Living	Decrement	Expectation
Radix	1000	1.5	37.79	25.	75.7	2.0	21.64	50.	29.4	2.6	
1	98.5	1.5		26.	73.7	1.9		51.	26.8	2.7	
2	97.0	1.5		27.	71.8	1.9		52.	24.1	2.7	
3.	95.5	1.5		28.	69.9	1.9		53.	21.4	2.7	
4	94.0	1.2		29.	68.0	2.0		54.	18.7	0.6	
5.	92.8	1.2	35.53	30.	66.0	1.9		55.	18.1	0.6	9.72
6	91.6	1.3		31.	64.1	1.9		56.	17.5	0.7	
7	90.3	1.1		32.	62.2	1.9		57.	16.8	0.6	
8.	89.2	1.3		33.	60.3	2.0		58.	16.2	0.6	
9	87.9	1.2		34.	58.3	1.3		59.	15.6	0.6	
10.	86.7	1.2		35.	57.0	1.2	17.15	60.	15.0	0.6	
11	85.5	1.3		36.	55.8	1.3		61.	14.4	0.6	
12	84.2	1.2		37.	54.5	1.3		62.	13.8	0.7	
13	83.0	1.2		38.	53.2	1.3		63.	13.1	0.6	
14	81.8	0.4		39.	51.9	1.2		64.	12.5	2.1	
15	81.4	0.4	29.85	40.	50.7	1.3		65.	10.4	2.0	2.58
16.	81.0	0.5		41.	49.4	1.3		66.	8.4	2.1	
17	80.5	0.4		42.	48.1	1.3		67.	6.3	1.9	
18.	80.1	0.4		43.	46.8	1.2		68.	4.4	2.2	
19.	79.7	0.4		44.	45.6	2.6		69.	2.2	1.9	
20	79.3	0.4		45.	43.0	2.8	10.96	70.	0.3	0.3	
21	78.9	0.4		46.	40.2	2.7					
22	78.5	0.5		47.	37.5	2.7					
23.	78.0	0.4		48.	34.8	2.7					
24.	77.6	1.9		49.	32.1	2.7					

All that now remains in order to determine, whether the ministers, President and Professors are subjected to the same rate of mortality which pervades the whole body of the people in any place where regular Bills of Mortality have been kept will be, to find the mean age of the Harvard graduates, at the time of their commencing Bachelors of Arts. This age, added to their standing, will give their mean ages. And by comparing the expectation corresponding to the mean ages of the graduates, with the expectation of a person of the same age in Dr Price's Tables, we shall get a solution of the question under consideration.

For this end I have carefully examined the register of the students admitted into the University for seven years, viz. from 1775 to 1781 inclusive; and find that their mean age at the time of receiving the first honours of the Society is twenty one years.

Upon comparing the expectation of the Harvard graduates, found by this process with the expectations of persons of similar ages in most of Dr Price's Tables, it appears that the former generally exceed the latter in expectation of life.

How far this may effect the permanency of the Society proposed to be established, I am not at present able to determine. Probably, if you

should submit the matter to the consideration of the Doctor, he would do it with more precision than any gentleman among ourselves.

What appears to me at present most expedient is, that the intended Society should take the Doctor's Tables for the whole kingdom of Sweden, as the basis of their calculations. The expectation of life is, indeed, less in Sweden than among the Harvard graduates. But the inconveniencies arising from this cause may, I apprehend, be guarded against, by the Society's making the annuities payable to the widows subject to a diminution, in case it should hereafter appear from Registers of Mortality kept in this country, that the annuities were stated higher than the funds of the Society would admit.

Should you judge it expedient to consult the Doctor on this subject, and to ask his opinion on the most efficacious method of making the intended Society a *permanent one*, you have my consent, should you see fit, to transmit to him the preceding observations and calculations either in whole or in part. I am with the greatest respect and esteem,
Reverend Sir,

Your affectionate friend and humble servant.

EDWARD WIGGLESWORTH.

Rev^d JOSEPH WILLARD, D.D., President of the University and Chairman of the Committee of the Convention of Ministers, entrusted with the Care of forming the Society.

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WILLIAM HAZLITT TO RICHARD PRICE.

DEAR SIR, — I wrote a short letter to you above a year ago, which, I believe, you have received, as the answers I have had to those which accompanied it were an evidence that the whole packet arrived safe. Notwithstanding some untoward circumstances, I still hope that the American Revolution will be finally beneficial to the whole human race. I, therefore, wish you to continue your benevolent exertions to meliorate and enlighten this people, and to arouse them to improve and perfect their several forms of government. No man living can influence them so much as you. You are furnished, I know, almost every day with an ample detail of the state of things here. But you have one correspondent, I mean Dr. Rush of Philadelphia, whose information I cannot help cautioning you to receive with diffidence. He is the tool of a party, whilst his vanity leads him to imagine himself the principal, who are labouring to destroy the present constitution of Pennsylvania, and to introduce in its room one which is in a great measure aristocratical, and, in my opinion, very inimical to liberty. He hates Dr. Ewing, on account of his superior abilities, and particularly because he is a friend to the present constitution, and has fifty times his influence. He

made a very scurrilous and base attack upon the Doctor, when he was at a great distance from Philadelphia, and, what particularly characterises him with me, is, that he represented the D^r as an iniquitous man, on account of his catholicism, thinking that this measure would effectually ruin him with the public. After pretending that he himself was my very good friend he, upon mere suspicion, proclaimed me a Socinian in the news papers and reproached Dr. Ewing as an unprincipled hypocrite, because that he, being a Presbyterian, was affectionately attached to me, and had warmly recommended me to be the pastor of a church at Carlisle, and the principal of that University. This conduct, so ungentlemanlike with respect to me, and so inconsistent with his own past professions of esteem and friendship, and that great assiduity with which he affected to serve me, disgusted me exceedingly, and made me think meanly of him ever since. I was first introduced to Dr. Rush by Mr. John Vaughan. He, then, paid me many fulsome compliments, congratulated the country upon the acquisition of such a man as he said I was, told me that he had heard me preach, and that my sentiments were too enlarged, and my compositions too elegant for the undiscerning multitude, but lamented that there were not many such, in the country, to cultivate a rational mode of thinking, and to disperse that darkness which overspread it. He afterwards talked to me, in the same strain, and promised me great things. But when he found that there was a popular clamour against me, as the editor of Dr. Priestley's Appeal, &c., printed at Philadelphia, he coldly told me that he was contented with the religion of his ancestors. This declaration then lowered him much in my estimation. But still I did not think him capable of that subsequent conduct which I mentioned above. Dr. Lathrop of Boston is as worthy a man as in America.¹ He is friendly, generous, and without guile. On whatever accounts he sends you from his own knowledge you may absolutely depend. Dr. Chauncy, you know, is thoroughly honest. But he takes it for granted that the world will continually be growing worse until the consummation of all things. Besides, his warm temper frequently leads him into mistakes. Mr. Clarke is very sensible and ingenious, whilst he possesses a great share of vanity. There are some other intelligent and very worthy ministers in Boston, particularly Howard, Everitt, and Elliot.² The late Dr. Mather, though a treasury of valuable historical anecdotes, was as weak a man as I ever knew.³ He took it for granted, that his last let-

¹ Rev. John Lathrop, D.D., of the Second Church. — Eds.

² Rev. Simeon Howard, D.D., of the West Church; Rev. Oliver Everett, of the New South Church; and Rev. John Eliot, D.D., of the New North Church. — Eds.

³ Rev. Samuel Mather, D.D., son of Cotton Mather, born in Boston Oct. 30 1706, graduated at Harvard College in 1723, settled in the ministry in 1732, died June 27, 1785. — Eds.

ter to you would make you a Trinitarian, just as he supposed that his last letter to Dr. Lardner made him die of a broken heart. I am sorry that the people of England are squandering away great sums of money, in endeavouring to raise Nova Scotia into consequence. The old settlers and the refugees hate one another. The former are removing here as fast as they can sell their farms. The others are a horribly abandoned set, who damn the king and the country, and who are, some few excepted, determined to stay no longer there than they are supported in idleness by Great Britain, or a permission be granted them to return to the United States. I am now by the desire of Mr. Vaughan, at Kennebec River, where, according to present appearances, I shall probably settle. I wish that you were young enough to think of a tour through this continent. Your presence would do much good. I am, dear Sir, your very affectionate and humble servant.

W. HAZLITT

HOLLYWELL, 15 Nov^r, 1785

If you should have leisure to write to me, be pleased to direct to me at Boston, N. England.

JOHN LATHROP¹ TO RICHARD PRICE

Boston, March, 1786

REV^d SIR, — The two young gentlemen of the name of Lewis whom you recommended to my attention were in Boston when your very obliging letter, dated in June last, came to hand. One of them, the eldest, has been since doing business in New-London, in Connecticut. The other brother went from this town to Nova Scotia, where he had accounts to settle, and after he had finished his business there, he told me it was his intention to go to his brother at New-London.

Those worthy young gentlemen met with some unfriendly treatment in this place, at a time when the spirits of the trading part of the people were irritated by the operation of British acts of trade, and just at the time when a number of our merchants had their orders sent back unanswered, and their ships without freight.

It will be easy for you to conceive a number of traders had it in their power, and that they would not want a disposition, to raise a clamor against those English merchants who resided among us. The news papers, which are free enough in this place, were filled with pieces tending to irritate and inflame. But I feel happy in reflecting that before your letter came to hand, I had seen the young gentlemen and invited them to my house, and had used my endeavors to soften the minds of people

¹ Minister of the Second Church in Boston, born in Norwich, Connecticut, May 17, 1740, graduated at Princeton in 1763, died in Boston Jan. 4, 1816. — Eds.

towards them. Your letter coming to hand before the young gentlemen left the place gave me sufficient support, and they might have tarried in peace as long as they pleased afterwards, had they found business could have been done to advantage.

The state of commerce at present in this country is not favourable to adventurers from Europe. The large credit which your merchants gave at the beginning of the peace filled the country with goods. The operation of several acts of the British legislature respecting commerce with America prevented our merchants making remittance in the way they had been used to, and were obliged to send away the cash; very little is now remaining, and a great part of the goods not paid for. Bankruptcies are daily taking place; taxes cannot be collected in sufficient quantities to support the credit of government. Many who loaned their money to Congress or the particular States are put to great difficulties, and some who depended on receiving their monies thus loaned to answer the demands of creditors on the other side the water are brought into the most wretched circumstances. But I do not despair; I am not discouraged. Good will come out of this evil. Happy for us, your merchants will not send out goods, as they have done in years past. Our people will be more industrious and I hope more virtuous. We shall be *obliged* to apply to our own resources, and learn to live with less foreign superfluities and luxuries. If our seaport towns do not increase, as we who live in them wo^l naturally wish, our inland country will be filled with more inhabitants. The wilderness will be subdued, and we shall make more speedy advances in strength and real wealth than we should if foreign trade was encouraged to the utmost.

But so short is human life, so uncertain are all things temporal, that I often blame myself for being anxious about the wealth and power of the people with whom I am connected. The late important revolution, I fear, hath in times past too much engaged my attention. My expectations from new forms of government were too sanguine. We find time and experience are necessary to teach us wisdom. Our systems are imperfect; but so many States are to be consulted that it is difficult to agree on the necessary amendments. It seems as if *suffering* were necessary to teach us; happy for us if we learn before the sufferings be so great as to break the constitution.

But while we wish and pray for the peace and happiness of the kingdoms and nations of the world, we are looking for a better country, even a heavenly, that we may meet in *that* better country, and cultivate that acquaintance which, on my part, is began with great pleasure with you, Sir, in *this*, is the sincere wish of, Rev^d Sir,

Your affectionate friend and most humble servant,

JOHN LATHROP.

Rev^d D. PIERCE

JAMES BOWDOIN¹ TO RICHARD PRICE.

BOSTON, April 2nd, 1786.

REV^d SIR, — In the letter I had the honour of writing to you some months ago, I informed you that a volume of the Memoirs of the American Academy was at the press, and that I should take the first opportunity of sending you a copy of it.

It being now finished, I beg the favour of your acceptance of a copy, w^{ch} y^e Rev^d Dr. Gordon, who is so kind as to take charge of it, will cause to be delivered to you.

