

The Online Library of Liberty

A Project Of Liberty Fund, Inc.

Benjamin Franklin, *The Works of Benjamin Franklin, Vol. V Letters and Misc. Writings 1768-1772* [1904]



The Online Library Of Liberty

This E-Book (PDF format) is published by Liberty Fund, Inc., a private, non-profit, educational foundation established in 1960 to encourage study of the ideal of a society of free and responsible individuals. 2010 was the 50th anniversary year of the founding of Liberty Fund.

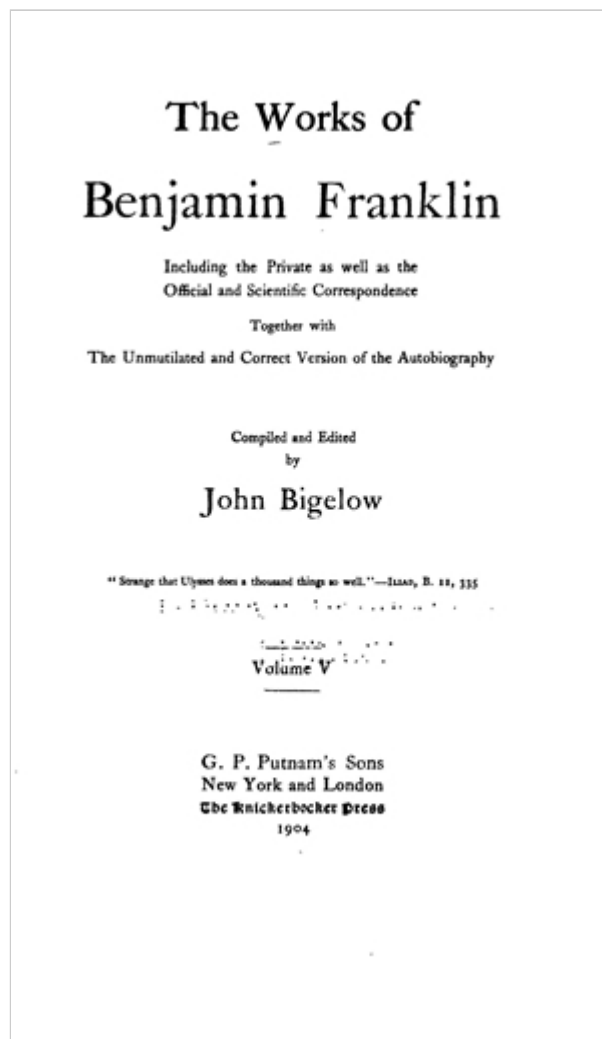
It is part of the Online Library of Liberty web site <http://oll.libertyfund.org>, which was established in 2004 in order to further the educational goals of Liberty Fund, Inc. To find out more about the author or title, to use the site's powerful search engine, to see other titles in other formats (HTML, facsimile PDF), or to make use of the hundreds of essays, educational aids, and study guides, please visit the OLL web site. This title is also part of the Portable Library of Liberty DVD which contains over 1,000 books and quotes about liberty and power, and is available free of charge upon request.

The cuneiform inscription that appears in the logo and serves as a design element in all Liberty Fund books and web sites is the earliest-known written appearance of the word “freedom” (amagi), or “liberty.” It is taken from a clay document written about 2300 B.C. in the Sumerian city-state of Lagash, in present day Iraq.

To find out more about Liberty Fund, Inc., or the Online Library of Liberty Project, please contact the Director at oll@libertyfund.org

and visit Liberty Fund's main web site at www.libertyfund.org or
the *Online Library of Liberty* at oll.libertyfund.org.

LIBERTY FUND, INC.
8335 Allison Pointe Trail, Suite 300
Indianapolis, Indiana 46250-1684



Edition Used:

The Works of Benjamin Franklin, including the Private as well as the Official and Scientific Correspondence, together with the Unmutilated and Correct Version of the Autobiography, compiled and edited by John Bigelow (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1904). The Federal Edition in 12 volumes. Vol. V (Letters and Misc. Writings 1768-1772).

Author: [Benjamin Franklin](#)

Editor: [John Bigelow](#)

About This Title:

Volume 5 of a 12 volume collection of the works of Franklin edited by the New York lawyer and politician John Bigelow. Vol. 5 contains a essays and letters written between 1768 and 1772.

About Liberty Fund:

Liberty Fund, Inc. is a private, educational foundation established to encourage the study of the ideal of a society of free and responsible individuals.

Copyright Information:

The text is in the public domain.

Fair Use Statement:

This material is put online to further the educational goals of Liberty Fund, Inc. Unless otherwise stated in the Copyright Information section above, this material may be used freely for educational and academic purposes. It may not be used in any way for profit.

CONTENTS OF VOL. V

1768		PAGE
CCCXXXIV.—To M. DUBOURG		3
Modes of swimming.		
CCCXXXV.—To JOHN WINTHROP, JULY 2D . .		6
On lightning conductors.		
CCCXXXVI.—PETITION OF THE LETTER Z . .		15
CCCXXXVII.—To WILLIAM FRANKLIN, JULY 2D .		16
CCCXXXVIII.—To JOSEPH GALLOWAY, JULY 2D .		22
CCCXXXIX.—To M. DUBOURG, JULY 25TH . .		25
On the free use of air.		
CCCXL.—To DUPONT DE NEMOURS, JULY 28TH .		26
The <i>Economistes</i> .—"Physiocratie."		
CCCXLI.—To JOHN ALLEYNE, ESQ., AUGUST 9TH		28
CCCXLII.—A SCHEME FOR A NEW ALPHABET AND REFORMED MODE OF SPELLING . .		30
From Mary Stevenson, September 6th		
—To Mary Stevenson, September 18th.		
CCCXLIII.—To MRS. DEBORAH FRANKLIN, Oc- TOBER 5TH		41
CCCXLIV.—FROM JOSEPH GALLOWAY TO B. FRANKLIN, OCTOBER 17TH		42
CCCXLV.—To MISS MARY STEVENSON, OCTOBER .		44
CCCXLVI.—To A FRIEND, NOVEMBER 28TH . .		47
CCCXLVII.—To MRS. DEBORAH FRANKLIN, DE- CEMBER 21ST		48
CCCXLVIII.—To MICHAEL COLLINSON		50

iii

21/43 124

Table Of Contents

[The Works of Benjamin Franklin, Volume V: Correspondence
and Miscellaneous Writings](#)
[1768: CCCXXXIV: To M. Dubourg 1](#)
[CCCXXXV: To John Winthrop](#)
[CCCXXXVI: Petition of the Letter Z](#)
[CCCXXXVII: To William Franklin](#)
[CCCXXXVIII: To Joseph Galloway](#)
[CCCXXXIX: To M. Dubourg. 1](#)
[Cccxl: to Dupont De Nemours 1](#)
[Cccxli: to John Alleyne, Esq.](#)
[Cccxlii: a Scheme For a New Alphabet and Reformed Mode of
Spelling With Remarks and Examples Concerning the Same,
and an Enquiry Into Its Uses, In a Correspondence Between
Miss Stevenson and Dr. Franklin, Written In the Characters
of the Alphabet 1](#)
[Cccxliii: to Mrs. Deborah Franklin](#)
[Cccxliv: From Joseph Galloway to B. Franklin](#)
[Cccxlv: to Miss Mary Stevenson](#)
[Cccxlv: to a Friend](#)
[Cccxlvii: to Mrs. Deborah Franklin](#)
[Cccxlviii: to Michael Collinson, Esq.](#)
[1769:CCCXLIX: To Lord Kames](#)
[Cccl: to John Bartram](#)
[Cccli: to M. Le Roy](#)
[Ccclii: to Lord Kames](#)
[Cccliii: to Mrs. Jane Mecom](#)
[Cccliv: to Samuel Cooper, At Boston](#)
[Ccclv: to John Winthrop](#)
[Ccclvi: Positions to Be Examined, Concerning National Wealth](#)
[Ccclvii: to Samuel Cooper](#)
[Ccclviii: to Mrs. Jane Mecom](#)
[Ccclxix: to the London Chronicle 1](#)
[Ccclx: to Miss Mary Stevenson](#)
[Ccclxi: to the Committee of Merchants In Philadelphia](#)
[Ccclxii: to John Bartram](#)
[Ccclxiii: to James Bowdoin](#)
[Ccclxiv: to M. Dubourg 3](#)
[Ccclxv: From Miss Mary Stevenson to B. Franklin](#)
[Ccclxvi: to Miss Mary Stevenson](#)
[Ccclxvii: to Cadwallader Evans](#)
[Ccclxviii: to Samuel Cooper](#)
[Ccclxix: On Ventilation](#)
[Ccclxx: to Miss Mary Stevenson](#)

[Ccclxxi: Queries By Mr. Strahan Respecting American Affairs,
and Dr. Franklin's Answers](#)
[Ccclxxii: State of the Constitution of the Colonies 1](#)
[Ccclxxiii: Observations On Passages In "an Inquiry Into the
Nature and Causes of the Disputes Between the British
Colonies In America and Their Mother Country."](#)
[Ccclxxiv: Observations On Passages In a Pamphlet, Entitled
"the True Constitutional Means For Putting an End to the
Disputes Between Great Britain and the American Colonies."](#)
[1770: Ccclxxv: to M. Dubourg 1](#)
[Ccclxxvi: to John Bartram](#)
[Ccclxxvii: to Miss Mary Stevenson](#)
[Ccclxxviii: to Nevil Maskelyne, Astronomer Royal](#)
[Ccclxxix: to Michael Hillegas](#)
[Ccclxxx: to a Friend In America](#)
[Ccclxxxi: to Samuel Cooper](#)
[Ccclxxxii: to Miss Mary Stevenson](#)
[Ccclxxxiii: to Jonathan Williams](#)
[Ccclxxxiv: to Samuel Cooper 1](#)
[Ccclxxxv: to Samuel Franklin](#)
[Ccclxxxvi: to Mrs. Deborah Franklin](#)
[Ccclxxxvii: to Samuel Rhoads](#)
[Ccclxxxviii: to Mrs. Mary Hewson 1](#)
[Ccclxxxix: to Cadwallader Evans](#)
[CCCXC: The Craven-street Gazette 1](#)
[CCCXCI: To M. Dubourg](#)
[CCCXCII: To Dupont De Nemours](#)
[CCCXCIII: To Mrs. Deborah Franklin](#)
[CCCXCIV: From Deborah Franklin to B. Franklin](#)
[CCCXCV: From Samuel Cooper to B. Franklin](#)
[CCCXCVI: To Thomas Cushing 1](#)
[CCCXCVII: To Mrs. Jane Mecom](#)
[1771: CCCXCVIII: To Thomas Cushing](#)
[CCCXCIX: To Samuel Cooper](#)
[CCCC: To Cadwallader Evans](#)
[CCCCI: To Jonathan Williams](#)
[CCCCII: To Mrs. Williams](#)
[CCCCIII: To William Franklin](#)
[CCCCIV: From Samuel Rhoads to B. Franklin](#)
[CCCCV: To the Committee of Correspondence In
Massachusetts 1](#)
[CCCCVI: To Mrs. Deborah Franklin](#)
[CCCCVII: To Jonathan Shipley, Bishop of Asaph](#)
[CCCCVIII: To Noble Wimberly Jones](#)
[CCCCIX: To Cadwallader Evans](#)
[CCCCX: From Samuel Cooper to B. Franklin](#)
[CCCCXI: To Samuel Franklin](#)
[CCCCXII: To John Bartram](#)

[CCCCXIII: To Cadwallader Evans](#)
[CCCCXIV: To Mrs. Deborah Franklin](#)
[CCCCXV: Plan For Benefiting Distant Unprovided Countries](#)
[CCCCXVI: Concerning the Provision Made In China Against
Famine 1](#)
[CCCCXVII: To Mr. William Strahan](#)
[CCCCXVIII: To Thomas Percival 1](#)
[CCCCXIX: To Mrs. Mary Hewson](#)
[1772: CCCCXX: To Mrs. Jane Mecom](#)
[CCCCXXI: To the Committee of Correspondence In
Massachusetts](#)
[CCCCXXII: To Samuel Cooper](#)
[CCCCXXIII: To James Bowdoin](#)
[CCCCXXIV: To Joshua Babcock](#)
[CCCCXXV: To Thomas Cushing](#)
[CCCCXXVI: To Samuel Franklin](#)
[CCCCXXVII: To Ezra Stiles](#)
[CCCCXXVIII: To Mrs. Deborah Franklin](#)
[CCCCXXIX: To Mrs. Sarah Bache](#)
[CCCCXXX: To William Franklin](#)
[CCCCXXXI: Mayz, Or Indian Corn](#)
[CCCCXXXII: Precautions to Be Used By Those Who Are About
to Undertake a Sea Voyage](#)
[CCCCXXXIII: Toleration In Old England and New England 1](#)
[CCCCXXXIV: To John Foxcroft](#)
[CCCCXXXV: To Cadwallader Evans](#)
[CCCCXXXVI: From David Hume to B. Franklin](#)
[CCCCXXXVII: To Thomas Cushing](#)
[CCCCXXXVIII: To M. Le Roy](#)
[CCCCXXXIX: To Joseph Priestley](#)
[CcccxI: to Mrs. Deborah Franklin](#)
[CcccxII: to Major Dawson, Engineer 1](#)
[CcccxIII: From Joseph Priestley to B. Franklin](#)
[CcccxIIII: to Mr. Maseres](#)
[CcccxIV: From Joseph Priestley to B. Franklin](#)
[CcccxV: to Mrs. Deborah Franklin](#)
[CcccxVI: to William Franklin](#)
[CcccxVII: to Governor Franklin, New Jersey](#)
[CcccxVIII: to William Franklin](#)
[CcccxIX: Report On Lightning-conductors For the Powder
Magazines At Purfleet](#)
[Ccccl: to Mr. Anthony Benezet, 1 Philadelphia](#)
[CccclI: Experiments, Observations, and Facts, Tending to
Support the Opinion of the Utility of Long, Pointed Rods, For
Securing Buildings From Damage By Strokes of Lightning.](#)
[CccclII: to Joseph Galloway](#)
[CccclIII: to Thomas Cushing](#)
[CccclIV: to Dr. Priestley](#)

[Cccclv: to Miss Georgiana Shipley 1](#)
[Cccclvi: the Art of Procuring Pleasant Dreams](#)
[Cccclvii: to Mr. Bache](#)
[Cccclviii: to John Bartram](#)
[Cccclix: to Jonathan Williams](#)
[Cccclx: to Lord Stirling](#)
[Cccclxi: to Governor William Franklin](#)
[Cccclxii: to Mr. Timothy](#)
[Cccclxiii: to Thomas Cushing](#)
[Cccclxiv: Preface By the British Editor](#)
[Cccclxv: to Mrs. Deborah Franklin](#)
[Cccclxvi: to Joseph Galloway](#)
[Cccclxvii: to Mr. Abel James](#)
[Cccclxviii: to William Franklin](#)
[Cccclxix: Answer to M. Dubourg's Queries Respecting the
Armonica](#)
[Cccclxx: Settlement On the Ohio River 1](#)

FEDERAL EDITION

Limited to 1,000 signed and numbered sets.

The Connoisseur's Federal Edition of the Writings of Benjamin Franklin is limited to four hundred signed and numbered sets, of which this is

Number _____

We guarantee that no limited, numbered edition, other than the Federal, shall be printed from these plates.

The written number must correspond with the perforated number at top of this page.



Franklin Found by Diogenes

After the painting by d'Estamps

The Works of Benjamin Franklin in Twelve Volumes

Federal Edition

The Knickerbocker Press, New York

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

The Works Of Benjamin Franklin, Volume V

CORRESPONDENCE AND MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS

CCCXXXIV

TO M. DUBOURG¹

I am apprehensive that I shall not be able to find leisure for making all the disquisitions and experiments which would be desirable on this subject. I must, therefore, content myself with a few remarks.

The specific gravity of some human bodies, in comparison to that of water, has been examined by Mr. Robinson, in our *Philosophical Transactions*, Volume L., page 30, for the year 1757. He asserts that fat persons with small bones float most easily upon the water.

The diving-bell is accurately described in our *Transactions*.

When I was a boy I made two oval palettes, each about ten inches long and six broad, with a hole for the thumb, in order to retain it fast in the palm of my hand. They much resembled a painter's palettes. In swimming I pushed the edges of these forward, and I struck the water with their flat surfaces as I drew them back. I remember I swam faster by means of these palettes, but they fatigued my wrists. I also fitted to the soles of my feet a kind of sandals; but I was not satisfied with them, because I observed that the stroke is partly given by the inside of the feet and the ankles, and not entirely with the soles of the feet.

We have here waistcoats for swimming, which are made of double sail-cloth, with small pieces of cork quilted in between them.

I know nothing of the *scaphandre* of M. de la Chapelle.

I know by experience that it is a great comfort to a swimmer who has a considerable distance to go, to turn himself sometimes on his back, and to vary in other respects the means of procuring a progressive motion.

When he is seized with the cramp in the leg, the method of driving it away is, to give to the parts affected a sudden, vigorous, and violent shock; which he may do in the air as he swims on his back.

During the great heats of summer there is no danger in bathing, however warm we may be, in rivers which have been thoroughly warmed by the sun. But to throw one's self into cold spring water, when the body has been heated by exercise in the sun, is an imprudence which may prove fatal. I once knew an instance of four young men who, having worked at harvest in the heat of the day, with a view of refreshing themselves plunged into a spring of cold water; two died upon the spot, a third the next morning, and the fourth recovered with great difficulty. A copious draught of cold water, in similar circumstances, is frequently attended with the same effect in North America.

The exercise of swimming is one of the most healthy and agreeable in the world. After having swam for an hour or two in the evening, one sleeps coolly the whole night, even during the most ardent heat of summer. Perhaps, the pores being cleansed, the insensible perspiration increases and occasions this coolness. It is certain that much swimming is the means of stopping a diarrhœa, and even of producing a constipation. With respect to those who do not know how to swim, or who are affected with a diarrhœa at a season which does not permit them to use that exercise, a warm bath, by cleansing and purifying the skin, is found very salutary, and often effects a radical cure. I speak from my own experience, frequently repeated, and that of others, to whom I have recommended this.

You will not be displeased if I conclude these hasty remarks by informing you that as the ordinary method of swimming is reduced to the act of rowing with the arms and legs, and is consequently a laborious and fatiguing operation when the space of water to be crossed is considerable, there is a method in which a swimmer may pass to a great distance with much facility, by means of a sail. This discovery I fortunately made by accident, and in the following manner:

When I was a boy I amused myself one day with flying a paper kite; and approaching the bank of a pond, which was near a mile broad, I tied the string to a stake and the kite ascended to a very considerable height above the pond while I was swimming. In a little time, being desirous of amusing myself with my kite, and enjoying at the same time the pleasure of swimming, I returned, and loosing from the stake the string with the little stick which was fastened to it, went again into the water, where I found that, lying on my back and holding the stick in my hands, I was drawn along the surface of the water in a very agreeable manner. Having then engaged another boy to carry my clothes round the pond, to a place which I pointed out to him on the other side, I began to cross the pond with my kite, which carried me quite over without the least fatigue, and with the greatest pleasure imaginable. I was only

obliged occasionally to halt a little in my course and resist its progress when it appeared that, by following too quick, I lowered the kite too much; by doing which occasionally I made it rise again. I have never since that time practised this singular mode of swimming, though I think it not impossible to cross in this manner from Dover to Calais. The packet-boat, however, is still preferable.

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXXXV

TO JOHN WINTHROP

London, 2 July, 1768.

Dear Sir:—

You must needs think the time long that your instruments have been in hand. Sundry circumstances have occasioned the delay. Mr. Short, who undertook to make the telescope, was long in a bad state of health, and much in the country for the benefit of the air. He however at length finished the material parts that required his own hand, and waited only for something about the mounting that was to have been done by another workman, when he was removed by death. I have put in my claim to the instrument, and shall obtain it from the executors as soon as his affairs can be settled. It is now become much more valuable than it would have been if he had lived, as he excelled all others in that branch. The price agreed for was one hundred pounds.

The equal altitudes and transit instrument was undertaken by Mr. Bird, who doing all his work with his own hands for the sake of greater truth and exactness, one must have patience that expects any thing from him. He is so singularly eminent in his way, that the commissioners of longitude have lately given him five hundred pounds merely to discover and make public his method of dividing instruments. I send it you herewith. But what has made him longer in producing your instrument is the great and hasty demand on him from France and Russia, and our Society here, for instruments to go to different parts of the world for observing the next transit of Venus; some to be used in Siberia, some for the observers that go to the South Seas, some for those that go to Hudson's Bay. These are now all completed and mostly gone, it being necessary, on account of the distance, that they should go this year to be ready on the spot in time. And now he tells me he can finish yours, and that I shall have it next week. Possibly he may keep his word. But we are not to wonder if he does not.

Mr. Martin, when I called to see his panopticon, had not one ready; but was to let me know when he should have one to show me. I have not since heard from him, but will call again.

Mr. Maskelyne wishes much that some of the governments in North America would send an astronomer to Lake Superior to observe

this transit. I know no one of them likely to have a spirit for such an undertaking, unless it be the Massachusetts, or that have a person and instruments suitable. He presents you one of his pamphlets, which I now send you, together with two letters from him to me relating to that observation. If your health and strength were sufficient for such an expedition, I should be glad to hear you had taken it. Possibly you may have an *élève* that is capable. The fitting you out to observe the former transit, was a public act for the benefit of science, that did your province great honor.

We expect soon a new volume of the *Transactions*, in which your piece will be printed. I have not yet got the separate ones which I ordered.

It is perhaps not so extraordinary that unlearned men, such as commonly compose our church vestries, should not yet be acquainted with, and sensible of the benefits of metal conductors in averting the stroke of lightning, and preserving our houses from its violent effects, or that they should be still prejudiced against the use of such conductors, when we see how long even philosophers, men of extensive science and great ingenuity, can hold out against the evidence of new knowledge that does not square with their preconceptions¹; and how long men can retain a practice that is conformable to their prejudices, and expect a benefit from such practice though constant experience shows its inutility. A late piece of the Abbé Nollet, printed last year in the Memoirs of the French Academy of Sciences, affords strong instances of this; for, though the very relations he gives of the effects of lightning in several churches and other buildings show clearly that it was conducted from one part to another by wires, gildings, and other pieces of metal that were *within* or connected with the building, yet in the same paper he objects to the providing metalline conductors *without* the building, as useless or dangerous.² He cautions people not to ring the church bells during a thunder-storm, lest the lightning, in its way to the earth, should be conducted down to them by the bell-ropes,¹ which are but bad conductors, and yet is against fixing metal rods on the outside of the steeple, which are known to be much better conductors, and which it would certainly choose to pass in, rather than in dry hemp. And, though for a thousand years past bells have been solemnly consecrated by the Romish Church,² in expectation that the sound of such blessed bells would drive away the storms, and secure our buildings from the stroke of lightning; and during so long a period, it has not been found by experience that places within the reach of such blessed sound are safer than others where it is never heard; but that, on the contrary, the lightning seems to strike steeples of choice, and that at the very time the bells are ringing¹; yet still they continue to bless the new bells, and jangle the old ones whenever it

thunders. One would think it was now time to try some other trick; and ours is recommended (whatever this able philosopher may have been told to the contrary) by more than twelve years' experience, wherein, among the great number of houses furnished with iron rods in North America, not one so guarded has been materially hurt with lightning, and several have evidently been preserved by their means; while a number of houses, churches, barns, ships, &c., in different places, unprovided with rods, have been struck and greatly damaged, demolished, or burnt. Probably the vestries of our English churches are not generally well acquainted with these facts; otherwise, since as good Protestants they have no faith in the blessing of bells, they would be less excusable in not providing this other security for their respective churches, and for the good people that may happen to be assembled in them during a tempest, especially as those buildings from their greater height, are more exposed to the stroke of lightning than our common dwellings.

I have nothing new in the philosophical way to communicate to you, except what follows. When I was last year in Germany, I met with a singular kind of glass, being a tube about eight inches long, half an inch in diameter, with a hollow ball of near an inch diameter at one end, and one of an inch and a half at the other, hermetically sealed, and half filled with water. If one end is held in the hand, and the other a little elevated above the level, a constant succession of large bubbles proceeds from the end in the hand to the other end, making an appearance that puzzled me much, till I found that the space not filled with water was also free from air, and either filled with a subtile, invisible vapor continually rising from the water, and extremely rarefiable by the least heat at one end, and condensable again by the least coolness at the other; or it is the very fluid of fire itself, which parting from the hand pervades the glass, and by its expansive force depresses the water till it can pass between it and the glass, and escape to the other end, where it gets through the glass again into the air. I am rather inclined to the first opinion, but doubtful between the two.

An ingenious artist here, Mr. Nairne, mathematical instrument-maker, has made a number of them from mine, and improved them; for his are much more sensible than those I brought from Germany. I bored a very small hole through the wainscot in the seat of my window, through which a little cold air constantly entered, while the air in the room was kept warmer by fires daily made in it, being winter time. I placed one of his glasses, with the elevated end against this hole; and the bubbles from the other end, which was in a warmer situation, were continually passing day and night, to the no small surprise of even philosophical spectators. Each bubble discharged is larger than that from which it proceeds, and yet that

is not diminished; and by adding itself to the bubble at the other end, the bubble is not increased, which seems very paradoxical.

When the balls at each end are made large, and the connecting tube very small, and bent at right angles, so that the balls, instead of being at the ends, are brought on the side of the tube, and the tube is held so that the balls are above it, the water will be depressed in that which is held in the hand, and rise in the other as a jet or fountain; when it is all in the other, it begins to boil, as it were, by the vapor passing up through it; and the instant it begins to boil, a sudden coldness is felt in the ball held; a curious experiment this, first observed and shown by Mr. Nairne. There is something in it similar to the old observation, I think mentioned by Aristotle, that the bottom of a boiling pot is not warm; and perhaps it may help to explain the fact; if indeed it be a fact.

When the water stands at an equal height in both these balls, and all at rest, if you wet one of the balls by means of a feather dipped in spirit, though that spirit is of the same temperament as to heat and cold with the water in the glasses, yet the cold occasioned by the evaporation of the spirit from the wetted ball will so condense the vapor over the water contained in that ball, as that the water of the other ball will be pressed up into it, followed by a succession of bubbles, till the spirit is all dried away. Perhaps the observations on these little instruments may suggest and be applied to some beneficial uses. It has been thought, that water reduced to vapor by heat was rarefied only fourteen thousand times, and on this principle our engines for raising water by fire are said to be constructed; but, if the vapor so much rarefied from water is capable of being itself still farther rarefied to a boundless degree, by the application of heat to the vessels or parts of vessels containing the vapor (as at first it is applied to those containing the water), perhaps a much greater power may be obtained, with little additional expense. Possibly, too, the power of easily moving water from one end to the other of a movable beam (suspended in the middle like a scale-beam) by a small degree of heat, may be applied advantageously to some other mechanical purposes.

The magic square and circle, I am told, have occasioned a good deal of puzzling among the mathematicians here; but no one has desired me to show him my method of disposing the numbers. It seems they wish rather to investigate it themselves. When I have the pleasure of seeing you, I will communicate it.

With singular esteem and respect, I am, dear Sir,

Your Most Obedient Humble Servant,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXXXVI

PETITION OF THE LETTER Z

From *The Tatler*, No. 1778.

To the Worshipful Isaac Bickerstaff, Esquire, Censor-General.

The petition of the letter Z, commonly called *Ezzard*, *Zed*, or *Izard*, most humbly sheweth:

That your petitioner is of as high extraction, and has as good an estate, as any other letter of the Alphabet;

That there is therefore no reason why he should be treated as he is, with disrespect and indignity;

That he is not only actually placed at the tail of the Alphabet, when he had as much right as any other to be at the head; but it is by the injustice of his enemies totally excluded from the word WISE; and his place injuriously filled by a little hissing, crooked, serpentine, venomous letter, called S, when it must be evident to your worship, and to all the world, that W, I, S, E, do not spell *Wize*, but *Wise*.

Your petitioner therefore prays, that the Alphabet may by your censorial authority be reversed; and that in consideration of his long-suffering and patience he may be placed at the head of it; that S may be turned out of the word *Wise*, and the petitioner employed instead of him.

And your petitioner, as in duty bound, shall ever pray, &c., &c.

Mr. Bickerstaff, having examined the allegations of the above petition, judges and determines that Z be admonished to be content with his station, forbear reflections upon his brother letters, and remember his own small usefulness, and the little occasion there is for him in the Republic of Letters since S, whom he so despises, can so well serve instead of him.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXXXVII

TO WILLIAM FRANKLIN

London, 2 July, 1768.

Dear Son:—

Since my last I have received yours of May 10th, dated at Amboy, which I shall answer particularly by next week's packet. I purpose now to take notice of that part wherein you say it was reported at Philadelphia I was to be appointed to a certain office here, which my friends all wished, but you did not believe it for the reasons I had mentioned. Instead of my being appointed to a new office, there has been a motion made to deprive me of that I now hold,¹ and, I believe, for the same reason, though that was not the reason given out, viz., my being too much of an American; but, as it came from Lord Sandwich, our new postmaster-general, who is of the Bedford party, and a friend of Mr. Grenville, I have no doubt that the reason he gave out, viz., my non-residence, was only the pretence, and that the other was the true reason; especially as it is the practice in many other instances to allow the non-residence of American officers, who spend their salaries here, provided care is taken that the business be done by deputy or otherwise.

The first notice I had of this was from my fast friend, Mr. Cooper, secretary of the treasury. He desired me, by a little note, to call upon him there, which I did, when he told me that the Duke of Grafton had mentioned to him some discourse of Lord Sandwich's, as if the office suffered by my absence, and that it would be fit to appoint another, as I seemed constantly to reside in England; that Mr. Todd, secretary of the post-office, had also been with the Duke, talking to the same purpose, &c.; that the Duke wished him (Mr. Cooper) to mention this to me, and to say to me, at the same time, that, though my going to my post might remove the objection, yet, if I choose rather to reside in England, my merit was such in his opinion as to entitle me to something better here, and it should not be his fault if I was not well provided for. I told Mr. Cooper that, without having heard any exception had been taken to my residence here, I was really preparing to return home, and expected to be gone in a few weeks; that, however, I was extremely sensible of the Duke's goodness in giving me this intimation, and very thankful for his favorable disposition towards me; that, having lived long in England, and contracted a friendship and affection for many persons here, it could not but be agreeable to me to remain

among them some time longer, if not for the rest of my life; and that there was no nobleman to whom I could, from sincere respect for his great abilities and amiable qualities, so cordially attach myself, or to whom I should so willingly be obliged for the provision he mentioned, as to the Duke of Grafton, if his Grace should think I could, in any station where he might place me, be serviceable to him and to the public.

Mr. Cooper said he was very glad to hear I was still willing to remain in England, as it agreed so perfectly with his inclinations to keep me here; wished me to leave my name at the Duke of Grafton's as soon as possible, and to be at the treasury again the next board day. I accordingly called at the Duke's and left my card; and when I went next to the treasury, his Grace not being there, Mr. Cooper carried me to Lord North, chancellor of the exchequer, who said very obligingly, after talking of some American affairs, "I am told by Mr. Cooper that you are not unwilling to stay with us. I hope we shall find some way of making it worth your while." I thanked his Lordship, and said I should stay with pleasure, if I could any ways be useful to government. He made me a compliment and I took my leave, Mr. Cooper carrying me away with him to his country-house at Richmond to dine and stay all night.

He then told me that Mr. Todd had been again at the Duke of Grafton's, and that upon his (Mr. Cooper's) speaking in my behalf, Mr. Todd had changed his style, and said I had, to be sure, a great deal of merit with the office, having by my good management regulated the posts in America so as greatly to increase the revenue; that he had had great satisfaction in corresponding with me while I was there, and he believed they never had a better officer, &c. The Thursday following, being the birthday, I met with Mr. Todd at court. He was very civil, took me with him in his coach to the King's Arms in the city, where I had been invited to dine by Mr. Trevor, with the gentlemen of the post-office; we had a good deal of chat after dinner between us two, in which he told me Lord Sandwich (who was very sharp) had taken notice of my stay in England, and said, "If *one* could do the business why should there be *two*?" On my telling Mr. Todd that I was going home (which I still say to everybody, not knowing but that what is intimated above may fail of taking effect), he looked blank, and seemed disconcerted a little, which makes me think some friend of his was to have been vested with my place; but this is surmise only. We parted very good friends.

That day I received another note from Mr. Cooper, directing me to be at the Duke of Grafton's next morning, whose porter had orders to let me in. I went accordingly, and was immediately admitted. But his Grace being then engaged in some unexpected business, with

much condescension and politeness made that apology for his not discoursing with me then, but wished me to be at the treasury at twelve the next Tuesday. I went accordingly, when Mr. Cooper told me something had called the Duke into the country, and the board was put off, which was not known till it was too late to send me word; but was glad I was come, as he might then fix another day for me to go again with him into the country. The day fixed was Thursday. I returned yesterday; should have stayed till Monday, but for writing by these vessels. He assures me the Duke has it at heart to do something handsome for me. Sir John Pringle, who is anxious for my stay, says Mr. Cooper is the honestest man of a courtier that he ever knew, and he is persuaded they are in earnest to keep me.

The piece I wrote against smuggling, in the *Chronicle* of November last, and one in April, on the Laboring Poor, which you will find in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for that month, have been lately shown by Mr. Cooper to the chancellor of the exchequer, and to the Duke, who have expressed themselves much pleased with them. I am to be again at the treasury on Tuesday next, by appointment of Mr. Cooper. Thus particular I have been, that you may judge of this affair.

For my own thoughts, I must tell you that, though I did not think fit to decline any favor so great a man expressed an inclination to do me, because at court if one shows an unwillingness to be obliged it is often construed as a mark of mental hostility, and one makes an enemy, yet, so great is my inclination to be at home and at rest, that I shall not be sorry if this business falls through, and I am suffered to retire with my old post; nor indeed very sorry if they take that from me, too, on account of my zeal for America, in which some of my friends have hinted to me that I have been too open. I shall soon be able, I hope, by the next packet to give you farther light. In the meantime, as no one but Sir John knows of the treaty, I talk daily of going in the August packet at farthest. And when the late Georgia appointment of me to be their agent is mentioned, as what may detain me, I say, I have yet received no letters from that Assembly acquainting me what their business may be; that I shall probably hear from them before that packet sails; that if it is extraordinary and of such a nature as to make my stay another winter necessary, I may possibly stay, because there would not be time for them to choose another; but if it is common business, I shall leave it with Mr. Jackson and proceed.

I do not, by the way, know how that appointment came about, having no acquaintance that I can recollect in that country. It has been mentioned in the papers some time; but I have only just now received a letter from Governor Wright, informing me that he had that day given his assent to it, and expressing his desire to

correspond with me on all occasions, saying the Committee, as soon as they could get their papers ready, would write to me and acquaint me with their business.¹

We have lost Lord Clare from the Board of Trade. He took me home from court the Sunday before his removal, that I might dine with him, as he said, alone, and talk over American affairs. He seemed as attentive to them as if he was to continue ever so long. He gave me a great deal of flummery, saying that, though at my Examination I answered some of his questions a little pertly, yet he liked me from that day for the spirit I showed in defence of my country; and at parting, after we had drunk a bottle and a half of claret each, he hugged and kissed me, protesting he never in his life met with a man he was so much in love with. This I write for your amusement. You see by the nature of this whole letter that it is to yourself only. It may serve to prepare your mind for any event that shall happen.

If Mr. Grenville comes into power again, in any department respecting America, I must refuse to accept of any thing that may seem to put me in his power, because I apprehend a breach between the two countries; and that refusal might give offence. So that, you see, a turn of a die may make a great difference in our affairs. We may be either promoted or discarded; one or the other seems likely soon to be the case, but it is hard to divine which. I am myself grown so old as to feel much less than formerly the spur of ambition; and if it were not for the flattering expectation, that by being fixed here I might more effectually serve my country, I should certainly determine for retirement without a moment's hesitation. I am, as ever, your affectionate father,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXXXVIII

TO JOSEPH GALLOWAY

London, 2 July, 1768.

Dear Sir:—

Since my last nothing material has occurred here relating to American affairs, except the removal of Lord Clare from the head of the Board of Trade to the treasury of Ireland, and the return of Lord Hillsborough to the Board of Trade as first commissioner, retaining the title and powers of secretary of state for the colonies. This change was very sudden and unexpected. My Lord Clare took me home from court to dine with him but two days before, saying he should be without other company and wanted to talk with me on sundry American businesses. We had accordingly a good deal of conversation on our affairs, in which he seemed to interest himself with all the attention that could be supposed in a minister who expected to continue in the management of them. This was on Sunday, and on the Tuesday following he was removed. Whether my Lord Hillsborough's administration will be more stable than others have been for a long time, is quite uncertain; but as his inclinations are rather favorable towards us (so far as he thinks consistent with what he supposes the unquestionable rights of Britain), I cannot but wish it may continue, especially as these perpetual mutations prevent the progress of all business.

But another change is now talked of that gives me great uneasiness. Several of the Bedford party being now got in, it has been for some time apprehended that they would sooner or later draw their friend Mr. Grenville in after them. It is now said he is to be secretary of state, in the room of Lord Shelburne. If this should take place, or if in any other shape he comes again into power, I fear his sentiments of the Americans, and theirs of him, will occasion such clashings as may be attended with fatal consequences. The last accounts from your part of the world, of the combinations relating to commerce with this country, and resolutions concerning the duties here laid upon it, occasion much serious reflection; and it is thought the points in dispute between the two countries will not fail to come under the consideration of Parliament early in next session. Our friends wonder that I persist in my intention of returning this summer, alleging that I might be of much more service to my country here than I can be there, and wishing me by all means to stay the ensuing winter, as the presence

of persons well acquainted with America, and of ability to represent these affairs in a proper light, will then be highly necessary. My private concerns, however, so much require my presence at home, that I have not yet suffered myself to be persuaded by their partial opinion of me.

The tumults and disorders, that prevailed here lately, have now pretty well subsided. Wilkes' outlawry is reversed, but he is sentenced to twenty-two months imprisonment, and *one thousand pounds* fine, which his friends, who feared he would be pilloried, seem rather satisfied with. The importation of corn, a pretty good hay harvest, now near over, and the prospect of plenty from a fine crop of wheat, make the poor more patient, in hopes of an abatement in the price of provisions; so that, unless want of employment by the failure of American orders should distress them, they are like to be tolerably quiet.

I purpose writing to you again by the packet that goes next Saturday, and therefore now only add that I am, with sincere esteem, dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXXXIX

TO M. DUBOURG.[1](#)

London, 28 July, 1768.

I greatly approve the epithet which you give, in your letter of the 8th of June, to the new method of treating the small-pox, which you call the *tonic* or bracing method; I will take occasion from it to mention a practice to which I have accustomed myself. You know the cold bath has long been in vogue here as a tonic; but the shock of the cold water has always appeared to me, generally speaking, as too violent, and I have found it much more agreeable to my constitution to bathe in another element, I mean cold air. With this view I rise almost every morning and sit in my chamber without any clothes whatever, half an hour or an hour, according to the season, either reading or writing. This practice is not in the least painful, but, on the contrary, agreeable; and, if I return to bed afterwards, before I dress myself, as sometimes happens, I make a supplement to my night's rest of one or two hours of the most pleasing sleep that can be imagined. I find no ill consequences whatever resulting from it, and that at least it does not injure my health, if it does not in fact contribute much to its perservation. I shall therefore call it for the future a *bracing* or *tonic* bath.

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXL

TO DUPONT DE NEMOURS¹

London, 28 July, 1768.

I received your obliging letter of the 10th May, with the most acceptable present of your *Physiocratie*, which I have read with great pleasure, and received from it a great deal of instruction. There is such a freedom from local and national prejudices and partialities, so much benevolence to mankind in general, so much goodness mixt with the wisdom, in the principles of your new philosophy, that I am perfectly charmed with them, and wish I could have stayed in France for some time, to have studied in your school, that I might by conversing with its founders have made myself quite a master of that philosophy. . . . I had, before I went into your country, seen some letters of yours to Dr. Templeman, that gave me a high opinion of the doctrines you are engaged in cultivating and of your personal talents and abilities, which made me greatly desirous of seeing you. Since I had not that good fortune, the next best thing is the advantage you are so good to offer me of your correspondence, which I shall ever highly value, and endeavor to cultivate with all the diligence I am capable of.

I am sorry to find that that wisdom which sees the welfare of the parts in the prosperity of the whole, seems yet not to be known in this country. . . . We are so far from conceiving that what is best for mankind, or even for Europe in general, may be best for us, that we are even studying to establish and extend a separate interest of Britain, to the prejudice of even Ireland and our own colonies. . . . It is from your philosophy only that the maxims of a contrary and more happy conduct are to be drawn, which I therefore sincerely wish may grow and increase till it becomes the governing philosophy of the human species, as it must be that of superior beings in better worlds. I take the liberty of sending you a little fragment that has some tincture of it, which, on that account, I hope may be acceptable.

Be so good as to present my sincere respect to that venerable apostle, Dr. Quesnay, and to the illustrious Ami des Hommes (of whose civilities to me at Paris I retain a grateful remembrance), and believe me to be, with real and very great esteem, Sir,

Your obliged and most obedient humble servant,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXLI

TO JOHN ALLEYNE, ESQ.

Craven Street,

9 August, 1768.

Dear Jack:—

You desire, you say, my impartial thoughts on the subject of an early marriage, by way of answer to the numberless objections that have been made by numerous persons to your own. You may remember, when you consulted me on the occasion, that I thought youth on both sides to be no objection. Indeed, from the marriages that have fallen under my observation, I am rather inclined to think that early ones stand the best chance of happiness. The temper and habits of the young are not yet become so stiff and uncomplying as when more advanced in life; they form more easily to each other, and hence many occasions of disgust are removed. And if youth has less of that prudence which is necessary to manage a family, yet the parents and elder friends of young married persons are generally at hand to afford their advice, which amply supplies that defect; and by early marriage youth is sooner formed to regular and useful life; and possibly some of those accidents or connexions that might have injured the constitution, or reputation, or both, are thereby happily prevented.

Particular circumstances of particular persons may possibly sometimes make it prudent to delay entering into that state; but in general, when nature has rendered our bodies fit for it, the presumption is in nature's favor, that she has not judged amiss in making us desire it. Late marriages are often attended, too, with this further inconvenience, that there is not the same chance that the parents shall live to see their offspring educated. "*Late children*," says the Spanish proverb, "*are early orphans*." A melancholy reflection to those whose case it may be! With us in America, marriages are generally in the morning of life; our children are therefore educated and settled in the world by noon; and thus, our business being done, we have an afternoon and evening of cheerful leisure to ourselves; such as our friend at present enjoys. By these early marriages we are blessed with more children; and from the mode among us, founded by nature, every mother suckling and nursing her own child, more of them are

raised. Thence the swift progress of population among us, unparalleled in Europe.

In fine, I am glad you are married, and congratulate you most cordially upon it. You are now in the way of becoming a useful citizen; and you have escaped the unnatural state of celibacy for life, the fate of many here, who never intended it, but who, having too long postponed the change of their condition, find at length that it is too late to think of it, and so live all their lives in a situation that greatly lessens a man's value. An odd volume of a set of books bears not the value of its proportion to the set. What think you of the odd half of a pair of scissors? It cannot well cut any thing; it may possibly serve to scrape a trencher.

Pray make my compliments and best wishes acceptable to your bride. I am old and heavy, or I should ere this have presented them in person. I shall make but small use of the old man's privilege, that of giving advice to younger friends. Treat your wife always with respect; it will procure respect to you, not only from her, but from all that observe it. Never use a slighting expression to her, even in jest, for slights in jest, after frequent bandyings, are apt to end in angry earnest. Be studious in your profession, and you will be learned. Be industrious and frugal, and you will be rich. Be sober and temperate, and you will be healthy. Be in general virtuous, and you will be happy. At least you will, by such conduct, stand the best chance for such consequences. I pray God to bless you both; being ever your affectionate friend,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXLII

A SCHEME FOR A NEW ALPHABET AND REFORMED MODE OF SPELLING

WITH REMARKS AND EXAMPLES CONCERNING THE SAME, AND AN ENQUIRY INTO ITS USES, IN A CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN MISS STEVENSON AND DR. FRANKLIN, WRITTEN IN THE CHARACTERS OF THE ALPHABET¹

I hope I shall be forgiven for observing that even our *present* printed and written characters are fundamentally the same. The (Roman) *printed* one is certainly the neatest, simplest, and most legible of the two; but for the sake of ease and rapidity in our writing, it seems we there insert a number of joining or terminating strokes, substitute curves for angles, and give the letters a small inclination, to which rules even the letters *a*, *g*, *r*, and *w*, are easily reconcilable. This will cease to appear a remark of mere curiosity, if applied to the deciphering of foreign correspondence. But for this purpose I would add that the *French* in particular seem to treat the small up-stroke in the letters *h*, *p*, and *c*, as proceeding originally in an angle from the *bottom* of the down-stroke: they therefore begin it with a curve from the bottom, and keep it all the way distinct; hence forming their written *r* much like our written *v*. This last letter *v*, they again distinguish by a loop at the bottom; which loop they often place where we place an outward curve. The remarkable terminating *s* which they sometimes use, seems intended for our printed *s* begun from the bottom, but from corrupt writing inverted and put horizontally, instead of vertically. It is rather from bad writing than system that their *n* and *m* appear like *u* and *w*. I could go on to speak of the formation of written and printed *capitals*, but as this would be a work of mere curiosity, I leave it for the reader's amusement.

TABLE OF THE REFORMED ALPHABET
SOUNDED, RESPECTIVELY, AS IN THE WORDS IN THE COLUMN BELOW
Characters

<i>o</i>	Old.
<i>* _</i>	John, folly; awl, ball.
<i>a</i>	Man, can.
<i>e</i>	Men, lend, name, lane.
<i>i</i>	Did, sin, deed, seen.
<i>u</i>	Tool, fool, rule.
<i>* _</i>	um, un; as in umbrage, unto, &c., and as in <i>er</i> .
<i>h</i>	Hunter, happy, high.
<i>g</i>	Give, gather.
<i>k</i>	Keep, kick.
<i>* _</i>	(sh) Ship, wish.
<i>* _</i>	(ng) ing, repeating, among.
<i>n</i>	End.
<i>r</i>	Art.
<i>t</i>	Teeth.
<i>d</i>	Deed.
<i>l</i>	Ell, tell.
<i>s</i>	Essence.
<i>z</i>	(ez) Wages.
<i>* _</i>	(th) Think.
<i>* _</i>	(dh) Thy.
<i>f</i>	Effect.
<i>v</i>	Ever.
<i>b</i>	Bees.
<i>p</i>	Peep.
<i>m</i>	Ember.

**The six new letters are marked with an asterisk (*), to distinguish them and show how few new sounds are proposed.*

TABLE OF THE REFORMED ALPHABET

***Names of Letters as
expressed in the
reformed Sounds and
Characters.*** **MANNER OF PRONOUNCING THE SOUNDS**

<i>o</i>	The first VOWEL naturally, and deepest sound, requires only to open the mouth, and breathe through it. The next requiring the mouth opened a little more, or hollower.
<i>a</i>	The next, a little more.
<i>e</i>	The next requires the <i>tongue</i> to be a little more elevated.
<i>i</i>	The next still more.
<i>u</i>	The next requires the <i>lips</i> to be gathered up, leaving a small opening. The next a very short vowel, the sound of which we should express in our present letters thus, <i>uh</i> , a short, and not very strong <i>aspiration</i> .
<i>huh</i>	A stronger or more forcible aspiration.
<i>gi</i>	The first CONSONANT; being formed by the <i>root of the tongue</i> ; this is the present hard <i>g</i> .
<i>ki</i>	A kindred sound; a little more acute; to be used instead of the hard <i>c</i> .
<i>ish</i>	A new letter wanted in our language; our <i>sh</i> , separately taken, not being proper elements of the sound.
<i>ing</i>	A new letter wanted for the same reason.—These are formed <i>back in the mouth</i> .
<i>en</i>	Formed <i>more forward</i> in the mouth, the <i>tip of the tongue</i> to the <i>roof</i> of the mouth.
<i>r</i>	The same, the tip of the tongue a little loose or separate from the roof of the mouth, and vibrating.
<i>ti</i>	The tip of the tongue more forward, touching, and then leaving the roof.
<i>di</i>	The same, touching a little fuller.
<i>el</i>	The same; touching just about the <i>gums</i> of the <i>upper teeth</i> .
<i>es</i>	This sound is formed by the breath passing <i>between</i> the moist end of the <i>tongue</i> and the <i>upper teeth</i> .
<i>ez</i>	The same, a little denser and duller.

**Names of Letters as
expressed in the
reformed Sounds and
Characters.** **MANNER OF PRONOUNCING THE SOUNDS**

<i>e</i>	The tongue under, and a little <i>behind</i> , the upper teeth; touching them, but so as to let the breath pass between.
<i>e</i>	The same; a little fuller.
<i>ef</i>	Formed by the <i>lower lip</i> against the upper teeth.
<i>ev</i>	The same; fuller and duller.
<i>b</i>	The <i>lips full together</i> , and <i>opened</i> as the air passes out.
<i>pi</i>	The same; but a thinner sound.
<i>em</i>	The <i>closing</i> of the lips, while the <i>e</i> [here annexed] is sounding.

REMARKS ON THE ALPHABETICAL TABLE

<i>o</i> {	
to {	It is endeavoured to give the alphabet a <i>more natural order</i> ;
<i>y</i> {	beginning first with the simple sounds formed by the breath,
<i>huh</i> {	with none or very little help of tongue, teeth, and lips, and produced chiefly in the windpipe.
<i>g k</i> {	Then coming forward to those formed by the roof of the tongue next to the windpipe.
<i>r n</i> {	Then to those formed more forward, by the fore part of the tongue against the roof of the mouth.
<i>t d</i> {	
<i>l</i> {	Then those formed still more forward, in the mouth, by the tip of the tongue applied first to the roots of the upper teeth.
<i>s z</i> {	
<i>th</i> {	Then to those formed by the tip of the tongue applied to the ends or edges of the upper teeth.
<i>dh</i> {	
<i>f</i> {	Then to those formed still more forward, by the under lip applied to the upper teeth.
<i>v</i> {	
<i>b</i> {	Then to those formed yet more forward, by the upper and under lip opening to let out the sounding breath.
<i>p</i> {	
<i>m</i> {	And lastly, ending with the shutting up of the mouth, or closing the lips, while any vowel is sounding.

In this alphabet *c* is *omitted* as unnecessary; *k* supplying its hard sound, and *s* the soft; *k* also supplies well the place of *q*, and, with

an *s* added, the place of *x*; *q* and *x* are therefore omitted. The vowel *u*, being sounded as *oo*, makes the *w* unnecessary. The *y*, where used simply, is supplied by *i* and, where as a diphthong, by two vowels; that letter is therefore omitted as useless. The jod *j* is also omitted, its sound being supplied by the new letter, *ish*, which serves other purposes, assisting in the formation of other sounds; thus the *with a d before it gives the sound of the jod j and soft g, as in "James, January, giant, gentle," "deems, danueri, dyiant, dentel"; with a t before it, it gives the sound of ch, as in "cherry, chip," "teri, tip"; and, with a z before it, the French sound of the jod j, as in "jamais," "zame."*

Thus the *g* has no longer *two different* sounds, which occasioned confusion, but is, as every letter ought to be, confined to one. The same is to be observed in *all* the letters, vowels, and consonants, that wherever they are met with, or in whatever company, their sound is always the same. It is also intended, that there be no *superfluous* letters used in spelling; that is, no letter that is not sounded; and this alphabet, by six new letters, provides that there be no distinct sounds in the language *without letters* to express them. As to the difference between *short and long vowels*, it is naturally expressed by a single vowel where short, a double one where long; as for "mend," write "mend," but for "remain'd," write "remeen'd;" for "did," write "did," but for "deed," write "diid," &c.

What in our common alphabet is supposed the third vowel, *i*, as we sound it, is as a *diphthong*, consisting of two of our vowels joined; viz. as sounded in "into," and *i* in its true sound. Any one will be sensible of this, who sounds those two vowels *i* quick after each other; the sound begins and ends *ii*. The true sound of the *i* is that we now give to *e* in the words "deed, keep." Though a single vowel appears to be put in the table for *did* and *deed* equally, yet in the remarks—above—the latter is made to require two *i*'s. Perhaps the same doubling of the vowel is meant for *name* and *lane*; for certainly *name* is not pronounced as *nem*, in the expression *nem. con.*, corresponding to the sound in *men*. Some critics may probably think that these two sets of sounds are so distinct as to require different characters to express them: since in *mem*, pronounced affectedly for *ma'am—madam*—and corresponding in sound to *men*, the lips are kept close to the teeth, and perpendicular to each other; but in *maim*, corresponding in sound to *name*, the lips are placed poutingly and flat towards each other; a remark that might be applied with little variation to *did* and *deed* compared. As this is a subject I have never much examined, it becomes me only to add, that spelling may be considered as "an analysis of the operations of the organs of speech, where each separate letter has to represent a different movement"; and that among these organs of speech, we are to enumerate the epiglottis,

and perhaps even the lungs themselves, not merely as furnishing air for sound, but as modifying the sound of that air both in *inhaling* and expelling it.

EXAMPLES

*So huen sm endel bi divin kamand,
Ui rizi tempests eeks e gilty land,
(St az v leet or peel Britania past,) Kalm and siriin hi drivs i fiuris blast;
And pliiz'd ' lmitis rdrs tu prfrm,
Rids in i hurluind and direkts i strm,
So i piur limpid striim, huen ful ui steens
v ri trents and disendi reens,
Urks itself kliir; and az it rns rifins;
Til bi digriis, i floti mirr ins,
Riflekts iit flur at n its brdr groz,
And e nu hev'n in its feer bzm oz.*

FROM MISS STEVENSON TO B. FRANKLIN

Kensitn, 26 Septembr, 1768.

Diir Sr:—

i hav transkrib'd iur alfabet, &c., huit i ink mit bi v srvis tu oz, hu ui to akuir an akiuret pronnsien, if at kuld bi fiks'd; bt i si meni inkniiniensis, az uel az difikltis at uuld atend i brii iur letrs and rgrafi intu kmn ius. I ur etimlodiz uuld be lst, knsikuentli ui kuld nt asrteen i miini v meni urds; i distinkn, tu, bituiin urds v difrent miini and similar sund uuld bi iusles, nles ui livi riters pbli nu iidins. In rt i biliiv ui mst let piipil spel n in eer old ue, and (as ui find it iisiiest) du i seem urselves. With ease and sincerity I can, in the old way, subscribe myself,

**Dear Sir,
Your Faithful And Affectionate Servant,**

Dr. Franklin.

M. S.

ANSWER TO MISS STEVENSON

Diir Madam:—

i bdekn iu meek to rektifi ur alfabet, “at it uil bi atended ui inknviniansiz and difikltiz,” iz e natural un; fr it luaz kyrz huen eni refrmen is propozed; huer in rilidn, gvernment, lz, and iven dun az lo az rods and huil karidiz. i tru kuestn en, is nt huer aer uil bi no difikltiz r inknviniansiz, bt huer i difikltiz mê nt bi srmunted; and huer i knviniansiz uil nt, n i huol, bi grêtr an i inknviniansiz. In is kes, i difikltiz er onli in i bigini v i praktis; huen ê er uns ovrkm, i advantedez er lasti.—To ir iu r mi, hu spel uel in i prezent mod, i imadin i difiklti v tendi at mod fr i nu, iz nt so grêt, bt at ui mit prfektli git ovr it in a uiik’s riti.—Az to oz hu du nt spel uel, if i tu difikltiz er kmpêrd, viz., at v titi em tru speli in i prezent mod, and at v titi em i nu alfabet and i nu speli akrdi to it, i am knfident at i latr uuld bi byi far i liist. ê natrali fl into i nu med alrehdi, az mt az i imperfekn v êr alfabet uil admit v; êr prezent bad speli iz onli bad, bikz kntreri to i prezent bad ruls; ndr i nu ruls it uuld bi gud.—i difiklti v lrni to spel uel in i old uê iz so grêt, at fiu atên it; auzandsand uzands riti n to old ed, uiut ever bii ebil to akuir it. ‘Tiz, bisidz, e difiklti kntinuali inkriisi, az i sund graduali veriz mor and mor frm i speli; and to frenrs¹ it mêks i lrni to pronuns ur laued, az riten in ur buks, almost impibil.

Nu az to “i inknviniansiz” iu menn.—i frst iz, at “l ur etimlodiz uuld bi lst, knsikuentli ui kuld nt asrteen i miini v meni urds.”—Etimlodiz er at prezent veri nsrteen; bt st az ê er, i old buks uuld stil prizrv em, and etimlodists uuld find em. Urds in i kors v tim, tend er miinis, az uel az er speli and pronnsien; and ui du nt luk to etimlodi fr er prezent miinis. If i uld kl e man e neev and e vilen, hi uuld hardli bi satisfid ui mi teli him, at un v i urds oridinali signifid onli e lad r srvant; and i r, an ndr pluman, r i inhabitant v e viled. It iz frm prezent iused onli, i miini v urds iz to bi ditrmined.

Iur seknd inknvinians iz, at “i distinkyn bituiin urds v difrent miini and similar sunduuld bi distrid.”—at distinkn iz lreadi distrid in pronunsi em; and ui rili n i sens alon v i sentens to asrteen, huit v i several urds, similar in sund, ui intend. If is iz sfient in i rapidtti v diskors, it uil bi mut mor so in riten sentenses, huit mê bi red lezurli, and atended to mor partikularli in kes v difiklti, an ui kan atend to e paft sentens, huil e spikr iz hrii s al ui nu uns.

Iur rd inknvinians iz, at “l i buks alredi riten uuld bi iusles.”—is inknvinians uuld onli km n graduali, in e kors v edes. Iu and i, and r nu livi ridrs, uuld hardli frget i ius v em. Piipil uuld lo lrn to riid i old riti, o ê praktist i nu.—And i inknvinians iz nt greter an huat hes

*aktuali hapend in e similar kes, in Iteli. Frmerli its inhabitants l
spok and rot Latin; az i laued tendd, i speli flo'd it. It iz tru at, at
prezent, e miir nlern'd Italien kant riid i Latin buks; o ê er stil red
and ndrstud bi meni. Bt, if i speli had nevr bin tended, hi uuld nu
hev fund it mt mor difiklt to riid and rit hiz on lauad; fr riten urds
uuld heve had no rilên to sunds, ê uuld onli hev stud fr is; so at if hi
uuld ekspres in riti i idia hi hez huen hi sunds i urd Vescovo, hi mst
iuz i letterz Episcopus.—In rt, huatever i difikltiz and inkviniensiz
nu er, ê uil bi mor iizili srmunted nu, an hirafr; and sm tim r r, it
mst bi dn; r ur riti uil bikm i sêm ui i Tiniiz, [1](#)az to i difikltiv lrne and
iuzing it. And it uuld alredi hev bin st, if ui had kntinud i Saksn
speli and riti, iuzed bi our forfaers.*

i am, mi diir frind, iurs afeknetli,

B. Franklin.

*Lndn,
Kreven-striit, Sept. 28, 1768.*

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXLIII

TO MRS. DEBORAH FRANKLIN

London, 5 October, 1768.

My Dear Child:—

It feels very strange to have ships and packets come in, and no letters from you. But I do not complain of it, because I know the reason is, my having written to you that I was coming home. That you may not have the same disagreeable sensation, I write this line, though I have written largely by the late ship, and therefore have little left to say. I have lately been in the country to spend a few days at friends' houses, and to breathe a little fresh air. I have made no very long journey this summer as usual, finding myself in very good health, a greater share of which I believe few enjoy at my time of life; but we are not to expect it will be always sunshine. Cousin Folger, who is just arrived from Boston, tells me he saw our son and daughter Bache at that place, and that they were going farther, being very well, which I was glad to hear. My love to them and all friends, from your ever affectionate husband.

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXLIV

FROM JOSEPH GALLOWAY TO B. FRANKLIN

Philadelphia, 17 October, 1768.

Dear Sir:—

I have for some time omitted to write to you, from an apprehension that my letters might not meet you in England. But finding by your favor of August 13th, now before me, that you have altered your intention of seeing America this fall, I again resume my pen.

The new Assembly of this province, chiefly composed of the old members, adjourned on Saturday last to the 2d of January. They have again appointed yourself and Mr. Jackson their agents, to whom I enclose a letter from the Committee of Correspondence. You will perceive by it that they have a sixth time renewed the instructions relating to a change of government, every member now approving of the measure, save the Chief-Justice. So that you are not to judge of the desire of the House to have the measure accomplished by the brevity of the letter, which was occasioned by the shortness of their sitting, and the fulness of the instructions of former Houses, which rendered much on the subject unnecessary.

I am much obliged by the particular account of the situation in which this matter stands. No part of it, which you wish to be concealed, shall transpire. You really judge right; should the petitions be rejected or neglected, the crown will never have the like request made by the people, nor such another opportunity of resuming one of the most beneficial governments in America. Their own welfare will oblige them to court the proprietary favor; and, should they continue to gratify the people, by the lenient measures adopted during the last year, they will place all their confidence in them, and lose all ideas of loyalty or affection to the person, where alone they ought to be fixed. The revenues of our Proprietaries are immense; not much short, at this time, of one hundred thousand pounds per annum. And, had they as much policy as money, they might easily find means with their vast treasure so to endear themselves to the people, as to prevail on them to forget all duty and affection to others. As to the peoples paying, it never can be done, nor is it just they should; nor would they ever agree to establish fixed salaries on governors, for the reasons you have mentioned.

It is truly discouraging to a people, who wish well to the mother country, and by their dutiful behaviour during these times of American confusion have recommended themselves to the crown, to have an application so honorable and beneficial to the latter so much neglected. Would the ministry coolly attend to the matter, it would certainly be otherwise. However, I am convinced, should the people once despair of the change, either the greatest confusion, or the consequence you have pointed out, will assuredly ensue.

Two regiments, commanded by Colonel Dalrymple, are arrived at Boston, and we learn the town is providing quarters for them; so that I hope the mischiefs, which some have thought would attend that measure, will not follow. Great pains have been taken in this city by some hot-headed, indiscreet men, to raise a spirit of violence against the late act of Parliament; but the design was crushed in its beginning by our friends so effectually, that I think we shall not soon have it renewed.

Your continuance in London this winter gives the Assembly much satisfaction, as there is a great probability that American affairs will come before the present Parliament, and they have the fullest confidence in you. My good friend, Governor Franklin, is now at Fort Stanwix with Sir William Johnson, where a treaty is holding respecting a general boundary. I have had a letter from him since his arrival there, and he is well. I write in much hurry, which will apologize for incorrectness. Believe me, my dear friend, with the most perfect esteem, &c.,

Joseph Galloway.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXLV

TO MISS MARY STEVENSON

London, October, 1768.

I see very clearly the unhappiness of your situation, and that it does not arise from any fault in you. I pity you most sincerely. I should not, however, have thought of giving you advice on this occasion, if you had not requested it, believing, as I do, that your own good sense is more than sufficient to direct you in every point of duty to others and yourself. If, then, I should advise you to any thing that may be contrary to your own opinion, do not imagine that I shall condemn you if you do not follow such advice. I shall only think that, from a better acquaintance with circumstances, you form a better judgment of what is fit for you to do.

Now, I conceive with you, that —, both from her affection to you, and from the long habit of having you with her, would really be miserable without you. Her temper, perhaps, was never of the best; and, when that is the case, age seldom mends it. Much of her unhappiness must arise from thence; and since wrong turns of mind, when confirmed by time, are almost as little in our power to cure as those of the body, I think with you that her case is a compassionate one.

If she had, through her own imprudence, brought on herself any grievous sickness, I know you would think it your duty to attend and nurse her with filial tenderness, even were your own health to be endangered by it. Your apprehension, therefore, is right, that it may be your duty to live with her, though inconsistent with your happiness and your interest; but this can only mean present interest and present happiness; for I think your future, greater, and more lasting interest and happiness will arise from the reflection that you have done your duty, and from the high rank you will ever hold in the esteem of all that know you, for having persevered in doing that duty under so many and great discouragements.

My advice, then, must be, that you return to her as soon as the time proposed for your visit is expired; and that you continue, by every means in your power, to make the remainder of her days as comfortable to her as possible. Invent amusements for her; be pleased when she accepts of them, and patient when she perhaps peevishly rejects them. I know this is hard, but I think you are equal to it; not from any servility of temper, but from abundant

goodness. In the meantime, all your friends, sensible of your present uncomfortable situation, should endeavour to ease your burden, by acting in concert with you, and to give her as many opportunities as possible of enjoying the pleasures of society, for your sake.

Nothing is more apt to sour the temper of aged people, than the apprehension that they are neglected; and they are extremely apt to entertain such suspicions. It was therefore that I proposed asking her to be of our late party; but, your mother disliking it, the motion was dropped, as some others have been, by my too great easiness, contrary to my judgment. Not but that I was sensible her being with us might have lessened our pleasure, but I hoped it might have prevented you some pain.

In fine, nothing can contribute to true happiness, that is inconsistent with duty; nor can a course of action, conformable to it, be finally without an ample reward. For God governs; and he is *good*. I pray him to direct you; and, indeed, you will never be without his direction, if you humbly ask it, and show yourself always ready to obey it. Farewell, *my* dear friend, and believe me ever sincerely and affectionately *yours*,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXLVI

TO A FRIEND

London, 28 November, 1768.

Dear Sir:—

I received your obliging favor of the 12th instant. Your sentiments of the importance of the present dispute between Great Britain and the colonies appear to me extremely just. There is nothing I wish for more than to see it amicably and equitably settled.

But Providence will bring about its own ends by its own means; and if it intends the downfall of a nation, that nation will be so blinded by its pride and other passions as not to see its danger, or how its fall may be prevented.

Being born and bred in one of the countries, and having lived long and made many agreeable connexions of friendship in the other, I wish all prosperity to both; but I have talked and written so much and so long on the subject, that my acquaintance are weary of hearing, and the public of reading, any more of it, which begins to make me weary of talking and writing; especially as I do not find that I have gained any point in either country, except that of rendering myself suspected by my impartiality; —in England, of being too much an American, and in America, of being too much an Englishman. Your opinion, however, weighs with me, and encourages me to try one effort more, in a full though concise statement of facts, accompanied with arguments drawn from those facts; to be published about the meeting of Parliament, after the holidays. If any good may be done I shall rejoice; but at present I almost despair.

