

LETTERS

OF

Mrs. ADAMS,

THE WIFE OF JOHN ADAMS.

WITH AN

INTRODUCTORY MEMOIR

BY HER GRANDSON,

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS.

VOLUME II.

SECOND EDITION.

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CHARLES C. LITTLE AND JAMES BROWN.

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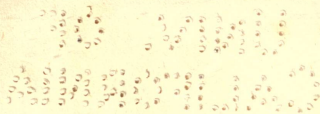
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In Memoriam

S. W. Bunnell.

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LETTERS.



LETTERS.

TO MRS. CRANCH.

On board ship Active, Latitude 44, Longitude 34.
Tuesday, 6 July, 1784. From the Ocean.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I HAVE been sixteen days at sea, and have not attempted to write a single letter. 'Tis true, I have kept a journal whenever I was able; but that must be close locked up, unless I was sure to hand it you with safety.

'Tis said of Cato, the Roman Censor, that one of the three things, which he regretted during his life, was going once by sea when he might have made his journey by land. I fancy the philosopher was not proof against that most disheartening, dispiriting malady, sea-sickness. Of this I am very sure, that no lady would ever wish a second time to try the sea, were the objects of her pursuit within the reach of a land journey. I have had frequent occasion, since I came on board, to recollect an observation of

my best friend's, "that no being in nature was so disagreeable as a lady at sea," and this recollection has in a great measure reconciled me to the thought of being at sea without him ; for one would not wish, my dear sister, to be thought of in that light by those, to whom we would wish to appear in our best array. The decency and decorum of the most delicate female must in some measure yield to the necessities of nature ; and, if you have no female capable of rendering you the least assistance, you will feel grateful to any one who will feel for you, and relieve or compassionate your sufferings.

And this was truly the case of your poor sister and all her female companions, when not one of us could make her own bed, put on or take off her shoes, or even lift a finger. As to our other clothing, we wore the greater part of it until we were able to help ourselves. Added to this misfortune, Briesler, my man-servant, was as bad as any of us. But for Job, I know not what we should have done. Kind, attentive, quick, neat, he was our nurse for two days and nights ; and, from handling the sails at the top-gallant-mast head, to the more feminine employment of making wine-cordial, he has not his equal on board. In short, he is the favorite of the whole ship. Our sickness continued for ten days, with some intermissions. We crawled upon deck whenever we were able ; but it was so cold and damp, that we could not remain long upon it. And the confinement of the air below, the constant rolling of the vessel, and the nausea of the ship, which was

much too tight, contributed to keep up our disease. The vessel is very deep loaded with oil and potash. The oil leaks, the potash smokes and ferments. All adds to the *flavor*. When you add to all this the horrid dirtiness of the ship, the slovenliness of the steward, and the unavoidable slopping and spilling occasioned by the tossing of the ship, I am sure you will be thankful that the pen is not in the hand of Swift or Smollet, and still more so that you are far removed from the scene. No sooner was I able to move, than I found it necessary to make a bustle amongst the waiters, and demand a cleaner abode. By this time, Briesler was upon his feet, and, as I found I might reign mistress on board without any offence, I soon exerted my authority with scrapers, mops, brushes, infusions of vinegar, &c., and in a few hours you would have thought yourself in a different ship. Since which, our abode is much more tolerable, and the gentlemen all thank me for my care. Our captain is an admirable seaman, always attentive to his sails and his rigging; keeps the deck all night; careful of everybody on board; watchful that they run no risk; kind and humane to his men, who are all as still and quiet as any private family; nothing cross or dictatorial in his manners; a much more agreeable man than I expected to find him. He cannot be called a polished gentleman; but he is, so far as I have seen, a very clever man.

We have for passengers, a Colonel Norton, who is a grave, sedate man, of a good natural understanding, improved by business and converse with mankind;

his literary accomplishments not very great. A Mr. Green, a Scotchman I am persuaded ; a high prerogative man ; plumes himself upon his country ; haughty and imperious, but endeavours to hide this with the appearance of politeness, which, however, he is too apt to transgress upon any occasion when a subject arises which does not entirely agree with his sentiments ; he calls himself an Englishman ; has been in the British service during the war, as a secretary on board some of the British admirals. He is a man of sense and of reading, the most so of any we have on board. Next to him is Dr. Clark, to whom we are under obligations for every kindness and every attention, that it is in the power of a gentleman and a physician to show. Humane, benevolent, tender, and attentive not only to the ladies, but to every one on board, to the servant as well as the master, he has rendered our voyage much more agreeable and pleasant than it possibly could have been without him. His advice we have stood in need of, and his care we have felt the benefit of. A brother could not have been kinder, nor a parent tenderer, and it was all in the pleasant, easy, cheerful way, without any thing studied, labored, or fulsome ; the natural result of a good heart, possessed with the power of making others happy.

'Tis not a little attention that we ladies stand in need of at sea ; for it is not once in the twenty-four hours that we can even cross the cabin without being held or assisted. Nor can we go upon deck without the assistance of two gentlemen, and when there, we

are always bound into our chairs. Whilst you, I imagine, are scorching under the midsummer heat, we can comfortably bear our double calico gowns, our baize ones upon them, and a cloth cloak in addition to all these.

Mr. Foster is another passenger on board, a merchant, a gentleman soft in his manners, very polite and kind ; loves domestic life, and thinks justly of it. I respect him on this account. Mr. Spear brings up the rear, a single gentleman, with a great deal of good humor, some wit, and much drollery ; easy and happy, blow high or blow low ; can sleep and laugh at all seasons. These are our male companions. I hardly thought a Lieutenant Mellicot worth mentioning, who is, I believe, a mere pot-companion, though he keeps not with us except at meal-times, when he does not behave amiss. My namesake¹ you know. She is a modest, pretty woman, and behaves very well.

I have accustomed myself to writing a little every day, when I was able, so that a small motion of the ship does not render it more unintelligible than usual ; but there is no time, since I have been at sea, when the ship is what we call still, that its motion is not equal to the moderate rocking of a cradle. As to wind and weather, since we came out, they have been very fortunate for us in general. We have had three calm days, and two days con-

¹ A Mrs. Adams, a passenger, bearing the same name, but in no way related to the author of the letter.

trary wind, with a storm, I called it ; but the sailors say it was only a breeze. This was upon the Banks of Newfoundland, the wind at east ; through the day we could not sit in our chairs, only as some gentleman sat by us with his arm fastened into ours, and his feet braced against a table or chair, that was lashed down with ropes ; bottles, mugs, plates, crashing to pieces, first on one side and then on the other ; the sea running mountain-high, and knocking against the sides of the vessel as though it would burst them. When I became so fatigued with the incessant motion as not to be able to sit any longer, I was assisted into my cabin, where I was obliged to hold myself in with all my might the remainder of the night. No person, who is a stranger to the sea, can form an adequate idea of the debility occasioned by sea-sickness. The hard rocking of a ship in a storm, and the want of sleep for many nights, altogether reduce one to such a lassitude that you care little for your fate. The old seamen thought nothing of all this, nor once entertained an idea of danger. Compared to what they have suffered, I do suppose it was trifling ; but to me it was alarming, and I most heartily prayed, if this was only a breeze, to be delivered from a storm.

Our accommodations on board are not what I could wish, or hoped for. We cannot be alone, only when the gentlemen are thoughtful enough to retire upon deck, which they do for about an hour in the course of the day. Our state-rooms are about half as large as cousin Betsey's little chamber, with

two cabins in each. Mine had three, but I could not live so. Upon which Mrs. Adams's brother gave up his to Abby,¹ and we are now stowed two and two. This place has a small grated window, which opens into the companion-way, and by this is the only air admitted. The door opens into the cabin, where the gentlemen all sleep, and where we sit, dine, &c. We can only live with our door shut, whilst we dress and undress. Necessity has no law; but what should I have thought on shore, to have laid myself down to sleep in common with half a dozen gentlemen? We have curtains, it is true, and we only in part undress, about as much as the Yankee bundlers; but we have the satisfaction of falling in with a set of well-behaved, decent gentlemen, whose whole deportment is agreeable to the strictest delicacy, both in word and action.

If the wind and weather continue as favorable as they have hitherto been, we expect to make our passage in thirty days, which is going a hundred miles a day. 'Tis a vast tract of ocean which we have to traverse; I have contemplated it with its various appearances. It is indeed a secret world of wonders, and one of the sublimest objects in Nature.

“Thou mak'st the foaming billows roar,
Thou mak'st the roaring billows sleep.”

They proclaim the Deity, and are objects too vast for the control of feeble man. That Being alone,

¹ The daughter of Mrs. Adams.

who "maketh the clouds his chariot, and rideth upon the wings of the wind," is equal to the government of this stupendous part of creation.

And now, my dear sister, after this minute account of my important self, which, judging by myself, you take an affectionate interest in, I call upon you to inquire after your welfare, my much esteemed brother's, and my dear niece's. Not a day or night but I visit your calm retreat, look at my own deserted habitation, and recollect past endearments with a melancholy composure, and really am so vain as to commiserate you on account of the vacuity I fancy my absence occasions.

"We are so formed," says an ingenious writer, "as to be always pleased with somewhat in prospect, however distant, or however trivial." Thus do I gratify myself with the idea of returning to my native land, though the prospect is distant. "Pleasures," says Pope, "are ever in our hands or eyes." I have lost part of the other line, but the idea is, that, if we are not in the present possession of them, they rise to us in prospect.¹ I will now tell you where I am sitting. At a square table in the great cabin, at one corner of which are Colonel Norton and Mr. Foster, engaged in playing backgammon; at the other, Mr. Green, writing; and at the fourth, Dr. Clark, eating ham. Behind Colonel Norton, Mr. Spear, reading Thomson's "Seasons" with his hat on. Young Lawrence be-

¹ "Pleasures are ever in our hands and eyes;
And when in act they cease, in prospect rise."

hind me, reading Anson's "Voyages;" Esther,¹ knitting; the steward and boys, bustling about after wine and porter; and last of all, as the least importantly employed, Mrs. Adams and Abby, in their cabin asleep, and this at twelve o'clock in the day. O shame! The Captain comes down and finds me writing; kindly tenders me some large paper to write upon; I believe he thinks I shall have occasion for it. This man has a kindness in his disposition, which his countenance does not promise. Mr. Green comes down from deck, and reports that the mate says we are sixteen hundred miles on our way. This is good nearing; I can scarcely realize myself upon the ocean, or that I am within fourteen hundred miles of the British coast. I rejoice with trembling; painful and fearful ideas will arise and intermix with the pleasurable hopes of a joyful meeting of my long absent friend. I frequently recollect some lines of Miss More's, in her "Sir Eldred of the Bower," describing a mixture of hope and anxiety. She says;

" 'T was such a sober sense of joy,
As angels well might keep;
A joy chastised by piety,
A joy prepared to weep."

I shall write, whilst I am on board, whenever I can catch a quiet time. It is an amusement to me; reading tires one; work I do sometimes, but, when there

¹ A female domestic of Mrs. Adams.

is no writing, there is less pleasure in working; I shall keep the letter open until I arrive, and put it on board the first vessel I find coming to America. 'Tis impossible for me to find any variety at sea to entertain my friends with, so that this letter with all its inaccuracies must be submitted to them. Do not however expose me, especially where I have a little credit; you know very well that affection and intimacy will cover a multitude of faults.

7 July.

If I did not write every day, I should lose the days of the month and of the week; confined all day on account of the weather, which is foggy, misty, and wet. You can hardly judge how irksome this confinement is. When the whole ship is at our service, it is little better than a prison. We suppose ourselves near the Western Islands. O dear variety! how pleasing to the human mind is change. I cannot find such a fund of entertainment within myself as not to require outward objects for my amusement. Nature abounds with variety, and the mind, unless fixed down by habit, delights in contemplating new objects, and the variety of scenes which present themselves to the senses were certainly designed to prevent our attention from being too long fixed upon any one object. "This," says a late celebrated medical writer, "greatly conduces to the health of the animal frame; your studious people and your deep thinkers," he observes, "seldom enjoy either health or spirits."

I have been in much trouble, upon looking over my letters since I came on board, to find those given me by my friend, Mrs. Warren, missing. I cannot account for it in any other way, than that I must have put them into the pocket of the chaise, when I received them, which I recollect ; and I did not think to take them out. You remember the day with all the circumstances, and will accordingly apologize to our friend, whose goodness, I know, will pardon the omission, nor add to my mortification by charging it to inattention.

8 July.

Another wet, drizzly day, but we must not complain, for we have a fair wind, our sails all square, and go at seven knots an hour. I have made a great acquisition. I have learnt the names and places of all the masts and sails ; and the Captain compliments me by telling me that he is sure I know well enough how to *steer*, to take a turn at the helm. I may do pretty well in fair weather, but 'tis your masculine spirits that are made for storms. I love the tranquil scenes of life. Nor can I look forward to those in which 'tis probable I shall soon be engaged with those pleasurable ideas, which a retrospect of the past presents to my mind.

I went last evening upon deck, at the invitation of Mr. Foster, to view that phenomenon of Nature, a blazing ocean. A light flame spreads over the ocean, in appearance, with thousands of thousands of spark.

ling gems, resembling our fire-flies in a dark night. It has a most beautiful appearance. I never view the ocean without being filled with ideas of the sublime, and am ready to break forth with the Psalmist, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; in wisdom hast thou made them all."

Saturday, 10th.

Yesterday was a very pleasant day. Very little wind, but a fine sun and a smooth sea. I spent most of the day upon deck, reading; it was not, however, so warm but a baize gown was very comfortable. The ship has gradually become less irksome to me. If our cook was but tolerably clean, I could relish my food. But he is a great, dirty, lazy negro, with no more knowledge of cookery than a savage, nor any kind of order in the distribution of his dishes; but on they come, higgledy-piggledy, with a leg of pork all bristly; a quarter of an hour after, a pudding; or, perhaps, a pair of roast fowls, first of all, and then will follow one by one a piece of beef, and, when dinner is nearly completed, a plate of potatoes. Such a fellow is a real imposition upon the passengers. But gentlemen know but little about the matter, and, if they can get enough to eat five times a day, all goes well. We ladies have not eaten, upon our whole passage, more than just enough to satisfy nature, or to keep body and soul together.

Thursday, 15th of July.

On Sunday, I wrote part of a letter to sister Shaw, since which I have not used my pen, even in my journal. Monday we had a fair wind, but too much to be able to write, as it was right aft, and we pitched exceedingly, which is a motion more disagreeable to me than the rocking, though less fatiguing. On Tuesday a calm. Should you not suppose that in a calm we at least had the satisfaction of lying still? Alas! it is far otherwise, as my flesh and bones witness; a calm generally succeeds a storm or a fresh breeze; the sea has a great swell after the wind is silent, so that the ship lies entirely at the mercy of the waves, and is knocked from side to side with a force you can form no idea of without experience. I have been more wearied and worn out with the motion and exercise of a calm than in riding fifty miles in a day. We have had three days in succession nearly calm; the first is the most troublesome, as the motion of the sea subsides in a degree. It is, however, a great trial of one's patience, to think yourself within a few days of your desired port, to look at it as the promised land, and yet to be held fast;

“Ye too, ye winds, I raise my voice to you.

In what far distant region of the sky,

Hushed in deep silence, sleep you when 't is calm?”

I begin to think, that a calm is not desirable in any situation in life. Every object is most beautiful in motion; a ship under sail, trees gently agitated with

the wind, and a fine woman dancing, are three instances in point. Man was made for action and for bustle too, I believe. I am quite out of conceit with calms. I have more reason for it, too, than many others, for the dampness of the ship has for several days threatened me with the rheumatism; and yesterday morning I was seized with it in good earnest. I could not raise my head, nor get out of bed without assistance. I had a good deal of fever, and was very sick. I was fearful of this before I came to sea, and had proper medicine put up, which the doctor administered. What with that, good nursing and rubbing, flannel, &c., I am able to-day to sit up in my bed and write, as you see. To-day we have a small wind, but 't is right ahead. This is still mortifying, but what we had reason to expect. Patience, patience, patience, is the first, second, and third virtue of a seaman, or, rather, as necessary to him as to a statesman. Three days' good wind would give us land.

Friday.

We have another wet, misty day; the cabin so damp that I dare not sit in it; I am therefore obliged, confined as it is, to keep in my own little room, and upon my bed. I long for the day which will give us land. Esther makes but a poor hand at sea. Scarcely a day, but what she is sick some part of it. I hope she will be the better for it when she gets on shore. We have but one passenger

whom we should have been willing to have been without. I have no particular reason to dislike him, as he is studiously complaisant to me ; but I know his politeness to me is not personally upon my own account, but because of my connexion, which gives me importance sufficient to entitle me to his *notice*. Abby says he is exactly such a character as Mr. A—. I really think there is a striking resemblance. He was always inquiring, “ Who was such a general ? What was his origin and rank in life ? ” I have felt a disposition to quarrel with him several times, but have restrained myself, and only observed to him, mildly, that merit, not title, gave a man preëminence in our country ; that I did not doubt it was a mortifying circumstance to the British nobility to find themselves so often conquered by mechanics and mere husbandmen ; but that we esteemed it our glory to draw such characters not only into the field, but into the Senate ; and I believed no one would deny that they had shone in both. All our passengers enjoyed this conversation, and the *gentleman* was civil enough to drop the subject ; but the venom spits out very often ; yet the creature is sensible and entertaining when upon indifferent subjects. He is a haughty Scotchman ; he hates the French, and upon all occasions ridicules them and their country. I fancy, from his haughty airs, that his own rank in life has not been superior to those whom he affects to despise. He is not a man of liberal sentiments, and is less beloved than any passenger we have on board.