It will be highly acceptable to the Academy to be favoured with communications from Dr. Price, especially with such as are the production of his excellent pen. Will you permit the Academy to hope for some of them, that their next volume may be rendered valuable by y^r insertion of them?

With sincere regard, I have the honour to be, Rev^d Sir,

Yr most obed^t, hble. serv^t.

JAMES BOWDOIN.

JOSEPH WILLARD² TO RICHARD PRICE

CAMBRIDGE, April 6, 1786

REV^d AND DEAR SIR, — I this day received your letter of the 23^d of March, 1785, accompanied by three copies of the second edition of your tract, addressed to the United States, one of which I have delivered to Professor Williams, agreeably to your desire. I am much obliged to you for this new instance of your politeness and friendship.

I wish my country may profit by your advice in all respects. My greatest fear is for our national credit. However, I think the prospect is now pretty fair for the Congress being furnished with the means of paying the interest upon the public debt, and gradually sinking the principal, as all but one State, as I hear, have granted the impost, &c., recommended to them; and I think that State will not venture long to impede the measures of the other twelve and hazard the Confederation.

When I suggested the hint of the donation from Dr. Priestley, I knew that his publications were numerous; but from this very circumstance I supposed that he would be the more able to make it to the

¹ First President of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and when this letter was written Governor of Massachusetts. He was born in Boston Aug 7, 1726, graduated at Harvard College in 1745, and died in his native town Nov. 6, 1790. — EDS

² Joseph Willard was born in Biddeford, Maine, Jan. 9, 1738; graduated at Harvard College in 1765; became President of the College in 1781, which office he held until his death, at New Bedford, Sept 25, 1804 — EDS.

University, as I presumed he must have made something handsome to himself by his works. However, I find by your letter that "*he is by no means rich*"; and I would not wish anything from him that would in the least straiten him.

I have sent you by Dr. Gordon, who is so kind as to take the charge of this letter, a volume of the first fruits of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, which I beg your acceptance of as a token of my sincere esteem and friendship. I wish it may in any measure answer your expectations. In this new country, the materials for such a work cannot be expected so various or learned as in old countries. However, I hope we shall improve as we grow older and shall, from time to time, offer something to the public that will not be altogether unworthy of their reception.

Several months ago I wrote you by a ship of Mr. Foster's. I hope you have received the packet long since.

I wish, Sir, to hear from you whenever your leisure will allow you to gratify me. In the meantime, permit me to subscribe,

With the greatest esteem, Rev^d Sir,

Your obliged friend and very humble serv^t.

JOSEPH WILLARD.

Rev^d D^r PRICE.

P. S. Please to deliver or send to Dr. Priestley the letter enclosed with this.

THOMAS DAY¹ TO RICHARD PRICE.

ASSINGLEY, NEAR CHERTSEY. April 8, 1786

DEAR SIR, — M^r Day begs me not to omit her respects, which I am therefore obliged to put in here.

I regret that in an affair of the nature of the poem, you should think it necessary to consult any judgment but your own; but as you have referred to me, with whatever reluctance I may undertake to express an opinion upon so invidious a subject as an author's poetical merit, I will certainly obey you, when I receive the poem. At the same time, there may be one reason why you should not implicitly trust the dictates of your own mind; and that is, the great goodness of your mind, which inclines you to undertake a task that most other people would have declined at the first offer.

For these reasons, I shall take the liberty of making a few observations which I recommend to your discretion and secrecy, and which must

¹ The eccentric author of "Sanford and Merton," born in London June 22, 1748, and died Sept 28, 1789, as the result of an accident. See Dictionary of National Biography, vol. xiv pp. 239-241. — Eds.

be perfectly impartial, as I know nothing of the author and have not yet received the poem from M^r Stockdale. Poetical excellence, like every other excellence, is not very common; and in an age which abounds with so many versifiers, a mediocrity of this, like every other talent, will excite very little curiosity. As to the composition of an epic poem, it must certainly possess either a very extraordinary degree of merit, or it must be tiresome and insipid to the last degree: witness, the very small number of attempts in this nature which have succeeded in so many ages and countries. I cannot say, that such a genius may not arise in America: but till I see proofs of it, I have very little faith in the prodigy. All the attempts I have hitherto seen in that way from that country are certainly not above mediocrity. The poem of Col. Humphreys is but indifferent;¹ and Stockdale for my entertainment has sent me down another extraordinary performance called the Conquest of Canaan, which is also intended for an epic poem.² The writer of this long, tiresome work is certainly not destitute of poetical genius, had he cultivated it more, and published less. The lines are in general easy and flowing, and the descriptions neither destitute of fancy nor strength; but the whole plan is so extremely injudicious and tiresome, that the writer might as well have called it an elegy, a tragedy, an eclogue, or anything else in rhyme, as an epic poem; and I defy the most resolute reader to wade through it without yawning an hundred times. If, as I suspect, the Columbiad³ should prove of the same nature, I fear the poor anth[or will] be much disappointed in the sanguine ideas he entertains of impro[ving h]is fortune by it. From the inclosed letter which you sent, he seems to be of the "genus irritabile vatum," and I cannot help lamenting that he has honoured you with a post which I fear will prove so troublesome. You are to consider that the character of an author of this kind bears a much closer analogy to that of Catiline, than your friend Dr. Shebbeare could ever make out for you; "ardens in cupiditatibus; satis eloquentia, sapientia parum": and his expectations from his own productions are generally "immoderata, incredibilia, nimis alta." The office you have undertaken must at all events prove troublesome, and the discharge of it, with whatever fidelity, can hardly be expected to please. He com-

¹ "A Poem, on the Happiness of America; addressed to the Citizens of the United States. By D. Humphrys." It was printed in London in 1786, and reprinted in Hartford. A presentation copy from the author to Brig. Gen. H. Jackson is in the library of the Historical Society. — Eds.

² "The Conquest of Canaan; a Poem, in eleven Books." It was by Theodore Dwight, afterward President of Yale College, and was printed in Hartford in 1785, and reprinted in London in 1788. A copy of the English edition, given by John Quincy Adams, is in the library of the Historical Society. — Eds.

³ "The Vision of Columbus; a Poem in nine Books. By Joel Barlow, Esquire." Hartford, 1787.

missions you to dispose of the copyright, but, when it is remembered that Milton sold his immortal work for ten pound, what offer of a London bookseller for this production of Western genius is likely to satisfy the author? From the disposition he seems to make of the prod[uce] he seems to me to entertain ideas which are never likely to be realized. [Would] it not therefore be better, before you took any decisive measures, to acquaint the author with the offers that have been made, and let him decide about the disposal of his own invaluable property? Should your good-nature think of printing it yourself, though I would not wish to stint your bounty, you will pardon me, who, from being a brother author, am alive to all the misfortunes of the trade, if I suggest the possibility of your being considerably out of pocket? At all events these reflexions can do you no hurt, and if your own good-nature prompts you to overlook them, it is my duty to present them to your mind. I am, with the greatest respect,

Yours, &c.,

T. DAY.

BENJAMIN RUSH TO RICHARD PRICE.

PHILADELPHIA, 22nd April, 1786

DEAR SIR, — I am very happy in being able to inform you that the test law was so far repealed a few weeks ago in Pennsylvania as to confer equal priviledges upon every citizen of the State. The success of the friends of humanity in this business should encourage them to persevere in their attempts to enlighten and reform the world. Your letter to me upon the subject of that unjust law was the instrument that cut its last sinew.

The States have almost generally appointed a Convention to sit next September at Annapolis, for the sole purpose of conferring upon Congress additional powers, especially for the purpose of regulating our trade. Republics are slow in discovering their interest, but when once they find it out they pursue it with vigor and perseverance. Nothing can be done by our public bodies till they can carry the people along with them, and as the means of propagating intelligence and knowledge in our country are as yet but scanty, all their movements are marked with appearances of delay and procrastination. To remedy these inconveniences, Colleges, newspapers, and posts are establishing in all our States. I have thrown my mite into these necessary undertakings by publishing a small tract containing a plan for the diffusion for knowledge, and a few thoughts upon the education proper for a republic, a copy of which I have sent for you directed to the care of Mr. Granville Sharp.

I have requested Mr. Dilly to send you a copy of an oration which I

had the honor to deliver before our Philosophical Society last winter "upon the influence of physical causes upon y^e moral faculty." It has had a quick sale and an extensive circulation in this country. As it contains some new opinions in religion and morals, as well as in physic, it will stand in need of the protection of my friends in London to preserve it from the rage of criticism. If political prejudice blends itself with literature, I shall find no mercy from British reviewers. I have avoided every thing that could awaken an idea of the folly of Great Britain in the late war. In science of every kind men should consider themselves as citizens of the whole world. The oration is dedicated to our great and good friend Dr. Franklin.

A volume of transactions will be published by our Society in the course of a few weeks. It will contain many useful essays, particularly two long ones by Dr. Franklin, one on chimneys, the other on the means of lessning the evils and dang[ers of] navigation, both written on his late [journey] from Europe to America.

Continue, my dear Sir, to love, to def[end and] to enlighten the United States. We sh[all not] disappoint nor disgrace you. The vi[gorous] good sense and the property of our count[ry are] coming forth daily, and seizing upon power and offices. The scum which was thrown upon the surface, by the fermentation of the war is daily sinking, while a pure spirit is occupying its place. Please to communicate these facts to Mr. Adams, who I know from his perfect knowledge of human nature and of our country will be prepared to believe them.

Yrs. sincerely.

B: RUSH.

P. S. I am sorry to perceive by my letter to you dated October 15, 1785, and printed in all your papers, that you have in your *note* mistaken my acc^t of the alterations in the articles, liturgy, &c., of the Episcopal Church in the middle and southern States. Their Articles are still Calvinistical, and they hold no union in principle with the new sect of Episcopalians in Boston. I wish this matter could be rectified in your papers, but *without* my name.

The Socinian tenets are confined to a few people. I do not find that the spirit of enquiry that has broken out in religion has among any sects, except one in Boston, invaded the doctrine of the Trinity.

April 23rd 86

BENJAMIN RUSH TO RICHARD PRICE.

PHILADA, May 25th, 1786.

DEAR SIR, — My last letter to you by Capt. Kennady contained an account of an intended Convention of the States to assemble at Annap-

olis in Maryland next September, for the purpose of agreeing upon certain commercial regulations, and of suggesting such alterations in the Confederation as will give more extensive and coercive powers to Congress. We entertain the most flattering hopes from this Convention, especially as an opinion seems to have pervaded all classes of people, that an increase of power in Congress is absolutely necessary for our safety and independence. Most of the *distresses* of our country, and of the *mistakes* which Europeans have formed of us, have arisen from a belief that the American revolution is *over*. This is so far from being the case, that we have only finished the first act of the great drama. We have changed our forms of government, but it remains yet to effect a revolution in our principles, opinions and manners, so as to accommodate them to the forms of government we have adopted. This is the most difficult part of the business of the patriots and legislators of our country. It requires more wisdom and fortitude than to expel or to reduce armies into captivity. I wish to see this idea inculcated by your pen. Call upon the rulers of our country to lay the foundations of their empire in *knowledge* as well as virtue. Let our common people be compelled by law to give their children (what is commonly called) a good English education. Let schoolmasters of every description be supported in part by the public, and let their principles and morals be subjected to examination before we employ them. Let us have Colleges in each of the States, and one federal university under the patronage of Congress, where the youth of all the States may be melted (as it were) together into one mass of citizens, after they have acquired the first principles of knowledge in the Colleges of their respective States. Let the law of nature and nations, the common law of our country, the different systems of government, history, and every thing else connected with the advancement of republican knowledge and principles, be taught by able professors in this University. This plan of general education alone will render the American revolution a blessing to mankind. As you have staked your reputation upon this great event, with the world and with posterity, you must not desert us till you see the curtain drop and the last act of the drama closed. A small pamphlet addressed by you to the Congress, and the legislature of each of the States, upon this subject, I am sure would have more weight with our rulers than an hundred publications thrown out by the citizens of this country. It will only be necessary in this pamphlet to be wholly silent upon those subjects in Christianity which now so much divide and agitate the Christian world. The wisest plan of education that could be offered would be unpopular among 99 out of an 100 of the citizens of America, if it opposed in any degree the doctrine of the Trinity. Some of the members of the reformed Episcopal Church in the middle and southern States complained of the note you published

with my letter in the English newspapers. It has injured them in the opinion of some of the English clergy. You will perceive from their prayer book, that their Articles, tho' reduced in number, are equally Calvinistical with the Articles of the old English Church.