Have you ever seen the barometer so low as of late? The 22d instant mine was at 28.41, and yet the weather fine and fair. With sincere esteem, I am, dear friend, yours affectionately,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXLVII

TO MRS. DEBORAH FRANKLIN

London, 21 December, 1768.

My Dear Child:—

I wonder to hear that my friends were backward in bringing you my letters when they arrived, and think it must be a mere imagination of yours, the effect of some melancholy humor you happened then to be in. I condole with you sincerely on poor Debby's account, and I hope she got well to her husband with her two children.

You say in yours of October 18th, "For me to give you any uneasiness about your affairs here, would be of no service, and I shall not at this time enter on it." I am made by this to apprehend that something is amiss, and perhaps have more uneasiness from the uncertainty than I should have had if you had told me what it was. I wish, therefore, you would be explicit in your next. I rejoice that my good old friend, Mr. Coleman, is got safe home and continues well.

Remember me respectfully to Mr. Rhoads, Mr. Wharton, Mr. Roberts, Mr. and Mrs. Duffield, neighbour Thomson, Dr. and Mrs. Redman, Mrs. Hopkinson, Mr. Duché, Dr. Morgan, Mr. Hopkinson, and all the other friends you have from time to time mentioned as inquiring after me. As you ask me, I can assure you that I do really intend, God willing, to return in the summer, and that as soon as possible after settling matters with Mr. Foxcroft, whom I expect in April or May. I am glad that you find so much reason to be satisfied with Mr. Bache. I hope all will prove for the best. Captain Falconer has been arrived at Plymouth some time, but, the winds being contrary, could get no farther; so I have not yet received the apples, meal, &c., and fear they will be spoiled. I send with this some of the new kind of oats much admired here to make oatmeal of, and for other uses, as being free from husks; and some Swiss barley, six rows to an ear. Perhaps our friends may like to try them, and you may distribute the seed among them. Give some to Mr. Roberts, Mr. Rhoads, Mr. Thomson, Mr. Bartram, our son, and others.

I hope the cold you complain of in two of your letters went off without any ill consequences. We are, as you observe, blest with a great share of health, considering our years, now sixty-three. For my own part, I think of late that my constitution rather mends. I

have had but one touch of the gout, and that a light one, since I left you. It was just after my arrival here, so that this is the fourth winter I have been free. Walking a great deal tires me less than it used to do. I feel stronger and more active. Yet I would not have you think that I fancy I shall grow young again. I know that men of my bulk often fail suddenly. I know that, according to the course of nature, I cannot at most continue much longer, and that the living even of another day is uncertain. I therefore now form no schemes but such as are of immediate execution, indulging myself in no future prospect except one, that of returning to Philadelphia, there to spend the evening of life with my friends and family.

Mr. and Mrs. Strahan, and Mr. and Mrs. West, when I last saw them, desired to be kindly remembered to you. Mrs. Stevenson and our Polly send their love. Mr. Coombe, who seems a very agreeable young man, lodges with us for the present. Adieu, my dear Debby. I am, as ever, your affectionate husband,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXLVIII

TO MICHAEL COLLINSON, ESQ.

[Date uncertain.]

Dear Sir:—

Understanding that on account of our dear departed friend, Mr. Peter Collinson,¹ is intended to be given to the public, I cannot omit expressing my approbation of the design. The characters of good men are exemplary, and often stimulate the well-disposed to an imitation, beneficial to mankind and honorable to themselves. And as you may be unacquainted with the following instance of his zeal and usefulness in promoting knowledge, which fell within my observation, I take the liberty of informing you that in 1730, a subscription library being set on foot at Philadelphia, he encouraged the design by making several very valuable presents to it, and procuring others from his friends; and as the library company had a considerable sum arising annually to be laid out in books, and needed a judicious friend in London to transact the business for them, he voluntarily and cheerfully undertook that service, and executed it for more than thirty years successively, assisting in the choice of books, and taking the whole care of collecting and shipping them, without ever charging or accepting any consideration for his trouble. The success of this library (greatly owing to his kind countenance and good advice) encouraged the erecting others in different places on the same plan; and it is supposed there are now upwards of thirty subsisting in the several colonies, which have contributed greatly to the spreading of useful knowledge in that part of the world; the books he recommended being all of that kind, and the catalogue of the first library being much respected and followed by those libraries that succeeded.

During the same time he transmitted to the directors of the library the earliest account of every new European improvement in agriculture and the arts, and every philosophical discovery; among which, in 1745, he sent over an account of the new German experiments in electricity, together with a glass tube, and some directions for using it, so as to repeat those experiments. This was the first notice I had of that curious subject, which I afterwards prosecuted with some diligence, being encouraged by the friendly reception he gave to the letters I wrote to him upon it. Please to accept this small testimony of mine to his memory, for which I shall

ever have the utmost respect; and believe me, with sincere esteem,
dear Sir, your most humble servant,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXLIX

TO LORD KAMES

London, 1 January, 1769.

My Dear Friend:—

It is always a great pleasure to me to hear from you, and would be a much greater to be with you, to converse with you on the subjects you mention, or any other. Possibly I may one day enjoy that pleasure. In the meantime we may use the privilege that the knowledge of letters affords us, of conversing at a distance by the pen.

I am glad to find you are turning your thoughts to political subjects, and particularly to those of money, taxes, manufactures, and commerce. The world is yet much in the dark on these important points; and many mischievous mistakes are continually made in the management of them. Most of our acts of Parliament for regulating them are, in my opinion, little better than political blunders, owing to the ignorance of science or to the designs of crafty men, who mislead the legislature, proposing something under the specious appearance of public good, while the real aim is to sacrifice that to their private interest. I hope a good deal of light may be thrown on these subjects by your sagacity and acuteness. I only wish I could first have engaged you in discussing the weighty points in dispute between Britain and the colonies. But the long letter I wrote you for that purpose, in February or March, 1767, perhaps never reached your hand, for I have not yet had a word from you in answer to it.¹

The act you inquire about had its rise thus: During the war Virginia issued great sums of paper money for the payment of their troops to be sunk in a number of years by taxes. The British merchants trading thither received these bills in payment for their goods, purchasing tobacco with them to send home. The crop of tobacco one or two years falling short, the factors, who were desirous of making a speedy remittance, sought to pay, with the paper money, bills of exchange. The number of bidders for these bills raised the price of them thirty per cent. above par. This was deemed so much loss to the purchasers, and supposed to arise from a depreciation of the paper money. The merchants, on this supposition, founded a complaint against that currency to the Board of Trade. Lord Hillsborough, then at the head of that Board, took up the matter

strongly, and drew a report, which was presented to the King in Council, against all paper currency in the colonies. And, though there was no complaint against it from any merchants but those trading to Virginia, all those trading to the other colonies being satisfied with its operation, yet the ministry proposed and the Parliament came into the making a general act, forbidding all future emissions of paper money, that should be a legal tender in any colony whatever.

The Virginia merchants have since had the mortification to find that, if they had kept the paper money a year or two, the above-mentioned loss would have been avoided; for as soon as tobacco became more plenty, and of course bills of exchange also, the exchange fell as much as it before had risen. I was in America when the act passed. On my return to England I got the merchants trading to New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, &c., to meet, to consider, and join in an application to have the restraining act repealed. To prevent this application, a copy was put into the merchants' hands of Lord Hillsborough's report, by which it was supposed they might be convinced that such an application would be wrong. They desired my sentiments on it, which I gave in the paper I send you enclosed. I have no copy by me of the report itself; but in my answer you will see a faithful abridgment of all the arguments or reasons it contained. Lord Hillsborough has read my answer, but says he is not convinced by it, and adheres to his former opinion. We know nothing can be done in Parliament; that the minister is absolutely against, and therefore we let that point rest for the present. And as I think a scarcity of money will work with our other present motives for lessening our fond extravagance in the use of the superfluous manufactures of this country, which unkindly grudges us the enjoyment of common rights, and will tend to lead us naturally into industry and frugality, I am grown more indifferent about the repeal of the act, and if my countrymen will be advised by me, we shall never ask it again.¹

There is not, as I conceive, any new principle wanting to account for the operations of air, and all the affections of smoke in rooms and chimneys; but it is difficult to advise in particular cases at a distance, where one cannot have all the circumstances under view. If two rooms and chimneys are "perfectly similar" in situation, dimension, and all other circumstances, it seems not possible that, "in summer, when no fire had been in either of them for some months, and in a calm day, a current of air should at the same time go up the chimney of the one, and down the chimney of the other." But such difference may and often does take place, from circumstances in which they are dissimilar, and which dissimilarity is not very obvious to those who have little studied the subject. As to your particular case, which you describe to be that, "after a

whole day's fire, which must greatly heat the vent, yet when the fire becomes low, so as not to emit any smoke, neighbour smoke immediately begins to descend and fill the room"; this, if not owing to particular winds, may be occasioned by a stronger fire in another room, communicating with yours by a door, the outer air being excluded by the outward door's being shut, whereby the stronger fire finds it easier to be supplied with air down through the vent in which the weak fire is, and thence through the communicating door, than through the crevices. If this is the circumstance, you will find that a supply of air is only wanting, that may be sufficient for both vents. If this is not the circumstance, send me, if you please, a complete description of your room, its situation and connexion, and possibly I may form a better judgment; though I imagine your Professor of Natural Philosophy, Mr. Russel, or Mr. George Clark, may give you as good advice on the subject as I can. But I shall take the liberty of sending you, by the first convenient opportunity, a collection of my philosophical papers lately published, in which you will find something more relating to the motions of air in chimneys.[1](#)

To commence a conversation with you on your new project, I have thrown some of my present sentiments into the concise form of aphorisms, to be examined between us, if you please, and rejected or corrected and confirmed, as we shall find most proper. I send them enclosed.[1](#)

With thanks for your good wishes, and with unalterable esteem, I remain, my dear friend, affectionately yours,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCL

TO JOHN BARTRAM

London, 9 January, 1769.

My Dear Old Friend:—

I received your kind letter of November 5th, and the box directed to the King is since come to hand. I have written a line to our late dear friend's son² (who must be best acquainted with the usual manner of transacting your affairs here), to know whether he will take charge of the delivery of it; if not, to request he would inform me how or to whom it is to be sent for the King. I expect his answer in a day or two, and I shall, when I see him, inquire how your pension is hereafter to be applied for and received, though I suppose he has written to you before this time.¹

I hope your health continues, as mine does hitherto; but I wish you would now decline your long and dangerous peregrinations in search of new plants, and remain safe and quiet at home, employing your leisure hours in a work that is much wanted, and which no one besides is so capable of performing. I mean the writing a Natural History of our country. I imagine it would prove profitable to you, and I am sure it would do you honor. My respects and best wishes attend Mrs. Bartram and your family. With sincere esteem, I am, as ever, your affectionate friend,

B. Franklin.

P. S.—*January 28th.*—The box is delivered, according to Mr. Michael Collinson's directions, at Lord Bute's. I have sent over some seed of naked oats, and some of Swiss barley, six rows to one ear. If you would choose to try some of it, call on Mrs. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLI

TO M. LE ROY

London, 31 January, 1769.

Dear Sir:—

I received your obliging favor of November 15th. I presented your compliments to Sir John Pringle, who was glad with me to hear of your welfare, and desired me to offer his best respects whenever I wrote to you. The *Farmer's Letters* were written by one Mr. Dickinson, of Philadelphia, and not by me, as you seem to suppose. I only caused them to be reprinted here with that little Preface, and had no other hand in them, except that I see some of my sentiments formerly published are collected, and interwoven with those of others, and his own, by the author. I am glad they afforded you any amusement. It is true, as you have heard, that troops are posted in Boston, on the pretence of preventing riots and protecting the custom-house officers; but it is also true that there was no intention among the people there to oppose the landing of those troops, or to resist the execution of the law by arms. The riots talked of were sudden, unpremeditated things, that happened only among a few of the lower sort. Their plan of making war on this country is of a different kind. It is to be a war on commerce only, and consists in an absolute determination to buy and use no more of the manufactures of Britain till the act is repealed. This is already agreed to by four provinces, and will be by all the rest in the ensuing summer. Eleven ships now here from Boston and New York, which would have carried, one with another, fifty thousand pounds sterling each in goods, are going away in their ballast, as the Parliament seems determined not to repeal. I am inclined to think, however, that it will alter its mind before the end of the session. Otherwise it is to be feared the breach will grow wider by successive indiscretions on both sides.

The subject you propose to me, the consequences of allowing a free exportation of corn, the advantages or disadvantages of the *Concurrence*, &c., is a very extensive one; and I have been, and am at present, so much occupied with our American affairs as that, if I were ever so capable of handling it, I have not time to engage in it at present to any purpose. I think, however, with you, that the true principles of commerce are yet but little understood, and that most of the acts of Parliament, *arrêts* and edicts of princes and states,

relating to commerce, are political errors, solicited and obtained by particulars for private interest, under the pretext of public good.

The bearer of this, Captain Overy, is a particular friend of mine, who now only passes through Paris for Lyons and Nice, but in his return may stay in your city some time. He is a gentleman of excellent character and great merit, and as such I beg leave to recommend him to your civilities and advice, which may be of great service to him, as he is quite a stranger in Paris. With the greatest esteem and respect, I am, dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. Franklin.

P. S.—Your English is extremely good; but if it is more easy for you to write in French, do not give yourself the trouble of writing in English, as I understand your French perfectly well.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLII

TO LORD KAMES

London, 21 February, 1769.

My Dear Friend:—

I received your excellent paper on the preferable use of oxen in agriculture, and have put it in the way of being communicated to the public here. I have observed in America that the farmers are more thriving in those parts of the country where horned cattle are used, than in those where the labor is done by horses. The latter are said to require twice the quantity of land to maintain them; and, after all, are not good to eat; at least we do not think them so. Here is a waste of land that might afford subsistence for so many of the human species. Perhaps it was for this reason that the Hebrew lawgiver, having promised that the children of Israel should be as numerous as the sands of the sea, not only took care to secure the health of individuals by regulating their diet, that they might be fitter for producing children, but also forbade their using horses, as these horses would lessen the quantity of subsistence for men. Thus we find, when they took any horses from their enemies, they destroyed them; and in the commandments, where the labor of the ox and ass is mentioned, and forbidden on the Sabbath, there is no mention of the horse, probably because they were to have none. And, by the great armies suddenly raised in that small territory they inhabited, it appears to have been very full of people.

Food is *always* necessary to *all*, and much the greatest part of the labor of mankind is employed in raising provisions for the mouth. Is not this kind of labor, then, the fittest to be the standard by which to measure the values of all other labor, and consequently of all other things whose value depends on the labor of making or procuring them? May not even gold and silver be thus valued? If the labor of the farmer, in producing a bushel of wheat, be equal to the labor of the miner in producing an ounce of silver, will not the bushel of wheat just measure the value of the ounce of silver? The miner must eat; the farmer indeed can live without the ounce of silver, and so perhaps will have some advantage in settling the price. But these discussions I leave to you, as being more able to manage them; only, I will send you a little scrap I wrote some time since on the laws prohibiting foreign commodities.

I congratulate you on your election as president of your Edinburgh Society. I think I formerly took notice to you in conversation, that I thought there had been some similarity in our fortunes, and the circumstances of our lives. This is a fresh instance, for, by letters just received, I find that I was about the same time chosen president of our American Philosophical Society, established at Philadelphia.[1](#)

I have sent by sea, to the care of Mr. Alexander, a little box containing a few copies of the late editions of my books, for my friends in Scotland. One is directed for you, and one for your Society, which I beg that you and they would accept as a small mark of my respect. With the sincerest esteem and regard, I am, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

P. S.—I am sorry my letter of 1767, concerning the American disputes, miscarried. I now send you a copy of it from my book. The Examination mentioned in it you have probably seen. Things daily wear a worse aspect, and tend more and more to a breach and final separation.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLIII

TO MRS. JANE MECOM

London, 23 February, 1769.

Your political disputes I have no objection to, if they are carried on with tolerable decency, and do not become outrageously abusive. They make people acquainted with their rights, and the value of them. But your squabbles about a bishop I wish to see speedily ended. They seem to be unnecessary at present, as the design of sending one is dropped; and, if it were not dropped, I cannot think it a matter of such moment as to be a sufficient reason for division among you, when there never was more need of your being united. I do not conceive, that bishops residing in America would either be of such advantage to Episcopalians, or such disadvantage to Anti-Episcopalians, as either seem to imagine.

Each party abuses the other; the profane and the infidel believe both sides, and enjoy the fray; the reputation of religion in general suffers, and its enemies are ready to say, not what was said in the primitive times, *Behold how these Christians love one another*;—but, *Mark how these Christianshate one another!* Indeed, when religious people quarrel about religion, or hungry people about their victuals, it looks as if they had not much of either among them.

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLIV

TO SAMUEL COOPER, AT BOSTON

London, 24 February, 1769.

Dear Sir:—

I received your favor by Mr. Jeffries. I should have been glad if in any thing I could have served him here. The part I took in the application for your degree¹ was merely doing justice to merit, which is the duty of an honest man whenever he has the opportunity. I did that duty, indeed, with pleasure and satisfaction to myself, which was sufficient; but I own the pleasure is greatly increased by finding that you are so good as to accept my endeavours kindly.

I was about to return home last summer and had some thoughts of doing it by way of Boston; but the untoward situation of American affairs here induced my friends to advise my staying another winter. I should have been happy in doing any service to our country. The tide is yet strong against us, and our endeavours to turn it have hitherto had but little effect. But it must turn, if your frugal and industrious resolutions continue. Your old governor, Mr. Pownall, appears a warm and zealous friend to the colonies in Parliament, but unfortunately he is very ill heard at present. I have been in constant pain since I heard of troops assembling at Boston, lest the madness of mobs, or the insolence of soldiers, or both, should, when too near each other, occasion some mischief difficult to be prevented or repaired, and which might spread far and wide. I hope, however, that prudence will predominate, and keep all quiet.

A great cause between the city of London and the Dissenters was decided here the year before last in the House of Lords. No account of it has been printed; but, one having been taken in writing, I obtained a copy of it, which I send you, supposing it may afford you and your friends some pleasure.¹

Please to present my respectful compliments to Mrs. Cooper, and to Mr. Bowdoin, when you see him. With sincere and great esteem, I am, &c.,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLV

TO JOHN WINTHROP

London, 11 March, 1769.

Dear Sir:—

At length after much delay and difficulty I have been able to obtain your telescope, that was made by Mr. Short before his death. His brother who succeeds in the business has fitted it up and completed it. He has followed the business many years at Edinburgh, is reckoned very able, and therefore I hope every thing will be found all right; but, as it is only just finished, I have no time left to get any philosophical or astronomical friends to examine it, as I intended, the ship being on the point of sailing, and a future opportunity uncertain. Enclosed is his direction-paper for opening and fixing it.

I have not yet got the bill of the price. It is to be made from the deceased Mr. Short's book of memorandums and orders, in which he entered this order of ours, and, as it is supposed, the price. I do not remember, it is so long since, whether it was one hundred pounds, or one hundred guineas; and the book is in the hands of the executor as I understand. When I have the account, I shall pay it as I did Bird's for the transit instrument, which was forty guineas, and then shall apply for the whole to Mr. Mauduit. By the way, I wonder that I have not heard from you of the receipt of that instrument, which went from hence in September by Captain Watt. I hope it got safe to hand and gave satisfaction. The ship was the same that Mr. Rogers went in, who I hear is arrived; and by him too I sent the *Philosophical Transactions*, with a number of copies of your paper as printed separately. But I have no letter from you since that by the young gentleman you recommended to me, grandson to Sir William Pepperell, which I think was dated about the beginning of October, when you could not have received them.

By a late ship I sent your college a copy of the new edition of my *Philosophical Papers*; and others, I think, for yourself and for Mr. Bowdoin. I should apologize to you for inserting therein some part of our correspondence without first obtaining your permission; but, as Mr. Bowdoin had favored me with his consent for what related to him, I ventured to rely upon your good nature as to what related to you, and I hope you will forgive me.

I have got from Mr. Ellicot the glasses, &c., of the long Galilean telescope, which he presents to your college. I put them into the hands of Mr. Nairne, the optician, to examine and put them in order. I thought to have sent them by this ship, but am disappointed. They shall go by the next, if possible.

There is nothing new here in the philosophical way at present.

With great and sincere esteem, I am, Dear Sir,

Your Most Obedient And Humble Servant,

B. Franklin.

P.S.—There is no prospect of getting the duty acts repealed this session, if ever. Your steady resolutions to consume no more British goods may possibly, if persisted in, have a good effect another year. I apprehend the Parliamentary resolves and addresses will tend to widen the breach. Enclosed I send you Governor Pownall's speech against those resolves; his name is not to be mentioned. He appears to me a hearty friend of America, though I find he is suspected by some on account of his connexions.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLVI

POSITIONS TO BE EXAMINED, CONCERNING NATIONAL WEALTH

dated april 4, 1769.

1. All food or subsistence for mankind arises from the earth or waters.
2. Necessaries of life, that are not food, and all other conveniences, have their values estimated by the proportion of food consumed while we are employed in procuring them.
3. A small people, with a large territory, may subsist on the productions of nature, with no other labor than that of gathering the vegetables and catching the animals.
4. A large people, with a small territory, find these insufficient, and, to subsist, must labor the earth, to make it produce greater quantities of vegetable food, suitable for the nourishment of men, and of the animals they intend to eat.
5. From this labor arises a *great increase* of vegetable and animal food, and of materials for clothing, as flax, wool, silk, &c. The superfluity of these is wealth. With this wealth we paid for the labor employed in building our houses, cities, &c., which are therefore only subsistence metamorphosed.
6. *Manufactures* are only *another shape* into which so much provisions and subsistence are turned, as were equal in value to the manufactures produced. This appears from hence, that the manufacturer does not, in fact, obtain from the employer, for his labor, *more* than a mere subsistence, including raiment, fuel, and shelter; all which derive their value from the provisions consumed in procuring them.
7. The produce of the earth, thus converted into manufactures, may be more easily carried to distant markets than before such conversion.
8. *Fair commerce* is, where equal values are exchanged for equal, the expense of transport included. Thus, if it costs A in England as much labor and charge to raise a bushel of wheat, as it costs B in France to produce four gallons of wine, then are four gallons of

wine the fair exchange for a bushel of wheat, A and B meeting at half distance with their commodities to make the exchange. The advantage of this fair commerce is, that each party increases the number of his enjoyments, having, instead of wheat alone, or wine alone, the use of both wheat and wine.

9. Where the labor and expense of producing both commodities are known to both parties, bargains will generally be fair and equal. Where they are known to one party only, bargains will often be unequal, knowledge taking its advantage of ignorance.

10. Thus, he that carries one thousand bushels of wheat abroad to sell, may not probably obtain so great a profit thereon as if he had first turned the wheat into manufactures, by subsisting therewith the workmen while producing those manufactures; since there are many expediting and facilitating methods of working not generally known; and strangers to the manufactures, though they know pretty well the expense of raising wheat, are unacquainted with those short methods of working, and thence being apt to suppose more labor employed in the manufactures than there really is, are more easily imposed on in their value, and induced to allow more for them than they are honestly worth.¹

11. Thus the advantage of having manufactures in a country does not consist, as is commonly supposed, in their highly advancing the value of rough materials, of which they are formed; since, though six pennyworth of flax may be worth twenty shillings when worked into lace, yet the very cause of its being worth twenty shillings is, that, besides the flax, it has cost nineteen shillings and sixpence in subsistence to the manufacturer. But the advantage of manufactures is, that under their shape provisions may be more easily carried to a foreign market; and, by their means, our traders may more easily cheat strangers.¹ Few, where it is not made, are judges of the value of lace. The importer may demand forty, and perhaps get thirty, shillings for that which cost him but twenty.

12. Finally, there seem to be but three ways for a nation to acquire wealth. The first is by *war*, as the Romans did, in plundering their conquered neighbours. This is *robbery*. The second by *commerce*, which is generally *cheating*. The third by *agriculture*, the only *honest way*, wherein man receives a real increase of the seed thrown into the ground, in a kind of continual miracle, wrought by the hand of God in his favor, as a reward for his innocent life and his virtuous industry.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLVII

TO SAMUEL COOPER

London, 27 April, 1769.

Dear Sir:—

I received your favor of February 27th, by Captain Carver, and thank you for giving me an opportunity of being acquainted with so great a traveller. I shall be glad if I can render him any service here.¹

The Parliament remain fixed in their resolution not to repeal the duty acts this session, and will rise next Tuesday. I hope my country folks will remain as fixed in their resolutions of industry and frugality, till these acts are repealed. And, if I could be sure of that, I should almost wish them never to be repealed; being persuaded that we shall reap more solid and extensive advantages from the steady practice of those two great virtues, than we can possibly suffer damage from all the duties the Parliament of this kingdom can levy on us. They flatter themselves you cannot long subsist without their manufactures. They believe you have not virtue enough to persist in such agreements. They imagine the colonies will differ among themselves, deceive and desert one another, and quietly one after the other submit to the yoke, and return to the use of British fineries. They think, that, though the men may be contented with homespun stuffs, the women will never get the better of their vanity and fondness for English modes and gewgaws. The ministerial people all talk in this strain, and many even of the merchants. I have ventured to assert that they will all find themselves mistaken; and I rely so much on the spirit of my country, as to be confident I shall not be found a false prophet, though at present not believed.

I hope nothing that has happened, or may happen, will diminish in the least our loyalty to our Sovereign, or affection for this nation in general. I can scarcely conceive a King of better dispositions, of more exemplary virtues, or more truly desirous of promoting the welfare of all his subjects. The experience we have had of the family in the two preceding mild reigns, and the good temper of our young princes, so far as can yet be discovered, promise us a continuance of this felicity.¹ The body of this people, too, is of a noble and generous nature, loving and honoring the spirit of liberty,

and hating arbitrary power of all sorts. We have many, very many, friends among them.

But, as to the Parliament, though I might excuse that which made the acts, as being surprised and misled into the measure, I know not how to excuse this, which, under the fullest conviction of its being a wrong one, resolves to continue it. It is decent, indeed, in your public papers to speak as you do of the "*wisdom and the justice of Parliament*"; but now that the subject is more thoroughly understood, if this new Parliament had been really *wise*, it would not have refused even to receive a petition against the acts; and, if it had been *just*, it would have repealed them, and refunded the money. Perhaps it may be *wiser* and *juster* another year, but that is not to be depended on.

If, under all the insults and oppressions you are now exposed to, you can prudently, as you have lately done, continue quiet, avoiding tumults, but still resolutely keeping up your claims and asserting your rights, you will finally establish them, and this military cloud that now blusters over you will pass away, and do no more harm than a summer thunder shower. But the advantages of your perseverance in industry and frugality will be great and permanent. Your debts will be paid, your farms will be better improved and yield a greater produce; your real wealth will increase in a plenty of every useful home production and all the true enjoyments of life, even though no foreign trade should be allowed you; and this handicraft, shop-keeping state will, for its own sake, learn to behave more civilly to its customers.¹

Your late governor, Mr. Pownall, appears a hearty friend to America. He moved last week for a repeal of the acts, and was seconded by General Conway, Sir George Saville, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Trecothick, and others, but did not succeed. A friend has favored me with a copy of the notes taken of Mr. Pownall's speech, which I send you, believing it will be agreeable to you and some other of our friends to see them. You will observe in some parts of it the language a member of Parliament is obliged to hold, on American topics, if he would at all be heard in the House. He has given notice that he will renew the motion at the next and every session. All Ireland is strongly in favor of the American cause. They have reason to sympathize with us. I send you four pamphlets written in Ireland, or by Irish gentlemen here, in which you will find some excellent, well-said things. With the greatest esteem, I am, my dear friend, &c.,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLVIII

TO MRS. JANE MECOM

London, 27 April, 1769.

— Mrs. Stevenson has executed your order, and sends the things in a bandbox directed to you. A new-fashioned something, that was not ready when the box was packed up, is enclosed in her letter.

I am now grown too old to be ambitious of such a station as that which you say has been mentioned to you. Repose is more fit for me, and much more suitable to my wishes. There is no danger of such a thing being offered to me, and I am sure I shall never ask it. But if it were offered, I certainly could not accept it, to act under such instructions as I know must be given with it. So you may be quite easy on that head.[1](#)

The account you write of the growing industry, frugality, and good sense of my countrywomen gives me more pleasure than you can imagine; for from thence I presage great advantages to our country. I should be sorry that you are engaged in a business which happens not to coincide with the general interest, if you did not acquaint me that you are now near the end of it.

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXIX

TO THE LONDON CHRONICLE¹

Mr. Chronicle:

Sir:—

While the public attention is so much turned towards America, every letter from thence that promises new information, is pretty generally read. It seems, therefore, the more necessary that care should be taken to disabuse the public, when those letters contain facts false in themselves, and representations injurious to bodies of people, or even to private persons.

In your paper, No. 310, I found an extract of a letter, said to be from a gentleman in General Abercrombie's army. As there are several strokes in it tending to render the colonies despicable, and even odious, to the mother country, which may have ill consequences, and no notice having been taken of the injuries contained in that letter, other letters of the same nature have since been published; permit me to make a few observations on it.

The writer says: "New England was settled by Presbyterians and Independents, who took shelter there from the persecutions of Archbishop Laud; they still retain their original character; they generally hate the Church of England," says he. It is very true that if some resentment still remained for the hardships their fathers suffered, it might perhaps be not much wondered at; but the fact is, that the moderation of the present Church of England towards dissenters in Old as well as New England, had quite effaced those impressions; the dissenters, too, are become less rigid and scrupulous, and the good-will between those different bodies in that country is now both mutual and equal.

He goes on: "They came out with a levelling spirit, and they retain it. They cannot bear to think that one man should be exorbitantly rich, and another poor; so that, except in the seaport towns, there are few great estates among them. This equality produces also a rusticity of manners; for their language, dress, and in all their behaviour, they are more boorish than any thing you ever saw in a certain northern latitude." One would imagine, from this account, that those who were growing poor plundered those who were growing rich, to preserve this equality, and that property had no

protection; whereas, in fact, it is nowhere more secure than in the New England colonies; the law is nowhere better executed, or justice obtained at less expense. The equality he speaks of arises first from a more equal distribution of lands by the assemblies in the first settlement than has been practised in the other colonies, where favourites of governors have obtained enormous tracts for trifling considerations, to the prejudice both of the crown revenues and the public good; and secondly, from the nature of their occupation; husbandmen with small tracts of land, though they may by industry maintain themselves and families in mediocrity, having few means of acquiring great wealth, especially in a young colony that is to be supplied with its clothing and many other expensive articles of consumption from the mother country. Their dress the gentleman may be a more critical judge of than I can pretend to be; all I know of it is, that they wear the manufacture of Britain, and follow its fashions perhaps too closely, every remarkable change in the mode making its appearance there within a few months after its invention here; a natural effect of their constant intercourse with England, by ships arriving almost every week from the capital, their respect for the mother country, and admiration of every thing that is British. But as to their language, I must beg this gentleman's pardon, if I differ from him. His ear, accustomed perhaps to the dialect practised in the certain northern latitude he mentions may not be qualified to judge so nicely what relates to pure English. And I appeal to all Englishmen here, who have been acquainted with the colonists, whether it is not a common remark, that they speak the language with such an exactness both of expression and accent, that though you may know the natives of several of the counties of England, by peculiarities in their dialect, you cannot by that means distinguish a North American. All the new books and pamphlets worth reading, that are published here, in a few weeks are transmitted and found there, where there is not a man or woman born in the country but what can read; and it must, I think, be a pleasing reflection to those who write either for the benefit of the present age or of posterity, to find their audience increasing with the increase of our colonies, and their language extending itself beyond the narrow bounds of these islands, to a continent larger than all Europe, and to future empire as fully peopled, which Britain may one day probably possess in those vast western regions.

But the gentleman makes more injurious comparisons than these:

"That latitude," he says, "has this advantage over them, that it has produced sharp, acute men, fit for war or learning, whereas the others are remarkably simple, or silly, and blunder eternally. We have six thousand of their militia, which the general would willingly exchange for two thousand regulars. They are forever marring

some one or other of our plans, when sent to execute them. They can, indeed, some of them at least, range in the woods; but three hundred Indians with their yell throw three thousand of them in a panic, and then they will leave nothing for the enemy to do, for they will shoot one another; and in the woods our regulars are afraid to be on a command with them on that very account." I doubt, Mr. Chronicle, that this paragraph, when it comes to be read in America, will have no good effect; and rather increase that inconvenient disgust which is too apt to arise between the troops of different corps, or countries, who are obliged to serve together. Will not a New England officer be apt to retort and say, what foundation have you for this odious distinction in favour of the officers from your certain northern latitude? They may, as you say, be fit for learning; but, surely, that return of your first general, with a well-appointed and sufficient force, from his expedition against Louisbourg, without so much as seeing the place, is not the most shining proof of his talents for war. And no one will say his plan was marred by us, for we were not with him. Was his successor who conducted the blundering attack, and inglorious retreat from Ticonderoga, a New England man, or one of that certain latitude? Then as to the comparison between regulars and provincials, will not the latter remark that it was two thousand New England provincials, with about one hundred and fifty regulars that took the strong fort of Beaufort in the beginning of the war; though in the accounts transmitted to the English gazette, the honor was claimed by the regulars, and little or no notice taken of the others. That it was the provincials who beat General Dieskau with his regulars, Canadians, and "yelling Indians," and sent him prisoner to England. That it was a provincial-born officer, with American batteaux-men, that beat the French and Indians on Oswego River. That it was the same officer, with provincials, who made that long and admirable march into the enemy's country, took and destroyed Fort Frontenac, with the whole French fleet on the lakes, and struck terror into the heart of Canada. That it was a provincial officer, with provincials only, who made another extraordinary march into the enemy's country, surprised and destroyed the Indian town of Kittanning, bringing off the scalps of their chiefs. That one ranging captain of a few provincials, Rogers, has harassed the enemy more on the frontiers of Canada, and destroyed more of their men, than the whole army of regulars. That it was the regulars who surrendered themselves, with the provincials under their command, prisoners of war, almost as soon as they were besieged, with the forts, fleets, and all the provisions and stores that had been provided and amassed to so immense expense at Oswego. That it was the regulars who surrendered Fort William Henry, and suffered themselves to be butchered and scalped with arms in their hands. That it was the regulars under Braddock, who were thrown into a panic by the "yells of three or four hundred

Indians," in their confusion shot one another, and, with five times the force of the enemy, fled before them, destroying all their own stores, ammunition and provisions. These regular gentlemen, will the provincial rangers add, may possibly be afraid, as they say they are, to be on a command with us in the woods; but when it is considered that, from all past experience, the chance of our shooting them is not as one to a hundred, compared with that of their being shot by the enemy, may it not be suspected, that what they give as the *very account* of their fear and unwillingness to venture out with us, is only the *very excuse*; and that a concern for their scalps weighs more with them than a regard for their honor.

Such as these, sir, I imagine may be the reflections extorted by such provocation from the provincials in general. But the New England men in particular will have reason to resent the remarks on their reduction of Louisbourg. Your writer proceeds "Indeed they are all very ready to make their boast of taking Louisbourg, in 1745; but if people were to be acquitted or condemned according to the propriety and wisdom of their plans, and not according to their success, the persons that undertook the siege merited little praise; for I have heard officers who assisted at it say, never was any thing more rash; for had one single part of their plan failed, or had the French made the fortieth part of the resistance then that they have made now, every soul of the New Englanders must have fallen in the trenches. The garrison was weak, sickly, and destitute of provisions, and disgusted, and therefore became a ready prey; and, when they returned to France, were decimated for their gallant defence." Where then is the glory arising from thence? After denying his facts: "that the garrison was weak, wanted provisions, made not a fortieth part of the resistance, were decimated," &c., the New England men will ask this regular gentleman, if the place was well fortified, and had (as it really had) a numerous garrison, was it not at least brave to attack it with a handful of raw, undisciplined militia? If the garrison was, as you say, "sickly, disgusted, destitute of provisions, and ready to become a prey," was it not prudent to seize the opportunity, and put the nation in possession of so important a fortress, at so small an expense? So that if you will not allow the enterprise to be, as we think it was, both brave and prudent, ought you not at least to grant it was either one or the other? But is there no merit on this score in the people, who, though at first so greatly divided, as to the making or forbearing the attempt, that it was carried in the affirmative by the small majority of one vote only; yet when it was once resolved on, unanimously prosecuted the design, and prepared the means with the greatest zeal and diligence; so that the whole equipment was completely ready before the season would permit the execution? Is there no merit or praise in laying and executing their plan so well, that, as you have confessed, not a

single part of it failed? If the plan was destitute of “propriety and wisdom,” would it not have required the sharp, acute men of the northern latitude to execute it, that by supplying its deficiencies they might give it some chance of success? But if such “remarkably silly, simple, blundering war plans,” as you say we are, could execute *this plan*, so that not a *single part* of it failed, does it not at least show that the plan itself must be laid with some “wisdom and propriety”? Is there no merit in the ardour with which all degrees and ranks of people quitted their private affairs and ranged themselves under the banners of their king, for the honor, safety, and advantage of their country? Is there no merit in the profound secrecy guarded by a whole people, so that the enemy had not the least intelligence of the design, till they saw the fleet of transports cover the sea before their port? Is there none in the indefatigable labour the troops went through during the siege, performing the duty of both men and horses; the hardship they patiently suffered for want of tents and other necessities; the readiness with which they learnt to move, direct, and manage cannon, raise batteries, and form approaches; the bravery with which they sustained sallies; and finally, in their consenting to stay and garrison the place after it was taken, absent from their business and families, till troops could be brought from England for that purpose, though they undertook the service on a promise of being discharged as soon as it was over, were unprovided for so long an absence, and actually suffered ten times more loss by mortal sickness through want of necessities, than they suffered from the arms of the enemy? The nation, however, had a sense of this undertaking different from the unkind one of this gentleman. At the treaty of peace, the possession of Louisbourg was found of great advantage to our affairs in Europe; and if the brave men that made the acquisition for us were not rewarded, at least they were praised. Envy may continue a while to cavil and detract, but public virtue will in the end obtain esteem; and honest impartiality, in this and future ages, will not fail doing justice to merit.

Your gentleman writer thus decently goes on: “The most substantial men of most of the provinces are children or grandchildren of those that came here at the king’s expense—that is, thieves, highwaymen, and robbers.” Being probably a military gentleman, this, and therefore a person of nice honour, if any one should tell him in the plainest language that what he here says is an absolute falsehood, challenges and cutting of throats might immediately ensue. I shall therefore only refer to his own account in this same letter, of the peopling of New England, which he says, with more truth, was by Puritans, who fled thither for shelter from the persecutions of Archbishop Laud. Is there not a wide difference between removing to a distant country to enjoy the exercise of religion according to a man’s conscience, and his being transported

thither by a law, as a punishment for his crimes? This contradiction we therefore leave the gentleman and himself to settle as well as they can between them. One would think from his account that the provinces were so many colonies from Newgate. The truth is, not only Laud's persecution, but the other public troubles in the following reigns, induced many thousand families to leave England and settle in the plantations. During the predominance of the Parliament many Royalists removed or were banished to Virginia and Barbadoes, who afterwards spread into other settlements. The Catholics sheltered themselves in Maryland. At the Restoration many of the deprived non-conformist ministers, with their families, friends, and hearers, went over. Towards the end of Charles the Second's reign, and during James the Second's, the dissenters again flocked into America, driven by persecution, and dreading the introduction at home. Then the high price or reward of labour in the colonies and want of artisans there drew over many, as well as the occasion of commerce; and when once people begin to migrate, every one has his little sphere of acquaintance and connections, which he draws after him by invitation, motives of interest, praising his new settlement, and other encouragements. The "most substantial men" are descendants of those early settlers, new comers not having yet had time to raise estates. The practice of sending convicts thither is modern; and the same indolence of temper and habits of idleness that make people poor and tempt them to steal in England continue with them when they are sent to America, and must there have the same effects, where all who live well owe their subsistence to labour and business, and where it is a thousand times more difficult than here to acquire wealth without industry. Hence the instances of transported thieves advancing their fortunes in the colonies are extremely rare; if there really is a single instance of it, which I very much doubt; but of their being advanced there to the gallows the instances are plenty. Might they not as well have been hanged at home? We call Britain the mother country; but what good mother would introduce thieves and criminals into the company of her children to corrupt and disgrace them? And how cruel is it to force, by the high hand of power, a particular country of your subjects, who have not deserved such usage, to receive your outcasts, repealing all the laws they make to prevent their admission, and then reproach them with the detested mixture you have made! "Their emptying their jails into our settlements," says a writer of that country, "is an insult and contempt, the cruellest perhaps that ever one people offered to another, and would not be equalled even by emptying their jakes on tables."

The letter I have been considering, Mr. Chronicle, is followed by another in your paper of Tuesday, the 17th, past, said to be from an officer who attended Brigadier-General Forbes, in his march from

Philadelphia to Fort Du Quesne, but written probably by the same gentleman who wrote the former, as it seems calculated to raise the character of the officers of the certain northern latitude, at the expense of the reputation of the colonies and the provincial forces. According to this letter-writer, if the Pennsylvanians granted large supplies and raised a great body of troops for the last campaign, this was not on account of Mr. Pitt's zeal for the king's service, or even a regard for their own safety; but it was owing to the "general's proper management of the Quakers and other parties in the province." The withdrawing the Indians from the French interest, by negotiating a peace, is all ascribed to the general, and not a word said of the honour of the poor Quakers, who first set these negotiations on foot, or of honest Frederick Post, that completed them with so much ability and success. Even the little merit of the Assembly's making a law to regulate carriages is imputed to the general's "multitude of letters." Then he tells us "innumerable scouting parties had been sent out during a long period, both by the general and Colonel Bouquet, towards Fort Du Quesne, to catch a prisoner, if possible, for intelligence, but never got any." How happened that? Why, "it was the provincial troops that were constantly employed in that service," and they, it seems, never do any thing they are ordered to do. That, however, one would think might be easily remedied, by sending regulars with them, who, of course, must command them, and may see that they do their duty. No; the regulars are afraid of being shot by the provincials in a panic. Then send all regulars. Aye; that was what the colonel resolved upon. "Intelligence was now wanted [says the letter-writer]; Col. Bouquet, whose attention to business was [only] very considerable [that is, not quite so great as the general's for he was not of the northern latitude], was determined to send no more provincials a-scouting." And how did he execute his determination? Why, by sending "Major Grant, of the Highlanders, with seven hundred men, three hundred of them Highlanders, the rest Americans, Virginians, and Pennsylvanians." No blunder this in our writer, but a misfortune; and he is, nevertheless, one of those "acute sharp" men who are "fit for learning." And how did this major and seven hundred men succeed in catching the prisoner? Why, their "march to Fort Du Quesne was so conducted the surprise was complete." Perhaps you may imagine, gentle reader, that this was a surprise of the enemy. No such matter. They knew every step of his motions, and had, every man of them, left their fires and huts in the fields, and retired into the fort. But the major and his seven hundred men, they were surprised,—first to find nobody there at night, and next to find themselves surrounded and cut to pieces in the morning, two or three hundred being killed, drowned, or taken prisoners, and among the latter the major himself. Those who escaped were also surprised at their own good fortune; and the whole army was surprised at the major's bad

management. Thus the surprise was indeed complete, but not the disgrace; for provincials were there to lay the blame on. The misfortune (we must not call it misconduct) of the major was owing, it seems, to an unnamed and, perhaps, unknown provincial officer, who, it is said, "disobeyed his orders and quitted his post." Whence a formal conclusion is drawn, "that a planter is not to be taken from the plough and made an officer on a day." Unhappy provincials! If success attends where you are joined with the regulars, they claim all the honour, though not a tenth part of your number. If disgrace, it is all yours, though you happen to be a small part of the whole, and have not the command; as if regulars were in their nature invincible when not mixed with provincials, and provincials of no kind of value without regulars. Happy is it for you that you were neither present at Prestonpans nor Falkirk, at the faint attempt against Rochfort, the rout of St. Cas, or the hasty retreat from Martinico. Every thing that went wrong, or did not go right, would have been ascribed to you. Our commanders would have been saved the labour of writing long apologies for their conduct. It might have been sufficient to say, provincials were with us.

A New Englandman.

May 9, 1769.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLX

TO MISS MARY STEVENSON

Tuesday Morning, 27 June, 1769.

Dear Polly:—

Agreeably to your orders, delivered to me very punctually by Temple, I return you enclosed, Voltaire's verses. The translation I think full as good as the original. Remember that I am to have them again.

I take this opportunity to send you, also, a late paper, containing a melancholy account of the distresses of some seamen. You will observe in it the advantages they received from wearing their clothes constantly wet with salt water, under the total want of fresh water to drink. You may remember I recommended this practice many years ago. Do you know Dr. *Len*, and did you communicate it to him? I fancy his name is wrong spelt in this paper, and that it should be *Lind*, having seen in the *Review* some extracts from a book on sea diseases, published within these two or three years, by one Dr. Lind; but I have not seen the book, and know not whether such a passage be in it.

I need not point out to you an observation in favor of our doctrine, that you will make on reading this paper, that, *having little to eat*, these poor people in wet clothes day and night *caught no cold*.

My respects to your aunt, and love to all that love you. Yours affectionately,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXI

TO THE COMMITTEE OF MERCHANTS IN PHILADELPHIA

London, 9 July, 1769.

Gentlemen:—

I received yours of the 18th of April enclosing copies of the articles of your agreements with respect to importation, and of your letter to the merchants here. The letter was published, and universally spoken well of, as a well-written, sensible, manly, and spirited performance; and I believe the publication has been of service to our cause. You are in my opinion perfectly right in your supposition, that “the redress of American grievances likely to be proposed by the ministry will at first only be partial; and that it is intended to retain some of the revenue duties, in order to establish a right of Parliament to tax the colonies.” But I hope that, by persisting steadily in the measure you have so laudably entered into, you will, if backed by the general honest resolution of the people to buy British goods of no others, but to manufacture for themselves, or use colony manufactures only, be the means, under God, of recovering and establishing the freedom of our country entire, and of handing it down complete to posterity.

And in the meantime the country will be enriched by its industry and frugality. These virtues will become habitual. Farms will be more improved, better stocked, and rendered more productive by the money that used to be spent in superfluities. Our artificers of every kind will be enabled to carry on their business to more advantage; gold and silver will become more plenty among us, and trade will revive, after things shall be well settled, and become better and safer than it has lately been; for an industrious, frugal people are best able to buy, and pay best for what they purchase. With great regard, I have the honor, to be, &c.,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXII

TO JOHN BARTRAM

London, 9 July, 1769.

Dear Friend:—

It is with great pleasure I understand by your favor of April 10th that you continue to enjoy so good a share of health. I hope it will long continue. And although it may not now be suitable for you to make such wide excursions as heretofore, you may yet be very useful to your country and to mankind, if you sit down quietly at home, digest the knowledge you have acquired, and compile and publish the many observations you have made, and point out the advantages that may be drawn from the whole, in public undertakings or particular private practice. It is true, many people are fond of accounts of old buildings and monuments; but there is a number who would be much better pleased with such accounts as you could afford them. And, for one, I confess that if I could find in any Italian travels a receipt for making Parmesan cheese, it would give me more satisfaction than a transcript of any inscription from any old stone whatever.

I suppose Mr. Michael Collinson, or Dr. Fothergill, has written to you what may be necessary for your information relating to your affairs here. I imagine there is no doubt but the King's bounty to you will be continued; and that it will be proper for you to continue sending now and then a few such curious seeds as you can procure, to keep up your claim. And now I mention seeds, I wish you would send me a few of such as are least common, to the value of a guinea, which Mr. Foxcroft will pay you for me. They are for a particular friend, who is very curious. If in any thing I can serve you here, command freely. Your affectionate friend,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXIII

TO JAMES BOWDOIN

London, 13 July, 1769.

Dear Sir:—

I am honored with yours of May 10th, and agree with you perfectly in your sentiments of public affairs. Government here seems now to be growing more moderate with regard to America, and I am persuaded that, by a steady, prudent conduct, we shall finally obtain all our important points, and establish American liberty on a clearer and firmer foundation. The folly of the late measures begins to be seen and understood at court; their promoters grow out of credit, and the trading part of the nation, with the manufacturers, are become sensible how necessary it is for their welfare to be on good terms with us. The petitioners of Middlesex and of London have numbered among their grievances the *unconstitutional* taxes on America, and similar petitions are expected from all quarters. So that I think we need only be quiet, and persevere in our schemes of frugality and industry, and the rest will do itself.

Your governor¹ is recalled, and it is said the commissioners² will follow soon, or be new modelled with *some more* men of discretion among them. I am just setting out on a journey of five or six weeks, and have now only time to add that I am, with the greatest esteem and regard, dear Sir, &c.,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXIV

TO M. DUBOURG³

London, 30 August, 1769.

This letter will be forwarded to you by Dr. Lettsom, a young American physician of much merit, and one of the peaceable sect of Quakers. You will therefore at least regard him as a curiosity, even though you should have embraced all the opinions of the majority of your countrymen concerning these people.

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXV

FROM MISS MARY STEVENSON TO B. FRANKLIN

Margate, 1 September, 1769.

Welcome to England! my dear, my honored friend. Just as I began a letter to my mother, I received the news of your arrival.¹ I have the same confidence in my parent that the Esquimaux woman had in hers; for if my mother did not know "I always speak truth," I could not venture to say what she might be apt to doubt. I confess she has some reason to complain of me; I *must* not complain of her; I have written to her but once since I came hither, and she ——. A blank will conclude that sentence. I have had the satisfaction to hear of her by several of my correspondents. I hope you will intercede for me, that I may not be severely rebuked. Indeed, my expedition has afforded me so little entertainment, that I could not have given her any by my letters, and I know she is not so well affected to the government as to wish to increase the revenue without some advantage to herself. She is a very good subject, notwithstanding; and a faithful disciple of yours in all points, but that of tribute. There her daughter exceeds her; for, convinced by your arguments, I turn a deaf ear to all invitations to smuggling, and in such a place as this it is well to have one's honesty guarded.

As I have cast a censure upon the inhabitants of this place, I must, for the honor of my landlord and his family, tell you that they condemn and avoid those illicit practices, which are too common here. Indeed the exemplary conduct of these good people would make me join their sect, if reason would qualify me for it; but they are happily got into the flights of enthusiasm, which I cannot reach. They are certainly the happiest people, and I should be glad to be like them; but my reason will not suffer me, and my heart prevents my playing the hypocrite; so your Polly must remain as she is, neither in the world, nor out of it. How strangely I let my pen run on to a philosopher! But that philosopher is my friend, and I may write what I please to him.

I met with a very sensible physician yesterday, who prescribes abstinence for the cure of consumptions. He must be clever, because he thinks as *we* do. I would not have you or my mother surprised, if I should run off with this young man. To be sure it would be an imprudent step, at the discreet age of thirty; but there is no saying what one should do, if solicited by a man of an

insinuating address and good person, though he may be too young for one, and not yet established in his profession. He engaged me so deeply in conversation, and I was so much pleased with him, that I thought it necessary to give you warning, though I assure you he has made no *proposal*.[1](#)

How I rattle! This flight must be owing to this new acquaintance, or to the joy of hearing my old one is returned to this country. I know which I attribute it to, for I can tell when my spirits were enlivened; but you may think as you please, if you will believe me to be, dear Sir, your truly affectionate humble servant,

Mary Stevenson.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXVI

TO MISS MARY STEVENSON

Saturday Evening, 2 September, 1769.

Just come home from a venison feast, where I have drunk more than a philosopher ought, I find my dear Polly's cheerful, chatty letter, that exhilarates me more than all the wine.

Your good mother says there is no occasion for any intercession of mine in your behalf. She is sensible that she is more in fault than her daughter. She received an affectionate, tender letter from you, and she has not answered it, though she intended to do it; but her head, not her heart, has been bad, and unfitted her for writing. She owns that she is not so good a subject as you are, and that she is more unwilling to pay tribute to Cæsar, and has less objection to smuggling. But it is not, she says, mere selfishness or avarice; it is rather an honest resentment at the waste of those taxes in pensions, salaries, perquisites, contracts, and other emoluments for the benefit of people she does not love, and who do not deserve such advantages, because—I suppose—because they are not of her party.

Present my respects to your good landlord and his family. I honor them for their conscientious aversion to illicit trading. There are those in the world who would not wrong a neighbour, but make no scruple of cheating the King. The reverse, however, does not hold; for whoever scruples cheating the King, will certainly not wrong his neighbour.

You ought not to wish yourself an enthusiast. They have, indeed, their imaginary satisfactions and pleasures, but these are often balanced by imaginary pains and mortification. You can continue to be a good girl, and thereby lay a solid foundation for expected future happiness, without the enthusiasm that may perhaps be necessary to some others. As those beings who have a good sensible instinct have no need of reason, so those who have reason to regulate their actions have no occasion for enthusiasm. However, there are certain circumstances in life, sometimes, where it is perhaps best not to hearken to reason. For instance: possibly, if the truth were known, I have reason to be jealous of this same insinuating, handsome young physician; but, as it flatters more my vanity, and therefore gives me more pleasure, to suppose you were in spirits on account of my safe return, I shall turn a deaf ear to

reason in this case, as I have done with success in twenty others. But I am sure you will always give me reason enough to continue your ever affectionate friend,

B. Franklin.

P. S.—Our love to Mrs. Tickell. We shall long for your return. Your Dolly was well last Tuesday; the girls were there on a visit to her; I mean at Bromley. Adieu. No time now to give you any account of my French journey.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXVII

TO CADWALLADER EVANS

London, 7 September, 1769.

Dear Sir:—

I now have before me your favors of June 11th and June 15th. I thank you for communicating to me the observations of the transit made by Messrs. Biddle and Bayley. I gave them immediately to Mr. Maskelyne, the Astronomer Royal, who will compare and digest the whole received from different parts of the world, and report thereon to the Royal Society. They are the only ones I have received from our Society; those made by the others were sent to Mr. Penn. Being last week with Mr. Maskelyne, at Flamsteed House, I found he had got them. I shall send him to-day the corrected account, which I have since received from you by way of Liverpool.

I should be very sorry that any thing of party remained in the American Philosophical Society after the union. Here the Royal Society is of all parties, but party is entirely out of the question in all our proceedings.¹

It grieves me to hear that our friend Galloway is in so bad a state of health. He should make a long journey, or take a sea voyage. I wish he would come to London for the winter.

Mr. Henry's *Register*, which you communicated to me last year, is thought a very ingenious one, and will be published here, though it has long been delayed. I have not seen Mrs. Dowell. I suppose she is not yet come to town. At least I have not heard of her being here, though possibly she might while I was in France.

Our friend W—, who is always complaining of a constant fever, looks nevertheless fresh and jolly, and does not fall away in the least. He was saying the other day at Richmond (where we were together dining with Governor Pownall) that he had been pestered with a fever almost continually for these three years past, and that it gave way to no medicines; all he had taken, advised by different physicians, having never any effect towards removing it. On which I asked him if it was not now time to inquire whether he had really any fever at all. He is indeed the only instance I ever knew of a man growing fat upon a fever. But I see no occasion for reading him the lecture you desired, for he appears to me extremely temperate in

his eating and drinking. His affairs here are I think in a good train, but every thing to be transacted in our great offices requires time. I suppose he will hardly be able to return before the spring.

By a ship just sailed from hence (the captain a stranger, whose name I have forgotten), I send you a a late French treatise on the management of silkworms. It is said to be the best hitherto published, being written in the silk country by a gentleman well acquainted with the whole affair. It seems to me to be, like many other French writings, rather too much drawn out in words; but some extracts from it, of the principal directions, might be of use, if you would translate and publish them. I think the bounty is offered for silk from all the colonies in general. I will send you the act. But I believe it must be wound from the cocoons, and sent over in skeins. The cocoons would spoil on the passage, by the dead worm corrupting and staining the silk. A public filature should be set up for winding them there; or every family should learn to wind their own. In Italy they are all brought to market, from the neighbouring country, and bought up by those that keep the filatures. In Sicily each family winds its own silk, for the sake of having the remains to card and spin for family use. If some provision were made by the Assembly for promoting the growth of mulberry trees in all parts of the provinces, the culture of silk might afterwards follow easily. For the great discouragement to breeding worms at first is the difficulty of getting leaves and the being obliged to go far for them.

There is no doubt with me but that it might succeed in our country. It is the happiest of all inventions for clothing. Wool uses a good deal of land to produce it, which, if employed in raising corn, would afford much more subsistence for man than the mutton amounts to. Flax and hemp require good land, impoverish it, and at the same time permit it to produce no food at all. But mulberry trees may be planted in hedgerows on walks or avenues, or for shade near a house, where nothing else is wanted to grow. The food for the worms, which produce the silk, is in the air, and the ground under the trees may still produce grass, or some other vegetable good for man or beast. Then the wear of silken garments continues so much longer, from the strength of the materials, as to give it greatly the preference. Hence it is that the most populous of all countries, China, clothes its inhabitants with silk, while it feeds them plentifully, and has besides a vast quantity, both raw and manufactured, to spare for exportation. Raw silk here, in skeins well wound, sells from twenty to twenty-five shillings per pound; but if badly wound is not worth five shillings. Well wound is, when the threads are made to cross each other every way in the skein, and only touch where they cross. Badly wound is, when they are laid parallel to each other; for so they are glued together, break in unwinding them, and take a vast deal of time more than the other,

by losing the end every time the thread breaks. When once you can
raise plenty of silk, you may have manufactures enough from
hence. With great esteem, I am, my dear friend, yours
affectionately,

B. Franklin.[1](#)

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXVIII

TO SAMUEL COOPER

London, 30 September, 1769.

Dear Sir:—

Your favor of August 3d has given me great pleasure. I have only time now to acknowledge the receipt of it, but purpose to write fully by the next opportunity. I am just returned from France, where I found our dispute much attended to, several of our pamphlets being translated and printed there, among the rest my *Examination*[1](#) and the *Farmer's Letters*,[2](#) with two of my pieces annexed, of which last I send you a copy. In short, all Europe (except Britain) appears to be on our side of the question. But Europe has its reasons. It fancies itself in some danger from the growth of British power, and would be glad to see it divided against itself. Our prudence will, I hope, long postpone the satisfaction our enemies expect from our dissensions. With sincere and great esteem, I am, dear Sir, &c.,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXIX

ON VENTILATION

I do not know that we have in any author particular and separate directions concerning the ventilating of hospitals, crowded rooms, or dwelling-houses, or the making of proper drains for carrying off stagnant or putrid water. The want of such general information on these subjects has induced me to endeavour to recollect all I can of the many instructive conversations I have had upon these matters with that judicious and most accurate observer of nature, Dr. Benjamin Franklin. I do this in hopes that either the Doctor himself or some other person well qualified for the task may follow the example set in so masterly a manner by Sir John Pringle, Baronet, when speaking on the preservation of the health of seamen.

It has long been observed that if a number of persons are shut up in a small room, of which the internal air has little or no communication with the external, the respiration of those who are so confined renders by degrees the air of that room effete and unfit for the support of life.

Dr. Franklin was, if I mistake not, the first who observed that respiration communicated to the air a quality resembling the mephitic, such as the *Grotto del Cane*, near Naples. The air impressed with this quality rises only to a certain height, beyond which it gradually loses it. The amendment begins in the upper part, and descends gradually until the whole becomes capable of sustaining life. The Doctor confirmed this by the following experiment. He breathed gently through a tube into a deep glass mug, so as to impregnate all the air in the mug with this quality. He then put a lighted *bougie* into the mug, and upon touching the air therein the flame was instantly extinguished. By frequently repeating this operation the *bougie* gradually preserved its light longer in the mug, so as in a short time to retain it to the bottom of it, the air having totally lost the bad quality it had contracted from the breath blown into it.

At the same time that the lower part of the air is thus affected, an acrid, noxious quality may be communicated to its upper part in the room, occasioned by the volatile putrescent effluvia of the persons enclosed therein. "It is surprising," says Sir John Pringle, in his *Observations on the Diseases of the Army*, fourth edition, p. 109, "in how few days the air will be corrupted in close and crowded wards; and what makes it hard to remedy the evil, is the difficulty

of convincing either nurses or the sick themselves, of the necessity of opening the windows and doors at any time for a supply of fresh air."

It may be inferred from the above account of mephitic air, that such air can be but little altered by a ventilator in the ceiling of a room; and Dr. Franklin justly concluded, that in crowded rooms, and especially in bedrooms in dwelling-houses, a current of air should be kept up in the lower part of the rooms, to carry off what is thus affected. He approved of the use of chimneys for this purpose, especially when the current is quickened by a fire. Even when there is not any fire in the chimney, a current of air is constantly kept up in it, by its ascending or descending in the flue, as the weight of the internal or external air preponderates. This creates a kind of tide in the flue, conducing much to the healthiness of air in rooms; and hence we may see the injudiciousness of having chimney-boards which fit closely, and thereby prevent a salutary circulation in the air. Hence also in warm weather we may account for liquors or other things kept in a chimney being cooled, and more so if means are used to create an evaporation around them.

Every person has an atmosphere of his own, heated by the warmth of his body, which can be dissipated only by motion in the circumambient air. Thus in warm weather, wind cools the body, by carrying off the personal atmosphere, and promoting at the same time a more free evaporation of the effluvia arising from the body. This creates a great degree of coolness on the skin. The personal atmosphere can be but little affected by a ventilator in the ceiling of a room, unless the admission of external air is so directed as to act principally on the air surrounding those in the room. Dr. Franklin, when consulted on ventilating the House of Commons, represented that the personal atmosphere surrounding the members might be carried off by making outlets in the perpendicular parts of the seats, through which the air might be drawn off by ventilators so placed as to accomplish this without admitting any by the same channels. It will appear from what has been said, that windows placed high in the walls of churches or rooms intended for large assemblies, can contribute but little towards correcting the mephitic quality of the lower part of the air, or towards carrying off the personal atmospheres.

The experiments made for ventilating crowded rooms by that most beneficent of men, the Reverend Dr. Stephen Hales, bring evident proof how much the upper part of the air in such places is vitiated by the volatile putrescent effluvia arising from the persons present in such rooms. He at the same time showed an easy and effectual way to carry off such vitiated air. His ventilators were, however, attended with the inconveniency of occasioning smoky chimneys,

by drawing off so much air, that there was not a sufficiency left to keep a current strong enough to carry the smoke up the chimney, unless a door or window was left open. The circulating ventilators in windows were intended for refreshing the air in rooms, without affecting the current of air up the chimney; but they did not affect the mephitic air, nor the higher air near the ceiling of lofty rooms, which is most vitiated with putrescent particles; and they were besides often out of repair.

Instead of either of these, Dr. Franklin proposed that openings should be made close to the ceilings of rooms communicating with a flue, which should ascend in the wall close to the flues of the chimneys, and, where it can be done conveniently, close to the flue of the kitchen chimney; because the fire, burning pretty constantly there, would keep the sides of that flue warmer than those of the other chimneys; whereby a quicker current of air would be kept up in the ventilating flue. Such a flue might be carried from the vaults or under ground offices. This would render them drier, without altering their temperature much as to heat or cold. These ventilating flues would cause a constant discharge of the volatile putrescent *effluvia* without interfering with the current of air up the chimneys; while the current towards the chimney would carry off the *mephitic* air below. These ventilating flues would be peculiarly beneficial in bedrooms of which the ceilings are low.

Dr. Franklin mentioned an instance of a number of Germans, who on their arrival in Pennsylvania were obliged to live in a large barn; there being at that time no other place of residence fit for them. Several small windows were made on both sides of the barn under the eaves. These windows were kept constantly open, even during a severe frost in the winter; and this without any detriment to the health of the Germans. Prejudice, said he, has raised so great a dread against cold air in England, that such openings would make every person shudder at the thought of being exposed to so great a degree of cold; and therefore I did not dare to recommend a practice, the good effects of which I had known. The dormitory for the youths of Westminster School is a similar instance; for the glass put in their high lofty windows is soon broken, but seldom repaired; yet without prejudice to the health of the youths.

There is a channel by which much of the vitiated air escapes, and is but little attended to. Whoever looks at the ceilings of rooms in old houses, will soon discover the traces of the rafters, by a difference in color, in parts of the ceiling, for wherever there is not a solid resistance to the passage of the air, much of it gets off through the ceiling, and deposits in it part of its contents, which discolors the intervals between the joists. In the British Museum there is a remarkable instance of the inconveniency of the want of this outlet.

The ceiling of one of the rooms in that house is covered with a picture, or painted cloth. The room continues warm with little fire; but the air soon affects the respiration of valetudinarians, as was often remarked by that accurate observer, Dr. G. Knight, late principal librarian.

Vaulted rooms may be considered in this light; because the materials of which the arch is built must generally be solid. If the arch is built of stones, and these are exposed to the air, as they cannot so soon as wood or brick become of the temperature of the air, as to heat and cold, the vault must become wet on every change of the air, from cold to warm, as every one may observe in the walls and furniture of rooms in which fire is not kept. The vault may thus become a frequent source of moisture, which, mixing with the air, may gradually descend into the room, and become very prejudicial to the health of persons of weak constitutions, who may inhabit such rooms.

An attentive observer will soon be convinced that there is a current of warm air which ascends in the room from the chimney, while a fire burns. Dr. Franklin showed that this was the case by the following experiment: He suspended, by a thread, a piece of pasteboard cut in a spiral form. The thread was fastened to the chimney-piece, so that the pasteboard, drawn out in a spiral form, came near to the edge of the chimney. The constant current of warm air, heated by the fire, gave a continued circular motion to the pasteboard. This warm air, ascending to the ceiling, there spread, and kept a constant motion in the upper part of the air. The warm air thus ascending, coming into contact with the cool walls, and being thereby condensed, becomes heavier and so falls along the sides of the walls. Also the glass in windows, being exposed to the temperature of the external air, in cold weather becomes colder than any other part of the room; therefore the internal air more sensibly descends, as may be seen by approaching a lighted *bougie* to a window. The flame is then carried downwards by the air; or, if the flame is extinguished, the smoke will more clearly show this truth, by descending along the window till it meets the air of an equal temperature. This will be the case, however tight the window; and the more so, the brighter and stronger the fire is, and the colder the external air; the circulation of the air being thereby quickened. This accounts for the familiar caution of avoiding to sit in or near a window. This circulation of the air is yet more evidently proved by the following instance. When there is a bright strong fire in a close room, open the door and present immediately a lighted candle to the upper part of the door-way, the flame will bend outward; though warm air in the higher part rushes out, lower the candle gradually, and the strength of the current outward will lessen by degrees, as the candle is lowered, till it comes to a space

in which the flame shall rise upright; continue to lower the candle gradually, and then the current of cold air inward will gradually increase and more strongly bend the flame of the candle inward. This will be the case even in frosty and windy weather. May it not be inferred from this circumstance of so strong a current of air outwards in the upper part of the door-way, that an opening over or in the upper part of the door in the ward of a hospital might be of advantage, especially if there is no ventilating flue in the ceiling? By such means a circulation of the air in the upper part of the ward could be constantly kept up; and thereby a vent would be given to the volatile putrescent particles. This vent might be left open at all times, without any prejudice to the patients.