A man's humor contributes much to the making him agreeable or otherwise. Dark and sour humors, especially those which have a spice of malevolence in them, are vastly disagreeable. Such men have no music in their souls. I believe he would hardly be so complaisant, if he knew how meanly I thought of him ; but he deserves it all ; his whole countenance shows his heart.

Saturday, 17 July.

Give me joy, my dear sister ; we have sounded to-day and found bottom, fifty-five fathom. We have seen, through the course of the day, twenty different sail, and spoke with a small boat upon a smuggling expedition, which assured us we were within the Channel.

18 July.

This day four weeks we came on board. Are you not all calculating to-day that we are near the land ? Happily, you are not wrong in your conjectures. I do not despair of seeing it yet before night, though our wind is very small and light. The captain has just been down to advise us, as the vessel is so quiet, to get what things we wish to carry on shore into our small trunks. He hopes to land us at Portsmouth, seventy miles distant from London, to-morrow or next day ; from thence we are to proceed, in post-chaises, to London. The ship may

be a week in the Channel before she will be able to get up.

Deal, 20 July.

Heaven be praised, I have safely landed upon the British coast. How flattering, how smooth the ocean, how delightful was Sunday, the 18th of July. We flattered ourselves with the prospect of a gentle breeze to carry us on shore at Portsmouth, where we agreed to land, as going up the Channel always proves tedious ; but on Sunday night the wind shifted to the southwest, which, upon this coast, is the same with our northeast winds. It blew a gale on Sunday night, on Monday and Monday night, equal to an equinoctial. We were obliged to carry double-reefed topsails only, and what added to our misfortunes was, that, though we had made land the day before, it was so thick that we could not certainly determine what land it was. It is now Tuesday, and I have slept only four hours since Saturday night, such was the tossing and tumbling on board our ship. The captain never left the deck the whole time, either to eat or sleep, though they told me there was no danger ; nor do I suppose that there really was any, as we had sea-room enough. Yet, the great number of vessels constantly coming out of the Channel, and the apprehension of being run down, or being nearer the land than we imagined, kept me constantly agitated. Added to this, I had a violent sick headache. O ! what

would I have given to have been quiet upon the land. You will hardly wonder, then, at the joy we felt this day in seeing the cliffs of Dover, Dover castle, and town. The wind was in some measure subsided. It rained, however, and was as squally as the month of March; the sea ran very high; a pilot-boat came on board at about ten o'clock this morning. The captain came to anchor with his ship in the Downs, and the little town of Deal lay before us. Some of the gentlemen talked of going on shore with the pilot-boat, and sending for us if the wind subsided. The boat was about as large as a Charlestown ferry-boat, and the distance from the ship about twice as far as from Boston to Charlestown; a shore as bold as Nantasket beach; no wharf, but you must be run right on shore by a wave, where a number of men stand to catch hold of the boat, and draw it up. The surf ran six feet high, but this we did not know until driven on by a wave; for the pilots, eager to get money, assured the gentlemen they could land us safe, without our being wet; and, as we saw no prospect of its being better through the day, we accordingly agreed to go. We were wrapped up and lowered from the ship into the boat; the whole ship's crew eager to assist us; the gentlemen attentive and kind as though we were all brothers and sisters. We have spent a month together, and were as happy as the sea would permit us to be. We set off from the vessel, now mounting upon the top of a wave high as a steeple, and then so low that the boat was not to be seen.

I could keep myself up no other way than as one of the gentlemen stood braced up against the boat, fast hold of me, and I with both my arms round him; the other ladies were held in the same manner, whilst every wave gave us a broadside, and finally a wave landed us with the utmost force upon the beach, the broadside of the boat right against the shore, which was owing to the bad management of the men, and the high sea.

(Thus far I had proceeded in my account, when a summons to tea prevented my adding more; since which I have not been able to take my pen. Though now, at my lodgings in London, I will take up the thread where I left it, until the whole ball is unwound. Every particular will be interesting to my friends, I presume, and to no others expose this incorrect scrawl.)

We consequently all pressed upon the side next the shore, to get out as quick as possible, which we need not have done, if we had known what I afterwards found to be the case, that it was the only way in which we could be landed, and not, as I at first supposed, owing to the bad management of the boatmen. We should have sat still for a succession of waves to have carried us up higher, but the roar of them terrified us all, and we expected the next would fill our boat; so out we sprang, as fast as possible, sinking every step into the sand, and looking like a parcel of Naiads, just rising from the sea. A public house was fortunately just at hand, into which we thankfully entered, changed our clothing,

dried ourselves, and, not being able to procure carriages that day, we engaged them for six o'clock the next morning, and took lodgings there, all of us, ten in number. Mr. Green set off immediately for London; nobody mourned. We were all glad to retire early to rest. For myself, I was so faint and fatigued, that I could get but little. We rose at five, and, our post-chaises being all at the door, we set off, in the following order; Mr. Foster, myself, and Esther, in one, Dr. Clark and Abby in the second, Colonel Norton, Mrs. Adams and brother, in the third, and Mr. Spear and Lieutenant Mellicot brought up the rear. Our first stage was eighteen miles, from Deal to Canterbury, where we breakfasted; the roads are fine, and a stone a novelty; I do not recollect to have seen one, except the pavements of Canterbury and other towns, from Deal to London, which is seventy-two miles. Vast fields of wheat, oats, English beans, and the horse-bean, with hops, are the produce of the country through which we passed, which is cultivated like a garden down to the very edge of the road, and what surprised me was that very little was enclosed within fences. Hedge fences are almost the only kind you see; no cattle at large without a herdsman; the oxen are small, but the cows and sheep very large, such as I never saw before. When we arrive at the end of our stage, we discharge the first carriages, and call for new ones, which will be ready in a few moments after you issue your orders. Call for breakfast, you have it, perhaps, in ten minutes for ten people, with

the best of attendance, and at a reasonable price. Canterbury is a larger town than Boston. It contains a number of old Gothic cathedrals, which are all of stone, very heavy, with but few windows, which are grated with large bars of iron, and look more like jails for criminals, than places designed for the worship of the Deity. One would suppose, from the manner in which they are guarded, that they apprehended devotion would be stolen. They have a most gloomy appearance, and really made me shudder. The houses, too, have a heavy look, being chiefly thatched roofs, or covered with crooked brick tiles. Now and then you would see upon the road a large wood, looking like a forest, for a whole mile, enclosed with a high brick wall, or cemented stone ; an enormous iron gate would give one a peep, as we passed, of a large pile of building, which looked like the castles of some of the ancient barons ; but, as we were strangers in the country, we could only conjecture what they were, and what they might have been. We proceeded from Canterbury to Rochester, about fifteen miles, another pretty town, not so large as the former. From thence to Chatham, where we stopped at a very elegant inn to dine. As soon as you drive into the yard, you have at these places as many footmen round you as you have carriages, who, with their politest airs, take down the step of your carriage, assist you out, inquire if you want fresh horses or carriages ; “ Will supply you directly, Sir,” is the answer ; a well-dressed hostess steps forward, making

a lady-like appearance, and wishes your commands ; if you desire a chamber, the chambermaid attends ; you request dinner, say in half an hour ; the bill of fare is directly brought ; you mark what you wish to have, and suppose it to be a variety of fish, fowl, and meat, all of which we had, up to eight different dishes, besides vegetables. The moment the time you stated is out, you will have your dinner upon table in as elegant a style as at any gentleman's table, with your powdered waiters, and the master or mistress always brings the first dish upon table in person. But you must know that travelling in a post-chaise is what entitles you to all this respect.

From Chatham we proceeded on our way as fast as possible, wishing to pass Blackheath before dark. Upon this road, a gentleman alone in a chaise passed us, and very soon a coach before us stopped, and there was a hue and cry, " A robbery, a robbery ! " The man in the chaise was the person robbed, and this in open day with carriages constantly passing. We were not a little alarmed, and every one was concealing his money. Every place we passed and every post-chaise we met was crying out, " A robbery ! " Where the thing is so common, I was surprised to see such an alarm. The robber was pursued and taken in about two miles, and we saw the poor wretch, ghastly and horrible, brought along on foot ; his horse ridden by a person who took him, who also had his pistol. He looked like a youth of twenty only, attempted to lift his hat, and looked despair. You can form some idea of my feelings when they

told him, "Ay, you have but a short time ; the assize sits next month ; and then, my lad, you swing." Though every robber may deserve death, yet to exult over the wretched is what *our* country is not accustomed to. Long may it be free from such villanies, and long may it preserve a commiseration for the wretched.

We proceeded, until at about eight o'clock I was set down at Low's Hotel in Covent Garden, the Court end of the town. These lodgings I took only for one night, until others more private could be procured. As I found Mr. Adams was not here, I did not wish such expensive apartments. It was the hotel at which he kept, when he resided here. Mr. Spear set out in quest of Mr. Smith ; but he had received intelligence of my coming out with Captain Lyde, and had been in quest of me but half an hour before at this very place. Mr. Spear was obliged to go first to the custom-house, and, as good fortune would have it, Mr. Smith and Mr. Storer were near it and saw him alight from the coach, upon which he informed them of my arrival. Though a mile distant, they set out upon a full run, (they say,) and very soon, to our mutual satisfaction, we met in the hotel. "How do you ?" and "How do ye ?" "We rejoice to see you here ;" and a thousand such kind of inquiries as take place between friends, who have not seen each other for a long time, naturally occurred. My first inquiry was for Mr. Adams. I found that my son had been a month waiting for my arrival in London, expecting

me with Callaghan, but that, upon getting letters by him, he returned to the Hague. Mr. Smith had received a letter from his father, acquainting him that I had taken passage with Captain Lyde. This intelligence he forwarded three days before I came, so that I hourly expect either Mr. Adams or Master John. I should have mentioned, that Mr. Smith had engaged lodgings for me, to which Mr. Storer and he accompanied me this morning, after paying a guinea and a half for tea last evening, and lodging and breakfast, a coach included, not however to carry me a greater distance than from your house to our own. The gentlemen all took less expensive lodgings than mine, excepting Dr. Clark, who tarried with us. He said he would not quit us until we were fixed in our present hotel; the direction to which is "Osborne's New Family Hotel, Adelphi, at Mrs. Sheffield's, No. 6." Here we have a handsome drawing-room, genteelly furnished, and a large lodging-room. We are furnished with a cook, chambermaid, waiter, &c., for three guineas a week; but in this is not included a mouthful of victuals or drink, all of which is to be paid for separately.

Friday, 24 July.

I have little time for writing now, I have so many visitors. I hardly know how to think myself out of my own country, I see so many Americans about me. The first persons who called to see me

after my arrival here, were Mr. Jackson, Mr. Winslow Warren, Mr. Rogers, Mr. Ward Boylston, Mrs. Atkinson, and yesterday morning before I had breakfasted, (for the fashionable hours of the city had taken hold of me, not out of choice but necessity; Miss A. having a hairdresser. I had directed breakfast at nine o'clock; it was ten, however, but those were early visiting hours for this fine city, yet,) whilst I was breakfasting, who should be announced to me but *Parson Walter* and Mrs. Hallowell? ¹ both appeared very glad to see me. Mrs. Hallowell treated me with her old affability and engaged me to dine with her to-day; "not," says she, "to a feast, for we make none; but to an unceremonious family dinner. Luxury," says she, "is the mode, but we know, too, how to practise frugality and economy."

I am not a little surprised to find dress, unless upon public occasions, so little regarded here. The gentlemen are very plainly dressed, and the ladies much less so than with us. 'T is true, you must put a hoop on and have your hair dressed, but a common straw hat, no cap, with only a ribbon upon the crown, is thought dress sufficient to go into company. Muslins are much in taste; no silks but lutestrings worn; but send not to London for any article you want; you may purchase any thing you can name much lower in Boston. I went yesterday into Cheapside to purchase a few articles, but found every thing

¹ Persons who left Massachusetts on account of their adherence to the British side.

higher than in Boston. Silks are in a particular manner so ; they say, when they are exported, there is a drawback upon them which makes them lower with us. Our country, alas, our country ! they are extravagant to astonishment in entertainments compared with what Mr. Smith and Mr. Storer tell me of this. You will not find at a gentleman's table more than two dishes of meat, though invited several days beforehand. Mrs. Atkinson went out with me yesterday, and Mrs. Hay, to the shops. I returned and dined with Mrs. Atkinson, by her invitation the evening before, in company with Mr. Smith, Mrs. Hay, Mr. Appleton. We had a turbot, a soup, and a roast leg of lamb, with a cherry pie. I was more gratified by the social, friendly style in which I was treated, than if a sumptuous feast had been set before me. Mr. Gorham, a Dr. Parker, Mr. Bromfield, and a Mr. Murray from the Hague, came to see me yesterday morning ; and, when I returned last evening, I found cards left by a number of gentlemen, some of whom I knew, others I did not ; but, knowing Mr. Adams, and being Americans, they called to make their compliments. Prentice Cushing I met with yesterday at Mr. A.'s. I am going to-day to see Mr. Copley's pictures. I am told he has an excellent likeness of Mr. Adams. Mr. Murray informed me, that he left Mr. Adams last Friday excessively anxious for my arrival. He had removed Mr. Dumas and family in expectation of my coming. He says, John, with whom he went to the Hague, was melancholy when Callaghan arrived without me, and

Mr. Adams more so. I have sent to-day by the post, to acquaint him with my being here, but hope every hour to see him or Master John.

The wind has prevented the arrival of the post. The city of London is pleasanter than I expected; the buildings more regular, the streets much wider, and more sunshine than I thought to have found; but this, they tell me, is the pleasantest season to be in the city. At my lodgings I am as quiet as at any place in Boston; nor do I feel as if it could be any other place than Boston. Dr. Clark visits us every day; says he cannot feel at home anywhere else; declares he has not seen a handsome woman since he came into the city; that every old woman looks like Mrs. H——, and every young one like — like the D—l. They paint here nearly as much as in France, but with more art. The head-dress disfigures them in the eye of an American. I have seen many ladies, but not one elegant one since I came; there is not to me that neatness in their appearance, which you see in our ladies.

The American ladies are much admired here by the gentlemen, I am told, and in truth I wonder not at it. O, my country, my country! preserve, preserve the little purity and simplicity of manners you yet possess. Believe me, they are jewels of inestimable value; the softness, peculiarly characteristic of our sex, and which is so pleasing to the gentlemen, is wholly laid aside here for the masculine attire and manners of Amazonians.

This moment a very polite card is delivered me

from Mrs. Hallowell, desiring me to remove my lodgings to her house whilst I continue in London; to which I have replied, with thanks, excusing myself, that I am very well accommodated, and in hourly expectation of my son; not the less obliged, however, by her politeness. Mr. Elworthy I have not yet seen, though I have had several messages from him. This is not owing to inattention in him, but to being informed that every thing was done for me before my arrival, which I stood in need of. Our ship is not yet got up the Channel; what a time we should have had of it, if we had not landed. Mr. Smith expects to sail on Monday or Tuesday; I shall keep open this letter until he goes; let sister Shaw see it, and read such parts as you think proper to the rest of our friends; but do not let it go out of your hands. I shall not have time to write to the rest of my friends; they must not think hardly of me; I could only repeat what I have here written, and I think it is best to have the whole budget together; besides, Abby writes to all her acquaintance, which must answer for me. Remember me to them all; first, to my dear and aged parent,¹ to whom present my duty; to Dr. Tufts, to my aunt, to uncle Quincy, to Mr. Wibird, to all my friends and neighbours.

¹ The mother of Mr. Adams.

Sunday Morning, 25 July.

I went yesterday, accompanied by Mr. Storer and Mr. Smith, to Mr. Copley's, to see Mr. Adams's picture.¹ This, I am told, was taken at the request of Mr. Copley, and belongs to him. It is a full-length picture, very large, and a very good likeness. Before him stands the globe; in his hand a map of Europe; at a small distance, two female figures, representing Peace and Innocence. It is a most beautiful painting. From thence, we went to what is called Mr. Copley's exhibition. Here is the celebrated picture, representing the death of Lord Chatham in the House of Commons; his three sons around him, each with strong expressions of grief and agitation in his countenance. Every member is crowding around him with a mixture of surprise and distress. I saw in this picture, what I have every day noticed since I came here, a strong likeness of some American or other; and I can scarcely persuade myself that I have not seen this person, that, and the other, before, their countenances appear so familiar to me, and so strongly mark our own descent. There was another painting, which struck me more than this. It is the death of Major Pierson, the particular account of which I enclose to you. I never saw painting more expressive than this. I looked upon it until I was faint; you can scarcely believe but you hear the groans of the sergeant, who is

¹ This picture is now in possession of the University at Cambridge.

wounded, and holding the handkerchief to his side, whilst the blood streams over his hand. Grief, despair, and terror are strongly marked, whilst he grows pale and faint with loss of blood. The officers are holding Major Pierson in their arms, who is mortally wounded, and the black servant has levelled his piece at the officer who killed him. The distress in the countenances of the women, who are flying, one of whom has a baby in her arms, is beautifully represented; but descriptions of these things give you but a faint resemblance of what in reality they are.