It is with singular pleasure that I inform you that public and private credit are reviving every where, and that laws are gradually coming into force to compel the payment of *old* English debts. Whoever considers the effects of war upon morals in all countries, and then adds to these the effects of a sudden, total, and universal dissolution of all government, such as took place in America during the late war, will not be surprised at any of the events that have happened or at the laws that have been passed since the peace. It requires less charity than good sense to make proper allowances for all the vices of our country.

The letters written by Dr Nisbet to his friends soon after his arrival in America, from which so many extracts have been published in the Scotch papers, were written under a deranged state of mind, occasioned by a fever which fixed itself upon his brain. The Doctor has since perfectly recovered his health and reason, has been reinstated in the College, and is now perfectly satisfied with our country.

Our venerable friend Dr. Franklin continues to enjoy as much health and spirits as are compatible with his time of his life. I dined with him a few days ago in a most agreeable circle where he appeared as chearful and gay as a young man of five and twenty. But his conversation was full of the wisdom and experience of mellow old age. He has destroyed party rage in our State, or to borrow an allusion from one of his discoveries, his presence and advice, like oil upon troubled waters, have composed the contending waves of faction which for so many years agitated the State of Pennsylvania.

I beg my most respectful comp^{ts} to Mr. Adams, with whom I am happy to find you live upon the most intimate terms.

Should you conclude that the publication of any part of the intelligence contained in this letter, will serve our country, you are at liberty to make that use of it, but I must request that you will not give my name to the public with it.

With the greatest respect, I am, my dear Sir,

Your sincere friend, and most humble servant,

BENJ^r RUSH.

P. S. Most of the complaints against our country which are published in your papers come from British agents, or from a sett of men who have settled among us since the peace, who want either virtue or abilities to maintain themselves, and who would have been poor and unhappy in any country.

JOHN CLARKE¹ TO RICHARD PRICE.BOSTON, 18th July, 1786.

REV^d AND HON^d SIR, — I received your letter dated May 27th, and thank you for your remarks upon the late publication of my venerable colleague. Your sentiments perfectly coincide with my own. I have long been of the opinion that the Mosaic history of the creation, fall, &c., was not to be understood according to the literal sense of the words. Dr. Chauncy has writ ingeniously upon the vulgar supposition; but I think that can by no means be admitted. The work, however, may do some good; particularly that part which exposes the sophistry of Dr. Edwards.

I am happy to find Mr. Adams among your hearers and particular friends. In America he is highly esteemed. His political abilities, patriotism and integrity greatly endear him to his countrymen. But their want of his virtues must be extremely mortifying to him. He must often blush for his country. And his present appointment he must consider as one of the very humiliating events of his life.²

Dr. Chauncy enjoys his health, but his mind is much impaired. He is but the shadow of his former self. Your letter to Mr Hazlett is delivered. That to Dr. Wheelock will be safely conveyed. The Tractate on Church Music is now circulating among the people to whom it is particularly addressed. When I have more carefully perused it, I will candidly own the impression it makes. That it was compiled with the most friendly view, is the opinion of all who have read it; and particularly so of

Your much obliged and most humble serv^t.

JOHN CLARKE.

P. S. I would beg leave to observe that we do not style ourselves Dissenters but Congregationalists.

EDWARD WIGGLESWORTH TO RICHARD PRICE.

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS, July 27, 1786.

REV^d AND DEAR SIR, — Permit me to express my gratitude for the obliging manner in which you were pleased to communicate to the Rev^d

¹ Rev. John Clarke, D.D., was born in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, April 13, 1755, graduated at Harvard College in 1774, was ordained over the First Church in Boston in 1778, as colleague with Rev. Dr. Chauncy, and died April 2, 1798. See Ellis's Hist. of the First Church, pp. 208–215. — Eds.

² Mr. Adams was at the time this letter was written minister plenipotentiary to Great Britain; but it is well known that the feebleness of the government which he represented was a serious and mortifying embarrassment to him. See Life and Works of John Adams, vol. i pp. 413–425. — Eds.

President Willard your judicious remarks on the Expectation of Life among the Harvard graduates; and at the same time to return you thanks in my own name, and in behalf of the ministers of this Commonwealth for the kind assistance you have given them in the formation of a plan for providing annuities for their widows.

The General Court of the last year, at the close of the sessions, passed an act for incorporating a Society, by the name of *The Massachusetts Congregational Charitable Society*, with power to hold an annual income, not exceeding *three thousand pounds*. The annual income of the Society is to be "applied to the support of such widows and children of deceased Congregational Ministers, who have been or shall be settled within this Commonwealth, and of the widows and children of the Presidents and Professors of the University, as in the opinion of the said Corporation shall be proper objects of the said Charity."

The corporation, judging it within their province to provide a particular fund for granting annuities to the widows of the subscribers, appointed a committee to prepare a plan for that purpose. The committee, having considered the two plans which you communicated to the President, were of opinion that the plan mentioned in the postscript of your letter would, for the reasons therein offered, be the more eligible of the two. They accordingly reported it to the Society, who voted to carry it into execution; as soon as *fifty* subscribers should subject themselves to an annual payment of five pounds five shillings, during the continuance of their respective marriages. The younger ministers, I persuade myself, will generally become subscribers. And as soon as a few widows commence annuitants, the utility of the institution will be obvious. This will have a natural tendency to put the younger ministers, in future, on providing annuities for their wives in season.

Some of the gentlemen of the corporation were of opinion that it would promote the general design of this institution to provide for the making single payments at admission, instead of the annual payments, mentioned in the plan; for some persons may prefer a single payment to annual ones. The Society accordingly referred the consideration of this motion to the committee who reported the plan. The value of such single payments may, I think, be found with precision by multiplying the value of an annuity on two *joint* lives, found in Table XLVI of Vol. II of your Treatise, by 5.25, the annual payment. Should I be mistaken, I shall esteem myself much obliged for your correction.

The principles by which the annuities in the plan we have adopted are regulated, I do not recollect to have found laid down in your Treatise on reversionary Payments. If they are not, the gentlemen of the Society will esteem themselves obliged to you for a mathematical

resolution of them, whenever you may find leisure amidst your many engagements to attend to this subject.

That a life so important as yours to Great Britain and America, may be prolonged, and that you may have the satisfaction of finding a due regard paid by the inhabitants of both countries to your salutary admonitions, is the desire and prayer of him, who is with the greatest esteem,
Reverend Sir,

Your obliged servant,

EDWARD WIGGLESWORTH.

Rev^d RICHARD PRICE, D.D., &c.

JOSEPH WILLARD TO RICHARD PRICE.

CAMBRIDGE, July 29, 1786.

REV^d AND DEAR SIR. — I am much obliged to you for your letter, in which you communicated to me your answers to the Rev^d Professor Wigglesworth's queries respecting a plan for annuities for the widows of ministers in this Commonwealth. The Trustees of *The Massachusetts Congregational Charitable Society*, lately incorporated, have accepted the report of their Committee, viz. Professor Wigglesworth, Mr. Sullivan and myself, recommending the plan of annuities which you suggested in the postscript of your letter; and which you say you have recommended to some societies in Great Britain. Some of the Trustees wished to provide for the making of a single payment, where desired, instead of the annual payments, and referred the matter to the consideration of this Committee. The Professor, who has looked into the doctrine of annuities more than the rest of us, has written to you directly upon the subject, whose letter I enclose, and which makes it unnecessary for me to enlarge upon the matter.

I wish, Sir, I could give you a favourable account of the aspect of our public affairs in these States; but unhappily, the Congress still continues unfurnished with the means of extinguishing our national debt; nor is it yet furnished with powers for regulating trade. How unfortunate that little jealousies and local considerations should prevent the general good and endanger the confederation! What the end of these things may be Heaven alone knows! May it be better than our fears! I confess, I cannot help frequently trembling for the event.

The citizens of the States feel the public taxes to be heavy, and find a scarcity of money to pay them. Some States in the union have already issued a paper currency, which seems to increase the evil instead of lessening it. The little State of Rhode Island has lately issued a large sum of paper money, a measure highly disgusting to many of its citizens. They are thrown into parties, and great confu-

sion and disorder at present subsist among them. I hope the commotions *there* will be a warning to the inhabitants of this Commonwealth, and that they will learn wisdom by the sufferings of their neighbours. At the last session of our General Assembly, about a month ago, an attempt was made by some members to obtain a vote for a paper currency to be issued among us; but the number was so very small that they made no head; and I hope there will continue to be wisdom enough in the State to prevent so pernicious a measure.

I had like to have forgotten to mention a mistake in the direction of your last letter to me. The letter designed for me went enclosed to Mr. Sullivan, while one designed for him came directed to me. As the letter was not directed to any person at the bottom, it was several days before I could find out to whom that of which I was possessed belonged, and recover my own. At length I made the discovery, and each of us got his own letter. However, no damage has attended the mistake, and it need give you no uneasiness.

Mr. Sparhawk, a grandson of the late Sir William Pepperrell, who is a merchant at Portsmouth in New Hampshire, and a friend and classmate of mine, is so polite as to offer to wait upon you in person with this letter when he gets to London, for which he is to sail the next week. He tells me, he wishes to have the honor and pleasure of being introduced to *you*, for whose character he entertains the highest regard. If you should have any commands for America, Mr. Sparhawk, I am persuaded, will be happy to execute them.

I wrote you by Dr. Gordon in the spring, who I hear has arrived in London.

I hope this letter will find you in the enjoyment of health; and that you may long be continued a blessing to the world is the ardent wish and prayer of, Sir,

Your sincere friend and obliged humble serv^t.

JOSEPH WILLARD.

Rev^d Dr RICHARD PRICE.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO RICHARD PRICE.

PHILAD^A, July 29, 1786.

DEAR FRIEND, — I could not let this opportunity, by Mr Nicklin, pass without selecting you. I hope you continue well, as I do, my old malady excepted, and that so useful a life as yours will be long protracted. I repeat my thanks to you for the pamphlet you so kindly sent me. I should ere now have try'd the remedy indicated in it, but my glass instrument for impregnating liquors with fix'd air, being lent into the country, I have been kept in continual expectation of its being

return'd, and am hitherto disappointed; at which I have been the less uneasy, as the pain has been tolerable generally, and I do not find that the malady grows worse.

Our Philosophical Society think themselves honour'd by your acceptance of their diploma. You will receive by M^r Vaughan a second volume of their Transactions.

I see there are mischievous spirits at work, labouring to disturb the peace between our countries, but I trust they will not succeed. We are improving daily in public prudence and the true knowledge of our essential interests; and notwithstanding some political errors hard to eradicate I flatter myself that on the whole and in time we shall do very well. Indeed I think I see evident marks of the favourable hand of Providence in our affairs; for even our own blunders, and the malice of our enemies, are made to operate our advantage. My best wishes attend you and good M^r Price, being ever, my dear Friend,

Yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

Rev^d D^r PRICE.

BENJAMIN RUSH TO RICHARD PRICE

PHILADELPHIA, August 2nd, 1786.

DEAR SIR, — With great reluctance I set down to write a few lines to you by good Mrs. Vaughan and her family. They will leave many *friends* behind them, and carry with them the good wishes of all who have ever known them. I consider our city and society impoverished by their leaving us, but taking every consideration into question, I cannot help approving of their preferring the highly cultivated society of old friends in England to the less cultivated society of new ones in America. Mr. Vaughan's active and public spirit has laid our city under great obligations to him. We look forward with pain to the time of his leaving us. He has been the principal cause of the resurrection of our Philosophical Society. He has even done more, he has laid the foundation of a philosophical *hall* which will preserve his name and the name of his family among us for many, many years to come.

I refer you to the enclosed papers for political information, and beg leave, for the present, only to subscribe myself with great respect, dear Sir,

Your sincere friend and humble servant,

BENJⁿ RUSH.

P. S. The essays subscribed Nestor in the enclosed papers have been ascribed to your friend.

B. R.

MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE¹ TO RICHARD PRICE.BOWOOD PARK, 21st Sept^r. 1786.