What is said on this subject by Dr. John Armstrong, a gentleman no less remarkable for his benevolence than for his judgment and fine taste, may be properly mentioned here. "A constant circulation of fresh air is so necessary, so important in fevers and in all feverish disorders, that it ought to be particularly considered in the construction of houses. It would be well, if in all the apartments of every house, but especially in bed-chambers, the upper sashes of every window were contrived to let down; for by this means the admission of fresh air would at all times be perfectly safe, except during a raw, damp, foggy night; as the body, even when under such a sweat as could not without danger be interrupted, may receive all the refreshing, restorative, and invigorating influence of the air, without being exposed to a stream of it; meantime, where this is wanting, the best method to supply it is by drawing the bed-curtains close, now and then, for a few minutes at a time, while a free passage is made to the foul air, by opening the doors and windows."—*Medical Essays*, p. 22.

The noxious vapors that fill a sick-room are not only offensive but dangerous to those who continue in it for any time. If dangerous to people then in health, how detrimental must they be to one oppressed and struggling under an enfeebling disease! It is a common thing in a campaign to distribute the sick soldiers, ill of malignant fevers, in open barns, where the putrid volatile poison is in a short time dissipated.

There is, in a volume of the *Mémoires et Observations recueillies par la Société Economique de Berne*, a letter concerning the health of the inhabitants of the *Pays de Vaud*; part of which I beg to present here, as bearing a near analogy to this subject. The letter is written by a most accurate and judicious clergyman. "One fact," says he, "deserves to be noticed. Taking one year with another, a greater proportional number always die in towns than in villages. But whence comes it that, when epidemic diseases prevail, the mortality takes quite a different road; that is, it is much more

considerable in villages than in towns? I have taken great pains to find out the cause of this phenomenon, and am apt to impute the difference to the difference of habitations. The poor in cities and great towns dwell in houses not originally intended for them; but which, being so old and past repairing, as to be no longer tenantable by persons at their ease, fall to the lot of the lower class of people. In these houses the rooms are spacious, cold as ice, where the air plays freely around, with doors and windows that do not half shut. The inhabitants of these shattered houses are pitied; and yet the very circumstance of their being out of repair, is what contributes to the health of those who live in them, and facilitates their cure when diseases reign.”

The more I see of hospitals, the more I am convinced of the great want of instructions on duly ventilating them. It is surprising to see what little attention has been paid in some hospitals about London to this article, which have been built since the importance of ventilation has been well known. In all of them there is too great a distance between the windows and the ceilings, where the volatile putrescent particles may remain till they become very acrid. With pleasure I here do justice to the judgment and precaution of Messrs. Adam, in the manner of ventilating the great room built by them for the meeting of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, &c., by leaving spaces between the panes of glass in the sky-lights, the panes overlaying each other. These spaces being concealed from the eye, do not alarm those fearful of cold air, and keep the room constantly sweet.

The hospitals most judiciously built in this respect, which I have seen, are those in Philadelphia and in Lyons. In the hospital in Philadelphia the wards are two stories high, with two rows of windows in each, the upper row being kept generally open: and the windows in the hospital at Lyons are very lofty, so that the upper sashes may be for the most part kept open. Both hospitals are by this means perfectly sweet; so sweet that a military gentleman, who went with me into the hospital at Lyons, and was unaccustomed to sick-rooms, declared that the air in the ward was not disagreeable to him, though it contained a considerable number of sick. Indeed they were kept very clean. I am sorry to say this is not the case in any one of our hospitals.

The naval hospital at Gibraltar, is a square, which in a hot climate is itself a great imperfection, as the air within the square must, in summer especially, be greatly heated; and, as if they had studied to keep the cool air out of the wards, the windows open into the square only; whereas, if the west side had been left open, the wards might have received the cool breezes from the Bay. The sick are lodged in long galleries not sufficiently divided to have the

patients in separate wards, and no openings to carry off the putrid air lodged among the rafters which support the roof.

On my arrival in the island of Minorca, as surgeon to the royal artillery there, I was surprised at the neglect of my predecessors in that office in regard to ventilating the hospital. There were no openings in the wards in which the sick lay but the windows and doors, which were necessarily shut every night, to prevent the irregularities soldiers might be guilty of. Where chimneys had been they were built up to prevent the expense of fires; and thus, during the night, the sick lay in absolutely confined air. The consequence was that when the nurse opened the wards in the morning she was obliged to withdraw instantly, for the highly infected air often brought on vomiting. In this case I applied to our most worthy and ingenious chief engineer, the late Colonel Mackellar for leave to use such means as might create a circulation of air in all the wards. In this he readily concurred, and ordered the necessary alterations.

In each ward in which the flue of the chimney remained, an opening of about four or five inches square was made through the wall into the flue, as near the ceiling as possible. Round holes of about three inches diameter were cut low in each door, covered with a sliding flap to shut the holes occasionally. In some of the wards there never had been chimneys. In these, holes were cut through the wall close to the ceiling, which opened into a common passage; and when two such wards were contiguous, a hole was cut through the dividing wall as well as in the door of each ward. One of the wards in which there had not been a chimney, and which was arched with stones, was constantly so damp that no use was made of it. The walls and arch were covered with green moss. They were afterwards scraped, to clear them of the moss which retained moisture, and then covered with lime. This room became so dry, that though locked up for three months, during which I was confined with the gout, books and papers which had remained in it were at the end of that time perfectly dry. The generally agreeable effects of this opening can scarcely be conceived; the wards, and indeed the whole hospital, being rendered perfectly sweet, greatly to the benefit of the sick, as well as to the pleasure of the attendants.

The barracks in the square of the Castle St. Philip, in which are lodged the detachment of the regiment of artillery doing duty there, are dry, except that, being built of stone, they collect moisture on every sudden change of the air from cold to warm. Each barrack opens into the square, and is divided into three apartments. The part next the door has the whole height, and in it their arms and necessaries are kept. The inner part, being about one half, is divided into two floors. In the lower room they cook,

each barrack having a mess or family in it, some of whom sleep in it. The fire, and the free access between it and the door, keep up a due circulation here. In the upper room most of the men sleep under a stone arch, the room being little more than six feet high in the centre, and therefore much lower in the sides. Under that arch from four to six or eight persons sleep, especially when there are children. This room is very stifling, there being little circulation of air in it, more especially in calm, warm weather, such as the nights generally are there in summer. In order to create a circulation of air in this upper room, openings were made into the flues of the chimneys of the lower room, as near the centre of the arch as possible, the chimneys being in the corner of the rooms below. In general these openings drew very well, and gave great relief, especially to those who had weak or diseased lungs. The proper remedy here would have been to have had small flues made near the flues of the chimneys below, could it have been done. This measure is too much neglected in all barracks.

Whoever may on any future occasion have the direction of military hospitals, is already furnished with such judicious directions by my learned friends Sir John Pringle, Baronet, and Dr. Donald Munro, that, were I to say any thing on that subject, I could only copy whole pages from them. Sir John Pringle's speech on giving the gold medal of the Royal Society to Captain Cook, in which he took occasion to point out the means of preserving the health of seamen, is equally deserving of commendation.

The healthiness of buildings does not perhaps depend more on the due ventilation of the rooms than it does on the dryness of the situation and of the foundation. Sir John Pringle, in the first part of his *Observations on the Diseases of the Army*, has given several instances of this truth. But as every man who regards his own life and health, or the lives and health of others, should be well acquainted with that work, I shall refer to the original. I have often lamented that the first part of that book, describing the natural consequences of the situation of places and their effects on health, has not been published separately, because it might thereby become of more general use to every man who leads country life, or resorts thither frequently to enjoy quiet; for being part of a book professedly treating of diseases, few think of consulting it, except whose business it is to cure diseases.

However inviting the situation may be, and whatever may be the quality of the ground on which houses are built, generally drains should be made all around the house deeper than the foundation of the building, to carry off the superfluous moisture, even the moisture that may be lodged under the ground; for it is essentially necessary that the lower part of the house be kept continually dry.

The advantages of drains or sewers are remarkably felt in London, which, before the fire of London, was frequently afflicted with contagious malignant fevers. Before that period all the waste water and filth remained above ground, and the people, as Erasmus complained, were very inattentive to keeping their houses clean. The wooden houses projected so much over the then very narrow streets that the air became almost stagnant, and must have been loaded with putrid effluvia, there being very little circulation or current in the air, thus confined, to carry off these effluvia.

Before the city was rebuilt, that ingenious architect, Sir Christopher Wren, planned and built the common sewers, as they continue to this day; and they are a lasting monument of his judgment and attention to the health and welfare of its inhabitants. These, together with the removal of signs and signposts, new paving and cleansing the streets, have been attended with such happy effects that London and Westminster are now ranked among the most healthy spots in the island for grown persons whose lungs can bear the cloud of smoke which generally hovers over them, and thus the apparent great calamity of a fire became a singular blessing to the city of London.

The quantity of water brought into the city by the New River and other water-works, which runs daily to waste, helps to cleanse and keep the common sewers sweet, and thereby contributes much to the healthiness of the city. Though foreign to the subject, it may be observed that till the Restoration there were few gardens about London for supplying kitchen herbs. These became more numerous after that period, and still more so after the Revolution, a number of Dutch gardeners coming to England at that time. The quantity of vegetables supplied by these gardens contribute greatly to the healthiness of the citizens.

Rome would not perhaps have become mistress of so extraordinary an empire, situated as that city is near marshy grounds, had not the common sewers, which still attract the admiration of all travellers, been so early and judiciously built by Tarquinius Priscus, who may for that reason be called a second founder of Rome. The ancient Romans were particularly attentive to the draining and cultivating of these marshes, and they soon became the granary of ancient Rome; but being neglected during the invasions of the barbarous nations, they are now the reproach and just chastisement of the supine indolence and inactivity of the modern Romans.

Gravel, which is generally reckoned a dry and healthy foundation to build upon, is found by experience not to deserve that character at all times, unless deep drains are made to carry off the water of heavy rains long continued; for by such rains the gravel may be so

charged with water, especially in flat grounds, that the lower parts of the houses erected on such soils may prove damp. In all the flat grounds along the Thames the cellars are often filled with water after heavy rains; and if the water continues there stagnant till the animal or vegetable substances mixed with it begin to putrefy, aches, agues, and putrid fevers are the natural consequences. Though Kensington Palace stands high and on a declivity yet when King George the Second continued there till late in October, the lower parts of the house became damp, occasioned by the want of drains, and the servants became aguish. Stones which absorb and retain water, as the *Cantoon* stone in *Minorca* does, are in this respect similar to gravel. There was a remarkable instance of this in a magazine cut out of a solid rock of *Cantoon* stone in Georgetown, in *Minorca*. The magazine was covered with a well-limed arch and roof. Yet when the winter rains began to fall in November, the magazine was filled with water, as high as it was cut out of the rock. When drains were made to carry off the water, the magazine then became and continued to be sufficiently dry.

Might not low grounds on the banks of rivers, similar to those in Flanders, and so justly and judiciously complained of by Sir John Pringle, be rendered more healthy by drains dug as deep as low-water mark in the adjacent rivers? Sluices might be made in the banks of the river, to prevent the tides or floods from entering into the drains. It would be advisable to cover the drains, to prevent the noxious vapors arising from putrid vegetable or animal substances, which generally rot in open ditches. The earth thrown out of the drains might serve to cover them, when the channels for carrying off the water are properly constructed. By these means no surface would be lost for the growth of vegetables.

Willows, alders, and such trees as delight in a moist or wet soil may be planted on the banks of ditches, if any such are permitted to remain open, that their leaves may correct the putrid vapors arising from the stagnant water in the ditches. I fear, however, that in the autumn, when the effects of putrid vapors are most severely felt, the leaves of these trees, being then hardened by age, may in a great measure lose the power of correcting the putrid vapors. The late summer shoots may afford aid till the equinoxial rains clear the ditches of all filth. That trees have not the power of proving an effectual remedy against these putrid exhalations, the frequency of agues in the Low Countries, in every season, is a sufficient proof. If such trees grow on the banks of ditches, they should be kept in a pollard state, to admit of a free circulation of air.

An observation of Dr. Franklin's deserves a place here, especially as it is not generally attended to. The opinion is indeed against it. The banks of rivers which have a quick motion, and run on a clear

sandy bottom, are very agreeable and healthy situations; but the sides of rivers which have oozy bottoms, or marshy banks, or which are in the neighbourhood of extensive marshes, are to be avoided. When necessity or any peculiar advantage obliges people to build near such bad neighbours, the south side, says the Doctor, is the most eligible; because the warm southerly winds, which promote a tendency to putrefaction, and are the most frequent, blow the noxious vapors from the buildings; whereas the northerly winds, which blow but seldom compared with the former, and which generally blow strongly, check putrefaction, and speedily carry off noxious vapors.

It is now well known that the stench arising from stationary privies may be prevented by a cheap and easy method. The excrements may be received in tubs, so closely connected with the seat that no air can pass. The lower ends of the tub should be sunk below the surface of water contained in proper cisterns. The excrements are soon dissolved in water, and so carried off, *every time the privy is washed, which should be as often as it is used.*

In towns the stench of the common sewers is sometimes very offensive. This may be prevented by interrupting the current of air through them by means of sink-traps; the construction and utility of which are of late years well known in London. As sand or other filth may be apt to lodge in the deepened place, it should be so contrived as to be easily come at, in order to clear away every obstruction.

Let me add here to the method of correcting bad water, proposed by Dr. Munro in his *Essay on the Means of Preserving the Health of Soldiers*, the following easy method of keeping water clear and sweet, ascertained by several experiments made some years ago by the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, &c., in London. The method is to mix clay with the water in such quantities that when the clay is dissolved the hand immersed under the surface of the water shall not be seen. The clay subsiding, carries down with it all the impurities, and in a manner burying them, prevents their communicating any bad taste or smell to the water, which thereby continues long clear and sweet. Clay may probably correct stagnant water, and thereby preserve it clear and good in dry seasons, and may thus become very useful where there is no running water. If any bad taste or smell remains after the use of the clay, it may be carried off by one of the ventilators recommended for that purpose by the Reverend Dr. Hales. The clear water may be drawn off by a siphon or a cock, placed high enough not to touch the clay.

A. S.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXX

TO MISS MARY STEVENSON

Craven Street,

Saturday Evening, past ten.

The question you ask me is a very sensible one, and I shall be glad if I can give you a satisfactory answer. There are two ways of contracting a chimney: one, by contracting the opening *before* the fire; the other, by contracting the funnel *above* the fire. If the funnel above the fire is left open in its full dimensions, and the opening before the fire is contracted, then the coals, I imagine, will burn faster, because more air is directed through the fire, and in a stronger stream; that air which before passed over it, and on each side of it, now passing *through* it. This is seen in narrow stove chimneys, when a sacheverell or blower is used, which still more contracts the narrow opening. But if the funnel only *above* the fire is contracted, then, as a less stream of air is passing up the chimney, less must pass through the fire, and consequently it should seem that the consuming of the coals would rather be checked than augmented by such contraction. And this will also be the case when both the opening *before* the fire and the funnel *above* the fire are contracted, provided the funnel above the fire is more contracted in proportion than the opening before the fire.

So you see I think you had the best of the argument; and as you notwithstanding gave it up in complaisance to the company, I think you had also the best of the dispute. There are few, though convinced, that know how to give up, even an error, they have been once engaged in maintaining. There is therefore the more merit in dropping a contest where one thinks one's self right; it is at least respectful to those we converse with. And indeed all our knowledge is so imperfect, and we are from a thousand causes so perpetually subject to mistake and error, that positiveness can scarce ever become even the most knowing; and modesty in advancing any opinion, however plain and true we may suppose it, is always decent, and generally more like to procure assent. Pope's rule,

"To speak, though sure, with seeming diffidence,"

is therefore a good one; and, if I had ever seen in your conversation the least deviation from it, I should earnestly recommend it to your observation.

I Am, &C.,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXXI

QUERIES BY MR. STRAHAN RESPECTING AMERICAN AFFAIRS, AND DR. FRANKLIN'S ANSWERS

W. STRAHAN TO B. FRANKLIN¹

21 November, 1769.

Dear Sir:—

In the many conversations we have had together about our present disputes with North America, we perfectly agreed in wishing they may be brought to a speedy and happy conclusion. How this is to be done is not so easily ascertained.

Two objects, I humbly apprehend, his Majesty's servants have now in contemplation. First, to relieve the colonies from the taxes complained of, which they certainly had no hand in imposing. Secondly, to preserve the honor, the dignity, and the supremacy of the British legislature over all his Majesty's dominions.

As I know your singular knowledge of the subject in question, and am as fully convinced of your cordial attachment to his Majesty, and your sincere desire to promote the happiness equally of all his subjects, I beg you would, in your own clear, brief, and explicit manner, send me an answer to the following questions. I make this request now, because this matter is of the utmost importance, and must very quickly be agitated. And I do it with more freedom, as you know me and my motives too well to entertain the most remote suspicion that I will make an improper use of any information you shall hereby convey to me.

1.—Will not a repeal of all the duties (that on tea excepted, which was before paid here on exportation, and of course no new imposition) fully satisfy the colonists?¹ If you answer in the negative,

2.—Your reasons for that opinion?

3.—Do you think the only effectual way of composing the present differences is to put the Americans precisely in the situation they

were in before the passing of the late Stamp Act? If that is your opinion,

4.—Your reasons for that opinion?

5.—If this last method is deemed by the legislature and his Majesty's ministers to be repugnant to their duty as guardians of the just rights of the crown and of their fellow subjects, can you suggest any other way of terminating these disputes, consistent with the ideas of justice and propriety conceived by the King's subjects on both sides of the Atlantic?

6.—And, if this method was actually followed, do you not think it would actually encourage the violent and factious part of the colonists to aim at still farther concessions from the mother country?

7.—If they are relieved in part only, what do you, as a reasonable and dispassionate man, and an equal friend to both sides, imagine will be the probable consequences?

The answers to these questions, I humbly conceive, will include all the information I want, and I beg you will favor me with them as soon as may be. Every well-wisher to the peace and prosperity of the British empire, and every friend to our truly happy constitution, must be desirous of seeing even the most trivial causes of dissension among our fellow subjects removed. Our domestic squabbles, in my mind, are nothing to what I am speaking of. This you know much better than I do, and therefore I need add nothing farther to recommend this subject to your serious consideration. I am, with the most cordial esteem and attachment, dear Sir, your faithful and affectionate humble servant,

W. Strahan.

THE ANSWER

Craven Street,

29 November, 1769.

Dear Sir:—

Being just returned to town from a little excursion, I find yours of the 21st, containing a number of queries that would require a pamphlet to answer them fully. You, however, desire only brief answers, which I shall endeavour to give.

Previous to your queries you tell me that you appreciate his Majesty's servants have now "in contemplation, first, to relieve the colonists from the taxes complained of; secondly, to preserve the honor, the dignity, and the supremacy of the British legislature over all his Majesty's dominions." I hope your information is good, and that what you suppose to be in contemplation will be carried into execution by repealing all the laws that have been made for raising a revenue in America by authority of Parliament without the consent of the people there. The honor and dignity of the British legislature will not be hurt by such an act of justice and wisdom. The wisest councils are liable to be misled, especially in matters remote from their inspection. It is the persisting in an error, not the correcting it, that lessens the honor of any man or body of men.

The supremacy of that legislature, I believe, will be best preserved by making a very sparing use of it; never but for the evident good of the colonies themselves, or of the whole British empire; never for the partial advantage of Britain, to their prejudice. By such prudent conduct I imagine that supremacy may be gradually strengthened, and in time fully established; but otherwise, I apprehend it will be disputed, and lost in the dispute. At present the colonies consent and submit to it for the regulations of general commerce; but a submission to acts of Parliament was no part of their original constitution. Our former kings governed their colonies, as they had governed their dominions in France, without the participation of British parliaments. The Parliament of England never presumed to interfere in that prerogative till the time of the great rebellion, when they usurped the government of all the King's other dominions, Ireland, Scotland, &c. The colonies that held for the King, they conquered by force of arms, and governed afterwards as conquered countries; but New England, not having opposed the Parliament, was considered and treated as a sister-kingdom in amity with England, as appears by the Journals, *March 10th*, 1642.

1.—Will not a repeal of all the duties (that on tea excepted, which was before paid here on exportation, and, of course no new imposition) fully satisfy the colonists?

I think not.

2.—Your reasons for that opinion?

Because it is not the sum paid in that duty on tea that is complained of as a burden, but the principle of the act expressed in the preamble, viz., that those duties were laid for the better support of government and the administration of justice in the colonies.¹ This the colonists think unnecessary, unjust, and dangerous to their most important rights. *Unnecessary*, because in

all the colonies (two or three new ones excepted)¹ government and the administration of justice were, and always had been, well supported without any charge to Britain; *unjust*, as it has made such colonies liable to pay such charge for others, in which they had no concern or interest; *dangerous*, as such mode of raising money for those purposes tended to render their assemblies useless; for if a revenue could be raised in the colonies for all the purposes of government by act of Parliament, without grants from the people there, governors who do not generally love assemblies, would never call them. They would be laid aside; and when nothing should depend on the people's good-will to government, their rights would be trampled on; they would be treated with contempt.

Another reason why I think they would not be satisfied with such a partial repeal is, that their agreements not to import till the repeal takes place, include the whole, which shows that they object to the whole, and those agreements will continue binding on them if the whole is not repealed.

3.—Do you think the only effectual way of composing the present differences is to put the Americans precisely in the situation they were in before the passage of the late Stamp Act?

I think so.

4.—Your reasons for that opinion?

Other methods have been tried. They have been rebuked in angry letters. Their petitions have been refused or rejected by Parliament. They have been threatened with the punishments of treason by resolves of both Houses. Their assemblies have been dissolved, and troops have been sent among them; but all these ways have only exasperated their minds and widened the breach. Their agreements to use no more British manufactures have been strengthened; these measures, instead of composing differences, and promoting a good correspondence, have almost annihilated your commerce with those countries, and greatly endanger the national peace and general welfare.

5.—If this last method is deemed by the legislature and his Majesty's ministers to be repugnant to their duty, as guardians of the just rights of the crown and of their fellow subjects, can you suggest any other way of terminating these disputes, consistent with the ideas of justice and propriety, conceived by the King's subjects on both sides of the Atlantic?

I do not see how that method can be deemed repugnant to the rights of the crown. If the Americans are put into their former

situation, it must be by an act of Parliament; in the passing of which by the King, the rights of the crown are exercised, not infringed. It is indifferent to the crown whether the aids received from America are granted by Parliament here, or by the assemblies there, provided the *quantum* be the same; and it is my opinion that more will be generally granted there voluntarily, than can ever be exacted or collected from thence by authority of Parliament.

As to the rights of fellow subjects (I suppose you mean the people of Britain), I cannot conceive how those will be infringed by that method. They will still enjoy the right of granting their own money, and may still, if it pleases them, keep up their claim to the right of granting ours; a right they can never exercise properly for want of a sufficient knowledge of us, our circumstances and abilities, (to say nothing of the little likelihood there is that we should ever submit to it,) therefore a right that can be of no good use to them; and we shall continue to enjoy in fact the right of granting our money, with the opinion now universally prevailing among us, that we are free subjects of the King, and that fellow subjects of one part of his dominions are not sovereigns over fellow subjects in any other part.

If the subjects on the different sides of the Atlantic have different and opposite ideas of "justice and propriety," no one "method" can possibly be consistent with both. The best will be to let each enjoy their own opinions, without disturbing them, when they do not interfere with the common good.

6.—And, if this method were actually followed, do you not think it would encourage the violent and factious part of the colonists to aim at still farther concessions from the mother country?

I do not think it would. There may be a few among them that deserve the name of factious and violent, as there are in all countries; but these would have little influence, if the great majority of sober, reasonable people were satisfied. If any colony should happen to think that some of your regulations of trade are inconvenient to the general interest of the empire, or prejudicial to them without being beneficial to you, they will state these matters to Parliament in petitions as heretofore; but will, I believe, take no violent steps to obtain what they may hope for in time from the wisdom of government here. I know of nothing else they can have in view; the notion that prevails here of their being desirous to set up a kingdom or commonwealth of their own, is, to my certain knowledge, entirely groundless.

I therefore think that, on a total repeal of all duties laid expressly for the purpose of raising a revenue on the people of America

without their consent, the present uneasiness would subside; the agreements not to import would be dissolved, and commerce flourish as heretofore; and I am confirmed in this sentiment by all the letters I have received from America, and by the opinions of all the sensible people who have lately come from thence, crown officers excepted.

I know, indeed, that the people of Boston are grievously offended by the quartering of troops among them, as they think, contrary to law; and are very angry with the Board of Commissioners, who have calumniated them to government; but, as I suppose the withdrawing of those troops may be a consequence of reconciling measures taking place, and that the commission also will be either dissolved, if found useless, or filled with more temperate and prudent men, if still deemed useful and necessary; I do not imagine these particulars would prevent a return of the harmony so much to be wished.¹

7.—If they are relieved in part only, what do you, as a reasonable and dispassionate man, and an equal friend to both sides, imagine will be the probable consequences?

I imagine that repealing the offensive duties in part will answer no end to this country; the commerce will remain obstructed, and the Americans go on with their schemes of frugality, industry, and manufactures, to their own great advantage. How much that may tend to the prejudice of Britain, I cannot say; perhaps not so much as some apprehend, since she may in time find new markets. But I think, if the union of the two countries continues to subsist, it will not hurt the general interest; for whatever wealth Britain loses by the failing of its trade with the colonies, America will gain; and the crown will receive equal aids from its subjects upon the whole, if not greater.

And now I have answered your questions as to what may be, in my opinion, the consequence of this or that supposed measure, I will go a little farther, and tell you what I fear is more likely to come to pass in reality. I apprehend that the ministry, at least the American part of it, being fully persuaded of the right of Parliament, think it ought to be enforced, whatever may be the consequences; and at the same time do not believe there is even now any abatement of the trade between the two countries on account of these disputes; or that, if there is, it is small, and cannot long continue.

They are assured by the crown officers in America that manufactures are impossible there; that the discontented are few, and persons of little consequence; that almost all the people of property and importance are satisfied, and disposed to submit

quietly to the taxing power of Parliament; and that, if the revenue acts are continued, and those duties only that are called anti-commercial be repealed, and others perhaps laid in stead, the power ere long will be patiently submitted to, and the agreements not to import be broken, when they are found to produce no change of measures here.

From these and similar misinformations, which seem to be credited, I think it likely that no thorough redress of grievances will be afforded to America this session. This may inflame matters still more in that country; farther rash measures there may create more resentment here, that may produce not merely ill-advised dissolutions of their assemblies, as last year, but attempts to dissolve their constitution¹; more troops may be sent over, which will create more uneasiness; to justify the measures of government, your writers will revile the Americans in your newspapers, as they have already begun to do, treating them as miscreants, rogues, dastards, rebels, &c., to alienate the minds of the people here from them, and which will tend farther to diminish their affections to this country. Possibly, too, some of their warm patriots may be distracted enough to expose themselves by some mad action to be sent for hither; and government here be indiscreet enough to hang them, on the act of Henry the Eighth.²

Mutual provocations will thus go on to complete the separation; and instead of that cordial affection that once and so long existed, and that harmony, so suitable to the circumstances, and so necessary to the happiness, strength, safety, and welfare of both countries, an implacable malice and mutual hatred, such as we now see subsisting between the Spaniards and Portuguese, the Genoese and Corsicans, from the same original misconduct in the superior governments, will take place; the sameness of nation, the similarity of religion, manners, and language not in the least preventing in our case, more than it did in theirs.

I hope, however, that this may all prove false prophecy, and that you and I may live to see as sincere and perfect a friendship established between our respective countries, as has so many years subsisted between Mr. Strahan and his truly affectionate old friend,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXXII

STATE OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COLONIES¹

BY GOVERNOR POWNALL

WITH REMARKS BY DR. FRANKLIN

1. Wherever any Englishmen go forth without the realm, and make settlements *in partibus exteris*, “These settlements as English settlements, and these inhabitants as English subjects, (carrying with them the laws of the land wherever they form colonies, and receiving his Majesty’s protection by virtue of his royal charter”² or commissions of government,) “have and enjoy all liberties and immunities of free and natural subjects, to all intents, constructions, and purposes whatsoever, as if they and every of them were born within the realm,”³ and are bound by the like allegiance as every other subject of the realm.

Remark.—The settlers of colonies in America did not carry with them the *laws of the land*, as being bound by them wherever they should settle. They left the realm to avoid the inconveniences and hardships they were under, where some of those laws were in force; particularly ecclesiastical laws, those for payment of tithes, and others. Had it been understood that they were to carry these laws with them, they had better have stayed at home among their friends, unexposed to the risk and toils of a new settlement. They carried with them a right to such parts of laws of the land, as they should judge advantageous or useful to them; a right to be free from those they thought hurtful; and a right to make such others, as they should think necessary, not infringing the general rights of Englishmen; and such *new* laws they were to form as agreeable as might be to the laws of England.

2. Therefore, the common law of England, and all such statutes as were enacted and in force at the time which such settlers went forth, and such colonies and plantations were established, (except as hereafter excepted,) together with all such alterations and amendments as the said common law may have received, is from time to time, and at all times, the law of those colonies and plantations.

So far as they have adopted it; by express laws or by practice.

3. Therefore all statutes touching the right of the succession, and settlement of the crown, with the statutes of treason relating thereto; all statutes regulating or limiting the general powers and authority of the crown, and the exercise of jurisdiction thereof; all statutes declaratory of the rights and liberty of the subject; do extend to all British subjects in the colonies and plantations as of common right, and as if they and every of them were born within the realm.

It is doubted whether any settlement of the crown by Parliament takes place in the colonies, otherwise than by the consent of the assemblies there. Had the rebellion in 1745 succeeded so far as to settle the Stuart family again on the throne, by act of Parliament, I think the colonies would not have thought themselves bound by such an act. They would still have adhered to the present family, as long as they could.

[*Observation in Reply.*—They are bound to the King and his successors, and we know no succession but by act of Parliament.—T. P.]

4. All statutes enacted since the establishment of colonies and plantations, do extend to and operate within the said colonies and plantations, in which statutes the same are specially named.

It is doubted whether any act of Parliament should *of right* operate in the colonies; *in fact*, several of them have and do operate.

5. Statutes and customs which respect only the special and local circumstances of the realm, do not extend to and operate within said colonies and plantations, where no such special and local circumstances are found. Thus the ecclesiastical and canon law, and all statutes respecting tithes; the laws respecting courts baron and copyholds; the game acts; the statutes respecting the poor, and settlements; and all other laws and statutes having special reference to special and local circumstances and establishments within the realm; do not extend to and operate within these settlements, *in partibus exteris*, where no such circumstances or establishments exist.

These laws have no force in America; not merely because local circumstances differ, but because they have never been adopted, or brought over, by acts of Assembly or by practice in the courts.

6. No statutes made since the establishment of said colonies and plantations (except as above described in Articles 3 and 4) do extend to and operate within said colonies and plantations.

Query.—Would any statute made since the establishment of said colonies and plantations, which statute imported to annul and abolish the powers and jurisdictions of their respective constitutions of government, where the same was not contrary to the laws, or any other wise forfeited or abated; or which statute imported to take away, or did take away, the rights and privileges of the settlers as British subjects; would such statute, as of right, extend to and operate within said colonies and plantations?

No. The Parliament has no such power. The charters cannot be altered but by consent of both parties, the King and the colonies.

Upon the matters of fact, right, and law, as above stated, it is, that the British subjects thus settled *in partibus exteris* without the realm, so long as they are excluded from an entire union with the realm, as parts of and within the same, have a right to have (as they have) and be governed by (as they are) a *distinct entire civil government*; of the like powers, pre-eminences, and jurisdictions (conformable to the like rights, privileges, immunities, franchises, and civil liberties) as are to be found and are established in the British government, respecting the British subject within the realm.

Right.

Hence also it is that the rights of the subject, as declared in the Petition of Rights, that the limitation of the prerogative by the Act for Abolishing the Star-Chamber, and for regulating the Privy Council, &c.; that the Habeas Corpus Act, the Statute of Frauds, the Bill of Rights, do of common right extend to, and are in force within, said colonies and plantations.

Several of these rights are established by special colony laws. If any are not yet so established, the colonies have right to such laws; and, the covenant having been made in the charters by the King, for himself and his successors, such laws ought to receive the royal assent *as of right*.

Hence it is that the freeholders within the precincts of these jurisdictions have (as of right they ought to have) a *share in the power of making those laws* which they are to be governed by, by the right which they have of sending their representatives to act for them and to consent for them in all matters of legislation; which representatives, when met in general assembly, have, together with the crown, a right to perform and do all the like acts respecting the matters, things, and rights within the precincts of their jurisdiction, as the Parliament hath respecting the realm and British dominions.

Hence also it is that all the executive offices (from the supreme civil magistrate, as *locum tenens* to the King, down to that of constable and head-borough) must of right be established with all and the like powers, neither more nor less than as defined by the constitution and law, as in fact they are established.

Hence it is that the judicial offices and courts of justice, established within the precincts of said jurisdictions, have, as they ought of right to have, all those jurisdictions and powers, “as fully and amply, to all intents and purposes whatsoever, as the courts of King’s Bench, Common Pleas, and Exchequer, within his Majesty’s kingdom of England have, and ought to have; and are empowered to give judgment and award execution thereupon.”¹

Hence it is that by the possession, enjoyment, and exercise of his Majesty’s great seal, delivered to his Majesty’s governor, there is established within the precincts of the respective jurisdictions all the same and like powers of Chancery (except where by charters specially excluded) as his Majesty’s chancellor within his Majesty’s kingdom of England hath, and of right ought to have, by delivery of the great seal of England. And hence it is that all the like rights, privileges, and powers follow the use, exercise, and application of the great seal of each colony and plantation within the precincts of said jurisdiction; as doth, and ought of right to, follow the use, exercise, and applications of the great seal.

Hence also it is that appeals in real actions, “whereby the lands, tenements, and hereditaments of British subjects may be drawn into question and disposed of,”¹ do not lie, as of right and by law they ought not to lie, to the King in Council.

Hence also it is that there is not any law now in being, whereby the subject within said colonies and plantations can be removed² from the jurisdiction to which he is amenable in all his rights, and through which his service and allegiance must be derived to the crown, and from which no appeal lies in criminal causes; so as that such subject may become amenable to a jurisdiction foreign to his natural and legal residency, to which he may be thereby transported, and under which he may be brought to trial and receive judgment, contrary to the rights and privileges of the subject, as declared by the spirit and intent, and especially by the 16th section of the Habeas Corpus Act. And if the person of any subject within the said colonies and plantations should be seized or detained by any power issuing from any court without the jurisdiction of the colony where he then had his legal residency, it would become the duty of the courts of justice *within* such colony (it is undoubtedly of their jurisdiction so to do) to issue the writ of Habeas Corpus.¹

Hence also it is that in like manner as “the command and disposition of the militia, and of all forces by sea and land, and of all forts and places of strength, is, and by the laws of England ever was, the undoubted right of his Majesty, and his royal predecessors, kings and queens of England, within all his Majesty’s realms and dominions² ; in like manner as the supreme military power and command (so far as the constitution knows of and will justify its establishment) is inseparably annexed to, and forms an essential part of, the office of supreme civil magistrate, the office of King; in like manner in all governments under the King, where the constituents are British subjects, and of full and perfect right entitled to the British laws and constitution, the supreme military command within the precincts of such jurisdictions must be inseparably annexed to the office of supreme civil magistrate (his Majesty’s regent, viceregent, lieutenant, or *locum tenens* in what form soever established), so that the King cannot, by any¹ commission of regency, by any commission or charter of government, separate or withdraw the supreme command of the military from the office of supreme civil magistrate, either by reserving this command in his own hands, to be exercised and executed independent of the civil power, or by granting a distinct commission to any military commander-in-chief, so as to be exercised and executed, but more especially not within such jurisdictions where such supreme military power (so far as the constitution knows and will justify the same) is *already* annexed and granted to the office of supreme civil magistrate.

And hence it is that the King cannot erect or establish any law martial or military command by any commission which may supersede, and not be subject to, the supreme civil magistrate within the respective precincts of the civil jurisdiction of said colonies and plantations, otherwise than in such manner as the said law martial and military commissions are annexed or subject to the supreme civil jurisdiction within his Majesty’s realms and dominions of Great Britain and Ireland; and hence it is that the establishment and exercise of such commands and commissions would be illegal.¹

The King has the command of all military force in his dominions; but in every distinct state of his dominions there should be the consent of the Parliament or Assembly (the representative body), to the raising and keeping up such military force. He cannot even raise troops and quarter them in another, without the consent of that other. He cannot of right bring troops raised in Ireland and quarter them in Britain, but with the consent of the Parliament of Britain; nor carry to Ireland, and quarter there, soldiers raised in Britain, without the consent of the Irish Parliament; unless in time of war and cases of extreme exigency. In 1756, when the Speaker

went up to present the money bills, he said, among other things, that "England was capable of fighting her own battles and defending herself; and, although ever attached to your Majesty's person, ever at ease under your just government, they cannot forbear taking notice of some circumstances in the present situation of affairs, which nothing but the confidence in your justice could hinder from alarming their most serious apprehensions. Subsidies to foreign princes, when already burdened with a debt scarce to be borne, cannot but be severely felt. An army of foreign troops, a thing unprecedented, unheard of, unknown, brought into England, cannot but alarm," &c., &c. (See the *Speech*.)

N.B.—These *foreign troops* were part of the King's subjects, Hanoverians, and all in *his* service; which is the same thing as . . .

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXXIII

OBSERVATIONS ON PASSAGES IN “AN INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE AND CAUSES OF THE DISPUTES BETWEEN THE BRITISH COLONIES IN AMERICA AND THEIR MOTHER COUNTRY.”

London, 1769.

Extract.—Supreme power and authority must not, cannot, reside equally everywhere throughout an empire.

Observation.—Writers on this subject often confuse themselves with the idea, that all the King’s dominions make one state, which they do not, nor ever did since the conquest. Our kings have ever had dominions not subject to the English Parliament. At first, the provinces of France, of which Jersey and Guernsey remain, always governed by their own laws, appealing to the King in Council only, and not to our courts or the House of Lords. Scotland was in the same situation before the union. It had the same King, but a separate Parliament, and the Parliament of England had no jurisdiction over it. Ireland the same in truth, though the British Parliament has *usurped* a dominion over it. The colonies were originally settled in the idea of such extrinsic dominions of the King, and of the King only. Hanover is now such a dominion.

If each Assembly in this case, were absolute, they would, it is evident, form not one only, but so many different governments, perfectly independent of one another.

This is the only clear idea of their real present condition. Their only bond of union is the King.

Now that of Great Britain being exactly the kind of government I have been speaking of, the absolute impossibility of vesting the American assemblies with an authority in all respects equal to that of the mother country, without actually dismembering the British empire, must naturally occur to every one.

It would not be dismembering it, if it never was united, as, in truth, it never yet has been. Breaking the present union between England and Scotland would be dismembering the empire; but no such union has yet been formed between Britain and the colonies.

Where divers remote and distant countries are united under one government, an equal and fair representation becomes almost impracticable, or, at least, extremely inconvenient.

Here appears the excellency of the invention of colony government, by separate, independent legislatures. By this means, the remotest parts of a great empire may be as well governed as the centre; misrule, oppressions of proconsuls, and discontents and rebellions thence arising, prevented. By this means the power of a king may be extended without inconvenience over territories of any dimensions, how great soever. America was thus happily governed in all its different and remote settlements, by the crown and their own assemblies, till the new politics took place, of governing it by one Parliament, which have not succeeded and never will.

Should we carry our supposition much farther, the inconveniencies attending such long journeys would be very great, although not interrupted by water.

Water, so far from being an obstruction, is a means of facilitating such assemblies from distant countries. A voyage of three thousand miles by sea is more easily performed, than a journey of one thousand by land.

It is, in my opinion, by no means impracticable to bring representatives conveniently from America to Britain, but I think the present mode of letting them govern themselves by their own assemblies much preferable. They will always be better governed; and the Parliament has business enough here with its own internal concerns.

Whether they should not be allowed such a form of government, as will best secure to them their just rights and natural liberties.

They have it already. All the difficulties have arisen from the British Parliament attempting to deprive them of it.

Is it not, let me ask, most egregious folly so loudly to condemn the Stuart family, who would have governed England without a Parliament, when at the same time we would, almost all of us, govern America upon principles not at all more justifiable?

Very just. Only that the arbitrary government of a single person is more eligible than the arbitrary government of a body of men. A single man may be afraid or ashamed of doing injustice; a body is never either one or the other, if it is strong enough. It cannot apprehend assassination, and by dividing the shame among them, it is so little apiece that no one minds it.

And consistently with our rights of sovereignty over them.

I am surprised that a writer, who, in other respects, appears often very reasonable, should talk of *our sovereignty* over the colonies! As if every individual in England was a part of a sovereign over America! The King is the sovereign of all.

The Americans think that, while they can retain the right of disposing of their own money, they shall thereby secure all their other rights. They have, therefore, not yet disputed your other pretensions.

That England has an undeniable right to consider America as a part of her dominions is a fact, I presume, which can never be questioned.

You do, indeed, *presume* too much. America *is not* part of the dominions of *England*, but of *the King's dominion*. England is a dominion itself, and has no dominions.

I will only observe at present, that it was England, in some sense, which at first gave them being.

In some sense! In what sense? They were not planted at her expense. As to defence, all parts of the King's dominion have mutually always contributed to the defence one of the other. The man in America, who contributes sixpence towards an armament against the common enemy, contributes as much to the common protection as if he lived in England.

They have always been ready to contribute, but by voluntary grants according to their rights; nor has any Englishman yet had the effrontery to deny this truth.

If they are at liberty to choose what sums to raise, as well as the manner of raising them, it is scarcely to be doubted that their allowance will be found extremely short. And it is evident they may, upon this footing, absolutely refuse to pay any taxes at all. And, if so, it would be much better for England, if it were consistent with her safety, to disclaim all further connexion with them, than to continue her protection to them solely at her own expense.

Why is it to be doubted that they will not grant what they ought to grant? No complaint was ever yet made of their refusal or deficiency. He says, if they are not without reserve obliged to comply with the requisitions of the ministry, they may absolutely refuse to pay any taxes at all. Let him apply this to the British Parliament, and the reasoning will equally prove that the Commons ought likewise to comply absolutely with the requisitions of the

ministry. Yet I have seen lately the ministry demand four shillings in the pound, and the Parliament grant but three. But Parliaments, and provincial assemblies may always be safely trusted with this power of refusing, or granting in part. Ministers will often demand too much. But assemblies, being acquainted properly with the occasion, will always grant what is necessary. As protection is, as I said before, mutual and equal in proportion to every man's property, the colonies have been drawn into all British wars, and have annoyed the enemies of Britain as much in proportion as any other subjects of the King, equal in numbers and property. Therefore, this account has always balanced itself.

It may further be observed, that their proceedings are not quite so rapid and precipitate as those of the Privy Council; so that, should it be found necessary, they will have more time to petition or make remonstrances. For this privilege, the least which a subject can enjoy, is not to be denied them.

Late experience has fully shown that American petitions and remonstrances are little regarded in Britain. The privilege of petitioning has been attempted to be wrested from them. The assemblies' uniting to petition has been called *a flagitious attempt*, in the ministers' letters; and such assemblies as would persist in it have therefore been dissolved.

It is a joke to talk thus to us, when we know that Parliament, so far from solemnly canvassing our petitions, have refused to receive or read them.

Our right of legislation over the Americans, unrepresented as they are, is the point in question. This right is asserted by most, doubted by some, and wholly disclaimed by a few.

I am one of those few; but am persuaded the time is not far distant when the few will become the many; for *Magna est veritas et prevalebit*.

But to put the matter in a stronger light, the question, I think, should be, whether we have a general right of making slaves or not?

A very proper state of the question.

And the Americans may be treated with as much equity, and even tenderness, by the Parliament of Great Britain, as by their own assemblies. This, at least, is possible, though perhaps not very probable.

How can we Americans believe this, when we see almost half the nation paying but one shilling and sixpence in the pound, while others pay full four shillings; and that there is not virtue and honesty enough in Parliament to rectify this iniquity? How can we suppose they will be just to us at such a distance, when they are not just to one another? It is not, indeed, as the author says, *very probable*. The *unequal representation*, too, that prevails in this kingdom, they are so far from having virtue enough to attempt to remedy, that they make use of it as an argument why we should have no representation at all.

To the equity of this measure [an American representation in Parliament], the Americans themselves, I presume, could have nothing fairly to object.

Provided they had an equitable number of representatives allowed them.

As to those, indeed, which attend only the choosing a new Parliament, they may, perhaps, by proper means, be considerably lessened, though not wholly removed.

Let the old members continue till superseded by new ones from America.

But, should the King at any time be disposed to dissolve his Parliament and convene a new one, as hath often been done, only at a few weeks' notice, this, upon the same footing, could not be effected.

By the above it might.

The method, however, of examining and deciding contested elections, when necessary, must undoubtedly with respect to America be set, in a great measure, upon a different footing from that at present practised in this kingdom.

Let the members be chosen by the American assemblies, and disputed elections settled there, if any; but there would be none.

It is not in the least, at this time, probable that an American representation will ever be convened in England.

I think so too; where neither side approves a match, it is not likely to be made.

They will be almost wholly excluded the benefit of private acts by reason of immoderate expense.

They may make them at home. The expense of private acts in England is shamefully great.

The repairing of highways, making rivers navigable, and cutting canals, with a variety of other things of the like kind, wherein recourse must be had to Parliament, and yet the expense be supplied chiefly, if not wholly, by private persons.

All this may be done by their own laws at home.

This mode of compromise may as well be waived, as it cannot be effected, it is evident, without immense trouble.

Very little.

And if they should be divided in their sentiments upon it, and uncertain what measures to adopt and follow, it cannot be matter of just wonder and censure.

Then leave it as it is. It was very well, till you attempted alterations and novelties.

In respect to the article of levying taxes, it should be deemed only a matter of grace, to be resumed at pleasure.

Your humble servant! We thank you for nothing. Keep up your claim, and make the most of it.

To be placed upon a level with the rest of the subjects of the British crown, is the utmost the colonies can challenge.

No. They may challenge all that was promised them by charters to encourage them to settle there. They have performed their part of the contract, and therefore have a right to expect a performance of the other part. They have, by the risks and expenses they have incurred, additional merit, and are therefore to be considered as *above the level of other subjects*.

We cannot otherwise maintain our sovereignty over it, unless our safety were actually at stake and absolutely required it.

I am quite sick of *our sovereignty*. Your safety is only endangered by quarrelling with the colonies, not by leaving them to the free enjoyment of their own liberties.

They who first migrated from England to settle in America well knew, I presume, they were still to continue the subjects of the same government.

They well knew the contrary. They would never have gone if that had been the case. They fled from your government, which oppressed them. If they carried your government with them, and of course your laws, they had better have stayed and endured the oppression at home, and not have added to it all the hardships of making a new settlement. They carried not your laws; but, had they carried your government and laws, they would now have been subject to spiritual courts, tithes, church acts of Parliament, game acts, &c., &c., which they are not, and never were since their being *out of the realm*.

They knew they were not to be independent.

They were to depend on the King only.

For no one, I imagine, would doubt if their charters granted them an inconsistent power, but that they might be justly cancelled; as no government can be supposed to alienate prerogatives necessary to its safe existence.

Every government is supposed to be *compos mentis* when it grants charters, and shall not be allowed to plead insanity. If you break the charters, or violate them, you dissolve all ties between us.

However, a right of sovereignty in this case we may undeniably claim and vindicate; though we might safely grant them independency.

You may claim it; but you have not, never had, nor, I trust, ever will have it. You, that is, the people of England, cannot grant the Americans independency of the King. It can never be, but with his consent and *theirs*.

Preserving our sovereignty over them, although at the expense of some portion of their natural prerogatives. They partly consist of our own plantations, and partly of the conquests we have made from a nation in whose hands it would have been dangerous for us to have continued.

Our sovereignty! Our sovereignty for ever. Of *their*, not *our* plantations. The conquests may be yours partly; but they are partly conquests belonging to the colonies, who joined their forces with yours in equal proportion.

Our very being, therefore, at least as a free people, depends upon our retention of them.

Take care, then, how you use them.

They are now treated as children. Their complaints are heard, and grievances redressed. But then they would be treated rather as slaves, having the swords of their masters perpetually held at their throats, if they should presume to offer half the indignities to the officers of the French crown, which they have often with impunity done to those of the British.

The direct contrary is true; they are not redressed; they are refused to be heard. Fresh oppressions and insults are continually added. English swords are now held at our throats. Every step is taking to convince us that there is no difference in government.

Nay, they have assemblies of their own to redress their grievances.

It is well they have.

And, if that should be done, what marks of sovereignty will they allow *us* to enjoy? What sort of a claim will they indulge us with? Only, I suppose, a mere titular one. And if so, would they then expect that we should still protect them with our forces by sea and land? Or will they themselves maintain an army and navy sufficient for that purpose? This they certainly at present are not able to do, if they were not sheltered by the wings of Great Britain.

What would you have? Would you, the people of England, be subjects and kings at the same time? Don't be under any apprehensions for them. They will find allies and friends somewhere; and it will be worth no one's while to make them enemies, or to attack so poor a people, so numerous, and so well armed.

Nor is there any reason to apprehend that they should be at all formidable to England; as the number [of American representatives in Parliament] might be properly limited, as those of Scotland were at the Union.

A proper limitation can only be this, that they shall from time to time have such a number of additional members, as are proportioned to their increasing share of the taxes and numbers of the people.

An exact estimate can scarcely be made of what expense their protection stands in to Great Britain.

The protection is mutual. They are always, in time of war, at as much expense as would be necessary to protect themselves; first, by the troops and armed ships they raise and equip; secondly, by the higher price they pay for all commodities, when drawn into war

by English European quarrels; thirdly, by obstructions to the vent of their produce by general embargo.

They are justly chargeable with a certain portion of the civil list; for this most indubitably constitutes a part of government. How this article at present is managed in England, is not now my business to inquire.

I will tell you how it is managed. The colonies maintain their governors, who are the King's representatives; and the King receives a quitrent from the lands in most of the colonies.

In many parts they are little, perhaps, or nothing at all, inferior in respect of their conveniences to the mother country.

As these differences cannot be known in Parliament here, how can you proportion and vary your taxes of America, so as to make them equal and fair? It would be undertaking what you are not qualified for, as well as doing what you have no right to do.

Yet it must be granted that they know the best state of their own funds and what taxes they can afford to pay.

And yet you would be meddling.

It is very certain that England is entitled to a great deal of gratitude from her colonies.

The English are eternally harping on this strain, the great obligation the colonies are under for protection from the French. I have shown, already, that the defence was mutual. Every man in England, and every man's estate, have been defended from the French; but is it sense to tell any particular man "the nation has incurred a debt of one hundred and forty-eight millions to protect you and your estate, and therefore you owe a great deal of gratitude to the nation"? He will say, and justly: "I paid my proportion, and I am under no obligation." The colonies, as I have shown in preceding notes, have always paid more in various ways, and besides extending your trade sometimes (from which you exclude the colonies), and for whims about the balance of power, and for the sake of continental connexions in which they were separately unconcerned. On the other hand, they have, from their first settlement, had wars in America, in which they never engaged you. The French have never been their enemies, but on your account.

That the late war was chiefly kindled and carried on on your account, can scarcely be denied.

It is denied.

By the steps they seem to take to shake off our sovereignty.

Our sovereignty again! This writer, like the Genoese queens of Corsica, deems himself a sprig of royalty!

For as soon as they are no longer dependent upon England, they may be assured they will immediately become dependent upon France.

We are assured of the contrary. Weak states that are poor are as safe as great ones that are rich. They are not objects of envy. The trade that may be carried on with them makes them objects of friendship. The smallest states may have great allies; and the mutual jealousies of great nations contribute to their security.

And whatever reasons there might exist to dispose them in our favor in preference to the French; yet how far these would operate no one can pretend to say.

Then be careful not to use them ill. It is a better reason for using them kindly. That alone can retain their friendship. Your sovereignty will be of no use if the people hate you. Keeping them in obedience will cost you more than your profits from them will amount to.

It is not, indeed, for their jealousy of their rights and liberties, but for their riotous and seditious manner of asserting them.

Do you Englishmen then pretend to censure the colonies for riots? Look at home! I have seen, within a year, riots in the country about corn; riots about elections; riots about work-houses; riots of colliers; riots of weavers; riots of coal-heavers; riots of sawyers; riots of sailors; riots of Wilkesites; riots of government chairmen; riots of smugglers, in which custom-house officers and excisemen have been murdered, the King's armed vessels and troops fired at, &c. In America, if one mob rises and breaks a few windows, or tars and feathers a single rascally informer, it is called *rebellion*; troops and fleets must be sent, and military execution talked of as the decentest thing in the world. Here, indeed, one would think riots part of the mode of government.

And if she had not thought proper to centre almost all her care as she has done, upon making the late peace, in procuring them a safe establishment, and to sacrifice to it, in a manner, every other object, she might at least expect from them a more decent and dutiful demeanour.

In the last war, America kept up twenty-five thousand men at her own cost for five years, and spent many millions. Her troops were in all battles, all service. Thousands of her youth fell a sacrifice. The crown gained an immense extent of territory, and a great number of new subjects. Britain gained a new market for her manufactures, and recovered and secured the old one among the Indians, which the French had interrupted and annihilated. But what did the Americans gain except that *safe establishment*, which they are now so taunted with? Lands were divided among none of them. The very fishery, which they fought to obtain, they are now restrained in. The plunder of the Havana was not for them. And this very *safe establishment* they might as well have had by treaty with the French, their neighbours, who would probably have been easily made and continued their friends, if it had not been for their connexion with Britain.

And it seldom happens that any one fares the better for his insolence.

Then don't be insolent with your power.

For should matters on all sides, as I hope they never will, be carried to extremities, I cannot take upon me to say but England may yet produce both a ministry and Parliament, that would rather share them once more with the French than relinquish her present pretensions.

We have been often threatened with this wise measure of returning Canada to France. Do it when you please. Had the French power, which you were five years subduing with twenty-five thousand regulars, and twenty-five thousand of us to help you, continued at our backs ready to support and assist us, whenever we might think proper to resist your oppressions, you would never have thought of a Stamp Act for us; you would not have dared to use us as you have done. If it be so politic a measure to have enemies at hand (as the notion is), to keep *your subjects* in obedience, then give part of Ireland to the French to plant. Plant another French colony in the Highlands, to keep rebellious Scotland in order. Plant another on Tower Hill, to restrain your own mobs. There never was a notion more ridiculous. Don't you see the advantage you may have, if you preserve our connexion? The fifty thousand men and the fleet employed in America during the last war, are now so much strength at liberty to be employed elsewhere.

The legislative power of every kingdom or empire should centre in one supreme assembly.

Distinguish here what may be *convenient* from what is *fact*. Before the union it was thought *convenient* and long wished for, that the two kingdoms should join in one Parliament. But, till that union was formed, the fact was, that their parliaments were distinct, and the British parliaments would not make laws for Scotland. The same fact now subsists in America. The Parliament and states are distinct; but the British Parliament has taken advantage of our minority, and usurped powers not belonging to it.

It would not be amiss, perhaps, to ask them what bounds they would be content to fix to their claims and demands upon us, as hitherto they seem to be at a loss where to stop.

They only desire that you would leave them where you found them; repeal all your taxing laws, and return to requisitions when you would have aids from them.

I must freely own, that whatever opinion I may have of their right, I certainly have not quite as favorable one of their conduct, which often is neither consistent nor prudent.

They think the same of yours.

If they are really willing we should exercise any acts of sovereignty among them at all, the imposition they have so riotously resisted might not improperly, perhaps, have been allowed better quarter.

Leave the King, who alone is the sovereign, to exercise his acts of sovereignty in appointing their governors, and in approving or disapproving their laws. But do you leave it to their choice to trade elsewhere for commodities? To go to another shop? No! you say they shall buy of you, or nobody.

Nor should mere custom, nor any charter or law in being, be allowed any great weight in the decision of this point.

The charters are sacred. Violate them, and then the present bond of union (the kingly power over us) will be broken.

The Americans may insist upon the same rights, privileges, and exemptions as are allowed the Irish, because of the similarity, if not identity, of their connexions with us.

Surely the Americans deserve a little more. They never put you to the trouble and expense of conquering them, as Ireland has done three times over. They never were in rebellion. I speak now of the native Irish. The English families settled there lost no rights by their merit in conquering that country.

But if any distinction were to be made, most certainly, of the two nations, the Americans are least entitled to any lenity on that score.

I wonder much at this "*most certainly*."

The terms she may not think safe and proper to grant the Irish, she may judge full as dangerous and imprudent to grant the Americans.

It is very imprudent to deprive America of any of her privileges. If her commerce and friendship are of any importance to you, they are to be had on no other terms than leaving her in the full enjoyment of her rights.

Long before we could send among them any considerable number of forces, they might do a great deal of mischief, if not actually overturn all order and government.

They will take care to preserve order and government for their own sakes.

Several other reasons might be offered why the same measures, in regard to both nations, might not be altogether alike convenient and advisable.

Where you cannot so conveniently use force, there you should endeavour to secure affection.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXXIV

OBSERVATIONS ON PASSAGES IN A PAMPHLET, ENTITLED “THE TRUE CONSTITUTIONAL MEANS FOR PUTTING AN END TO THE DISPUTES BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND THE AMERICAN COLONIES.”

Extract. Every British subject must acknowledge that the directive influence of the British state remains with the British legislature, who are the only proper judges of what concerns the general welfare of the whole empire.

Observation. The British state is only the Island of Great Britain; the British legislature are undoubtedly the only proper judges of what concerns the welfare of that state; but the Irish legislature are the proper judges of what concerns the Irish state, and the American legislature of what concerns the American states respectively. By “the whole empire” does this writer mean all the King’s dominions? If so, the British Parliament should also govern the Isles of Jersey and Guernsey, and Hanover; but this is not so.

But the land tax, which I have proposed, is in its very nature unoppressive, and is equally well suited to the poorest as to the richest province of the British empire.

This writer seems ignorant that every colony has its own civil and military establishment to provide for, new roads and bridges to make, churches and all public edifices to erect; and would he separately tax them, moreover, with a tax on lands equal to what is paid in Britain?

The colonists must possess a luxuriant abundance to be able to double their inhabitants in so short a space.

How does this appear? Is not a mere competence sufficient for this purpose? If America will consent to pay thus its proportion of British taxes, will Britain pay out of the whole all the American taxes? Or is America to pay both?

The produce of the planters purchases for them what others buy with gold and silver; but even several of the colonists of the rank of good livers have often been seen to pay the price of a negro with gold. As instances of Virginian luxury, I have been assured that

there are few families there without some plate; and at some entertainments the attendants have appeared almost as numerous as the guests.

Was not the gold first purchased by the produce of his land, obtained by hard labor? Does gold drop from the clouds in Virginia into the laps of the indolent. Their very purchasing plate and other superfluities from England is one means of disabling them from paying taxes to England. Would you have it both in meal and malt? It has been a great folly in the Americans to entertain English gentlemen with a splendid hospitality ill suited to their circumstances; by which they excited no other grateful sentiments in their guests than that of a desire to tax the landlord.

It cannot be deemed exorbitant, considering their traffic with the French sugar islands, as well as with our own; and this will make the whole of their importations four millions per annum.

This is arguing the riches of a people from their extravagance—the very thing that keeps them poor.

The inhabitants of Great Britain pay above thirteen millions sterling every year, including turnpikes and the poor's rates, two articles which the colonists are exempt from.

A turnpike tax is no burden, as the turnpike gives more benefit than it takes. And ought the rich in Britain, who have made such numbers of poor by engrossing all the small divisions of land, and who keep the laborers and working people poor by limiting their wages,—ought those gentry to complain of the burden of maintaining the poor that have worked for them at unreasonably low rates all their lives? As well might the planter complain of being obliged to maintain his poor negroes when they grow old, or sick, or lame, and unable to provide for themselves.

For though all pay by the same law, yet none can be required to pay beyond his ability; and the fund from whence the tax is raised is, in the colonies that are least inhabited, just as able to bear the burden imposed, as in the most populous county of Great Britain.

The colonies are almost always considered by these ignorant, flimsy writers, as unwilling to contribute to the general exigencies of the state; which is not true. They are always willing, but will have the granting of their own money themselves; in which they are right for various reasons.

They would be content to take land from us gratuitously.

What land have they ever taken from you? The lands did not belong to the crown, but to the Indians, of whom the colonists either purchased them at their own expense, or conquered them without assistance from Britain. The engagement to settle the American lands, and the expense of settlement, are more than equivalent for what was of no value to Britain without a first settlement.

The rental of the lands in Great Britain and Ireland amounts to about twenty-two millions; but the rental of the same extent of lands in America is not probably one million sterling.

What signifies extent of unsettled lands, that produce nothing?

I beg to know if the returns of any traffic on earth ever produced so many per cent. as the returns of agriculture in a fertile soil and favorable climate.

How little this politician knows of agriculture! Is there any country where ten bushels of grain are generally got in for one sown? And are all the charges and advances for labor to be nothing? No farmer of America in fact makes five per cent. of his money. His profit is only being paid for his own labor and that of his children. The opulence of one English or Dutch merchant would make the opulence of a hundred American farmers.

It may, I think, be safely concluded that the riches of the colonists would not increase so fast, were the inhabitants to leave off enlarging their settlements and plantations, and run eagerly upon manufactures.

There is no necessity of leaving their plantations; they can manufacture in their families at spare times. Depend upon it, the Americans are not so impolitic as to neglect settlements for unprofitable manufactures; but some manufactures may be more advantageous to some persons than the cultivation of land, and these will prosecute such manufactures notwithstanding your oratory.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXXV

TO M. DUBOURG¹

. . . I am persuaded, as well as you, that the sea coal has a vegetable origin, and that it has been formed near the surface of the earth; but, as preceding convulsions of nature had served to bring it very deep in many places, and covered it with many different strata, we are indebted to subsequent convulsions for having brought within our view the extremities of its veins, so as to lead us to penetrate the earth in search of it. I visited last summer a large coal mine at Whitehaven, in Cumberland; and in following the vein and descending by degrees towards the sea, I penetrated below the ocean, where the level of its surface was more than eight hundred fathoms above my head, and the miners assured me that their works extended some miles beyond the place where I then was, continually and gradually descending under the sea. The slate, which forms the roof of this coal mine, is impressed in many places with the figures of leaves and branches of fern, which undoubtedly grew at the surface when the slate was in the state of sand on the banks of the sea. Thus it appears that this vein of coal has suffered a prodigious settlement. . . .

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXXVI

TO JOHN BARTRAM

London, 11 January, 1770.

My Ever Dear Friend:—

I received your kind letter of November 29th, with the parcel of seeds, for which I am greatly obliged to you. I cannot make you adequate returns in kind; but I send you, however, some of the true rhubarb seed, which you desire. I had it from Mr. English, who lately received a medal of the Society of Arts for propagating it. I send also some green dry peas, highly esteemed here as the best for making pea soup; and also some Chinese *caravances*, with Father Navarette's account of the universal use of a cheese made of them in China, which so excited my curiosity, that I caused inquiry to be made of Mr. Flint, who lived many years there, in what manner the cheese was made, and I send you his answer. I have since learned that some runnings of salt (I suppose runnet) is put into water, when the meal is in it, to turn it to curds. I think we have *caravances* with us, but I know not whether they are the same with these, which actually came from China. They are said to be of great increase.

I shall inquire of Mr. Collinson for your *Journal*. I see that of East Florida is printed with Stork's *Account*. My love to good Mrs. Bartram and your children. With esteem I am ever, my dear friend, yours affectionately,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXXVII

TO MISS MARY STEVENSON

Craven Street,

22 January, 1770.

Dear Polly:—

I received your favor of Saturday, early this morning, and am, as usual, much obliged by the kind readiness with which you have done what I requested.

Your good mother has complained more of her head since you left us than ever before. If she stoops, or looks, or bends her neck downwards, on any occasion, it is with great pain and difficulty that she gets her head up again. She has, therefore, borrowed a breast and neck collar of Mrs. Wilkes, such as misses wear, and now uses it to keep her head up. Mr. Strahan has invited us all to dine there to-morrow, but she has excused herself. Will you come, and go with me? If you cannot well do that, you will at least be with us on Friday.

As to my own head, which you so kindly inquire after, its swimming has gradually worn off, and to-day for the first time I felt nothing of it on getting out of bed. But as this speedy recovery is, as I am fully persuaded, owing to the extreme abstemiousness I have observed for some days past at home, I am not without apprehensions that, being to dine abroad this day, to-morrow, and next day, I may inadvertently bring it on again, if I do not think of my little monitor and guardian angel, and make use of the proper and very pertinent clause she proposes, in my grace. Here comes a morning visitor. Adieu. My best respects to Mrs. Tickell. I am, my dear friend, yours affectionately,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXXVIII

**TO NEVIL MASKELYNE, ASTRONOMER
ROYAL**

read at the royal society, january 10, 1771

Craven Street,

12 February, 1770.

Dear Sir:—

I have just received a letter from Mr. Winthrop, dated December 7th, containing the following account, viz.:

“On Thursday, the 9th of November, I had an opportunity of observing a transit of Mercury. I had carefully adjusted my clock to the apparent time, by correspondent altitudes of the sun, taken with the quadrant for several days before, and with the same reflecting telescope as I used for the transit of Venus.¹ I first perceived the little planet making an impression on the sun’s limb at 2^h 52’ 41”; and he appeared wholly within at 53’ 58” apparent time. The sun set before the planet reached the middle of his course; and for a considerable time before sunset it was so cloudy that the planet could not be discerned. So that I made no observations of consequence, except that of the beginning, at which time the sun was perfectly clear. This transit completes three periods of forty-six years, since the first observation of Gassendi at Paris, in 1631.”

**I Am, Sir, With Great Esteem,
Your Most Obedient Servant,**

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXXIX

TO MICHAEL HILLEGAS

London, 17 March, 1770.