From thence I went to see the celebrated Mrs. Wright, Messrs. Storer and Smith accompanying us. Upon my entrance, (my name being sent up,) she ran to the door, and caught me by the hand; "Why, is it really and in truth Mrs. Adams? and that your daughter? Why, you dear soul you, how young you look. Well, I am glad to see you. All of you Americans? Well, I must kiss you all." Having passed the ceremony upon me and Abby, she runs to the gentlemen. "I make no distinction," says she, and gave them a hearty buss; from which we would all rather have been excused, for her appearance is quite the slattern. "I love everybody that comes from America," says she; "here," running to her desk, "is a card I had from Mr. Adams; I am quite proud of it; he came to see me, and made me a noble present. Dear creature, I design to have his head. There," says she, pointing to an old man and woman, who were sitting in

one corner of the room, "are my old father and mother ; don't be ashamed of them because they look so. They were good folks ;" (these were their figures in wax-work ;) "they turned Quakers, and never would let their children eat meat, and that is the reason we were all so ingenious ; you had heard of the ingenious Mrs. Wright in America, I suppose ?" In this manner she ran on for half an hour. Her person and countenance resemble an old maiden in your neighbourhood, Nelly Penniman, except that one is neat, the other the queen of sluts, and her tongue runs like Unity Badlam's. There was an old clergyman sitting reading a paper in the middle of the room ; and, though I went prepared to see strong representations of real life, I was effectually deceived in this figure for ten minutes, and was finally told that it was only wax. From Mrs. Wright's I returned to my hotel, dressed, and at four went to dine with Mrs. Hallowell. Mr. H. had in the morning been to see me, and Mr. Thomas Boylston, both of whom urged me to take up my lodgings with Mrs. Hallowell. I chose to decline, but went and dined with them. Here I found Parson Walter. We had a handsome dinner of salt fish, pea soup, boiled fowl and tongue, roast and fried lamb, with a pudding and fruit. This was a little in the Boston style. Messrs. Smith and Storer dined with us. Mr. Hallowell lives handsomely, but not in that splendor which he did in Boston.¹ On Sunday, I engaged to

¹ He was Comptroller of the Customs, under the British Government, in Boston.

take a coach for the day, which is only twelve-and-sixpence sterling, and go to church at the Foundling Hospital. Messrs. Atkinson, Smith, and Storer with me.

Monday Morning.

Well, my dear sister, if you are not tired with following me, I will carry you to the Foundling Hospital, where I attended divine service yesterday morning. Really glad I was that I could, after so long an absence, again tread the courts of the Most High, and I hope I felt not unthankful for the mercies I had received.

This hospital is a large, elegant building, situated in a spot as airy, and much more beautiful than Boston Common. The chapel, which is upon the second floor, is as large as what is called the Old South with us. There is one row of galleries; upon the floor of this chapel there are rows of seats like Concert Hall, and the pulpit is a small ornamented box, near the centre. There were about two thousand persons, as near as I could guess, who attended. In the gallery, opposite to where I sat, was the organ loft; upon each side an alcove, with seats, which run up like a pyramid. Here the foundlings sat, upon one side the boys, upon the other the girls, all in uniform; none appeared under five, nor any older than twelve. About three hundred attended the service. The uniform of the boys was a brown cloth, with a red collar, and a red stripe upon the

shoulder. The girls were in brown, with a red girdle round the waist, a checked stomacher and apron ; sleeves turned up, and white cloth caps with a narrow lace, clean and neat as wax ; their governesses attended with them. They performed the vocal music ; one man and woman upon each side the organ, who sung an anthem ; both blind, and educated at this foundling hospital. When we came down, we went into the dining-rooms, which were upon each side of the ascent into the chapel ; here the tables were all arranged, and the little creatures curtsying and smiling ; some as sweet children as ever you saw. There is an inscription over the door, in gold letters ; “ Can a mother forget her sucking child,” &c. In a hall are placed the pictures of many noted benefactors and founders of this institution. (I should have mentioned that the chapel windows are painted glass ; the arms and names of the most distinguished benefactors are in the different squares of the glass.) We were shown into their bed-chambers, which are long, airy chambers, with ten or fifteen windows in each, and about fifty or sixty beds, placed in rows upon each side, covered with blue and white furniture check. At the head of the chamber is a bed for the governess. When you have seen one of them, you have a specimen of the whole.

I dined with Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson, in company with Messrs. Jackson, Smith, &c. Mr. Atkinson is a very modest, worthy man, and Mrs. Atkinson a most amiable woman. You see no parade, no ceremony,

I am treated with all the kindness of a sister, in as easy a way as I could wish. As I took the carriage for the day, after forenoon service, we rode out to see Mrs. Atkinson's twins, who are at nurse at Islington, about two miles from the city. It is a fine ride. We went through a number of the great squares. Portland Square is one of the finest. In short, the representations, which you and I amused ourselves with looking at not long ago, are very near the life. When we returned, we dined, and at six o'clock went to the Magdalen Hospital, which is three miles from where I dined; for this is a *monstrous* great city. We were admitted with a ticket. This assembly was very full and crowded. Yet no children or servants are admitted. In short, I begin to hope that this people are more serious and religious than I feared they were. There is great decorum and decency observed. Here are only two small galleries, which hold the unhappy beings who are the subjects of this merciful institution. Those who attend the service are placed upon seats below, like Concert Hall. The building is about as large again as Braintree church, in a most delightful situation, surrounded by weeping willows. All the public buildings here have large open spaces around them, except those churches which are in the heart of the city. I observed, upon going in, a gallery before me, raised very high, and covered with green canvass. Here sat these unhappy women, screened from public view. You can discern them through the canvass, but not enough to

distinguish countenances. I admired the delicacy of this thought. The singing was all performed by these females, accompanied with the organ ; the melancholy melody of their voices, the solemn sound of the organ, the serious and affecting discourse of the preacher, together with the humiliating objects before me, drew tears from my eyes. The chapel to these apartments is always in the heart of the building ; the dining, working, and lodging apartments surround them.

Returned about eight o'clock ; found many cards left for me ; some from Virginians, some from Marylanders, some from Connecticut. Colonel Trumbull has called twice upon me, but I was so unfortunate as not to be at home. Amongst the Americans who called yesterday to see me during my absence, was Mr. Joy. He left his name and direction, with a polite billet, inviting me to dine with him on Tuesday, if I was not engaged ; and, if I was, the first day I was disengaged. I have replied to him that I will wait upon him on Wednesday. Invited by Mr. Murray to the play this evening ; declined going, in hopes my best friend will be here to attend me very soon ; besides, have no clothes yet which will do. No mail from Holland yet arrived ; the wind has been so contrary that two are now due. Dr. Clark, our constant and daily visiter, is just come in to drink tea with me. Messrs. Smith and Storer are here great part of the day. Captain Lyde did not get up the Channel until Sunday, so that I have no occasion to repent

landing when I did ; contrary winds and bad weather prevented his coming up only with the tide ; his vessel, too, had like to have been sunk by a collier running foul of him. They did him a good deal of damage ; these are vessels that take pleasure in injuring others. He told me many dismal stories about coming up the Channel, which made me determined to land at any rate.

On Saturday, Mr. Elworthy called upon me, and tendered me any service I could wish for. I thanked him, but Messrs. Smith and Storer and Dr. Clark render any other assistance unnecessary, as any and all of them are ready and willing to oblige me. On Sunday morning, Mr. and Mrs. Elworthy came to see me. She is a very agreeable woman, and *looks like one of us*, that is, she had more of our American neatness about her than any lady I have seen ; for I am yet so impolite as not to be reconciled to the jaunty appearance and the elegant stoop. There is a rage of fashion which prevails here with despotic sway ; the color and kind of silk must be attended to, and the day for putting it on and off ; no fancy to be exercised, but it is the *fashion*, and that is argument sufficient to put one in or out of countenance. I am coming on half-way. I breakfast at nine, and dine at three, when at home ; but I rise at six. I am not obliged to conform in that ; the other hours I am forced to submit to, upon account of company. This morning, Dr. Clark and Colonel Trumbull are to breakfast with me. I long for the hour, when I shall set off for the Hague, or see Mr. Adams here. I

meet with so many acquaintances, that I shall feel loth to quit the city upon that account. There are no Americans in Holland, and the language will prevent any sociability but what I find in my own family ; but, having a house, garden, and servants at command, feeling at home will in some measure compensate for the rest. I have a journey of eighty miles to make, to Margate, before I can embark ; and, as soon as Mr. Jefferson arrives, I suppose we must go to France. I have not executed your orders with regard to satin, because, upon inquiry, I find you can buy cheaper with you. I have not found any thing, except shoes, that are lower ; such a satin as my black, you must give as much sterling for a yard, as I gave lawful money ; — no silks but lute-string, and those which are thinner, are worn at this season ; — mode cloaks, muslin and sarsnet, — gauze hats, bonnets, and ribbons, — every thing as light and thin as possible, — different gowns and skirts, — muslin skirts, flounced chintz, with borders white, with a trimming that looks like gartering ; — the silk, which is most in taste, is what is called “new-mown hay,” — the pattern I enclose ; and this part of the letter is for the tasty folks of my acquaintance. Mr. Smith brings home a specimen of the newest fashioned hats.

Tuesday Morning.

Determined to tarry at home to-day, and see company. Mr. Joy came in and spent an hour. He is

the same pleasing man you formerly knew him ; that bashful diffidence is supplied by manly confidence, and acquaintance with the world has given ease and politeness to his manners. He really is quite the accomplished gentleman, bears a very good character, has made a great deal of money, and married a Yorkshire lady of handsome fortune about three months since. He again repeated his invitation to me to dine with him, accompanied by Mr. Smith. To-morrow, I go. Many gentlemen have called upon me this forenoon, so that I have only time to dress before dinner, which I order at an earlier hour than the London fashion. At three is my hour, and breakfast at nine. I cannot dine earlier, because from nine till three I am subject to company. From the hours of three till five and six, I am generally alone, or only Mr. Smith, or Mr. Storer here, to whom I am never denied. The servant will frequently come and ask me if I am at home.

Wednesday.

I have walked out to-day, for the first time, and a jaunt Mr. Storer has led me. I shall not get the better of it for a week. The walking is very easy here, the sides of the street being wholly of flat stones ; and the London ladies walk a great deal, and very fast. My walk out and in was only four miles ; judge you then, what an effect it had upon me. I was engaged to dine out. I got home at one, but

was obliged to lie upon the bed an hour, and have not recovered from it yet.

At four, I was obliged to go out. Mr. Joy lives three miles from where I lodge. The house in which he lives is very elegant, not large, but an air of taste and neatness is seen in every apartment. We were shown into the drawing-room, where he awaited us at the door, and introduced us to his lady and her sister. She is quite young, delicate as a lily, modest and diffident, not a London lady by any means. After we had dined, which was in company with five American gentlemen, we retired to the drawing-room, and there I talked off the lady's reserve, and she appeared agreeable. Her dress pleased me, and answered to the universal neatness of the apartments, furniture, and entertainment. It was a delicate blue and white copper-plate calico, with a blue lutestring skirt, flounced; a muslin apron and handkerchief, which are much more worn than gauze; her hair, a fine black, dressed without powder, with a fashionable cap, and straw ribbons upon her head and breast, with a green morocco slipper. Our dinner consisted of fried fish of a small kind, a boiled ham, a fillet of veal, a pair of roast ducks, an almond pudding, currants and gooseberries, which in this country are very fine. Painted muslin is much worn here; a straw hat with a deep crown, lined, and a white, green, or any colored ribbon you choose. I returned, and found a number of cards left by gentlemen who had called during my absence. Tomorrow I am invited to dine again with Mr. Atkinson

and lady. I feel almost ashamed to go again, but, not being otherwise engaged, they insist upon it. It is a thanksgiving day for the peace. I design to hear Mr. Duché, who officiates at the Asylum or Orphan House.

Thursday.

I found myself so unwell, that I could not venture to-day into a crowded assembly. My walk yesterday gave me a pain in my head, and stiffened me so that I can scarcely move. Abby, too, has the London cold, which they say every body experiences, who comes here; but Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson would not excuse my dining with them, and Charles came for us. We went and found the same friendly, hospitable attention, — nothing more on account of the day, — a neat, pretty dinner, consisting of two dishes and vegetables. After dinner, returned the visit of Mr. and Mrs. Elworthy, who were very glad to see me. Mr. Elworthy carried us to Drapers' Hall. This is a magnificent building, belonging to a company of that people, to which is a most beautiful garden. To walk in some of these places, you would think yourself in a land of enchantment. It would just suit my dear Betsy's romantic fancy. Tell her I design very soon to write to her. It shall be a description of some pretty scene at the Hague; and Lucy shall have a Parisian letter; but, writing to one, I think I am writing to you all.

Friday.

To-day, my dear sister, I have determined upon tarrying at home, in hopes of seeing my son or his papa ; but, from a hint dropped by Mr. Murray, I rather think it will be my son, as political reasons will prevent Mr. Adams's journey here. Whilst I am writing, a servant in the family runs puffing in, as if he were really interested in the matter ; " Young Mr. Adams is come." " Where, where is he ? " we all cried out. " In the other house, Madam ; he stopped to get his hair dressed." Impatient enough I was ; yet, when he entered, we had so many strangers, that I drew back, not really believing my eyes, till he cried out, " O, my mamma and my dear sister ! " Nothing but the eyes, at first sight, appeared what he once was. His appearance is that of a man, and in his countenance the most perfect good humor ; his conversation by no means denies his stature. I think you do not approve the word *feelings*, but I know not what to substitute in lieu, or even to describe mine. His sister, he says, he should have known in any part of the world.

Mr. Adams chooses I should come to the Hague and travel with him from thence ; and says it is the first journey he ever looked forward to with pleasure, since he came abroad. I wish to set out on Friday ; but, as we are obliged to purchase a carriage, and many other matters to do, Master John thinks we cannot go until the Tuesday after. In the meantime, I shall visit the curiosities of the city ; not

feeling twenty years younger, as my best friend says he does, but feeling myself exceedingly matronly with a grown up son on one hand, and daughter upon the other, and, were I not their mother, I would say a likelier pair you will seldom see in a summer's day. You must supply words where you find them wanting, and imagine what I have left unfinished, for my letter is swelled to such a bulk that I have not even time to peruse it. Mr. Smith goes to-morrow morning, and I must now close, requesting you to make the distribution of the little matters I send, as directed. Tell Dr. Tufts, my dear and valued uncle and friend, that I design to write to him by the next vessel.

Particularly remember me to uncle Quincy, to Mrs. Quincy and Nancy, and to all my dear Boston friends. Tell Mr. Storer, that Charles is very good to me, and that, walking with Abby, the other day, she was taken for his wife. Ask him if he consents. Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson treat me like a sister. I cannot find myself in a strange land. I shall experience this, when I get to a country the language of which I cannot speak. I sincerely wish the treaty might have been concerted here. I have a partiality for this country; but, where my treasure is, there shall my heart go.

I know not when to close; you must write often to me, and get uncle Smith to cover to Mr. Atkinson; then, wherever I am, the letters will come safe.

Adieu, once more, my dear sister, and believe me

Most affectionately yours.

A. A.

TO MRS. CRANCH.

Auteuil, distant from Paris four miles. }
5 September, 1784. }

MY DEAR SISTER,

IT is now the 5th of September, and I have been at this place more than a fortnight; but I have had so many matters to arrange, and so much to attend to, since I left London, that I have scarcely touched a pen. I am now vastly behindhand in many things which I could have wished to have written down and transmitted to my American friends, some of which would have amused, and others diverted them. But such a rapid succession of events, or rather occurrences, have been crowded into the last two months of my life, that I can scarcely recollect them, much less recount them in detail. There are so many of my friends, who have demands upon me, and who I fear will think me negligent, that I know not which to address first. Abby has had less of care upon her, and therefore has been very attentive to her pen, and I hope will supply my deficiencies.

Auteuil is a village four miles distant from Paris, and one from Passy. The house we have taken is large, commodious, and agreeably situated, near the Woods of Boulogne, which belong to the King, and which Mr. Adams calls his park, for he walks an hour or two every day in them. The house is much larger than we have need of; upon occasion, forty beds

may be made in it. I fancy it must be very cold in winter. There are few houses with the privilege which this enjoys, that of having the saloon, as it is called, the apartment where we receive company, upon the first floor. This room is very elegant, and about a third larger than General Warren's hall. The dining-room is upon the right hand, and the saloon upon the left, of the entry, which has large glass doors opposite to each other, one opening into the court, as they call it, the other into a large and beautiful garden. Out of the dining-room you pass through an entry into the kitchen, which is rather small for so large a house. In this entry are stairs which you ascend, at the top of which is a long gallery fronting the street, with six windows, and, opposite to each window, you open into the chambers which all look into the garden.

But with an expense of thirty thousand livres in looking glasses, there is no table in the house better than an oak board, nor a carpet belonging to the house. The floors I abhor, made of red tiles in the shape of Mrs. Quincy's floor-cloth tiles. These floors will by no means bear water, so that the method of cleaning them is to have them waxed, and then a man-servant with foot brushes drives round your room, dancing here and there like a Merry Andrew. This is calculated to take from your foot every atom of dirt, and leave the room in a few moments as he found it. The house must be exceedingly cold in winter. The dining-rooms, of which you make no other use, are laid with small

stones, like the red tiles for shape and size. The servants' apartments are generally upon the first floor, and the stairs which you commonly have to ascend to get into the family apartments are so dirty, that I have been obliged to hold up my clothes, as though I was passing through a cow-yard.