MY DEAREST FRIEND, — I did not answer the kind letter which I receiv'd from you at Weymouth, expecting to do it in person, as I generally go to town from Wycombe, but as I found it impossible to do so this year, I was thinking of writing to you to-morrow, just when I receiv'd the melancholy account you have taken the trouble of sending me of the irreparable loss you have sustain'd.² I am very sensible of the confidence you must have in my affection by the early communication of this heart-breaking event, and, tho' the post only allows me a moment, I cannot delay a day to assure you that you have not a relation who feels more sensibly the loss you have sustain'd. I have no need when I write to you, particularly on this occasion, to wait for reflection, I am not afraid to let my heart dictate. Let me beseech you to command me in any shape. I will go instantly to London if I can contribute to your comfort, or will be happy to see you here, where no one shall come, but such as are agreeable to you. Lady Lansdown upon receipt of your letter mention'd this before I did, or as soon as Miss Fox gets here to keep Lady Lansdown company I will attend you anywhere. In the mean time let me beseech you, my dear Friend, to struggle against your misfortune, and let your mind dwell as little as possible on an event which is now pass'd. One of the wisest *practical* men who ever liv'd, Philippe de Commynes, says in his memoirs, that the only remedy he observ'd thro' life in cases of great and heavy calamity, was first to vent the grief to some true friend, and then to have recourse to time and as hard and constant exercise as the body can endure. I am unhappily myself a physician and as you know have had too much experience of domestick calamity, but as I have often told you, tho' they have hurt my health fundamentally yet the calamitys I have suffer'd have made me a better and for that reason a happier man. I have not time to read over what I have wrote, as I am afraid of losing the post; I trust you will not doubt its sincerity, and accept both my wishes and my prayers that you may hereafter meet the friend you have lost a saint in Heaven. I will write to you soon again, and believe me, in the mean time,

Y^r most affect^d friend,

LANSDOWN.

¹ William, 2d Earl of Shelburne, Dr. Price's friend, was advanced to the dignity of Marquis of Lansdowne Nov. 30, 1784. — Eds.

² The death of Mrs. Price, to whom the Doctor had been married for nearly thirty years. — Eds.

MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE TO RICHARD PRICE.

BOWOOD PARK, 29th Sept^r, 1786.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — I was going to write to Mr. Vaughan or some other friend to enquire about you, but upon recollection I chuse to address yourself, as I think it the duty of every friend you have to incite you to exert yourself, to prevent the calamity which you have lately undergone taking too much hold of your mind. Recollect the advantages of your situation for example over mine, the longer scene of uninterrupted domestick felicity which you have enjoy'd, the great happiness of a middle station which you have often told me, and which I am perfectly sure, is the happiest, when properly understood, as it has been without the least compliment by you, who have never debas'd it by a meanness nor committed it by a petulance, but always supported the dignity of it; but above all the lively sense of religion, which you must have had early impress'd upon your mind, and which I am free to own by all I have observ'd is worth the knowledge and riches of the whole world; for how can a man who firmly believes in another life and in the divine mission of Jesus Christ lose his time in regretting any event in a short and contemptible life like the present? It gave me great satisfaction to find in your letter before the last, that you were occupied about some moral treatise, for anxious as I am for the permanent dignity of your character I wish morality to form the predominant feature of it; and tho' as long as a sinking fund exists, (and when it ceases, the country must do so too) your name must be connected with it, yet I am not afraid that if you apply your mind to the great line of morality, you will leave some still better legacy to mankind, by which you will be still better characteris'd; but allow me to speak my mind freely, that it should turn upon such general principles as may embrace the Turk or the Gentoo equally with the Christian, and not to suffer yourself to be diverted by controversies, which are better left in the hands of conceited men who live by them, and who have neither your comprehension of head or heart, and which do not contribute to make mankind essentially better in the several relations of life. You see that you make me almost commence preacher, but you need not be afraid that if you will venture here, that I will tire you with that or any other subject. You will find Lady Lansdown and me nearly alone for two months to come. I am in the habit of riding from ten to thirty or sometimes forty mile a day. We dine at 5 o'clock as plain as you do in your own house, Lady Lansdown plays for an hour on the harpsichord, not very well but without any pretensions, and we go to bed at eleven. We'll consider and treat you as a father. Every person about the house reveres and respects you, and you'll make us very happy, which is the next thing to being happy yourself. In the

mean time I hope to know that you have fix'd upon some of your relations to live with you, for you must not live alone, and that you exert yourself.

Believe me, my dear Friend, most affect^{ly} yr.

LANSDOWN.

JAMES SULLIVAN¹ TO RICHARD PRICE.

BOSTON, 16th October, 1786.

REV^d SIR, — I am really much indebted by your obliging letter with which I was favoured some time ago. You were very kind in giving me liberty to communicate to you any thing respecting infringements upon the sacred rights of conscience which might happen in our Commonwealth. There is no one, Sir, on the globe to whom I should apply myself in difficulties of this sort sooner than to you. But I am very happy to inform you that the Judges of our Supreme Judicial Court, have given *at last* such a construction to our declaration of rights as sets this point upon a liberal and safe footing. I shall not do you justice without observing that I believe your letter did much towards it.

I have the honor to send you the Memoirs of the American Academy. You have no doubt received one of the books before but I wish to testify the great respect I have for you. This may enable you to give one to a friend. It will be delivered perhaps some time after you receive this letter by my particular friend Mr. Martin of Portsmouth in New Hampshire.

The inclosed paper may serve as a hint of the disagreeable situation we are in here. Insurrections increase upon us, and our troubles arising from a want of firmness in government threaten our very existence as a government. But I hope in Heaven that all may soon subside.

I am, dear Sir, with the most sincere veneration,

Your most obliged and most humble servant,

JAMES SULLIVAN.

DOCTOR PRICE.

BENJAMIN RUSH TO RICHARD PRICE

DEAR SIR, — This letter will be handed to you by the Rev^d D^r White of this city who goes to London in order to be consecrated

¹ Born in Berwick, Maine, April 22, 1744; died in Boston Dec. 10, 1808. He was the first President of the Massachusetts Historical Society, and afterward Governor of the State. — EDS.

Bishop of Pennsylvania. He is a gentleman of a most worthy and respectable character. With prospects of an affluent fortune, and with the most liberal connections, he early devoted himself to the service of the sanctuary. He has officiated as one of the ministers of the Episcopal churches in our city for upwards of fourteen years with the utmost reputation. In every stage of the late war he was a consistent Whig. In the most doubtful stage of the war he acted as chaplain to the Congress. He is almost the only man I ever knew of real abilities, and unaffected purity and simplicity of manners, that had not a single enemy. He carries with him the good wishes and prayers of thousands of his fellow citizens.

Accept of my thanks for your very agreeable favor of July 30th.

I lament that your declining health will not permit you to undertake a second address to the citizens of America upon the subject of a new federal government. You will perceive by the papers that the Convention which was to have laid the foundation for that salutary measure in Septem^r last adjourned, from the want of sufficient powers for that purpose, till next May, *then* to meet in the city of Philadelphia.

Some of our enlightened men who begin to despair of a more complete union of the States in Congress, have secretly proposed an Eastern, Middle, and Southern Confederacy, to be united by an alliance offensive and defensive. These confederacies they say will be united by nature, by interest, and by manners, and consequently they will be safe, agreeable and durable. The first will include the four New England States and New York. The second will include New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland; and the last Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia. The foreign and domestic debt of the United States, they say shall be divided justly between each of the new confederations. This plan of a new continental government is at present a mere speculation. Perhaps necessity, or rather divine providence, may drive us to it. Whatever form of political existence may be before us, I am fully satisfied that our independance rests upon a firm basis, and that Great Britain will never recover from any of our changes in opinion or government her former dominion or influence in this country.

The commotions in New England have happily subsided without the loss of a life or the effusion of one drop of kindred blood. If your countrymen should shew a disposition to rejoice in hearing of these commotions, it will only be necessary to remind them of the present distractions in Ireland, or of the late mob conducted by Lord George Gordon in the city of London, to convince them that stability, contentment and perfect order are no more the offsprings of monarchical than of republican forms of government. The kingdoms of Europe have travelled into their present state of boasted tranquillity thro' seas

of blood. The republics of America are travelling into order and wise government, only thro' a sea of blunders.

Our venerable friend D^r Franklin has found considerable benefit from the use of the remedy you recommended to him, joined with the black-berry jam. He informed me a few days ago that he had not enjoyed better health for the last 30 years of his life than he does at present. His faculties are still in their full vigor. He amuses himself daily in superintending two or three houses which he is building in the neighbourhood of his dwelling house. One of them is for a printing office for his grandson, a promising youth who was educated by him in France.

An important revolution took place on the 10th day of this instant in favor of the wisdom, virtue, and property of Pennsylvania. Mr. Rob^t Morris, the late financier of the United States, is at the head of the party that will rule our State for the insuing year. This gentleman's abilities, eloquence, and integrity place him upon a footing with the first legislators and patriots of ancient and modern times. It is expected the charter of the Bank of North America will be restored, and that the College of Philadelphia (seized by fraud and force by D^r Ewing and his friends) will be given back to its original and just owners.

If you should conclude to publish any part of my letters, I have only to request that you would not connect the extracts from them with my name.

With the greatest respect, and the most fervent wishes that your useful life may be prolonged for *many, many* years to come, I am,
d^r Sir,

Your sincere friend and most humble servant.

BENJⁿ RUSH.

PHILADELPHIA, October 27th, 1786.

Rev^d D^r PRICE.

SAMUEL VAUGHAN¹ TO RICHARD PRICE.

PHILADELPHIA, 4th November, 1786.

MY DEAR SIR, — I am favord with your acceptable letter of 1 Aug^t, and feel with strong sensibility the affliction you must be under for the helpless and deplorable state of M^r Price; happy it is that your philosophy and Christian fortitude is so well calculated to support you under so distressing dispensations of providence in this transitory state, resting on well grounded hopes of a future just and merciful

¹ The writer of this letter (born June 22, 1762, died Dec. 4, 1802) was one of the numerous children of Samuel and Sarah (Hallowell) Vaughan, and brother of Benjamin and John Vaughan. (See N. E. Hist. and Gen. Regist., vol. xix. p. 355) He was a member of the American Philosophical Society. — Eds.

retribution when you will assuredly have your full reward. I most sincerely hope your trip to Brighton may establish your health, spirits and usefulness for a long, long period.

Before my departure from England, you wished to retire from part of your pastoral care and labours; your now undertaking to give lectures in the rising Accademy¹ is an illustrious proof of your unabated, persevering zeal for extending your usefulness, nor do I think you could have found a better line to render essential service to the rising generation than by employing your credit and labours in promoting that young and so much wanted seminary of learning, for the extention of useful knowledge on rational principles, at a period when the Dissenting Interest is rapidly declining and many academies that were designed for like purpose fall to decay.

I am rejoiced to hear that after so long solicitation of your friends you are at length persuaded to publish a volume of Sermons, in perusal of which I promise my self much pleasure and profit. I also rejoice to hear the amiable Miss Priestley is so well married, but under great concern to hear the return of the Doctor's complaint. God grant his valuable and useful life may be prolonged to pursue his rapid, valuable, original discoveries and researches into the works of nature; he is indeed a most wonderful and good man, without a parallel. Many here wish he would drop his theological pursuits and stick to philosophical.

I spend many agreeable evenings with our good friend Doctor Franklin, who except for the stone, which prevents his using exercise, except in walking in the house up and down stairs, and sometime to the State-house (which is one eighth of a mile distant) still retains his health, spirits and memory beyond all conception, insomuch that there are few transactions, subjects or publications, ancient or modern, that are of any note but what he retains and when necessary in conversation will repeat and retain with wonderful facility. He bathes twice a week stately (for hours) in a hot bath and, instead of relaxation, he enjoys and finds benefit from it. He desires his kind remembrance to you and the members of the Club. He has been again chosen President unanimously.

I hope Mr. Courtland will succeed in Albany, tho the soil (except at a distance from the Mohawk River and near Fort Stanwick) is generally poor and but little society even in the city except young lawyers training for the bar.