Dear Sir:—

I received your favor of November 25th, and have made inquiries, as you desired, concerning the copper covering of houses. It has been used here in a few instances only, and the practice does not seem to gain ground. The copper is about the thickness of a common playing-card; and, though a dearer metal than lead, I am told that as less weight serves, on account of its being so much thinner, and as slighter woodwork in the roof is sufficient to support it, the roof is not dearer, on the whole, than one covered with lead.

It is said that hail and rain make a disagreeable drumming noise on copper; but this I suppose is rather fancy; for the plates being fastened on the rafters must, in a great measure, deaden such sound. The first cost, whatever it is, will be all, as a copper covering must last for ages; and when the house decays, the plates will still have intrinsic worth. In Russia, I am informed, many houses are covered with plates of iron tinned, such as our tin pots and other vases are made of, laid on over the edges of one another like tiles; and which, it is said, last very long, the tin preserving the iron from much decay by rusting. In France and the Low Countries, I have seen many spouts or pipes for conveying the water down from the roofs of houses, made of the same kind of tin plates soldered together; and they seem to stand very well.

**With Sincere Regard, I Am
Yours, &C.,**

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXXX

TO A FRIEND IN AMERICA

London, 18 March, 1770.

Dear Sir:—

Your very judicious letter of November 26th, being communicated by me to some member of Parliament, was handed about among them, so that it was some time before I got it again into my hands. It had due weight with several, and was of considerable use. You will see that I printed it at length in the London *Chronicle*, with the merchants' letter. When the American affairs came to be debated in the House of Commons, the majority, notwithstanding all the weight of ministerial influence, was only sixty-two for continuing the whole last act; and would not have been so large, nay, I think the repeal would have been carried, but that the ministry were persuaded by Governor Bernard, and some lying letters, said to be from Boston, that the associations not to import were all breaking to pieces, that America was in the greatest distress for want of the goods, that we could not possibly subsist any longer without them, and must of course submit to any terms Parliament should think fit to impose upon us. This, with the idle notion of the dignity and sovereignty of Parliament, which they are so fond of, and imagine will be endangered by any further concessions, prevailed, I know, with many, to vote with the ministry, who, otherwise, on account of the commerce, wish to see the difference accommodated.

But though both the Duke of Grafton and Lord North were and are, in my opinion, rather inclined to satisfy us, yet the Bedford party are so violent against us, and so prevalent in the council, that more moderate measures could not take place. This party never speak of us but with evident malice; "rebels" and "traitors" are the best names they can afford us, and I believe they only wish for a colorable pretence and occasion of ordering the soldiers to make a massacre among us.

On the other hand, the Rockingham and Shelburne people, with Lord Chatham's friends, are disposed to favor us, if they were again in power, which at present they are not like to be; though they, too, would be for keeping up the claim of Parliamentary sovereignty, but without exercising it in any mode of taxation. Besides these, we have for sincere friends and well-wishers the body of Dissenters generally throughout England, with many others, not to mention

Ireland and all the rest of Europe, who, from various motives, join in applauding the spirit of liberty with which we have claimed and insisted on our privileges, and wish us success, but whose suffrage cannot have much weight in our affairs.

The merchants here were at length prevailed on to present a petition, but they moved slowly, and some of them, I thought, reluctantly; perhaps from a despair of success, the city not being much in favor with the court at present. The manufacturing towns absolutely refused to move at all; some pretending to be offended with our attempting to manufacture for ourselves; others saying that they had employment enough, and that our trade was of little importance to them, whether we continued or refused it. Those who began a little to feel the effects of our forbearing to purchase, were persuaded to be quiet by the ministerial people, who gave out that certain advices were received of our beginning to break our agreements; of our attempts to manufacture proving all abortive and ruining the undertakers; of our distress for want of goods, and dissensions among ourselves, which promised the total defeat of all such kind of combinations, and the prevention of them for the future, if the government were not urged imprudently to repeal the duties. But now that it appears from late and authentic accounts, that agreements continue in full force, that a ship is actually returned from Boston to Bristol with nails and glass (articles that were thought of the utmost necessity), and that the ships, which were waiting here for the determination of Parliament, are actually returning to North America in their ballast, the tone of the manufacurers begins to change, and there is no doubt that, if we are steady, and persevere in our resolutions, these people will soon begin a clamor, that much pains has hitherto been used to stifle.

In short, it appears to me that if we do not now persist in this measure till it has had its full effect, it can never again be used on any future occasion with the least prospect of success, and that, if we do persist another year, we shall never afterwards have occasion to use it. With sincere regards, I am, dear Sir, your obedient servant,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXXXI

TO SAMUEL COOPER

London, 14 April, 1770.

Dear Sir:—

I suppose Governor Pownall acquaints you with what has passed this session relating to our American affairs. All Europe is attentive to the dispute between Britain and the colonies; and I own I have a satisfaction in seeing that our part is taken everywhere, because I am persuaded that that circumstance will not be without its effect here in our favor. At the same time the malignant pleasure which other powers take in British divisions, may convince us on both sides of the necessity of our uniting.

In France they have translated and printed the principal pieces that have been written on the American side of the question; and as French is the political language of Europe, it has communicated an acquaintance with our affairs very extensively. M. Beaumont, a famous advocate of Paris, the defender of the family of Calas, wrote the *Reflexions d'un Etranger désintéressé*, which I send you. The manuscript is an original letter from a gentleman (of note, I am told) as far off as the Austrian Silesia, who, being concerned for us, wrote it to the Parliament, directing it to the late Speaker. The Speaker read only the first side, was offended at the freedom and impertinence, as he called it, and returned the letter to the office, refusing to pay the postage. Accept it as a curiosity. I send you also a late edition of Molineux's *Case of Ireland*, with a new preface, shrewdly written. Our part is warmly taken by the Irish in general, there being in many points a similarity in our cases. My respects to Mr. Bowdoin, and believe me ever, dear Sir, yours affectionately,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXXXII

TO MISS MARY STEVENSON

Tuesday, 31 May, 1770.

Dear Polly:—

I received your letter early this morning, and as I am so engaged that I cannot see you when you come to-day, I write this line just to say that I am sure you are a much better judge in this affair of your own, than I can possibly be.¹ In that confidence it was that I forebore giving my advice when you mentioned it to me, and not from any disapprobation. My concern (equal to any father's) for your happiness makes me write this, lest, having more regard for my opinion than you ought, and imagining it against the proposal because I did not immediately advise accepting it, you should let that weigh any thing in your deliberations.

I assure you that no objection has occurred to me. His person you see: his temper and understanding you can judge of; his character, for any thing I have ever heard, is unblemished; his profession, with the skill in it he is supposed to have, will be sufficient to support a family; and, therefore, considering the fortune you have in your hands (though any future expectation from your parent should be disappointed), I do not see but that the agreement may be a rational one on both sides.

I see your delicacy, and your humility too; for you fancy that if you do not prove a great fortune, you will not be loved; but I am sure, were I in his situation in every respect, knowing you so well as I do, and esteeming you so highly, I should think you a fortune sufficient for me without a shilling.

Having thus, more explicitly than before, given my opinion, I leave the rest to your sound judgment, of which no one has a greater share; and I shall not be too inquisitive after your particular reasons, your doubts, your fears, and the like. For I shall be confident, whether you accept or refuse, that you do right. I only wish you may do what will most contribute to your happiness, and of course to mine; being ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

P. S.—Do not be angry with me for supposing your determination
not quite so fixed as you fancy it.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXXXIII

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS

London, 6 June, 1770.

Dear Cousin:—

Your favor of January 8th came duly to hand, but I have been so much engaged during the sitting of Parliament that I could not correspond regularly with all my friends, and have of course trespassed most with those on whose good nature and indulgence I could most rely. I am, however, ashamed of being so long silent. It was but the other day that I inquired after the fate of your tickets, when I received the enclosed answer, whereby you will see that the whole cost has not been lost. I only wished to see three ciphers more following the sum. I have not any further orders from you, but think to take at a venture two tickets more on your account. If you disapprove and choose to rest where you are, signify it by a line before the drawing, directed to Messrs. Smith, Wright, and Grey, who may then dispose of the tickets.

I am glad to hear the old gentleman, your father, is still alive and happy. Please to remember me to him respectfully. Probably he can recollect but little of me, as it is a good deal more than half a century since he has seen me; but I remember him well, a lively, active, handsome young man, with a fine full flowing head of hair. I suppose he must now be near fourscore.

If I could have given you any intimation of the intentions of government with regard to America that might be depended upon, you should have had them in good time for use, in the views of trade you hint at. But there have been this winter such changes of men and of minds, and such continual expectations of more and other changes, that nothing was certain; and I believe that to this day the ministry are not all of a mind, or determined what are the next steps proper to be taken with us. Some are said to be for severe, others for lenient measures; others for leaving things as they now are, in confidence that we shall soon be tired of our non-importation agreements, manufacturing schemes, and self-denying frugalities, submit to the duties, and return by degrees to our dear luxuries and idleness, with our old course of commercial extravagance, folly, and good humor. Which of these opinions will prevail and be acted on it is impossible yet to say. I only know that generally the dispute is thought a dangerous one, and that many

wish to see it well compromised in time, lest by a continuance of mutual provocations the breach should become past healing.

I am much obliged to you and cousin Hubbard for your kindness to my friend Hughes, of which he informed me, with many expressions of gratitude for your civilities. He would have been very happy in that station, and in your acquaintance so nigh him; but he is now removed to Carolina.

My love to your good wife and children, and believe me ever your affectionate uncle,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXXXIV

TO SAMUEL COOPER¹

London, 8 June, 1770.

Dear Sir:—

I received duly your favor of March 28th. With this I send you two speeches in Parliament on our affairs by a member that you know. The repeal of the whole late act would undoubtedly have been a prudent measure, and I have reason to believe that Lord North was for it, but some of the other ministers could not be brought to agree to it; so the duty on tea, with that obnoxious preamble, remains to continue the dispute. But I think the next session will hardly pass over without repealing them; for the Parliament must finally comply with the sense of the nation.

As to the standing army kept up among us in time of peace, without the consent of our assemblies, I am clearly of opinion that it is not agreeable to the constitution. Should the King, by the aid of his parliaments in Ireland and the colonies, raise an army, and bring it into England, quartering it here in time of peace without the consent of the Parliament of Great Britain, I am persuaded he would soon be told that he had no right so to do, and the nation would ring with clamors against it. I own that I see no difference in the cases; and while we continue so many distinct and separate states, our having the same head or sovereign, the King, will not justify such an invasion of the separate right of each state to be consulted on the establishment of whatever force is proposed to be kept up within its limits, and to give or refuse its consent, as shall appear most for the public good of that state.

That the colonies were originally constituted distinct states, and intended to be continued such, is clear to me from a thorough consideration of their original charters, and the whole conduct of the crown and nation towards them until the Restoration. Since that period, the Parliament here has usurped an authority of making laws for them, which before it had not. We have for some time submitted to that usurpation, partly through ignorance and inattention, and partly from our weakness and inability to contend. I hope when our rights are better understood here, we shall, by prudent and proper conduct, be able to obtain from the equity of this nation a restoration of them. And, in the meantime, I could wish that such expressions as *the Supreme authority of Parliament*,

subordinacy of our assemblies to the Parliament, and the like, which in reality mean nothing, if our assemblies, with the King, have a true legislative authority; I say, I could wish that such expressions were no more seen in our public pieces. They are too strong for compliment, and tend to confirm a claim of subjects in one part of the King's dominions to be sovereigns over their fellow-subjects in another part of his dominions, when in truth they have no such right, and their claim is founded only in usurpation, the several states having equal rights and liberties, and being only connected as England and Scotland were before the union, by having one common sovereign, the King.

This kind of doctrine the Lords and Commons here would deem little less than treason against what they think their share of the sovereignty over the colonies. To me those bodies seem to have been long encroaching on the rights of their and our sovereign, assuming too much of his authority, and betraying his interests. By our constitution he is, with his plantation parliaments, the sole legislator of his American subjects, and in that capacity is, and ought to be, free to exercise his own judgment, unrestrained and unlimited by his Parliament here. And our parliaments have a right to grant him aids without the consent of this Parliament, a circumstance which, by the way, begins to give it some jealousy. Let us, therefore, hold fast our loyalty to our King, who has the best disposition towards us, and has a family interest in our prosperity; as that steady loyalty is the most probable means of securing us from the arbitrary power of a corrupt Parliament that does not like us, and conceives itself to have an interest in keeping us down and fleecing us.

If they should urge the *inconvenience* of an empire's being divided into so many separate states, and from thence conclude that we are not so divided, I would answer that an inconvenience proves nothing but itself. England and Scotland were once separate states, under the same King. The inconvenience found in their being separate states did not prove that the Parliament of England had a right to govern Scotland. A formal union was thought necessary, and England was a hundred years soliciting it before she could bring it about. If Great Britain now thinks such a union necessary with us, let her propose her terms, and we may consider them. Were the general sentiment of this nation to be consulted in the case, I should hope the terms, whether practicable or not, would at least be equitable; for I think that, except among those with whom the spirit of Toryism prevails, the popular inclination here is to wish us well, and that we may preserve our liberties.

I unbosom myself thus to you, in confidence of your prudence, and wishing to have your sentiments on the subject in return.

Mr. Pownall, I suppose, will acquaint you with the event of his motions, and therefore I say nothing more of them than that he appears very sincere in his endeavors to serve us; on which account, I sometime since republished with pleasure the parting addresses to him of your Assembly, with some previous remarks to his honor, as well as in justification of our people.

I hope that before this time those detestable murderers have quitted your province, and that the spirit of industry and frugality continues and increases. With sincerest esteem and affection, I am, dear Sir, &c.,

B. Franklin.

P. S.—Just before the last session of Parliament commenced, a friend of mine, who had connexion with some of the ministry, wrote me a letter purposely to draw from me my sentiments in writing on the then state of affairs. I wrote a pretty free answer, which I know was immediately communicated, and a good deal handed about among them. For your private amusement I send you copies. I wish you may be able to read them, as they are very badly written by a very blundering clerk.[1](#)

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXXXV

TO SAMUEL FRANKLIN

London, 8 June, 1770.

Loving Cousin:—

I received your kind letter of the 23d of March. I was happy to find that neither you nor any of your family were in the way of those murderers.² I hope that before this time the town is quite freed from such dangerous and mischievous inmates.

I rejoice to hear that you and your good wife and children continue in health. My love to them. I still enjoy a considerable share of that blessing, thanks to God, and hope once more to see Boston and my friends there before I die. I left it first in 1723. I made a visit there in 1733; another in 1743; another in 1753; another in 1763. Perhaps if I live to 1773, I may then call again, and take my leave.

Our relation, Sally Franklin, is still with me here, is a very good girl, and grown up almost a woman. She sends her love to you and yours. I am, with sincere regard, your affectionate cousin,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXXXVI

TO MRS. DEBORAH FRANKLIN

London, 10 June, 1770.

My Dear Child:—

I think you are the most punctual of all my correspondents; and it is often a particular satisfaction to me to hear from you when I have no letter from any one else. By Captain Falconer I answered Sally's letter about her son's being inoculated, and told her Sir John Pringle's opinion, as to the probability of his not having the smallpox hereafter. I think he advised, as no eruption appeared, to make sure of the thing, by inoculating him again. I rejoice much in the pleasure you appear to take in him. It must be of use to your health, the having such an amusement. My love to him, and to his father and mother.

Captain Ourry is gone abroad as a travelling tutor to Lord Galway's son; Mrs. Strahan is at Bath; Mr. Strahan and children, Mr. and Mrs. West and their son, are all well at present; though Mr. West himself has had a long illness. They always inquire after you, and I present your compliments. Poor Nanny was drawn in to marry a worthless fellow, who got all her money, and then ran away, and left her. So she is returned to her old service with Mrs. Stevenson, poorer than ever, but seems pretty patient, only looks dejected, sighs sometimes, and wishes she had never left Philadelphia. Mr. Montgomery died at sea, as we have lately heard.

As to myself, I had, from Christmas till Easter, a disagreeable giddiness hanging about me, which, however, did not hinder me from being about and doing business. In the Easter holidays, being at a friend's house in the country, I was taken with a sore throat, and came home half strangled. From Monday till Friday I could swallow nothing but barley water and the like. On Friday came on a fit of the gout, from which I had been free five years. Immediately the inflammation and swelling in my throat disappeared; my foot swelled greatly, and I was confined about three weeks; since which I am perfectly well, the giddiness and every other disagreeable symptom having quite left me. I hope your health is likewise by this time quite reëstablished; being as ever, my dear child, your affectionate husband,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXXXVII

TO SAMUEL RHOADS

London, 26 June, 1770.

Dear Friend:—

It is a long time since I had the pleasure of hearing from you directly. Mrs. Franklin has indeed now and then acquainted me of your welfare, which I am always glad to hear of. It is, I fear, partly if not altogether my fault, that our correspondence has not been regularly continued. One thing I am sure of, that it has been from no want of regard on either side, but rather from too much business, and avocations of various kinds, and my having little of importance to communicate.

One of our good citizens, Mr. Hillegas, anxious for the future safety of our town, wrote to me some time since, desiring I would inquire concerning the covering of our houses here with copper. I sent him the best information I could then obtain, but have since received the enclosed from an ingenious friend, who is what they call here a civil engineer. I should be glad you would peruse it, think of the matter a little, and give me your sentiments of it. When you have done with the paper, please to give it to Mr. Hillegas. I am told by Lord Despencer, who has covered a long piazza, or gallery, with copper, that the expense is charged in this account too high; for his cost but one shilling and ten pence per foot, all charges included. I suppose his copper must have been thinner. And, indeed, it is so strong a metal, that I think it may well be used very thin.

It appears to me of great importance, to build our dwelling-houses, if we can, in a manner more secure from danger by fire. We scarcely ever heard of fire in Paris. When I was there I took particular notice of the construction of their houses, and I did not see how one of them could well be burnt. The roofs are slate or tile, the walls are stone, the walls generally lined with stucco or plaster, instead of wainscot, the floors of stucco, or of six square tiles painted brown, or of flag stone, or of marble; if any floors were of wood, it was of oak wood, which is not so inflammable as pine. Carpets prevent the coldness of stone or brick floors offending the feet in winter, and the noise of treading on such floors overhead is less inconvenient than on boards.

The stairs, too, at Paris, are either stone or brick, with only a wooden edge or corner for the step; so that, on the whole, though the Parisians commonly burn wood in their chimneys, a more dangerous kind of fuel than that used here, yet their houses escape extremely well, as there is little in a room that can be consumed by fire except the furniture; whereas in London, perhaps scarcely a year passes in which half a million of property and many lives are not lost by this destructive element. Of late, indeed, they begin here to leave off wainscoting their rooms, and instead of it cover the walls with stucco, often formed into pannels like wainscot, which, being painted, is very strong and warm. Stone staircases, too, with iron rails, grow more and more into fashion here; but stone steps cannot, in some circumstances, be fixed; and there, methinks, oak is safer than pine; and I assure you that in many genteel houses here, both old and new, the stairs and floors are oak, and look extremely well. Perhaps solid oak for the steps would be still safer than boards; and two steps might be cut diagonally out of one piece.

Excuse my talking to you on a subject with which you must be so much better acquainted than I am. It is partly to make out a letter, and partly in hope that, by turning your attention to the point, some methods of greater security in our future building may be thought of and promoted by you, whose judgment I know has deservedly great weight with our fellow-citizens. For, though our town has not hitherto suffered greatly by fire, yet I am apprehensive, that some time or other, by a concurrence of unlucky circumstances, such as dry weather, hard frost, and high winds, a fire then happening may suddenly spread far and wide over our cedar roofs, and do us an immense mischief. I am, yours, &c.,

B. Franklin.

[Paper referred to in the above letter.]

The carpentry of the roof, being formed with its proper descents, is, in the first place, sheeted or covered with deals, nailed horizontally upon the rafters, after the same manner as when intended to be covered with lead. The sheets of the copper for this covering are two feet by four, and for covering the slopes of the roof are cast so thin as to weigh eight or nine pounds, and for covering the flats or gutters, ten or eleven pounds each, or about one pound or a pound and a quarter to the superficial foot.

A string of strong cartridge paper (overlapping a little at its joints) is regularly tacked down upon the sheeting, under the copper covering, as the work proceeds from eaves to ridge. It prevents the

jingling sound of hail or rain falling upon the roof, and answers another purpose to be mentioned by and by.

In order to show the regular process of laying down the roof, we must begin with fastening two sheets together lengthwise. The edges of two sheets are laid down so as to lap or cover each other an inch, and a slip of the same copper, about three inches and a half broad, called the reeve, is introduced between them. Four oblong holes, or slits, are then cut or punched through the whole, and they are fastened or riveted together by copper nails, with small round shanks and flat heads. Indents are then cut one inch and three quarters deep upon the seam at top and bottom. The right hand sheet and the reeve are then folded back to the left. The reeve is then folded to the right, and the sheets being laid on the roof in their place, it is nailed down to the sheeting with flat-headed, short copper nails. The right-hand sheet is then folded over the reeve to the right, and the whole beat down flat upon the cartridge paper covering the sheeting, and thus they are fastened and laid in their places by nailing down the reeve only; and by reason of the oblong holes through them and the reeve, have a little liberty to expand or contract with the heat and cold, without raising themselves up from the sheeting, or tearing themselves or the fastening to pieces.

Two other sheets are then fixed together, according to the first and second operations above, and their seam, with the reeve, introduced under the upper ends of the seam of the former, so as to cover down about two inches upon the upper ends of the former sheets; and so far the cartridge paper is allowed to cover the two first sheets. This edge of the paper is dipped in oil, or in turpentine, so far before its application, and thus a body between the sheets is formed, impenetrable to wet, and the reeve belonging to the two last sheets is nailed down to the sheeting as before, and the left-hand sheet is turned down to the right. Four sheets are now laid down, with the seam or joint rising to the ridge; and thus the work is continued, both vertically and horizontally, till the roof is covered, the sides and ends of each sheet being alternately, each way, undermost and uppermost.

The price for copper, nails, and workmanship runs at about eight pounds ten shillings per hundred weight, or two shillings and three pence per foot, superficial, exclusive of the lappings; and about two shillings and eight pence per foot upon the whole; which is rather above half as much more as the price of doing it well with lead.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXXXVIII

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON¹

London, 24 July, 1770.

Dear Polly:—

I wrote a few lines to you last week, in answer to yours of the 15th, since which I have been in the country; and returning yesterday, found your good mother was come home, and had got a letter from you of the 20th. She has just put it into my hands, and desired me to write to you, as she is going into the city with Miss Barwell to buy things. Whether she will have time to write herself, or whether, if she had, she would get over her natural aversion to writing, I cannot say. I rather think she will content herself with your knowing what she should say, and would say if she wrote; and with my letting you know that she is well, and very happy in hearing that you are so.

Your friends are all much pleased with your account of the agreeable family, their kind reception and entertainment of you, and the respect shown you; only Dolly and I, though we rejoice and shall do so in every thing that contributes to your happiness, are now and then in low spirits, supposing we have lost each a friend. Barwell says she conceives nothing of this; and that we must be two simpletons to entertain such imaginations. I showed her your letter to your mother, wherein you say “Dolly is a naughty girl, and if she does not mend, I shall turn her off; for I have got another Dolly now, and a very good Dolly too.” She begged me not to communicate this to Dolly, for though said in jest, yet in her present state of mind it would hurt her. I suppose that it was for the same good-natured reason that she refused to show me a paragraph of your letter to Dolly, that had been communicated by Dolly to her.

July 25th. The above was written yesterday, but, being interrupted, I could not finish my letter in time for the post; though I find I had little to add. Your mother desires me to express abundance of affection for you, and for Mr. Hewson; and to say all the proper things for her, with respect to the rest of your friends there. But you can imagine better than I can write. Sally and little Temple¹ join in best wishes of prosperity to you both. Make my sincerest respects acceptable to Mr. Hewson, whom, exclusive of his other merits, I shall always esteem in proportion to the regard he manifests for you. Barwell tells me that your aunt had received his

letter, and was highly pleased with it and him; so I hope all will go well there; and I shall take every opportunity of cultivating her good disposition, in which I think you used to be sometimes a little backward, but you always had your reasons.

I am apt to love everybody that loves you, and therefore I suppose I shall in time love your new mother, and new sister, and new Dolly. I find I begin to like them already, and, if you think proper, you may tell them so. But your old Dolly and I have agreed to love each other better than ever we did, to make up as much as we can our supposed loss of you. We like your assurance of continued friendship, unimpaired by your change of condition, and we believe you think as you write; but we fancy we know better than you. You know I once knew your heart better than you did yourself. As a proof that I am right, take notice,—that you now think this the silliest letter I ever wrote to you, and that Mr. Hewson confirms you in that opinion.

However, I am still what I have been so many years, my dear good girl, your sincerely affectionate friend and servant,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCLXXXIX

TO CADWALLADER EVANS

London, 27 August, 1770.

Dear Doctor:—

I am favored with yours of June 10th. With this I send you our last volume of *Philosophical Transactions*, wherein you will see printed the observations of Messrs. Biddle and Bayley on the Transit, as well as those of Messrs. Mason and Dixon relating to the longitude of places. When you and your friends have perused it, please to deliver it to Mrs. Franklin to be put among my books.

Thanks for the books on the silk affair. It will give me great pleasure to see that business brought to perfection among us. The subscription is a noble one, and does great honor to our public spirit. If you should not procure from Georgia, as you expected, one that understands the reeling, I believe I can procure you such a hand from Italy, a great silk merchant here having offered me his assistance for that purpose, if wanted.

I am happy beyond expression to see the virtue and firmness of our country, with regard to the non-importation. It does us great honor. And New York is in great disgrace with all the friends of liberty in the kingdom, who are, I assure you, no contemptible number, and who applaud the stand we have made, and wish us success. I am, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXC

THE CRAVEN-STREET GAZETTE¹

Saturday, September 22, 1770.

This morning Queen Margaret, accompanied by her first maid of honor, Miss Franklin, set out for Rochester. Immediately on their departure the whole street was in tears—from a heavy shower of rain. It is whispered that the new family administration, which took place on her Majesty's departure, promises, like all other new administrations, to govern much better than the old one.

We hear that the great person (so called from his enormous size) of a certain family in a certain street is grievously affected at the late changes, and could hardly be comforted this morning, though the new ministry promised him a roasted shoulder of mutton and potatoes for his dinner.

It is said that the same great person intended to pay his respects to another great personage this day at St. James's, it being coronation-day; hoping thereby a little to amuse his grief; but was prevented by an accident, Queen Margaret or her maid of honor having carried off the key of the drawers, so that the lady of the bedchamber could not come at a laced shirt for his Highness. Great clamors were made on this occasion against her Majesty.

Other accounts say that the shirts were afterwards found, though too late, in another place. And some suspect that the wanting a shirt from those drawers was only a ministerial pretence to excuse picking the locks, that the new administration might have every thing at command.

We hear that the lady chamberlain of the household went to market this morning by her own self, gave the butcher whatever he asked for the mutton, and had no dispute with the potato-woman, to their great amazement at the change of times.

It is confidently asserted that this afternoon, the weather being wet, the great person a little chilly, and nobody at home to find fault with the expense of fuel, he was indulged with a fire in his chamber. It seems the design is to make him contented by degrees with the absence of the Queen.

A project has been under consideration of government to take the opportunity of her Majesty's absence for doing a thing she was

always averse to, namely, fixing a new lock on the street door, or getting a key made to the old one; it being found extremely inconvenient that one or other of the great officers of state should, whenever the maid goes out for a ha'penny worth of sand or a pint of porter, be obliged to tend the door to let her in again. But opinions being divided which of the two expedients to adopt, the project is for the present laid aside.

We have good authority to assure our readers that a Cabinet Council was held this afternoon at tea; the subject of which was a proposal for the reformation of manners and a more strict observation of the Lord's day. The result was a unanimous resolution that no meat should be dressed to-morrow; whereby the cook and the first minister will both be at liberty to go to church, the one having nothing to do, and the other no roast to rule. It seems the cold shoulder of mutton and the apple-pie were thought sufficient for Sunday's dinner. All pious people applaud this measure and it is thought the new ministry will soon become popular.

We hear that Mr. Wilkes was at a certain house in Craven Street this day, and inquired after the absent Queen. His good lady and the children are well.

The report that Mr. Wilkes, the patriot, made the above visit is without foundation, it being his brother, the courtier.

Sunday, September 23d.

It is now found, by sad experience, that good resolutions are easier made than executed. Notwithstanding yesterday's solemn order of Council, nobody went to church to-day. It seems the great person's broad-built bulk lay so long abed that the breakfast was not over till it was too late to dress. At least this is the excuse. In fine, it seems a vain thing to hope reformation from the example of our great folks.

The cook and the minister, however, both took advantage of the order so far, as to save themselves all trouble, and the clause of cold dinner was enforced, though the going to church was dispensed with, just as common working folks observe the commandment. *The seventh day thou shalt rest*, they think a sacred injunction; but the other *six days thou shalt labor* is deemed a mere piece of advice, which they may practise when they want bread and are out of credit at the ale-house, and may neglect whenever they have money in their pockets.

It must, nevertheless, be said, in justice to our court, that whatever inclination they had to gaming, no cards were brought out to-day. Lord and Lady Hewson walked after dinner to Kensington to pay their duty to the Dowager, and Dr. Fatsides made four hundred and sixty-nine turns in his dining-room as the exact distance of a visit to the lovely Lady Barwell, whom he did not find at home; so there was no struggle for and against a kiss, and he sat down to dream in the easy-chair that he had it without any trouble.

Monday, September 24th.

We are credibly informed that the great person dined this day with the Club at the Cat and Bagpipes in the City on cold round of boiled beef. This, it seems, he was under some necessity of doing (though he rather dislikes beef), because truly the ministers were to be all abroad somewhere to dine on hot roast venison. It is thought that if the Queen had been at home he would not have been so slighted. And though he shows outwardly no marks of dissatisfaction, it is suspected that he begins to wish for her Majesty's return.

It is currently reported that poor Nanny had nothing for dinner in the kitchen for herself and puss but the scrapings of the bones of Saturday's mutton.

This evening there was high play at Craven-Street House. The great person lost money. It is supposed the ministers, as is usually supposed of all ministers, shared the emoluments among them.

Tuesday, September 25th.

This morning the good Lord Hutton called at Craven-Street House, and inquired very respectfully and affectionately concerning the welfare of the Queen. He then imparted to the big man a piece of intelligence important to them both, which he had just received from Lady Hawkesworth, namely, that their amiable and excellent companion, Miss Dorothea Blount, had made a vow to marry absolutely him of the two whose wife should first depart this life. It is impossible to express with words the various agitations of mind appearing in both their faces on this occasion; *vanity* at the preference given them over the rest of mankind; *affection* for their present wives; *fear* of losing them; *hope* (if they must lose them) to obtain the proposed comfort; *jealousy* of each other in case both wives should die together,—all working at the same time, jumbled their features into inexplicable confusion. They parted at length, with professions and outward appearances of ever-enduring friendship; but it was shrewdly suspected that each of them wished health and long life to the other's wife, and that however long

either of these friends might like to live himself, the other would be very well pleased to survive him.

It is remarked that the skies have wept every day in Craven Street the absence of the Queen.

The public may be assured that this morning a certain great person was asked very complacently by the mistress of the household, if he would choose to have the blade-bone of Saturday's mutton, that had been kept for his dinner to-day, *broiled* or *cold*. He answered gravely: *If there is any flesh on it, it may be broiled; if not, it may as well be cold*. Orders were accordingly given for broiling it. But when it came to table, there was indeed so very little flesh, or rather none at all (puss having dined on it yesterday after Nanny), that, if our new administration had been as good economists as they would be thought, the expense of broiling might well have been saved to the public and carried to the sinking fund. It is assured the great person bears all with infinite patience. But the nation is astonished at the insolent presumption that dares treat so much mildness in so cruel a manner.

A terrible accident *had like to have happened* this afternoon at tea. The boiler was set too near the end of the little square table. The first mistress was sitting at one end of the table to administer the tea; the great person was about to sit down at the other end, where the boiler stood. By a sudden motion, the lady gave the table a tilt. Had it gone over, the great person must have been scalded; perhaps to death. Various are the surmises and observations on this occasion. The godly say it would have been a just judgment on him for preventing, by his laziness, the family's going to church last Sunday. The opposition do not stick to insinuate that there was a design to scald him, prevented only by his quick catching the table. The friends of the ministry give out that he carelessly jogged the table himself, and would have been inevitably scalded, had not the mistress saved him. It is hard for the public to come at the truth in these cases.

At six o'clock this afternoon, news came by the post that her Majesty arrived safely at Rochester on Saturday night. The bells immediately rang—for candles to illuminate the parlour; the court went into cribbage; and the evening concluded with every demonstration of joy.

It is reported that all the principal officers of state have received an invitation from the Duchess Dowager of Rochester, to go down thither on Saturday next. But it is not yet known whether the great affairs they have on their hands will permit them to make this excursion.

We hear that, from the time of her Majesty's leaving Craven-Street House to this day, no care is taken to file the newspapers; but they lie about in every room, in every window, and on every chair, just where the Doctor lays them when he has read them. It is impossible government can long go on in such hands.

***To The Publisher Of The Craven-Street
Gazette:***

Sir:—

I make no doubt of the truth of what the papers tell us, that a certain great person has been half-starved on the blade-bone of a *sheep* (I cannot call it of *mutton*, because none was on it), by a set of the most careless, blundering, foolish, crafty, and knavish ministers that ever got into a house, and pretended to govern a family and provide a dinner. Alas, for the poor old England of Craven Street! If these nefarious wretches continue in power another week, the nation will be ruined; undone, totally undone, if the Queen does not return, or (which is better) turn them all out, and appoint me and my friends to succeed them. I am a great admirer of your useful and impartial paper, and therefore request you will insert this, without fail, from

Your Humble Servant,

Indignation.

***To The Publisher Of The Craven-Street
Gazette:***

Sir:—

Your correspondent, "*Indignation*," has made a fine story in your paper against our excellent Craven-Street ministry, as if they meant to starve his Highness, giving him only a bare blade-bone for his dinner, while they riot upon roast venison. The wickedness of writers in this age is truly amazing. I believe we never had, since the foundation of our state, a more faithful, upright, worthy, careful, considerate, incorrupt, discreet, wise, prudent, and beneficent ministry than the present. But if even the angel Gabriel would condescend to be our minister, and provide our dinners, he could scarcely escape newspaper defamation from a gang of hungry, ever-restless, discontented, and malicious scribblers.

It is, Sir, a piece of justice you owe our righteous administration to undeceive the public on this occasion, by assuring them of the fact, which is that there was provided, and actually smoking on the table under his royal nose at the same instant, as fine a piece of ribs of beef roasted as ever knife was put into; with potatoes, horse-radish, pickled walnuts, &c., which beef his Highness might have eaten of if he had pleased so to do; and which he forbore to do, merely from a whimsical opinion (with respect be it spoken) that beef doth not with him perspire well. This is the truth; and if your boasted impartiality is real, you will not hesitate a moment to insert this letter in your very next paper.

I am, though a little angry with you at present,

Yours, As You Behave,

A Hater of Scandal.

Junius and *Cinna* came to hand too late for this day's paper, but shall have place in our next.

Marriages. None since our last; but puss begins to go a courting.

Deaths. In the back closet and elsewhere, many poor mice.

Stocks. Biscuit—very low. Buckwheat and Indian meal—both sour. Tea lowering daily—in the canister.

Wednesday, September 26th. Postscript.—Those in the secret of affairs do not scruple to assert roundly that the present first ministress proves very notable, having this day been at market, bought excellent mutton-chops, and apples four a penny, made a very fine apple-pie with her own hands, and mended two pair of breeches.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXCI

TO M. DUBOURG

London, 2 October, 1770.

I see with pleasure, that we think pretty much alike on the subject of English America. We of the colonies have never insisted that we ought to be exempt from contributing to the common expenses necessary to support the prosperity of the empire. We only assert that, having parliaments of our own, and not having representatives in that of Great Britain, our parliaments are the only judges of what we can and what we ought to contribute in this case; and that the English Parliament has no right to take our money without our consent. In fact, the British empire is not a single state; it comprehends many; and though the Parliament of Great Britain has arrogated to itself the power of taxing the colonies, it has no more right to do so than it has to tax Hanover. We have the same King, but not the same legislatures.

The dispute between the two countries has already lost England many millions sterling, which it has lost in its commerce, and America has in this respect been a proportionable gainer. This commerce consisted principally of superfluities; objects of luxury and fashion, which we can well do without; and the resolution we have formed of importing no more till our grievances are redressed, has enabled many of our infant manufactures to take root; and it will not be easy to make our people abandon them in future, even should a connexion more cordial than ever succeed the present troubles. I have, indeed, no doubt that the Parliament of England will finally abandon its present pretensions, and leave us to the peaceable enjoyment of our rights and privileges.

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXCII

TO DUPONT DE NEMOURS

London, 2 October, 1770.

Dear Sir:—

I received with great pleasure the assurance of your kind remembrance of me, and the continuance of your good-will toward me, in your letter by M. le Comte Chreptowitz. . . . I should have been happy to have rendered him every civility and mark of respect in my power (as the friend of those I so much respect and honor) if he had given me the opportunity. But he did not let me see him.

Accept my sincere acknowledgments and thanks for the valuable present you made me of your excellent work on the commerce of the India Company, which I have perused with much pleasure and instruction. It bears throughout the stamp of your masterly hand, in method, perspicuity, and force of argument. The honorable mention you have made in it of your friend is extremely obliging. I was already too much in your debt for favours of that kind.

I purpose returning to America in the ensuing summer, if our disputes should be adjusted, as I hope they will be in the next session of Parliament. Would to God I could take with me Messrs. Dupont, Dubourg, and some other French friends with their good ladies! I might then, by mixing them with my friends in Philadelphia, form a little happy society that would prevent my ever wishing again to visit Europe.

With great and sincere esteem and respect, I am, Dear Sir,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXCIII

TO MRS. DEBORAH FRANKLIN

London, 3 October, 1770.

My Dear Child:—

I received your kind letter of August 16th, which gave me a great deal of satisfaction. I am glad your little grandson recovered so soon of his illness, as I see you are quite in love with him, and that your happiness is wrapped up in his, since your whole long letter is made up of the history of his pretty actions. It was very prudently done of you not to interfere when his mother thought fit to correct him; which pleased me the more, as I feared, from your fondness of him, that he would be too much humored, and perhaps spoiled. There is a story of two little boys in the street; one was crying bitterly; the other came to him to ask what was the matter. "I have been," says he, "for a pennyworth of vinegar, and I have broke the glass, and spilled the vinegar, and my mother will whip me." "No, she won't whip you," says the other. "Indeed she will," says he. "What," says the other, "have you then got ne'er a grandmother?"

I am sorry I did not send one of my books to Mr. Rhoads, since he was desirous of seeing it. My love to him, and to all inquiring friends. Mrs. West was here to-day, and desired me to mention her love to you. Mr. Strahan and family are all well, always inquire how you all do, and send their love. Mrs. Stevenson is at present in the country. But Polly sends her love to you, and Mrs. Bache, and the young gentleman. I am, as ever, your affectionate husband,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXCIV

**FROM DEBORAH FRANKLIN TO B.
FRANKLIN**

My Dear Child:—

the bairer of this is the Son of Dr. Phinis Bond his only son and a
worthey young man he is a going to studey the Law he desired a
line to you I believe you have such a number of worthey young
Jentelmen as ever wente to gather I hope to give you pleshuer to
see such a numbe of fine youthes from your one countrey which
will be an Honour to thar parentes and Countrey.

I Am My Dear Child Your Ffeckshonot

wife D. Franklin.

Ocktober ye 11, 1770.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXCV

FROM SAMUEL COOPER TO B. FRANKLIN

Boston, 6 November, 1770.

Dear Sir:—

My state of health, and excursions upon that account into the country, must be my excuse for not taking an earlier notice of your obliging packet of the 8th June, for which I return you my particular thanks. Your letter and replies to Mr. Strahan's questions gave me great pleasure, though the closing and prophetic part, coming from one so capable of discerning, amidst the uncertainties of futurity, which may probably take place, could not but impress me with melancholy ideas.¹ Some of them have since been realized, but may Heaven forbid a further fulfilment. In this wish I doubt not of your own hearty concurrence; for I do not take you to be of the turn of Swift's physicians, of whom he somewhere says:

“They rather choose that I should die,
Than their predictions prove a lie.”

and yet I am afraid I shall not soon see you thoroughly refuted by events.

So many hope to find their own interest in misrepresentations, so many seem willing to be deceived, and so much art is employed to make whatever is thought convenient appear just and true, that the happy day for establishing the prosperity of Great Britain, by composing the troubles, and insuring to her the united affections of America, seems to be at too great a distance.

We ought not, however, to be discouraged from employing the most likely means to promote so desirable an end. Such a means I esteem the choice which our House of Representatives have made of you to be their agent. Your letter came most seasonably for this. I communicated it with great caution, knowing the delicacy the times require. I allowed, however, some of the leading members of the House in confidence to read your sentiments. They expressed the highest satisfaction; and, though it was objected, that you were agent for other provinces, and we ought to enlarge the number of our friends, and that you and your son, the governor, held places of importance under the crown; and though the House, from various causes, had been much divided respecting an agent; yet such was

their opinion of your abilities and integrity, that a majority readily confided the affairs of the province at this critical season to your care.

I am this moment told the vessel is just upon sailing. I must break off. You see the hurry of this script, but it is to a friend. I shall write more fully soon. Your very respectful, &c.,

Samuel Cooper.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXCVI

TO THOMAS CUSHING¹

London, 24 December, 1770.

Sir:—

Your favor of October 31st came to hand a few days since, with the vote of the House of Representatives, appointing me their agent here, which, as it was unsolicited on my part, I esteem the greater honor; and shall be very happy if I can in that capacity render my country any acceptable service.²

I have also just received your letter of November 6th, containing an account of the state and circumstances of the province, and the grievances it labors under, with sundry depositions and other papers. Another, of November 17th, with a pamphlet, entitled, the *Proceedings of Council*, &c.; another, of November 23d, containing an order on Mr. De Berdt for papers. I can at present only say that I shall immediately endeavour to make myself master of the business committed to my care, that so, when the Parliament and public boards, which are now adjourned for a month, shall meet again, I may be ready to proceed in such manner as, on conferring with Mr. Bollan, shall appear advisable for obtaining redress of the grievances so justly complained of.

I have the pleasure to acquaint you, from good authority, that the project formed by the enemies of the province, for bringing into Parliament a bill to abridge our charter rights, though at first it received some countenance, and great pains were taken to recommend it, is now laid aside. I do not presume to suppose that the opposition I gave to it (by showing the imprudence of the measure, and declaring openly my opinion on all occasions, that, the charter being a compact between the King and the people of the colony, who were *out of the realm* of Great Britain, there existed nowhere on earth a power to alter it, while its terms were complied with, without the consent *of both the contracting parties*) had any weight on the occasion. I rather think that a disposition prevails of late to be on good terms with the colonies, especially as we seem to be on the eve of a war with Spain; and that, in consequence of that disposition, which I hope we shall cultivate, more attention has been paid to the sober advice of our friends, and less to the virulent instigations of our enemies.

I beg you will present my dutiful respects to the House of
Representatives, and assure them of my most faithful endeavours
in their service. With great esteem and regard, I have the honor to
be, &c.,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXCVII

TO MRS. JANE MECOM

London, 30 December, 1770.

Dear Sister:—

This ship staying longer than was expected, gives me an opportunity of writing to you, which I thought I must have missed when I desired cousin Williams to excuse me to you. I received your kind letter of September 25th, by the young gentlemen, who, by their discreet behaviour, have recommended themselves very much to me and many of my acquaintance. Josiah has attained his heart's desire, of being under the tuition of Mr. Stanley, who, though he had long left off teaching, kindly undertook, at my request, to instruct him, and is much pleased with his quickness of apprehension and the progress he makes; and Jonathan appears a very valuable young man, sober, regular, and inclined to industry and frugality, which are promising signs of success in business. I am very happy in their company.

As to the rumor you mention (which was, as Josiah tells me, that I had been deprived of my place in the post-office on account of a letter I wrote to Philadelphia), it might have this foundation, that some of the ministry had been displeased on my writing such letters, and there were really some thoughts among them of showing that displeasure in that manner. But I had some friends too, who, unrequested by me, advised the contrary. And my enemies were forced to content themselves with abusing me plentifully in the newspapers, and endeavoring to provoke me to resign. In this they are not likely to succeed, I being deficient in that Christian virtue of resignation. If they would have my office, they must take it.

I have heard of some great man whose rule it was, with regard to offices, *never to ask for them, and never to refuse them*; to which I have always added, in my own practice, *never to resign them*. As I told my friends, I rose to that office through a long course of service in the inferior degrees of it. Before my time, through bad management, it never produced the salary annexed to it; and when I received it, no salary was to be allowed if the office did not produce it. During the first four years it was so far from defraying itself, that it became nine hundred and fifty pounds sterling in debt to me and my colleague. I had been chiefly instrumental in bringing

it to its present flourishing state, and therefore thought I had some kind of right to it. I had hitherto executed the duties of it faithfully, and to the perfect satisfaction of my superiors, which I thought was all that should be expected of me on that account. As to the letters complained of, it was true I did write them, and they were written in compliance with another duty, that to my country; a duty quite distinct from that of postmaster.

My conduct in this respect was exactly similar to that I held on a similar occasion but a few years ago, when the then ministry was ready to hug me for the assistance I afforded them in repealing a former revenue act. My sentiments were still the same, that no such acts should be made here for America; or, if made, should as soon as possible be repealed; and I thought it should not be expected of me to change my political opinions every time his Majesty thought fit to change his ministers. This was my language on the occasion; and I have lately heard that, though I was thought much to blame, it being understood that every man who holds an office should act with the ministry, whether agreeable or not to his own judgment, yet, in consideration of the goodness of my private character (as they were pleased to compliment me), the office was not to be taken from me.

Possibly they may still change their minds, and remove me; but no apprehension of that sort will, I trust, make the least alteration in my political conduct. My rule, in which I have always found satisfaction, is, never to turn aside in public affairs through views of private interest; but to go straight forward in doing what appears to me right at the time, leaving the consequences with Providence. What in my younger days enabled me more easily to walk upright was, that I had a trade, and that I knew I could live upon little; and thence (never having had views of making a fortune) I was free from avarice, and contented with the plentiful supplies my business afforded me. And now it is still more easy for me to preserve my freedom and integrity, when I consider that I am almost at the end of my journey, and therefore need less to complete the expense of it; and that what I now possess, through the blessing of God, may, with tolerable economy, be sufficient for me (great misfortunes excepted), though I should add nothing more to it by any office or employment whatsoever.

I send you by this opportunity the two books you wrote for. They cost three shillings apiece. When I was first in London, about forty-five years since, I knew a person who had an opinion something like your author's. Her name was Ilive, a printer's widow. She died soon after I left England, and by her *will* obliged her son to deliver publicly, in Salters' Hall, a solemn discourse, the purport of which was to prove that this world is the true Hell, or place of punishment

for the spirits who had transgressed in a better state, and were sent here to suffer for their sins in animals of all sorts. It is long since I saw the discourse, which was printed. I think a good deal of Scripture was cited in it, and that the supposition was that, though we now remembered nothing of such a preëxistent state, yet after death we might recollect it, and remember the punishments we had suffered, so as to be the better for them; and others, who had not yet offended, might now behold and be warned by our sufferings.

In fact, we see here that every lower animal has its enemy, with proper inclinations, faculties, and weapons, to terrify, wound, and destroy it; and that men, who are uppermost, are devils to one another; so that, on the established doctrine of the goodness and justice of the great Creator, this apparent state of general and systematical mischief seemed to demand some such supposition as Mrs. Ilive's, to account for it consistently with the honor of the Deity. But our reasoning powers, when employed about what may have been before our existence here, or shall be after it, cannot go far, for want of history and facts. Revelation only can give us the necessary information, and that, in the first of these points especially, has been very sparingly afforded us.

I hope you continue to correspond with your friends at Philadelphia. My love to your children; and believe me ever your affectionate brother,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXCVIII

TO THOMAS CUSHING

London, 5 February, 1771.

Sir:—

Since mine of December 24th, I have been honored by the letter from the Committee, dated December 17th, which, with yours of November 6th, now lies before me.

The doctrine of the right of Parliament to lay taxes on America is now almost generally given up here, and one seldom meets in conversation with any who continue to assert it. But there are still many who think that the dignity and honor of Parliament, and of the nation, are so much engaged, as that no formal renunciation of the claim is ever to be expected. We ought to be contented, they say, with a forbearance of any attempt hereafter to exercise such right; and this they would have us rely on as a certainty. Hints are also given, that the duties now subsisting may be gradually withdrawn, as soon as a regard to that dignity will permit it to be decently done, without subjecting government to the contempt of all Europe, as being compelled into measures by the refractoriness of the colonies. How far this may be depended on, no one can say. The presumption rather is, that if, by time, we become so accustomed to these, as to pay them without discontent, no minister will afterwards think of taking them off, but rather be encouraged to add others.

Perhaps there was never an instance of a colony so much and so long persecuted with vehement and malicious abuse, as ours has been, for near two years past, by its enemies here and those who reside in it. The design apparently was, by rendering us odious, as well as contemptible, to prevent all concern for us in the friends of liberty here, when the projects of oppressing us further, and depriving us of our rights by various violent measures, should be carried into execution. Of late this abuse has abated; the sentiments of a majority of the ministers are, I think, become more favorable towards us; and I have reason to believe that all those projects are now laid aside. The projectors themselves, too, are, I believe, somewhat diminished in their credit; and it appears not likely that any new schemes of the kind will be listened to, if fresh occasion is not administered from our side the water. It seems, however, too early yet to expect such an attention to our

complaints, as would be necessary to obtain an immediate redress of our grievances. A little time is requisite; but no opportunity will be lost by your agents, of stating them where it may be of use, and inculcating the necessity of removing them, for the strength and safety of the empire. And I hope the colony assemblies will show, by frequently repeated resolves, that they know their rights, and do not lose sight of them. Our growing importance will ere long compel an acknowledgment of them, and establish and secure them to our posterity.

In case of my leaving this country, which I may possibly do in the ensuing summer, I shall put into the hands of Dr. Lee¹ all the papers relating to your affairs, which I have received from you, or from the son of your late agent, Mr. De Berdt. The present American secretary, Lord Hillsborough, has indeed objected to the Assembly's appointment, and insists that no agent ought to be received or attended to by government here who is not appointed by an act of the General Court, to which the governor has given his assent. This doctrine, if he could establish it, would in a manner give to his Lordship the power of appointing, or, at least, negating any choice of the House of Representatives and Council, since it would be easy for him to instruct the governor not to assent to the appointment of such and such men who are obnoxious to him; so that if the appointment is annual, every agent that valued his post must consider himself as holding it by the favor of his Lordship, and, of course, too much obliged to him to oppose his measures, however contrary to the interest of the province.

Of what use such agents would be it is easy to judge, and, although I am assured that notwithstanding this fancy of his Lordship, any memorial, petition, or other address from, or in behalf of, the House of Representatives to the King in Council, or to either House of Parliament, would be received from your agent as usual, yet on this occasion I cannot but wish that the public character of a colony agent was better understood and settled, as well as the political relation between the colonists and the mother country.

When they come to be considered in the light of *distinct states*, as I conceive they really are, possibly their agents may be treated with more respect, and considered more as public ministers. Under the present American administration they are rather looked on with an evil eye, as obstructors of ministerial measures; and the Secretary would, I imagine, be well pleased to get rid of them, being, as he has sometimes intimated, of opinion that agents are unnecessary, for that whatever is to be transacted between the assemblies of colonies and the government here may be done through and by the governor's letters, and more properly than by any agent whatever.

In truth, your nominations, particularly of Dr. Lee and myself, have not been at all agreeable to his Lordship.

I purpose, however, to draw up a memorial, stating our rights and grievances, and in the name and behalf of the province protesting particularly against the late innovations in respect to the military power obtruded on the civil, as well as the other infringements of the charter, and at a proper time, if Mr. Bollan, on due consideration, approves of it, and will join me in it, to present it to his Majesty in Council. Whether speedy redress is, or is not, the consequence, I imagine it may be of good use to keep alive our claims, and show that we have not given up the contested points, though we take no violent measures to obtain them.

A notion has been much inculcated here by our enemies that any farther concession on the part of Great Britain would only serve to increase our demands. I have constantly given it as my opinion that if the colonies were restored to the state they were in before the Stamp Act, they would be satisfied, and contend no farther. As in this I have been supposed not to know or not to speak the sentiments of the Americans, I am glad to find the same so fully expressed in the Committee's letter. It was certainly, as I have often urged, bad policy, when they attempted to heal our differences by repealing part of the duties only, as it is bad surgery to leave splinters in a wound which must prevent its healing, or in time occasion it to open afresh.

There is no doubt of the intention to make governors and some other officers independent of the people for their support, and that this purpose will be persisted in if the American revenue is found sufficient to defray the salaries. Many think this so necessary a measure that even if there were no such revenue the money should issue out of the treasury here. But this, I apprehend, would hardly be the case, there being so many demands at home, and the salaries of so many officers in so many colonies would amount to such an immense sum that probably the burden would be found too great, and the providing for the expense of their governments be left to the colonies themselves.

I shall watch every thing that may be moved to the detriment of the province, and use my best endeavours for its service.

No public notice has yet been taken of the inflammatory paper mentioned by the Committee, as stuck up in Boston, and I think the indiscretion of individuals is not now so likely, as it has been of late, to make general impressions to our disadvantage. With the greatest respect, &c.,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCXCIX

TO SAMUEL COOPER

London, 5 February, 1771.

Dear Sir:—

I have just received your kind favor of January 1st by Mr. Bowdoin, to whom I should be glad to render any service here. I wrote to you some weeks since in answer to yours of July and November, expressing my sentiments without the least reserve on points that require free discussion, as I know I can confide in your prudence not to hurt my usefulness here by making me more obnoxious than I must necessarily be from that known attachment to the American interest, which my duty as well as inclination demands of me.

In the same confidence I send you the enclosed extract from my Journal, containing a late conference between the Secretary¹ and your friend, in which you will see a little of his temper. It is one of the many instances of his behaviour and conduct that have given me the very mean opinion I entertain of his abilities and fitness for his station. His character is conceit, wrongheadedness, obstinacy, and passion. Those who would speak most favorably of him allow all this; they only add that he is an honest man and means well. If that be true, as perhaps it may, I wish him a better place, where only honesty and well-meaning are required, and where his other qualities can do no harm. Had the war taken place, I have reason to believe he would have been removed. He had, I think, some apprehensions of it himself at the time I was with him. I hope, however, that our affairs will not much longer be perplexed and embarrassed by his perverse and senseless management. I have since heard that his Lordship took great offence at some of my last words, which he calls extremely rude and abusive. He assured a friend of mine that they were equivalent to telling him to his face that the colonies could expect neither favor nor justice during his administration. I find he did not mistake me.

It is true, as you have heard, that some of my letters to America have been echoed back thither; but that has not been the case with any that were written to you. Great umbrage was taken, but chiefly by Lord Hillsborough, who was disposed before to be angry with me, and therefore the inconvenience was the less; and, whatever the consequences are of his displeasure, putting all my offences together, I must bear them as well as I can. Not but that if there is

to be war between us I shall do my best to defend myself and annoy my adversary, little regarding the story of the Earthen Pot and Brazen Pitcher. One encouragement I have, the knowledge that he is not a whit better liked by his colleagues in the ministry than he is by me; that he cannot probably continue where he is much longer, and that he can scarce be succeeded by anybody who will not like me the better for his having been at variance with me.

Pray continue writing to me, as you find opportunity. Your candid, clear, and well-written letters, be assured, are of great use. With the highest esteem, I am, my dear friend, &c.,

B. Franklin.

[Minutes of the Conference mentioned in the preceding Letter.]

Wednesday, 16 January, 1771.

I went this morning to wait on Lord Hillsborough. The porter at first denied his Lordship, on which I left my name, and drove off. But before the coach got out of the square the coachman heard a call, turned, and went back to the door, when the porter came and said: "His Lordship will see you, Sir." I was shown into the levee room, where I found Governor Bernard, who, I understand, attends there constantly. Several other gentlemen were there attending, with whom I sat down a few minutes, when Secretary Pownall¹ came out to us, and said his Lordship desired I would come in.

I was pleased with this ready admission and preference, having sometimes waited three or four hours for my turn; and, being pleased, I could more easily put on the open, cheerful countenance that my friends advised me to wear. His Lordship came towards me, and said: "I was dressing in order to go to court; but, hearing that you were at the door, who are a man of business, I determined to see you immediately." I thanked his Lordship, and said that my business at present was not much; it was only to pay my respects to his Lordship and to acquaint him with my appointment by the House of Representatives of Massachusetts Bay to be their agent here, in which station if I could be of any service—(I was going on to say—"to the public I should be very happy"; but his Lordship, whose countenance changed at my naming that province, cut me short by saying with something between a smile and a sneer):

L. H.—

I must set you right there, Mr. Franklin, you are not agent.

B. F.—

Why, my Lord?

L. H.—

You are not appointed.

B. F.—

I do not understand your Lordship; I have the appointment in my pocket.

L. H.—

You are mistaken; I have later and better advices. I have a letter from Governor Hutchinson; he would not give his assent to the bill.

B. F.—

There was no bill, my Lord; it was a vote of the House.

L. H.—

There was a bill presented to the governor for the purpose of appointing you and another, one Dr. Lee, I think he is called, to which the governor refused his assent.

B. F.—

I cannot understand this, my Lord; I think there must be some mistake in it. Is your Lordship quite sure that you have such a letter?

L. H.—

I will convince you of it directly. (*Rings the bell.*) Mr. Pownall will come in and satisfy you.

B. F.—

It is not necessary, that I should now detain your Lordship from dressing. You are going to court. I will wait on your Lordship another time.

L. H.—

No, stay; he will come immediately. (*To the servant.*) Tell Mr. Pownall I want him. (*Mr. Pownall comes in.*)

L. H.—

Have not you at hand Governor Hutchinson's letter, mentioning his refusing his assent to the bill for appointing Dr. Franklin agent?

SEC. P.—

My Lord?

L. H.—

Is there not such a letter?

SEC. P.—

No, my Lord; there is a letter relating to some bill for the payment of a salary to Mr. De Berdt, and I think to some other agent, to which the governor had refused his assent.

L. H.—

And is there nothing in the letter to the purpose I mention?

SEC. P.—

No, my Lord.

B. F.—

I thought it could not well be, my Lord; as my letters are by the last ships, and they mention no such thing. Here is the authentic copy of the vote of the House appointing me, in which there is no mention of any act intended. Will your Lordship please to look at it? (*With seeming unwillingness he takes it, but does not look into it.*)

L. H.—

An information of this kind is not properly brought to me as Secretary of State. The Board of Trade is the proper place.

B. F.—

I will leave the paper then with Mr. Pownall to be—

L. H. (HASTILY)—

To what end would you leave it with him?

B. F.—

To be entered on the minutes of that Board, as usual.

L. H. (ANGRILY)—

It shall not be entered there. No such paper shall be entered there while I have any thing to do with the business of that Board. The House of Representatives has no right to appoint an agent. We shall take no notice of any agents, but such as are appointed by acts of Assembly, to which the governor gives his assent. We have had confusion enough already. Here is one agent appointed by the Council, another by the House of Representatives. Which of these is agent for the province? Who are we to hear in provincial affairs? An agent appointed by act of Assembly we can understand. No other will be attended to for the future, I can assure you.

B. F.—

I cannot conceive, my Lord, why the consent of the governor should be thought necessary to the appointment of an agent for the people. It seems to me that—.

L. H. (WITH A MIXED LOOK OF ANGER AND CONTEMPT)—

I shall not enter into a dispute with you, Sir, upon this subject.

B. F.—

I beg your Lordship's pardon; I do not presume to dispute with your Lordship. I would only say that it seems to me that every body of men who cannot appear in person where business relating to them may be transacted, should have a right to appear by an agent. The concurrence of the governor does not seem to be necessary. It is the business of the people that is to be done; he is not one of them; he is himself an agent.

L. H. (HASTILY)—

Whose agent is he?

B. F.—

The King's, my Lord.

L. H.—

No such matter. He is one of the corporation by the province charter. No agent can be appointed but by an act, nor any act pass without his assent. Besides, this proceeding is directly contrary to express instructions.

B. F.—

I did not know there had been such instructions. I am not concerned in any offence against them, and——.

L. H.—

Yes, your offering such a paper to be entered is an offence against them. (*Folding it up again without having read a word of it.*) No such appointment shall be entered. When I came into the administration of American affairs I found them in great disorder. By *my firmness* they are now something mended; and while I have the honor to hold the seals I shall continue the same conduct, the same *firmness*. I think my duty to the master I serve, and to the government of this nation, requires it of me. If that conduct is not approved, *they* may take my office from me when they please. I shall make them a bow, and thank them; I shall resign with pleasure. That gentleman knows it (*pointing to Mr. Pownall*); but while I continue in it I shall resolutely persevere in the same firmness. (*Spoken with great warmth, and turning pale in his discourse, as if he was angry at something or somebody besides the agent, and of more consequence to himself.*)

B. F. (REACHING OUT HIS HAND FOR THE PAPER, WHICH HIS LORDSHIP RETURNED TO HIM)—

I beg your Lordship's pardon for taking up so much of your time. It is, I believe, of no great importance whether the appointment is acknowledged or not, for I have not the least conception that an agent can *at present* be of any use to any of the colonies. I shall therefore give your Lordship no further trouble. (*Withdrew.*)

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCC

TO CADWALLADER EVANS

London, 10 February, 1771.

Dear Doctor:—

I have not now before me your letter, which came with the sample of silk, having put it into the hands of Mr. Walpole with the sample, who has promised me full and particular answers to all your queries, after the silk has been thoroughly examined. In the meantime he tells me the best sort appears to him to be worth in itself twenty-seven or twenty-eight shillings a pound, and will fetch that price when some imperfections in the reeling it are remedied. He tells me, farther, that the best eggs are to be had from Valencia, in Spain, whence he will procure some for you against the next year, the worms from those eggs being the strongest, healthiest, and producing the finest silk of any others, and he thinks you should get some reelers from Italy, which he would likewise undertake to do for you, if desired. He is one of the most opulent and noble-spirited merchants of this kingdom.

I shall write to you fully by Osborne, with all the information I can procure. In the meantime please to present my respects to the gentlemen concerned in the affair, and assure them of my best services. I am, my dear friend, yours affectionately,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCI

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS

London, 5 March, 1771.

Loving Cousin:—

I suppose Jonathan has told you that the lottery is drawn, and your two new tickets had the same success as the former, namely: one twenty-pound prize, and one blank. Would you go on any further?

Josiah is very happy in being under the tuition of Mr. Stanley, who very kindly undertook him at my request, though he had left off teaching. Josiah goes constantly, too, to several concerts, besides operas and oratorios, so that his thirst for music is in a way of being thoroughly satiated. This is the principal expense; for, in all other respects, I never saw two young men from America more prudent and frugal than he and his brother are.

Jonathan seems to have an excellent turn for business, and to be a perfect master of accounts. In the latter he has been of great use to me, having put all mine in order for me. There is a proposal from his uncle of his going to East India as a writer in the Company's service, which I wish may take place, as I think, if he lives, he cannot fail bringing home a fortune. He had ordered a cargo of goods to be sent you for cousin Wood's shop, and had given expectations of paying ready money; but, one of your bills being protested, there seemed a necessity of asking some credit of the merchant. I advised him to take what was wanting of me, rather than fail in punctuality to his word, which is sacred here among all that would maintain a character in trade. He did so; and thereby also saved the discount without putting me to the least inconvenience, provided the money is replaced in six months; and I was glad I had it in my power to accommodate him.

I hope you have before this time got another tenant for your house, and at the former rent. However, I would have you go on advancing to my sister the amount of it, as I am persuaded she cannot well do without it. She has, indeed, been very unfortunate in her children.¹ I am glad to hear that as soon as the weather permits, the tomb will receive a thorough repair. Your kind care in this matter will greatly oblige your affectionate uncle,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCII

TO MRS. WILLIAMS

London, 5 March, 1771.

Dear Cousin:—

I received your kind letter by your sons. They are, I assure you, exceeding welcome to me; and they behave with so much prudence, that no two young men could possibly less need the advice you would have me give them. Josiah is very happily employed in his musical pursuits. And as you hinted to me, that it would be agreeable to you if I employed Jonathan in writing, I requested him to put my accounts in order, which had been much neglected. He undertook it with the utmost cheerfulness and readiness, and executed it with the greatest diligence, making me a complete set of new books, fairly written out and settled in a mercantile manner, which is a great satisfaction to me, and a very considerable service. I mention this, that you may not be in the least uneasy from an apprehension of their visit being burdensome to me; it being, I assure you, quite the contrary.

It has been wonderful to me to see a young man from America, in a place so full of various amusements as London is, as attentive to business, as diligent in it, and keeping as close at home till it was finished, as if it had been for his own profit; and as if he had been at the public diversions so often as to be tired of them.

I pray God to keep and preserve you, and give you again, in due time, a happy sight of these valuable sons; being your affectionate uncle,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCIII

TO WILLIAM FRANKLIN

London, 20 April, 1771.

Dear Son:—

It is long since I have heard from you. The last packet brought me no letter, and there are two packets now due. It is supposed that the long easterly winds have kept them back. We have had a severe and tedious winter. There is not yet the smallest appearance of spring. Not a bud has pushed out, nor a blade of grass. The turnips, that used to feed the cattle, have been destroyed by the frost. The hay in most parts of the country is gone, and the cattle perishing for want, the lambs dying by thousands through cold and scanty nourishment. On Tuesday last I went to dine at our friend Sir Matthew Featherstone's through a heavy storm of snow. His windows, you know, look into the park. Towards evening, I observed the snow still lying over all the park, for the ground was before too cold to thaw, it being itself frozen, and ice in the canal. You cannot imagine a more winterlike prospect. Sir Matthew and Lady Featherstone always inquire kindly of your welfare, as do Mr. and Mrs. Sargent.