I have been but little abroad. It is customary in this country for strangers to make the first visit. As I cannot speak the language, I think I should make rather an awkward figure. I have dined abroad several times with Mr. Adams's particular friends, the Abbés, who are very polite and civil, three sensible and worthy men. The Abbé de Mably has lately published a book, which he has dedicated to Mr. Adams. This gentleman is nearly eighty years old; the Abbé Chalut, seventy-five; and Arnoux, about fifty, a fine, sprightly man, who takes great pleasure in obliging his friends. Their apartments were really nice. I have dined once at Dr. Franklin's, and once at Mr. Barclay's, our consul, who has a very agreeable woman for his wife, and where I feel like being with a friend. Mrs. Barclay has assisted me in my purchases, gone with me to different shops, &c. To-morrow I am to dine at Monsieur Grand's; but I have really felt so happy within doors, and am so pleasingly situated, that I have had little inclination to change the scene. I have not been to one public amusement as yet, not even the opera, though we have one very near us.

You may easily suppose I have been fully employed, beginning house-keeping anew, and arranging

my family to our no small expense and trouble ; for I have had bed-linen and table-linen to purchase and make, spoons and forks to get made of silver, three dozen of each, besides tea furniture, china for the table, servants to procure, &c. The expense of living abroad, I always supposed to be high, but my ideas were nowise adequate to the thing. I could have furnished myself in the town of Boston, with every thing I have, twenty or thirty per cent. cheaper than I have been able to do it here. Every thing which will bear the name of elegant, is imported from England, and, if you will have it, you must pay for it, duties and all. I cannot get a dozen handsome wine-glasses under three guineas, nor a pair of small decanters for less than a guinea and a half. The only gauze fit to wear is English, at a crown a yard ; so that really a guinea goes no further than a copper with us. For this house, garden, stables, &c., we give two hundred guineas a year. Wood is two guineas and a half per cord ; coal, six livres the basket of about two bushels ; this article of firing, we calculate at one hundred guineas a year. The difference between coming upon this negotiation to France and remaining at the Hague, where the house was already furnished at the expense of a thousand pounds sterling, will increase the expense here to six or seven hundred guineas ; at a time, too, when Congress have cut off five hundred guineas from what they have heretofore given. For our coachman and horses alone, (Mr. Adams purchased a coach in England,) we give fifteen guineas a month. It is

the policy of this country to oblige you to a certain number of servants, and one will not touch what belongs to the business of another, though he or she has time enough to perform the whole. In the first place, there is a coachman who does not an individual thing but attend to the carriages and horses ; then the gardener, who has business enough ; then comes the cook ; then the *maître d'hôtel* ; his business is to purchase articles in the family, and oversee, that nobody cheats but himself ; a *valet de chambre*, — John serves in this capacity ; a *femme de chambre*, — Esther serves in this line, and is worth a dozen others ; a *coiffeuse*, — for this place, I have a French girl about nineteen, whom I have been upon the point of turning away, because Madame will not brush a chamber ; “ it is not de fashion, it is not her business.” I would not have kept her a day longer, but found, upon inquiry, that I could not better myself, and hair-dressing here is very expensive, unless you keep such a madam in the house. She sews tolerably well, so I make her as useful as I can. She is more particularly devoted to Mademoiselle. Esther diverted me yesterday evening, by telling me that she heard her go muttering by her chamber door after she had been assisting Abby in dressing. “ Ah, mon Dieu, 't is provoking,” — (she talks a little English.) — “ Why, what is the matter, Pauline, what is provoking ? ” — “ Why, Mademoiselle look so pretty, I, so mauvais.” There is another indispensable servant, who is called a *frotteur* ; his business is to rub the floors.

We have a servant who acts as *maître d'hôtel*, whom I like at present, and who is so very gracious as to act as footman too, to save the expense of another servant, upon condition that we give him a gentleman's suit of clothes in lieu of a livery. Thus, with seven servants and hiring a charwoman upon occasion of company, we may possibly make out to keep house ; with less, we should be hooted at as ridiculous, and could not entertain any company. To tell this in our own country, would be considered as extravagance ; but would they send a person here in a public character to be a public jest ? At lodgings in Paris last year, during Mr. Adams's negotiations for a peace, it was as expensive to him as it is now at house-keeping, without half the accommodations.

Washing is another expensive article ; the servants are all allowed theirs, besides their wages ; our own costs us a guinea a week. I have become steward and book-keeper, determined to know with accuracy what our expenses are, and to prevail with Mr. Adams to return to America, if he finds himself straitened, as I think he must be. Mr. Jay went home because he could not support his family here with the whole salary ; what then can be done, curtailed as it now is, with the additional expense ? Mr. Adams is determined to keep as little company as he possibly can, but some entertainments we must make, and it is no unusual thing for them to amount to fifty or sixty guineas at a time. More is to be performed by way of negotiation, many times, at one

of these entertainments, than at twenty serious conversations ; but the policy of our country has been, and still is, to be penny-wise and pound-foolish. We stand in sufficient need of economy, and, in the curtailment of other salaries, I suppose they thought it absolutely necessary to cut off their foreign ministers. But, my own interest apart, the system is bad ; for that nation which degrades their own ministers by obliging them to live in narrow circumstances, cannot expect to be held in high estimation themselves. We spend no evenings abroad, make no suppers, attend very few public entertainments, or spectacles, as they are called, and avoid every expense that is not held indispensable. Yet I cannot but think it hard, that a gentleman who has devoted so great a part of his life to the service of the public, who has been the means, in a great measure, of procuring such extensive territories to his country, who saved their fisheries, and who is still laboring to procure them further advantages, should find it necessary so cautiously to calculate his pence, for fear of overrunning them. I will add one more expense. There is now a Court mourning, and every foreign minister, with his family, must go into mourning for a Prince of eight years old, whose father is an ally to the King of France. This mourning is ordered by the Court, and is to be worn eleven days only. Poor Mr. Jefferson had to hie away for a tailor to get a whole black silk suit made up in two days ; and at the end of eleven days, should another death happen, he will be obliged to

have a new suit of mourning, of cloth, because that is the season when silk must be left off. We may groan and scold, but these are expenses which cannot be avoided; for fashion is the deity every one worships in this country, and, from the highest to the lowest, you must submit. Even poor John and Esther had no comfort amongst the servants, being constantly the subjects of their ridicule, until we were obliged to direct them to have their hair dressed. Esther had several crying fits upon the occasion, that she should be forced to be so much of a fool; but there was no way to keep them from being trampled upon but this; and, now that they are *à la mode de Paris*, they are much respected. To be out of fashion is more criminal than to be seen in a state of nature, to which the Parisians are not averse.

Sunday here bears the nearest resemblance to our Commencement, and Election days; every thing is jollity, and mirth, and recreation. But, to quit these subjects, pray tell me how you all do. I long to hear from you. House and garden, with all its decorations, are not so dear to me as my own little cottage, connected with the society I used there to enjoy; for, out of my own family, I have no attachments in Europe, nor do I think I ever shall have. As to the language, I speak it a little, bad grammar and all; but I have so many French servants, that I am under a necessity of trying.

Could you, my sister, and my dear cousins, come and see me as you used to do, walk in the garden, and delight yourselves in the alcoves and arbours,

I should enjoy myself much better. When Mr. Adams is absent, I sit in my little writing-room, or the chamber I have described to Betsey, and read or sew. Abby is for ever at her pen, writing or learning French; sometimes company, and sometimes abroad, we are fully employed.

Who do you think dined with us the other day? A Mr. Mather and his lady, son of Dr. Mather, and Mrs. Hay, who have come to spend the winter in France. I regret that they are going to some of the provinces. To-day, Mr. Tracy, Mr. Williams, Mr. Jefferson, and Colonel Humphreys are to dine with us; and one day last week we had a company of twenty-seven persons; Dr. Franklin, Mr. Hartley and his secretaries, &c. &c. But my paper warns me to close. Do not let anybody complain of me. I am going on writing to one after another as fast as possible, and, if this vessel does not carry the letters, the next will. Give my love to one of the best men in the world.

Affectionately yours,

A. A.

TO MISS LUCY CRANCH.

Auteuil, 5 September, 1784.

MY DEAR LUCY,

I PROMISED to write to you from the Hague, but your uncle's unexpected arrival at London prevented

me. Your uncle purchased an excellent travelling coach in London, and hired a post-chaise for our servants. In this manner we travelled from London to Dover, accommodated through England with the best of horses, postilions, and good carriages; clean, neat apartments, genteel entertainment, and prompt attendance. But no sooner do you cross from Dover to Calais, than every thing is reversed, and yet the distance is very small between them.

The cultivation is by no means equal to that of England; the villages look poor and mean, the houses all thatched, and rarely a glass window in them; their horses, instead of being handsomely harnessed, as those in England are, have the appearance of so many old cart-horses. Along you go, with seven horses tied up with ropes and chains, rattling like trucks; two ragged postilions, mounted, with enormous jack-boots, add to the comic scene. And this is the style in which a duke or a count travels through this kingdom. You inquire of me how I like Paris. Why, they tell me I am no judge, for that I have not seen it yet. One thing, I know, and that is that I have smelt it. If I was agreeably disappointed in London, I am as much disappointed in Paris. It is the very dirtiest place I ever saw. There are some buildings and some squares, which are tolerable; but in general the streets are narrow, the shops, the houses, inelegant and dirty, the streets full of lumber and stone, with which they build. Boston cannot boast so elegant public buildings; but, in every other respect, it is as

much superior in my eyes to Paris, as London is to Boston. To have had Paris tolerable to me, I should not have gone to London. As to the people here, they are more given to hospitality than in England, it is said. I have been in company with but one French lady since I arrived; for strangers here make the first visit, and nobody will know you until you have waited upon them in form.

This lady¹ I dined with at Dr. Franklin's. She entered the room with a careless, jaunty air; upon seeing ladies who were strangers to her, she bawled out, "Ah! mon Dieu, where is Franklin? Why did you not tell me there were ladies here?" You must suppose her speaking all this in French. "How I look!" said she, taking hold of a chemise made of tiffany, which she had on over a blue lute-string, and which looked as much upon the decay as her beauty, for she was once a handsome woman; her hair was frizzled; over it she had a small straw hat, with a dirty gauze half-handkerchief round it, and a bit of dirtier gauze, than ever my maids wore, was bowed on behind. She had a black gauze scarf thrown over her shoulders. She ran out of the room; when she returned, the Doctor entered at one door, she at the other; upon which she ran forward to him, caught him by the hand, "Hélas! Franklin;" then gave him a double kiss, one upon each cheek, and another upon his fore-

¹ This lady was Madame Helvétius, widow of the philosopher who had resided at Auteuil.

head. When we went into the room to dine, she was placed between the Doctor and Mr. Adams. She carried on the chief of the conversation at dinner, frequently locking her hand into the Doctor's, and sometimes spreading her arms upon the backs of both the gentlemen's chairs, then throwing her arm carelessly upon the Doctor's neck.

I should have been greatly astonished at this conduct, if the good Doctor had not told me that in this lady I should see a genuine Frenchwoman, wholly free from affectation or stiffness of behaviour, and one of the best women in the world. For this I must take the Doctor's word; but I should have set her down for a very bad one, although sixty years of age, and a widow. I own I was highly disgusted, and never wish for an acquaintance with any ladies of this cast. After dinner she threw herself upon a settee, where she showed more than her feet. She had a little lap-dog, who was, next to the Doctor, her favorite. This she kissed, and when he wet the floor she wiped it up with her chemise. This is one of the Doctor's most intimate friends, with whom he dines once every week, and she with him. She is rich, and is my near neighbour; but I have not yet visited her. Thus you see, my dear, that manners differ exceedingly in different countries. I hope, however, to find amongst the French ladies manners more consistent with my ideas of decency, or I shall be a mere recluse.

You must write to me, and let me know all about you; marriages, births, and preferments; every

thing you can think of. Give my respects to the Germantown family. I shall begin to get letters for them by the next vessel.

Good night. Believe me

Your most affectionate aunt,

A. A.

TO MRS. CRANCH.

Auteuil, 9 December, 1784.

MY DEAR SISTER,

YOUR letter by way of Amsterdam had a quick passage, and was matter of great pleasure to me. I thank you for all your kind and friendly communications, by which you carry my imagination back to my friends and acquaintance, who were never dearer to me than they now are, though so far distant from me.

I have really commiserated the unhappy refugees more than ever, and think no severer punishment need to be inflicted upon any mortals than that of banishment from their country and friends. Were it my case, I should pray for death and oblivion. The consolation which Bolingbroke comforted himself with would afford me little satisfaction; for, though the same heavens were spread over me and the same sun enlightened me, I should see the heavens covered with darkness, and the sun bereft of its splendor.

We reside here at this village, four miles distant from Paris. It is a very agreeable summer situation, but in winter I should prefer Paris, on many accounts ; but upon none more than that of society. The Americans who are in France, and with whom I have any acquaintance, all reside in Paris ; they would frequently fall in and spend an evening with us ; but to come four miles, unless by particular invitation, is what they do not think of ; so that our evenings, which are very long, are wholly by ourselves. You cannot wonder that we all long for the social friends whom we left in America, whose places are not to be supplied in Europe. I wish our worthy and sensible parson could visit us as he used to do in America ; his society would be very precious to us here.

I go into Paris sometimes to the plays, of which I am very fond ; but I so severely pay for it, that I refrain many times upon account of my health. It never fails giving me a severe headache, and that in proportion as the house is thin or crowded, one, two, or three days after. We make it a pretty general rule to entertain company once a week. (I do not call a transient friend or acquaintance dining, by that name.) Upon those occasions, our company consists of fifteen, eighteen, or twenty, which commonly costs us as many guineas as there are persons. You will naturally be surprised at this, as I was when I first experienced it ; but my weekly bills, all of which pass through my hands, and are paid by me, convince me of it. Every American

who comes into Paris, no matter from what State, makes his visit, and pays his respects, to the American ministers; all of whom, in return, you must dine. Then there are the foreign ministers, from the different courts, who reside here, and some French gentlemen. In short, there is no end of the expense, which a person in a public character is obliged to be at. Yet our countrymen think their ministers are growing rich. Believe me, my dear sister, I am more anxious for my situation than I was before I came abroad. I then hoped that my husband, in his advanced years, would have been able to have laid up a little without toiling perpetually; and, had I been with him from the first, he would have done it when the allowance of Congress was more liberal than it now is; but cutting off five hundred [guineas] at one blow, and at the same time increasing our expenses, by removing us from place to place, is more than we are able to cope with, and I see no prospect but we must be losers at the end of the year. We are now cleverly situated. I have got a set of servants as good as I can expect to find; such as I am pretty well satisfied with; but I apprehend, that, in the month of January, we shall be obliged to give up our house, dismiss our servants, and make a journey to England. This is not yet fully agreed upon; but, I suppose the next letters from the Court of England will determine it; and this has been Mr. Adams's destiny ever since he came abroad. His health, which has suffered greatly in the repeated attacks of the fevers he has had,

obliges him to live out of cities. You cannot procure genteel lodgings in Paris under twenty-five or thirty guineas a month ; which is much dearer than we give for this house, besides the comfort of having your family to yourself. When I speak of twenty-five and thirty guineas per month, not a mouthful of food is included.

As to speaking French, I make but little progress in that ; but I have acquired much more facility in reading it. My acquaintance with French ladies is very small. The Marquise de la Fayette was in the country when I first came, and continued out until November. Immediately upon her coming into Paris, I called and paid my compliments to her. She is a very agreeable lady, and speaks English with tolerable ease. We sent our servant, as is the custom, with our names, into the house, to inquire if she was at home. We were informed that she was not. The carriage was just turning from the door, when a servant came running out to inform us that Madame would be glad to see us ; upon which Mr. Adams carried me in and introduced me. The Marquise met me at the door, and with the freedom of an old acquaintance, and the rapture peculiar to the ladies of this nation, caught me by the hand and gave me a salute upon each cheek, most heartily rejoiced to see me. You would have supposed I had been some long absent friend, whom she dearly loved. She presented me to her mother and sister, who were present with her, all sitting together in her bed-room, quite *en famille*. One of the ladies

was knitting. The Marquise herself was in a chintz gown. She is a middle-sized lady, sprightly and agreeable; and professes herself strongly attached to Americans. She supports an amiable character, is fond of her children, and very attentive to them, which is not the general character of ladies of high rank in Europe. In a few days, she returned my visit, upon which we sent her a card of invitation to dine. She came; we had a large company. There is not a lady in our country, who would have gone abroad to dine so little dressed; and one of our fine American ladies, who sat by me, whispered to me, "Good Heavens! how awfully she is dressed." I could not forbear returning the whisper, which I most sincerely despised, by replying, that the lady's rank sets her above the little formalities of dress. She had on a brown Florence gown and petticoat,—which is the only silk, excepting satins, which are worn here in winter,—a plain double gauze handkerchief, a pretty cap, with a white ribbon in it, and looked very neat. The rouge, 't is true, was not so artfully laid on, as upon the faces of the American ladies who were present. Whilst they were glittering with diamonds, watch-chains, girdle-buckles, &c., the Marquise was nowise ruffled by her own different appearance. A really well-bred French lady has the most ease in her manners, that you can possibly conceive of. It is studied by them as an art, and they render it nature. It requires some time, you know, before any fashion quite new be-

comes familiar to us. The dress of the French ladies has the most taste and variety in it, of any I have yet seen ; but these are topics I must reserve to amuse my young acquaintance with. I have seen none, however, who carry the extravagance of dress to such a height as the Americans who are here, some of whom, I have reason to think, live at an expense double what is allowed to the American ministers. They must, however, abide the consequences.