My opinion and expectations respecting America are not altered; true it is, that many improvements are wanted, and the Constitution of this State and some others very deficient; it however requires much time to reform States, but the evils will in due time remedy themselves, when commerce, &c^o, comes to a level. Taxes at present lies heavy on

¹ The college at Hackney. By his will Dr. Price gave £50 to it. — Eds.

the people, tho' their debt is a drop of the bucket when compared with their resources of land and produce as the continent becomes better settled. The improvements making in many of the seminaries of learning and provisions made by grants of land for many others about to be established in the back States will defuse general knowledge; suffering and experience will open the eyes of the people, and it may be expected in due time that habits of sobriety, industry and frugality will promote good morals; and I have the pleasure to inform you, that the inconsistent acts passed and often repealed by the Assembly of this State since their independence have already roused the people's attention, insomuch that the faction called the Constitutionalists, who since the Revolution have ruled with despotic sway, met with an unexpected defeat the last election for members of Assembly, by the Whigs, who go under the name of Republicans, whose interest will yearly encrease by the young Quakers arriving at age, who are not subject to the iniquitous test law, and who are perhaps the most moderate and valuable set of people in this State. It is now thought there is a majority of Whigs in the Assembly, and it is expected that a charter for better regulating the police of this City will be obtained, the charter of the Bank restored and hopes of the repeal of the Test Law, with other reforms, but it yet may be feared from the number of country members, who are yet uninformed, jealous of and opposing the cities and people in trade, from an erroneous opinion of their having separate interests, and for want of knowledge and experience have been hitherto led by a few designing men, that business will not be conducted as well as could be wished; however from the provision made for defusing of knowledge in the several counties and the power being where it should be, that is in the hands of the people, it may be hoped and expected the evils when felt will remedy themselves. And indeed this may be expected from a recent instance in the reforms made here in the Prayers, Psalms and Service of the Church of England (as soon as in their power) and that in fewer months than has been done by enlightened nations in centuries, and it may be hoped that it will have further reform yet, and that the example will stimulate and open the eyes of that persuasion in England to act likewise. You will see Docter White, who is gone in the packet for consecration, and who has bore a uniform excellent character and more liberal than most of his brethren.

I hope ere this that M^r Vaughan and family are safe arrived and that you will often favor them with your company, which will add much to their pleasure and happiness as well as greatly oblige, dear Sir,

Your ever affectionate friend,

SAM^l VAUGHAN.

Rev^d Docter PRICE.

MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE TO RICHARD PRICE.

BOWOOD PARK, 22^d Novr, 1786

MY DEAR FRIEND, — It's very long since I have heard from you. I want to know how you go on, and hope to hear that the late changes of weather have not affected you too much.

I have taken the liberty of giving M^r Playfair a letter to you. He is the author of some commercial tables which you may have seen, as well as of one to shew the operation of a Sinking Fund. He is going to publish one to shew the different operation of annuities and perpetuities, with a treatise which he desires to dedicate to me, but wishes to communicate his opinions first to you. When you have seen him, I shall be glad to have your opinion of him and his book. He is a Scotsman.

I have been much entertain'd with a Life of M^r Turgot by M^r Condorcet. They are both great pedants, but the first was certainly a great man. I don't imagine he would have made a minister in any country, but he was a greater character. His virtues and good qualities overbalance very far his failings. I am captivated with one of his ideas, that of establishing certain fix'd fundamental principles of law, commerce, morality and politicks comprehensive enough to embrace all religions and all countrys. It is to the inculcating these principles I want you, my dear friend, to dedicate your whole time, to cry down war throughout the world, which nothing can ever justifie, and to prove the advantages of peace, and the right which all countries have to require it of their respective sovereigns. If sovereigns are offended with each other, let them fight singlehanded, without involving their people in their silly quarrels. You have talents and character peculiarly adapted to give weight to these principles. Every one is sufficiently agreed about the existence of God and about his attributes, except some conceited men of letters, who are delighted to reason in the dark, and think themselves superior to the rest of the world, because they think they know what the rest of the world don't think worth knowing. I want you to keep better company. I cannot help thinking that the want of taste, observable in the present age for several matters of controversy, is not entirely owing to love of dissipation but that good sense has its share of the motive. But I am afraid of saying more upon a subject upon which you may very reasonably think I have no right to say any thing.

I observe the political world is entirely occupied about the French treaty. I need not tell you that as far as it goes it is perfectly agreeable to my principles. I am at a loss to account for the motives of either side in adopting the principles of the armed neutrality. If it arises from no little secret motive, but is done with a view to soften the

great evil of war, I must highly approve of that also, and can only wish that they had gone still further, and follow'd the example set by the late King of Prussia's treaty with America. But writing to you confidentially I own I am at a loss what to conjecture about its fate when Parliament meets. Our publick is so ignorant and so changeable, that its present popularity goes with me for nothing, and when I see on the one hand however agreeable the whole treaty may be to me, several of the clauses contradicting directly the spirit of several laws pass'd only last sessions, other clauses founded on principles directly opposite to those which were maintain'd with the utmost violence in the Irish treaty by the very man who signs this, and the tendency of the whole very opposite to the passions and dispositions of some who have the most to say at present, I cannot conceive what is to come of it, or if it does pass in its present form, what can have produc'd such an incredible change. I know that a great deal is to be said for its passing besides its merits, and when I write to you upon this as well as many other subjects, I only think aloud, and wish for many reasons my private reflections to remain with you only. I shall be vastly troubl'd if it fails, for prejudice will get a new lease, and we shall be drove so far back in error.

I don't find any of my correspondents able to account for the late fall of the funds.

Lady Lansdown desires her kind compliments and wishes much that you would spend at least a part of your holydays here. You would find only your friends, and no ladys except Miss Vernous, the eldest of whom is an extraordinary good young woman. They and Miss Fox are leaving the Dutchess of Bedford, and are to live with M^r Vernon. The old Dutchess as long as she can't keep her great houses does not care about keeping any thing else, and least of all her temper, which does not endure any thing which looks like retiring from power and greatness.

I am, dear D^r Price, most affect^{ly} y^rs.

LANSDOWN.

MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE TO RICHARD PRICE.

BOWOOD PARK, 29th Nov^r, 1786.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — I am very glad to hear of the intended publication you mention. I have long wish'd to see something of the sort, and actually propos'd to the very gentleman whom I mention'd in my last to undertake a paper under the title of the Neutralist. The arn'd neutrality may be a more popular title and better. I therefore beg that you'll tell D^r Thompson with my compliments that if his object be

to inculcate your principles regarding liberty in general, and his countryman M^r Adam Smith's regarding liberty of commerce, I shall think it a duty to do every thing I possibly can to encourage his undertaking, in short that he may freely command me in any shape. But its success will depend upon the impartiality and ability with which it is conducted. I have often thought that D^r Macleane at the Hague was a person very capable of assisting the foreign part of such a work, but I don't know how far he might be dispos'd to embark at his time of life in any thing of the sort.

So far you may tell D^r Thompson. It may perhaps be as well not to tell him that I can scarce conceive a Scotchman capable of liberality, but utterly incapable of impartiality. That nation is compos'd of such a sad set of innate, cold-hearted, impudent rogues, that I sometimes think it a comfort when you and I shall be to walk together in the next world, which I hope we shall as well as in this, we cannot possibly then have any of them sticking to our skirts. In the mean time it's a melancholy thing that there is no finding any other people that will take pains, or be amenable even to the best purposes.

I have an account of the revenue of the year up to the last quarter. I have given it to William to copy, and it shall be forwarded to you either to-morrow or Fryday, but I am very much inclin'd to attribute the late fluctuations to stock-jobbing, only assisted by the state of things in Holland.

I am very glad to hear that your new academy is like to prosper. I only hope that more regard will be paid to modern languages, German as well as French, and less to ancient, than has been usual in such institutions, that there will not be such long vacations as is generally practis'd, and from time to time some very publick examinations.

I have been so much struck with M^r Turgot's Life, that I have sent it to a friend of ours to get it translated and publish'd. I take Mr. Necker's book to be a singular instance of the power of mixing a great attention to popularity, court favour, and almost all the reigning prejudices, not only with great brilliancy of sentiment, but with a very honourable regard to good economy, order and several very liberal principles. However, it must be allow'd that M^r Turgot's principles are made of sterner stuff. One seems to have been calculated to do good to the present age, the other to posterity. It's a pity that their respective partizans in France do not rather chuse to dwell on those points where two such respectable authoritys agree, especially as there are very important ones which comes under this predicament, rather than on those where they oppos'd each other, but I hope posterity will be wiser than the King of France and will in the long run avail itself of the joint labours of both these men. There is certainly more liberality among official people in France than in England, while on the

other hand our middle class of people are far better inform'd and more liberal than theirs. I consider the conduct of the present Opposition as a great misfortune, as they make it a principle to oppose every thing right or wrong, and by that means stifle the real publick voice and mislead strangely.

I will read your Sermons I am sure with great pleasure, as I do every thing which comes from you. I want you to live hereafter with the Turgots and the Neckers, and to leave the Doct^r and the Archdeacons to dye by the hands of one another. I am sorry to find you complain of any low intervals, and that it should ever occur to your mind to think of retiring from your friends at a time that you should retire to them. I am a few years younger than you, I believe, and certainly have not the same philosophy as you, yet I am glad to find myself so far on my road, and so far well over, especially since my eldest son is of age and has given a tolerable earnest of good dispositions. I have no uneasy intervals except when I think of my second son, which I am convinc'd is owing in great part to my having indulg'd my grief for him to an excessive degree. I would give a great deal that I had not done it, as it can do him no good. God knows my heart, it is not for want of tenderness for him, as my tears sufficiently witness while I am now writing, but painfull as it is to me to recur to the subject, I cannot help doing it to warn you, my dear Friend, against incurring a disease in which you may find at first a melancholy comfort, but in the end you'll find lowering and incapacitating to a great degree. You'll be tir'd of my hand writing, but I hope not at the truth and regard with which

I am affect^{ly} y^rs.

LANSDOWN.

WILLIAM BINGHAM¹ TO RICHARD PRICE.

NEW YORK, Decem^r 1, 1786.

DEAR SIR, — You were so obliging as to indulge me with the promise of your correspondence, on my return to this country. I have been prevented (from various avocations) from availing myself of many opportunities that have offered to inform you of my arrival.

I must confess that I did not find the United States in as flourishing a situation as I had reason to expect. Many circumstances have combined to check their prosperity. Their immense consumption of foreign manufactures has greatly injured them, by involving them in a heavy

¹ William Bingham, a member of the United States Senate from 1795 to 1801, was born in Philadelphia in 1751, and died in Bath, England, Feb. 7, 1804. His eldest daughter married Alexander Baring, first Baron Ashburton. — Eds.

debt to Europe, which they will not be able to extinguish in many years. In the mean while, the specie of the country, which after the war constituted its only circulating medium, has been almost wholly exported, and many of the States have had recourse to the dangerous expedient of paper money, which by not being in general well funded has in many instances greatly depreciated.

The Confederation is likewise an evil of an alarming nature. It does not possess sufficient powers to constitute a firm, vigorous, and energetic government, such as so extensive a country demands. The individual States, from the sufferings they are exposed to from the weakness and inefficiency of the Confederacy, seem disposed to vest Congress with such authorities as are necessary to pursue and preserve the general interests of the Union. This will make their administration respectable abroad and vigorous at home.

There is often a turn in human affairs which baffles the foresight of the wisest men. After the immense expences that G. Britain incurred in the prosecution of the war, her most sanguine friends had no idea of her affairs being so soon retrieved, and her situation so prosperous as it now appears to be. She is indebted for these advantages to the wisdom of her councils and the energy of her government.

I hope the turn will soon take place in our affairs. Our resources are great, the industry and intelligence of our people are not to be surpassed, and I do not believe there exists a greater fund of public and private virtue than in this country. Nothing is wanting but a good government to direct these advantages to public good and private benefit.

We have daily accessions of inhabitants from emigrations from different parts of Europe, particularly Germany. It is a pleasing circumstance to a benevolent mind to contemplate the advantageous situation this class of people is placed in on their arrival here. From being in a state of vassalage in their own country, mere hewers of wood and drawers of water, they find themselves entitled to all the rights of citizenship in a free country, and with a small pittance enabled to purchase a freehold estate for themselves and family.

It is really fortunate for human nature, that there is a country where the oppressed of all nations may find a secure asylum.

I know no State in the Union that would be so envied as Pennsylvania, if it was not so defective in its constitution and form of government. By possessing but a single branch of legislature, subject to an annual change, its laws are very often crude and indigested, and its conduct governed by no system. A few factious and designing men, possessed of popular talents, may at any time throw the councils of the country into confusion, and, if their views are selfish, bend the public business to meet their private convenience.