Sir John Pringle has heard from Mr. Bowman of your kindness to that gentleman, and desires I would present his particular acknowledgments for the attention you have paid to his recommendation. The Ohio affair seems now near a conclusion, and if the present ministry stand a little longer, I think it will be completed to our satisfaction. Mr. Wharton has been indefatigable, and I think scarce any one I know besides would have been equal to the task, so difficult it is to get business forward here, in which some party purpose is not to be served. But he is always among them, and leaves no stone unturned.¹

I have attended several times this winter upon your acts of Assembly. The Board are not favorably disposed towards your insolvent acts, pretending to doubt whether distant creditors, particularly such as reside in England, may not sometimes be injured by them. I have had a good deal of conversation with Mr. Jackson about them, who remarks that whatever care the Assembly may, according to my representation of their practice, take in examining into the cases to prevent injustice, yet upon the face of the acts nothing of that care appears. The preambles only say that

such and such persons have petitioned and set forth the hardship of their imprisonment, but not a word of the Assembly's having inquired into the allegations contained in such petitions and found them true; not a word of the general consent of the principal creditors, or of any public notice given of the debtor's intention to apply for such an act; all which, he thinks, should appear in the preambles. And then those acts would be subject to less objection and difficulty in getting them through the offices here. I would have you communicate this to the Speaker of the Assembly, with my best respects. I doubt some of those acts will be repealed. Nothing has been done, or is now likely to be done, by the Parliament in American affairs. The House of Commons and the city of London are got into a violent controversy, that seems at present to engross the public attention, and the session cannot continue much longer.

By this ship I send the picture that you left with Meyer. He has never yet finished the miniatures. The other pictures I send with it are for my own house, but this you may take to yours.

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCIV

FROM SAMUEL RHOADS TO B. FRANKLIN

Philadelphia, 3 May, 1771.

Dear Friend:—

I received thy kind favor of February 10th, and am much obliged by the several useful papers, pamphlets, and samples contained therein. Thy friend Wooller has taken much pains in explaining the method of making our houses secure from fire, which I hope will be of great service. We are much obliged to him. I have given several little bits of the limestone to some of my acquaintance in the country, in hopes it may be found here. I am told they make lime in Berks County that will harden under water. I have sent for a sample of it, and will try it. We certainly have plenty of stone very like this in appearance, and I hope of the same quality. I am the more concerned for this discovery, as we are told it was very useful in the works under water of the Duke of Bridgewater's canal, and we expect shortly to be canal-mad, and may want it in such works also.

The growing trade of Baltimore Town in Maryland, drawn principally from our province west of the Susquehanna, begins to alarm us with serious apprehensions of such a rival, as may reduce us to the situation of Burlington and Newcastle on the Delaware; and we can devise no means of saving ourselves but by a canal from the Susquehanna to the Schuylkill, and amending the navigation of all our rivers, so far as they lead towards our capital city. A great number of thy friends are very anxious for promoting this work, particularly the canal, if it is practicable, through the heart of the country. And as thou wast kind enough formerly to send me several papers relating to the navigation of Calder River, I request the favor of adding thereto the last accounts and instructions respecting canals, the construction of their floodgates, wastegates, &c. The Assembly have ordered the Speaker to procure the remainder of the statutes to complete their set in the State House library, by which, I suppose we shall have those relating to canals; but, if they are to be had singly, please to send one or two, which are the most instructive in the rates, terms, conditions of carriage, and passing the grounds, and the cost shall be paid.¹

I congratulate thee on the prospect we have of the sum of money lodged in the bank for the Pennsylvania Hospital being now paid,

and of thy pleasure in receiving it for that charity, which thou hadst so great a share in establishing. We last night executed a power of attorney to thee, Dr. Fothergill, and David Barclay, to apply to the Court of Chancery in order to receive it; and lest our Hospital seal should not be sufficient evidence of our act and deed, we called three witnesses, who may be examined by your people on oath respecting the due executing the powers of attorney. If any difficulty should occur, you will not fail of acquainting us with it by the first opportunity. My wife, children, and thy old friend Ann Paschal, desire to be kindly remembered to thee. Thy sincere and affectionate friend,

Samuel Rhoads.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCV

TO THE COMMITTEE OF CORRESPONDENCE IN MASSACHUSETTS¹

London, 15 May, 1771.

Gentlemen:—

I have received your favor of the 27th of February, with the Journal of the House of Representatives, and copies of the late oppressive prosecutions in the Admiralty Court, which I shall, as you direct, communicate to Mr. Bollan, and consult with him on the most advantageous use to be made of them for the interest of the province.

I think one may clearly see, in the system of customs to be exacted in America by act of Parliament, the seeds sown of a total disunion of the two countries, though, as yet, that event may be at a considerable distance. The course and natural progress seems to be, first, the appointment of needy men as officers, for others do not care to leave England; then, their necessities make them rapacious, their office makes them proud and insolent, their insolence and rapacity make them odious, and, being conscious that they are hated, they become malicious; their malice urges them to a continual abuse of the inhabitants in their letters to administration, representing them as disaffected and rebellious, and (to encourage the use of severity) as weak, divided, timid, and cowardly. Government believes all; thinks it necessary to support and countenance its officers; their quarrelling with the people is deemed a mark and consequence of their fidelity; they are therefore more highly rewarded, and this makes their conduct still more insolent and provoking.

The resentment of the people will, at times and on particular incidents, burst into outrages and violence upon such officers, and this naturally draws down severity and acts of further oppression from hence. The more the people are dissatisfied the more rigor will be thought necessary; severe punishment will be inflicted to terrify; rights and privileges will be abolished; greater force will then be required to secure execution and submission; the expense will become enormous; it will then be thought proper, by fresh exactions, to make the people defray it; thence, the British nation and government will become odious, the subjection to it will be

deemed no longer tolerable; war ensues, and the bloody struggle will end in absolute slavery to America, or ruin to Britain by the loss of her colonies; the latter most probable, from America's growing strength and magnitude.

But, as the whole empire must, in either case, be greatly weakened, I cannot but wish to see much patience and the utmost discretion in our general conduct, that the fatal period may be postponed, and that, whenever this catastrophe shall happen, it may appear to all mankind that the fault has not been ours. And, since the collection of these duties has already cost Britain infinitely more in the loss of commerce than they amount to, and that loss is likely to continue and increase by the encouragement given to our manufactures through resentment; and since the best pretence for establishing and enforcing the duties is the regulation of trade for the general advantage, it seems to me that it would be much better for Britain to give them up, on condition of the colonies undertaking to enforce and collect such as are thought fit to be continued, by laws of their own, and officers of their own appointment, for the public uses of their respective governments. This would alone destroy those seeds of disunion and both countries might thence much longer continue to grow great together, more secure by their united strength, and more formidable to their common enemies. But the power of appointing friends and dependents to profitable offices is too pleasing to most administrations to be easily parted with or lessened; and therefore such a proposition, if it were made, is not very likely to meet with attention.

I do not pretend to the gift of prophecy. History shows that, by these steps, great empires have crumbled heretofore; and the late transactions we have so much cause to complain of show that we are in the same train, and that, without a greater share of prudence and wisdom than we have seen both sides to be possessed of, we shall probably come to the same conclusion.

The Parliament, however, is prorogued, without having taken any of the steps we had been threatened with, relating to our charter. Their attention has been engrossed by other affairs, and we have therefore longer time to operate in making such impressions, as may prevent a renewal of this particular attempt by our adversaries. With great esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCVI

TO MRS. DEBORAH FRANKLIN

London, 5 June, 1771.

My Dear Child:—

I have lately made a journey of a fortnight to Birmingham, Sheffield, Leeds, and Manchester, and returned only in time to be at court on the King's birthday, which was yesterday. The joy was in a fair way of being doubled on the same day; for the Queen was delivered early this morning of another prince, the eighth child, there being now six princes and two princesses, all lovely children. The Prince of Wales and the Bishop of Osnaburg appeared yesterday for the first time in the drawing-room, and gave great pleasure by their sensible, manly behaviour. My journey has been of use to my health; the air and exercise have given me fresh spirits, and I feel now exceedingly well, thanks to God.

I wrote to you lately. I suppose you have written by Falconer, who is not yet heard of. My love to our children and grandson. I am, as ever, your affectionate husband,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCVII

TO JONATHAN SHIPLEY, BISHOP OF ASAPH

London, 24 June, 1771.

My Lord:—

I got home in good time and well; but on perusing the letters that were sent to me from America during my absence, and considering the business they require of me, I find it not convenient to return so soon as I intended. I regret my having been obliged to leave that most agreeable retirement, which good Mrs. Shipley put me so kindly in possession of.¹ I now breathe with reluctance the smoky air of London, when I think of the sweet air of Twyford; and by the time your races are over, or about the middle of next month, if it should not then be unsuitable to your engagements or other purposes, I promise myself the happiness of spending a week or two where I so pleasantly spent the last.

I have taken the liberty of sending by the Southampton stage, which goes to-morrow, a parcel directed to your Lordship, to be left at the turnpike next beyond Winchester, containing one of my books for Miss Georgiana, which I hope she will be good enough to accept as a small mark of my regard for her philosophic genius; and also a specimen of the American dried apples for Mrs. Shipley, that she may judge whether it will be worth while to try the practice. I doubt some dust may have got among them; therefore it will not perhaps be amiss to rinse them a minute or two in warm water, and dry them quick in a napkin; but this is submitted to her better judgment. With great esteem and respect, and many thanks for your abundant civilities, I am, my Lord, &c.,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCVIII

TO NOBLE WIMBERLY JONES

London, 3 July, 1771.

Sir:—

In mine of May 1st, I enclosed a copy of the petition intended to be presented to the King in Council, in behalf of the possessors of the lands claimed by Sir William Baker's assigns. I am now to acquaint you that it was presented accordingly, and is referred down to the Board of Trade for their opinion. But as the Board is about to adjourn for some months, we are advised not to press the consideration of it till they meet again, as they have now too little time to attend to it properly. Immediately on their return to business, we shall urge for their report.

I see by the newspapers that your new Assembly is also dissolved.^{[1](#)} I am sorry for these differences, which must be uncomfortable to you and all that wish the welfare of the province.

It is now thought that a peace between the Turks and Russians is likely soon to be concluded, which gives a better prospect of the continuance of peace among the other powers of Europe; for it seldom happens that a war, begun between any two of them, does not extend itself sooner or later till it involves the whole. Spain showed a strong inclination to begin with us; but, France being not willing or ready to join her, she has smothered that inclination for the present. With great esteem, I am, Sir, &c.,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCIX

TO CADWALLADER EVANS

London, 4 July, 1771.

Dear Doctor:—

I acquainted you some time since that I expected soon to obtain satisfactory answers to your queries relating to the specimens of silk you sent over; but I was disappointed till lately, when I had a meeting with Mr. Patterson, esteemed one of the best judges of that commodity, who favored me with the enclosed paper, and, in conversation, with the following particulars.

He thinks that the water, though clear at first, may grow foul with the impurities of the cocoons reeled in it, and therefore should be changed as that appears to be the case. He gave me a skein of what is called the best Italian silk imported here, and advised me to send it over as a pattern, for our people to endeavour to imitate, with regard to its evenness, cleanness from nibs, and lustre; and, that they might better see the difference and understand his remarks, he wished the skeins sent over hither might be returned with it. I send them all together accordingly.

He says the silk reeled from twelve cocoons fetches nearly as good a price as that from six, because it winds well, and there is less *fine waste*; the dropping accidentally, or through inattention, three or four of the cocoons out of twelve not weakening the thread so much in proportion, as when the same number are dropped out of six; nor is the thread so apt to break in winding. I observe that the Italian silk has a sweet smell, as if perfumed. He thinks it is the natural smell of the silk, when prepared in perfection. He understands that the Piedmontese reel is esteemed preferable to Mr. Pullein's. He says we may carry that produce to what length we please. It is impossible to overstock the market, as the demand is continually increasing, silk being more and more worn, and daily entering into the composition of more and a greater variety of manufactures.

I communicated your thanks to Mr. Walpole, who was pleased to assure me he should always be ready to afford the design all the assistance in his power, and will endeavour to procure some eggs for you from Valencia against the next season.

I am much obliged to you for the snuff-box. The wood is beautiful. The manufacture should be encouraged. I hope our people will not be disheartened by a few accidents, and such disappointments as are incident to all new undertakings, but persevere bravely in the silk business till they have conquered all difficulties. *By diligence and patience the mouse ate in twain the cable.* It is not two centuries since it was as much a novelty in France, as it is now with us in North America, and the people as much unacquainted with it.

My respects to my good old friend, Mr. Wharton. I hope he is recovered of the indisposition you mention. With sincere esteem, I am, dear Sir, your affectionate friend and humble servant,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCX

FROM SAMUEL COOPER TO B. FRANKLIN

Boston, 10 July, 1771.

Dear Sir:—

My thanks are due to you for writing to me with so much freedom, and I endeavour to make the best use of what you communicate. Your interposition in favor of the charter was kind, and must endear you to every true friend of the province. But what shall we say of those who were capable of forming or promoting such a design? Can we suppose them possessed of such ideas and principles, as entitle them to influence the councils of a great nation?

I could not but regard with pleasure the figure which the Secretary made in his conversation with my friend. He must have been uneasy, not only from an apprehension of losing his place, but from feeling also his own littleness; and his self-sufficiency, for a moment at least, must have been suspended amidst all the pomp and parade of his office. His measures respecting this province exactly answer the picture you have given of him; and, while we have in the American department a man, of a size and temper to be a tool of Sir Francis Bernard, his Majesty's service will be perpetually embarrassed.

The project, for making governors independent for their salaries upon the grants of the people they govern, gives great uneasiness to the most considerate friends of the constitution. The reasons you mention against it are unanswerable. It was taken for granted, when the charter was received here, that the governor was to be supported by the free gift of the province, and this was doubtless one reason for acquiescing in a compact that gave so great a power and influence to the crown; and, accordingly, this has been the manner in which the representatives of the crown have constantly been supported. It is a strong connexion between the ruler and the people, tending in every view to promote the great end of government, and the want of which no expedient can supply. The civil list is the free grant of a British Parliament, and is augmented from time to time at their pleasure, but the American revenue is not the gift of the American assemblies; it is extorted from them by mere power, contrary to their just remonstrances and humble petitions. And, though the Assembly may make a grant to a good

governor, at the close of his administration, yet it is in the power of the crown to cut off from the people this very small resource of influence, by obliging its representative not to accept such a grant, while, by its absolute appointment of him, it is absolute master of his conduct.

Nor can there be any pretence for this threatening innovation from the conduct of our provincial Assembly upon this point. For even in the highest political contest with Sir Francis Bernard, so sensible were the House of the importance of supporting the King's governor, while he remained in office, that they never once proposed to diminish or delay, much less to deny, his salary; and surely it is to be hoped that the Assembly will never meet with a stronger provocation to such a measure than they did in him.

I cannot forbear to add, though writing to one who has a much more thorough comprehension of the subject than myself, that this proposed, and, I am afraid, determined independence, is impolitic on the part of the crown, and tends to prejudice its interest, even considered separately from that of the people; as it will prove a strong temptation to governors to hold a conduct that will greatly lessen their esteem and influence in the province, and consequently their power to promote the service of the King. Caution and watchfulness in governors, and some regard to the interest, and even the inclinations and humors, of the people, must, I think, be a security to the prerogative; but independence will take off this guard, and lead them to be inattentive to, if not directly to encourage and promote, such things as will still further weaken the political connexion between the parent country and the colonies; so that I hope the ministry, upon cool consideration, may be induced to lay aside this measure, as they wish the continuance of the constitutional powers of the crown, and that it may long retain the peaceful and happy government of America.

I doubt not of your exerting your abilities and influence for so good a purpose; and, should you succeed, you will do a most important and obliging service to the province. But what are we to expect, when the means of self-defence upon such great points are to be taken from us, and no public moneys are allowed for the support of an agent, unless he be under the control of the governor?

You will no doubt be particularly informed of a new point that has alarmed us as much as any thing, and is regarded almost universally as an undisguised violation of a fundamental principle of the charter. I mean the governor's refusing to sign the supply bill, because the Commissioners¹ were not exempted by it from taxes. The crown grants by charter, that the General Assembly shall have full power and authority to impose rates and taxes upon all

and every the proprietors and inhabitants of the province. No persons, however related to the crown, are excepted. The King now says, by his instructions, no supply bill shall be passed, unless the Commissioners are exempted. Is not this to claim a right to rescind by instruction what was solemnly ceded by charter and compact? The governor may indeed refuse his assent to a supply bill; but can he do it upon a declared principle subversive of the capital privileges of the charter, and only because they exercise the power and authority granted them in it? If the crown can exempt five persons, it may with equal right five hundred; not only the Commissioners, but all judges, justices, clerks of courts, constables, and all friends to government, as men of slavish principles affect to be called, and leave the whole burden of taxes upon those who wish well to the rights of their country.

In this manner people reason here. "But out of the eater cometh forth meat." Good may arise from this. It is bold and open, and strikes every description of men. It is not a point confined to trade; it regards in itself, and much more in its tendency, the pocket of the farmer, and the farmer will regard his pocket. It shows the disposition of the Commissioners, who, for such a trifle as the tax they pay, and which, perhaps, affects their pride much more than their purse, have started a new and important subject of contention; and how fit they are for that influence in governmental measures, which they have so long and so mysteriously possessed.

I long to see your treatise, showing that every lady of Genoa is not Queen of Corsica. I doubt not you will be able to prove your point. But though I believe you capable of confuting a whole island of queens, I fear whether you could persuade them silently to renounce their crowns and sceptres. I am, Sir, with the greatest esteem, &c.,

Samuel Cooper.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXI

TO SAMUEL FRANKLIN

London, 12 July, 1771.

Loving Cousin:—

I received your kind letter of May 17th, and rejoice to hear that you and your good family are well. My love to them. With this I send you the print you desire for Mr. Bowen. He does me honor in accepting it.

Sally Franklin presents her duty to you and Mrs. Franklin. Yesterday a very odd accident happened, which I must mention to you, as it relates to your grandfather. A person that deals in old books, of whom I sometimes buy, acquainted me that he had a curious collection of pamphlets bound in eight volumes folio, and twenty-four volumes quarto and octavo, which he thought, from the subjects, I might like to have, and that he would sell them cheap. I desired to see them, and he brought them to me. On examining I found that they contained all the principal pamphlets and papers on public affairs that had been printed here from the Restoration down to 1715. In one of the blank leaves at the beginning of each volume the collector had written the titles of the pieces contained in it, and the price they cost him. Also notes in the margin of many of the pieces; and the collector I find, from the handwriting and various other circumstances, was your grandfather, my uncle Benjamin. Wherefore, I the more readily agreed to buy them. I suppose he parted with them when he left England and came to Boston, soon after your father, which was about the year 1716 or 1717, now more than fifty years since. In whose hands they have been all this time I know not. The oddity is that the book-seller, who could suspect nothing of any relation between me and the collector, should happen to make me the offer of them. My love to your good wife and children. Your affectionate cousin,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXII

TO JOHN BARTRAM

London, 17 July, 1771.

My Good And Dear Old Friend:—

I received your kind letter of April 29th, wherein you complain of your friends here not writing to you. I had written a letter to you on the 20th of the same month, which I hope is long since come to hand; but I confess I ought to have written sooner, to acknowledge the receipt of the box of seeds, whereby I was much obliged. As to your pension, there is not, I believe, the least reason for you to apprehend its being stopped. I know not who receives it for you here, or I should quicken them in writing to you. But there is no instance in this King's reign of taking away a pension once granted, unless for some great offence. Young is in no esteem here as far as I can learn.

I wish your daughter success with her silkworms. I am persuaded nothing is wanting in our country for the produce of silk, but skill; which will be obtained by persevering till we are instructed by experience.

You take notice of the failing of your eyesight. Perhaps you have not spectacles that suit you, and it is not easy there to provide one's self. People too, when they go to a shop for glasses, seldom give themselves time to choose with care; and if their eyes are not rightly suited, they are injured. Therefore I send you a complete set, from number one to thirteen, that you may try them at your ease; and having pitched on such as suit you best at present, reserve those of higher numbers for future use, as your eyes grow still older; and with the lower numbers, which are for younger people, you may oblige some other friends. My love to good Mrs. Bartram and your children. I am, as ever, your faithful friend and servant,

B. Franklin.

P. S.—On inquiry, I find your pension continues, and will be regularly paid, as it becomes due, to the person you empower to receive it for you.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXIII

TO CADWALLADER EVANS

London, 18 July, 1771.

Dear Doctor:—

I wrote to you on the 4th instant, and sent you a paper of observations on your specimens of silk, drawn up by Mr. Patterson, who is noted here in that trade, with a specimen of Italian silk as a copy for our people to imitate. But they must not be discouraged if they should not come up to the lustre of it, that being the very finest, and from a particular district in Italy, none other being equal to it from any other district or any other country.

The European silk I understand is all yellow, and most of the India silk. What comes from China is white. In Ogilby's account of that country, I find that, in the province of Chekiang, "they prune their mulberry-trees once a year, as we do our vines in Europe, and suffer them not to grow up to high trees, because through long experience they have learned that the leaves of the smallest and youngest trees make the best silk, and know thereby how to distinguish the first spinning of the threads from the second, viz.: the first is that which comes from the young leaves, that are gathered in March, with which they feed their silkworms; and the second is of the old summer leaves. And it is only the change of food, as to the young and old leaves, which makes the difference in the silk. The prices of the first and second spinning differ among the Chinese. The best silk is that of March, the coarsest of June, yet both in one year." I have copied this passage to show that in Chekiang they keep the mulberry-trees low; but I suppose the reason to be the greater facility of gathering the leaves. It appears, too, by this passage, that they raise two crops a year in that province, which may account for the great plenty of silk there. But perhaps this would not answer with us, since it is not practised in Italy, though it might be tried. Chekiang is from twenty-seven to thirty-one degrees of north latitude. Duhalde has a good deal on the Chinese management of the silk business.

Dr. Pullein is an acquaintance of mine. I will forward any letters you may send him. He lives in Ireland, but often comes to London.

As you did not write to Dr. Fothergill, I communicated to him what you wrote in favor of Mr. Parke, who is to wait on him to-morrow. I shall be glad to render the young man any service here.

We had a cold, backward spring here, and it is since the solstice that we have had what may be called a warm day. But the country now looks well with the prospect of great plenty. It is, however, the general opinion that Britain will not for some years export much corn, great part of the arable land being now enclosed and turned to grass, to nourish the immense number of horses raised for exportation, there being a rage in France and other parts of Europe for English horses, that seems increasing every year.

I hope our friend Galloway will not decline the public service in the Assembly with his private business. Both may be too much for his health; but the first alone will be little more than an amusement. And I do not see that he can be spared from that station, without great detriment to our affairs and to the general welfare of America. I am, with sincere esteem, &c.,

B. Franklin.

P. S.—The enclosed notes were given me by Mr. Small, a leading member of the Society of Arts, with a desire that I would send them over to some member of your Philosophical Society; supposing the herbs may be of some use.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXIV

TO MRS. DEBORAH FRANKLIN

London, 14 August, 1771.

My Dear Child:—

I am glad to hear of all your welfares, and that the pictures were safe arrived. You do not tell me who mounted the great one, nor where you have it hung up. Let me know whether Dr. Bond likes the new one better than the old one; if so, the old one is to be returned hither to Mr. Wilson the painter. You may keep the frame, as it may be wanted for some other picture there. I wrote to you a letter the beginning of last month, which was to go by Captain Falconer, and have since been in the country. I am just returned to town, and find him still here, and the letters not gone. He goes, however, next Saturday.

I had written to many of my friends by him. I spent three weeks in Hampshire, at my friend, the Bishop of St. Asaph's. The Bishop's lady knows what children and grandchildren I have and their ages; so, when I was to come away on Monday, the 12th, in the morning, she insisted on my staying that one day longer, that we might together keep my grandson's birthday. At dinner, among other nice things, we had a floating island, which they always particularly have on the birthdays of any of their own six children, who were all but one at table, where there was also a clergyman's widow, now above one hundred years old. The chief toast of the day was Master Benjamin Bache, which the venerable old lady began in a bumper of *mountain*. The Bishop's lady politely added, "and that he may be as good a man as his grandfather." I said I hoped he would be *much better*. The Bishop, still more complaisant than his lady, said: "We will compound the matter, and be contented if he should not prove *quite so good*." This chitchat is to yourself only, in return for some of yours about your grandson, and must only be read to Sally, and not spoken of to anybody else; for you know how people add and alter silly stories that they hear, and make them appear ten times more silly.

Just while I am writing, the post brings me the inclosed from the good Bishop, with some letters of recommendation for Ireland, to see which country I am to set out next week with my old friend and fellow traveller, Counsellor Jackson. We expect to be absent a month or six weeks. The Bishop's youngest daughter, mentioned in

his letter, is about thirteen years of age, and came up with me in the postchaise to go to school.

Captain Osborn is not yet arrived here, but is every day expected. I hope he will come before I set out, that I may hear from you by him. I desire you will push the inquiry after the Lancaster Dutchman, and not let it sleep and be forgotten. I send you by Captain Falconer a box of looking-glasses for the closet door in the——[The remainder is lost.]

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXV

PLAN FOR BENEFITING DISTANT UNPROVIDED COUNTRIES

by dr. franklin and mr. dalrymple¹

august 29, 1771.

The country, called in the maps New Zealand, has been discovered by the *Endeavour*, to be two islands, together as large as Great Britain; these islands, named Acpy-nomawée and Tovy-poennammoo, are inhabited by a brave and generous race, who are destitute of corn, fowls, and all quadrupeds, except dogs.

These circumstances being mentioned lately in a company of men of liberal sentiments, it was observed that it seemed incumbent upon such a country as this, to communicate to all others the conveniences of life which we enjoy.

Dr. Franklin, whose life has ever been directed to promote the true interest of society, said “he would with all his heart *subscribe* to a voyage intended to communicate *in general* those benefits which we enjoy, to countries destitute of them in the remote parts of the globe.” This proposition being warmly adopted by the rest of the company, Mr. Dalrymple, then present, was induced to offer to undertake the command in such an expedition.

On mature reflection, this scheme appears the most honorable to the national character of any which can be conceived, as it is grounded on the noblest principle of benevolence. Good intentions are often frustrated by letting them remain undigested; on this consideration, Mr. Dalrymple was induced to put the outlines on paper, which are now published, that by an early communication there may be a better opportunity of collecting all the hints which can conduce to execute effectually the benevolent purpose of the expedition, in case it should meet with general approbation.

On this scheme being shown to Dr. Franklin, he communicated his sentiments, by way of introduction, to the following effect:

“Britain is said to have produced originally nothing but *sloes*. What vast advantages have been communicated to her by the fruits, seeds, roots, herbage, animals, and arts of other countries! We are, by their means, become a wealthy and a mighty nation, abounding

in all good things. Does not some *duty* hence arise from us towards other countries still remaining in our former state?

Britain is now the first maritime power in the world. Her ships are innumerable; capable, by their form, size, and strength, of sailing on all seas. Our seamen are equally bold, skilful, and hardy; dexterous in exploring the remotest regions, and ready to engage in voyages to unknown countries, though attended with the greatest dangers. The inhabitants of those countries, our *fellow-men*, have canoes only; not knowing iron, they cannot build ships; they have little astronomy, and no knowledge of the compass to guide them; they cannot therefore come to us, or obtain any of our advantages. From these circumstances, does not some duty seem to arise from us to them? Does not Providence, by these distinguishing favors, seem to call on us to do something ourselves for the common interests of humanity?

Those who think it their duty to ask bread and other blessings daily from Heaven, would they not think it equally a duty to communicate of those blessings when they have received them, and show their gratitude to their Benefactor by the only means in their power, promoting the happiness of his other children?

Ceres is said to have made a journey through many countries to teach the use of corn and the art of raising it. For this single benefit the grateful nations deified her. How much more may Englishmen deserve such honor, by communicating the knowledge and use, not of corn only, but of all the other enjoyments the earth can produce, and which they are now in possession of. *Communiter bona profundere, Deûm est.*

Many voyages have been undertaken with views of profit or of plunder, or to gratify resentment; to procure some advantage to ourselves, or do some mischief to others. But a voyage in now proposed to visit a distant people on the other side the globe; not to cheat them, not to rob them, not to seize their lands, or enslave their persons; but merely to do them good, and make them, as far as in our power lies, to live as comfortably as ourselves.

It seems a laudable wish that all the nations of the earth were connected by a knowledge of each other and a mutual exchange of benefits; but a commercial nation particularly should wish for a general civilization of mankind, since trade is always carried on to much greater extent with people who have the arts and conveniences of life, than it can be with naked savages. We may therefore hope, in this undertaking, to be of some service to our country as well as to those poor people who, however distant from

us, are in truth related to us, and whose interests do, in some degree, concern every one who can say, *Homo sum*, &c."

Scheme of a voyage by subscription, to convey the conveniences of life, as fowls, hogs, goats, cattle, corn, iron, &c., to those remote regions which are destitute of them, and to bring from thence such productions as can be cultivated in this kingdom, to the advantage of society, in a ship under the command of Alexander Dalrymple.

Catt or bark, from the coal trade, of 350 tons, estimated at	£2,000	
about		
Extra expenses, stores, boats, &c.		3,000
To be manned with sixty men at £4 per	£240	
man per month	12	
	£2,880	per annum.
	3	
Wages and provisions	£8,640	for three years 8,640
		13,640
Cargo included, supposed		£15,000

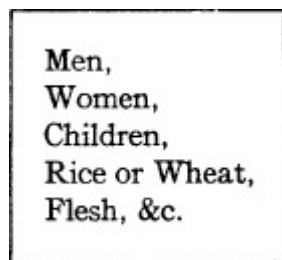
The expenses of this expedition are calculated for *three* years; but the greatest part of the amount of wages will not be wanted till the ship returns, and a great part of the expense of provisions will be saved by what is obtained in the course of the voyage, by barter or otherwise, though it is proper to make provision for contingencies.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXVI

CONCERNING THE PROVISION MADE IN CHINA AGAINST FAMINE¹

I have somewhere read that, in China, an account is yearly taken of the number of people, and the quantities of provision produced. This account is transmitted to the emperor, whose ministers can thence foresee a scarcity, likely to happen in any province, and from what province it can best be supplied in good time. To facilitate the collecting of this account, and prevent the necessity of entering houses and spending time in asking and answering questions, each house is furnished with a little board, to be hung without the door during a certain time each year; on which board are marked certain words, against which the inhabitant is to mark the number and quantity, somewhat in this manner:



All under sixteen are accounted children, and all above men and women. Any other particulars, which the government desires information of, are occasionally marked on the same boards. Thus the officers appointed to collect the accounts in each district, have only to pass before the doors, and enter into their book what they find marked on the board, without giving the least trouble to the family. There is a penalty on marking falsely; and as neighbors must know nearly the truth of each other's account, they dare not expose themselves by a false one, to each other's accusation. Perhaps such a regulation is scarcely practicable with us.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXVII

TO MR. WILLIAM STRAHAN

Edinburgh, 17 November, 1771.

Dear Sir:—

I have been at Blair Drummond on a visit to my friend Lord Kames, thence I went to Glasgow, thence to Carron Works, viewing the Canal by the way. Extreme bad weather detained me in several places some days longer than I intended. But on Tuesday I purpose setting out on my return, and hope for the pleasure of seeing you by the Tuesday following. I thank you for your kind congratulations on the news you have heard. I like immortal friendships, but not immortal enmities; and therefore kill the latter whenever I have a good opportunity, thinking it no murder. I am but just come back hither, and write this line just to let you know I am well and again under the hospitable roof of the good Samaritan. As to news, which you seem to expect from me, I protest I know of none, and I am too dull for invention. My love to Mrs. Strahan and your children, and believe me, ever, my dear friend,

Yours Most Affectionately,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXVIII

TO THOMAS PERCIVAL¹

On my return to London I found your favor of the 16th of May (1771). I wish I could, as you desire, give you a better explanation of the phenomenon in question, since you seem not quite satisfied with your own; but I think we want more and greater variety of experiments in different circumstances to enable us to form a thoroughly satisfactory hypothesis. Not that I make the least doubt of the facts already related, as I know both Lord Charles Cavendish and Dr. Heberden to be very accurate experimenters; but I wish to know the event of the trials proposed in your six queries; and also, whether in the same place where the lower vessel receives nearly twice the quantity of water that is received by the upper, a third vessel placed at half the height will receive a quantity proportionable. I will, however, endeavour to explain to you what occurred to me when I first heard of the fact.

I suppose it will be generally allowed, on a little consideration of the subject, that scarce any drop of water was, when it began to fall from the clouds, of a magnitude equal to that it has acquired when it arrives at the earth; the same of the several pieces of hail; because they are often so large and so weighty that we cannot conceive a possibility of their being suspended in the air, and remaining at rest there, for any time, how small soever; nor do we conceive any means of forming them so large before they set out to fall. It seems, then, that each beginning drop, and particle of hail receives continual addition in its progress downwards. This may be several ways: by the union of numbers in their course, so that what was at first only descending mist becomes a shower; or by each particle, in its descent through air that contains a great quantity of dissolved water, striking against, attaching to itself, and carrying down with it such particles of that dissolved water as happen to be in its way; or attracting to itself such as do not lie directly in its course by its different state with regard either to common or electric fire; or by all these causes united.

In the first case, by the uniting of numbers, larger drops might be made, but the quantity falling in the same place would be the same at all heights; unless, as you mention, the whole should be contracted in falling, the lines described by all the drops converging, so that what set out to fall from a cloud of many thousand acres, should reach the earth in perhaps a third of that

extent, of which I somewhat doubt. In the other cases we have two experiments.

1. A dry glass bottle filled with very cold water, in a warm day, will presently collect from the seemingly dry air that surrounds it a quantity of water that shall cover its surface and run down its sides; which perhaps is done by the power wherewith the cold water attracts the fluid common fire that had been united with the dissolved water in the air, and drawing the fire through the glass into itself, leaves the water on the outside.

2. An electrified body, left in a room for some time, will be more covered with dust than other bodies in the same room not electrified, which dust seems to be attracted from the circumambient air.

Now we know that the rain, even in our hottest days, comes from a very cold region. Its falling sometimes in the form of ice shows this clearly; and perhaps even the rain is snow or ice, when it first moves downward though thawed in falling; and we know that the drops of rain are often electrified. But those causes of addition to each drop of water, or piece of hail, one would think could not long continue to produce the same effect; since the air, through which the drops fall, must soon be stripped of its previously dissolved water, so as to be no longer capable of augmenting them. Indeed very heavy showers of either are never of long continuance; but moderate rains often continue so long as to puzzle this hypothesis; so that upon the whole I think, as I intimated before, that we are yet hardly ripe for making one.

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXIX

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON

Preston, 25 November, 1771.

Dear Friend:—

I came to this place on Saturday night, right well, and untired with a seventy miles' journey. That day I met with your and my Dolly's joint letter, which would have refreshed me with its kindness, if I had been ever so weary.

The account you give of a certain lady's having entertained a new gallant, in my absence, did not surprise me; for I have been used to rivals, and scarce ever had a friend or a mistress in my whole life, that other people did not like as well as myself. And, therefore, I did not wonder, when I read in the newspapers some weeks since, that "the Duke of C." (that general lover) "had made many visits of late to an old lady not many miles from Craven Street." I only wondered, considering the dislike she used to have for the family, that she would receive his visits. But as I saw, soon after, that Prince Charles had left Rome, and was gone a long journey, nobody knew whither, I made no doubt but the newswriters had mistaken the person, and that it was he who had taken the opportunity of my absence to solace himself with his old friend.

I thank you for your intelligence about my godson. I believe you are sincere when you say you think him as fine a child as you wish to see. He had cut two teeth, and three, in another letter, make five; for I know you never write tautologies. If I have over-reckoned, the number will be right by this time. His being like me in so many particulars pleases me prodigiously; and I am persuaded there is another, which you have omitted, though it must have occurred to you while you were putting them down. Pray let him have every thing he likes. I think it of great consequence while the features of the countenance are forming; it gives them a pleasant air, and, that being once become natural and fixed by habit, the face is ever after the handsomer for it, and on that much of a person's good fortune and success in life may depend. Had I been crossed as much in my infant likings and inclinations as you know I have been of late years, I should have been, I was going to say, not near so handsome, but as the vanity of that expression would offend other folks' vanity, I change it out of regard to them and say a great deal more homely.

I rejoice that your good mother's new regimen succeeds so well with her. We are to set out, my son and I, to-morrow for London, where I hope to be by the end of the week, and to find her and you and all yours well and happy. My love to them all. They tell me dinner is coming in, and I have yet said nothing to Dolly; but must nevertheless conclude, my dear friend. Yours ever most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXX

TO MRS. JANE MECOM

London, 13 January, 1772.

My Dear Sister:—

I received your kind letters of September 12th and November 9th. I have now been some weeks returned from my journey through Wales, Ireland, Scotland, and the north of England, which, besides being an agreeable tour with a pleasant companion, has contributed to the establishment of my health; and this is the first ship I have heard of, by which I could write to you.

I thank you for the receipts; they are as full and particular as one could wish; but they can easily be practised only in America, no bayberry wax, nor any Brasileto, being here to be had, at least to my knowledge. I am glad, however, that those useful arts, which have so long been in our family, are now put down in writing. Some future branch may be the better for it.

It gives me pleasure that those little things sent by Jonathan proved agreeable to you. I write now to cousin Williams to press the payment of the bond. There has been forbearance enough on my part; seven years or more, without receiving any principal or interest. It seems as if the debtor was like a whimsical man in Pennsylvania, of whom it was said that, it being against his principle to pay interest, and against his interest to pay the principal, he paid neither one nor the other.

I doubt you have taken too old a pair of glasses, being tempted by their magnifying greatly. But people in choosing should only aim at remedying the defect. The glasses that enable them to see *as well*, at the *same distance* they used to hold their book or work, while their eyes were good, are those they should choose; not such as make them see *better*; for such contribute to hasten the time when still older glasses will become necessary.

All who have seen my grandson agree with you in their accounts of his being an uncommonly fine boy, which brings often afresh to my mind the idea of my son Franky,¹ though now dead thirty-six years, whom I have seldom since seen equalled in every thing, and whom to this day I cannot think of without a sigh. Mr. Bache is here; I found him at Preston, in Lancashire, with his mother and sisters,

very agreeable people, and I brought him to London with me. I very much like his behaviour. He returns in the next ship to Philadelphia. The gentleman who brought your last letter, Mr. Fox, stayed but a few minutes with me, and has not since called, as I desired him to do.

I shall endeavour to get the arms you desire for cousin Coffin. Having many letters to write, I can now only add my love to cousin Jenny, and that I am, as ever, your affectionate brother,

B. Franklin.

P. S.—Sally Franklin presents her duty. Mrs. Stevenson desires to be affectionately remembered. No arms of the Folgers are to be found in the Herald's Office. I am persuaded it was originally a Flemish family, which came over with many others from that country in Queen Elizabeth's time, flying from the persecution then raging there.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXXI

TO THE COMMITTEE OF CORRESPONDENCE IN MASSACHUSETTS

London, 13 January, 1772.

Gentlemen:—

On my return from a late tour through Ireland and Scotland, for the establishment of my health, I found your respected letter of June 25th, with the papers therein referred to, relating to the townships settled eastward of Penobscot River. I immediately waited on Mr. Bollan to consult with him, agreeably to your instructions, who informed me that in my absence he had by himself thoroughly considered the same, having formerly had occasion to be acquainted with the whole affair, and he suggested to his constituents, the Council, a plan of accommodation to be proposed to government here, if they should approve of it; and that he hoped by the meeting of Parliament (before which little public business is done here, so many of the Lords of the Council being out of town) he might have their answer; and it would otherwise be to little purpose to attempt any thing sooner. I make no doubt but the proposal has been communicated to the House of Representatives, if they have since had a meeting, and that we may soon receive their further instructions thereon.

The town now begins to fill with members of Parliament, and great officers of state coming in daily to celebrate the Queen's birthday, and be present at the opening of the session, which is fixed for next Tuesday. It is given out that nothing relating to America is likely to be agitated this session; that is, there is no purpose either to abrogate the old duties or lay new ones. For the first I am sorry, believing, as I do, that no harmony can be restored between the two countries while these duties are continued. This, with the other aggrievances mentioned in your letters of June 29th and July 13th, your agents will constantly attend to, and take every step possible in their present situation, unacknowledged as they are here, to obtain the redress that is so justly your due, and which it would be so prudent in government here to grant.

In yours of July 9th it is mentioned that the House desire I would annually send an account of the expense I am at, in carrying on the affairs of the province. Having business to do for several colonies,

almost every time I go to the public offices, and to the ministers, I have found it troublesome to keep an account of small expenses, such as coach and chair hire, stationery, &c., and difficult to divide them justly. Therefore I have some time since omitted keeping any account, or making any charge of them, but content myself with such salaries, grants, and allowances as have been made me. Where considerable sums have been disbursed, as in fees to counsel, payment of solicitor's bills, and the like, those I charge. But as yet I have made no such disbursements on the account of your province. Please to present my duty to the House of Representatives, and believe me to be, with great esteem and respect, Gentlemen, &c.,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXXII

TO SAMUEL COOPER

London, 13 January, 1772.

Dear Sir:—

I have now before me your several favors. A long journey I took in the summer and autumn, for the establishment of my health, prevented my answering sooner the two first. I hope the state of your health also is mended by your retirement into the country, as mine has sensibly been by that journey.

You have furnished me with a very good additional argument against the crown paying its governors, namely, that the proposed independence is impolitic on the part of the crown, and tends to prejudice it is interest, even considered separately from that of the people, as it will prove a strong temptation to governors to hold a conduct that will greatly lessen their esteem and influence in the province, and consequently their power to promote the service of the King. Indeed, the making it a rule among ourselves, that the governor is to have his salary from our assemblies, though his public conduct should be wilfully and maliciously prejudicial to the province, has the same tendency, of which the conduct of Governor Bernard, while he was constantly and regularly paid by us, is a considerable proof; and, therefore, in my opinion, if we would have our power of granting the support operate with any weight in maintaining an influence with the governor, it should have been withheld from him, and we should withhold it in part or in the whole, according to the circumstances, as often as such a conduct appears in any governor; otherwise the power, if in such cases it is not to be used, would seem of very little importance. And since the Assembly have of late years, and under such great provocations, never attempted to abridge or withhold the salary, no reason appears why the American minister should now think it necessary or advisable for the crown to take the payment of its governor upon itself, unless it be with an intention to influence him, by withholding it when he declines executing arbitrary instructions; and then, in such cases, the people should be sure to compensate him. As to procuring here any change of this measure, I frankly own to you that I despair of it while the administration of American affairs continues in the hands of Lord Hillsborough; and while, by our paying the duties, there is a sufficient American fund out of

which such salaries can be satisfied. The failure of that fund would be the most likely means of demolishing the project.

The attempt to get the Commissioners exempted from the payment of their taxes, by an instruction to the governor, is the most indiscreet thing surely, to say nothing of its injustice, that any prudent government was ever guilty of. I cannot think it will be persisted in. I hope it will never be complied with. If the supply bill is duly offered without the clause, I am persuaded it will not long be refused. The public must, however, suffer in the meantime by the want of the supply; but that will be a good foundation for an impeachment here. Your reasonings against the instruction are unanswerable, and will be of use in the discussing that business.

I am glad that Commodore Gambier behaved in so satisfactory a manner. His uncle, Mr. Mead, first commissioner of the customs, is a particular and intimate friend of mine, a man of great moderation and prudence. I knew that he gave his nephew, before he went hence, a great deal of good advice with regard to his conduct among the people of Boston, for whom he has a great esteem and regard, having formerly commanded a frigate stationed there; and he is happy to find by your letter, which I communicated to him, that his advice was so well followed. He gave also equally good advice to your indiscreet Commissioners, when they were sent out; but they had not sense enough to follow it, and therefore have been the authors of infinite mischief. I wonder at the invention of so improbable a lie, as that I should desire a place among them, who am daily urging the expediency of their dissolution. The other calumny you mention, contained in an anonymous letter to the Speaker, is so weak that I believe you do not think that I ought to take any notice of it.¹

As to the agency, whether I am re-chosen or not, and whether the General Assembly is ever permitted to pay me or not, I shall nevertheless continue to exert myself in behalf of my country as long as I see a probability of my being able to do it any service. I have nothing to ask or expect of ministers. I have, thanks to God, a competency for the little time I may expect to live, and am grown too old for ambition of any kind, but that of leaving a good name behind me.

Your story of the clergymen and proclamation is a pleasant one. I can only match it with one I had from my father. I know not if it was ever printed. Charles the First ordered his proclamation, authorizing sport on a Sunday, to be read in all churches. Many clergymen complied, some refused, and others hurried it through as indistinctly as possible. But one, whose congregation expected no such thing from him, did, nevertheless, to their great surprise

read it distinctly. He followed it, however, with the fourth commandment, *Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day*, and then said: "Brethern, I have laid before you the commandment of your King, and the commandment of your God. I leave it to yourselves to judge which of the two ought rather to be observed." With great and sincere esteem, I remain, dear Sir, &c.,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXXIII

TO JAMES BOWDOIN

London, 13 January, 1772.

Dear Sir:—

I should very readily have recommended your son to the care of my friend, Dr. Priestley, if he had continued to superintend the academy at Warrington; but he has left that charge some time since, and is now pastor of a congregation at Leeds in Yorkshire. I am much obliged to you for introducing me to the acquaintance of Mr. Erving, who appears a very intelligent, sensible man.

The governing of colonies by instruction has long been a favorite point with ministers here. About thirty years since, in a bill brought into Parliament relating to America, they inserted a clause to make the King's instructions *laws* in the colonies, which, being opposed by the then agents, was thrown out. And I well remember a conversation with Lord Granville, soon after my arrival here, in which he expressed himself on that subject in the following terms: "Your American assemblies slight the King's instructions, pretending that they are not laws. The instructions sent over to your governors are not like the pocket instructions given to ambassadors, to be observed at their discretion, as circumstances may require. They are drawn up by grave men, learned in the laws and constitutions of the realm; they are brought into Council, thoroughly weighed, well considered, and amended if necessary, by the wisdom of that body; and, when received by the governors, they are the laws of the land; for the King is the *legislator of the colonies*."

I remember this the better, because, being a new doctrine to me, I put it down as soon as I returned to my lodgings. To be sure, if a governor thinks himself obliged to obey all instructions, whether consistent or inconsistent with the constitution, laws, and rights of the country he governs, and can proceed to govern in that train, there is an end of the constitution, and those rights are abolished. But I wonder, that any honest gentleman can think there is honor in being a governor on such terms. And I think the practice cannot possibly continue, especially if opposed with spirit by our assemblies. At present no attention is paid by the American ministers to any agent here, whose appointment is not ratified by the governor's assent; and if this is persisted in, you can have none

to serve you in a public character, that do not render themselves agreeable to these ministers, and those otherwise appointed can only promote your interests by conversation, as private gentlemen, or by writing.

Virginia had, as you observe, two agents, one for the Council, the other for the Assembly; but I think the latter only was considered as agent for the province. He was appointed by an act, which expired in the time of Lord Botetourt, and was not revived. The other, I apprehend, continues; but I am not well acquainted with the nature of his appointment. I only understand that he does not concern himself much with the general affairs of the colony.

It gives me great pleasure that my book afforded any to my friends. I esteem those letters of yours among its highest ornaments; and have the satisfaction to find that they add greatly to the reputation of American philosophy.

There is, in the governor's *Collection of Papers Relative to the Colony of Massachusetts Bay*, published in 1769, a copy of an answer made by Randolph to several *Heads of Inquiry*, which I take to be the same with those I sent you.¹ I shall be very glad to have an account of the present number of ratables, when you can obtain it for me.

In Ireland, among the patriots, I dined with Dr. Lucas. They are all friends of America, in which I said every thing I could think of to confirm them. Lucas gave Mr. Bowdoin, of Boston, for his toast. My best respects to Mrs. Bowdoin. With sincere and great esteem, I am, dear Sir, &c.,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXXIV

TO JOSHUA BABCOCK

London, 13 January, 1772.

Dear Sir:—

It was with great pleasure I learnt, by Mr. Marchant, that you and Mrs. Babcock and all your good family continue well and happy. I hope I shall find you all in the same state, when I next come your way, and take shelter, as often heretofore, under your hospitable roof. The Colonel, I am told, continues an active and able farmer, the most honorable of all employments, in my opinion, as being the most useful in itself, and rendering the man most independent. My namesake, his son, will soon, I hope, be able to drive the plough for him.

I have lately made a tour through Ireland and Scotland. In those countries, a small part of the society are landlords, great noblemen, and gentlemen, extremely opulent, living in the highest affluence and magnificence. The bulk of the people are tenants, extremely poor, living in the most sordid wretchedness, in dirty hovels of mud and straw, and clothed only in rags.

I thought often of the happiness of New England, where every man is a freeholder, has a vote in public affairs, lives in a tidy, warm house, has plenty of good food and fuel, with whole clothes from head to foot, the manufacture, perhaps, of his own family. Long may they continue in this situation! But, if they should ever envy the trade of these countries, I can put them in a way to obtain a share of it. Let them, with three fourths of the people of Ireland, live the year round on potatoes and buttermilk, without shirts, then may their merchants export beef, butter, and linen. Let them, with the generality of the common people of Scotland, go barefoot, then may they make large exports in shoes and stockings; and, if they will be content to wear rags, like the spinners and weavers of England, they may make cloths and stuffs for all parts of the world.

Farther, if my countrymen should ever wish for the honor of having among them a gentry enormously wealthy, let them sell their farms and pay racked rents; the scale of the landlords will rise, as that of the tenants is depressed, who will soon become poor, tattered, dirty, and abject in spirit. Had I never been in the American colonies, but were to form my judgment of civil society by what I

have lately seen, I should never advise a nation of savages to admit of civilization; for I assure you that, in the possession and enjoyment of the various comforts of life, compared to these people, every Indian is a gentleman, and the effect of this kind of civil society seems to be, the depressing multitudes below the savage state, that a few may be raised above it. My best wishes attend you and yours, being ever, with great esteem, &c.,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXXV

TO THOMAS CUSHING

London, 13 January, 1772.

Sir:—

I am now returned again to London from a journey of some months in Ireland and Scotland. Though my constitution, and too great confinement to business during the winter, seem to require the air and exercise of a long journey once a year, which I have now practised for more than twenty years past, yet I should not have been out so long this time, but that I was well assured the Parliament would not meet till towards the end of January, before which meeting few of the principal people would be in town, and no business of importance likely to be agitated relating to America.

I have now before me your esteemed favors. In the first you mention that the General Assembly was still held out of its ancient and only convenient seat, the Townhouse in Boston, and by the latest papers from thence I see that it was prorogued again to meet in Cambridge, which I a little wonder at, when I recollect a question asked me by Lord Hillsborough in Ireland, viz.: Whether I had heard from New England lately, since the General Court was returned to Boston? From this I concluded that orders had been transmitted by his Lordship for its removal. Perhaps such may have been sent, to be used discretionally. I think I have before mentioned to you one of the articles of impeachment brought against a bad minister of a former King: "That to work his ends he had caused the Parliament to sit *in villibus et remotis partibus regni*, where few people, *propter defectum hospitii et victualium*, could attend, thereby to force *illos paucos, qui remanebunt de communitate regni, concedere regi quamvis pessima.*" Lord Clarendon, too, was impeached for endeavouring to introduce arbitrary government into the colonies.

Lord Hillsborough seems, by the late instructions, to have been treading in the paths that lead to the same unhappy situation, if the Parliament here should ever again feel for the colonies. Being in Dublin, at the same time with his Lordship, I met with him accidentally at the Lord Lieutenant's, who had happened to invite us to dine with a large company on the same day. As there was something curious in our interview, I must give you an account of it. He was surprisingly civil, and urged my fellow-travellers and me

to call at his house in our intended journey northward, where we might be sure of better accommodations than the inns would afford us. He pressed us so politely that it was not easy to refuse without apparent rudeness, as we must pass through his town, Hillsborough, and by his door; and therefore, as it might afford an opportunity of saying something on American affairs, I concluded to comply with his invitation.

His Lordship went home some time before we left Dublin. We called upon him, and were detained at his house four days, during which time he entertained us with great civility, and a particular attention to me, that appeared the more extraordinary, as I knew that just before we left London he had expressed himself concerning me in very angry terms, calling me a republican, a factious, mischievous fellow, and the like.

In our conversations he first showed himself a good Irishman, blaming England for its narrowness towards that country in restraining its commerce and discouraging its woollen manufacture. When I applied his observations to America, he said he had always been of opinion that America ought not to be restrained in manufacturing any thing she could manufacture to advantage; that he supposed that, at present, she found more profit in agriculture; but, whenever she found that less profitable, or any particular manufacture more so, he had no objection to her pursuing it, and that the subjects in every part of the King's dominion had a natural right to make the best use they could of the productions of their country. He censured Lord Chatham for affecting in his speech that the Parliament had a right or ought to restrain manufactures in the colonies; adding that, as he knew the English were apt to be jealous on that head, he avoided every thing that might inflame that jealousy; and, therefore, though the Commons had requested the crown to order the governor to send over annually accounts of such manufactures as were undertaken in the colonies, yet, as they had not ordered such accounts to be annually laid before them, he should never produce them till they were called for.

Then he gave me to understand that the bounty on silk raised in America was a child of his, and he hoped it would prove of great advantage to that country; and that he wished to know in what manner a bounty on raising wine there might be contrived, so as to operate effectually for that purpose, desiring me to turn it in my thoughts, as he should be glad of my opinion and advice. Then he informed me that Newfoundland was grown too populous to be left any longer without a regular government, but there were great difficulties in the forming such a kind of government as would be suitable to the particular circumstances of that country, which he

wished me likewise to consider, and that I would favor him with my sentiments.

He seemed attentive to every thing that might make my stay in his house agreeable to me, and put his eldest son, Lord Killwarling, into his phaeton with me, to drive me a round of forty miles, that I might see the country, the seats, and manufactures, covering me with his own greatcoat, lest I should take cold. In short, he seemed extremely solicitous to impress me, and the colonies through me, with a good opinion of him. All which I could not but wonder at, knowing that he likes neither them nor me; and I thought it inexplicable, but on the supposition that he apprehended an approaching storm, and was desirous of lessening beforehand the number of enemies he had so imprudently created. But, if he takes no steps towards withdrawing the troops, repealing the duties, restoring the Castle, or recalling the offensive instructions, I shall think all the plausible behaviour I have described is meant only, by patting and stroking the horse, to make him more patient, while the reins are drawn tighter, and the spurs set deeper into his sides.

Before leaving Ireland I must mention that, being desirous of seeing the principal patriots there, I stayed till the opening of their Parliament. I found them disposed to be friends of America, in which I endeavoured to confirm them, with the expectation that our growing weight might in time be thrown into their scale, and, by joining our interests with others, a more equitable treatment from this nation might be obtained for them as well as for us. There are many brave spirits among them. The gentry are a very sensible, polite, and friendly people. Their Parliament makes a most respectable figure, with a number of very good speakers in both parties, and able men of business. And I must not omit acquainting you that, it being a standing rule to admit members of the English Parliament to sit (though they do not vote) in the House among the members, while others are only admitted into the gallery, my fellow-traveller, being an English member, was accordingly admitted as such. But I supposed I must go to the gallery, when the Speaker stood up, and acquainted the House that he understood there was in town an American gentleman of (as he was pleased to say) distinguished character and merit, a member or delegate of some of the Parliaments of that country, who was desirous of being present at the debates of the House; that there was a rule of the House for admitting members of English Parliaments, and that he supposed the House would consider the American assemblies as English parliaments; but, as this was the first instance, he had chosen not to give any order in it without receiving their directions. On the question, the House gave a loud, unanimous *aye*; when two members came to me without the bar—[The remainder is lost.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXXVI

TO SAMUEL FRANKLIN

London, 13 January, 1772.

Dear Cousin:—

I received your kind letter of November 8th, and rejoice to hear of the continued welfare of you and your good wife and four daughters. I hope they will all get good husbands. I dare say they will be educated so as to deserve them.

I knew a wise old man who used to advise his young friends to choose wives out of a bunch; for where there were many daughters, he said, they improved each other, and from emulation acquired more accomplishments, knew more, could do more, and were not spoiled by parental fondness, as single children often are. Yours have my best wishes and blessing, if that can be of any value.

I received a very polite letter from your friend, Mr. Bowen, relating to the print. Please to present him my respectful compliments. I am just returned from a long journey. Your affectionate cousin,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXXVII

TO EZRA STILES

London, 13 January, 1772.

Dear Sir:—

There is lately published in Paris a work entitled *Zend-Avesta, Ouvrage de Zoroastre, contenant les Idées Théologiques, Physiques et Morales de ce Législateur; les Cérémonies du Culte Religieux qu'il a établi, et plusieurs Traits importants relatifs à l'Ancienne Histoire des Parses. Traduit en François sur l'Original Zend, avec des Remarques; et accompagné de plusieurs Traités propres à éclaircir les Matières, qui en sont l'Objet; par M. Anquetil du Perron, de l'Académie Royale des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, et Interprète du Roy pour les Langues Orientales*. It is in two volumes quarto. Near half the work is an account of the author's travels in India, and his residence among the Parses during several years to learn their languages.

I have cast my eye over the religious part; it seems to contain a nice morality, mixed with abundance of prayers, ceremonies, and observances. If you desire to have it, I will procure it for you. There is no doubt of its being a genuine translation of the books at present deemed sacred, as the writings of Zoroaster, by his followers; but perhaps some of them are of later date, though ascribed to him; for to me there seems too great a quantity and variety of ceremonies and prayers to be directed at once by one man. In the Romish church they have increased gradually in the course of ages to their present bulk. Those who added new ones from time to time found it necessary to give them authority by pretences of their antiquity. The books of Moses, indeed, if all written by him, which some doubt, are an exception to this observation. With great esteem, I am ever, dear Sir, &c.,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXXVIII

TO MRS. DEBORAH FRANKLIN

London, 28 January, 1772.

My Dear Child:—

I have written several short letters to you lately, promising to write more fully by Captain Falconer, which I now sit down to do with a number of your favors before me. I take notice of the considerable sums you have paid. I would not have you send me any receipts. I am satisfied with the accounts you give.

I am much pleased with your little histories of our grandson, and happy in thinking how much amusement he must afford you. I pray that God may continue him to us and to his parents. Mr. Bache is about retiring. His behaviour here has been very agreeable to me. I have advised him to settle down to business in Philadelphia, where I hope he will meet with success. I mentioned to you before that I saw his mother and sisters at Preston, who are very genteel and agreeable people.

I received your young neighbour Haddock's silk, and carried it to her relations, who live very well, keeping a linen-draper's shop in Bishop's-gate Street. They have a relation in Spitalfields that is a manufacturer, who I believe will do it well. I shall honor much every young lady that I find on my return dressed in silk of her own raising. I thank you for the sauceboats, and am pleased to find so good a progress made in the china manufactory. I wish it success most heartily.

Mrs. Stevenson, too, loves to hear about your little boy. Her own grandson and my godson is a fine child, now nine months old. He has an attentive, observing, sagacious look, as if he had a great deal of sense; but as yet he is not enough acquainted with our language to express it intelligently. His mother nurses him herself, for which I much esteem her; as it is rather unfashionable here, where numbers of little innocents suffer and perish. His name is William.

The squirrels came safe and well. You will see by the enclosed how welcome they were. A hundred thanks are sent for them, and I thank you for the readiness with which you executed the commission. The buckwheat and Indian meal are come safe and

good. They will be a great refreshment to me this winter; for, since I cannot be in America, every thing that comes from thence comforts me a little, as being something like home. The dried peaches, too, are excellent; those dried without their skins. The parcel in their skins are not so good. The apples are the best I ever had, and came with the least damage. The sturgeon you mention did not come; but that is not so material.

I hope our cousin Fisher will do well among us. He seems a sober, well-inclined man; and when I saw him in Birmingham he appeared to be well respected by his relations and friends. An active, lively, industrious wife would be a good thing for him. I sent you from Ireland a fine piece of the holland of that country. Captain All, whom I met with there, found a captain whom he knew, who promised to take care of it and deliver it safe. You mention nothing of it in your letter of December 2d, when, in the common course, you ought to have had it before that time, which makes me fear it is lost. I wrote to you from Dublin, and from Glasgow in Scotland. I was in Ireland about seven weeks; in Scotland about four weeks; absent from London, in all, more than three months. My tour was a very pleasant one. I received abundance of civilities from the gentry of both kingdoms, and my health is improved by the air and exercise.

I have advised Mr. Bache to deal only in the ready-money way though he should sell less. It is the safest and the most easy manner of carrying on business. I have given him two hundred pounds sterling to add something to his cargo. My love to our dear Sally. Your affectionate husband,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXXIX

TO MRS. SARAH BACHE

London, 29 January, 1772.

Dear Sally:—

I met with Mr. Bache at Preston, where I stayed two or three days, being very kindly entertained by his mother and sisters, whom I liked much. He came to town with me, and is now going home to you. I have advised him to settle down to business in Philadelphia, where he will always be with you. I am of opinion that almost any profession a man has been educated in is preferable to an office held at pleasure, as rendering him more independent, more a free man, and less subject to the caprices of superiors; and I think that in keeping a store, if it be where you dwell, you can be serviceable to him, as your mother was to me; for you are not deficient in capacity, and I hope you are not too proud.

You might easily learn accounts, and you can copy letters, or write them very well upon occasion. By industry and frugality you may get forward in the world, being both of you yet young; and then what we may leave you at our death will be a pretty addition, though of itself far from sufficient to maintain and bring up a family. It is of more importance for you to think seriously of this, as you may have a number of children to educate. Till my return you need be at no expense for rent, as you are all welcome to continue with your mother; and indeed it seems to be your duty to attend her, as she grows infirm, and takes much delight in your company and the child's. This saving will be a help in your progress; and for your encouragement I can assure you that there is scarce a merchant of opulence in your town whom I do not remember a young beginner with as little to go on with, and no better prospects than Mr. Bache.

I hope you will attend to what is recommended to you in this letter, it proceeding from sincere affection, after due consideration, with the knowledge I have of the world and my own circumstances. I am much pleased with the account I receive from all hands of your dear little boy. I hope he will be continued a blessing to us all. It is a pleasure to me that the little things I sent you proved agreeable. I am ever, my dear Sally, your affectionate father,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXXX

TO WILLIAM FRANKLIN

London, 30 January, 1772.

My Dear Son:—

In your last you mention some complaisance of Lord Hillsborough towards you, that showed a disposition to be on better terms. His behaviour to me in Ireland corresponds exactly. We met first at the Lord Lieutenant's. Mr. Jackson and I were invited to dine there, and when we came we were shown into a room where Lord Hillsborough was alone. He was extremely civil, wonderfully so to me, whom he had not long before abused to Mr. Strahan, as a factious, turbulent fellow, always in mischief, a republican, enemy to the King's service, and what not. He entered very frankly into conversation with us both, and invited us both to stop at his house in Hillsborough, as we should travel northward, and urged it in so polite a manner that we could not avoid saying that we would wait on him if we went that way. In my own mind I was determined not to go that way; but Mr. Jackson thought himself obliged to call on his Lordship, considering the connexion his office forms between them. His Lordship dined with us at the Lord Lieutenant's. There were at the table the Lord Chancellor, the Speaker, and all the great officers of state. He drank my health, and was otherwise particularly civil. He went from Dublin some days before us.¹

At Dublin we saw and were entertained by both parties, the courtiers and the patriots. The latter treated me with particular respect. We were admitted to sit among the members of the Commons' House; Mr. Jackson as member of the British Parliament, and I as member of some British Parliament in America. The Speaker proposed it on my behalf, with some very obliging expressions of respect for my character, and was answered by the House with a unanimous *aye* of consent, when two members came out to me, led me in between them, and placed me honorably and commodiously. I hope our assemblies will not fall short of them in this politeness, if any Irish member should happen to be in our country.

In Scotland I spent five days with Lord Kames at his seat, Blair Drummond, near Stirling, two or three days at Glasgow, two days at Carron Iron Works, and the rest of the month in and about Edinburgh, lodging at David Hume's, who entertained me with the

greatest kindness and hospitality, as did Lord Kames and his lady. All our old acquaintances there, Sir Alexander Dick and lady, Mr. McGowan, Drs. Robertson, Cullen, Black, Ferguson, Russel, and others, inquired affectionately of your welfare. I was out three months, and the journey was evidently of great service to my health.

Mr. Bache had some views of obtaining an office in America; but I dissuaded him from the application, as I could not appear in it, and rather wish to see all I am connected with in an independent situation, supported by their own industry. I therefore advised him to lay out the money he brought with him in goods, return and sit down to business in Philadelphia, selling for ready money only, in which way I think he might, by quick returns, get forward in the world. It would have been wrong for Sally to leave her mother, besides incurring the expense of such a voyage.

I cast my eye over Goddard's piece against our friend Mr. Galloway, and then lit my fire with it. I think such feeble, malicious attacks cannot hurt him.

The resolution of the Board of Trade to admit, for the future, no agents to appear before them but such as are appointed by "concurrent act of the whole Legislature," will, I think, put an end to agencies, as, I apprehend, the assemblies will think agents, under the ministerial influence that must arise from such appointments, cannot be of much use in their colony affairs. In truth, I think the agents, as now appointed, of as much use to the government here, as to the colonies that send them, having often prevented its going into mistaken measures through misinformation, that must have been very inconvenient to itself and would have prevented more of the same kind if they had been attended to; witness the Stamp and Duty acts. I believe, therefore, we shall conclude to leave this omniscient, infallible minister to his own devices, and be no longer at the expense of sending any agent, whom he can displace by a repeal of the appointing act. I am sure I should not like to be an agent in such a suspicious situation, and shall therefore decline serving under every such appointment.

Your Assembly may avoid the dispute you seem apprehensive of, by leaving the appointment of an agent out of the support bill, or rather, I should say, the sum for his salary. The money in my hands will pay him, who ever he is, for two or three years, in which the measure and the minister may be changed. In the meantime, by working with a friend who has great influence at the Board, he can serve the province as effectually as by an open reception and appearance.

Our friend, Sir John Pringle, put into my hands the other day a letter from Mr. Bowman, seeming, I thought, a good deal pleased with the notice you had taken of his recommendation. I send you a copy of it that you may see the man has a grateful disposition. Temple has been at home with us during the Christmas vacation from school. He improves continually, and more and more engages the regard of all that are acquainted with him by his pleasing, sensible, manly behaviour.

I have of late great debates with myself whether or not I shall continue here any longer. I grow homesick, and, being now in my sixty-seventh year, I begin to apprehend some infirmity of age may attack me, and make my return impracticable. I have also some important affairs to settle before my death, a period I ought now to think cannot be far distant. I see here no disposition in Parliament to meddle farther in colony affairs for the present, either to lay more duties or to repeal any, and I think, though I were to return again, I may be absent from here a year without any prejudice to the business I am engaged in, though it is not probable that, being once at home, I should ever again see England. I have indeed so many good kind friends here, that I could spend the remainder of my life among them with great pleasure, if it were not for my American connexions, and the indelible affection I retain for that dear country from which I have so long been in a state of exile. My love to Betsey. I am ever your affectionate father,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXXXI

MAYZ, OR INDIAN CORN

It is remarked in North America that the English farmers, when they first arrive there, finding a soil and climate proper for the husbandry they have been accustomed to, and particularly suitable for raising wheat, they despise and neglect the culture of mayz, or Indian corn; but, observing the advantage it affords their neighbours, the older inhabitants, they by degrees get more and more into the practice of raising it; and the face of the country shows, from time to time, that the culture of that grain goes on visibly augmenting.