Mr. Jefferson has been sick, and confined to his house for six weeks. He is upon the recovery, though very weak and feeble. Dr. Franklin is much afflicted with his disorder, which prevents his going abroad, unless when the weather will permit him to walk.

12 December, 1784.

“Do you say that Scott has arrived in England ?” said I to my friend, when he returned from Paris, “and that Messrs. Tracy and Jackson have received their letters by the post, and that we have none ? How can this be ? News, too, of Mr. Smith’s arrival.” Thus passed the day, and the next which followed ; but in the evening a letter was brought for J. Q. A. from London, from Charles Storer, informing us that he had received sundry large packets from America ; not being able to find a private conveyance, he had sent them by the new *diligence*, lately set up, which passed once a week

from Calais to Paris. It was evening. No sending in that night, because a servant could not get them. There was nothing to be done but to wait patiently until the next morning. As soon as breakfast was over, the carriage was ordered, and Mr. J. Q. A. set off for Paris. About two o'clock he returned, and was met with a "Well; have you found the letters?" "Yes, he had heard of them, but could not procure them; they refused to deliver them at the post-office, because he had carried no proof that the letters belonged to the family; he might be an impostor, for aught they knew, and they were answerable for them; he scolded and fretted, but all to no purpose; they finally promised to send them out in the evening to our hotel." O how provoking! About eight in the evening, however, they were brought in and safely delivered, to our great joy. We were all together. Mr. Adams in his easy-chair upon one side of the table, reading Plato's *Laws*; Mrs. A. upon the other, reading Mr. St. John's "Letters"; Abby, sitting upon the left hand, in a low chair, in a pensive posture;—enter J. Q. A. from his own room, with the letters in his hand, tied and sealed up, as if they were never to be read; for Charles had put half a dozen new covers upon them. Mr. A. must cut and undo them leisurely, each one watching with eagerness. Finally, the originals were discovered; "Here is one for you, my dear, and here is another; and here, Miss Abby, are four, five, upon my word, six, for you, and more yet for your mamma. Well, I fancy

I shall come off but slenderly. One only for me.” “Are there none for me, Sir?” says Mr. J. Q. A., erecting his head, and walking away a little mortified.

We then began to unseal and read; and a rich repast we had. Thank you, my dear sister, for your part of the entertainment. I will not regret sending my journal, uncouth as I know it was; to friends, who so nearly interest themselves in the welfare of each other, every event, as it passes, becomes an object of their attention. You will chide me, I suppose, for not relating to you an event, which took place in London; that of unexpectedly meeting there my long absent friend; for, from his letters by my son, I had no idea that he would come. But you know, my dear sister, that poets and painters wisely draw a veil over those scenes, which surpass the pen of the one, and the pencil of the other. We were, indeed, a very, very happy family, once more met together, after a separation of four years. For particular reasons we remained but one day in England, after the arrival of Mr. A. We set off on Sunday morning, as I believe I have before related, in a coach, and our two servants in a post-chaise. As we travelled over the same part of the country which I had before described in my journey up to London, I was not particular in relating my journey to Dover. We were about twelve hours in crossing to Calais.

The difference is so great between travelling through England and through France, that no per-

son could possibly imagine that these countries were separated only by a few leagues. Their horses, their carriages, their postilions, their inns! I know not how to point out the difference, unless you will suppose yourself a stranger in your own country, first entertained at Mr. Swan's, then at General Warren's, and next at Bracket's tavern. Such is the difference, I assure you. From Calais to Paris you pass through a number of villages, which have the most miserable appearance, in general; the houses of the peasants being chiefly low, thatched huts, without a single glass window. Their fields were well cultivated, and we saw everywhere women and children laboring in them. There is not, however, that rich luxuriance, which beauteous England exhibits, nor have they ornamented their fields with the hedge, which gives England a vast advantage, in appearance, over this country. The place most worthy of notice between Calais and Paris, is Chantilly, where we stopped one day; but, as I was so much fatigued with my journey, I made no minute of what I saw there, though richly worth a particular description. I must, therefore, request the favor of Mr. J. Q. A. to transcribe a few incorrect minutes from his journal, which will give you some idea of what we saw there. I have not a wish to repeat this journey in the winter season; but I greatly fear we shall be obliged to do so, as England does not choose to treat in France. This, however, you will not mention at present; as I cannot yet

assure you what will be the result of the last despatches sent to that Court.

This is the twelfth of December; and a severer snow-storm than the present is seldom seen in our country at this season. I was pleased at the appearance, because it looked so American; but the poor Frenchman will shrug his shoulders.

I feel very loth to part with my son, and shall miss him more than I can express; but I am convinced that it will be much for his advantage to spend one year at Harvard, provided he makes, as I have no reason to doubt, a suitable improvement of his time and talents; the latter, the partiality of a mother would say, no young fellow of his age can boast superior; yet there are many branches of knowledge in which he is deficient, and which, I think, he will be best able to acquire in his own country. I am sure he will acquire them with more pleasure to himself, because he will find there companions and associates. Besides, America is the theatre for a young fellow who has any ambition to distinguish himself in knowledge and literature; so that, if his father consents, I think it not unlikely that you will see him in the course of next summer. I hope I shall follow him the next spring. Europe will have fewer charms for me then, than it has at present.

I know not how to bid adieu. You did not say a word of uncle Quincy. How does he do? My duty to him; tell him, if Mr. A. was in Braintree, he would walk twice a week to see him. Madam Quincy,

too, how is -she? My respects to her, and to Mr. Wibird, who, I think, misses me as much as I do his friendly visits.

Affectionately yours,

A. A.

TO MRS. SHAW.

Auteuil, 14 December, 1784.

MY DEAR SISTER,

FROM the interest you take in every thing which concerns your friends, I hear you inquiring how I do, how I live, whom I see, where I visit, who visit me. I know not whether your curiosity extends so far as the color of the house, which is white stone, and to the furniture of the chamber where I sleep. If it does, you must apply to Betsey Cranch for information, whose fancy has employed itself so busily as to seek for intelligence even in the minutæ; and, although they look trifling upon paper, yet, if our friends take an interest in them, that renders them important; and I am the rather tempted to a compliance from the recollection, that, when I have received a sentimental letter from an absent friend, I have passed over the sentiment at the first reading, and hunted for that part, which more particularly related to themselves.

This village, where we reside, is four miles from

Paris, and is famous for nothing, that I know of, but the learned men who have inhabited it. Such were Boileau, Molière, D'Aguesseau, and Helvétius. The first and last lived near this hôtel, and Boileau's garden is preserved as a choice relic. As to my own health, it is much as usual. I suffer through want of exercise, and grow too fat. I cannot persuade myself to walk an hour in the day, in a long entry which we have, merely for exercise ; and as to the streets, they are continually a quagmire. No walking there without boots or wooden shoes, neither of which are my feet calculated for. Mr. Adams makes it his constant practice to walk several miles every day, without which he would not be able to preserve his health, which at best is but infirm. He professes himself so much happier for having his family with him, that I feel amply gratified in having ventured across the ocean. He is determined, that nothing but the inevitable stroke of death shall in future separate him at least from one part of it ; so that I know not what climates I may yet have to visit, — more, I fear, than will be agreeable to either of us.

If you want to know the manners and customs of this country, I answer you, that pleasure is the business of life, more especially upon a Sunday. We have no days with us or rather with you, by which I can give you any idea of them, except Commencements and Elections. We have a pretty wood within a few rods of this house, which is called the Bois de Boulogne. This is cut into many regular

walks, and during the summer months, upon Sundays, it looked like Boston and Cambridge Commons upon the public days I have mentioned. Paris is a horrid dirty city, and I know not whether the inhabitants could exist, if they did not come out one day in the week to breathe a fresh air. I have sat at my window of a Sunday, and seen whole cart-loads of them at a time. I speak literally ; for those, who neither own a coach nor are able to hire one, procure a cart, which in this country is always drawn by horses. Sometimes they have a piece of canvass over it. There are benches placed in them, and in this vehicle you will see as many well-dressed women and children as can possibly pile in, led out by a man, or driven. Just at the entrance of the wood they descend. The day is spent in music, dancing, and every kind of play. It is a very rare thing to see a man with a hat anywhere but under his arm, or a woman with a bonnet upon her head. This would brush off the powder, and spoil the elegant *toupet*. They have a fashion of wearing a hood or veil either of gauze or silk. If you send for a tailor in this country, your servant will very soon introduce to you a gentleman full dressed in black, with his head as white as a snow-bank, and which a hat never rumbled. If you send to a mantua-maker, she will visit you in the same style, with her silk gown and petticoat, her head in ample order, though, perhaps, she lives up five pair of stairs, and eats nothing but bread and water, as two thirds of these people do. We have a servant in our family,

who dresses more than his young master, and would not be guilty of tending table *unfrizzed*, upon any consideration. He dresses the hair of his young master, but has his own dressed by a hair-dresser. By the way, I was guilty of a sad mistake in London. I desired the servant to procure me a barber. The fellow stared, and was loth to ask for what purpose I wanted him. At last he said, "You mean a hair-dresser, Madam, I believe?" "Ay," says I, "I want my hair dressed." "Why, barbers, Madam, in this country, do nothing but shave."

When I first came to this country, I was loth to submit to such an unnecessary number of domestics, as it appeared to me, but I soon found that they would not let me do without them; because, every one having a fixed and settled department, they would not lift a pin out of it, although two thirds of the time they had no employment. We are however thankful that we are able to make eight do for us, though we meet with some difficulties for want of a ninth. Do not suppose from this, that we live remarkably nice. I never put up in America with what I do here. I often think of Swift's High Dutch bride, who had so much nastiness, and so much pride.

Adieu. Most affectionately yours,

A. A.

TO THE REVEREND JOHN SHAW.

Auteuil, 18 January, 1785.

I FIND, Sir, what I never doubted, that you are a gentleman of your word. I thank you for the agreeable proof which you have given me of it; and, that I may not be wanting in punctuality, I have taken my pen to discharge the debt which I acknowledge is due to you.

Amongst the public edifices which are worthy of notice in this country, are several churches. I went, a few days since, to see three of the most celebrated in Paris. They are prodigious masses of stone buildings, and so surrounded by houses which are seven stories high, that the sun seldom enlightens them. I found them so cold and damp, that I could only give them a very hasty and transient survey. The architecture, the sculpture, the paintings, are beautiful indeed, and each of them would employ my pen for several pages, when the weather will permit me to take a more accurate and critical inspection of them. These churches are open every day, and at all times of the day; so that you never enter them without finding priests upon their knees, half a dozen at a time, and more at the hours of confession. All kinds of people and of all ages go in without ceremony, and regardless of each other; fall upon their knees, cross themselves, say their Pater-nosters and Ave-Marias silently

and go out again without being noticed or even seen by the priests, whom I found always kneeling with their faces towards the altar. Round these churches, (for they have not pews and galleries as with us, chairs alone being made use of,) there are little boxes or closets about as large as a sentry-box, in which is a small grated window, which communicates with another closet of the same kind. One of them holds the person who is confessing, and the other the confessor, who places his ear at this window, hears the crime, absolves the transgressor, and very often makes an assignation for a repetition of the same crime, or perhaps a new one. I do not think this a breach of charity; for can we suppose, that, of the many thousands whom the religion of the country obliges to celibacy, one quarter part of the number can find its influence sufficiently powerful to conquer those passions which nature has implanted in man, when the gratification of them will cost them only a few livres in confession?

I was at the Church of St. Roch about ten o'clock in the morning, and, whilst I was there, about three hundred little boys came in from some charity seminary which belongs to that church. They had books in their hands. They followed each other in regular order, and fell upon their knees in rows like soldiers in rank and file. There might have been fifty other persons in the church at their devotion. Every thing was silent and solemn throughout this vast edifice. I was walking with a slow pace round it, when, all at once, the drear

silence which reigned was suddenly broken by all these boys at one instant chanting with loud voices, which made the dome ring, and me start, for I had no apprehension of any sound. I have never been to any of these churches upon a Sunday. When the weather is warmer, I design it. But their churches seem rather calculated to damp devotion than excite it. I took such a cold there as I have not had since I have been in France. I have been several times to the chapel of the Dutch ambassador, and should go oftener if I could comprehend the discourses, which are all in French. I believe the American embassy is the only one to which chaplains are not allowed. Do Congress think that their ministers have no need of grace? or that religion is not a necessary article for them? Sunday will not feel so to me whilst I continue in this country. It is high holiday for all France.

We had a visit the other day from no less a personage than Abbé Thayer, in his habit, who has become a convert. His visit was to me, I suppose, for he was a perfect stranger to Mr. Adams. He told us that he had spent a year at Rome, that he belonged to a seminary of St. Sulpice in Paris, that he never, knew what religion was, until his conversion, and that he designed to return to America in a year or two, to see if he could not convert his friends and acquaintance. After talking some time in this style, he began to question Mr. Adams if he believed the Bible, and to rail at Luther and Calvin; upon which Mr. Adams took him up pretty short, and told him

that he was not going to make a father confessor of him, that his religion was a matter that he did not look upon himself accountable for to any one but his Maker, and that he did not choose to hear either Luther or Calvin treated in such a manner. Mr. Abbé took his leave after some time, without any invitation to repeat his visit.

I am very truly yours,

A. A.

TO MRS. STORER.¹

Auteuil, 20 January, 1785.

MY DEAR MADAM,

For your kind congratulations upon my arrival in Europe, receive my thanks. Those only, who have crossed the ocean, can realize the pleasure which is felt at the sight of land. The inexperienced traveller is more sensible of this, than those who frequently traverse the ocean. I could scarcely realize that thirty days had removed me so far distant from my native shore; but the new objects which surrounded me did not efface from my remembrance the dearer ones which I left behind me. "And is this the country, and are these the people, who so lately waged

¹ This is the same lady to whom the first letter of the present collection was addressed, and the Editor is indebted for both to the same source. See Vol. I., p. 3, note.

a cruel war against us ?” were reflections, which did not escape me amidst all the beauty and grandeur, which presented themselves to my eyes. You have doubtless heard from my friends, that I was pleased with England, and that I met with much civility and politeness there, and a large share of it from your connexions.

I am now resident in a country, to which many Americans give the preference. The climate is said to be more temperate and mild. I can pass no judgment by comparison, but that there are more fogs in both, than are agreeable to me. A North-American, however, has no right to complain of the rigor of a climate, which, in the middle of January, is as mild as our May ; though I think the fall of the year was near as cold as ours.

Do you know, my dear Madam, what a task you have set me ? a description of ladies !

“ Catch, ere she change, the Cynthia of this minute.”

To a lady of Mrs. Storer’s discernment, the mere superficial adorning of the sex would afford but little satisfaction. Yet this is all I shall be able to recount to her. A stranger in the country, not only to the people but to the language, I cannot judge of mental accomplishment, unless you will allow that dress and appearance are the index of the mind. The etiquette of this country requires the first visit from the stranger. You will easily suppose, that I have not been very fond of so awkward a situation as going to visit ladies, merely to make my dumb com-

pliments, and receive them in return. I have declined visiting several personages, to whom Mr. Adams would have introduced me, upon this account. An acquaintance with a gentleman by no means insures to you a knowledge of his lady; for no one will be so ill-bred as to suppose an intercourse between them. It is from my observations of the French ladies at the theatres and public walks, that my chief knowledge of them is derived.

The dress of the French ladies is, like their manners, light, airy, and genteel. They are easy in their deportment, eloquent in their speech, their voices soft and musical, and their attitude pleasing. Habituated to frequent the theatres from their earliest age, they become perfect mistresses of the art of insinuation and the powers of persuasion. Intelligence is communicated to every feature of the face, and to every limb of the body; so that it may with truth be said, every man of this nation is an actor, and every woman an actress. It is not only among the rich and polite, who attend the great theatres, that this art is acquired, but there are a dozen small theatres, to which all classes resort. There are frequently given pieces at the opera, and at the small theatres, where the actors speak not a single word, but where the action alone will delineate to you the story. I was at one of this kind last evening. The story is too long to relate here; but there was a terrible sea-storm in it; the rolling of the sea, the mounting of the vessel upon the waves, in which I could discern a lady and little child in the

utmost distress, the terrible claps of thunder and flashes of lightning, which flew from one side of the stage to the other, really worked me up to such a pitch, that I trembled with terror. The vessel was finally dashed upon the rocks, and the lady and child were cast on a desert island.

The dancing on the stage is a great amusement to me, and the dresses are beautifully fanciful. The fashionable shape of the ladies here is, to be very small at the bottom of the waist, and very large round the shoulders, — a wasp's, — pardon me, ladies, that I should make such a comparison, it is only in shape, that I mean to resemble you to them. You and I, Madam, must despair of being in the mode.

I enclose to you the pattern of a stomacher, cape, and forebody of a gown; different petticoats are much worn, and then the stomacher must be of the petticoat color, and the cape of the gown, as well as the sleeves. Sometimes a false sleeve is made use of to draw over the other, and, in that case, the cape is like the gown. Gowns and petticoats are worn without any trimming of any kind. That is reserved for full dress only, when very large hoops and negligees, with trains three yards long, are worn. But these are not used, except at Court, and then only upon public occasions; the Queen herself, and the ladies of honor, dressing very plain upon other days. Abby has made you a miniature handkerchief, just to show you one mode; but caps, hats, and handkerchiefs are as various as ladies' and milliners' fancies can devise.