However, as our constitution has wisely fixed a septennial period, when its defects may be remedied by a council of Censors and a Convention, I hope the citizens of the State will take advantage of this circumstance, and adopt a more perfect form of government.

Having the honor of being appointed to represent the State of Pennsylvania in Congress, I shall reside here for the greatest part of the ensuing year.

Please to make my compliments to M^r Price, and believe me to be with great regard, dear Sir,

Your obed^t, hble serv^t. W^m BINGHAM.

P. S. Please to inform me if there are any new political publications of any note.

MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE TO RICHARD PRICE

B[OWOOD] P[ARK], 19th Dec^r, 1786

MY DEAR FRIEND, — I have read your volume of Sermons with that interest which I must ever take in whatever comes from you.

The first reflects back my own opinions so forcibly upon me, that I am of course struck with it, and think it should not only be read but *taught* in every school of every sect in England. Children should learn to spell out of it.

I never read thirty pages of any book whatever more happily express'd, or with which I was more captivated than I am with your seventh sermon.

At the same time that I take the liberty of particularizing these two, I must say that I read all the rest with the greatest pleasure.

I admire the repeated cautions you give against uncharitableness in matters of opinion, as well as your declining in such express terms against all desire of proselytism, your object being to assist enquiry, it not being requir'd of us to find out Truth so much as to endeavour to find it out and practice it, which last alone can give satisfaction to a Christian mind, and your absolution of those innocent people who fall into involuntary error, but above all, the very fair manner in which you confess at the end of your fifth sermon the doubts which have occur'd sometimes to your own mind upon some important principles, which gives so much weight to those, still more important, upon which you profess never to have entertain'd any in any circumstance of life. These are truly Christian sentiments, and accompanied with such proofs of sincerity and unaffected candor, as I imagine must make an impression on whoever hears or reads them.

I am highly pleas'd too with the spirit with which you acknowledge

the obligations which the Dissenters owe to the *publick* for not executing the penal laws, and the warning you give the hierarchy, who appear so stupidly insensible to the danger as well as duty of their situation.

The concise and plain manner in which you expose the absurdity of the two extremes is full of information to such people as me, who want either time or patience to read the volumes which I see daily publishing on these subjects, and seems well calculated to prevent people from wasting their time in reading such useless books, tho' I suppose it may not be so easy a matter to check the ardour of those who write them. The idea of a spontaneous instrumentality is perfectly new to me, and, if I was not afraid of going out of my depth, I should suppose it capable of accounting for a great deal indeed.

If I was desir'd to find an objection to any part of the whole, and could venture to risque speaking impertinently upon a subject to which I am so little competent, which nothing but your friendship could encourage me to do, I should be led to doubt whether you do not bestow too much pains in inculcating the middle line, and whether you do not descend almost to controversy, if it was not for the very wise advertisement you have plac'd after your title page. I am almost sorry upon this account for a severe expression or two which you have let drop in your second sermon. There is nothing of which I am more convinc'd than that the effect of all church controversy as the world stands must be the making Christians deists and deists atheists. To what else can the conceit which you say poor D^r Priestly has pick'd up in his flight. If it was to get the length of forming a sect, I know of no other name to give his followers except that of atheistical Christians, men who would not believe in a God if it was not for Jesus Christ. You know better than I do that the deists have their advantages. All negative advantages are on their side, which is a great deal in any dispute. They have nothing to prove except the simplest of all things, which commands conviction upon the first mention of it, supported as it is by our very instinct. For tho' I have met with many who have call'd themselves atheists, particularly in France, I never met with any who upon reasoning with him turn'd out any thing but a mere sceptic. How natural is it when two vulgar people are fighting, for a gentleman passing by to see that they are both in the wrong, and to get as soon as he can out of the bustle, especially if there is a great deal of good company inviting him with every expression which wit, humour, refin'd learning, benevolent professions, easy arguments furnish. It is impossible that men will not go from brambles and thistles and walk in a plain open country so richly ornamented. Modern controversy appears to me always like a mob taking possession of the seat of justice, by which means large descriptions of men are depriv'd of that consolation which can alone come from Christianity, of which you give so true a picture in your fifth ser-

mon. For no man of the least experience or observation but must acknowledge that it is not only a consolation but a sure support such as there is none like it in the hour of distress. But if prejudice once take a wrong turn belief, as I believe many men experience, can never be recover'd. *Peace on Earth, Good Will towards Men* should be written over every divinity school of every sect in the world, but in the largest letters over every parish church, meeting house, &c. No controversy should be allow'd to enter there. I do not mean that it should be prevented by law, but other means should be found. No controversial writer or preacher should be allow'd to rise in the church. Let them stay in their closets and colleges, and live upon their own conceits, or share those allowances only which are appropriated to promote learning. They do no good to mankind, and have no right to reward. For where they make one proselyte to their respective opinions I am sure they let loose twenty. Let, what would be still more comprehensive, eminent men on all occasions discountenance them and their works. Publick opinion, happily for all of us, is sure sooner or later to govern government, and there are men who can go a great way in leading public opinion. Let all discourses of a controversial nature be printed seperate, except where they are merely calculated to cry down the very principle of it, and expose its folly, absurdity, and pernicious effects. All governments have been perfectly wise and right in endeavouring to preserve peace in the church, but as is mostly the case with power, they have been right as to the object but wrong as to the means. Let the law be only made use of to prevent one sect from denouncing vengeance against another; exactly upon the same principle upon which men are imprison'd for a breach of the peace. But I believe by this time you think my sermon quite long enough. I know your friendship will put the best interpretation upon it, and you may laugh at it, provided you believe me, what I really am.

Very affect^y y^r.

LANSDOWN.

JOHN ADAMS TO RICHARD PRICE.

GROSVENOR SQUARE, Feb. 4, 1787.

DEAR SIR, — I am happy to learn, by your obliging letter of the second of this month, that you have found some amusement, in the volume I left with you, and that I may entertain a hope of its doing any good.¹ It is but an humble tho' laborious office, to collect together

¹ The first volume of Mr. Adams's "Defence of the Constitutions of Government of the United States of America, against the Attack of M. Turgot." This volume was published in London in 1787, as a complete work, and was immediately reprinted in America in three editions, at Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. The second and third volumes were published in the following year. — Eds.

so many opinions and examples; but it may point out to my young countrymen the genuine sources of information, upon a subject more interesting to them if possible than to the rest of the world. A work might be formed upon that plan which would be worthy of the pen and talents of a Hume, a Gibbon, a Priece or a Priestley, and I cannot but think that the two former would have employed their whole lives in forming into one system and view all the governments that exist, or are recorded, more beneficially to mankind than in attacking all the principles of human knowledge, or in painting the ruins of the Roman Empire, instead of leaving such an enterprise to the temerity of an American demagogue worn out with the cares and vexations of a turbulent life.

There is no proposition, of which I am more fully satisfied, than in the necessity of placing the whole executive authority in one. This I know will make me unpopular with a number of persons in every American State, but this is no new thing. Before even the government of Virginia was erected, and before the Convention that formed it met, which was several months before the Convention which made the constitution of Pennsylvania, in the beginning of 1776, I wrote at the desire of several gentlemen in Congress, a short sketch of a government which they caused to be printed under the title of *Thoughts on Government* in a Letter from a Gentleman to his Friend, in which three independent branches were insisted on. This pamphlet was scattered through the States and was known to be mine. Afterwards in 1779 in the Convention of Massachusetts, I supported to the utmost of my power the same system in public debates in Convention, as well as in the grand Committee and Sub Committee, and drew up the plan of their constitution, with a negative to the Governor. So that my opinion, such as it is, has always been generally known, and I am not apprehensive of any uncandid reflections in consequence of the late publication. On the contrary it is well known that M^r Turgot's crude idea is really a personal attack upon me, whether he knew it or not, and therefore very proper that the defence should come from me.

Your favourable sentiments of it oblige me very much. I have great reason to lament the hurry in which it was done, having neither put pen to paper nor begun to collect the materials till after my return from Holland in September. Such a work too ought to have been grounded wholly upon original authorities; whereas I have made use of any popular publication that happen'd to fall in my way. If apologies were not always suspected, I should have made one.

M^r Adams and the children desire me to make you their affectionate respects. With the highest esteem, I am, dear Sir, your most obedient servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

The Rev^d D^r PRICE.

BENJAMIN RUSH TO RICHARD PRICE.

PHILAD^A, April 6, 1787.

DEAR SIR, — I am encouraged by the favourable reception you have given my humble attempts to advance the interests of humanity, to send you a copy of an essay which has for its object the happiness of a part of our fellow-creatures who 'till lately have been excluded from human benevolence.¹ I have sent a copy of it to M^r Dilly with a preface, to suit it to the taste of the citizens of your country, to be re-published by him if he thinks proper. It will stand in need of the protection of all my friends, for not only the novelty of the opinions contained in it, but the rebel country of its author, will I fear expose it to obloquy and opposition. I enclose you also a copy of the laws of the Society before which it was read, of which our venerable friend D^r Franklin is President.

Mr. Sam^l Vaughan is perfectly qualified to give you a just acc^t of the political state of our country. With great respect, I am, d^r Sir,

Your faithful friend and humble serv^t.

BENJ^N RUSH.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO RICHARD PRICE.

PHILAD^A, May 18, 1787.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — I received your favour of Jan. 26 with the volume of Sermons, for which please to accept my thanks. I have read them with great pleasure, and I think no one can read them without improvement.

I condole with you on the loss of that excellent woman, so long your pleasing companion. The being depriv'd of dear friends and relations one after another, is a very severe tax we pay for living a great while ourselves. But such is the miserable state of things in this period of our existence; the rectification is only to be expected in that which is to come.

My health continues as when M^r Vaughan left us. My malady does not grow perceptibly worse, and I hope may continue tolerable to my life's end, which cannot now be far distant, being in my 82^d year.

On farther consideration of my scheme for sinking the national debt, I became so doubtful of it as not to venture exposing it to Baron Maseres. I must digest it a little better.

¹ "An Enquiry into the Effects of Public Punishments upon Criminals, and upon Society. Read in the Society for promoting Political Enquiries, convened at the house of his Excellency Benjamin Franklin, Esquire, in Philadelphia, March 9th, 1787" — EDS.

We have now meeting here a Convention of the principal people in the several States, for the purpose of revising the federal Constitution, and proposing such amendments as shall be thought necessary. It is a most important business, and I hope will be attended with success.

With great and sincere esteem, I am ever, my dear Friend,

Yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

If you have not receiv'd the Vol. of our Transactions I will send you another

BENJAMIN RUSH TO RICHARD PRICE.

PHILADELPHIA, June 2nd, 1787

DEAR SIR, — I set down with great pleasure to inform you that *eleven* States have this day been represented in the Convention now assembled in this city for the purpose of revising the federal Constitution. A delegation is expected in a few days from the 12th. Rhode Island is destined to all the distress and infamy that can arise from her total seperation from the Confederacy. Her insignificance in point of numbers, strength, and character render this event of no consequence to the general interests of the Union.

D^r Franklin exhibits daily a spectacle of transcendent benevolence by attending the Convention punctually, and even taking part in its business and deliberations. He says "it is the most august and respectable Assembly he ever was in in his life, and adds, that he thinks they will soon finish their business, as there are no prejudices to oppose, nor errors to refute in any of the body." Mr. Dickinson (who is one of them) informs me that they are all *united* in their objects, and he expects they will be equally united in the means of attaining them. Mr. Adams's book has diffused such excellent principles among us, that there is little doubt of our adopting a vigorous and compounded federal legislature. Our illustrious minister in this gift to his country has done us more service than if he had obtained alliances for us with all the nations in Europe.