The inducements are, the many different ways in which it may be prepared, so as to afford a wholesome and pleasing nourishment to men and other animals. 1st. The family can begin to make use of it before the time of full harvest; for the tender green ears, stripped of their leaves, and roasted by a quick fire till the grain is brown, and eaten with a little salt or butter are a delicacy. 2dly. When the grain is ripe and harder, the ears, boiled in their leaves, and eaten with butter, are also good and agreeable food. The tender green grains, dried, may be kept all the year, and, mixed with green *haricots*,¹ also dried, make at any time a pleasing dish, being first soaked some hours in water, and then boiled. When the grain is ripe and hard, there are also several ways of using it. One is, to soak it all night in a *lessive* or lye, and then pound it in a large wooden mortar with a wooden pestle; the skin of each grain is by that means skinned off, and the farinaceous part left whole, which, being boiled, swells into a white soft pulp, and eaten with milk, or with butter and sugar, is delicious.² The dry grain is also sometimes ground loosely, so as to be broke into pieces of the size of rice, and being winnowed to separate the bran, it is then boiled and eaten with turkeys or other fowls, as rice. Ground into a finer meal, they make of it, by boiling, a hasty-pudding, or *bouilli*, to be eaten with milk, or with butter and sugar; this resembles what the Italians call *polenta*. They make of the same meal, with water and salt, a hasty cake, which, being stuck against a hoe or other flat iron, is placed erect before the fire, and so baked, to be used as bread. Broth is also agreeable thickened with the same meal. They also parch it in this manner. An iron pot is filled with sand, and set on the fire till the sand is very hot. Two or three pounds of the grain are then thrown in, and well mixed with the sand by stirring. Each grain bursts and throws out a white substance of twice its bigness. The sand is separated by a wire sieve, and returned into

the pot, to be again heated, and repeat the operation with fresh grain. That which is parched is pounded to a powder in mortars. This being sifted, will keep long for use. An Indian will travel far and subsist long on a small bag of it, taking only six or eight ounces of it per day, mixed with water.

The flour of *mayz*, mixed with that of wheat, makes excellent bread, sweeter and more agreeable than that of wheat alone. To feed horses, it is good to soak the grain twelve hours; they mash it easier with their teeth, and it yields them more nourishment. The leaves, stripped off the stalks after the grain is ripe, and tied up in bundles when dry, are excellent forage for horses, cows, &c. The stalks, pressed like sugar-cane yield a sweet juice, which, being fermented and distilled, yields an excellent spirit; boiled without fermentation, it affords a pleasant syrup. In Mexico, fields are sown with it thick, that multitudes of small stalks may arise, which, being cut from time to time like asparagus, are served in desserts, and their sweet juice extracted in the mouth by chewing them. The meal wetted is excellent food for young chickens, and the whole grain for grown fowls.^{[1](#)}

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXXXII

PRECAUTIONS TO BE USED BY THOSE WHO ARE ABOUT TO UNDERTAKE A SEA VOYAGE

When you intend to take a long voyage, nothing is better than to keep it a secret till the moment of your departure. Without this, you will be continually interrupted and tormented by visits from friends and acquaintances, who not only make you lose your valuable time, but make you forget a thousand things which you wish to remember; so that, when you are embarked, and fairly at sea, you recollect, with much uneasiness, affairs which you have not terminated, accounts that you have not settled, and a number of things which you proposed to carry with you, and which you find the want of every moment. Would it not be attended with the best consequences to reform such a custom and to suffer a traveller, without deranging him, to make his preparations in quietness, to set apart a few days, when these are finished to take leave of his friends, and to receive their good wishes for his happy return?

It is not always in one's power to choose a captain; though great part of the pleasure and happiness of the passage depends upon this choice, and though one must for a time be confined to his company, and be in some measure under his command. If he is a social, sensible man, obliging, and of a good disposition, you will be so much the happier. One sometimes meets with people of this description, but they are not common; however, if yours be not of this number, if he be a good seaman, attentive, careful, and active in the management of his vessel, you must dispense with the rest, for these are essential qualities.

Whatever right you may have, by your agreement with him, to the provisions he has taken on board for the use of the passengers, it is always proper to have some private store, which you may make use of occasionally. You ought, therefore, to provide good water, that of the ship being often bad; but you must put it into bottles, without which you cannot expect to preserve it sweet. You ought also to carry with you good tea, ground coffee, chocolate, wine of that sort which you like best, cider, dried raisins, almonds, sugar, capillaire, citrons, rum, eggs dipped in oil, portable soup, bread twice baked. With regard to poultry, it is almost useless to carry any with you, unless you resolve to undertake the office of feeding and fattening them yourself. With the little care which is taken of them on board ship, they are almost all sickly, and their flesh is as tough as leather.

All sailors entertain an opinion, which has undoubtedly originated formerly from a want of water, and when it has been found necessary to be sparing of it, that poultry never know when they have drunk enough; and that when water is given them at discretion, they generally kill themselves by drinking beyond measure. In consequence of this opinion, they give them water only once in two days, and even then in small quantities; but as they pour this water into troughs inclining on one side, which occasions it to run to the lower part, it thence happens that they are obliged to mount one upon the back of another in order to reach it; and there are some which cannot even dip their beaks in it. Thus continually tantalized and tormented by thirst, they are unable to digest their food, which is very dry, and they soon fall sick and die. Some of them are found thus every morning, and are thrown into the sea; whilst those which are killed for the table are scarcely fit to be eaten. To remedy this inconvenience, it will be necessary to divide their troughs into small compartments, in such a manner that each of them may be capable of containing water; but this is seldom or never done. On this account sheep and hogs are to be considered as the best fresh provision that one can have at sea; mutton there being in general very good, and pork excellent.

It may happen that some of the provisions and stores which I have recommended may become almost useless, by the care which the captain has taken to lay in a proper stock; but in such a case you may dispose of it to relieve the poor passengers, who, paying less for their passage, are stowed among the common sailors, and have no right to the captain's provisions, except such part of them as is used for feeding the crew. These passengers are sometimes sick, melancholy, and dejected; and there are often women and children among them, neither of whom have any opportunity of procuring those things which I have mentioned, and of which, perhaps, they have the greatest need. By distributing amongst them a part of your superfluity, you may be of the greatest assistance to them. You may restore their health, save their lives, and, in short, render them happy; which always affords the liveliest sensation to a feeling mind.

The most disagreeable thing at sea is the cookery; for there is not, properly speaking, any professional cook on board. The worse sailor is generally chosen for that purpose, who for the most part is equally dirty. Hence comes the proverb used among the English sailors, that *God sends meat, and the Devil sends cooks*. Those, however, who have a better opinion of Providence, will think otherwise. Knowing that sea air, and the exercise or motion, which they receive from the rolling of the ship, have a wonderful effect in whetting the appetite, they will say that Providence has given sailors bad cooks to prevent them from eating too much; or that,

knowing they would have bad cooks, has given them a good appetite to prevent them from dying with hunger. However, if you have no confidence in those succours of Providence, you may yourself, with a lamp and a boiler, by the help of a little spirits of wine, prepare some food, such as soup, hash, &c. A small oven made of tin-plate is not a bad piece of furniture; your servant may roast in it a piece of mutton or pork. If you are ever tempted to eat salt beef, which is often very good, you will find that cider is the best liquor to quench the thirst generally caused by salt meat or salt fish. Sea biscuit, which is too hard for the teeth of some people, may be softened by steeping it; but bread double-baked is the best; for, being made of good loaf-bread cut into slices, and baked a second time, it readily imbibes water, becomes soft, and is easily digested; it consequently forms excellent nourishment, much superior to that of biscuit, which has not been fermented.

I must here observe that this double-baked bread was originally the real biscuit prepared to keep at sea; for the word *biscuit*, in French, signifies twice baked. Pease often boil badly, and do not become soft; in such case, by putting a two-pound shot into the kettle, the rolling of the vessel, by means of this bullet, will convert the pease into a kind of porridge, like mustard.

Having often seen soup, when put upon the table at sea in broad, flat dishes, thrown out on every side by the rolling of the vessel, I have wished that our tinmen would make our soup-basins with divisions or compartments, forming small plates, proper for containing soup for one person only. By this disposition, the soup, in an extraordinary roll, would not be thrown out of the plate, and would not fall into the breast of those who are at table, and scald them.

Having entertained you with these things of little importance, permit me now to conclude with some general reflections upon navigation.

When navigation is employed only for transporting necessary provisions from one country, where they abound, to another where they are wanting; when by this it prevents famines, which were so frequent and so fatal before it was invented and became so common, we cannot help considering it as one of those arts which contribute most to the happiness of mankind. But when it is employed to transport things of no utility, or articles merely of luxury, it is then uncertain whether the advantages resulting from it are sufficient to counterbalance the misfortunes it occasions by exposing the lives of so many individuals upon the vast ocean. And when it is used to plunder vessels and transport slaves, it is

evidently only the dreadful means of increasing those calamities which afflict human nature.

One is astonished to think on the number of vessels and men who are daily exposed in going to bring tea from China, coffee from Arabia, and sugar and tobacco from America; all, commodities which our ancestors lived very well without. The sugar trade employs nearly a thousand vessels, and that of tobacco, almost the same number. With regard to the utility of tobacco, little can be said; and, with regard to sugar, how much more meritorious would it be to sacrifice the momentary pleasure which we receive from drinking it once or twice a day in our tea, than to encourage the numberless cruelties that are continually exercised in order to procure it us!

A celebrated French moralist said that, when he considered the wars which we foment in Africa to get negroes, the great number who of course perish in these wars; the multitude of those wretches who die in their passage, by disease, bad air, and bad provisions; and, lastly, how many perish by the cruel treatment they meet with in a state of slavery, when he saw a bit of sugar he could not help imagining it to be covered with spots of human blood. But, had he added to these considerations the wars which we carry on against one another, to take and retake the islands that produce this commodity, he would not have seen the sugar simply spotted with blood, he would have beheld it entirely tinged with it.

These wars make the maritime powers of Europe and the inhabitants of Paris and London pay much dearer for their sugar than those of Vienna, though they are almost three hundred leagues distant from the sea. A pound of sugar, indeed, costs the former not only the price which they give for it, but also what they pay in taxes, necessary to support the fleets and armies which serve to defend and protect the countries that produce it.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXXXIII

TOLERATION IN OLD ENGLAND AND NEW ENGLAND^{[1](#)}

Sir:—

I understand from the public papers that, in the debates on the bill for relieving the Dissenters in the point of subscription to the church articles, sundry reflections were thrown out against that people, importing “that they themselves are of a persecuting, intolerant spirit; for that, when they had the superiority, they persecuted the church, and still persecute it in America, where they compel its members to pay taxes for maintaining the Presbyterian or Independent worship, and, at the same time, refuse them a toleration in the full exercise of their religion by the administrations of a bishop.”

If we look back into history for the character of the present sects in Christianity, we shall find few that have not in their turns been persecutors, and complainers of persecution. The primitive Christians thought persecution extremely wrong in the Pagans, but practised it on one another. The first Protestants of the Church of England blamed persecution in the Romish Church, but practised it against the Puritans. These found it wrong in the bishops, but fell into the same practice themselves, both here and in New England. To account for this we should remember that the doctrine of *toleration* was not then known, or had not prevailed in the world. Persecution was, therefore, not so much the fault of the sect as of the times. It was not in those days deemed wrong *in itself*. The general opinion was only that those *who are in error* ought not to persecute *the truth*; but the *possessors of truth* were in the right to persecute *error*, in order to destroy it. Thus every sect, believing itself possessed of *all truth*, and that every tenet differing from theirs was *error*, conceived that, when the power was in their hands, persecution was a duty required of them by that God whom they supposed to be offended with heresy. By degrees more moderate *and more modest* sentiments have taken place in the Christian world; and among Protestants, particularly, all disclaim persecution, none vindicate it, and but few practise it. We should then cease to reproach each other with what was done by our ancestors, but judge of the present character of sects or churches by their *present conduct* only.

Now, to determine on the justice of this charge against the present Dissenters, particularly those in America, let us consider the following facts. They went from England to establish a new country for themselves, *at their own expense*, where they might enjoy the free exercise of religion in their own way. When they had purchased the territory of the natives, they granted the lands out in townships, requiring for it neither purchase-money nor quit-rent, but this condition only to be complied with, that the free-holders should for ever support a gospel minister (meaning probably one of the governing sects) and a free-school within the township. Thus what is commonly called Presbyterianism became the *established religion* of that country. All went on well in this way while the same religious opinions were general, the support of minister and school being raised by a proportionate tax on the lands. But, in process of time some becoming Quakers,¹ some Baptists, and, of late years, some returning to the Church of England (through the laudable endeavours, and a *proper application*¹ of their funds, by the Society for Propagating the Gospel), objections were made to the payment of a tax appropriated to the support of a church they disapproved and had forsaken.

The civil magistrates, however, continued for a time to collect and apply the tax according to the original laws, which remained in force; and they did it more freely, as thinking it just and equitable that the holders of land should pay what was contracted to be paid when they were granted, as the only consideration for the grant, and what had been considered by all subsequent purchasers as a perpetual incumbrance on the estate, bought therefore at a proportionably cheaper rate; a payment which it was thought no honest man ought to avoid, under the pretence of his having changed his religious persuasion. And this, I suppose, is one of the best grounds of demanding tithes of Dissenters now in England. But the practice being clamored against by the Episcopalians as persecution, the legislature of the province of Massachusetts Bay, near thirty years since, passed an act for their relief, requiring indeed the tax to be paid as usual, but directing that the several sums levied from members of the Church of England, should be paid over to the minister of that church, with whom such members usually attended divine worship, which minister had power given him to receive, and on occasion *to recover the same by law*.

It seems that the legislature considered the *end* of the tax was to secure and improve the morals of the people and promote their happiness, by supporting among them the public worship of God and the preaching of the Gospel; that where particular people fancied a particular mode, that mode might probably, therefore, be of most use to those people; and that, if the good was done, it was not so material in what mode or by whom it was done. The

consideration that their brethren, the Dissenters in England, were still compelled to pay tithes to the clergy of the church, had not weight enough with the legislature to prevent this moderate act, which still continues in full force; and I hope no uncharitable conduct of the church towards the Dissenters will ever provoke them to repeal it.

With regard to a *bishop*, I know not upon what grounds the Dissenters, either here or in America, are charged with refusing the benefit of such an officer to the church in that country. *Here* they seem to have naturally no concern in the affair. *There* they have no power to prevent it, if government should think fit to send one. They would probably *dislike*, indeed, to see an order of men established among them, from whose persecutions their fathers fled into that wilderness, and whose future domination they may possibly fear, *not knowing that their natures are changed*. But the non-appointment of bishops for America seems to arise from another quarter. The same wisdom of government, probably, that prevents the sitting of convocations, and forbids by *noli-prosequis* the persecution of Dissenters for non-subscription, avoids establishing bishops where the minds of the people are not yet prepared to receive them cordially, lest the public peace should be endangered.¹

And now let us see how this *persecution account* stands between the parties.

In New England, where the legislative bodies are almost to a man dissenters from the Church of England—

1. There is no test to prevent churchmen from holding offices.
2. The sons of churchmen have the full benefit of the universities.
3. The taxes for support of public worship, when paid by churchmen, are given to the Episcopal minister.

In Old England—

1. Dissenters are excluded from all offices of profit and honor.
2. The benefits of education in the universities are appropriated to the sons of churchmen.
3. The clergy of the Dissenters receive none of the tithes paid by their people, who must be at the additional charge of maintaining their own separate worship.

But is it said the Dissenters of America *oppose* the introduction of a bishop.

In fact, it is not alone the Dissenters there that give opposition (if *not encouraging* must be termed *opposing*), but the laity in general dislike the project, and some even of the clergy. The inhabitants of Virginia are almost all Episcopalians. The church is fully established there, and the Council and General Assembly are perhaps to a man its members; yet, when lately, at a meeting of the clergy, a resolution was taken to apply for a bishop, against which several, however, protested, the Assembly of the province at their next meeting expressed their disapprobation of the thing in the strongest manner, by unanimously ordering the thanks of the House to the protesters; for many of the American laity of the church think it some advantage whether their own young men come to England for ordination and improve themselves at the same time with the learned here, or the congregations are supplied by Englishmen, who have had the benefit of education in English universities, and are ordained before they come abroad. They do not, therefore, see the necessity of a bishop merely for ordination, and confirmation is deemed among them a ceremony of no very great importance, since few seek it in England, where bishops are in plenty. These sentiments prevail with many churchmen there, not to promote a design which they think must sooner or later saddle them with great expenses to support it. As to the Dissenters, their minds might probably be more conciliated to the measure, if the bishops here should, in their wisdom and goodness, think fit to set their sacred character in a more friendly light, by dropping their opposition to the Dissenters' application for relief in subscription, and declaring their willingness that Dissenters should be capable of offices, enjoy the benefit of education in the universities, and the privilege of appropriating their tithes to the support of their own clergy. In all these points of toleration they appear far behind the present Dissenters of New England, and it may seem to some a step below the dignity of bishops to follow the example of such inferiors. I do not, however, despair of their doing it some time or other, since nothing of the kind is too hard for *true Christian humility*. I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

A New England Man.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXXXIV

TO JOHN FOXCROFT

London, 4 February, 1772.

Dear Friend:—

I have written two or three small letters to you since my return from Ireland and Scotland. Mr. Todd has not yet shown me that which you wrote to him about the New Colony, though he mentioned it, and will let me see it, I suppose, when I call on him.¹ I told you in one of mine, that he has advanced for your share what has been paid by others, though I was ready to do it, and shall in the whole affair take the same care of your interest as of my own.

You take notice that “Mr. Wharton’s friends will not allow me *any merit* in this transaction, but insist *the whole* is owing to his superior abilities.” It is a common error in friends, when they would extol their friend, to make comparisons, and to depreciate the merits of others. It was not necessary for his friends to do so in this case. Mr. Wharton will in truth have a good deal of merit in the affair if it succeeds, he having been exceedingly active and industrious in soliciting it, and in drawing up memorials and papers to support the application and remove objections. But though I have not been equally active, it not being thought proper that I should appear much in the solicitation, since I became a little obnoxious to the ministry, on account of my letters to America, yet I suppose my advice may have been thought of some use, since it has been asked on every step, and I believe that, being longer and better known here than Mr. Wharton, I may have lent some weight to his negotiations by joining in the affair, from the greater confidence men are apt to place in one they know, than in a stranger. However, as I neither ask nor expect any particular consideration for any service I may have done, and only think I ought to escape censure, I shall not enlarge on this invidious topic.

Let us all do our endeavours, in our several capacities, for the common service; and, if one has the ability or opportunity of doing more for his friends than another, let him think that a happiness, and be satisfied. The business is not yet quite completed; and, as many things may happen between the cup and the lip, perhaps there may be nothing of this kind for friends to dispute about. For, if nobody should receive any benefit, there would be no scrambling for the honor.

In yours from New York, of July 3d, you mentioned your intention of purchasing a bill to send hither, as soon as you returned home from your journey. I have not since received any from you, which I only take notice of that, if you have sent any, you may not blame me for not acknowledging the receipt of it.

In mine of April 20th, I explained to you what I had before mentioned, that, in settling our private accounts, I had paid you the sum of three hundred and eighty-nine pounds, or thereabouts, in my own wrong, having before paid it for you to the general post-office. I hope that since you have received your books, and looked over the accounts, you are satisfied of this. I am anxious for your answer upon it, the sum being too large to be left long without an adjustment. I am, &c.,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXXXV

TO CADWALLADER EVANS

London, 6 February, 1772.

Dear Doctor:—

The trunks of silk were detained at the custom-house till very lately; first, because of the holidays, and then waiting to get two persons, skilful in silk, to make a valuation of it, in order to ascertain the bounty. As soon as that was done, and the trunks brought to my house, I waited on Dr. Fothergill to request he would come and see it opened and consult about disposing of it, which he could not do till last Thursday. On examining it, we found that the valuers had opened all the parcels, in order, we suppose, to see the quality of each, had neglected to make them up again, and the directions and marks were lost (except that from Mr. Parke, and that of the second crop), so that we could not find which was intended for the Queen and which for the Proprietary family. Then, being no judges ourselves, we concluded to get Mr. Patterson, or some other skilful person, to come and pick out six pounds of the best for her Majesty, and four pounds for each of the other ladies. This I have endeavoured, but it is not yet done, though I hourly expect it.

Mr. Boydell, broker for the ship, attended the custom-house to obtain the valuation, and had a great deal of trouble to get it managed. I have not since seen him, nor heard the sum they reported, but hope to give you all the particulars by the next ship, which I understand sails in about a fortnight, when Dr. Fothergill and myself are to write a joint letter to the committee, to whom please to present my respects, and assure them of my most faithful services. I am charmed with the sight of such a quantity the second year, and have great hopes the produce will now be established. The second crop silk seems to me not inferior to the others; and, if it is practicable with us to have two crops, and the second season does not interfere too much with other business in the farming way, I think it will be a great addition to the profits as well as to the quantity.

Dr. Fothergill has a number of Chinese drawings, of which some represent the process of raising silk, from the beginning to the end. I am to call at his house and assist in looking them out, he

intending to send them as a present to the Silk Company. I have
now only time to add that I am, ever yours very affectionately,

B. Franklin.[1](#)

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXXXVI

FROM DAVID HUME TO B. FRANKLIN

Edinburgh, 7 February, 1772.

Dear Sir:—

I was very glad to hear of your safe arrival in London, after being exposed to as many perils as St. Paul, by land and by water, though to no perils among false brethren; for the good wishes of all your brother philosophers in this place attend you heartily and sincerely, together with much regret that your business would not allow you to pass more time among them.

Brother Lin expects to see you soon, before he takes his little trip round the world. You have heard, no doubt, of that project. The circumstances of the affair could not be more honorable for him, nor could the honor be conferred on one who deserves it more.

I really believe, with the French author of whom you have favored me with an extract, that the circumstance of my being a Scotchman has been a considerable objection to me. So factious is this country! I expected, in entering on my literary course, that all the Christians, all the whigs, and all the tories, should be my enemies. But it is hard that all the English, Irish, and Welsh should be also against me. The Scotch likewise cannot be much my friends as no man is a prophet in his own country. However, it is some consolation that I can bear up my head under all this prejudice. I fancy that I must have recourse to America for justice. You told me, I think, that your countrymen in that part of the world intended to do me the honor of giving an edition of my writings, and you promised that you should recommend to them to follow the last edition, which is in the press. I now use the freedom of reminding you of it.

Pray make my compliments to Sir John Pringle, and tell him how much I wish for his company; and be so good as to give him a description of the house I reserve for him in the Square. If you really go over to America, we hope you will not grudge us Sir John as a legacy. I am, dear Sir, with great truth and regard, your most obedient humble servant,

David Hume.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXXXVII

TO THOMAS CUSHING

London, 13 April, 1772.

Sir:—

I wrote to you in January last a long letter, by Meyrick, and at the same time wrote to the Committee, since which I have received no line from any one in Boston, nor has Mr. Bollan yet received the answer we wait for, respecting the eastern settlements on the crown land.

The Parliament has been employed in the royal marriage bill, and other business; nothing of importance relating to America has been mentioned hitherto during the session, and it is thought that India affairs will fill up the remainder of the time, to the prorogation. I have not met with Lord Hillsborough since my return from Ireland, seeing no use at present in attending his levees. The papers mentioned his intention of moving something in the House of Lords relating to America, but I cannot learn there was any truth in it.

It is my present purpose to return home this summer, in which case I suppose I am to leave your business and papers in the hands of Mr. Lee, which I shall do if I do not receive other directions.

Upon the present plan here of admitting no agent but such as governors shall approve of, from year to year, and of course none but such as the ministry approves of, I do not conceive that agents can be of much use to you; and, therefore, I suppose you would rather decline appointing any. In my opinion, they have at all times been of full as much service to government here, as to the colonies from whence they come, and might still be so, if properly attended to, in preventing, by their better information, those disgraceful blunders of government that arise from its ignorance of our situation, circumstances, abilities, temper, &c., such as the Stamp Act, which too would have been prevented, if the agents had been regarded. Therefore I should think that, if agents can be allowed here on no other footing than is now proposed, we should omit sending any, and leave the crown, when it wants our aids, or would transact business with us, to send its minister to the colonies.

Be pleased to present my respects to the Committee, and duty to the Assembly, and believe me, with sincere esteem, &c.,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXXXVIII

TO M. LE ROY

London, 20 April, 1772.

Dear Sir:—

I received your favor of March 5th, by M. Dazeux, and shall be glad of any opportunity of doing him service. It gave me great pleasure to learn by him that you are well and happily married, on which I give you joy. It is after all the most natural state of man.

Mr. West, our President, concerning whom you make inquiry, is esteemed a good antiquarian, but has not distinguished himself in any other branch of science. He is a member of Parliament, was formerly Secretary to the Treasury, and is very rich.¹

I am glad to hear that a voyage is intended from France to the North Pole. The world owes much to the noble spirit with which your nation pursues the improvement of knowledge, and to the liberality with which you communicate what you acquire to the rest of mankind. I hope your philosophers on this voyage will be able to discover more clearly the cause of the Aurora Borealis, and a passage round the north of America.

I suppose care has been taken to make their ships very strong, that they may bear thumping among the ice. My best wishes will attend them for their success and safe return.

Messrs. Banks and Solander are to sail with two ships in about a fortnight for the South. They expect to be out near four years. They present their compliments, and are pleased with the notice you honor them with in your letter to me. Sir John Pringle continues well, and presents his respectful compliments to you. I am, with the most perfect esteem, dear Sir, yours, &c.,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXXXIX

TO JOSEPH PRIESTLEY

London, 4 May, 1772.

Dear Sir:—

I think with you that there cannot be the least occasion for my explaining your method of impregnating water with fixed air to Messrs. Banks and Solander, as they were present, and I suppose are as well acquainted with it as myself; however, I shall readily do it if they think it necessary. I am glad you intend to improve and publish the process.

You must go half an inch farther with your spark to exceed what I showed here with my Philadelphia machine in 1758, to Lord Charles Cavendish and others, who judged them to be nine inches. My cushion was of buckskin, with a long damp flap, and had a wire from it through the window down to the iron rails in the yard; the conductor of tin four feet long and about four inches diameter. So powerful a machine had then never been seen in England before, as they were pleased to tell me. A machine was made from mine for Mr. Timmer, and was afterwards in the possession of Lord Morton. A more convenient construction I have never since seen, except that of yours. I intend soon to repeat Baretti's experiments, being provided with the requisites, and shall let you know the result.

I should be glad to see the French translation of your book. Can you conveniently lend it to me when you have perused it? I fancy it was translated at the request of Abbé Nollet by a friend and disciple of his; as I know there was one (whose name I have forgotten) that used to translate for him extracts of English electrical books.

The Abbé's machine was a very bad one, requiring three persons to make the smallest experiment; one to turn the great wheel, and one to hold hands on the globe. And the effect after all was but weak. De Lor had a similar one, and invited me to see him exhibit to the Duchess of Rochefoucauld; but, the weather being a little warm, he could perform nothing, scarce obtaining a spark.

This inconvenience must have occasioned his making fewer experiments, and of course his not being so easily convinced. M. Le Roy however, got early possession of the truth, and combated for it

with Nollet; yet I think the Academy rather favored the latter. Le Roy will, I suppose, now confute this translator, for I have just seen a letter of his to Mr. Magalhaens, thanking him for sending so excellent an electrical machine to France (it is one of the plate ones), which he has improved so as to produce the positive and negative electricities separately or together at the same time. “De façon,” says he, “qu’on peut faire toutes les expériences possibles sur l’une ou l’autre de ces deux électricités. Enfin on étoit si éloigné de connoître les phénomènes de ces deux électricités ici, faute de machines commodes de les demontrer, que beaucoup des gens ont été étonnés de voir avec quelle évidence ils établissent la distinction des ces deux électricités,” &c. This letter is of the 5th instant.

My best wishes attend you and yours. I am ever, with great respect,
my dear friend,

Yours Most Sincerely,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXL

TO MRS. DEBORAH FRANKLIN

London, 5 May, 1772.

My Dear Child:—

I received your kind letter of March 2d, and am glad to hear that the ship from Ireland is got safe into Antigua. I hope you will now get the little token I sent you from thence. I have not received the letter you mention to have given the young Scotchman, nor that from Mr. Craige.

I am sorry for the disorder that has fallen on our friend Kinnersley, but hope he will get the better of it. I thank you for your advice about putting back a fit of the gout. I shall never attempt such a thing. Indeed I have not much occasion to complain of the gout, having had but two slight fits since I came last to England. I hope Mr. Bache is with you and his family by this time, as he sailed from the Downs the latter end of February. My love to him and Sally, and young master, who, I suppose, is master of the house. Tell him that Billy Hewson is as much thought of here as he can be there; was weaned last Saturday; loves music; comes to see his grandmother; and will be lifted up to knock at the door himself, as he has done while I was writing this at the request of Mrs. Stevenson, who sends her love, as Sally does her duty. Thanks to God, I continue well, and am, as ever, your affectionate husband,

B. Franklin.[1](#)

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXLI

TO MAJOR DAWSON, ENGINEER¹

Craven Street,

29 May, 1772.

Sir:—

Having visited yesterday, as you desired, the powder magazines at Purfleet, in order to see how they may be protected against danger from lightning, I think—

1. That all the iron bars, which pass down along the arches, from the top to the place where the powder is deposited, should be removed; as they now constitute, with the brass hoops with which the casks are bound, an imperfect conductor; imperfect in proportion to the greater or less height to which the casks are piled; but, in any case, such that they can only serve to attract towards the powder the first stroke that falls upon the arch; and that they are consequently very dangerous.
2. That the building, which has a leaden coping along the ridge from one end to the other, may be secured by means of a pointed iron rod, carried up near each end, communicating with this coping, and extending through the rock of chalk, which serves as the foundation of the building, till it meets with water. This rod should be at least an inch in diameter, that it may be more durable, and afford the lightning a more free course through its substance; and it should be painted, to preserve it from rust. Its upper extremity should be carried ten feet above the summit of the roof, and taper off gradually till it ends in a sharp point; and, the better to preserve this point, the last six inches should be of brass, because it is less liable to become blunted by rust. If the rod cannot well be made entirely of a single piece, the different pieces composing it should be strongly screwed together, or into one another very closely, with a thin plate of lead between the joints, in order to render the junction or continuation of the metal more perfect.

After all the electrical experiments that I have made in reference to this subject, and all the examples that have come to my knowledge of the effects of lightning on these conductors, it seems to me that (provided they are good and perfect, carried down till water or very

moist ground is reached) they are equally safe, whether placed directly against the wall, and secured by staples driven into it, or whether supported by a pole or staff planted in the ground, at some distance from the wall. The former is the better rod, as the rod can be bent to avoid the windows or doors, which are situated directly below the summit of the roof. Yet, as certain apprehensions may be more effectually set at rest by supporting the rods in the other manner, I should make no objection to this, provided that they can be suitably placed, without interfering with any passage, and that they are so firmly fixed that the wind cannot, by causing them to vibrate, interrupt the communication of iron or lead between the side of the rod and the lead that covers the ridge.

3. As I am informed that the roofs of the other four buildings are to be reconstructed after the model of that of which I have just been speaking, the same method may be followed with regard to them, when they are finished in this manner. But if it be asked how they may be rendered secure in the meantime, I would advise that (as their roofs are now of a different form, being hip-roofs with four corners, and the joining at their corners, as well as their ridge-pieces, having a coping of lead, which extends to the gutters) the passages which it is proposed to carry down till water is reached, be bored or dug immediately, and that that part of each conductor which is to be carried up from the water as high as the gutters, be fixed in them. From the top of this conductor I would carry out two arms of iron to the corners of the gutters, where the leaden coping of the corners of the roof should be united to the ends of these bars; and at the junction of these corners with the ridge-piece, I would carry up rods to the height of ten feet, pointed as directed above; which, when a new roof is made, could be used for the upper part of a straight conductor. I am, Sir,

Your Most Obedient Humble Servant,

B. Franklin.

P. S.—For that part of the conductor which is to be carried under ground, leaden pipes should be used, as less liable to rust.^{[1](#)}

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXLII

FROM JOSEPH PRIESTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN

Leeds, 3 June, 1772.

Dear Sir:—

You make me very happy by the near prospect of seeing you and Sir John Pringle at Leeds. I shall be entirely at liberty to receive you, and I hope you will contrive to stay as long as possible in this town and neighbourhood. I thank you for the *Native of New England*.¹ I had casually seen the same paper and was particularly struck with it, without having any suspicion of *Poor Richard* being the author of it. I am obliged to you for your advice with respect to the *Dedication*, and shall comply with it; but some other alterations, besides what you noted, must be made in it, if it be addressed to Lord Sandwich only.

I am intent upon the prosecution of my experiments on *air*; and since I wrote to you have observed several remarkable appearances. That very extraordinary kind of air, which Dr. Hales got from Walton pyrites, and which I had despaired of procuring, I get from all the metals I have yet tried, by means of spirit of nitre. It is quite transparent; but a mixture of it and common air is red for a considerable time, in which the whole quantity is greatly reduced in bulk. A mixture of this and fixed air is not turbid. This air alone is reduced above one half by a mixture of iron filings and brimstone standing in it, whereas common air is diminished only about one fifth in the same process.

When I have the pleasure of seeing you, I shall acquaint you with some other remarkable properties of this new kind of air. In the meantime you will do me a very important service by procuring for me, and bringing along with you, a little of highly concentrated *marine acid*. There is none to be got here; and, using a weaker sort in the solution of gold, I was obliged to apply a considerable degree of heat, the consequence of which was that, the acid menstruum suddenly boiling, my hands, face, clothes, and the walls of the room have been great sufferers by it, as I am afraid, I shall be able to show you. A penny-weight of gold, which I had bought for the purpose, was also lost.

As a reward for this damage, I preserved about three ounce measures of *air* extracted from gold, which I believe was never

seen before, and have the prodigious satisfaction of finding that it has the very same properties with that which is produced from copper. If I had studied *Poor Richard* in time, I should not have indulged myself in these expenses; but bad habits are not easily corrected. If, however, the passion be not kept up by considerable success, frugality and an attention to a growing family will, at length, get the better of experimenting, and then I shall write nothing but *Politics* or *Divinity*, to furnish the Bishop of Llandaff with more quotations for his future invectives against the Dissenters.

The French translation of my *History of Electricity* I borrowed of Mr. Walsh; but, as it will be of some use to me in a future edition of my work, I think to purchase it. In the meantime Mr. Walsh will have no objection to your having it for what time you please, and I can give it to you when you are here.

I am surprised that the French electricians should not have been able to provide themselves with better machines. I am confident that plates will never answer so well as globes or cylinders. I am, with my respectful compliments to Sir John Pringle,

Dear Sir, Yours Sincerely,

Joseph Priestley.

P. S.—I wish you could bring Dr. Price with you.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXLIII

TO MR. MASERES

Craven Street,

17 June, 1772.

Sir:—

I thank you for the pamphlets proposing to establish Life Annuities in Parishes, &c. I think it an excellent one. In compliance with your wish, pages 25, 26, I send it back with a few marginal notes (perhaps of no great importance) made in reading it, requesting it may be returned to me.

In page 118 of Dr. Price's book on Annuities, 2d edition, you will find mention made of an institution in Holland. He had that information from me. Those houses are handsome, neat buildings, with very comfortable apartments. Some form the sides of a square, with grass-plots and gravel walks, flowers, &c., and some have little separate gardens behind each apartment. Those for men are called *Oude Mannen Huyzen*; for women, *Oude Vrouwen Huyzen*. I think the different kinds sometimes make different sides of the same square. There is a chapel for prayers, a common kitchen, and a common hall in which they dine together. Two persons, such as best like one another, and choose so to associate, are generally lodged in one apartment, though in separate beds, that they may be at hand to assist each other in case of sudden illness in the night, and otherwise be mutually helpful.

The Directors have also a room to meet in, who form rules for the government of the house, hear complaints, and rectify what is amiss. Gentlemen are directors of the *Oude Mannen Huyzen*, ladies of the *Oude Vrouwen Huyzen*. A committee of two are chosen every year, who visit often, see the rules observed, and take care of the management. At the end of the year these are thanked off, and as an honorable memorial of their services, their names, with the year they served, are added to the Gold-Letter List on the walls of the room. All the furniture is neat and convenient, the beds and rooms kept clean and sweet by the servants of the house; and the people appear to live happily.

These institutions seem calculated to prevent poverty, which is rather a better thing than relieving it. For it keeps always in the

public eye a state of comfort and repose in old age, with freedom from care held forth as an encouragement to so much industry and frugality in youth as may at least serve to raise the required sum (suppose £50) that is to entitle a man or a woman at fifty to a retreat in those houses. And in acquiring this sum habits may be acquired that produce such affluence before that age arrives, as to make the retreat unnecessary and so never claimed. Hence if £50 would (as by your table) entitle a man at fifty years of age to an annuity of £19 3 6½, I suppose that in such a house, entertainment, and accommodations to a much greater value might be afforded him; because the right to live there is not transferable, and therefore every unclaimed right is an advantage to the house, while annuities would probably all be claimed. Then it seems to me that the prospect of a distant annuity will not be so influencing on the minds of young people, as the constant view of the comfort enjoyed in those houses, in comparison of which the *payment* and *receipt* of the annuities are *private* transactions.

I write this in hopes you will, after consideration, favor me with your opinion whether (in addition to your plan, which will still have all advantages for smaller sums) one or more such houses in every county, would not probably be of great use in still farther promoting industry and frugality among the lower people, and of course lessening the enormous weight of the poor-tax?

I enclose a little piece I wrote in America, to encourage and strengthen those important virtues, of which I beg your acceptance, and am, with great esteem, Sir, your most obedient and humble Servant,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXLIV

FROM JOSEPH PRIESTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN

Leeds, 1 July, 1772.

Dear Sir:—

I presume that by this time you are arrived in London, and I am willing to take the first opportunity of informing you that I have never been so busy, or so successful in making experiments, as since I had the pleasure of seeing you at Leeds.

I have fully satisfied myself that air, rendered in the highest degree noxious by breathing, is restored by sprigs of mint growing in it. You will probably remember the flourishing state in which you saw one of my plants. I put a mouse in the air in which it was growing on the Saturday after you went away, which was seven days after it was put in, and it continued in it five minutes without showing any sign of uneasiness, and was taken out quite strong and vigorous, when a mouse died after being not two seconds in a part of the same original quantity of air, which had stood in the same exposure without a plant in it. The same mouse, also, that lived so well in the restored air, was barely recoverable after being not more than one second in the other. I have also had another instance of a mouse living fourteen minutes without being at all hurt in little more than two ounce measures of another quantity of noxious air, in which a plant had grown.

I have completely ascertained the restoration of air, in which tallow or wax candles, spirit of wine, or brimstone-matches, have burned out by the same means.

The *nitrous air*, which I showed you, I found to be an admirable test of air that is fit for breathing. It makes this air red and turbid, but no other that I have tried. I took air, in which a mouse had putrified, which was in the highest degree noxious and fetid, and also a quantity of fixed air. The nitrous air, admitted to each of these kinds of air separately, made no sensible alteration in them; but, when they were mixed (which I discovered to make a wholesome air), the nitrous air made the mixture turbid and diminished the bulk of it, as in common air, though not in the same degree. A mouse put into this mixture lived five minutes without uneasiness, when, if it had been put into either of them separately a few minutes before, it would have died in a few seconds.

Air that has passed through hot charcoal has many, perhaps all the properties of air that has been diminished by other processes. It extinguishes flame, kills animals, and is not diminished or made turbid by a mixture of nitrous air.

But the observation, that pleases me more than any I ever made, is the diminution of air by the crystallization (I believe) of quicksilver and the nitrous acid. This effect both precedes and follows the generation of nitrous air from the same mixture. This I suspect to be the case with other crystallizations.

I have observed many other things, which I have not room to mention at present.

**I Am, With Great Respect, Dear Sir,
Yours Sincerely,**

Joseph Priestley.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXLV

TO MRS. DEBORAH FRANKLIN

London, 14 July, 1772.

My Dear Child:—

I am just returned from a journey of near a month, which has given a new spring to my health and spirits. I did not get home in time to write by Osborne, but shall write fully to my friends in general by Captain All, who sails about the end of the week.

I was charged with abundance of love to you and Sally, and Ben, from our sister Bache and her amiable daughters. I spent some days at Preston, visited several friends in Cumberland, Westmoreland, Yorkshire, and Staffordshire. Rachel Wilson sent her love to you and our children, as did our remaining relations at Birmingham, where I likewise stayed several days. In Cumberland I ascended a very high mountain, where I had a prospect of a most beautiful country, of hills, fields, lakes, villas, &c., and at Whitehaven went down the coal mines, till they told me I was eighty fathoms under the surface of the sea, which rolled over our heads; so that I have been nearer both the upper and lower regions than ever in my life before. My love to our children, and all inquiring friends. I am ever, my dear Debby, your affectionate husband,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXLVI

TO WILLIAM FRANKLIN

London, 17 August, 1772.

Dear Son:—

At length we have got rid of Lord Hillsborough, and Lord Dartmouth takes his place, to the great satisfaction of all the friends of America. You will hear it said among you, I suppose, that the interest of the Ohio planters has ousted him; but the truth is, what I wrote you long since, that all his brother ministers disliked him extremely, and wished for a fair occasion of tripping up his heels; so, seeing that he made a point of defeating our scheme, they made another of supporting it, on purpose to mortify him, which they knew his pride could not bear. I do not mean they would have done this if they had thought our proposal bad in itself, or his opposition well founded; but I believe if he had been on good terms with them they would not have differed with him for so small a matter. The King, too, was tired of him and of his administration, which had weakened the affection and respect of the colonies for the royal government, of which (I may say it to you) I used proper means from time to time that his Majesty should have due information and convincing proofs. More of this when I see you.

The King's dislike made the others more firmly united in the resolution of disgracing Hillsborough, by setting at nought his famous report. But, now that business is done, perhaps our affair may be less regarded in the cabinet, and suffered to linger, and possibly may yet miscarry. Therefore let us beware of every word and action, that may betray a confidence in its success, lest we render ourselves ridiculous in case of disappointment. We are now pushing for a completion of the business; but the time is unfavorable, everybody gone or going into the country, which gives room for accidents.

I am writing by Falconer, and therefore in this only add that I am ever your affectionate father,

B. Franklin.

P. S.—The regard Lord Dartmouth has always done me the honor to express for me, gives me room to hope being able to obtain more in

favor of our colonies upon occasion, than I could for some time
past.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXLVII

TO GOVERNOR FRANKLIN, NEW JERSEY

London, 19 August, 1772.

Dear Son:—

In yours of May 14th, you acquaint me with your indisposition, which gave me great concern. The resolution you have taken to use more exercise is extremely proper; and I hope you will steadily perform it. It is of the greatest importance to prevent diseases, since the cure of them by physic is so very precarious.

In considering the different kinds of exercise, I have thought that the *quantum* of each is to be judged of, not by time or by distance, but by the degree of warmth it produces in the body. Thus, when I observe, if I am cold when I get into a carriage in a morning, I may ride all day without being warmed by it; that, if on horseback my feet are cold, I may ride some hours before they become warm, but if I am ever so cold on foot, I cannot walk an hour briskly, without glowing from head to foot by the quickened circulation, I have been ready to say (using round numbers without regard to exactness, but merely to make a great difference) that there is more exercise in *one* mile's riding on horseback, than in *five* in a coach; and more in one mile's walking on foot, than in *five* on horseback; to which I may add that there is more in walking *one* mile up and down stairs, than in *five* on a level floor. The two latter exercises may be had within doors, when the weather discourages going abroad; and the last may be had when one is pinched for time, as containing a great quantity of exercise in a handful of minutes. The dumb-bell is another exercise of the latter compendious kind. By the use of it I have in forty swings quickened my pulse from sixty to one hundred beats in a minute, counted by a second watch; and I suppose the warmth generally increases with quickness of pulse.

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXLVIII

TO WILLIAM FRANKLIN

London, 19 August, 1772.

Dear Son:—

I received yours of June 30th. I am vexed that my letter to you, written at Glasgow, miscarried; not so much that you did not receive it, as that it is probably in other hands. It contained some accounts of what passed in Ireland, which were for you only.

As Lord Hillsborough in fact got nothing out of me, I should rather suppose he threw me away as an orange that would yield no juice, and therefore not worth more squeezing. When I had been a little while returned to London, I waited on him to thank him for his civilities in Ireland, and to discourse with him on a Georgia affair. The porter told me he was not at home. I left my card, went another time, and received the same answer, though I knew he was at home, a friend of mine being with him. After intermissions of a week each, I made two more visits, and received the same answer. The last time was on a levee day, when a number of carriages were at his door. My coachman driving up, alighted, and was opening the coach door, when the porter, seeing me, came out and surlily chid the coachman for opening the door before he had inquired whether my Lord was at home; and then turning to me, said, "My Lord is not at home." I have never since been nigh him, and we have only abused one another at a distance.

The contrast, as you observe, is very striking between this conversation with the Chief Justice, and his letter to you concerning your province. I know him to be as double and deceitful as any man I ever met with. But we have done with him, I hope, for ever. His removal has, I believe, been meditated ever since the death of the Princess Dowager. For I recollect that on my complaining of him about that time to a friend at court, whom you may guess, he told me we Americans were represented by Hillsborough as an unquiet people, not easily satisfied with any ministry; that, however, it was thought too much occasion had been given us to dislike the present; and asked me whether, if he should be removed, I could name another likely to be more acceptable to us. I said: "Yes, there is Lord Dartmouth; we liked him very well when he was at the head of the Board formerly, and probably should like him again." This I heard no more of, but I am pretty

sure it was reported where I could wish it, though I know not that it had any effect.

As to my situation here, nothing can be more agreeable, especially as I hope for less embarrassment from the new minister; a general respect paid me by the learned, a number of friends and acquaintance among them, with whom I have a pleasing intercourse; a character of so much weight that it has protected me when some power would have done me injury, and continued me in an office they would have deprived me of; my company so much desired that I seldom dine at home in winter, and could spend the whole summer in the country-houses of inviting friends, if I chose it. Learned and ingenious foreigners, that come to England, almost all make a point of visiting me; for my reputation is still higher abroad than here. Several of the foreign ambassadors have assiduously cultivated my acquaintance, treating me as one of their *corps*, partly I believe from the desire they have, from time to time, of hearing something of American affairs, an object become of importance in foreign courts, who begin to hope Britain's alarming power will be diminished by the defection of her colonies; and partly that they may have an opportunity of introducing me to the gentlemen of their country who desire it. The King, too, has lately been heard to speak of me with great regard.

These are flattering circumstances; but a violent longing for home sometimes seizes me, which I can no otherwise subdue but by promising myself a return next spring or next fall, and so forth. As to returning hither, if I once go back, I have no thoughts of it. I am too far advanced in life to propose three voyages more. I have some important affairs to settle at home, and considering my double expenses here and there, I hardly think my salaries fully compensate the disadvantages. The late change, however, being thrown into the balance, determines me to stay another winter.

August 22d.—I find I omitted congratulating you on the honor of your election into the Society for Propagating the Gospel. There you match indeed my Dutch honor. But you are again behind, for last night I received a letter from Paris, of which the enclosed is an extract, acquainting me that I am chosen *Associé Etranger* (foreign member) of the Royal Academy there. There are but eight of these *Associés Etrangers* in all Europe, and those of the most distinguished names for science. The vacancy I have the honor of filling was made by the death of the late celebrated Van Swieten of Vienna. This mark of respect from the first academy in the world, which Abbé Nollet, one of its members, took so much pains to prejudice against my doctrines, I consider as a kind of victory without ink shed, since I never answered him. I am told he has but one of his sect now remaining in the Academy. All the rest, who

have in any degree acquainted themselves with electricity, are, as
he calls them, *Franklinists*.¹ Yours, &c.,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCXLIX

REPORT ON LIGHTNING-CONDUCTORS FOR THE POWDER MAGAZINES AT PURFLEET

Drawn up by Benjamin Franklin, August 21, 1772.

*To The President And Council Of The Royal
Society:*

Gentlemen:—

The Society being consulted by the Board of Ordnance, on the propriety of fixing conductors for securing the powder magazines at Purfleet from lightning, and having thereupon done us the honor of appointing us a committee to consider the same and report our opinion, we have accordingly visited those buildings, and examined with care and attention their situation, construction, and circumstances, which we find as follows:

They are five in number, each about one hundred and fifty feet long, about fifty-two feet wide, built of brick, arched under the roof, which in one of them is slated, with a coping of lead twenty-two inches wide on the ridge, from end to end; and the others, we were informed, are soon to be covered in the same manner. They stand parallel to each other, at about fifty-seven feet distance, and are founded on a chalk-rock about one hundred feet from the river, which rises at high tides within a few inches of the level of the ground, its brackish water also soaking through to the wells that are dug near the buildings.

The barrels of powder, when the magazines are full, lie piled on each other up to the spring of the arches; and there are four copper hoops on each barrel, which, with a number of perpendicular iron bars (that come down through the arches to support a long, grooved piece of timber, wherein the crane was usually moved and guided to any part where it was wanted), formed broken conductors, within the building, the more dangerous from their being incomplete; as the explosion from hoop to hoop, in the passage of lightning drawn down through the bars among the barrels, might easily happen to fire the powder contained in them; but the workmen were removing all those iron bars (by the advice of some members of the Society who had been previously consulted), a measure we very much approve of.

On an elevated ground, nearly equal in height with the tops of the magazines, and one hundred and fifty yards from them, is the house wherein the Board usually meet; it is a lofty building, with a pointed hip-roof, the copings of lead down to the gutters; whence leaden pipes descend at each end of the building into the water of two wells forty feet deep, for the purpose of conveying water, forced up by engines, to a cistern in the roof.

There is also a proof-house adjoining to the end of one of the magazines; and a clock-house at the distance of —— feet from them, which has a weathercock on an iron spindle, and probably some incomplete conductors within, such as the wire usually extending up from a clock to its hammer, the clock, pendulum-rod, &c.

The blowing up of a magazine of gunpowder by lightning within a few years past, at Brescia in Italy, which demolished a considerable part of the town, with the loss of many lives, does, in our opinion, strongly urge the propriety of guarding such magazines from that kind of danger. And since it is now well known from many observations, that metals have the property of conducting, and a method has been discovered of using that property for the security of buildings, by so disposing and fixing iron rods, as to receive and convey safely away such lightning as might otherwise have damaged them, which method has been practised near twenty years in many places, and attended with success in all the instances that have come to our knowledge, we cannot therefore but think it advisable to provide conductors of that kind for the magazines in question.

In common cases it has been judged sufficient, if the lower part of the conductor were sunk three or four feet into the ground till it came to moist earth; but, this being a case of the greatest importance, we are of opinion that greater precaution should be taken. Therefore we would advise that at each end of each magazine a well should be dug in or through the chalk, so deep as to have in it at least four feet of standing water. From the bottom of this water should rise a piece of leaden pipe to or near the surface of the ground, where it should be strongly joined to the end of an upright bar, an inch and a half in diameter, fastened to the wall by leaden straps, and extending ten feet above the ridge of the building, tapering from the ridge upwards to a sharp point; the upper twelve inches to be copper; the iron to be painted.

We mention lead for the underground part of the conductor, as less liable to rust in water and moist places, in the form of a pipe, as giving greater stiffness for the substance; and iron for the part above ground, as stronger and less likely to be cut away. The pieces

of which the bar may be composed should be screwed strongly into each other by a close joint, with a thin plate of lead between the shoulders, to make the joining or continuation of metal more perfect. Each rod, in passing above the ridge, should be strongly and closely connected by iron or lead, or both, with the leaden coping of the roof, whereby a communication of metal will be made between the two bars of each building, for a more free and easy conducting of the lightning into the earth.

We also advise, in consideration of the great length of the buildings, that two wells, of the same depth with the others, should be dug within twelve feet of the doors of the two outside magazines; that is to say one of them on the north side of the north building, the other on the south side of the south building; from the bottoms of which wells similar conductors should be carried up to the eaves, there joining well with a plate of lead, extending on the roof up to the leaden coping of the ridge, the said plate of lead being of equal substance with that of the coping.

We are further of opinion that it will be right to form a communication of lead from the top of the chimney of the proof-house to the lead on its ridge, and thence to the lead on the ridge of the corridor, and thence to the iron conductor of the adjacent end of the magazine; and also to fix a conductor from the bottom of the weathercock-spindle of the clock-house down on the outside of that building into the moist earth.

As to the board-house, we think it already well furnished with conductors by the several leaden communications above mentioned, from the point of the roof down into the water; and that, by its height and proximity, it may be some security to the buildings below it; we therefore propose no other conductor for that building, and only advise erecting a pointed rod on the summit, similar to those before described, and communicating with those conductors.

To these directions we would add a caution that, in all future alterations or repairs of the buildings, special care be taken that the metallic communications are not cut off or removed.

It remains that we express our acknowledgments to Sir Charles Frederick, Surveyor-general of the Ordnance, for the obliging attention with which he entertained and accommodated us on the day of our inquiry.

With very great respect, we are, Gentlemen,

Your Most Obedient Humble Servants,

H. Cavendish,

William Watson,

B. Franklin,

J. Robertson.[1](#)

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCCL

**TO MR. ANTHONY BENEZET,^{[1](#)}
PHILADELPHIA**

London, 22 August, 1772.

Dear Friend:—

I made a little extract from yours of April 27th, of the number of slaves imported and perishing, with some close remarks on the hypocrisy of this country, which encourages such a detestable commerce by laws for promoting the Guinea trade; while it piqued itself on its virtue, love of liberty, and the equity of its courts, in setting free a single negro. This was inserted in the *London Chronicle*, of the 20th of June last.

I thank you for the Virginia address, which I shall also publish with some remarks. I am glad to hear that the disposition against keeping negroes grows more general in North America. Several pieces have been lately printed here against the practice, and I hope in time it will be taken into consideration and suppressed by the legislature. Your labors have already been attended with great effects. I hope, therefore you and your friends will be encouraged to proceed. My hearty wishes of success attend you, being ever, my dear friend, yours affectionately,

B. F.

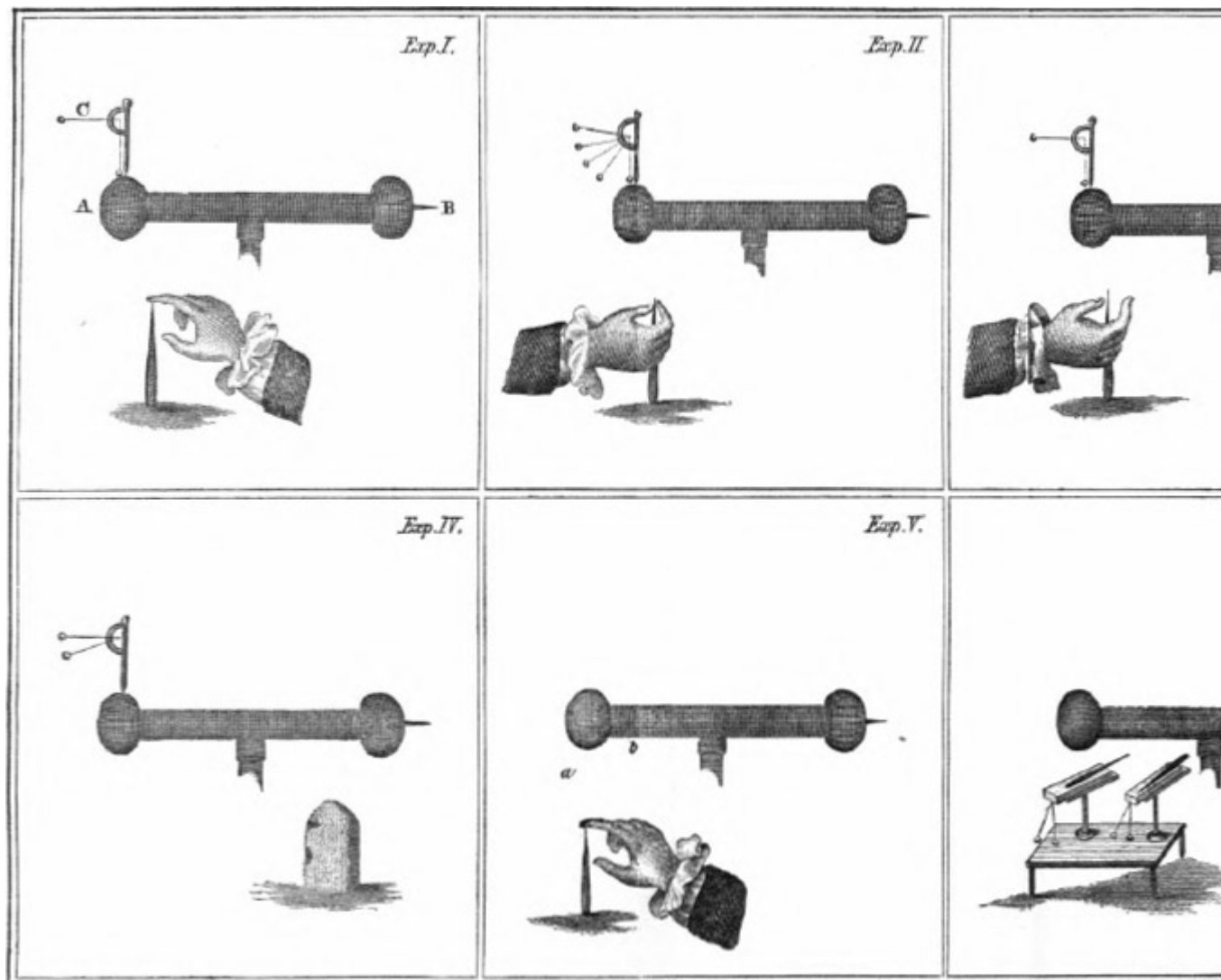


PLATE I., VOL. V., P. 357.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCLI

EXPERIMENTS, OBSERVATIONS, AND FACTS, TENDING TO SUPPORT THE OPINION OF THE UTILITY OF LONG, POINTED RODS, FOR SECURING BUILDINGS FROM DAMAGE BY STROKES OF LIGHTNING.

read at the committee appointed to consider the erection of
conductors to secure the magazines at purfleet, august 27, 1772

Experiment I

The prime conductor of an electric machine, *A*, *B*, (see Plate I.) being supported about ten inches and a half above the table by a wax stand, and under it erected a *pointed wire*, seven inches and a half high and one fifth of an inch thick, and tapering to a sharp point, communicating with the table; when the *point* (being uppermost) is *covered* by the end of a finger, the conductor may be full charged, and the electrometer¹ will rise to the height indicating a full charge; but the moment the point is *uncovered*, the ball of the electrometer drops, showing the prime conductor to be instantly discharged and nearly emptied of its electricity. Turn the wire its *blunt* end upward (which represents an unpointed bar), and no such effect follows, the electrometer remaining at its usual height when the prime conductor is charged.

Observation

What quantity of lightning a high, pointed rod, well communicating with the earth, may be expected to discharge from the clouds silently in a short time, is yet unknown; but I reason from a particular fact to think it may at some times be very great. In Philadelphia I had such a rod fixed to the top of my chimney, and extending about nine feet above it. From the foot of this rod, a wire (the thickness of a goose-quill) came through a covered glass tube in the roof, and down through the well of the staircase; the lower end connected with the iron spear of a pump. On the staircase opposite to my chamber door, the wire was divided; the ends separated about six inches, a little bell on each end; and between the bells a little brass ball, suspended by a silk thread, to play between and strike the bells when clouds passed with electricity in

them. After having frequently drawn sparks and charged bottles from the bell of the upper wire, I was one night awakened by loud cracks on the staircase. Starting up and opening the door, I perceived that the brass ball, instead of vibrating as usual between the bells, was repelled and kept at a distance from both; while the fire passed, sometimes in very large, quick cracks from bell to bell, and sometimes in a continued, dense, white stream, seemingly as large as my finger, whereby the whole staircase was enlightened as with sunshine, so that one might see to pick up a pin.¹ And from the apparent quantity thus discharged, I cannot but conceive that a *number*¹ of such conductors must considerably lessen that of any approaching cloud, before it comes so near as to deliver its contents in a general stroke; an effect not to be expected from bars *unpointed*, if the above experiment with the blunt end of the wire is deemed pertinent to the case.

Experiment II

The pointed wire under the prime conductor continuing of the same height, *pinch* it between the thumb and finger near the top, so as *just to conceal* the point; then turning the globe, the electrometer will rise and mark the full charge. Slip the fingers down, so as to discover about half an inch of the wire then another half inch, and then another; at every one of these motions *discovering more and more* of the pointed wire; you will see the electrometer fall quick and proportionably, stopping when you stop. If you slip down the *whole distance* at once, the ball falls instantly down to the stem.

Observation

From this experiment it seems that a greater effect in drawing off the lightning from the clouds may be expected from *long*, pointed rods, than from *short* ones; I mean from such as show the greatest length *above the building* they are fixed on.

Experiment III

Instead of pinching the point between the thumb and finger, as in the last experiment, keep the thumb and finger each at *near an inch distance* from it, but at the *same height*, the point between them. In this situation, though the point is fairly exposed to the prime conductor, it has little or no effect; the electrometer rises to the height of a full charge. But the moment the fingers are *taken away*, the ball falls quick to the stem.

Observation

To explain this, it is supposed that one reason of the sudden effect produced by a long, naked, pointed wire is that (by the repulsive power of the positive charge in the prime conductor) the natural quantity of electricity contained in the pointed wire is driven down into the earth, and the point of the wire made strongly *negative*; whence it attracts the electricity of the prime conductor more strongly than bodies in their natural state would do; the *small quantity of common matter* in the point not being able by its attractive force to retain its *natural quantity of the electric fluid*, against the force of that repulsion. But the finger and thumb, being substantial and blunt bodies, though as near the prime conductor, hold up better their *own* natural quantity against the force of that repulsion; and so, continuing nearly in the natural state, they jointly operate on the electric fluid in the point, opposing its descent, and *aiding the point* to retain it; contrary to the repelling power of the prime conductor, which would drive it down. And this may also serve to explain the different powers of the point in the preceding experiment, on the slipping down the finger and thumb to different distances.

Hence is collected that a pointed rod, erected *between two tall chimneys*, and very little higher (an instance of which I have seen) cannot have so good an effect, as if it had been erected on one of the chimneys, its whole length above it.

Experiment IV

If, *instead* of a long, pointed wire, a *large, solid body* (to represent a building without a point) be brought under and as near the prime conductor, when charged, the ball of the electrometer will *fall* a little; and on taking away the large body, will *rise again*.

Observation

Its *rising again* shows that the prime conductor lost little or none of its electric charge, as it had done through the point; the *falling* of the ball while the large body was under the conductor therefore shows that a quantity of its atmosphere was drawn from the end where the electrometer is placed, to the part immediately over the large body, and there accumulated *ready* to strike into it with its whole undiminished force, as soon as within the striking distance; and were the prime conductor movable like a *cloud*, it would approach the body by attraction till within that distance. The swift motion of clouds, as driven by the winds, probably prevents this happening so often as otherwise it might do; for though parts of the

cloud may stoop towards a building as they pass, in consequence of such attraction, yet they are carried forward beyond the striking distance before they could by their descending come within it.

Experiment V

Attach a small, light *lock of cotton* to the under side of the prime conductor, so that it may hang down towards the pointed wire mentioned in the first experiment. *Cover* the point with your finger, and the globe being turned, the cotton will extend itself, stretching down towards the finger, as at *a*; but, on *uncovering* the point it instantly flies up to the prime conductor, as at *b*, and continues there as long as the point is uncovered. The moment you cover it again the cotton flies down again, extending itself towards the finger; and the same happens in the degree, if (instead of the finger) you use, uncovered, the *blunt* end of the wire uppermost.

Observation

To explain this it is supposed that the cotton, by its connexion with the prime conductor, receives from it a quantity of its electricity; which occasions its being attracted by the *finger* that remains still in nearly its natural state. But when a *point* is opposed to the cotton, its electricity is thereby taken from it faster than it can at a distance be supplied with a fresh quantity from the conductor. Therefore being reduced *nearer* to the natural state, it is attracted *up* to the electrified prime conductor; *rather than down*, as before, to the finger.

Supposing farther, that the prime conductor represents a cloud charged with the electric fluid; the cotton, a ragged fragment of cloud (of which the underside of great thunder-clouds are seen to have many), the finger, a chimney or highest part of a building. We then may conceive that when such a cloud passes over a *building*, some one of its ragged, under-hanging fragments may be drawn down by the chimney, or other high part of the edifice; creating thereby a *more easy communication* between it and the great cloud. But a *long, pointed rod* being presented to this fragment may occasion its receding, like the cotton, up to the great cloud; and thereby *increase*, instead of *lessening* the distance, so as often to make it *greater* than the striking distance. Turning the *blunt end of a wire* uppermost (which represents the unpointed bar), it appears that the same good effect is not from that to be expected. A long, pointed rod, it is therefore imagined, may *prevent* some strokes; as well as *conduct* others that fall upon it, when a great body of cloud comes on so heavily that the above repelling operation on fragments cannot take place.

Experiment VI

Opposite the side of the prime conductor place *separately*, isolated by wax stems, Mr. Canton's two boxes with pith balls suspended by fine linen threads. On each box lay a wire six inches long and one fifth of an inch thick, tapering to a sharp point; but so laid, as that four inches of the *pointed* end of *one* wire, and an equal length of the *blunt* end of the *other*, may project beyond the ends of the boxes; and both at eighteen inches distance from the prime conductor. Then charging the prime conductor by a turn or two of the globe, the balls of each pair will separate; those of the box, whence the point projects most, *considerably*; the others *less*. Touch the prime conductor and those of the box with the *blunt* point will *collapse*, and join; those connected with the *point* will at the same time approach each other, *till* within about an inch, and there *remain*.