Thus, Madam, having displayed the mode to you, be so good as to present Mr. Adams's and my regards to Mr. Storer, and, in one word, to all who inquire after your affectionate friend,

A. ADAMS.

TO MISS LUCY CRANCH.

Auteuil, 24 January, 1785.

MY DEAR LUCY,

I HOPE you have before now received my letter, which was ordered on board with Captain Lyde, but put on board another vessel, because it was said she would sail first. By that you will see that I did not wait to receive a letter from you first. I thank you for yours of November 6th, which reached me last evening; and here I am, seated by your cousin J. Q. A.'s fireside, where, by his invitation, I usually write.

And in the first place, my dear Lucy, shall I find a little fault with you? A fault, from which neither your good sister, nor cousin Abby, is free. It is that all of you so much neglect your handwriting. I know that a sentiment is equally wise and just, written in a good or bad hand; but then there is certainly a more pleasing appearance, when the lines are regular, and the letters distinct and well cut. A sensible woman is so, whether she be handsome or ugly; but who looks not with most pleasure

upon the sensible beauty ? “ Why, my dear aunt,” methinks I hear you say, “ only look at your own handwriting.” Acknowledged ; I am very sensible of it, and it is from feeling the disadvantages of it myself, that I am the more solicitous that my young acquaintance should excel me, whilst they have leisure, and their fingers are young and flexible. Your cousin, J. Q. A., copied a letter for me the other day, and, upon my word, I thought there was some value in it, from the new appearance it acquired.

I have written several times largely to your sister, and, as I know you participate with her, I have not been so particular in scribbling to every one of the family ; for an imagination must be more inventive than mine, to supply materials with sufficient variety to afford you all entertainment. Through want of a better subject, I will relate to you a custom of this country. You must know that the religion of this country requires abundance of feasting and fasting, and each person has his particular saint, as well as each calling and occupation. To-morrow is to be celebrated, *le jour des rois*. The day before this feast it is customary to make a large paste pie, into which one bean is put. Each person at table cuts his slice, and the one who is so lucky as to obtain the bean, is dubbed king or queen. Accordingly, to-day, when I went in to dinner, I found one upon our table.

Your cousin Abby began by taking the first slice ; but alas ! poor girl, no bean, and no queen. In the next place, your cousin John seconded her by taking

a larger cut, and as cautious as cousin T—— when he inspects merchandise, bisected his paste with mathematical circumspection ; but to him it pertained not. By this time, I was ready for my part ; but first I declared that I had no cravings for royalty. I accordingly separated my piece with much firmness, nowise disappointed that it fell not to me. Your uncle, who was all this time picking his chicken bone, saw us divert ourselves without saying any thing ; but presently he seized the remaining half, and to crumbs went the poor paste, cut here and slash there ; when, behold the bean ! “ And thus,” said he, “ are kingdoms obtained ;” but the servant, who stood by and saw the havoc, declared solemnly that he could not retain the title, as the laws decreed it to chance, and not to force.

How is General Warren’s family ? Well, I hope, or I should have heard of it. I am sorry Mrs. Warren is so scrupulous about writing to me. I forwarded a long letter to her some time since. Where is Miss Nancy Quincy ? Well, I hope. We often laugh at your cousin John about her. He says her stature would be a great recommendation to him, as he is determined never to marry a tall woman, lest her height should give her a superiority over him. He is generally thought older than your cousin Abby ; and partly, I believe, because his company is with those much older than himself.

As to the Germantown family, my soul is grieved for them. Many are the afflictions of the righteous. Would to Heaven that the clouds would disperse,

and give them a brighter day. My best respects to them. Let Mrs. Field know, that Esther is quite recovered, and as gay as a lark. She went to Paris the other day with Pauline, to see a play, which is called "Figaro." It is a piece much celebrated, and has had sixty-eight representations; and every thing was so new to her, that Pauline says, "Est is crazed."

Affectionately yours,

A. A.

TO MRS. CRANCH.

Auteuil, 20 February, 1785.

MY DEAR SISTER,

THIS day eight months I sailed for Europe, since which many new and interesting scenes have presented themselves before me. I have seen many of the beauties, and some of the deformities, of this old world. I have been more than ever convinced, that there is no summit of virtue, and no depth of vice, which human nature is not capable of rising to, on the one hand, or sinking into, on the other. I have felt the force of an observation, which I have read, that daily example is the most subtle of poisons. I have found my taste reconciling itself to habits, customs, and fashions, which at first disgusted me. The first dance which I saw upon the stage

shocked me ; the dresses and beauty of the performers were enchanting ; but, no sooner did the dance commence, than I felt my delicacy wounded, and I was ashamed to be seen to look at them. Girls, clothed in the thinnest silk and gauze, with their petticoats short, springing two feet from the floor, poising themselves in the air, with their feet flying, and as perfectly showing their garters and drawers as though no petticoat had been worn, was a sight altogether new to me. Their motions are as light as air, and as quick as lightning ; they balance themselves to astonishment. No description can equal the reality. They are daily trained to it, from early infancy, at a royal academy, instituted for this purpose. You will very often see little creatures, not more than seven or eight years old, as undauntedly performing their parts as the eldest among them. Shall I speak a truth, and say that repeatedly seeing these dances has worn off that disgust, which I at first felt, and that I see them now with pleasure ? Yet, when I consider the tendency of these things, the passions they must excite, and the known character, even to a proverb, which is attached to an opera girl, my abhorrence is not lessened, and neither my reason nor judgment has accompanied my sensibility in acquiring any degree of callousness. The art of dancing is carried to the highest degree of perfection that it is capable of. At the opera, the house is neither so grand, nor of so beautiful architecture, as the French theatre, but it is more frequented by the *beau monde*, who had

rather be amused than instructed. The scenery is more various and more highly decorated, the dresses more costly and rich. And O! the music, vocal and instrumental, it has a soft, persuasive power, and a dying sound. Conceive a highly decorated building, filled with youth, beauty, grace, ease, clad in all the most pleasing and various ornaments of dress, which fancy can form; these objects singing like cherubs to the best tuned instruments, most skilfully handled, the softest, tenderest strains; every attitude corresponding with the music; full of the god or goddess whom they celebrate; the female voices accompanied by an equal number of Adonises. Think you that this city can fail of becoming a Cythera, and this house the temple of Venus?

“When music softens, and when dancing fires,”

it requires the immortal shield of the invincible Minerva, to screen youth from the arrows which assail them on every side.

As soon as a girl sets her foot upon the floor of the opera, she is excommunicated by the Church, and denied burial in holy ground. She conceives nothing worse can happen to her; all restraint is thrown off, and she delivers herself to the first who bids high enough for her. But let me turn from a picture, of which the outlines are but just sketched; I would willingly veil the rest, as it can only tend to excite sentiments of horror.

13 March, 1785.

You will see, by the former date, that my letter has lain by me some time. Mr. Pickman, of Salem, who is going to London, has promised to take this with him, and will carry it himself, if no opportunity offers before, to America. We are all well ; some preparing for America, and others longing for the time of their departure thither. What a sad misfortune it is to have the body in one place, and the soul in another. Indeed, my dear sister, I hope to come home the spring after the present. My acquaintance here is not large, nor ever will be. Then, what are dinners, and visits of ceremony, compared with "the feast of reason, and the flow of soul"? I have dined twice at the Marquis de la Fayette's, with a large company, some of whom I was acquainted with, and others that I never saw before ; and to-morrow are to dine here, Mr. Brantzen, the Ambassador Extraordinary from Holland ; the Chevalier de la Luzerne, late Minister in America ; Marquis de la Fayette and his lady ; Mr. W. T. Franklin, late Secretary to the American Commission ; Colonel Humphreys, our present Secretary ; and Mr. Williams, a worthy, clever gentleman, who has been very friendly to us ; Mr. Jonathan Williams, a Bostonian, who very often comes to have a social talk about all our old friends and acquaintance in Boston ; the Chevalier Jones ; Mr. Bingham and lady ; a Mr. and Mrs. Rucker, and Mrs. Rucker's sister, lately from New York, stran-

gers to me ; but all strangers, from every part of America, visit the American Ministers, and then are invited to dine with them. The Duc de la Vauguyon was invited also ; but, not hearing from him, I suppose him not in Paris at present ; he was late Minister from this Court to Holland. Madame la Marquise de la Fayette is a very agreeable lady, and has two very pretty children ; the third, Virginia, I have never seen ; it is in the country ; the eldest daughter is seven years old, and George Washington about five. After dinner, Miss and Master are always introduced to the company ; both of them speak English, and behave very prettily. Madame de la Fayette has promised to bring me acquainted with her mother, the Duchess de Noailles, who is now at Versailles, waiting for the birth of a Prince, or Princess, which is daily expected ; and, as she is one of the ladies of honor to the Queen, her attendance is indispensable.

I have scarcely room left to say, that I am,
Very affectionately yours,

A. A.

TO MISS LUCY CRANCH.

Auteuil, 7 May, 1785.

I PRESUME my dear Lucy would be disappointed, if her cousin did not deliver her a line from her aunt. Yet it is hardly fair to take up an exhausted

pen to address a young lady, whose eager search after knowledge entitles her to every communication in my power.

I was in hopes to have visited several curiosities before your cousin left us, that I might have been able to relate them to my friends ; but several engagements in the company way, and some preparation for his voyage, together with the necessary arrangements for our own journey, have so fully occupied me, that I fear I shall fail in my intentions. We are to dine to-day with Mr. Jefferson. Should any thing occur there worthy of notice, it shall be the subject of my evening pen.

Well, my dear niece, I have returned from Mr. Jefferson's. When I got there, I found a pretty large company. It consisted of the Marquis and Madame de la Fayette ; the Count and Countess de — ; a French Count, who had been a general in America, but whose name I forget ; Commodore Jones ; Mr. Jarvis, an American gentleman, lately arrived, the same who married Amelia Broom, who says there is so strong a likeness between your cousin and his lady, that he is obliged to be upon his guard lest he should think himself at home, and make some mistake ; he appears a very sensible, agreeable gentleman ; a Mr. Bowdoin, an American also ; I ask the Chevalier de la Luzerne's pardon, — I had like to have forgotten him ; Mr. Williams, of course, as he always dines with Mr. Jefferson ; and Mr. Short, though one of Mr. Jefferson's family, as he has been absent some time, I name him. He

took a resolution that he would go into a French family at St. Germain, and acquire the language ; and this is the only way for a foreigner to obtain it. I have often wished that I could not hear a word of English spoken. I think I have mentioned Mr. Short before, in some of my letters ; he is about the stature of Mr. Tudor ; a better figure, but much like him in looks and manners ; consequently a favorite of mine. They have some customs very curious here. When company are invited to dine, if twenty gentlemen meet, they seldom or never sit down, but are standing or walking from one part of the room to the other, with their swords on, and their *chapeau de bras*, which is a very small silk hat, always worn under the arm. These they lay aside whilst they dine, but reassume them immediately after. I wonder how the fashion of standing crept in amongst a nation, who really deserve the appellation of polite ; for in winter it shuts out all the fire from the ladies ; I know I have suffered from it many times. At dinner, the ladies and gentlemen are mixed, and you converse with him who sits next you, rarely speaking to persons across the table, unless to ask if they will be served with any thing from your side. Conversation is never general, as with us ; for, when the company quit the table, they fall into *tête-à-tête* of two and two, when the conversation is in a low voice, and a stranger, unacquainted with the customs of the country, would think that everybody had private business to transact.

Last evening, as we returned, the weather being very soft and pleasant, I proposed to your uncle to stop at the Tuileries and walk in the garden, which we did for an hour ; there was, as usual, a collection of four or five thousand persons in the walks. This garden is the most celebrated public walk in Paris. It is situated just opposite to the river Seine, upon the left hand as you enter Paris from Auteuil. Upon Boston Neck, suppose that on one side flows the river Seine, and on the other hand is the garden of the Tuileries. There is a high wall next the street, upon which there is a terrace, which is used as a winter walk. This garden has six large gates, by which you may enter. It is adorned with noble rows of trees, straight, large, and tall, which form a most beautiful shade. The populace are not permitted to walk in this garden but upon the day of Saint Louis, when they have it all to themselves. Upon one side of this garden is the castle of the Tuileries, which is an immense pile of building, very ancient. It is in one of these châteaux, that the *concert spirituel* is held. Upon the terrace which borders this château, are six statues and two vases. These vases are large, circular spots of water, which are conveyed there from the Seine by leaden pipes under ground. Round the great vase, which is in the midst of the *parterre*, are four groups of white marble. One represents Lucretia ; the story, I know, is familiar to you. The Parisians do well to erect a statue to her, for at this day, there are many more Tarquins than Lucretias. She is

represented as plunging the dagger into her bosom in presence of her husband. There is another statue, — Anchises saved from the flames of Troy by his son Æneas, who is carrying him out upon his shoulders, leading Ascanius, his son, by his hand. The third is the rape of Orithyia, the daughter of Erectheus, King of Athens, by Boreas; and the fourth, the ravishment of Cybele by Saturn; the two last *very pretty* ornaments for a public garden. At the end of the great alley fronting the largest water-piece, which is in the form of an octagon, are eight more marble statues. Upon the right is Hannibal, counting the rings which were taken from the knights who were killed in the battle of Cannæ. Two Seasons, Spring and Winter, are upon the left hand, and a very beautiful figure of Scipio Africanus, near which are the two other Seasons, Summer and Autumn, and a statue of the Empress Agrippina. Over against these are four Rivers, colossal, represented sleeping, the Seine, the Loire, the Tiber, and the Nile. At the end of the two terraces, are two figures in marble, mounted upon winged horses; one is Mercury, and the other Fame, who, as usual, is blowing a trumpet. In very hot weather, the alleys are watered; under the trees are seats and chairs, which you may hire to sit in for a sous or two. There are many plots of grass interspersed.

Thus, you see, I have scribbled you a long letter. I hope my description will please you. This is my eleventh letter, and I have yet several others to

write ; so adieu, my dear Lucy, and believe me
most affectionately yours,

A. A.

TO MRS. SHAW.

Auteuil, 8 May, 1785.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I do not expect to date you any more letters from this place. Delightful and blooming garden, how much shall I regret your loss ! The fish-pond and the fountain are just put in order ; the trees are in blossom, and the flowers are coming on in succession ; the forest trees are new clad in green, several beautiful rows of which form arched bowers at the bottom of our garden, the tops being cut so that they look like one continued plain ; their leaves and branches entwine, and shade you entirely from the rays of the sun. It will not be easy to find in the midst of a city so charming a scene. I shall quit it, however, with less reluctance, on account of my son's absence, which would be more irksome to me here, than in a country the language of which I shall be able to speak without an interpreter, or so much twisting and twirling of my tongue, and then pronouncing badly at last. I expect to be more scrutinized in England than here. "I said, I will take heed to my ways," is a text of holy writ fruitful of instruction in all

situations of life, but speaks more loudly to those who sustain public characters.

It is so long since I heard from my American friends, that I begin to grow impatient. I had hopes that another year's wandering would have put an end to our pilgrimage. You can hardly form an idea how difficult and expensive it is to be house-keeping a few months at a time in so many different countries. It has been Mr. Adams's fortune, ever since he came abroad, not to live a year at a time in one place. At the Hague he has a house and furniture, but they could not be removed five hundred miles; therefore it was necessary to hire a house and furniture here, to buy table linen, bed linen, china, glass, and plate. Here we have resided eight months, and now we must quit this for England. Removal in these countries is not so easy a matter as in ours; for, however well you may pack up your things for the purpose, they must undergo so many scrutinies, besides paying heavy duties for passing from one country to another. Of this I can give you one instance, which happened a few moments ago. A gentleman in one of the provinces sent Mr. Adams a present of five bottles of wine which he wished recommended in America, and this was to serve as a sample. The duties, which we had to pay upon only those five bottles, mounted them up to three livres a-piece, and the real value of the wine might be nine or ten coppers a bottle; be sure, not more.

The injury which clothing sustains, in such long

journeys upon paved roads, is incredible. I fancy I never related to you a droll adventure which happened to me on my journey here. My friends advised me, when I came abroad, to take my money in crowns and dollars, as being the most advantageous for me ; but, when arrived, I found I could not part with them without much loss, so I concluded to take them with me to France. There were about two hundred, which I had put into a strong bag, and at the bottom of my travelling trunk they were placed, in the middle of which I had put a large band-box in which I had packed a very nice gauze bonnet, four caps, handkerchiefs, &c., (to the amount of about five guineas,) which I had made for me whilst I was in London. The third day of our journey, when I had occasion to open the trunk, I found a prodigious black dust upon the top. I directed it to be taken out, when O ! terrible to behold, “dust to dust, and ashes to ashes,” nothing was left of all my rigging but a few black rags ; so that, when I got to Paris, I could not be seen until I had sent to the milliner’s and bought a cap. You can carry nothing with any safety, but what is upon the top of the carriage.

Affectionately yours,

A. A.

TO MRS. CRANCH.

Auteuil, 8 May, 1785.