You must not be surpris'd if you should hear of our new system of government meeting with some opposition. There are in all our States little characters, whom a great and respectable government will sink into insignificance. These men will excite factions among us, but they will be of a temporary duration. Time, necessity, and the gradual operation of reason will carry it down, and if these fail *force* will not be wanting to carry it into execution, for not only all the wealth but all the military men of our country (associated in the Society of the

Cincinnati) are in favor of a wise and efficient government. The order of nature is the same in the political as it is in the natural world, — good is derived chiefly from evil. We are travelling fast into order and national happiness. The same enthusiasm *now* pervades all classes in favor of *government*, that actuated us in favor of *liberty* in the years 1774 and 1775, with this difference, that we are more *united* in the former than we were in the latter pursuit. When our enemies triumph in our mistakes and follies, tell them that we are *men*, that we walk upon two legs, that we possess reason, passions, and senses, and that under these circumstances it is as absurd to expect the ordinary times of the rising and setting of the sun will be altered, as to suppose we shall not *finally* compose and *adopt* a suitable form of government, and be happy in the blessings which are usually connected with it.

The enclosed newspaper contains an address suited to our present hour of difficulty and danger. The sentiments contained in it will discover its author. I enclose you likewise a copy of the order to be observed next week in the dedication of our new German and English temple of science and religion.¹

Accept of my thanks for the copy of your Sermons by Dr White. I have read them with great pleasure. I have even done more. I have transcribed part of one of them for the benefit of a pious and accomplished female correspondent in a neighbouring State. I am pleased with the moderation with which you have discussed the controverted doctrines in the first five discourses. I confess I have not and cannot admit your opinions, having long before I met with the Arian or Socinian controversies, embraced the doctrines of universal salvation and final restitution. My belief in these doctrines is founded wholly upon the Calvinistical account (and which I believe to be agreeable to the *tenor* of Scripture) of the person, power, goodness, mercy, and other

¹ The reference is probably to the opening of the German College at Lancaster, now called Franklin and Marshall College, which was incorporated March 10, 1787. "A college has lately been founded by the state in Lancaster, and committed chiefly to the care of the Germans of all sects for the purpose of diffusing learning among their children. In this college they are to be taught the German and English languages, and all those branches of literature which are usually taught in the colleges of Europe and America." (See Rush's Account of the Manners of the German Inhabitants of Pennsylvania, written in 1789, pp. 42, 43). In the "Pennsylvania Packet," June 18, 1787, is a brief reference to the same institution. — "Every person, says a correspondent, must view with pleasure the establishment of a college for the benefit of the Germans in Pennsylvania. By means of this institution, so happily adapted to the national prejudices and religious principles of these useful citizens, the English language will be conveyed to them in its purity, and with all the modern improvements. In consequence of this event, knowledge of every kind will likewise be conveyed to them with ease, and the government of the state will thereby become more safe and uniform." — Eds.

divine attributes of the Saviour of the World. These principles, my dear friend, have bound me to the whole human race: these are the principles which animate me in all my labors for the interests of my fellow creatures. No particle of benevolence, no wish for the liberty of a slave or the reformation of a criminal will be lost. They must all be finally made effectual, for they all flow from the great author of goodness who implants no principles of action in man in vain. I acknowledge I was surprised to find *you* express yourself so cautiously and sceptically upon this point. Had you examined your own heart, you would have found in it the strongest proof of the truth of the doctrine. It is this light which shineth in darkness, and which the darkness as yet comprehendeth not, that has rendered you so useful to your country and to the world.

I beg pardon for this digression from the ordinary subjects of our correspondence. I submit my opinions with humility to that being who will not, as you happily express it, punish involuntary errors, if such have been embraced by me. I seldom distress myself with speculative inquiries in religion, being fully satisfied that our business is to be *good* here, that we may be *wise* hereafter.

With great respect, I am, dear Sir, your friend and humble servant,
BENJⁿ RUSH.

BENJAMIN RUSH TO RICHARD PRICE.

PHILADELPHIA, July 29, 1787.

DEAR SIR. — The bearer the Rev^d M^r Winchester¹ has yielded to an inclination he has long felt of visiting London, and has applied to me for a letter to you, for Americans of every profession and rank expect to find a friend in the friend of human kind. You are no stranger to his principles. I can with great pleasure add, that his life and conversation have fully proved that those principles have not had an unfavourable influence upon the heart. With a few oddities in dress and manner, he has maintained among both friends and enemies the character of an honest man. He leaves many sincere friends behind him. I know not how his peculiar doctrine of Universal Salvation may be received in London. But in every part of America it has advocates. In New England it continues to spread rapidly. In this city a M^r Blair, a Presbyterian minister of great abilities and

¹ Rev. Elhanan Winchester, born in Brookline, Massachusetts, Sept. 30, 1751, died in Hartford, Connecticut, April 18, 1797. In 1781 he founded a Universalist church in Philadelphia. In 1787 he went to England, where he preached with much success, and remained for several years. — Eds.

extensive learning, and equally distinguished for his humility and piety, has openly professed his belief of it from the pulpit.

M^r Winchester will deliver you two or three of our last newspapers.

With great respect I am, d^r Sir,

Your friend and humble serv^t.

BENJ^s RUSH.

P. S. All will end well from the federal convention.

WILLIAM WHITE¹ TO RICHARD PRICE.

PHILADELPHIA, July 31, 1787.

REV^d SIR, — A gentleman who is preparing to embark from this city for England to submit a mathematical instrument to the inspection of the Royal Society, has asked of me a letter to some member of that honourable body; and on such an occasion, who sh^d so naturally occur to me as the gentleman thro' whose good offices I was admitted to one of their meetings?

The bearer Mr. Joseph Workman is possessed of a mathematical instrument invented by his brother M^r Benj^m Workman of this city for taking the variation of the needle; for which they propose to solicit a patent, if it sh^d be approved of by the Society. I solicit your patronage for the introducing of the work to a candid examination; and your zeal for the advancement of the arts makes me flatter myself that I shall be successful, even were I not to add (as I can do with great truth) that the gentlemen who will be benefited by the success of it are worthy characters and have served with approbation as tutors in the University of this city.

The interest you take, Sir, in the civil happiness of America will doubtless make you anxious to hear of the event of the Convention now sitting for the improvement of our federal government. As they observe secrecy in their measures, I have cautiously avoided every thing which might look like a prying into their system. Thus much, however, I find, that gentlemen among them whom I consider as possessed of great and enlightened minds entertain agreeable prospects on the occasion. It is now well known that they have settled the principles of the plan which they are to propose, as the body have lately adjourned for a short time, leaving a Committee to digest and arrange the business.

I am, Rev^d Sir, with great respect,

Your very humble serv^t,

WM: WHITE.

Rev^d D^r PRICE.

¹ Rt. Rev. William White, first Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Pennsylvania, was born in Philadelphia April 4, 1748, and died there July 17, 1836. He was in England from 1770 to 1772 and again in 1786-87. — Ebs.

JOSEPH WILLARD TO RICHARD PRICE.

CAMBRIDGE, NOV 19, 1788.

REV^d SIR, — I received a letter from you some time ago accompanied by the third edition of your volume upon *Morals* for our Library. I have presented it to the Corporation, who have desired me to return you their thanks for this new instance of your kindness.

I am pleased to find that you are so far satisfied with our new federal Constitution. Eleven of the States have adopted it and the general government is to be organized the next March. It is to be hoped that this new government will have more energy than the old; and indeed it is so constituted that I think it must necessarily be the case. It is impossible that we should be a flourishing people or have national distinction if we should continue to go on as we have done since the conclusion of the war which established our independence. Recommendations may do in times of danger; but seldom is it that they will have the efficacy of laws in a time of peace. Several of the State Conventions have recommended alterations. Some of them, if adopted, would, it is probable, improve the Constitution; and I think it likely that this will after a while take place.

I am very happy to find that your new College is in a flourishing situation. I ardently wish it may be of extensive utility to the Dissenting Interest in your island, both in ecclesiastical and secular regards. A greater diffusion of knowledge among the body of Dissenters must be attended with important advantages. They are the strenuous assertors of religious liberty; and I look upon them to be very great supporters of the civil liberties of your nation. I rejoice that your new literary Society is entirely free from the shackles of subscriptions in which it imitates the liberality of this University, which enjoins no human formula as a standard of faith, and whose members are received from all religious denominations that offer.

Some time ago I mentioned to you the subject of a Greek Lexicon where each sense of the words should be given in English and supported by classical authority in the manner of Ainsworth's Latin Dictionary. I am still of opinion that such a Greek-English Lexicon would greatly facilitate the learning of that admirable language among youth and that we should have many more who would acquaint themselves with the immortal writers of Greece and Rome than has commonly been the case. Is there no one among you, Sir, who is capable of the business that might be induced to undertake such a work? How is it with Dr Harwood? I find by a number of passages in his "*View of the various editions of the Greek and Roman Classics*," that he has been a considerable reader in Greek. If he should be competent to such a work would he not have leisure for it? If you and a number of the

literati of your acquaintance should have the same opinion of the utility of such a lexicon as I have, might you not influence some proper hand to set about it? However, I will say nothing farther upon the subject. Your own judgment will determine whether these hints are worthy of any attention.

I have sent you several pamphlets and tracts which I hope will be some amusement to you. I have also sent you the Massachusetts Register for 1789.

The American Academy of Arts and Sciences having voted to furnish all their elected members with certificates, I take this opportunity of sending yours. Will you be so kind as to give Dr Priestley's certificate to him, which I have enclosed with yours?

I must ask the favor of you, Sir, to send the packets and letters accompanying yours to the gentlemen to whom they are directed. I am loth to give you this trouble, but I know of no other gentleman with whom I can take equal freedom.

I am, with the greatest esteem, Rev^d Sir,

Your very humble servant,

Rev^d RICHARD PRICE, D.D.

JOSEPH WILLARD.

I have engaged a friend to send this by Cap^t Scott, who will see that you have it free of expence.

THOMAS JEFFERSON TO RICHARD PRICE.

PARIS, July 12, 1789.

DEAR SIR, — The delay of my congé permits me still the pleasure of continuing to communicate the principal things which pass here. I have already informed you that the proceedings of the States General were tied up by the difficulty which arose as to the manner of voting, whether it should be by persons or orders. The Tiers at length gave an ultimate invitation to the other two orders to come and join them, informing them at the same time that if they did not they would proceed without them. The majority of the clergy joined them. The king then interposed by the seance royale, of which you have heard. The decision he undertook to pronounce was declared null by the assembly and they proceeded in business. Tumults in Paris and Versailles and still more the declared defection of the soldiery to the popular cause produced from the king an invitation to the Nobles and the minority of the clergy to go and join the common assembly. They did so, and since that time the three orders are in one room, voting by persons, and without any sensible dissension. Still the body of the nobles are rankling at the heart; but I see no reason to appre-

bend any great evil from it. Another appearance indeed, the approach of a great number of troops, principally foreigners, have given uneasiness. The Assembly addressed the King in an elegant and masculine stile. His answer, tho' dry, disavows every object but that of keeping the two capitals quiet. The States then are in quiet possession of the powers of the nation, and have begun the great work of building up a constitution. They appointed a committee to arrange the order in which they should proceed, and I will give you the arrangement, because it will shew you they mean to begin the building at the bottom, and know how to do it. They entitle it "Ordre du travail."

1. Every government should have for its only end the preservation of the rights of man: whence it follows that to recall constantly the government to the end proposed, the constitution should begin by a declaration of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man.
2. Monarchical government being proper to maintain these rights, it has been chosen by the French nation. It suits especially a great society; it is necessary for the happiness of France. The declaration of the principles of this government then should follow immediately the declaration of the rights of man.
3. It results from the principles of monarchy, that the nation, to assure its own rights, has yielded particular rights to the monarch; the constitution then should declare in a precise manner the rights of both; it should begin by declaring the rights of the French nation, and then it should declare the rights of the king.
4. The rights of the king and nation not existing but for the happiness of the individuals who compose it, they lead to an examination of the rights of citizens.
5. The French nation, not being capable of assembling individually to exercise all its rights, it ought to be represented. It is necessary then to declare the form of its representation and the rights of its representatives.
6. From the union of the powers of the nation and king should result the enacting and execution of the laws; thus then it should first be determined how the laws shall be enacted; afterwards should be considered how they shall be executed.
7. Laws have for their object the general administration of the kingdom, the property and the actions of the citizens. The execution of the laws which concern the general administration requires provincial and municipal assemblies. It is necessary then what should be the organisation of the provincial assemblies, and what of the municipal.
8. The execution of the laws which concern the property and actions of the citizens call for a judiciary power. It should be determined how that should be confided, and then its duties and limits.
9. For the execution of the laws and the defence of the kingdom, there exists a public force. It is necessary then to determine the principles which should direct it, and how it should be employed.