Observation

This seems a proof, that, though the small, sharpened part of the wire must have had a *less natural* quantity in it before the operation, than the thick, blunt part, yet a greater quantity was *driven down from it* to the balls. Thence it is again inferred, that the pointed rod is rendered *more negative*; and, farther, that if a *stroke must fall* from the cloud over a building, furnished with such a rod, it is more likely to be drawn to that pointed rod than to a blunt one; as being more strongly negative, and of course its attraction stronger. And it seems more eligible that the lightning should fall on the point of the conductor (provided to convey it into the earth) than on any other part of the building, *thence* to proceed to such conductor. Which end is also more likely to be obtained by the length and loftiness of the rod; as protecting more extensively the building under it.

It has been *objected*, that erecting pointed rods upon *edifices* is to *invite* and draw the lightning into *them*; and therefore dangerous. Were such rods to be erected on buildings *without continuing the communication* quite down into the moist earth, this objection might then have weight; but, when such complete conductors are made, the lightning is invited, not into the building, but into the *earth*, the situation it aims at, and which it always seizes every help to obtain, even from broken, partial metalline conductors.

It has also been suggested that from such electric experiments *nothing certain can be concluded as to the great operations of nature*; since it is often seen that experiments, which have succeeded in small, in large have failed. It is true that in mechanics this has sometimes happened. But when it is considered that we

owe our first knowledge of the nature and operations of lightning to observations on such small experiments; and that, on carefully comparing the most accurate accounts of former facts, and the exactest relations of those that have occurred since, the effects have surprisingly agreed with the theory; it is humbly conceived that in natural philosophy, in this branch of it at least, the suggestion has not so much weight; and that the farther new experiments, now adduced in recommendation of *long*, sharp-pointed rods, may have some claim to credit and consideration.

It has been urged, too, that, though points may have considerable effects on a *small* prime conductor at *small distances*, yet, on *great* clouds and at *great distances*, nothing is to be expected from them. To this it is answered, that in those *small* experiments it is evident the points act a greater than the *striking* distance; and, in the large way, their service is *only expected* where there it *such* nearness of the cloud as to *endanger a stroke*; and there, it cannot be doubted, the points must have some effect. And, if the quantity discharged by a single pointed rod may be so considerable as I have shown it, the quantity discharged by a number will be proportionally greater.

But this part of the theory does not depend alone on *small* experiments. Since the practice of erecting pointed rods in America (now near twenty years), five of them have been struck by lightning, namely: Mr. Raven's and Mr. Maine's in South Carolina, Mr. Tucker's in Virginia, Mr. West's and Mr. Moulder's in Philadelphia. Possibly there may have been more, that have not come to my knowledge. But, in every one of these, the lightning did *not* fall upon the *body of the house*, but precisely on the several *points* of the rods; and, though the conductors were sometimes *not sufficiently large and complete*, was conveyed into the earth without any material damage to the buildings. Facts then *in great*, as far as we have them authenticated, justify the opinion that is drawn from the experiments *in small*, as above related.

It has also been objected that, unless we knew the quantity that might *possibly* be discharged at one stroke from the clouds, we cannot be sure we have provided *sufficient* conductors; and therefore cannot depend on their conveying away *all* that may fall on their points. Indeed we have nothing to form a judgment by in this, but past facts; and we know of no instance where a *complete* conductor to the moist earth *has* been insufficient, if half an inch in diameter. It is probable that many strokes of lightning have been conveyed through the common leaden pipes affixed to houses to carry down the water from the roof to the ground; and there is no account of such pipes being melted and destroyed, as must sometimes have happened if they had been insufficient. We can then only judge of the dimensions proper for a conductor of

lightning, as we do of those proper for a *conductor of rain*, by past observation. And, as we think a pipe of three inches bore sufficient to carry off the rain that falls on a square of twenty feet, because we never saw such a pipe glutted by any shower, so we may judge a conductor of an inch diameter more than sufficient for any stroke of lightning that will fall on its point. It is true that, if another deluge should happen wherein the windows of heaven are to be opened, such pipes may be unequal to the falling quantity; and, if God for our sins should think it fit to rain fire upon us, as upon some cities of old, it is not expected that our conductors, of whatever size, should secure our houses against a miracle. Probably, as water drawn up into the air and there forming clouds, is disposed to fall again in *rain* by its natural gravity, as soon as a number of particles sufficient to make a drop can get together, so, when the clouds are (by whatever means) over- or under-charged with the *electric fluid* to a degree sufficient to attract them towards the earth, the equilibrium is restored, before the difference becomes great beyond that degree. Mr. Lane's *electrometer*, for limiting precisely the quantity of a shock that is to be administered in a medical view, may serve to make this more easily intelligible. The discharging knob does by a screw approach the conductor to the distance intended, but there remains fixed. Whatever power there may be in the glass globe to collect the fulminating fluid, and whatever capacity of receiving and accumulating it there may be in the bottle or glass jar, yet neither the accumulation nor the discharge ever exceeds the destined quantity. Thus, were the *clouds* always at a certain fixed distance from the earth, all discharges would be made when the quantity accumulated was equal to the distance. But there is a circumstance which, by occasional lessening the distance, lessens the discharge; to wit, the movableness of the clouds, and their being drawn nearer to the earth by attraction when electrified; so that discharges are thereby rendered more frequent and of course less violent. Hence, whatever the quantity may be in nature, and whatever the power in the clouds of collecting it, yet an accumulation and force beyond what mankind has hitherto been acquainted with is scarce to be expected.¹

B. F.

August 27, 1772.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCLII

TO JOSEPH GALLOWAY

London, 29 August, 1772.

Dear Friend:—

I acknowledged before the receipt of your favor of May 14th, since which I have no line from you. It will be a pleasure to render any service to Mr. Tilghman, whom you recommended.

The acts passed in your winter and spring sessions I have not yet received; nor have I heard from Mr. Wilmot, that they have been presented.

Lord Hillsborough, mortified by the Committee of Council's approbation of our grant, in opposition to his report, has resigned. I believe, when he offered to do so, he had such an opinion of his importance, that he did not think it would be accepted, and that it would be thought prudent rather to set our grant aside than part with him. His colleagues in the ministry were all glad to get rid of him, and perhaps for this reason joined more readily in giving him that mortification. Lord Dartmouth succeeds him, who has much more favorable dispositions towards the colonies. He has heretofore expressed some personal regard for me, and I hope now to find our business with the Board more easy to transact.

Your observations on the state of the islands did not come to hand till after Lord Rochford had withdrawn his petition.¹ His Lordship and the promoters of it were so roasted on the occasion, that I believe another kind will not very soon be thought of. The Proprietor was at the expense of the opposition; and, as I knew it would not be necessary, and thought it might be inconvenient to our affairs, I did not openly engage in it; but I gave some private assistance, that I believed was not without effect. I think too that Mr. Jackson's opinion was of great service. I would lodge a copy of your paper in the Plantation Office against any similar future applications, if you approve of it. I only think the island holders make too great a concession to the crown, when they suppose it may have a right to quit-rent. It can have none, in my opinion, on the old grants from Indians, Swedes, and Dutch, where none was reserved. And I think those grants so clearly good, as to need no confirmation; to obtain which I suppose is the only motive for offering such quit-rent. I imagine, too, that it may not be amiss to

affix a *caveat* in the Plantation Office, in the behalf of holders of property in those islands, against any grant of them that may be applied for, till they have had timely notice, and an opportunity of being fully heard. Mr. Jackson is out of town, but I shall confer with him on the subject as soon as he returns. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCLIII

TO THOMAS CUSHING

London, 3 September, 1772.

Sir:—

I write this line, just to acknowledge the receipt of your several favors of July 15th and 16th, containing the resolves of the House relating to the governor's salary and the petition to the King.

Lord Dartmouth, now our American minister, is at present in the country, and will probably not be in town till the season of business comes on. I shall then immediately put the petition into his hands, to be presented to his Majesty. I may be mistaken, but I imagine we shall not meet the same difficulty in transacting business with him, as with his predecessor, on whose removal I congratulate you and the Assembly most heartily. I shall write fully by some of the next Boston ships; at present can only add that, with the sincerest esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCLIV

TO DR. PRIESTLEY

London, 19 September, 1772.

Dear Sir:—

In the affair of so much importance to you, wherein you ask my advice, I cannot, for want of sufficient premises, advise you *what* to determine; but, if you please, I will tell you *how*. When these difficult cases occur, they are difficult, chiefly because, while we have them under consideration, all the reasons *pro* and *con* are not present to the mind at the same time; but sometimes one set present themselves, and at other times another, the first being out of sight. Hence the various purposes or inclinations that alternately prevail, and the uncertainty that perplexes us.

To get over this, my way is, to divide half a sheet of paper by a line into two columns; writing over the one *pro*, and over the other *con*; then during three or four days' consideration, I put down under the different heads short hints of the different motives, that at different times occur to me, *for* or *against* the measure. When I have thus got them all together in one view, I endeavour to estimate their respective weights; and, where I find two (one on each side) that seem equal, I strike them both out. If I find a reason *pro* equal to some two reasons *con*, I strike out the three. If I judge some two reasons *con*, equal to some three reasons *pro*, I strike out the five; and thus proceeding I find at length where the balance lies; and if, after a day or two of farther consideration, nothing new that is of importance occurs on either side, I come to a determination accordingly. And though the weight of reasons cannot be taken with the precision of algebraic quantities, yet, when each is thus considered separately and comparatively, and the whole lies before me, I think I can judge better, and am less likely to make a rash step; and in fact I have found great advantage from this kind of equation, in what may be called *moral* or *prudential algebra*.

Wishing sincerely that you may determine for the best, I am ever,
my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCCLV

TO MISS GEORGIANA SHIPLEY¹

on the loss of her american squirrel. who, escaping from his cage
was killed by a shepherd's dog

London, 26 September, 1772.

Dear Miss:—

I lament with you most sincerely the unfortunate end of poor Mungo. Few squirrels were better accomplished; for he had had a good education, had travelled far, and seen much of the world. As he had the honor of being, for his virtues, your favorite, he should not go like common skuggs, without an elegy or an epitaph. Let us give him one in the monumental style and measure, which, being neither prose nor verse, is perhaps the properest for grief; since to use common language would look as if we were not affected, and to make rhymes would seem trifling in sorrow.

Epitaph

Alas! poor Mungo!
Happy wert thou hadst thou known
Thy own felicity.
Remote from the fierce bald eagle,
Tyrant of thy native woods,
Thou hadst nought to fear from his piercing talons,
Nor from the murdering gun
Of the thoughtless sportsman.
Safe in thy wired castle,
Grimalkin never could annoy thee.
Daily wert thou fed with the choicest viands,
By the fair hand of an indulgent mistress;
But, discontented,
Thou wouldst have more freedom.
Too soon, alas! didst thou obtain it;
And wandering,
Thou art fallen by the fangs of wanton, cruel Ranger!
Learn hence,
Ye who blindly seek more liberty,
Whether subjects, sons, squirrels, or daughters,
That apparent restraint may be real protection,

Yielding peace and plenty
With security.

You see, my dear Miss, how much more decent and proper this
broken style is, than if we were to say, by way of epitaph:

Here Skugg
Lies snug
As a bug
In a rug.

And yet perhaps there are people in the world of so little feeling as
to think this would be a good enough epitaph for poor Mungo.

If you wish it, I shall procure another to succeed him; but perhaps
you will now choose some other amusement.[1](#)

Remember me affectionately to all the good family, and believe me
ever your affectionate friend,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCCLVI

THE ART OF PROCURING PLEASANT DREAMS

inscribed to miss —, being written at her request

As a great part of our life is spent in sleep, during which we have sometimes pleasant and sometimes painful dreams, it becomes of some consequence to obtain the one kind and avoid the other; for, whether real or imaginary, pain is pain and pleasure is pleasure. If we can sleep without dreaming, it is well that painful dreams are avoided. If, while we sleep, we can have any pleasing dream, it is, as the French say, *autant de gagné*, so much added to the pleasure of life.

To this end it is, in the first place, necessary to be careful in preserving health, by due exercise and great temperance; for, in sickness, the imagination is disturbed, and disagreeable, sometimes terrible, ideas are apt to present themselves. Exercise should precede meals, not immediately follow them; the first promotes, the latter, unless moderate, obstructs digestion. If, after exercise, we feed sparingly, the digestion will be easy and good, the body lightsome, the temper cheerful, and all the animal functions performed agreeably. Sleep, when it follows, will be natural and undisturbed; while indolence, with full feeding, occasions nightmares and horrors inexpressible; we fall from precipices, are assaulted by wild beasts, murderers, and demons, and experience every variety of distress. Observe, however, that the quantities of food and exercise are relative things; those who move much may, and indeed ought to, eat much more; those who use little exercise should eat little. In general, mankind, since the improvement of cookery, eat about twice as much as nature requires. Suppers are not bad, if we have not dined; but restless nights naturally follow hearty suppers after full dinners. Indeed, as there is a difference in constitutions, some rest well after these meals; it costs them only a frightful dream and an apoplexy, after which they sleep till doomsday. Nothing is more common in the newspapers than instances of people who, after eating a hearty supper, are found dead abed in the morning.

Another means of preserving health to be attended to is the having a constant supply of fresh air in your bed-chamber. It has been a great mistake the sleeping in rooms exactly closed, and in beds surrounded by curtains. No outward air that may come in to you is

so unwholesome as the unchanged air, often breathed, of a close chamber. As boiling water does not grow hotter by longer boiling, if the particles that receive greater heat can escape, so living bodies do not putrefy, if the particles, so fast as they become putrid, can be thrown off. Nature expels them by the pores of the skin and the lungs, and in a free, open air they are carried off; but in a close room we receive them again and again, though they become more and more corrupt. A number of persons crowded into a small room thus spoil the air in a few minutes, and even render it mortal, as in the Black Hole at Calcutta. A single person is said to spoil only a gallon of air per minute, and therefore requires a longer time to spoil a chamber-full; but it is done, however, in proportion, and many putrid disorders hence have their origin. It is recorded of Methusalem, who, being the longest liver, may be supposed to have best preserved his health, that he slept always in the open air; for, when he had lived five hundred years, an angel said to him, "Arise, Methusalem, and build thee an house, for thou shalt live yet five hundred years longer." But Methusalem answered and said, "If I am to live but five hundred years longer, it is not worth while to build me a house; I will sleep in the air, as I have been used to do." Physicians, after having for ages contended that the sick should not be indulged with fresh air, have at length discovered that it may do them good. It is therefore to be hoped that they may in time discover likewise that it is not hurtful to those who are in health, and that we may be then cured of the *aerophobia* that at present distresses weak minds, and makes them choose to be stifled and poisoned, rather than leave open the window of a bed-chamber, or put down the glass of a coach.

Confined air, when saturated with perspirable matter,¹ will not receive more; and that matter must remain in the bodies, and occasion diseases; but it gives some previous notice of its being about to be hurtful, by producing certain uneasinesses, slight indeed at first, such as with regard to the lungs is a trifling sensation, and to the pores of the skin a kind of restlessness, which is difficult to describe, and few that feel it know the cause of it. But we may recollect that sometimes, on waking in the night, we have, if warmly covered, found it difficult to get asleep again. We turn often, without finding repose in any position. This fidgetiness (to use a vulgar expression for want of a better) is occasioned wholly by an uneasiness in the skin, owing to the retention of the perspirable matter, the bed-clothes having received their quantity, and, being saturated, refusing to take any more. To become sensible of this by an experiment, let a person keep his position in the bed, but throw off the bed-clothes, and suffer fresh air to approach the part uncovered of his body; he will then feel that part suddenly refreshed; for the air will immediately relieve the skin, by receiving, licking up, and carrying off the load of perspirable

matter that incommoded it. For every portion of cool air that approaches the warm skin, in receiving its part of that vapor, receives therewith a degree of heat that rarefies and renders it lighter, when it will be pushed away with its burthen, by cooler and therefore heavier fresh air, which for a moment supplies its place, and then, being likewise changed and warmed, gives way to a succeeding quantity. This is the order of nature, to prevent animals being infected by their own perspiration. He will now be sensible of the difference between the part exposed to the air and that which, remaining sunk in the bed, denies the air access; for this part now manifests its uneasiness more distinctly by the comparison, and the seat of the uneasiness is more plainly perceived than when the whole surface of the body was affected by it.

Here then is one great and general cause of unpleasing dreams. For when the body is uneasy the mind will be disturbed by it, and disagreeable ideas of various kinds will in sleep be the natural consequences. The remedies, preventive and curative, follow.

1. By eating moderately (as before advised for health's sake), less perspirable matter is produced in a given time; hence the bed-clothes receive it longer before they are saturated, and we may therefore sleep longer before we are made uneasy by their refusing to receive any more.
2. By using thinner and more porous bed-clothes, which will suffer the perspirable matter more easily to pass through them, we are less incommoded, such being longer tolerable.
3. When you are awakened by this uneasiness, and find you cannot easily sleep again, get out of bed, beat up and turn your pillow, shake the bed-clothes well with at least twenty shakes, then throw the bed open and leave it to cool; in the meanwhile, continuing undressed, walk about your chamber till your skin has had time to discharge its load, which it will do sooner as the air may be drier and colder. When you begin to feel the cold air unpleasant, then return to your bed, and you will soon fall asleep and your sleep will be sweet and pleasant. All the scenes presented to your fancy will be too of the pleasing kind. I am often as agreeably entertained with them as by the scenery of an opera. If you happen to be too indolent to get out of bed, you may instead of it lift up your bed-clothes with one arm and leg, so as to draw in a good deal of fresh air, and by letting them fall force it out again. This, repeated twenty times, will so clear them of the perspirable matter they have imbibed, as to permit your sleeping well for some time afterwards. But this latter method is not equal to the former.

Those who do not love trouble and can afford to have two beds, will find great luxury in rising, when they wake in a hot bed, and going into the cool one. Such shifting of beds would also be of great service to persons ill of a fever, as it refreshes and frequently procures sleep. A very large bed that will admit a removal so distant from the first situation as to be cool and sweet, may, in a degree, answer the same end.

One or two observations more will conclude this little piece. Care must be taken when you lie down to dispose your pillow so as to suit your manner of placing your head, and to be perfectly easy; then place your limbs so as not to bear inconveniently hard upon one another, as, for instance, the joints of your ankles; for, though a bad position may at first give but little pain and be hardly noticed, yet a continuance will render it less tolerable, and the uneasiness may come on while you are asleep, and disturb your imagination. These are the rules of the art. But, though they will generally prove effectual in producing the end intended, there is a case in which the most punctual observance of them will be totally fruitless. I need not mention the case to you, my dear friend, but my account of the art would be imperfect without it. The case is, when the person who desires to have pleasant dreams has not taken care to preserve, what is necessary above all things,

A Good Conscience.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCLVII

TO MR. BACHE

London, 7 October, 1772.

Loving Son:—

I received yours of September 1st, and am rejoiced to hear you are all well. Your good mother and sisters were so about a fortnight ago, when I heard from them. The bill you sent me for £60, Whinney on Smith, Wright, & Grey, being good, I return your note enclosed and canceled. There remains five guineas unpaid, which you had of me just on going away, so I suppose you forgot it. Send it in a venture for Ben to Jamaica. By the way, it has been reported here, that some years since a very long building in that island, which had a rod or conductor at each end, was nevertheless struck by lightning in the middle and much damaged. Did you hear of such a thing while you was there? If so, pray enquire and learn the particulars from thence. What kind of rods, how placed, how high above the roof, how deep in the ground, and other material circumstances with regard to the building and the damage. If you heard of no such event while you was there, I suppose the story is not true; but a Mr. Smith, who was there in some business, and now here a merchant, I think, relates it as what he heard spoken of when there.

I am surprised to hear that the Dutchman I assisted with 25 guineas turned out a rogue; and that Sheets has paid nothing of what I furnished him when here. I am afraid I do not grow wiser as I grow older. Pray let me know whether the Dutch printer, Armbruster, has paid any thing, or is solvable or not. And also how the affair stands of the mortgage I had on my friend Maudgridge's plantation, no intelligible information has yet been given me of it.

We are moving to another house in the same [mutilated] leaving this to Mr. Hewson. As soon as I am settled in my new apartments I shall examine Parker's accounts and write to you on them.

You hope I was not a sufferer in the late general wreck of credit here. My two banking-houses, Browns & Collinson, and Smith, Wright, & Grey, stood firm, and they were the only people here in debt to me, so I lost nothing by the failure of others; and being out of debt myself, my credit could not be shaken by any run upon me; out of debt, as the proverb says, was being out of danger, but I

have since hazarded a little in using my credit with the bank to support that of a friend as far as £5,000, for which I am secured by bills of the bank of Douglas, Heron, & Co., accepted by a good house here; and therefore I call it only hazarding *a little*, though the sum is large enough to ruin me if I were to lose it. Our friends, the Alexanders, went on again immediately, being supported by great houses here and through them by the bank, their bottom being manifestly very great and good, though they had embarrassed themselves by assisting the Adamses and others.

The affair of the Grant is in good train, and we expect it to be completed soon after the Boards meet, if no new difficulties start up unexpected.

My love to Sally and the boy.

I Am Your Affectionate Father,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCLVIII

TO JOHN BARTRAM

London, 17 October, 1772.

My Dear Old Friend:—

I received some time since the enclosed letter from Dr. Hope; and lately the gold medal it mentions was delivered to me for you. By the first ship directly to Philadelphia, I shall send it, in the care of some safe hand, thinking it not so well to hazard it with this letter round through New York.

I hope the rhubarb you have sown and distributed will be taken care of. There seems to me no doubt of its doing as well with us as in Scotland. Remember, that for use the root does not come to its perfection of power and virtue in less than seven years. The physicians here, who have tried the Scotch, approve it much, and say it is fully equal to the best imported. I send you enclosed a small box of Upland rice, brought from Cochin China. It grows there on dry grounds, and not in water like the common sort. Also a few seeds of the Chinese tallow-tree. They have been carefully preserved in bringing hither by Mr. Ellis' method. I had them from him, and he tells me they may grow under your skilful care. My love to Mrs. Bartram, and all yours, from your affectionate friend,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCLIX

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS

London, 3 November, 1772.

Dear Cousin:—

My sister, to whom I have not now time to write, acquainted me in her last letter that there was some expectation her daughter would soon be married with her consent.

If that should take place, my request is that you would lay out the sum of fifty pounds, lawful money, in bedding or such other furniture as my sister shall think proper to be given the new-married couple towards housekeeping, with my best wishes; and charge that sum to my account. I can now only add that I am ever

Yours Most Affectionately,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCLX

TO LORD STIRLING

London, 3 November, 1772.

My Lord:—

On my return to town I found your favor, with the schemes of your lottery, to which I wish success, and besides ordering some tickets for myself, I have spoken well of it on every occasion; but I find little inclination among my acquaintances to engage in lotteries at such a distance, and one cannot be very open in promoting them, it being contrary to express acts of Parliament, as well as offensive to administration here, which would avail itself of all that is to be gained that way.

With great and sincere esteem, I am, my lord, your lordship's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. F.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCLXI

TO GOVERNOR WILLIAM FRANKLIN

London, 3 November, 1772.

Dear Son:—

I wrote to you per the October packet, and have not since had any line from you. I spent sixteen days at Lord Le Despencer's most agreeably, and returned in good health and spirits. Lord Dartmouth came to town last week, and had his first levee on Wednesday, at which I attended. He received me very politely in his room, only Secretary Pownall present, expressing some regret that he happened to be from home when I was near him in the country, where he had hoped for the pleasure of seeing me, &c. I said I was happy to see his lordship in his present situation, in which for the good of both countries I hoped he would long continue; and I begged leave to recommend my son to his protection, who, says I, is one of your Governors in America. The Secretary then put in—*and a very good governor he is*. Yes, says my lord, he has been a good Governor, and has kept his province in good order during times of difficulty. I then said that I came at present only to pay my respects, and should wait on his lordship another day on business; to which he said he should always be ready to hear me and glad to see me. I shall attend his levee again to-day, on some N. England affairs, and hope we may now go on more smoothly; but time will show.

As the Boards are met again, the Ohio affair will again be put forward as soon as Mr. Walpole comes to [town? mutilated in record], who went lately into Norfolk. I am almost settled in my new apartment; but removing, and sorting my papers, and placing my books and things has been a troublesome job. I am amazed to see how books have grown upon me since my return to England. I brought none with me, and have now a roomful; many collected in Germany, Holland, and France; and consisting chiefly of such as contain knowledge that may hereafter be useful to America.

My love to Betsey concludes at present from your affectionate father,

B. Franklin.

November 4th.

P. S.—I was this day again at Lord Dartmouth's levee, who showed me particular respect in sending for me out of the crowd long before my turn, and apologizing for having kept me so long by means of Mr. Maseres detaining him on Canada affairs. He received my business, too, very properly, not making any objection to my acting as agent for the Massachusetts without the Governor's approbation of my appointment, as his predecessor had done. Whether this will continue or not, is now the question; for as he has the same secretaries, Pownall and Knox, probably they will remind him of the late measures, and prompt him to continue them.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCLXII

TO MR. TIMOTHY

London, 3 November, 1772.

Dear Sir:—

I received yours of Aug. 24th, by Capt. Vanderhorst, to whom I should willingly have shown any civilities in my power, but I being gouty of late, seldom go into the city, and he has not called on me since he delivered your letter. I am sorry you talk of leaving off your business with a view of getting some post. It is so difficult a matter to obtain any thing of the kind, that I think to leave a good trade in hopes of an office, is quitting a certainty for an uncertainty, and losing substance for shadow. I have known so many here dangling and soliciting years for places, till they were reduced to the lowest poverty and distress, that I cannot but pity a man who begins to turn his thoughts that way. The proverb says; "He who has a trade has an office of profit and honor; because he does not hold it during any other man's pleasure, and it affords him honest subsistence with independence." I hope, therefore, you will alter your mind and go on with your business. I assure you it is not in my power to procure you that post you mention or any other, whatever my wishes may be for your prosperity. I am not [*sic*] thought here too much an American to have any interest of the kind. You have done me honor in giving a son my name. I wish he may live to be an honor and comfort to you.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCLXIII

TO THOMAS CUSHING

London, 4 November, 1772.

Sir:—

Lord Dartmouth, our American minister, came to town last week, and held his first levee on Wednesday, when I paid my respects to him, acquainting him at the same time that I should in a few days wait upon him, on business from Boston; which I have accordingly since done, and have put your petition to the King into his Lordship's hands, that being the regular course.

He received me very obligingly, made no objection to my acting as agent without an appointment assented to by the governor, as his predecessor had done, so that I hope business is getting into a better train. I shall use my best endeavours in supporting the petition, and write you more fully by the next ship to Boston. In the meantime I remain with great respect, your most obedient and humble servant,

B. Franklin.

London, 2 December, 1772.

Sir:—

The above is a copy of my last. A few days after my leaving your petition with Lord Dartmouth, his Lordship sent for me to discourse with me upon it. After a long audience, he was pleased to say that, notwithstanding all I had said or could say in support and justification of the petition, he was sure the presenting it at this time could not possibly produce any good; that the King would be exceedingly offended, but what steps his Majesty would take upon it was uncertain; perhaps he would require the opinion of the judges or government lawyers, which would surely be against us; perhaps he might lay it before Parliament, and so the censure of both Houses would be drawn down upon us. The most favorable thing to be expected was a severe reprimand to the Assembly, by order of his Majesty, the natural consequence of which must be more discontent and uneasiness in the province. That, possessed as he was with great good-will for New England, he was extremely

unwilling that one of the first acts of his administration, with regard to the Massachusetts, should be of so unpleasant a nature. That minds had been heated and irritated on both sides of the water, but he hoped those heats were now cooling, and he was averse to the addition of fresh fuel. That, as I had delivered the petition to him officially, he must present it if I insisted upon it; but he wished I would first consult my constituents, who might possibly, on reconsideration, think fit to order its being deferred.

I answered that the great majority with which the petition and the resolves on which it was founded were carried through the House, made it scarce expectable that their order would be countermanded; that the slighting, evading, or refusing to receive petitions from the colonies, on some late occasions by the Parliament, had occasioned a total loss of the respect for and confidence in that body, formerly subsisting so strongly in America, and brought on a questioning of their authority; that his Lordship might observe that petitions came no more from thence to Parliament, but to the King only; that the King appeared now to be the only connexion between the two countries; and that as a continued union was essentially necessary to the well-being of the whole empire, I should be sorry to see that link weakened, as the other had been; that I thought it a dangerous thing for any government to refuse receiving petitions, and thereby prevent the subjects from giving vent to their griefs.

His Lordship interrupted me by replying that he did not refuse to deliver the petition; that it should never justly be said of him that he interrupted the complaints of his Majesty's subjects; and that he must and would present it, as he had said before, whenever I should absolutely require it; but, for motives of pure good-will to the province, he wished me not to insist on it, till I should receive fresh orders.

Finally, considering that since the petition was ordered there had been a change in the American administration; that the present minister was our friend in the repeal of the Stamp Act, and seems still to have good dispositions towards us; that you had mentioned the probability that the House would have remonstrated on all the other grievances, had not their time been taken up with the difficult business of a general valuation; and since the complaint of this petition was likely alone to give offence, it might perhaps be judged advisable to give the substance of all our complaints at once, rather than in part and after a reprimand received; I say upon the whole I thought it best not to disoblige him in the beginning of his administration by refusing him what he seemed so desirous of—a delay at least in presenting the petition till further directions should be received from my constituents. If after

deliberation they should send me fresh orders, I shall immediately obey them, and the application to the Crown itself may possibly derive greater weight from the reconsideration given it, while the temper of the House may be somewhat calmed by the removal of a minister who had rendered himself so obnoxious to them. Accordingly I consented to the delay desired, wherein I hope my conduct will not be disapproved.¹

With the greatest esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, Sir,
your and the committee's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCLXIV

PREFACE

BY THE BRITISH EDITOR

to “the votes and proceedings of the freeholders and other inhabitants of the town of boston”[1](#)

All accounts of the discontent so general in our colonies, have of late years been industriously smothered and concealed here; it seeming to suit the views of the American minister,[1](#) to have it understood, that by his great abilities all faction was subdued, all opposition suppressed, and the whole country quieted. That the true state of affairs there may be known, and the true causes of that discontent well understood the following piece (not the production of a private writer, but the unanimous act of a large American city) lately printed in New England, is republished here. This nation, and the other nations of Europe, may thereby learn, with more certainty, the grounds of a dissension that possibly may, sooner or later, have consequences interesting to them all.

The colonies had from their first settlement been governed with more ease than perhaps can be equalled by any instance in history of dominions so distant. Their affection and respect for this country, while they were treated with kindness, produced an almost implicit obedience to the instructions of the Prince, and even to acts of the British Parliament; though the right of binding them by a legislature in which they were unrepresented, was never clearly understood. That respect and affection produced a partiality in favor of every thing that was English; whence their preference of English modes and manufactures; their submission to restraints on the importation of foreign goods, which they had but little desire to use; and the monopoly we so long enjoyed of their commerce, to the great enriching of our merchants and artificers.

The mistaken policy of the Stamp Act first disturbed this happy situation; but the flame thereby raised was soon extinguished by its repeal, and the old harmony restored, with all its concomitant advantage to our commerce. The subsequent act of another administration, which, not content with an established exclusion of foreign manufactures, began to make our own merchandise dearer to the consumers there, by heavy duties, revived it again; and combinations were entered into throughout the continent to stop trading with Britain till those duties should be repealed. All were

accordingly repealed but one, *the duty on tea*. This was reserved (professedly so) as a standing claim and exercise of the right assumed by Parliament of laying such duties.¹

The colonies, on this repeal, retracted their agreement, so far as related to all other goods, except that on which the duty was retained. This was trumpeted here by the minister for the colonies as a triumph; there it was considered only as a decent and equitable measure, showing a willingness to meet the mother country in every advance towards a reconciliation, and a disposition to a good understanding so prevalent that possibly they might soon have relaxed in the article of tea also. But the system of commissioners of customs, officers without end, with fleets and armies for collecting and enforcing those duties, being continued, and these acting with much indiscretion and rashness (giving great and unnecessary trouble and obstruction to business, commencing unjust and vexatious suits, and harassing commerce in all its branches, while that the minister kept the people in a constant state of irritation by instructions which appeared to have no other end than the gratifying his private resentments¹), occasioned a persevering adherence to their resolutions in that particular; and the event should be a lesson to ministers not to risk through pique the obstructing any one branch of trade; since the course and connexion of general business may be thereby disturbed to a degree impossible to be foreseen or imagined. For it appears that the colonies finding their humble petitions to have this duty repealed were rejected and treated with contempt, and that the produce of the duty was applied to the rewarding with undeserved salaries and pensions every one of their enemies, the duty itself became more odious, and their resolution to share it more vigorous and obstinate.

The Dutch, the Danes, and French took this opportunity thus offered them by our imprudence, and began to smuggle their teas into the plantations. At first this was something difficult; but at length, as all business is improved by practice, it became easy. A coast fifteen hundred miles in length could not in all parts be guarded, even by the whole navy of England; especially where their restraining authority was by all the inhabitants deemed unconstitutional, the smuggling of course considered as patriotism. The needy wretches, too, who, with small salaries, were trusted to watch the ports, day and night, in all weathers, found it easier and more profitable not only to wink, but to sleep in their beds; the merchant's pay being more generous than the King's. Other India goods, also, which, by themselves, would not have made a smuggling voyage sufficiently profitable, accompanied tea to advantage; and it is feared the cheap French silks, formerly rejected, as not to the tastes of the colonies, may have found their

way with the wares of India, and now established themselves in the popular use and opinion.

It is supposed that at least a million of Americans drink tea twice a day, which, at the first cost here, can scarce be reckoned at less than half a guinea a head per annum. This market, that in the five years which have run on since the act passed, would have paid two million five hundred thousand guineas for tea alone, into the coffers of the Company, we have wantonly lost to foreigners.

Meanwhile, it is said the duties have so diminished, that the whole remittance of the last year amounted to no more than the pitiful sum of eighty-five pounds,¹ for the expense of some hundred thousands, in armed ships and soldiers, to support the officers. Hence the tea, and other India goods, which might have been sold in America, remain rotting in the Company's warehouses² ; while those of foreign ports are known to be cleared by the American demand. Hence, in some degree, the Company's inability to pay their bills; the sinking of their stock, by which millions of property have been annihilated; the lowering of their dividend, whereby so many must be distressed; the loss to government of the stipulated four hundred thousand pounds a year,³ which must make a proportionable reduction in our savings towards the discharge of our enormous debt; and hence, in part, the severe blow suffered by credit in general,⁴ to the ruin of many families; the stagnation of business in Spitalfields and Manchester, through want of vent for their goods; with other future evils, which, as they cannot, from the numerous and secret connexions in general commerce, easily be foreseen, can hardly be avoided.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCLXV

TO MRS. DEBORAH FRANKLIN

London, 1 December, 1772.

My Dear Child:—

I received yours of October 14th, and one without date which I suppose to be written since. Cpts. All, Osborne, and Sparkes are arrived; and a barrel of apples with another of cranberries are come, I know not yet by which of them.

I am glad to hear you continue so well, and that the pain in your side and head have left you. Eat light foods, such as fowls, mutton, etc., and but little beef or bacon, avoid strong tea, and use what exercise you can; by these means you will preserve your health better, and be less subject to lowness of spirits.

It seems Polly Pitts is really dead. I suppose you know that we have a mortgage on her lots? Mr. Galloway took it for me. You do not tell me whether any thing has been done about it, or whether any interest was ever paid; nor have you ever told me whether Mr. Maugridge's executors have paid off his mortgage to me, and that to the insurance office. I wish you would.

Give my love to Mrs. Montgomery and all inquiring friends. Mrs. Stevenson and Polly Hewson and Sally Franklin present their love, the latter adds her duty. She is about to be married to a farmer's son. I shall miss her, as she is nimble-footed and willing to run of errands and wait upon me, and has been very serviceable to me for some years, so that I have not kept a man.

I am ever, my dear Debby, your affectionate husband,

B. F.

P. S.—Have just opened the apples and cranberries, which I find in good order, all sound. Thanks for your kind care in sending them.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCLXVI

TO JOSEPH GALLOWAY

London, 2 December, 1772.

Dear Friend:—

I am glad you are returned again to a seat in the Assembly, where your abilities are so useful and necessary in the service of your country. We must not in the course of public life expect immediate approbation and immediate grateful acknowledgement of our services. But let us persevere through abuse and even injury. The internal satisfaction of a good conscience is always present, and time will do us justice in the minds of the people, even those at present the most prejudiced against us.

I have given Dr. Denormandie a recommendation to a friend in Geneva, for which place he set out this morning; and I shall be glad of any opportunity of serving him when he returns to London. I see by the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, of October 21st, that you are continued Speaker, and myself agent; but I have no line from you or the Committee relative to instructions. Perhaps I shall hear from you by Falconer. I find myself upon very good terms with our new minister, Lord Dartmouth, who we have reason to think means well to the colonies. I believe all are now sensible that nothing is to be got by contesting with or oppressing us.

Two circumstances have diverted me lately. One was that, being at the court of exchequer on some business of my own, I there met with one of the commissioners of the stamp office, who told me he attended with a memorial from that board, to be allowed in their accounts the difference between their expense in endeavouring to establish those offices in America, and the amount of what they received, which from Canada and the West India Islands was but about *fifteen hundred pounds*, while the expense, if I remember right, was above *twelve thousand pounds*, being for stamps and stamping, with paper and parchment returned upon their hands, freight, &c. The other is the present difficulties of the India Company, and of government on their account. The Company have accepted bills, which they find themselves unable to pay, though they have the value of two millions in tea and other India goods in their stores, perishing under a want of demand; their credit thus suffering, and their stock falling one hundred and twenty per cent., whereby the government will lose the *four hundred thousand*

pounds per annum, it having been stipulated that it should no longer be paid, if the dividend fell to that mark. And although it is known that the American market is lost by continuing the duty on tea, and that we are supplied by the Dutch, who doubtless take the opportunity of smuggling other India goods among us with the tea, so that for the five years past we might probably have otherwise taken off the greatest part of what the Company have on hand, and so have prevented their present embarrassment, yet the honor of government is supposed to forbid the repeal of the American tea duty; while the amount of all the duties goes on decreasing, so that the balance of this year does not (as I have it from good authority) exceed eighty pounds after paying the collection; not reckoning the immense expense of *guarda-costas*, &c. Can an American help smiling at these blunders? Though, in a national light, they are truly deplorable.

With the sincerest esteem and inviolable attachment, I am, my dear friend, ever most affectionately yours,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCLXVII

TO MR. ABEL JAMES

London, 2 December, 1772.

Dear Friend:—

I duly received your favors of September 22d and October 9th, and am glad the purchase proves acceptable. Our friend Dr. Evans has remitted me the bill you mention, drawn for the produce of the silk. It exceeds what I paid, and I wait orders for the disposition of the overplus, particularly what I am to pay Wheeler for his services in the business.

I do not at this distance understand the politics of your last election, why so many of the members declined the service, and why yourself and Mr. Fox were omitted (which I much regret) while Goddard was voted for by so great a number. Another year I hope will set all right. The people seldom continue long in the wrong, when it is nobody's interest to mislead them. It must be very discouraging to our friend Galloway, to see his long and faithful services repaid with abuse and ingratitude; but let him persevere in well-doing and all will end well, and to his final satisfaction. And though it may be inconvenient to your private affairs to attend public business, I hope neither you nor Mr. Fox will through resentment of the present slight, decline the service when again called upon by your country.

With great and sincere esteem, I am ever, dear Sir, your affectionate friend and most obedient servant,

B. F.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCLXVIII

TO WILLIAM FRANKLIN

London, 2 December, 1772.

Dear Son:—

I have received yours of Oct. 4th, 8th, and 13th. I cannot imagine what became of my letter of August 3d from May Place. It was, however, of no great importance. Mr. Denormandie is gone this day to Geneva. I gave him a letter of recommendation to a friend there.

I am persuaded that your packets were not opened at the office; for though a Secretary of State has the power of ordering letters to be opened, I think it is seldom used but in times of war, rebellion, or on some great public occasion, and I have heard they have means of copying the seal so exactly, as that it cannot be discovered that the letters have been looked into.

It is plain therefore, that whoever rubbed your packets open, had not the use of such means, and yet as you are satisfied it was not done on your side the water, I suspect the letter-carrier might be corrupted and the business done between the office in Lombard Street and my house. When a packet arrives, a special messenger goes directly from the office with the public letters before the sorting is finished. Mine have been sometimes sent by the same messenger, who called on me on his way to Lord H.'s, sometimes on his return, and as he told Mr. Strahan that his letters to you were often returned to me from America, and yours to him sent through my hands to be seen he supposed by me before delivery; and since his resignation your packets do not appear to have suffered the least violation, I fancy the rubbing them open may possibly have been the ingenuity of Mr. Secretary Knox. By the list you have sent me I find none of the papers missing. Another circumstance in favor of this opinion is, that no letters to me were thus abused but yours and those from the Assembly of Boston. This I think clears the person you suspected, and rather fixes the above conjecture.

I have not seen your speech at the opening of your last session, but I hear it has been commended by the Ministry.

I return Mr. Foxcroft's letters as you desire. I make no remarks on the reports he mentions. I know not who is meant by the *Hero of your speech*. Nor will I say more at present of the Ohio affair, than

that it is not yet quite secure, and therefore I still advise discretion in speaking of it.

Dr. Price has been so good as to give me his opinion of your scheme, which I send, hoping it may be of use; I suppose you have his book, referred to in the paper. Some acknowledgment or thanks should be sent him for the trouble he has taken.

I continue very well, thanks to God. On Monday last I was chosen into the Council of the Royal Society for the fourth time. Our friend Sir John Pringle was elected President, which is very agreeable to him.

I shall send you a tea-urn by the first ship. I just now hear that the November packet is arrived, so I stop here till I receive the letters that come by her. [These words are crossed out in the record, apparently in the same ink.]

Just now comes to hand yours of November 3d, whereby I find mine of August 3d is received. I am glad to learn that you and your neighbouring governors are so sociable. I shall communicate what you write about the Virginia grants. At present I can only add that I am, with love to Betsey,

Your Ever Affectionate Father,

B. Franklin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCLXIX

ANSWER TO M. DUBOURG'S QUERIES RESPECTING THE ARMONICA

London, 8 December, 1772.

When the glasses are ranged on the horizontal spindle, or, to make use of your expression, *enfilés*, and each one is definitely fixed in its place, the whole of the largest glass appears at the extremity to the left; the following one, nearly enclosed in the preceding one, shows only about an inch of its border, which advances so much further than the edge of the larger glass; and so, in succession, each glass exceeds the one containing it, leaving by this placement an uncovered border on which the fingers may be applied. The glasses do not touch one another, but they are so near as not to admit a finger to pass between them; so that the interior border is not susceptible of being rubbed.

The finger is to be applied flat on the borders of the largest glasses, and on the borders of the smaller; but in part on the borders, and in part on the edges, of the glasses of an intermediate size. Nothing but experience can instruct with respect to this manutation (*fingering*), because the different-sized glasses require to be touched differently, some nearer the edge, and others farther from it. A few hours' exercise will teach this.

B. F.

SOME DIRECTIONS FOR DRAWING OUT THE TONES FROM THE GLASSES OF THE ARMONICA

Before you sit down to play, the fingers should be well washed with soap and water, and the soap well rinsed off.

The glasses must be always kept perfectly clean from the least greasiness; therefore suffer nobody to touch them with unwashed hands; for even the common slight natural greasiness of the skin rubbed on them will prevent their sounding for a long time.

You must be provided with a bottle of rain-water (spring water is generally too hard and produces a harsh tone), and a middling

sponge in a little slop-bowl, in which you must keep so much of the water that the sponge may be always very wet.

In a teacup keep also ready some fine scraped chalk, free from grit, to be used on occasion.

The fingers when you begin to play should not only be wet on the surface, but the skin a little soaked, which is readily done by pressing them hard a few times in the sponge.

The first thing after setting the glasses in motion is to pass the sponge slowly along from the biggest glass to the smallest, suffering it to rest on each glass during at least one revolution of the glasses, whereby they will all be made moderately wet. If too much water is left on them, they will not sound so readily.

If the instrument is near a window, let the window be shut or the curtain drawn, as wind or sunshine on the glasses dries them too fast.

When these particulars are all attended to, and the directions observed, the tone comes forth finely with the slightest pressure of the fingers imaginable, and you swell it at pleasure by adding a little more pressure, no instrument affording more shades, if one may so speak, of the Forte Piano.

One wetting with the sponge will serve for a piece of music twice as long as Handel's Water-piece, unless the air be uncommonly drying.

But a number of thin slices of sponge, placed side by side, and their ends held fast between two stripes of wood, like rulers, of a length equal to the glasses, and placed so that the loose ends of the sponges may touch the glasses behind, and by that means keep them constantly wet, is very convenient where one proposes to play a long time. The sponges being properly wetted will supply the glasses sufficiently a whole evening, and touching the glasses lightly do not in the least hurt the sound.

The powder of chalk is useful two ways.

Fingers, after much playing, sometimes begin to draw out a tone less smooth and soft, and you feel as well as hear a small degree of sharpness. In this case, if you dip the ends of your wet fingers in the chalk so as to take up a little, and rub the same well on the skin, it will immediately recover the smoothness of tone desired. And, if the glasses have been sullied by handling, or the fingers not being just washed have some little greasiness on them, so that the

sounds cannot easily be produced, chalk so used will clean both glasses and fingers, and the sounds will come out to your wish.

A little practice will make all this familiar; and you will also find by trials what part of the fingers most readily produces the sound from particular glasses, and whether they require to be touched on the edge chiefly, or a little more on the side; as different glasses require a different touch, some pretty full on the flat side of the brim, to bring out the best tone, others more on the edge and some of the largest may need the touch of two fingers at once.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CCCCLXX

SETTLEMENT ON THE OHIO RIVER¹

Report of the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, on the Petition of the Honorable Thomas Walpole and his Associates, for a Grant of Lands on the River Ohio, in North America.

My Lords:—

Pursuant to your Lordships' order of the 25th May, 1770, we have taken into our consideration the humble memorial of the Honorable Thomas Walpole, Benjamin Franklin, John Sargent, and Samuel Wharton, Esquires, in behalf of themselves and their associates, setting forth among other things, "That they presented a petition to his Majesty in Council, for a grant of lands in America (parcel of the lands purchased by government of the Indians), in consideration of a price to be paid in purchase of the same; that, in pursuance of a suggestion which arose when the said petition was under consideration of the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, the memorialists presented a petition to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, proposing to purchase a larger tract of land on the river Ohio in America, sufficient for a separate government; whereupon their Lordships were pleased to acquaint the memorialists they had no objection to accepting the proposals made by them with respect to the purchase-money and quit-rent to be paid for the said tract of land, if it should be thought advisable by those departments of government to whom it belonged to judge of the propriety of the grant, both in point of policy and justice, that the grant should be made; in consequence whereof the memorialists humbly renew their application that a grant of said lands may be made to them, reserving therein to all persons their just and legal rights to any parts or parcels of lands which may be comprehended within the tract prayed for by the memorialists"; whereupon we beg leave to report to your Lordships:—

I. That, according to the description of the tract of land prayed for by the memorialists, which description is annexed to their memorial, it appears to us to contain part of the dominion of Virginia, to the south of the river Ohio, and to extend several degrees of longitude westward from the western ridge of the Appalachian Mountains, as will more fully appear to your Lordships from the annexed sketch of the said tract, which we have since caused to be delineated with as much exactness as possible, and herewith submit to your Lordships, to the end that your Lordships

may judge, with the greater precision, of the situation of the lands prayed for in the memorial.

II. From this sketch your Lordships will observe that a very considerable part of the lands prayed for lies beyond the line which has, in consequence of his Majesty's orders for that purpose, been settled by treaty, as well with the tribes of the Six Nations and their confederates, as with the Cherokee Indians, as the boundary-line between his Majesty's territories and their hunting-grounds; and as the faith of the crown is pledged in the most solemn manner, both to the Six Nations and to the Cherokees, that, notwithstanding the former of these nations had ceded the property in the lands to his Majesty, yet no settlement shall be made beyond that line, it is our duty to report to your Lordships our opinion that it would on that account be highly improper to comply with the request of the memorial, so far as it includes any lands beyond the said line.

It remains, therefore, that we report to your Lordships our opinion, how far it may consist with good policy and with justice that his Majesty should comply with that part of the memorial which relates to those lands which are situated to the east of that line, and are part of the dominion of Virginia.

III. And, first, with regard to the policy, we take leave to remind your Lordships of that principle which was adopted by this Board, and approved and confirmed by his Majesty, immediately after the treaty of Paris, viz.: the confining the western extent of settlements to such a distance from the sea-coast as that those settlements should lie *within the reach of the trade and commerce of this kingdom*, upon which the strength and riches of it depend, and also of the exercise of that authority and jurisdiction which was conceived to be necessary for the preservation of the colonies in a due subordination to, and dependence upon, the mother country. And these we apprehend to have been two capital objects of his Majesty's proclamation of the 7th of October, 1763, by which his Majesty declares it to be his royal will and pleasure to reserve under his sovereignty, protection, and dominion, for the use of the Indians, all the lands not included within the three new governments, the limits of which are described therein, as also all the lands and territories lying to the westward of the sources of the rivers which fall into the sea from the west and northwest; and by which all persons are forbid to make any purchases or settlements whatever, or to take possession of any of the lands above reserved, without special license for that purpose.

IV. It is true, indeed, that, partly from want of precision in describing the line intended to be marked out by the proclamation of 1763, and partly from a consideration of justice in regard to

legal titles to lands which had been settled beyond that line, it has been since thought fit to enter into engagements with the Indians, for fixing a more precise and determinate boundary between his Majesty's territories and their hunting-grounds.

V. By this boundary, so far as regards the case now in question, your Lordships will observe, that the hunting-grounds of the Indians are reduced within narrower limits than were specified by the proclamation of 1763. We beg leave, however, to submit to your Lordships that the same principles of policy, in reference to settlements at so great a distance from the sea-coast as to be out of the reach of all advantageous intercourse with this kingdom, continue to exist in their full force and spirit; and, though various propositions for erecting new colonies in the interior parts of America have been, in consequence of this extension of the boundary line, submitted to the consideration of government (particularly in that part of the country wherein are situated the lands now prayed for, with a view to that object), yet the dangers and disadvantages of complying with such proposals have been so obvious as to defeat every attempt made for carrying them into execution.

VI. Many objections, besides those which we have already stated, occur to us to propositions of this kind; but as every argument on this subject is collected together with great force and precision, in a representation made to his Majesty by the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations in March, 1768, we beg leave to state them to your Lordships in their words.

In that representation they deliver their opinion upon a proposition for settling new colonies in the interior country as follows, viz.:

"The proposition of forming inland colonies in America is, we humbly conceive, entirely new. It adopts principles in respect to American settlements different from what has hitherto been the policy of this kingdom, and leads to a system which, if pursued through all its consequences, is, in the present state of that country, of the greatest importance.

"The great object of colonizing upon the continent of North America has been to improve and extend the commerce, navigation, and manufactures of this kingdom, upon which its strength and security depend.

"1. By promoting the advantageous fishery carried on upon the northern coast.

"2. By encouraging the growth and culture of naval stores, and of raw materials, to be transported hither in exchange for perfect manufactures and other merchandise.

"3. By securing a supply of lumber, provisions, and other necessities, for the support of our establishments in the American islands.

"In order to answer these salutary purposes, it has been the policy of this kingdom to confine her settlements as much as possible to the sea-coast, and not to extend them to places inaccessible to shipping, and consequently more out of the reach of commerce; a plan which, at the same time that it secured the attainment of these commercial objects, had the further political advantage of guarding against all interfering of foreign powers, and of enabling this kingdom to keep up a superior naval force in those seas, by the actual possession of such rivers and harbors as were proper stations for fleets in time of war.

"Such, may it please your Majesty, have been the considerations inducing that plan of policy hitherto pursued in the settlement of your Majesty's American colonies, with which the private interest and sagacity of the settlers coöperated from the first establishments formed upon that continent. It was upon these principles, and with these views, that government undertook the settlement of Nova Scotia in 1749; and it was from a view of the advantages represented to arise from it in these different articles that it was so liberally supported by the aid of Parliament.

"The same motives, though operating in a less degree, and applying to fewer subjects, did, as we humbly conceive, induce the forming the colonies of Georgia, East Florida, and West Florida, to the south, and the making those provincial arrangements in the proclamation of 1763, by which the interior country was left to the possession of the Indians.

"Having thus briefly stated what has been the policy of this kingdom in respect to colonizing in America, it may be necessary to take a cursory view of what has been the effect of it in those colonies where there has been sufficient time for that effect to discover itself, because if it shall appear from the present state of these settlements and the progress they have made that they are likely to produce the advantages above stated, it will, we humbly apprehend, be a very strong argument against forming settlements in the interior country, more especially when every advantage derived from an established country would naturally tend to draw the stream of population, fertility of soil and temperature of climate offering superior incitements to settlers, who, exposed to few

hardships, and struggling with few difficulties, could, with little labor, earn an abundance for their own wants, but without a possibility of supplying ours with any considerable quantities. Nor would these inducements be confined in their operation to foreign emigrants, determining their choice where to settle, but would act most powerfully upon the inhabitants of the northern and southern latitudes of your Majesty's American dominions; who, ever suffering under the opposite extremes of heat and cold, would be equally tempted by a moderate climate to abandon latitudes peculiarly adapted to the production of those things which are by nature denied to us, and for the whole of which we should, without their assistance, stand indebted to, and dependent upon, other countries.

"It is well known that antecedent to the year 1749 all that part of the sea-coast of the British empire in America which extends northeast from the province of Maine to Canceau, in Nova Scotia, and from thence north to the mouth of the St. Lawrence River, lay waste and neglected, though naturally affording, or capable by art of producing, every species of naval stores, the seas abounding with whale, cod, and other valuable fish, and having many great rivers, bays, and harbors fit for the reception of ships of war. Thus circumstanced, a consideration of the great commercial advantages which would follow from securing the possession of this country, combined with the evidence of the value set upon it by our enemies, who, during the war which terminated at that period, had, at an immense expense, attempted to wrest it from us, induced that plan for the settlement of Nova Scotia, to which we have before referred, and which, being prosecuted with vigor, though at a very large expense to this kingdom, secured the possession of that province, and formed those establishments which contributed so greatly to facilitate and promote the success of your Majesty's arms in the late war.

"The establishment of government in this part of America having opened to the view and information of your Majesty's subjects in other colonies the great commercial advantages to be derived from it, induced a zeal for migration, and associations were formed for taking up lands and making settlements in this province by principal persons residing in these colonies.

"In consequence of these associations upwards of ten thousand souls have passed from those colonies into Nova Scotia, who have either engaged in the fisheries or become exporters of lumber and provisions to the West Indies. And further settlements, to the extent of twenty-one townships, of one hundred thousand acres each, have been engaged to be made there by many of the principal persons in

Pennsylvania, whose names and association for that purpose now lie before your Majesty in Council.

“The government of Massachusetts Bay, as well as the proprietors of large tracts to the eastward of the province of Maine, excited by the success of these settlements, are giving every encouragement to the like settlements in that valuable country lying between them and Nova Scotia; and the proprietors of the twelve townships lately laid out there, by the Massachusetts government, now solicit your Majesty for a confirmation of their title.

“Such, may it please your Majesty, is the present state of the progress making in the settlement of the northern parts of the sea-coasts of North America, in consequence of what appears to have been the policy adopted by this kingdom; and many persons of rank and substance here are proceeding to carry into execution the plan, which your Majesty (pursuing the same principles of commercial policy) has approved, for the settlement of the islands of St. John and Cape Breton, and of the new-established colonies to the south; and, therefore, as we are fully convinced, that the encouraging settlements upon the sea-coast of North America is founded in the true principles of commercial policy; and as we find, upon examination, that the happy effects of that policy are now beginning to open themselves, in the establishment of those branches of commerce, culture, and navigation upon which the strength, wealth, and security of this kingdom depend, we cannot be of opinion that it would in any view be advisable to divert your Majesty’s subjects in America from the pursuit of those important objects, by adopting measures of a new policy, at an expense to this kingdom which in its present state it is unable to bear.

“This, may it please your Majesty, being the light in which we view the proposition of colonizing in the interior country, considered as a general principle of policy, we shall, in the next place, proceed to examine the several arguments urged in support of the particular establishments now recommended.

These arguments appear to us reducible to the following general propositions, viz.:

First, That such colonies will promote population, and increase the demands for, and consumption of, British manufactures.

Secondly, That they will secure the fur trade and prevent an illicit trade, or interfering of French or Spaniards with the Indians.

Thirdly, That they will be a defence and protection to the old colonies against the Indians.

Fourthly, That they will contribute to lessen the present heavy expense of supplying provisions to the distant forts and garrisons.

Lastly, That they are necessary in respect to the inhabitants already residing in those places where they are proposed to be established, who require some form of civil government.

After what we have already stated, with respect to the policy of encouraging colonies in the interior country as a general principle, we trust it will not be necessary to enter into an ample discussion of the arguments brought to support the foregoing propositions.

We admit, as an undeniable principle of true policy, that, with a view to prevent manufactures, it is necessary and proper to open an extent of territory for colonization proportioned to the increase of people, as a large number of inhabitants cooped up in narrow limits, without a sufficiency of land for produce, would be compelled to convert their attention and industry to manufactures; but we submit whether the encouragement given to the settlement of the colonies upon the sea-coast, and the effect which such encouragement has had, have not already effectually provided for this object, as well as for increasing the demand for, and consumption of, British manufactures, an advantage which, in our humble opinion, would not be promoted by these new colonies, which, being proposed to be established at the distance of above fifteen hundred miles from the sea, and in places which, upon the fullest evidence, are found to be utterly inaccessible to shipping, will, from their inability to find returns wherewith to pay for the manufactures of Great Britain, be probably led to manufacture for themselves; a consequence which experience shows has constantly attended, in a greater or lesser degree, every inland settlement, and therefore ought, in our humble opinion, to be carefully guarded against, by encouraging the settlement of that extensive tract of sea-coast hitherto unoccupied; which, together with the liberty that the inhabitants of the middle colonies will have (in consequence of the proposed boundary line with the Indians) of gradually extending themselves backwards, will more effectually and beneficially answer the object of encouraging population and consumption, than the erection of new governments. Such gradual extension might, through the medium of a continued population, upon even the same extent of territory, preserve a communication of mutual commercial benefits between its extremest parts and Great Britain, impossible to exist in colonies separated by immense tracts of unpeopled desert.

As to the effect which it is supposed the colonies may have to increase and promote the fur trade, and to prevent all contraband trade or intercourse between the Indians under your Majesty's

protection and the French or Spaniards; it does appear to us, that the extension of the fur trade depends entirely upon the Indians being undisturbed in the possession of their hunting-grounds; that all colonizing does in its nature, and must in its consequences, operate to the prejudice of that branch of commerce; and that the French and Spaniards would be left in possession of a great part of what remained, as New Orleans would still continue the best and surest market.

As to the protection which it is supposed these new colonies may be capable of affording to the old ones, it will, in our opinion, appear upon the slightest view of their situation, that, so far from affording protection to the old colonies, they will stand most in need of it themselves.

It cannot be denied that new colonies would be of advantage in raising provisions for the supply of such forts and garrisons as may be kept up in the neighborhood of them; but, as the degree of utility will be proportioned to the number and situation of these forts and garrisons, which, upon the result of the present inquiry, it may be thought advisable to continue, so the force of argument will depend upon that event.

The present French inhabitants in the neighborhood of the Lakes will, in our humble opinion, be sufficient to furnish with provisions whatever posts may be necessary to be continued there; and as there are also French inhabitants settled in some parts of the country lying upon the Mississippi, between the rivers Illinois and the Ohio, it is to be hoped that a sufficient number of these may be induced to fix their abode where the same convenience and advantage may be derived from them. But, if no such circumstance were to exist, and no such assistance to be expected from it, the objections stated to the plan now under our consideration are superior to this, or any other advantage it can produce; and although civil establishments have frequently rendered the expense of an armed force necessary for their protection, one of the many objections to these now proposed, yet we humbly presume there never has been an instance of a government instituted merely with a view to supply a body of troops with suitable provisions; nor is it necessary in these instances for the settlements, already existing as above described, which, being formed under military establishments, and ever subjected to military authority, do not, in our humble opinion, require any other superintendence than that of the military officers commanding at these posts."

In addition to this opinion of the Board of Trade, expressed in the foregoing recital, we further beg leave to refer your Lordships to the opinion of the commander-in-chief of his Majesty's forces in

North America, who, in a letter laid before us by the Earl of Hillsborough, delivers his sentiments with regard to settlements in the interior parts of America in the following words, viz.:

VII. "As to increasing the settlements to respectable provinces, and to colonization in general terms in the remote countries, I conceive it altogether inconsistent with sound policy; for there is little appearance that the advantages will arise from it which nations expect when they send out colonies into foreign countries. They can give no encouragement to the fishery, and though the country might afford some kind of naval stores, the distance would be too far to transport them; and for the same reason they could not supply the sugar islands with lumber and provisions. As for the raising wine, silk, and other commodities, the same may be said of the present colonies, without planting others for the purpose at so vast a distance; but, on the supposition that they would be raised, their very long transportation must probably make them too dear for any market.

"I do not apprehend the inhabitants could have any commodities to barter for manufactures, except skins and furs, which will naturally decrease as the country increases in people and the deserts are cultivated; so that, in the course of a few years, necessity would force them to provide manufactures of some kind for themselves; and, when all connection upheld by commerce with the mother country shall cease, it may be expected that an independency on her government will soon follow; the pretence of forming barriers will have no end; wherever we settle, however remote, there must be a frontier; and there is room enough for the colonists to spread within our present limits, for a century to come.

If we reflect how the people of themselves have gradually retired from the coast, we shall be convinced they want no encouragement to desert the sea-coast, and go into the back countries, where the lands are better and got upon easier terms; they are already almost out of the reach of law and government; neither the endeavors of government, nor fear of Indians, has kept them properly within bounds; and it is apparently most for the interest of Great Britain to confine the colonies on the side of the back country, and to direct their settlements along the sea-coast, where millions of acres are yet uncultivated. The lower provinces are still thinly inhabited and brought to the point of perfection that has been aimed at for the mutual benefit of Great Britain and themselves.

Although America may supply the mother country with many articles, few of them are yet supplied in quantities equal to her consumption; the quantity of iron transported is not great, of hemp very small, and there are many other commodities, not necessary to

enumerate, which America has not yet been able to raise, notwithstanding the encouragement given her by bounties and premiums. The laying open new tracts of fertile territory in moderate climates might lessen her present produce; for it is the passion of every man to be a landholder, and the people have a natural disposition to rove in search of good lands, however distant. It may be a question likewise, whether colonization of the kind could be effected without an Indian war and fighting for every inch of ground. The Indians have long been jealous of our power, and have no patience in seeing us approach their towns, and settle upon their hunting-grounds; atonements may be made for a fraud discovered in a trader, and even the murder of some of their tribes, but *encroachments* upon their lands have often produced serious consequences. The springs of the last general war are to be discovered near the Alleghany Mountains, and upon the banks of the Ohio.

It is so obvious that settlers might raise provision to feed the troops cheaper than it can be transported from the country below that it is not necessary to explain it; but I must own I know no other use in settlements, nor can give any other reason for supporting forts than to protect the settlements and keep the settlers in subjection to government.

I conceive that to procure all the commerce it will afford, and at as little expense to ourselves as we can, is the only object we should have in view in the interior country for a century to come, and I imagine it might be effected by proper management without either forts or settlements. Our manufactures are as much desired by the Indians as their peltry is sought for by us. What was originally deemed a superfluity or a luxury by the natives is now become a necessary. They are disused to the bow, and can neither hunt nor make war without fire-arms, powder, and lead. The British provinces can only supply them with their necessities, which they know, and for their own sakes would protect the trader, which they actually do at present. It would remain with us to prevent the traders being guilty of frauds and impositions, and to pursue the same methods to that end, as are taken in the southern district, and I must confess, though the plan pursued in that district might be improved by proper laws to support it, that I do not know a better or more economical plan for the management of trade; there are neither forts nor settlements in the southern department, and there are both in the northern department, and your Lordships will be the best judge which of them has given you the least trouble; in which we have had the fewest quarrels, with or complaints from, the Indians.

I know of nothing so liable to bring on a serious quarrel with Indians as an invasion of their property. Let the savages enjoy their deserts in quiet. Little bickerings that may unavoidably sometimes happen may soon be accommodated, and I am of opinion, independent of the motives of common justice and humanity, that the principles of interest and policy should induce us rather to protect than molest them. Were they driven from their forests, the peltry trade would decrease, and it is not impossible that worse savages would take refuge in them; for they might then become the asylum of fugitive negroes, and idle vagabonds escaped from justice, who in time might become formidable, and subsist by rapine, and plundering the lower countries."

VIII. The opinions delivered in the foregoing recitals are so accurate and precise as to make it almost unnecessary to add any thing more. But we beg leave to lay before your Lordships the sentiments of his Majesty's governor of Georgia upon the subject of large grants in the interior parts of America, whose knowledge and experience in the affairs of the colonies give great weight to his opinion.

In a letter to us on the subject of the mischiefs attending such grants, he expresses himself in the following manner, viz.:

"And now, my Lords, I beg your patience a moment, while I consider this matter in a more extensive point of view, and go a little further in declaring my sentiments and opinion, with respect to the granting of large bodies of land, in the back parts of the province of Georgia, or in any other of his Majesty's northern colonies, at a distance from the sea-coast, or from such parts of any province as is already settled and inhabited.

And this matter, my Lords, appears to me in a very serious and alarming light, and I humbly conceive may be attended with the greatest and worst of consequences. For, my Lords, if a vast territory be granted to any set of gentlemen, who really mean to people it, and actually do so, it must draw and carry out a great number of people from Great Britain; and I apprehend they will soon become a kind of separate and independent people, and who will set up for themselves; that they will soon have manufactures of their own; that they will neither take supplies from the mother country, nor from the provinces, at the back of which they are settled; that, being at a distance from the seat of government, courts, magistrates, etc., etc., they will be out of the reach and control of law and government; that it will become a receptacle and kind of asylum for offenders, who will fly from justice to such new country or colony; and therefore crimes and offences will be committed, not only by the inhabitants of such new settlements, but

elsewhere, and pass with impunity; and that, in process of time (and perhaps at no great distance), they will become formidable enough to oppose his Majesty's authority, disturb government, and even give law to the other or first-settled part of the country, and throw every thing into confusion.