MY DEAR SISTER,

CAN my dear sister realize that it is near eleven months since I left her? To me it seems incredible; more like a dream than a reality. Yet it ought to appear the longest ten months of my life, if I were to measure the time by the variety of objects which have occupied my attention; but, amidst them all, my heart returns, like the dove of Noah, and rests only in my native land. I never thought myself so selfish a being as since I have become a traveller; for, although I see nature around me in a much higher state of cultivation than our own country can boast, and elegance of taste and manners in a thousand forms, I cannot feel interested in them; it is in vain for me, that here

“kind Nature wakes her genial power,
Suckles each herb, and nurtures every flower.”

'T is true the garden yields a rich profusion; but they are neither plants of my hand, nor children of my care. I have bought a little bird lately, and I really think I feel more attached to that, than to any object out of my own family, animate or inanimate. Yet I do not consider myself in the predicament of a poor fellow, who, not having a house in which to put his head, took up his abode in the stable of a

gentleman ; but, though so very poor, he kept a dog, with whom he daily divided the small portion of food which he earned. Upon being asked why, when he found it so difficult to live himself, he still kept a dog ; “What,” says the poor fellow, “part with my dog ! Why, whom should I have to love me then ? ” You can never feel the force of this reply, unless you were to go into a foreign country without being able to speak the language of it. I could not have believed, if I had not experienced it, how strong the love of country is in the human mind. Strangers from all parts of the country, who visit us, feel more nearly allied than the most intimate acquaintance I have in Europe. Before this will reach you, you will have learnt our destination to England. Whether it will prove a more agreeable situation than the present, will depend much upon the state of politics. We must first go to Holland to arrange our affairs there, and to take leave of that Court. I shall wish to be moving as soon as my family lessens, it will be so lonesome. We have as much company in a formal way as our revenues will admit ; and Mr. Jefferson, with one or two Americans, visits us in the social, friendly way. I shall really regret to leave Mr. Jefferson ; he is one of the choice ones of the earth. On Thursday, I dine with him at his house. On Sunday, he is to dine here. On Monday, we all dine with the Marquis ; and on Thursday we dine with the Swedish Ambassador, one of the most agreeable men, and the politest gentleman I have met with.

He lives like a prince. I know you love to know all my movements, which makes me so particular to you.

I have many affairs upon me at present. What with my son's going away, my own adjustments for a final leave of this country, many things must pass through my hands; but I am the less anxious to write, as your nephew will tell you all about us. You will think I ought to have written you more now; but I am almost sick of my pen, and I know you will see what I write to others. I will not, however, close until the day before he quits the house.

10 May.

To-morrow morning my son takes his departure for America, and we go next week to England. I have nothing further to add, than my regards to Mr. Cranch, and a desire that you would let me hear from you by every opportunity. I shall lose part, and the greatest part of American intelligence by quitting France; for no person is so well informed from all the States as the Marquis de la Fayette. He has established a correspondence in all the States, and has the newspapers from every quarter.

Adieu.

A. A.

TO MRS. CRANCH.

London, Bath Hotel, Westminster, 24 June, 1785.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I HAVE been here a month without writing a single line to my American friends. About the 28th of May we reached London, and expected to have gone into our old quiet lodgings at the Adelphi; but we found every hotel full. The sitting of Parliament, the birth-day of the King, and the famous celebration of the music of Handel at Westminster Abbey had drawn together such a concourse of people, that we were glad to get into lodgings at the moderate price of a guinea per day, for two rooms and two chambers at the Bath Hotel, Westminster, Piccadilly, where we yet are. This being the Court end of the city, it is the resort of a vast concourse of carriages. It is too public and noisy for pleasure; but necessity is without law. The ceremony of presentation, upon one week to the King, and the next to the Queen, was to take place, after which I was to prepare for mine. It is customary, upon presentation, to receive visits from all the foreign ministers; so that we could not exchange our lodgings for more private ones, as we might and should, had we been only in a private character. The foreign ministers, and several English lords and earls, have paid their compliments here, and all hitherto is civil and polite. I was a fortnight, all the time I could

get, looking at different houses, but could not find any one fit to inhabit under £200, besides the taxes, which mount up to £50 or £60. At last, my good genius carried me to one in Grosvenor Square, which was not let, because the person who had the care of it could let it only for the remaining lease, which was one year and three quarters. The price, which is not quite £200, the situation, and all together, induced us to close the bargain, and I have prevailed upon the person who lets it to paint two rooms, which will put it into decent order ; so that, as soon as our furniture comes, I shall again commence housekeeping. Living at a hotel is, I think, more expensive than housekeeping, in proportion to what one has for his money. We have never had more than two dishes at a time upon our table, and have not pretended to ask any company, and yet we live at a greater expense than twenty-five guineas per week. The wages of servants, horse-hire, house-rent, and provisions are much dearer here than in France. Servants of various sorts, and for different departments, are to be procured ; their characters are to be inquired into, and this I take upon me, even to the coachman. You can hardly form an idea how much I miss my son on this, as well as on many other accounts ; but I cannot bear to trouble Mr. Adams with any thing of a domestic kind, who, from morning until evening, has sufficient to occupy all his time. You can have no idea of the petitions, letters, and private applications for assistance, which crowd our doors. Every person

represents his case as dismal. Some may really be objects of compassion, and some we assist ; but one must have an inexhaustible purse to supply them all. Besides, there are so many gross impositions practised, as we have found in more instances than one, that it would take the whole of a person's time to trace all their stories. Many pretend to have been American soldiers, some to have served as officers. A most glaring instance of falsehood, however, Colonel Smith¹ detected in a man of these pretensions, who sent to Mr. Adams from the King's Bench prison, and modestly desired five guineas ; a qualified cheat, but evidently a man of letters and abilities ; but, if it is to continue in this way, a galley slave would have an easier task.

The Tory venom has begun to spit itself forth in the public papers, as I expected, bursting with envy that an American minister should be received here with the same marks of attention, politeness, and civility, which are shown to the ministers of any other power. When a minister delivers his credentials to the King, it is always in his private closet, attended only by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, which is called a private audience, and the minister presented makes some little address to his Majesty, and the same ceremony to the Queen, whose reply was in these words ; " Sir, I thank you for your civility to me and my family, and I am glad to see

¹ This gentleman was, by Congress appointed Secretary of Legation to Mr. Adams upon this mission ; and, not long after, married his daughter.

you in this country ;” then she very politely inquired whether he had got a house yet. The answer of his Majesty was much longer ; but I am not at liberty to say more respecting it, than that it was civil and polite, and that his Majesty said he was glad the choice of his country had fallen upon him. The news-liars know nothing of the matter ; they represent it just to answer their purpose. Last Thursday, Colonel Smith was presented at Court, and to-morrow, at the Queen’s circle, my ladyship and your niece make our compliments. There is no other presentation in Europe, in which I should feel so much as in this. Your own reflections will easily suggest the reasons.

I have received a very friendly and polite visit from the Countess of Effingham. She called, and not finding me at home, left a card. I returned her visit ; but was obliged to do it by leaving my card too, as she was gone out of town ; but, when her Ladyship returned, she sent her compliments and word, that if agreeable she would take a dish of tea with me, and named her day. She accordingly came, and appeared a very polite, sensible woman. She is about forty, a good person, though a little masculine, elegant in her appearance, very easy and social. The Earl of Effingham is too well remembered¹ by America to need any particular recital of his character. His mother is first lady to

¹ On account of his resigning his commission in the British army, rather than serve against America. See his letter, in “The Remembrancer,” for 1775, p. 263.

the Queen. When her Ladyship took leave, she desired I would let her know the day I would favor her with a visit, as she should be loth to be absent. She resides, in summer, a little distance from town. The Earl is a member of Parliament, which obliges him now to be in town, and she usually comes with him, and resides at a hotel a little distance from this.

I find a good many ladies belonging to the Southern States here, many of whom have visited me ; I have exchanged visits with several, yet neither of us have met. The custom is, however, here much more agreeable than in France, for it is as with us ; the stranger is first visited.

The ceremony of presentation here is considered as indispensable. There are four minister-plenipotentiaries' ladies here ; but one ambassador, and he has no lady. In France, the ladies of ambassadors only are presented. One is obliged here to attend the circles of the Queen, which are held in summer once a fortnight, but once a week the rest of the year ; and what renders it exceedingly expensive is, that you cannot go twice the same season in the same dress, and a Court dress you cannot make use of anywhere else. I directed my mantuamaker to let my dress be elegant, but plain as I could possibly appear, with decency ; accordingly, it is white lutestring, covered and full trimmed with white crape, festooned with lilac ribbon and mock point lace, over a hoop of enormous extent ; there is only a narrow train of about three

yards in length to the gown waist, which is put into a ribbon upon the left side, the Queen only having her train borne. Ruffle cuffs for married ladies, treble lace ruffles, a very dress cap with long lace lappets, two white plumes, and a blonde lace handkerchief. This is my rigging. I should have mentioned two pearl pins in my hair, ear-rings and necklace of the same kind.

Thursday Morning.

My head is dressed for St. James's, and, in my opinion, looks very tasty. Whilst my daughter's is undergoing the same operation I set myself down composedly to write you a few lines. "Well," methinks I hear Betsey and Lucy say, "what is cousin's dress?" White, my dear girls, like your aunt's, only differently trimmed and ornamented; her train being wholly of white crape, and trimmed with white ribbon; the petticoat, which is the most showy part of the dress, covered and drawn up in what are called festoons, with light wreaths of beautiful flowers; the sleeves white crape, drawn over the silk, with a row of lace round the sleeve, near the shoulder, another half way down the arm, and a third upon the top of the ruffle, a little flower stuck between; a kind of hat cap, with three large feathers and a bunch of flowers; a wreath of flowers upon the hair. Thus equipped, we go in our own carriage, and Mr. Adams and Colonel Smith in his. But I must quit my pen to put myself in order for

the ceremony, which begins at two o'clock. When I return I will relate to you my reception ; but do not let it circulate, as there may be persons eager to catch at every thing, and as much given to misrepresentation as here. I would gladly be excused the ceremony.

Friday Morning.

Congratulate me, my dear sister, it is over. I was too much fatigued to write a line last evening. At two o'clock we went to the circle, which is in the drawing-room of the Queen. We passed through several apartments, lined as usual with spectators upon these occasions. Upon entering the ante-chamber, the Baron de Lynden, the Dutch Minister, who has been often here, came and spoke with me. A Count Sarsfield, a French nobleman, with whom I was acquainted, paid his compliments. As I passed into the drawing-room, Lord Carmarthen and Sir Clement Cotterel Dormer were presented to me. Though they had been several times here, I had never seen them before. The Swedish and the Polish ministers made their compliments, and several other gentlemen ; but not a single lady did I know until the Countess of Effingham came, who was very civil. There were three young ladies, daughters of the Marquis of Lothian, who were to be presented at the same time, and two brides. We were placed in a circle round the drawing-room, which was very full, I believe two hundred persons present. Only

think of the task ! The royal family have to go round to every person, and find small talk enough to speak to all of them, though they very prudently speak in a whisper, so that only the person who stands next you can hear what is said. The King enters the room, and goes round to the right ; the Queen and Princesses to the left. The lord in waiting presents you to the King ; and the lady in waiting does the same to her Majesty. The King is a personable man, but, my dear sister, he has a certain countenance, which you and I have often remarked ; a red face and white eyebrows. The Queen has a similar countenance, and the numerous royal family confirm the observation. Persons are not placed according to their rank in the drawing-room, but promiscuously ; and when the King comes in he takes persons as they stand. When he came to me, Lord Onslow said, " Mrs. Adams " ; upon which I drew off my right-hand glove, and his Majesty saluted my left cheek ; then asked me if I had taken a walk to-day. I could have told his Majesty that I had been all the morning preparing to wait upon him ; but I replied, " No, Sire." " Why, don't you love walking ? " says he. I answered, that I was rather indolent in that respect. He then bowed, and passed on. It was more than two hours after this before it came to my turn to be presented to the Queen. The circle was so large that the company were four hours standing. The Queen was evidently embarrassed when I was presented to her. I had disagreeable feelings too. She, however,

said, "Mrs. Adams, have you got into your house? Pray, how do you like the situation of it?" Whilst the Princess Royal looked compassionate, and asked me if I was not much fatigued; and observed, that it was a very full drawing-room. Her sister, who came next, Princess Augusta, after having asked your niece if she was ever in England before, and her answering "Yes," inquired of me how long ago, and supposed it was when she was very young. And all this is said with much affability, and the ease and freedom of old acquaintance. The manner, in which they make their tour round the room, is, first, the Queen, the lady in waiting behind her, holding up her train; next to her, the Princess Royal; after her, Princess Augusta, and their lady in waiting behind them. They are pretty, rather than beautiful, well-shaped, with fair complexions, and a tincture of the King's countenance. The two sisters look much alike; they were both dressed in black and silver silk, with a silver netting upon the coat, and their heads full of diamond pins. The Queen was in purple and silver. She is not well shaped nor handsome. As to the ladies of the Court, rank and title may compensate for want of personal charms; but they are, in general, very plain, ill-shaped, and ugly; but don't you tell anybody that I say so. If one wants to see beauty, one must go to Ranelagh; there it is collected, in one bright constellation. There were two ladies very elegant, at Court, — Lady Salisbury and Lady Talbot; but the observation did not in general hold good, that fine feathers make

fine birds. I saw many who were vastly richer dressed than your friends, but I will venture to say, that I saw none neater or more elegant; which praise I ascribe to the taste of Mrs. Temple and my mantuamaker; for, after having declared that I would not have any foil or tinsel about me, they fixed upon the dress I have described. Mrs. Temple is my near neighbour, and has been very friendly to me. Mr. Temple, you know, is deaf, so that I cannot hold much conversation with him.

The Tories are very free with their compliments. Scarcely a paper escapes without some scurrility. We bear it with silent contempt; having met a polite reception from the Court, it bites them like a serpent, and stings them like an adder. As to the success the negotiations may meet with, time alone can disclose the result; but, if this nation does not suffer itself to be again duped by the artifice of some and the malice of others, it will unite itself with America on the most liberal principles and sentiments.

Captain Dashwood come? Why, I have not half done. I have not told your aunt yet, that, whilst I was writing, I received her thrice-welcome letters, and from my dear cousins too, aunt Shaw and all; nor how sometimes I laughed, and sometimes I cried. Yet there was nothing sorrowful in the letters, only they were too tender for me. What, not time to say I will write to all of them as soon as possible? Why, I know they will all think I ought to write; but how is it possible? Let them think

what I have had to do, and what I have had to accomplish, as my furniture is come, and will be landed to-morrow. Eat the sweetmeats. Divide them amongst you, and the choicest sweetmeat of all I shall have in thinking that you enjoy them.

I went, last evening, to Ranelagh; but I must reserve that story for the young folk. You see I am in haste.

Believe me most tenderly yours,

A. A.

TO MRS. SHAW.

London, (Grosvenor Square,) 15 August, 1785.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I HAVE been situated here for nearly six weeks. It is one of the finest squares in London. The air is as pure as it can be so near a great city. It is but a small distance from Hyde Park, round which I sometimes walk, but oftener ride. It resembles Boston Common, much larger, and more beautified with trees. On one side of it is a fine river. St. James's Park and Kensington Gardens are two other fashionable walks, which I am very sensible I ought to improve oftener than I do. One wants society in these places. Mrs. Temple is the only person near me with whom I can use the freedom of calling

upon her to ride or walk with me, and her, to my no small regret, I am going to lose. Mrs. Hay resides out at Hampstead, about four miles from London. We visit, but they have such a paltry custom of dining here at night, that it ruins that true American sociability which *only* I delight in. Polite circles are much alike throughout Europe. Swift's "Journal of a Modern Lady," though written sixty years ago, is perfectly applicable to the present day; and, though noted as the changeable sex, in this scene of dissipation they have been steady. I shall never have much society with this kind of people, for they would not like me any more than I do them. They think much more of their titles here than in France. It is not unusual to find people of the highest rank there, the best bred and the politest people. If they have an equal share of pride, they know better how to hide it. Until I came here, I had no idea what a national and illiberal inveteracy the English have against their better behaved neighbours, and I feel a much greater partiality for them than I did whilst I resided among them. I would recommend to this nation a little more liberality and discernment; their contracted sentiments lead them to despise all other nations. Perhaps I should be chargeable with the same narrow sentiments, if I give America the preference over these old European nations. In the cultivation of the arts and improvement in manufactures, they greatly excel us; but we have native genius, capacity, and ingenuity, equal to all their improvements, and much more

general knowledge diffused amongst us. You can scarcely form an idea how much superior our common people, as they are termed, are to those of the same rank in this country. Neither have we that servility of manners, which the distinction between nobility and citizens gives to the people of this country. We tremble not, either at the sight or name of majesty. I own that I never felt myself in a more contemptible situation, than when I stood four hours together for a gracious smile from majesty, a witness to the anxious solicitude of those around me for the same mighty *boon*. I however had a more dignified honor, as his Majesty *deigned to salute me*. I have not been since to the drawing-room, but propose going to the next. As the company are chiefly out of town, the ceremony will not be so tedious.

As to politics, the English continue to publish the most abusive, barefaced falsehoods against America that you can conceive of; yet, glaring as they are, they gain credit here, and they shut their eyes against a friendly and liberal intercourse. Yet their very existence depends upon a friendly union with us. How the pulse of the ministry beats, time will unfold; but I do not promise or wish to myself a long continuance here. Such is the temper of the two nations towards each other, that, if we have not peace, we must have war. We cannot resign the intercourse, and quit each other. I hope, however, that it will not come to that alternative. Adieu.

Your sister,

A. A.

TO MISS LUCY CRANCH.