Recapitulation.

Declaration of the rights of man. Principles of the monarchy. Rights of the nation. Rights of the king. Rights of the citizens. Organisation and rights of the national assembly. Forms necessary for the enactment of laws. Organisation and functions of the provincial and municipal assemblies. Duties and limits of the judiciary power. Functions and duties of the military power."

The declaration of the rights of man, which constitutes the 1st chapter in this work, was brought in the day before yesterday and referred to the bureaux. You will observe that these are the outlines of a great work, and be assured that the body engaged in it are equal to a masterly execution of it. They may meet with some difficulties from within their body and some from without; there may be small and temporary checks; but I think they will persevere to its accomplishment. The mass of the people is with them; the effective part of the clergy is with them; so I believe is the soldiery and a respectable proportion of the officers. They have against them the high officers, the high clergy, the noblesse and the parliaments. This, you see, is an army of officers without souldiers. Should this revolution succeed, it is the beginning of the reformation of the governments of Europe. I received a note from Mr. Morgan, your nephew,¹ yesterday. I asked him to dine with me, but he was going to Versailles. He is to call on me to-morrow. Is there any thing good on the subject of the Socinian doctrine, levelled to a mind not habituated to abstruse reasoning? I would thank you to recommend such a work to me. Or have you written any thing of that kind? That is what I should like best, as none are so easy to be understood as those who understand themselves. I am with great sincerity, dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend and servant,

TH: JEFFERSON.

BENJAMIN RUSH TO RICHARD PRICE.

PHILADELPHIA, April 24, 1790.

DEAR SIR, — Accept of my thanks for your excellent Sermon preached before the Revolution Society. It is pregnant with noble sentiments. I rejoice to hear of your perseverance in opposing the infamous test laws of your country which disgrace both human reason and Christianity. They cannot much longer withstand the formidable attacks which have been made upon them. In the United States we view your religious establishment with horror, and the man who would

¹ George Cadogan Morgan. — Eds.

attempt to defend it publicly or privately would be consigned to a physician, instead of a casuist or a politician, to be cured of his error.

The papers will inform you of the death of our late illustrious and beloved friend Dr Franklin. The evening of his life was marked by the same activity of his moral and intellectual powers which distinguished its meridian. Three days before he died he dictated a letter upon very important business relative to the boundaries of the United States to Mr Jefferson, and three weeks before his death he wrote and published a very agreeable and ingenious parody upon a speech of a member of Congress in favor of the slavery of the Africans. His conversation with his family upon the subject of his dissolution was free and cheerful. A few days before he died, he rose from his bed and begged that it might be made up for him so that he might die "in a decent manner." His daughter told him that she hoped he would recover, and live many years longer. He calmly replied "He hoped not." Upon being advised to change his position in bed that he might breath *easy*, he said "A dying man can do nothing *easy*." His will has extended his benevolence beyond the grave. He has left £1000 to the city of Boston, and the same sum to the city of Philad^a; that to our city is to be put out on compound interest for 15 years, and afterwards to be applied to supply the inhabitants with water by means of aqueducts, for before that time he predicted, that the water at present obtained from pumps will be so much contaminated by the increase of offal matters in our city as to be unwholesome. The remainder of his estate he has bequeathed to his daughter and grandson, excepting from it only a legacy to his sister in Boston, and all his lands in Nova Scotia to his son Gov^r Franklin now in London.

All orders and bodies of people among us have vied with each other in paying tributes of respect to his memory. The Philosophical Society, of which he was President, have ordered a funeral eulogium to be delivered in honor of his illustrious character. Even the government of the United States have shared in the general sympathy, agreeing to wear mourning for one month for him; thus proclaiming to the world that republics are not deficient in gratitude to those men who have deserved well of their country for wisdom and virtue. I had like to have forgot to mention that he desired in his will that the elegant epitaph (suggested by his original occupation) which he composed for himself some years ago should be inscribed upon his tombstone. By this request he has declared his belief in the Christian doctrine of a resurrection.

From, my dear Sir, yours sincerely,

BENJ^N RUSH.

RICHARD PRICE TO ———.

[September or October, 1790.]¹

DEAR SIR, — I should not have delay'd so long writing to you had I not been for the last nine weeks absent on an excursion into the country in hopes of obtaining a recruit of health and spirits. I am now settled at home and glad to employ some of my first moments of leisure in making the acknowledgments I owe to you for your last letters. I am always truly sensible of the kindness of your attention, and of the honour it does me.

Our Feast on the 14th of July was very animating; and I think with satisfaction on the concern I had in calling together the friends of the Revolution in France, to testify on that day their joy. This meeting has, I find, in France been mistaken for a meeting of our Revolution Society. But the members of this Society made but an inconsiderable part of that company; and it is probable that they will make but an inconsiderable part of the company that will attend our annual feast on the 4th of November next for commemorating the British Revolution. Earl Stanhope has been the Chairman at these public dinners, and I hope he will continue to be so; but the *Society* has at present no fixed President. It is, however, now increasing; and it will, I hope, in time become sufficiently respectable to deserve the notice with which your Society of 1789 has honoured it.

The letter from the district of Quimper in Bretagne has, you will easily believe, given me particular pleasure.² I request the favour of you to convey the enclosed answer to the President. I have sent it open that you may read it. I have received another letter from a Literary Society at L'Orient. I know not well how to convey my answer to it. May I rely so far on your goodness as to beg the farther favour that you, after reading and sealing it, would convey it in whatever manner you may think best?

I am glad to find that you have recovered M. Turgot's letter. It is not indeed a letter of much importance, nor did I receive from him any letter more interesting except that which I have publish'd, and also one in which he gave me an account of the reasons of his dismis-

¹ Dr. Price died April 19, 1791, and this letter must have been written about six months before his death. — EDS.

² The reference is to an address to Dr. Price from the principal inhabitants of Quimper. It is now in the possession of Miss Caroline E. Williams, a great-grandniece of Dr. Price. — EDS.

sion from power. This last letter I am afraid I shall never be able to recover.

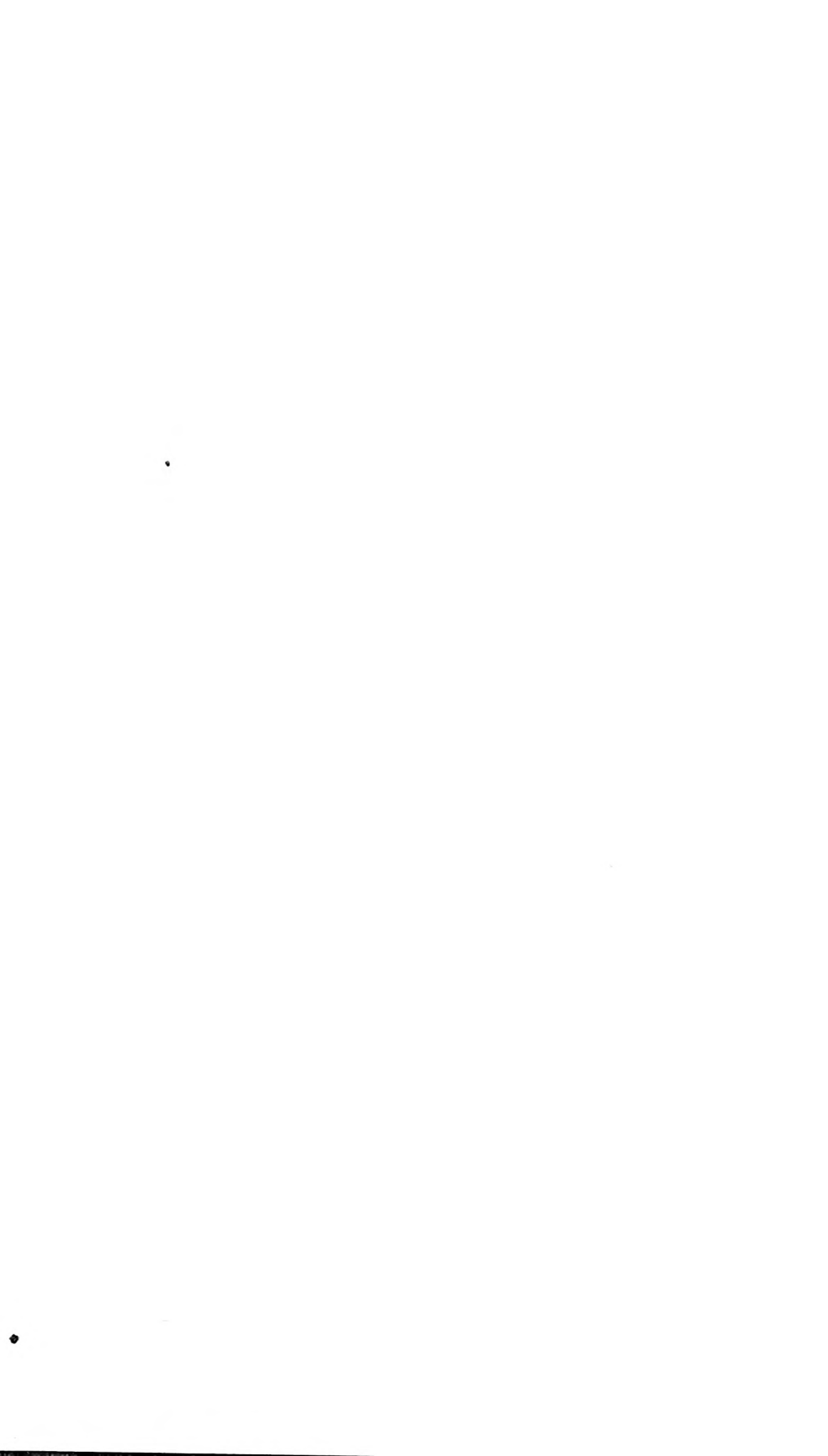
I have not seen my friend Mr. Vaughan since my return from the country. Probably he may before this time have performed the promise he made to convey to M. de Veillard his observations on Dr. Franklin's Memoirs of his own life. I had read these memoirs, and writ to Dr. Franklin in consequence of having read them about a fortnight before I received the account of his death. This letter must have fallen into the hands of his Executors; and as it contains all the remarks I had to offer, I have copy'd it for your perusal.

There have been two other deaths this year among my acquaintance and friends which have greatly affected me. I mean, Mr. Howard's death and Dr. Smith's.¹ The former had been my intimate friend from early life. The latter I looked up to as a writer of the first abilities. A few weeks before his death I had writ to him in consequence of having received from him the sixth edition of his Treatise on Morals. This work in the former editions of it made but one volume. In this edition it is increased into two volumes. In the Preface he takes notice of a promise he had made to the public of a treatise on the general principles of law and governm^t and the different revolutions they had undergone in the different ages and periods of society, and then adds that he had performed this promise in his book on the wealth of nations as far as it concerned police, revenue and arms, but that with respect to what remained (the Theory of Jurisprudence) his occupations had prevented him. He had not, however, abandoned the design, tho' his very advanced age had left him very little expectation of being able to execute so great a work to his own satisfaction. Soon after this, death put an end to all his labours; and this must soon happen to us all. Happy are those who at the close of life can reflect that they have lived to a valuable purpose by contributing as he did, to enlighten mankind and to spread the blessings of peace and liberty and virtue. He was indeed one of the ablest writers, and his personal character was, as far I ever knew or heard, irreproachable. We thought differently on the subject of the origin of our ideas of moral good and evil, but such differences among speculative men must always exist, and they do good by occasioning a more thorough investigation of important points, and in the end a clearer developem^t of truth. Dr. Smith had been gradually declining for more than a year before he died, nor do I know that his disorder had any particular name given it. His only publications were his treatises on morals and on the wealth of nations,

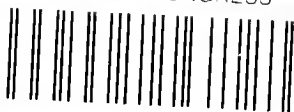
¹ John Howard, the philanthropist, died Jan. 20, 1790, and Adam Smith, author of the "Wealth of Nations," died July 17, 1790. — Eds

and I am told that he has left the world no room to hope for any posthumous work, except, perhaps, a few Essays. He had burnt many volumes of manuscripts to prevent the possibility of publishing them. Mr. Dugald Stuart, the Professor of Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh, is to give an account of his life in the Edinburgh Philosophical Transactions, and to attend it with some critical remarks on his books on morals and the wealth of nations.

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