My Lords, I hope I shall not be thought impertinent, when I give my opinion freely, in a matter of so great consequence as I conceive this to be; and, my Lords, I apprehend that in all the American colonies great care should be taken that the lands on the sea-coast should be thick settled with inhabitants, and well cultivated and improved; and that the settlements should be gradually extended back into the province and as much connected as possible, to keep the people together in as narrow a compass as the nature of the lands and state of things will admit of; and by which means there would probably become only one general view and interest amongst them, and the power of government and law would of course naturally and easily go with them, and matters thereby properly regulated and kept in due order and obedience; and they would have no idea of resisting or transgressing either, without being amenable to justice, and subject to punishment for offences they may commit.

But, my Lords, to suffer a kind of *province within a province*, and one that may, indeed must, in process of time, become superior, and too big for the head, or original settlement or seat of government, to me conveys with it many ideas of consequences of such a nature as I apprehend are extremely dangerous and improper, and it would be the policy of government to avoid and prevent, whilst in their power to do so.

My ideas, my Lords, are not chimerical; I know something of the situation and state of things in America; and from some little occurrences or instances that have already really happened, I can very easily figure to myself what may, and, in short, what will, certainly happen, if not prevented in time."

IX. At the same time that we submit the foregoing reasons against colonization in the interior country to your Lordships' consideration, it is proper we should take notice of one argument, which has been invariably held forth in support of every proposition of this nature, and upon which the present proponents appear to lay great stress. It is urged, that such is the state of the country now proposed to be granted, and erected into a separate government, that no endeavors on the part of the crown can avail to prevent its being settled by those who, by the increase of population in the middle colonies, are continually emigrating to the westward, and forming themselves into colonies in that country,

without the intervention or control of government, and who, if suffered to continue in that lawless state of anarchy and confusion, will commit such abuses as cannot fail of involving us in quarrel and dispute with the Indians, and thereby endangering the security of his Majesty's colonies.

We admit that this is an argument that deserves attention; and we rather take notice of it in this place, because some of the objections stated by Governor Wright lose their force, upon the supposition that the grants against which he argues are to be erected into separate governments. But we are clearly of opinion that his arguments do, in the general view of them, as applied to the question of granting lands in the interior parts of America, stand unanswerable; and, admitting that the settlers in the country in question are as numerous as report states them to be, yet we submit to your Lordships that this is a fact which does, in the nature of it, operate strongly in point of argument against what is proposed; for, if the foregoing reasoning has any weight, it certainly ought to induce your Lordships to advise his Majesty to take every method to check the progress of these settlements, and *not* to make such grants of the land as will have an immediate tendency to encourage them; a measure which we conceive is altogether as unnecessary as it is impolitic, as we see nothing to hinder the government of Virginia from extending the laws and constitution of that colony to such persons as may have already settled there under legal titles.

X. And there is one objection suggested by Governor Wright to the extension of settlements in the interior country, which, we submit, deserves your Lordships' particular attention, viz.: the encouragement that is thereby held out to the emigration of his Majesty's European subjects, an argument which, in the present peculiar situation of this kingdom, demands very serious consideration, and has for some time past had so great weight with this Board, that it has induced us to deny our concurrence to many proposals for grants of land, even in those parts of the continent of America where, in all other respects, we are of opinion that it consists with the true policy of this kingdom to encourage settlements; and this consideration of the certain bad consequences which must result from a continuance of such imigrations as have lately taken place from various parts of his Majesty's European dominions, added to the constant drains to Africa, to the East Indies, and to the new-ceded islands, will, we trust, with what has been before stated, be a sufficient answer to every argument that can be urged in support of the present memorial, so far as regards the consideration of it in point of policy.

XI. With regard to the propriety, in point of justice, of making the grant desired, we presume this consideration can have reference only to the case of such persons who have already possession of lands in that part of the country, under legal titles derived from grants made by the governor and council of Virginia, upon which case we have only to observe that it does appear to us that there are some such possessions held by persons who are not parties to the present memorial; and therefore, if your Lordships shall be of opinion that the making the grant desired would, notwithstanding the reservation proposed, in respect to such titles, have the effect to disturb those possessions, or to expose the proprietors to suit and litigation, we do conceive that, in that case, the grant would be objectionable in point of justice.

XII. Upon the whole, therefore, we cannot recommend to your Lordships to advise his Majesty to comply with the prayer of this memorial, either as to the erection of any parts of the lands into a separate government, or the making a grant of them to the memorialists; but, on the contrary, we are of opinion that settlements in that distant part of the country should be as much discouraged as possible; and that, in order thereto, it will be expedient, not only that the orders which have been given to the governor of Virginia, not to make any further grants beyond the line prescribed by the proclamation of 1763, should be continued and enforced, but that another proclamation should be issued, declaratory of his Majesty's resolution not to allow, for the *present*, any new settlements beyond that line, and to forbid all persons from taking up or settling any lands in that part of the country.

We are, my Lords,

**Your Lordships' Most Obedient And
Most Humble Servants.**

Whitehall, April 15, 1772.

DR. FRANKLIN'S ANSWER TO THE FOREGOING REPORT

I. The first paragraph of the report, we apprehend, was intended to establish two propositions as facts; viz.:

First, That the tract of land, agreed for with the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, contains part of the dominion of Virginia.

Secondly, That it extends several degrees of longitude *westward* from the western ridge of the Alleghany Mountains.

On the first proposition we shall only remark that no part of the above tract is to the *eastward* of the Alleghany Mountains, and that those mountains must be considered as the true western boundary of Virginia; for the king was not seized and possessed of a right to the country westward of the mountains, until his Majesty purchased it, in the year 1768, from the Six Nations; and, since that time, there has not been any annexation of such purchase, or of any part thereof, to the colony of Virginia.

On the second proposition we shall just observe that the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations appear to us to be as erroneous in this, as in the former proposition; for their Lordships say that the tract of land under consideration extends several degrees of longitude westward. The truth is, that it is not more, on a medium, than one degree and a half of longitude from the western ridge of the Alleghany Mountains to the river Ohio.

II. It appears, by the second paragraph, as if the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations apprehended that the lands southwesterly of the boundary line, marked on a map annexed to their Lordships' report, were either claimed by the Cherokees, or were their hunting-grounds, or were the hunting-grounds of the Six Nations and their confederates.

As to any claim of the Cherokees to the above country, it is altogether new and indefensible, and never was heard of until the appointment of Mr. Stuart to the superintendency of the southern colonies, about the year 1764; and this, we flatter ourselves, will not only be obvious from the following state of facts, but that the right to all the country on the southerly side of the river Ohio, quite to the Cherokee River, is now undoubtedly vested in the king, by the grant which the Six Nations made to his Majesty at Fort Stanwix, in November, 1768. In short, the lands from the Great Kenhawa to the Cherokee River were never either the dwelling or hunting-grounds of the Cherokees; but formerly belonged to and were inhabited by the Shawanese, until such time as they were conquered by the Six Nations.

Mr. Colden, the present lieutenant-governor of New York, in his *History of the Five Nations*, observes that, about the year 1664, "the Five Nations, being amply supplied by the English with fire-arms and ammunition, gave a full swing to their warlike genius. They carried their arms as far south as Carolina, to the northward of New England, and as far west as the river Mississippi, over a vast country, which extended twelve hundred miles in length, from

north to south, and about six hundred miles in breadth, where they entirely destroyed whole nations, of whom there are no accounts remaining among the English."

In 1701 the Five Nations put all their hunting-lands under the protection of the English, as appears by the records, and by the recital and confirmation thereof, in their deed to the king, of the 4th September, 1726; and Governor Pownall, who many years ago diligently searched into the rights of the natives, and in particular into those of the northern confederacy, says, in his book entitled the *Administration of the Colonies*: "The right of the Five-Nation confederacy to the hunting-lands of Ohio, Ticûcksouchrondite, and Scaniaderiada, by the conquest they made in subduing the Shaôanoes, Delawares (as we call them), Twigtwees, and Oilinois, may be fairly proved, as they stood possessed thereof at the peace of Ryswick, 1697." And confirmatory hereof, Mr. Lewis Evans, a gentleman of great American knowledge, in his map of the middle colonies, published in America in the year 1755, has laid down the country on the southeasterly side of the river Ohio, as the hunting-lands of the Six Nations; and in his analysis to this map he expressly says:

"The Shawanese, who were formerly one of the most considerable nations of those parts of America, whose seat extended from Kentucky southwestward to the Mississippi, have been subdued by the confederates (or Six Nations), and the country since became their property. . . . No nation held out with greater resolution and bravery; and, although they have been scattered in all parts for a while, they are again collected on Ohio, under the dominion of the confederates."

At a Congress held in the year 1744, by the provinces of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, with the Six Nations, the commissioners of Virginia, in a speech to the sachems and warriors of that confederacy, say:

"Tell us what nations of Indians you conquered any lands from in Virginia, how long it is since, and what possession you have had; and if it does appear that there is any land on the borders of Virginia, that the Six Nations have a right to, we are willing to make you satisfaction."

To this speech, the Six Nations gave the following animated and decisive answer:

"All the world knows we conquered the several nations living on Susquehanna, Cohongoranto [that is, Potomac], and on the back of the great mountains in Virginia: the Conoy-uck-suck-roona, Cock-

now-was-roonan, Tohoa-irough-roonan, and Connut-skin-ough-roonaw feel the effects of our conquests, being now a part of our nations, and their land at our disposal. We know very well it hath often been said by the Virginians, that the king of England and the people of that colony conquered the people who lived there; but it is not true. We will allow they conquered the Sachdagugchronaw, and drove back the Tuskaroras [the first resided near the branches of James River in Virginia, and the latter on these branches], and that they have, on that account, a right to some parts of Virginia; but, as to what lies beyond the mountains, we conquered the nations residing there, and that land, if the Virginians ever get a good right to it, it must be by us."

In the year 1750 the French seized four English traders, who were trading with the Six Nations, Shawanese, and Delawares, on the waters of the Ohio, and sent them prisoners to Quebec, and from thence to France.

In 1754 the French took a formal possession of the river Ohio, and built forts at Venango, at the confluence of the Ohio and Monongahela, and at the mouth of the Cherokee River.

In 1755 General Braddock was sent to America with an army to remove the French from their possessions over the Alleghany Mountains and on the river Ohio; and on his arrival at Alexandria, he held a council of war with the governors of Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, and the Massachusetts Bay; and, as these gentlemen well knew that the country claimed by the French, over the Alleghany Mountains, and southwesterly to the river Mississippi, was the unquestionable property of the Six Nations, and not of the Cherokees, or any other tribe of Indians, the general gave instructions to Sir William Johnson to call together the Indians of the Six Nations, and lay before them their before-mentioned grant to the king in 1726, wherein they had put all their hunting-lands under his Majesty's protection, to be guaranteed to them and to their use. And, as General Braddock's instructions are clearly declaratory of the right of the Six Nations to the lands under consideration, we shall here transcribe the conclusive words of them:

"And it appearing that the French have, from time to time, by fraud and violence, built strong forts within the limits of the said lands, contrary to the covenant chain of the said deed and treaties, you are, in my name, to assure the said nations that I am come by his Majesty's order to destroy all the said forts, and to build such others as shall protect and secure the said lands to them, their heirs and successors for ever, according to the intent and spirit of

the said treaty; and I do therefore call upon them to take up the hatchet and come and take possession of their own lands.”

That General Braddock and the American governors were not singular in their opinion, as to the right of the Six Nations to the land over the Alleghany Mountains, and on both sides of the river Ohio, quite to the Mississippi, is evident from the memorials which passed between the British and French courts in 1755.

In a memorial delivered by the king’s ministers on the 7th June, 1755, to the Duc de Mirepoix, relative to the pretensions of France to the above-mentioned lands, they very justly observed:

“As to the exposition which is made in the French memorial of the fifteenth article of the treaty of Utrecht, the court of Great Britain does not think it can have any foundation, either by the words or the intention of this treaty.

“The court of Great Britain cannot allow of this article relating only to the persons of the savages, and not their country. The words of this treaty are clear and precise; that is to say, the Five Nations, or Cantons, are subject to the dominion of Great Britain, which by the received exposition of all treaties must relate to the country, as well as to the persons of the inhabitants; it is what France has acknowledged in the most solemn manner; she had well weighed the importance of this acknowledgment at the time of signing this treaty, and Great Britain can never give it up. The countries possessed by these Indians are very well known, and are not at all so undetermined as it is pretended in the memorial. They possess and make them over, as other proprietors do in all other places.

“Whatever pretext might be alleged by France in considering these countries as the appurtenances of Canada, it is a certain truth that they have belonged, and (as they have not been given up or made over to the English) belong still, to the same Indian nations, which by the fifteenth article of the treaty of Utrecht, France agreed not to molest, *Nullo in posterum impedimento aut molestiâ afficiant*.

“Notwithstanding all that has been advanced in this article, the court of Great Britain cannot agree to France having the least title to the river Ohio and the territory in question.”

N. B.—This was all the country from the Alleghany Mountains to the Ohio, and down the same and on both sides thereof to the river Mississippi.

“Even that of possession is not, nor can it be alleged on this occasion, since France cannot pretend to have had any such before

the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, nor since, unless it be that of certain forts, unjustly erected lately on the lands which evidently belong to the Five Nations, or which these have made over to the crown of Great Britain or its subjects, as may be proved by treaties and acts of the greatest authority. What the court of Great Britain maintained, and what it insists upon, is that the Five Nations of the Iroquois, acknowledged by France to be the subjects of Great Britain, are, by origin or by right of conquest, the lawful proprietors of the river Ohio and the territory in question. And as to the territory which has been yielded and made over by these people to Great Britain (which cannot but be owned must be the most just and lawful manner of making an acquisition of this sort), she reclaims it as belonging to her, having continued cultivating it for above twenty years past, and having made settlements in several parts of it from the sources even of the Ohio to Pichawillanes in the centre of the territory between the Ohio and the Wabash."

In 1755 the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations were so solicitous to ascertain the territory of the Six Nations that Dr. Mitchell, by their desire, published a large map of North America, and Mr. Pownall, the present secretary of the Board of Trade, then certified, as appears on the map, that the doctor was furnished with documents for the purpose from that board. In this map Dr. Mitchell observes "that the Six Nations have extended their territories ever since the year 1672, when they subdued and were incorporated with the ancient Shawanese, the native proprietors of these countries and the river Ohio; besides which they likewise claim a right of conquest over the Illinois, and all the Mississippi, as far as they extend. This," he adds, "is confirmed by their own claims and possessions in 1742, which include all the bounds here laid down, and none have ever thought fit to dispute them." And, in confirmation of this right of the Six Nations to the country on the Ohio, as mentioned by the king's ministers in their memorial to the Duc de Mirepoix in 1755, we would just remark that the Six Nations, Shawanese, and Delawares were in the actual occupation of the lands southward of the Great Kenhawa for some time after the French had encroached upon the river Ohio; and that in the year 1752 these tribes had a large town on Kentucky River, two hundred and thirty-eight miles below the Scioto; that in the year 1753 they resided and hunted on the southerly side of the river Ohio, in the lower country, at about three hundred and twenty miles below the Great Kenhawa, and in the year 1755 they had also a large town opposite to the mouth of the Scioto, at the very place which is the southern boundary line of the tract of land applied for by Mr. Walpole and his associates. But it is a certain fact that the Cherokees never had any towns or settlements in the country southward of the Great Kenhawa; that they do not hunt there, and that neither the Six Nations, Shawanese, nor Delawares do now

reside or hunt on the southerly side of the river Ohio, nor did for several years before they sold the country to the king. These are facts which can be easily and fully proved.

In October, 1768, at a Congress held with the Six Nations at Fort Stanwix, they observed to Sir William Johnson:

“Now, brother, you, who know all our affairs, must be sensible that our rights go much farther to the southward than the Kenhawa, and that we have a very good and clear title as far south as the Cherokee River, which we cannot allow to be the right of any other Indians, without doing wrong to our posterity, and acting unworthy those warriors who fought and conquered it; we therefore expect our right will be considered.”

In November, 1768, the Six Nations sold to the king all the country on the southerly side of the river Ohio as far as the Cherokee River; but notwithstanding that sale, as soon as it was understood in Virginia, that government favored the pretensions of the Cherokees, and that Dr. Walker and Colonel Lewis (the commissioners sent from that colony to the Congress at Fort Stanwix) had returned from thence, the late Lord Botetourt sent these gentlemen to Charleston, South Carolina, to endeavor to convince Mr. Stuart, the southern superintendent of Indian affairs, of the necessity of enlarging the boundary line which he had settled with the Cherokees; and to run it from the Great Kenhawa to Holston River. These gentlemen were appointed commissioners by his Lordship, as they had been long conversant in Indian affairs, and were well acquainted with the actual extent of the Cherokee country. Whilst these commissioners were in South Carolina, they wrote a letter to Mr. Stuart, as he had been but a very few years in the Indian service (and could not, from the nature of his former employment, be supposed to be properly informed about the Cherokee territory), respecting the claims of the Cherokees to the lands southward of the Great Kenhawa, and therein they expressed themselves as follows:

“Charleston, South Carolina, February 2, 1769.—The country southward of the Big Kenhawa was never claimed by the Cherokees, and now is the property of the crown, as Sir William Johnson purchased it of the Six Nations at a very considerable expense, and took a deed of cession from them at Fort Stainwix.”

In 1769 the House of Burgesses of the colony of Virginia represented to Lord Botetourt, “That they have the greatest reason to fear the said line” (meaning the boundary line which the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations have referred to in the map annexed to their Lordships’ report), “if confirmed, would

constantly open to the Indians, and other enemies to his Majesty, a free and easy ingress to the heart of the country on the Ohio, Holston River, and the Great Kenhawa; whereby the settlements which may be attempted in those quarters will, in all probability, be utterly destroyed, and that great extent of country [at least eight hundred miles in length] from the mouth of the Kenhawa to the mouth of the Cherokee River, extending eastward as far as Laurel Hill, so lately ceded to his Majesty, to which no tribe of Indians at present set up any pretensions, will be entirely abandoned to the Cherokees; in consequence of which, claims totally destructive of the true interest of his Majesty may at some future time arise, and acquisitions justly ranked among the most valuable of the late war be altogether lost."

end of volume v.

[1] Translated from Dubourg's edition of Franklin's Works, vol. ii., p. 258.

[1] Alluding to the following passage in a letter from Professor Winthrop, respecting St. Bride's steeple:

"Cambridge, 6 Jan., 1768.

. . . I have read in the *Philosophical Transactions* the account of the effects of lightning on St. Bride's steeple. It is amazing to me, that after the full demonstration you had given, of the identity of lightning and of electricity, and the power of metalline conductors, they should ever think of repairing that steeple without such conductors. How astonishing is the force of prejudice, even in an age of so much knowledge and free inquiry!"

[2] "Notre curiosité pourroit peut-être s'applaudir des recherches qu'elle nous a fait faire sur la nature du tonnerre, et sur la mécanique de ses principaux effets mais ce n'est point ce qu'il y a de plus important; il vaudroit bien mieux que nous puissions trouver quelque moyen de nous en garantir: on y a pensé; on s'est même flatté d'avoir fait cette grande découverte; mais malheureusement douze années d'épreuves et un peu de réflexion nous apprennent qu'il ne faut pas compter sur les promesses qu'on nous a faites. Je l'ai dit, il y a long temps et avec regret, toutes, ces pointes de fer qu'on dresse en l'air, soit comme *électroscopes*, soit comme préservatifs, sont plus propre à nous attirer le feu du tonnerre qu'à nous en préserver; et je persiste à dire que le projet d'épuiser une nuée orageuse du feu dont elle est chargée, n'est pas celui d'un physicien."—*Mémoire sur les Effets du Tonnerre*.—F.

[1] “Les cloches, en vertu de leur bénédiction, doivent écarter les orages et nous préserver de coups de foudre; mais l’église permet à la prudence humaine le choix des momens où il convient d’user de ce préservatif. Je ne sais si le son, considéré physiquement, est capable ou non de faire crever une nuée, et de causer l’épanchement de son feu vers les objets terrestres: mais il est certain et prouvé par l’expérience, que le tonnerre peut tomber sur un clocher, soit que l’on y sonne ou que l’on n’y sonne point, et si cela arrive dans le premier cas, les sonneurs sont en grand danger, parcequ’ils tiennent des cordes par lesquelles la commotion de la foudre peut se communiquer jusqu’à eux; il est donc plus sage de laisser les cloches en repos quand l’orage est arrivé au-dessus de l’église.”—*Ibid.*

[2] Suivant le rituel de Paris, lorsqu’on bénit des cloches, on récite les oraisons suivantes.

“Benedic, Domine, . . . quoties-cumque sonuerit, procul recedat virtus insidiantium, umbra phantasmatis, incursio turbinum, percussio, fulminum læsio tonitruum, calamitas tempestatum, omnisque spiritus procelarum,” &c.

Deus, qui per beatum Moisen, &c., . . . procul pellentur insidiæ inimici, fragor grandinum, procella turbinum, impetus tempestatum, temperentur infesta tonitrua,” &c.

Omnipotens, sempiterno Deus, &c., . . . ut ante sonitum ejus effugentur ignita jacula inimici, percussio fulminum, impetus lapidum, læsio tempestatum,” &c.—F.

[1] “En 1718, M. Deslandes fit savoir à l’Académie Royale des Sciences, que la nuit du 14 où 15 d’Avril de la même année, le tonnerre étoit tombé sur vingt-quatre églises, depuis Landernau jusqu’à Saint-Pol-de-Léon en Bretagne; que ces églises étoient précisément celles où l’on sonnoit, et que la foudre avoit épargné celles où l’on ne sonnoit pas; que dans celle de Gouison, qui fut entièrement ruinée, le tonnerre tua deux personnes de quatre qui sonnoient,” &c.—*Histoire de l’Académie Royale des Sciences*, 1719.—F.

[1] Deputy Postmaster-General in America.

[1] Dr. Franklin was appointed Agent for Georgia by an ordinance of the Assembly, dated April 11, 1768, at a salary of one hundred pounds sterling money of Great Britain, “over and above his reasonable charges and disbursements.” The appointment was annually renewed while he remained in England, and the salary was enlarged to two hundred pounds a year.—Ed.

[1] Translated from M. Dubourg's edition of Franklin's Works, vol. ii., p. 310.

[1] Among the cherished friendships which grew out of Franklin's visit to Paris in 1767-8, was that with Dupont de Nemours, one of the chief apostles of the school of French *Economistes*, of whom Doctor Quesnay and the Marquis de Mirabeau were the high priests. Dupont studied for the medical profession, but his attention was early turned aside to economical and agricultural inquiries about which he became a voluminous writer. He enjoyed the confidence of Turgot, under whom he took office. He afterward wrote the *Mémoires sur la Vie de Turgot*. He assisted Vergennes in negotiating the treaty for the recognition of the Independence of the United States in 1782, and the treaty of commerce with Great Britain of 1786. During the French Revolution he found it convenient to emigrate to the United States. On his return he assisted in negotiating the purchase of Louisiana by the United States, and, at the request of Jefferson, prepared a scheme of national education for the young republic, which was published in 1812 and entitled *Sur l'Education Nationale dans les États Unis*. On the downfall of Napoleon in 1814, Dupont became Secretary to the Provisional government, and on the restoration was made Counsellor of State. The return of the Emperor in 1815 determined him to leave France and join his two sons, who had settled on the banks of the Delaware, where they had established a powder manufactory, which is still one of the flourishing industries of the country. He died there in 1817. Dupont failed to see Franklin on his first visit to Paris, but soon after his return sent him his treatise entitled *Physiocratie* and with it a letter, to which, the letter in the text is a reply.

[1] For the nature and intention of this alphabet, I must refer to what Dr. Franklin has himself said upon the subject, in answer to Miss Stevenson's objections; as the reader may understand the whole in an hour or two. It is necessary to add, that the new letters used in the course of printing this paper, are exactly copied from the *manuscript* in my possession; there being no provision for a distinction in the character as *written* or *printed*. I have no other way, therefore, of marking the scored parts of the manuscript (answering to *italics*) than by placing such passages between inverted commas. As to *capitals*, I should have provided for them by means of larger types, but the form of some of them would have made them too large for the page. However, were the author's general system ever adopted, nothing would be easier than to remedy this particular.—B. V.

[1] Dr. Franklin used to lay some little stress on this circumstance, when he occasionally spoke on the subject. "A dictionary, formed on

this model, would have been serviceable to him, he said, even as an American"; because, from the want of public examples of pronunciation in his own country, it was often difficult to learn the proper sound of certain words, which occurred very frequently in our English writings, and which of course every American very well understood as to their meaning. I think I have seen a French grammar which endeavored to represent the French pronunciation by a resolution of it into English letters, but for want of proper characters it seemed an embarrassed business. Is not the bad spelling observed in French manuscripts owing in some degree to the great variance between their orthography and pronunciation?—B. V.

[1] Chinese.

[1] Peter Collinson, F. R. S., a very celebrated botanist, was descended from a family of ancient standing in the county of Westmoreland, but born himself in 1693, in Clement's Lane, Lombard Street. His parents realized a handsome fortune by trade in Gracechurch Street, the bulk of which coming to Peter, who was the eldest son, he was enabled to follow his favorite pursuit of natural history. He had one of the finest gardens in England, at Peckham, in Surrey, whence he removed in 1749 to Mill Hill, in the parish of Hendon in Middlesex, where he died, in August, 1768. Mr. Collinson kept up a correspondence with men of science in all parts of the world, and he sent the first electrical machine that was ever seen in America, as a present to the Philosophical Society at Philadelphia. He was also a liberal contributor to the public library of that city; and an intimate friend of Dr. Franklin, who received from him many hints and papers on the subject of electricity.

[1] See *supra* the letter of April 11, 1767.

[1] See *Vindication of the Provincial Paper Money System*, vol. iv., p. 358.

[1] *Experiments and Observations on Electricity made at Philadelphia, in America, by B. Franklin, LL.D. and F.R.S., to which are added Letters and Papers on Philosophical Subjects, &c.* London: David Henry, 1769, 4°.

[1] These were probably *Positions to be Examined concerning National Wealth*. See *infra*, April 4, 1769.

In his reply to the above letter, Lord Kames said. "The letter you mention about American affairs never came to hand. I have an essay on the subject of your Queries, and you shall hear from me soon about our agreeing or differing. I have a great fund of political

knowledge reduced into writing, far from being ripe, but fit for your perusal. If you will come to my aid, I know not but that we shall make a very good thing of it. If not, it may be lost to the world, and what a loss will that be!"—*Edinburgh, January 21, 1769.*

[2] This "dear friend" was Peter Collinson, who had recently died, and who had long corresponded with John Bartram.

[1] Mr. Bartram's merit as a naturalist attracted the attention of the King, and he was appointed American botanist to his Britannic Majesty, which station probably entitled him to a pension.

[1] Dr. Franklin was elected President of the American Philosophical Society on the 19th February, 1768, and was annually re-elected until his death.

[1] Degree of Doctor in Divinity, conferred by the University of Edinburgh.

[1] At this time the controversy ran high in the colonies respecting the expediency of having an American bishop of the Episcopal Church.

[1] The reasons for paying a price are not founded merely upon a computation of the expense of production. A general knowledge of the expenses of producing a bushel of corn does not prevent the producer from demanding and the consumer from paying a higher price when the article is scarce; nor the consumer from offering and the producer from accepting a lower price when it is plenty. A proposition bearing a near affinity to that stated in the text seems to be true, namely, that those things which are of general production and habitual consumption, like the common agricultural products, are more likely to bear a market price near to the cost of production, than things of less common production and less regular use, as the article of lace, mentioned in the next section. It may also be generally the case, that the greater the distance of the place of consumption from that of production, the longer an article is likely to be sold at a great profit, since the operation of competition, in bringing down the price, is likely to be slower.—W. Phillips.

[1] Franklin does not, probably, intend to be literally understood as recommending a system of defrauding foreigners; the benefit he proposes from manufactures does not, by any means, amount to this. Nobody considers it cheating to obtain from a domestic purchaser more for a thing than it costs the vender to make it. The most scrupulous mercantile morality does not proscribe profits. The author has elsewhere stated, that gain is the great motive of

commerce. He can only mean what he has elsewhere stated, that the nation exporting manufactures has the means of carrying on a more profitable foreign trade, which it may do as long as there are few competitors in effecting sales. But the other reason mentioned immediately before, in favor of exporting manufactures, namely, that it gives an opportunity of exporting the products of more labor, is of much greater importance than the chance of making extraordinary profits; a chance which has been very much diminished by the diffusion of the manufacturing arts, since this article was written.—W. Phillips.

[1] Captain Jonathan Carver, celebrated for his travels in the interior parts of North America, was born in Connecticut in the year 1732. He served on the frontiers in the French war, with the reputation of a good officer, till the peace of 1763, after which he travelled near the sources of the Mississippi as far as the river Minnesota, and on the borders of Lake Superior. He returned to Boston in 1768, and thence went to England to solicit from the King some remuneration for his services and aid in publishing his charts and journals. So far from his application being favorably entertained, he was ordered to deliver up his papers as the property of the government, and was obliged to repurchase them from the bookseller to whom he had sold them for publication. He published his *Travels through the Interior of North America*, in 1778, and in 1779 a *Treatise on the Culture of the Tobacco Plant*. He died the following year, destitute and neglected.—Editor.

[1] The original of this letter, with several others belonging to Dr. Cooper, was seized by a British officer in Boston, soon after the battle of Lexington, when many of the inhabitants, and Dr. Cooper among them, had left the town. The parcel was sent to the King, and the letters themselves, in their original form, are now preserved in the British Museum, having been contained in the library presented by George the Fourth to that institution. Copies of the letters in that collection have been procured for this work, and the above letter is one of the number. Hence the complimentary paragraph, intended only for a private friend, was seen by the King five years after it was written, when Franklin was a member of the Continental Congress, and when, from subsequent experience, his sentiments had changed in regard to the King's good dispositions towards at least one part of his subjects. The letters from Dr. Franklin to Dr. Cooper, which were sent to the King as here mentioned, were those dated February 24, April 27, August 3, 1769; April 14, June 8, 1770; February 5, 1771; January 13, 1772; February 25, 1774.—Sparks.

[1] The *associations*, as they were called, or resolutions not to import goods from Great Britain had been unequally observed in

the different colonies, as will appear by the following statement, taken from the custom-house entries, of the value of all the goods exported from England to the several colonies, enumerated, from Christmas, 1767 to Christmas, 1769.

	1767 to 1768.	1768 to 1769.
New England	£419,000	£207,000
New York	482,000	74,000
Pennsylvania	432,000	119,000
Maryland and Virginia	475,000	488,000
Carolina	209,000	306,000

This summary shows a large decrease in the amount of goods exported to the eastern and middle colonies, particularly New York and Pennsylvania, but an increase at the south. This is in part explained by the fact that the necessities of the southern colonies for foreign goods were much greater than at the east, where domestic manufactures had to some extent become established. The statement is transcribed from a letter written by Mr. W. S. Johnson, in London, March 6, 1770.

[1] The office to which Franklin alludes in this letter was probably that of governor of Pennsylvania. It has been said that at one time he was tempted by the offer of the position of under-secretary of State. He was thought of also as a successor to Governor Bernard, in Massachusetts. The ministry would, no doubt, have given him any thing he would have asked to have him with them, but they never found him in a frame of mind which made it safe to approach him with any proposition which was irreconcilable with his devotion and loyalty to the interests of the colonies. Referring to similar reports set afloat some three or four years previous, he wrote to his sister. "As to the reports you mention, that are spread to my disadvantage, I give myself as little concern about them as possible. I have often met with such treatment from people that I was all the while endeavouring to serve. At other times I have been extolled extravagantly, where I had little or no merit. These are the operations of nature. It sometimes is cloudy, it rains, it hails; again it is clear and pleasant, and the sun shines on us. Take one thing with another, and the world is a pretty good sort of a world, and it is our duty to make the best of it and be thankful. One's true happiness depends more upon one's own judgment of one's self, or a consciousness of rectitude in action and intention, and the approbation of those few who judge impartially, than upon the applause of the unthinking, undiscerning multitude, who are apt to cry *Hosanna* to day, and to-morrow, *Crucify him*."

[1] This communication first appeared in the *London Chronicle*, and in reply to "some extracts of letters from officers serving in the British army in America," tending to cover the Americans with ridicule and obloquy, which appeared in that print in the month of May, 1769. I found it in Walsh's *Appeal from the Judgments of Great Britain*, &c., p. 447. It seems to have escaped the attention of Mr. Sparks.—Editor.

[1] Sir Francis Bernard, Governor of Massachusetts. He embarked at Boston on the 1st of August.

[2] Commissioners of the Customs in Boston.

[3] Translated from M. Dubourg's edition of Franklin's Works.

[1] From a tour on the continent.

[1] This young physician was Mr. Hewson, to whom she was married the year following.

[1] At the suggestion of Franklin, the American Philosophical Society was organized in Philadelphia, in 1744. Thomas Hopkinson was president of it and Franklin secretary. Nothing is known of its transactions. The records of its proceedings are lost, and if any papers were contributed by its members, they were never published. Franklin became absorbed in his electrical experiments, and the Society languished. Meantime another society sprang up in Philadelphia, called the *Junto*, or *Society for the Promotion of Useful Knowledge*. The portion of the records of this Society which have been preserved, begin with September 22, 1758.

In 1762 this society apparently began to decline. No records have been found from October, of that year, to April 25, 1766, when the society met, and took the name of *The American Society for Promoting and Propagating Useful Knowledge*. Thirty members then signed the constitution and rules. It was evidently intended now to embrace a much larger compass of objects than formerly, and to have more of a public character. Franklin was elected into this society on the 19th of February, 1768, and chosen president of it on the 4th of November following. He was then absent in England.

In November, 1767, the old Philosophical Society of 1744 was revived by a few of the original members, then residing in Philadelphia. They elected many new members. A union was proposed by the other society, which was accepted on the 2d of February, 1768, by choosing all the members of that association into this society. But they refused to unite on these terms, or on any

other, which did not imply a certain equality between the two associations. On the 23d of September, 1768, the *American Society* was again organized, new rules were adopted, and its title was changed to *The American Society Held at Philadelphia for the Promotion of Useful Knowledge*; and, on the 4th of November, the *Medical Society* of Philadelphia was incorporated with it.

After much negotiation, it was finally agreed that the two societies should unite on equal terms, each electing all the members of the other. This union was effected on the 2d of January, 1769. A new name was formed by uniting those of the two societies, which thus became *The American Philosophical Society Held at Philadelphia for Promoting Useful Knowledge*.

It is of this union that Franklin here speaks.

[1] Some of the author's friends in Philadelphia, engaged in raising silk, sent over a sample of their manufacture as a present to the Queen, which is alluded to in the following note:

"Dr. Franklin presents his respectful compliments to Sir John Pringle, and is much obliged to him for the trouble he has so kindly taken in the affair of the silk, and is very happy to learn that the Queen has graciously condescended to accept it with the purpose of wearing it. Her Majesty's countenance so afforded to the raisers of silk in Pennsylvania, where her character is highly revered, will give them great encouragement to proceed in a measure which the British Parliament seems to have had much at heart, the procuring a supply of that valuable article from our colonies, for which at present large sums are paid to France, Spain, Italy, and the Indies."

[1] Examination before the British House of Commons. See vol. iv., p. 171, under date of February 3, 1766.

[2] Written by John Dickinson, with a Preface by Dr. Franklin. See vol. iv., p. 437.

[1] Mr. Strahan was printer to the King, and became a man of wealth and influence. In 1775 he was elected to Parliament from the borough of Malmsbury, as a colleague with Mr. Fox. He was one of Franklin's oldest and most cherished friends in England.

[1] In the year 1767, for the express purpose of raising a revenue in America, glass, red lead, white lead, painters' colors, paper, and *tea* (which last article was subject to various home impositions) became charged by act of Parliament, with new *permanent* duties payable *in the American ports*. Soon after, in the same sessions, (the East India Company promising indemnification for the

experiment,) a *temporary* alteration was made with respect to the *home* customs or excise upon certain teas; in the hope that a deduction in the nominal imposition, by producing a more extended consumption, would give an increased sum to the exchequer. Mr. Strahan, comparing only the *amounts* of the imposed American duty, and the deducted home duty, determines that the Americans had suffered no new imposition. The Americans, it seems, thought otherwise. Had we established this precedent for a revenue, we thought we had every thing to hope; yet we affected surprise when the colonies avoided an acquiescence, which by parity of reasoning gave *them* every thing to fear.—B. V.

[1] “Men may lose little property by an act which takes away all their freedom. When a man is robbed of a trifle on the highway, it is not the two pence lost that makes the capital outrage. Would twenty shillings have ruined Mr. Hampden’s fortune? No! but the payment of half twenty shillings, on the principle it was demanded would have made him a slave.” See Mr. Burke’s speeches in 1774 and 1775.—B. V.

[1] Nova Scotia, Georgia, the Floridas, and Canada.

[1] “The opposition [to Lord Rockingham’s administration],” says Lord Chesterfield, “are for taking vigorous, as they call them, but I call them violent, measures—not less than *les dragonades*; and to have the tax collected by the troops we have there. For my part, I never saw a froward child mended by whipping; and I would not have the mother become a step-mother.”—*Letter*, No. 360.

“Is it a certain maxim,” pleads Mr. Burke, “that the fewer causes of dissatisfaction are left by government, the more the subject will be inclined to resist and rebel?” “I confess I do not feel the least alarm from the discontents which are to arise from putting people at their ease. Nor do I apprehend the destruction of this empire, from giving, by an act of free grace and indulgence, to two millions of my fellow-citizens, some share of those rights upon which I have always been taught to value myself.”—*Speeches* in 1774 and 1775.—B. V.

[1] This was afterwards attempted by the British legislature, in the case of the Massachusetts Bay province.—B. V.

[2] The Lords and Commons very prudently concurred in an address for this purpose; and the King graciously assured them of his compliance with their wishes.—B. V.

[1] This *State of the Constitution of the Colonies* was printed at the close of 1769, and communicated to various persons, with a view to

prevent mischief from the misunderstandings between the government of Great Britain and the people of America. I have taken the liberty of ascribing it to Governor Pownall, as his name could have been no secret at the time. Dr. Franklin's *Remarks* (which from their early date are the more curious) are in manuscript; and from an observation in reply, signed T. P., appear to have been communicated to Governor Pownall.—B. V.

[2] Pratt and York.

[3] General words in all charters.

[1] Law in New England, confirmed by the crown, October 22, 1700.

[1] 16th Car. I. c. 10.

[2] The case of the court erected by act of Parliament, 11th and 12th of William III. c. 7, (since the enacting of the Habeas Corpus Act) for the trial of piracies, felonies, and robberies committed in or upon the sea, or in any haven, river, creek, or place where the admiral has jurisdiction, does no way affect this position; nor doth the 14th section of the said statute, directing that the commissioners, of whom such court subsists, may issue their warrant for apprehending such pirates, &c., in order to their being tried in the colonies, or sent into England, any way militate with the doctrine here laid down, nor can it be applied as the case of a jurisdiction actually existing, which supersedes the jurisdictions of the courts in the colonies and plantations, and as what authorizes the taking the accused of such piracies, &c., from those jurisdictions, and the sending such, so taken, to England for trial. It cannot be applied as a case similar and in point to the application of an act of Parliament (passed in the 35th of Henry VIII. concerning the trial of treasons), lately recommended, in order to the sending persons, accused of committing crimes in the plantations, to England for trial; because this act of the 11th and 12th of William III. c. 7, respects crimes committed in places "where the admiral has jurisdiction," and cases to which the jurisdiction of those provincial courts do not extend. In the case of treasons committed within the jurisdiction of the colonies and plantations, there are courts competent to try such crimes, and to give judgment thereupon, where the trials of such are regulated by laws to which the King hath given his consent; from which there lies no appeal, and wherein the King hath given power and instruction to his governor, as to execution or respite of judgment. The said act of Henry VIII., which provides remedy for a case which supposes *the want* of due legal jurisdiction, cannot be any way, or

by any rule, applied to a case where there *is* due legal and competent jurisdiction.

[1] In referring to an old act, made for the trial of treasons committed out of the realm by such persons as had no legal residency but within the realm, and who were of the realm, applying the purview of that statute which was made to bring subjects of the realm, who had committed treason out of the realm (where there was no criminal jurisdiction to which they could be amenable), to trial within the realm, under that criminal jurisdiction to which alone, by their legal residency and allegiance, they were amenable; applying this to the case of subjects whose *legal* residency is *without* the realm, and who are, by that residency and their allegiance, amenable to a jurisdiction authorized and empowered to try and give judgment upon all capital offences whatsoever without repeal, thus applying this statute so as to take up a proceeding for which there is no legal process, either by common or statute law as now established, but in defiance of which there is a legal process established by the Habeas Corpus Act, would be to disfranchise the subject in America of those rights and liberties which by statute and common law he is now entitled to.

[2] 13th and 14th Car. II. c. 2.

[1] If the King was to absent himself for a time from the realm, and did, as usual, leave a regency in his place (his *locum tenens* as supreme civil magistrate), could he authorize and commission any military commander-in-chief to command the militia forts and forces *independent of such regency*? Could he do this in the colonies and plantations where the governor is already, by commission or charter, or both, under the great seal, military commander-in-chief, as part of (and inseparably annexed to) the office of supreme civil magistrate his Majesty's *locum tenens* within said jurisdiction? If he could, then while openly, by patent according to law, he appeared to establish a free British constitution, he might by a fallacy establish a military power and government.

[1] Governor Pownall accompanied this paper to Dr. Franklin with a sort of prophetic remark. After stating that these theorems, and their application to existing bases, were intended to remedy the prejudice, indigestion, indecision, and errors then prevailing, either in opinions or conduct, he adds: "The very attention to the investigation may lead to the discovery of *some truths respecting the whole British empire*, then little thought of, and scarce even suspected, and which perhaps it would not be *prudent* at this time to mark and point out." The minister, however, judged the *discussion* of *dubious* rights over growing states a better policy

than possession, discretion, and silence. He turned civilian, and lost an empire.—B. V.

[1] James Barbeau Dubourg, the first French editor of Franklin's works, was an accomplished scholar and naturalist. In 1761, he published a medical periodical; in 1767, he published the *Botaniste Francaise* in two volumes, judged in its day to be "one of the most agreeable elementary books in the language." He translated Bolingbroke's *Letters on History* into French, and held at one time intimate relation with their author. He dedicated his *Petit Code de la Raison Humaine* to Franklin. He was one of the Society of *Economistes* in France.

[1] See *Philosophical Transactions*, Vol. LIX., p. 352.

[1] Alluding to a proposal from Mr. Hewson, a physician of London, to whom Miss Stevenson was soon afterwards married.

[1] This letter is one of those which was sent to the King, as heretofore mentioned. It was seen by Governor Hutchinson before he wrote the third volume of his *History*, in which are contained extracts from it with comments.

[1] These papers were Mr. Strahan's *Queries* respecting American affairs, and Dr. Franklin's answers to them. See *supra*, p. 127.

[2] Alluding to the tragical scene in the streets of Boston, on the 5th of March, commonly called the *Massacre*, when Captain Preston's troops fired upon the inhabitants, and killed three persons.

[1] Mary Stevenson had just been married to Mr. Hewson.

[1] William Temple Franklin, son of William Franklin, Governor of New Jersey. He was educated by his grandfather, subsequently became his private secretary, and the legatee of most of his library and papers.

[1] While Dr. Franklin resided in London he lived for the most part in the family of Mrs. Stevenson in Craven Street. This humorous journal pretends to have been kept during a few days' absence of that lady from home.

[1] See *supra*, page 187.

[1] Mr. Cushing was Speaker of the Massachusetts Assembly, and in this capacity corresponded with Dr. Franklin during his agency for that colony in England.

[2] He succeeded Mr. De Berdt as agent. Mr. Bollan was agent for the Council. The following extracts are taken from the Journal of the House of Representatives in Massachusetts.

*"October 24th, 1770.—*The House proceeded, according to order, to bring in their votes for an agent to appear for this House at the court of Great Britain for one year; and the committee having assorted and counted the votes, reported that Benjamin Franklin was chosen."

*"October 30th.—*Ordered, that Mr. Speaker, Mr. Hancock, and Mr. Samuel Adams prepare a resolve authorizing Benjamin Franklin, to appear as agent for this House, agreeable to the choice made of him on the 24th instant, and report."

*"October 31st.—*Resolved, that Benjamin Franklin be, and hereby is appointed and authorized, in behalf of the House, to appear, as there shall be occasion, before his Majesty in Council, or in either House of Parliament, or before any public board in Great Britain, there to plead, and defend, as the exigency of the case and the service of the province may require, for the space of one year henceforward, agreeably to such directions or instructions as he may from time to time receive from the House, or from such committee as may by them be appointed and authorized for that purpose; relying on his vigilance, and the utmost exertion of his abilities, to support the constitutional rights of this House and the province, and, as far as in him lies, to defend against whatsoever may tend to prejudice the same."

[1] Arthur Lee had taken the degree of doctor in medicine before he commenced the study of the law; hence he was sometimes called Dr. Lee.

[1] Lord Hillsborough.

[1] John Pownall, Secretary to the Board of Trade, and brother to Governor Pownall.

[1] His sister, Mrs. Jane Mecom, was married very young, and became a widow in early life. She was left in narrow circumstances, but these were repaired, as far as they could be, by the generous and constant bounty of her brother. The sickness and death of some of her children, and the ill success of others in their worldly affairs, caused her much affliction. Her deep feeling on the death of a daughter is forcibly expressed in a letter written soon afterwards. "Sorrows roll upon me like the waves of the sea. I am hardly allowed time to fetch my breath. I am broken with breach upon breach, and I have now, in the first flow of my grief, been almost

ready to say, 'What have I more?' But God forbid that I should indulge that thought, though I have lost another child. God is sovereign, and I submit."

She was remarkable for her strength of mind and character, her good sense and practical views of life, resembling in these respects, more than any others of the family, her brother Benjamin, whom she survived, being the youngest of seventeen children, and the last that died.

[1] For an account of this "Ohio affair," see vol. iv., p. 416.

[1] Dr. Franklin sent the papers here requested, and Mr. Rhoads wrote to him a year afterwards as follows: "The several papers and pamphlets on canals came safe to hand, and I hope they will be useful, as I find the reports of the great engineers, Smeaton and Brindley, concerning the Scotch canal, contain a great deal of instruction for us inexperienced Americans. . . . I should have made this acknowledgment by Falconer, but was then out of town with the ingenious David Rittenhouse, on an examination of the ground, in order to judge of the practicability of a canal between the Schuylkill and Susquehanna, to save our western trade from total loss. As he was taken sick on the road, and I was not very well, our discoveries are yet too imperfect to communicate to thee; except that on levelling the waters of the Schuylkill, we find that river to ascend, or the bed of it to rise, near sixty feet in less than twenty miles, and I suppose it to continue the same ascent to Reading."—*May 30th, 1772.*

[1] The members of this committee were Thomas Cushing, James Otis, and Samuel Adams.

[1] It was during this visit to Twyford that Franklin began his Autobiography.

[1] The Assembly of Georgia, of which Mr. Jones was Speaker.

[1] Commissioners appointed by the government to collect the customs in America.

[1] These proposals were printed upon a sheet of paper, and distributed. The parts written by Dr. Franklin and Mr. Dalrymple are easily distinguished.—B. V.

[1] Taken from Dr. Percival's *Essays* (vol. iii., p. 25), being an extract from a letter written to him by Dr. Franklin, on the subject of his Observations on the State of Population in Manchester and Other Adjacent Places.—B. V.

[1] This letter, without date, was first printed in the *Memoirs of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester*, vol. ii., p. 110.

[1] His son, Francis Folger, who died when four years of age.

[1] Dr. Cooper had written. "Mr. Cushing showed me this morning an anonymous letter, directed to him as from London in a feigned hand, representing you as a tool of Lord Hillsborough. Whether it originated on this or your side of the water is uncertain. It will make no impression to your disadvantage, but rather confirm the opinion of your importance, while it shows the baseness of its author."—*August 23, 1771*. Considering the time when Mr. Cushing received this anonymous letter, and that similar sentiments were expressed nearly at the same time in a letter from London to Mr. Samuel Adams, there can be little doubt as to its origin. See the second note to a letter from Dr. Franklin to Mr. Cushing under date of July 7, 1773.

[1] Dr. Franklin had sent to Mr. Bowdoin a set of Queries, respecting the state of affairs in New England, which were given to Edward Randolph by the ministry, when he was about to visit Massachusetts in 1676. Randolph returned answers to them the same year. The queries and answers are contained in Hutchinson's *Collection of Papers*, etc., p. 477. Accompanying the queries, Randolph received an estimate, which is said to have been drawn from the best sources of information. A copy of this estimate was obtained by Dr. Franklin, and sent to Mr. Bowdoin. It is curious as an historical document, and has the merit of brevity. Its date is fifty-six years after the first settlement of Plymouth.

"There are in New England about 120,000 souls; 13,000 families, 16,000 that can bear arms; 12 ships of between 100 and 220 tons; 190, of between 20 and 100 tons; 440 fisherboats of about six tons each.

There are 5 iron works, which cast no guns; 15 merchants worth about £5,000, one with another; 500 persons worth £3,000 each. No house in New England hath above 20 rooms; not 20 in Boston which have above 10 rooms each. About 1,500 families in Boston. The worst cottages in New England are lofted. No beggars; not 3 put to death for theft.

About 35 rivers and harbours. About 23 islands and fishing-places. The three provinces of Boston, Maine, and Hampshire are three fourths of the whole in wealth and strength; the other four provinces of Plymouth, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Kennebec being but one quarter of the whole in effect. Not above three of their military men have ever been actual soldiers, but many are

such soldiers as the artillerymen at London. Amongst their magistrates, Leverett, the governor, Major Dennison, Major Clarke, and Mr. Broadstreet are the most popular. And amongst their ministers, Mr. Thatcher, Mr. Oxenbridge, and Mr. Higginson.

There are no musicians by trade. One dancing-school was set up, but put down. A fencing-school is allowed. All cordage, sailcloth, and nets come from England. No cloth made there worth above 4*s.* a yard, nor linen worth above 2*s.* 6*d.* No allum, nor copperas, nor salt by the sun.

They take an oath of fidelity to the governor, but none to the King, The governor is chosen by every freeman. A freeman must be orthodox, above twenty years of age, and worth about £200."

[1] In the original, here follows an account of his visit to Lord Hillsborough, the same in substance as that contained in the letter to Mr. Cushing, dated January 13th. See *supra*, page 288.

[1] Kidney beans.

[2] Called *hominy*, and much used in the Southern States, but seldom in New England.

[1] In a speech made by the late Governor Tilden on his return from a trip to Europe in the summer of 1877, he alluded to this staple in terms which confer an almost prophetic significance upon this brief paper of Franklin:

"I predict a great increase in the consumption of our corn by Great Britain over the sixty million bushels which it reached last year. It is the most natural and spontaneous of our cereal products. Our present crop ought to be 1,500,000,000 bushels, against 300,000,000 bushels of wheat. It is but little inferior to wheat in nutritive power. It costs less than one half on the seaboard, and much less than one half on the farm. It can be cooked, by those who consent to learn how, into many delicious forms of human food. Why should not the British workmen have cheaper food? Why should not our farmers have a great market? Why should not our carriers have the transportation? Let us remember that commercial exchanges must have some element of mutuality. Whoever obstructs the means of payment obstructs also the facilities of sale. We must relax our barbarous revenue system so as not to retard the natural processes of trade. We must no longer legislate against the wants of humanity and the beneficence of God."

[1] This piece was first printed in the *The London Packet*, June 3, 1772.

[1] No person appeared in New England, who professed the opinion of the Quakers, until 1656; that is, about thirty-six years after the first settling of the colony; when Mary Fisher and Ann Austin came from Barbadoes; and, soon after, nine others arrived in the ship *Speedwell* from London. They were successful in their preaching; and the provincial government, wishing to keep the colony free from them, attempted to send away such as they discovered, and prevent the arrival of others. Securities, fines, banishment, imprisonment, and corporal punishments were instituted for this purpose; but with so little effect, that at last “a law was made for punishing with death all such as should return into the jurisdiction after banishment. A few were hanged.” See *History of the British Dominions*, 4to, 1773, pp. 118, 120.—B. V.

[1] They were to spread the Gospel, and maintain a learned and orthodox clergy, where ministers were wanted or ill provided; administering God’s word and sacraments, and preventing atheism, infidelity, popery, and idolatry.—B. V.

[1] No bishops were appointed in America till after the Revolution. Previously to that time, the ecclesiastical affairs of the Protestant Episcopal Church in this country were under the charge of the Bishop of London. At length, in the year 1786, an act of Parliament was passed, empowering English bishops to consecrate to that office persons who might be subjects or citizens of other countries. In the following year, William White and Samuel Prevoſt were consecrated at Lambeth Palace, the one as Bishop of Pennsylvania, the other of New York.

[1] For further particulars about this New Colony, see vol. iv., p. 416.

[1] On the same subject he ſubſequentlſ wrote the following ſhort notes to Dr. Evans:

“*London, 5 May, 1772.*—You write that, beſides what was ſent here, fifty-four pounds had been reeled at the filature of private perſons, who are getting it manufactured into mitts, ſtockings, and ſtuffs. This gives me great pleaſure to hear; and I hope that practice will be rather followed, than the ſending ſmall parcels to be manufactured here, which are difficult to get done, where all goes on in the great way. Let nothing diſcourage you. Perſeverance will conquer all difficulties; and the contributors will have the glorious ſatisfaction of having procured an inſteſtimable advantage to their country.”

“*London, 3 June, 1772.*—I have at length purchaſed Stringfellow’s right for you, or for you and Mr. James, as you ſettle it between

you. As it was he who immediately recommended the business to me, I have sent the writings to him by this packet. The rights cost £110, and the charges were £5 15 6d. There is a letter of the Proprietary to Mr. Tilghman, which it is supposed will remove all difficulties in the office, and I hope the purchase will prove advantageous. Be so good as to acquaint the Silk Committee, to whom I wrote fully by the last packet, that I have since received the bounty from Boydell, the broker. The whole sum from government was £35 19 6; the charges were £5 11 6; so the net sum received by me was £30 8 0. This, with the £121 5 0, which I am to receive on the 10th instant, will make the whole £152 13 0, subject to the orders of the Committee."

*"London, 2 December, 1772.—*I received your favor of October 21st, with the bill enclosed, drawn on me by order of the managers for promoting the culture of silk, for £152 0 9, in favor of James & Drinker and yourself, and am glad the purchase I made was satisfactory. As the sum exceeds my disbursement, the overplus will wait your orders; and particularly I wish to have directions what I am to pay Mr. Wheeler for his diligence and trouble in the transaction, which really was considerable."

In a letter to his wife, he says:

"The Silk Committee were so good as to make me a present of four pounds of raw silk. I have had it worked up, with some addition of the same kind of silk, into a French grey *ducape*, which is a fashionable color, either for old or young women. I therefore send it as a present to you and Sally, understanding there is enough to make each of you a *negligée*. If you should rather incline to sell it, it is valued here at six shillings and sixpence a yard; but I hope you will wear it."—*July 15, 1773.*

[1] James West was President of the Royal Society from November, 1768, till his death in July, 1772. He possessed a very extensive library of rare and valuable books, which were sold by auction after his death. His curious collection of manuscripts was sold to the Marquis of Lansdowne, of whom they were purchased by Parliament, and they now make a part of the *Lansdowne Manuscripts* in the British Museum.

[1] He wrote the same day to another correspondent. "The session of Parliament has been a quiet one, and now draws near a conclusion. Opposition has made no figure, and Lord North manages ably. Peace is negotiating between the Turks and Russians, and miserable Poland is in a fair way of being pacified too, if the entrance of more standing armies into it can produce peace. There is no appearance of any other war likely to arise in

Europe, and thence a prospect of lessening considerably the national debt. I continue well. Sir John Pringle has proposed to me a journey for this summer to Switzerland. But I have not resolved upon it, and I believe I shall not. I am balancing upon a wish of visiting at least, if not returning for good and all (as the phrase is) to America. If I do not do that, I shall spend the summer with some or other of those friends who have invited me to their country-houses."

[1] This letter is here printed in a translation from the French, as contained in M. Dubourg's edition of the author's writings (tom. i., p. 280).—Ed.

[1] In consequence of this letter the Ordnance Department directed that the advice of the writer should be followed in some respects; but that they might be still better authorized to proceed with regard to other points, these gentlemen were desirous to obtain the sanction of the Royal Society, and therefore requested their opinion. The Royal Society appointed Messrs. Cavendish, Watson, Franklin, Wilson, and Robertson, a committee to examine the subject, and report thereon—Dubourg.

[1] Probably alluding to a piece entitled *Toleration in Old England and New England*, and signed A New England Man. This piece was first printed in the *London Packet*, June 3, 1772. See *supra*, page 313.

[1] The following is the reply which Dr. Franklin wrote to the Duke de Vrillière, who had informed him of his having been chosen a member of the Royal Academy at Paris.

"Dear Sir:—

It was with the greatest pleasure I received the information your Grace has condescended to give me, of my nomination by the King to fill a vacancy in the Academy of Sciences, as *Associé Etranger*. I have a high sense of the great honor thereby conferred on me, and beg that my grateful acknowledgments may be represented to his Majesty. With the greatest respect, &c."

—*London, September 4, 1772.*

[1] Mr. Benjamin Wilson, one of the committee appointed by the Royal Society, dissented from the part of the above report which relates to pointed conductors.—Ed.

"I dissent from the report," said he, "in that part only which recommends that each conductor should terminate in a *point*."

My reason for dissenting is, that such conductors are, in my opinion, less safe than those which are not *pointed*.

Every *point*, as such, I consider as *soliciting* the lightning, and by that means not only contributing to *increase* the quantity of every actual discharge, but also frequently occasioning a discharge, where it might not otherwise have happened.

If, therefore, we invite the lightning, while we are ignorant what the quantity or the effects of it may be, we may be *promoting* the very mischief we mean to prevent.

Whereas if, instead of pointed, we make use of blunted conductors, those will as effectually answer the purpose of conveying away the lightning *safely*, without that tendency to *increase* or *invite* it.

My further reasons for disapproving of *points*, in all cases where conductors are judged necessary, are contained in a letter addressed to the Marquis of Rockingham, and published in the *Philosophical Transactions*, Vol. LIV., p. 247.

There are other reasons also which I have to offer, for rejecting points on this *particular occasion*, and which were *mentioned at the committee*. Those I shall lay before the Royal Society at another opportunity, for the benefit of the public."

[1] An American philanthropist. In 1767, he wrote a caution to Great Britain and her colonies in a short *Representation of the Calamitous State of the Enslaved Negroes in the British Dominions*. In 1772, he published *Historical Accounts of Guinea; with an Inquiry into the Rise and Progress of the Slave Trade, its Nature and lamentable Effect*. This amiable man seemed to have nothing else at heart but the good of his fellow-creatures, and the last act of his life was to take from his desk six dollars for a poor widow.

[1] Mr. Henley's.

[1] M. de Romas saw still greater quantities of lightning brought down by the wire of his kite. He had "explosions from it, the noise of which greatly resembled that of thunder, and were heard (from without) into the heart of the city, notwithstanding the various noises there. The fire seen at the instant of the explosion had the shape of a spindle, eight inches long and five lines in diameter. Yet, from the time of the explosion to the end of the experiment, no lightning was seen above, nor any thunder heard. At another time the streams of fire issuing from it were observed to be an inch

thick, and ten feet long." See Dr. Priestley's *History of Electricity*, pp. 134-136 first edition.

[1] Twelve were proposed on and near the magazines at Purfleet.

[1] It may be fit to mention here, that the immediate occasion of the dispute concerning the preference between pointed and blunt conductors of lightning arose as follows. A powder-mill having blown up at Brescia, in consequence of its being struck with lightning, the English Board of Ordnance applied to their painter, Mr. Wilson, then of some note as an electrician, for a method to prevent the like accident to their magazines at Purfleet. Mr. Wilson having advised a blunt conductor, and it being understood that Dr. Franklin's opinion, formed upon the spot, was for a pointed one, the matter was referred in 1772, to the Royal Society, and by them as usual to a committee, who, after consultation, prescribed a method conformable to Dr. Franklin's theory. But a harmless stroke of lightning having, under particular circumstances, fallen upon one of the buildings and its apparatus in May, 1777, the subject came again into violent agitation, and was again referred to the Society, and by the Society again referred to a new committee, which committee confirmed the decision of the first committee.—B. V.

[1] Islands in the Delaware River, to which Lord Rochford had made a claim.

[1] A daughter of the Bishop of St. Asaph.

[1] The squirrel which furnished the occasion for this bit of pleasantry, had been sent to Miss Shipley by Mrs. Franklin. For fuller particulars of its cruel fate, the reader is referred to a letter from the Doctor to his wife, from London, under date of February 14, 1773. See *infra*, Vol. VI.

[1] What physicians call the perspirable matter is that vapor which passes off from our bodies, from the lungs, and through the pores of the skin. The quantity of this is said to be five eighths of what we eat.—Author.

[1] With this letter were communicated Hutchinson's letters, which produced so much excitement at the time in Massachusetts.

[1] On the 20th of November, 1772, there was a meeting of the inhabitants of Boston, at which was read a report of a committee, who had been appointed at a previous meeting. This report contained a view of the state of public affairs, touching largely on the rights of the colonists, and the infringement and violations of

those rights by the British government. It was the boldest exposition of the American grievances, which had hitherto been made public, and was drawn up with as much ability as freedom.

Hutchinson says of this report of the committee, that, "although at its first appearance it was considered as their own work, yet they had little more to do than to make the necessary alterations in the arrangement of materials prepared for them by their great director in England, whose counsels they obeyed, and in whose wisdom and dexterity they had an implicit faith. Such principles in government were avowed, as would be sufficient to justify the colonies in revolting, and forming an independent state; and such instances were given of the infringement of their rights by the exercise of Parliamentary authority, as, upon like reasons, would justify an exception to the authority in all cases whatever; nevertheless, there was color for alleging that it was not 'expressly' denied in 'every' case. The whole frame of it, however, was calculated to strike the colonists with a sense of their just claim to independence, and to stimulate them to assert it."—*History of Massachusetts*, vol. iii., p. 364.

The person alluded to by Governor Hutchinson, as "the great director in England," was Dr. Franklin, and it is insinuated, that he was in effect the author of the report; but this is in no sense true, nor did he wholly approve the measures adopted at that meeting. He thought the affair was carried a little farther than the occasion required at the time, and was afraid that ill consequences would result. It was only the time and manner of bringing the subject forward, however, upon which he had any doubts. To the sentiments expressed in the report of the committee, and adopted by the inhabitants of the town, he fully assented. This is proved by his sending a copy of the proceedings to the press, as soon as he received it in London, with a prefatory notice written by himself. The pamphlet was entitled, *The Votes and Proceedings of the Freeholders and other Inhabitants of the Town of Boston, in Town Meeting assembled, according to Law. Published by Order of the Town*. The following is Dr. Franklin's Preface to the London edition.—Sparks.

[1] Lord Hillsborough. This nobleman, already first Lord of Trade, was introduced in 1768 into the *new-titled office* of Secretary of State for the Colonies.—B. V.

[1] Mr. Burke says (in his speech in 1774), that this preamble tax had lost us at once the benefit of the west and of the east; had thrown open the folding-doors to contraband; and would be the means of giving the profits of the colony trade to every nation but ourselves. He adds, in the same place: "It is indeed a tax of

sophistry, a tax of pedantry, a tax of disputation, a tax of war and rebellion, a tax for any thing but benefit to the imposers, or satisfaction to the subject.”—B. V.

[1] Some of his circular-letters had been criticized and exposed by one or two of the American assemblies.—B. V.

[1] “*Eighty-five pounds*, I am assured, my Lords, is the whole equivalent we have received for all the hatred and mischief, and all the infinite losses this kingdom has suffered during that year, in her disputes with North America.” See the Bishop of St. Asaph’s “*Speech, intended to have been spoken.*”—B. V.

[2] At this time they contained many millions of pounds of tea, including the usual stock on hand. Mr. Burke, in his Speech in 1774, supposes that America might have given a vent for ten millions of pounds. This seems to have been the greater part of the whole quantity.—B. V.

[3] On account of a temporary compromise of certain disputes with government.—B. V.

[4] Seen in certain memorable mercantile failures in the year 1772.

[1] The report which follows was drawn up by Lord Hillsborough President of the Board of Trade, in opposition to the petition of a company of gentlemen, with Thomas Walpole at their head, for a grant of land on the Ohio River, already referred to in the preceding correspondence as *Walpole’s Grant*.

It is followed by an answer prepared by Dr. Franklin, which proved so cogent and conclusive that when the subject came again before the council on the first of July, 1772, and his answer was read, the petition was granted. Hillsborough was greatly chagrined by his defeat, and shortly after resigned his seat as President of the Board of Trade. Lord Dartmouth succeeded him. In both changes Hillsborough’s late colleagues, as well as the colonies, found great satisfaction. In a letter to his son, dated July 14, 1773, Franklin wrote of this matter:

“Mr. Todd, who has some attachment to Lord Hillsborough, told me, as a secret, that Lord Hillsborough was much chagrined at being out of place, and could never forgive me for writing that pamphlet against his report about the Ohio. Of all the men I ever met with, he is surely the most unequal in his treatment of people, the most insincere, and the most wrong-headed. Witness, besides his various behavior to me, his duplicity in encouraging us to ask for more land. ‘*Ask for enough to make a province*’ (when we at

first asked only for two millions five hundred thousand acres), were his words, pretending to befriend our application; then doing every thing to defeat it, and reconciling the first to the last by saying to a friend, that he meant to defeat it from the beginning, and that his putting us upon asking so much was with that very view, supposing it too much to be granted. Thus, by the way, his mortification becomes double. He has served us by the very means he meant to destroy us, and tripped up his own heels into the bargain."

Lord Hillsborough's report and Dr. Franklin's answer were published, in the year 1797, in the second volume of a work entitled *Biographical, Literary, and Political Anecdotes of Several of the Most Eminent Persons of the Present Age*. The author of that work remarks on the subject as follows:

"Lord Hillsborough was so much offended by the decision of the Privy Council, that he resigned upon it. He resigned for that reason only. He had conceived the idea, and was forming the plan, of a boundary line to be drawn from the Hudson River to the Mississippi, and thereby confining the British colonies between that line and the ocean, similar to the scheme of the French after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, which brought on the war of 1756. His favorite project being thus defeated, he quitted the ministry. Dr. Franklin's answer to the report of the Board of Trade was intended to have been published, but, Lord Hillsborough resigning, Dr. Franklin stopped the sale on the morning of the publication, when not above *five* copies had been disposed of."

Whatever may have been Hillsborough's other accomplishments, this report shows conclusively that he was but poorly equipped for a seat in the executive councils of a great empire.—Ed.