London, (Grosvenor Square,) 27 August, 1785.

MY DEAR LUCY,

I HAVE not yet noticed your obliging favor of April 26th, which reached me by Captain Lyde, whilst I was at the Bath Hotel. I had then so much upon my hands, that I did not get time to write but to your mamma and cousin, who I hope is with you before now. By him I wrote many letters, and amongst the number of my friends, my dear Lucy was not omitted.

If I did not believe my friends were partial to all I write, I should sometimes feel discouraged when I take my pen ; for, amongst so large a number of correspondents, I feel at a loss how to supply them all.

It is usual at a large entertainment, to bring the solid food in the first course. The second consists of lighter diet, kickshaws, trifles, whip syllabub, &c. ; the third is the dessert, consisting of the fruits of the season, and sometimes foreign sweetmeats. If it would not be paying my letters too great a compliment to compare any of them to solid food, I should feel no reluctance at keeping up the metaphor with respect to the rest. Yet it is not the studied sentence, nor the elaborate period, which pleases, but the genuine sentiments of the heart expressed with simplicity. All the specimens, which have been handed down to us as models for letter-

writing, teach us that natural ease is the greatest beauty of it. It is that native simplicity too, which gives to the Scotch songs a merit superior to all others. My favourite Scotch song, "There's na luck about the house," will naturally occur to your mind.

I believe Richardson has done more towards embellishing the present age, and teaching them the talent of letter-writing, than any other modern I can name. You know I am passionately fond of all his works, even to his "Pamela." In the simplicity of our manners, we judge that many of his descriptions and some of his characters are beyond real life; but those, who have been conversant in these old corrupted countries, will be soon convinced that Richardson painted only the truth in his abandoned characters; and nothing beyond what human nature is capable of attaining, and frequently has risen to, in his amiable portraits. Richardson was master of the human heart; he studied and copied nature; he has shown the odiousness of vice, and the fatal consequences which result from the practice of it; he has painted virtue in all her amiable attitudes; he never loses sight of religion, but points his characters to a future state of restitution as the sure ground of safety to the virtuous, and excludes not hope from the wretched penitent. The oftener I have read his books, and the more I reflect upon his great variety of characters, perfectly well supported, the more I am led to love and admire the author. He must have an abandoned, wicked, and depraved heart, who can be tempted to vice by the perusal

of Richardson's works. Indeed, I know not how a person can read them without being made better by them, as they dispose the mind to receive and relish every good and benevolent principle. He may have faults, but they are so few, that they ought not to be named in the brilliant clusters of beauties which ornament his works. The human mind is an active principle, always in search of some gratification; and those writings which tend to elevate it to the contemplation of truth and virtue, and to teach it that it is capable of rising to higher degrees of excellence than the mere gratification of sensual appetites and passions, contribute to promote its mental pleasures, and to advance the dignity of our natures. Sir Joshua Reynolds's observation with respect to painting may be applied to all those works which tend to refine the taste, "which, if it does not lead directly to purity of manners, obviates, at least, their greatest depravation, by disentangling the mind from appetite, and conducting the thoughts through successive stages of excellence, till that contemplation of universal rectitude and harmony, which began by taste, may, as it is exalted and refined, conclude in virtue."

Why may we not suppose, that, the higher our attainments in knowledge and virtue are here on earth, the more nearly we assimilate ourselves to that order of beings who now rank above us in the world of spirits? We are told in Scripture, that there are different kinds of glory, and that one star differeth from another. Why should not those who have dis-

tinguished themselves by superior excellence over their fellow-mortals continue to preserve their rank when admitted to the kingdom of the just? Though the estimation of worth may be very different in the view of the righteous Judge of the world from that which vain man esteems such on earth, yet we may rest assured that justice will be strictly administered to us.

But whither has my imagination wandered? Very distant from my thoughts when I first took my pen.

We have a large company to dine with us to-day, and I have some few arrangements to make before dinner, which obliges me to hasten to a conclusion; among the persons invited, is a gentleman who married the only daughter of Richardson. She died about six months ago. This gentleman has in his possession the only portrait of her father which was ever taken. He has several times invited me to go to his house and see it. I design it, though I have not yet accepted his invitation.

Write to me, my dear Lucy, and be assured I speak the words of truth and soberness when I tell you that your letters give real pleasure to

Your affectionate aunt,

A. A.

TO JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

London, 6 September, 1785. Grosvenor Square.

MY DEAR SON,

YESTERDAY, being Sunday, I went with your father to the Foundling Church, Dr. Price, whom we usually attend, being absent a few weeks in the country. When I returned from church, I went into my closet and took up my pen, with an intention of writing to you ; but I really felt so *triste* at not having heard of your arrival, that I could not compose myself sufficiently to write to you ; so I scribbled to your brothers. By the time I had finished my letters, I was called to tea. Mr. Brown, the painter, came in and spent part of the evening. I read a sermon in Barrow upon the government of the tongue, and went to bed with one of my old impressions, that letters were near at hand.

This morning went below to breakfast ; the urn was brought up boiling ; the chocolate ready upon the table ; enter Mr. Spiller, the butler, who, by the way, is a very spruce body, and after very respectfully bowing with his hands full, " Mr. Church's compliments to you, Sir, and has brought you this packet, but could not wait upon you to-day, as he was obliged to go out of town." Up we all jumped ; your sister seized hold of a letter, and cried " My brother, my brother ! " We were not long opening and perusing, and " I am so glad," and " I am so

glad," was repeated from one to another. Mamma did not fail remarking her old impression. The chocolate grew cold, the top of the tea-pot was forgotten, and the bread and butter went down uneaten. Yet nobody felt the loss of breakfast. So near akin are joy and grief, that the effect is often similar.

Our countrymen have most essentially injured themselves by running here in shoals after the peace, and obtaining a credit which they cannot support. They have so shackled and hampered themselves, that they cannot extricate themselves. Merchants, who have given credit, are now suffering, and that naturally creates ill-will and hard words. His Majesty and the ministry show every personal respect and civility which we have any right to expect. The Marquis de la Fayette writes, that he had always heard his Majesty was a great dissembler, but he never was so thoroughly convinced of it as by the reception given to the American Minister. I wish their conduct with regard to our country was of a piece with that which they have shown to its representative. The Marquis of Carmarthen and Mr. Pitt appear to possess the most liberal ideas with respect to us, of any part of the ministry. With regard to the negroes, they are full and clear that they ought to be paid for ; but, as to the posts, they say the relinquishment of them must depend upon certain other matters, which you know they were not at liberty to explain in private conversation ; but it is no doubt they mean to keep them as a security for the payment of the debts,

and as a rod over our heads. They think we are as little able to go to war as they are. The budget has not yet been officially opened. A generous treaty has been tendered them, upon which they are now pondering and brewing. The fate of the Irish propositions has thrown weight into the American scale ; but there are so many bones of contention between us, that snarling spirits will foment into rage, and cool ones kindle by repeated irritation. It is astonishing, that this nation catch at every straw which swims, and delude themselves with the bubble that we are weary of our independence, and wish to return under their government again. They are more actuated by these ideas in their whole system toward us, than by any generous plans, which would become them as able statesmen and a great nation. They think to effect their plans by prohibitory acts and heavy duties. A late act has passed, prohibiting the exportation of any tools of any kind. They say they can injure us much more than we can them, and they seem determined to try the experiment. Those, who look beyond the present moment, foresee the consequences, that this nation will never leave us until they drive us into power and greatness that will finally shake this kingdom. We must struggle hard first, and find many difficulties to encounter, but we may be a great and a powerful nation if we will. Industry and frugality, wisdom and virtue, must make us so. I think America is taking steps towards a reform, and I know her capable of whatever she undertakes.

I hope you will never lose sight of her interests ; but make her welfare your study, and spend those hours, which others devote to cards and folly, in investigating the great principles by which nations have risen to glory and eminence ; for your country will one day call for your services, either in the cabinet or field. Qualify yourself to do honor to her.

You will probably hear, before this reaches you, of the extraordinary affair respecting the Cardinal Rohan. It is said that his confinement is in consequence of his making use of the Queen's name to get a diamond necklace of immense value into his hands. Others say it is in consequence of some reflections cast upon the character of the Queen ; others suppose that the real fact is not known. I send you one newspaper account of the matter, and have not room to add more than that I am

Your affectionate mother,

A. A.

TO MRS. CRANCH.

London, 30 September, 1785.

MY DEAR SISTER,

YOUR kind letters of July and August are before me. I thank you most sincerely for the particular manner in which you write. I go along with you,

and take an interest in every transaction which concerns those I love ; and I enjoy more pleasure from those imaginary scenes than I do from the drawing-room at St. James's. In one, I feel myself your friend and equal. In the other, I know I am looked down upon with a sovereign pride, and the smile of royalty is bestowed as a mighty boon. As such, however, I cannot receive it. I know it is due to my country, and I consider myself as complimenting the power before which I appear as much as I am complimented by being noticed by it. With these ideas, you may be sure my countenance will never wear that suppliant appearance, which begs for notice. Consequently, I never expect to be a Court favorite. Nor would I ever again set my foot there, if the etiquette of my country did not require it. But, whilst I am in a public character, I must submit to the penalty ; for such I shall ever esteem it.

You will naturally suppose that I have lately been much fatigued. This is very true. I attended the drawing-room last week, upon the anniversary of the coronation of their Majesties. The company were very brilliant, and her Majesty was stiff with diamonds ; the three eldest Princesses and the Prince of Wales were present. His Highness looked much better than when I saw him before. He is a stout, well-made man, and would look very well if he had not sacrificed so much to Bacchus. The Princess Elizabeth I never saw before. She is about fifteen ; a short, clumsy miss, and would not be thought handsome if she was not a princess. The whole family

have one complexion, and all are inclined to be corpulent. I should know them in any part of the world. Notwithstanding the English boast so much of their beauties, I do not think they have really so much of it as you will find amongst the same proportion of people in America. It is true that their complexions are undoubtedly fairer than the French, and in general their figure is good. Of this they make the best ; but I have not seen a lady in England who can bear a comparison with Mrs. Bingham, Mrs. Platt, and a Miss Hamilton, who is a Philadelphia young lady. Amongst the most celebrated of their beauties stands the Duchess of Devonshire, who is masculine in her appearance. Lady Salisbury is small and genteel, but her complexion is bad ; and Lady Talbot is not a Mrs. Bingham, who, taken altogether, is the finest woman I ever saw. The intelligence of her countenance, or rather, I ought to say, animation, the elegance of her form, and the affability of her manners, convert you into admiration ; and one has only to lament too much dissipation and frivolity of amusement, which have weaned her from her native country, and given her a passion and thirst after all the luxuries of Europe.

The finest English woman I have seen is the eldest daughter of Mr. Dana, brother to our Mr. Dana ; he resides in the country, but was in London with two of his daughters, when I first came here. I saw her first at Ranelagh. I was struck with her appearance, and endeavoured to find who she was ; for she appeared like Calypso amongst her nymphs,

delicate and modest. She was easily known from the crowd, as a stranger. I had not long admired her, before she was brought by her father and introduced to me, after which she made me a visit, with her sister, who was much out of health. At the same time that she has the best title of any English woman I have seen to the rank of a divinity, I would not have it forgotten that her father is an American, and, as he was remarkably handsome, no doubt she owes a large share of her beauty to him.

I dread to hear from my dear aunt, lest melancholy tidings should reach me with respect to her. She is at the same critical period of life which proved fatal to Mrs. B. I will, however, hope that she may yet be spared to her friends. Though her health would never permit her to engage in the active business of her family, she was attentive to the interest and welfare of every individual of it. Like Sarah, she was always to be found in her tent. A more benevolent heart never inhabited a human breast. It was well-matched and seconded in a partner equally benevolent and humane, who has shared with us our former griefs, and will find us equally sympathetic towards himself, should so great a misfortune attend him as I fear. Indeed, I know not how to take my pen to write to him. I do not wonder that your heart was affected, or your spirits low, under the apprehension of losing one so deservedly dear to us all. Should this ornament be broken from the original building, it will be another memento to us of the frailty of the whole, and that

duration depends not upon age. Yet who would desire to stand, the last naked pillar of the whole? I believe our social affections strengthen by age; as those objects and amusements which gratified our youthful years lose their relish, the social converse and society of friends becomes more necessary.

“Needful auxiliars are our friends, to give
To social man true relish of himself.”

But I must close, as I am going to dine to-day with my friend Mrs. Rogers, where I have given myself an invitation, the occasion of which I will reserve for the subject of another letter, and subscribe myself affectionately yours,

A. A.

TO MRS. CRANCH.

London, 1 October, 1785.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I TOLD you in my last, that I was going to dine with my friend Mrs. Rogers. You must know that yesterday the whole diplomatic corps dined here; that is, his Lordship the Marquis of Carmarthen, and all the foreign ministers, fifteen in all, and to-day the newspapers proclaim it. I believe they have as many spies here as the police of France. Upon these occasions, no ladies are admitted; so I wrote

a card and begged a dinner for myself and daughter of Mrs. Rogers, where I know I am always welcome.

It is customary to send out cards of invitation ten days beforehand. Our cards were gone out, and, as good luck would have it, Captain Hay returned from the West Indies, and presented us with a noble turtle, weighing a hundred and fourteen pounds, which was dressed upon this occasion. Though it gave us a good deal of pain to receive so valuable a present from them, yet we could not refuse it without affronting them, and it certainly happened at a most fortunate time. On Tuesday, they and a number of our American friends, and some of our *English friends*, for I assure you we have a chosen few of that number, are to dine with us.

This afternoon I have had a visit from Madame Pinto, the lady of the Portuguese minister. They have all visited now, and I have returned their visits ; but this is the only lady that I have seen. She speaks English tolerably, and appears an agreeable woman. She has lately returned to this country, from whence she has been five years absent. The Chevalier de Pinto has been minister here for many years. Some years hence it may be a pleasure to reside here in the character of American minister ; but, with the present salary and the present temper of the English, no one need envy the embassy. There would soon be fine work, if any notice was taken of their billingsgate and abuse ; but all their arrows rebound, and fall harmless to the ground.

Amidst all their falsehoods, they have never insinuated a lisp against the private character of the American minister, nor in his public line charged him with either want of abilities, honor, or integrity. The whole venom has been levelled against poor America; and every effort to make her appear ridiculous in the eyes of the nation. How would they exult, if they could lay hold of any circumstance, in either of our characters, to make us appear ridiculous.

I received a letter to-day from Mr. Jefferson, who writes me that he had just received a parcel of English newspapers; they "teem," says he, "with every horror of which nature is capable; assassination, suicide, thefts, robberies, and, what is worse than thefts, murder, and robbery, the blackest slanders! Indeed, the man must be of rock who can stand all this. To Mr. Adams it will be but one victory the more. It would illy suit me. I do not love difficulties. I am fond of quiet; willing to do my duty; but irritable by slander, and apt to be forced by it to abandon my post. I fancy," says he, "it must be the quantity of animal food eaten by the English, which renders their character unsusceptible of civilization. I suspect that it is in their kitchens, and not in their churches, that their reformation must be worked, and that missionaries from hence would avail more than those who should endeavour to tame them by precepts of religion or philosophy."

But he adds, "What do the foolish printers of

America mean by retailing all this stuff in our papers, as if it was not enough to be slandered by one's enemies, without circulating the slanders amongst one's friends too? "

I could tell Mr. Jefferson that I doubt not there are persons in America equally gratified with them as the English, and that from a spirit of envy. But these open attacks are nothing to the secret and subtle enemies Mr. Adams has had heretofore to encounter. In Mr. Jefferson he has a firm and faithful friend, with whom he can consult and advise; and, as each of them has no object but the good of their country in view, they have an unlimited confidence in each other; and they have only to lament that the Channel divides their more frequent intercourse.

You ask me whether I must tarry out three years. Heaven only knows what may be the result of one. If any probability appears of accomplishing any thing, 't is likely we may tarry. I am sure that it will be a labor, if not of love, yet of much perplexity and difficulty. The immense debt, due from the mercantile part of America to this country, sours this people beyond measure, and greatly distresses thousands, who never were nor ever will be politicians,—the manufacturers,—who supplied the merchants, and depend upon them for remittances. Indeed, I pity their situation. At the same time, I think our countrymen greatly to blame for getting a credit, that many of them have taken no pains to preserve, but have thoughtlessly rioted upon the property of others.

And this, among other things, makes our situation disagreeable, and the path very difficult for negotiation.

Adieu. Yours affectionately,

A. A.

TO MRS. SHAW.

London, 4 March, 1786.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I SELDOM feel a sufficient stimulus for writing until I hear that a vessel is just about to sail, and then I find myself so deep in debt, that I know not where to begin to discharge the account ; but it is time for me to be a little more provident ; for, upon looking into my list, I find I have no less than eighteen correspondents, who have demands upon me. One needs to have a more fruitful fund than I am possessed of, to pay half these in sterling bullion. I fear many will find too great a quantity of alloy to be pleased with the traffic.

I think, in one of my letters to you last autumn, I promised to give you some account of the celebrated actress, Mrs. Siddons, whom I was then going to see. You may well suppose my expectations were very high ; but her circumstances were such then as prevented her from exerting that force of passion, and that energy of action, which have

rendered her so justly celebrated. . . . You will suppose that she ought not to have appeared at all upon the stage. I should have thought so too, if I had not seen her ; but she had contrived her dress in such a manner as wholly to disguise her situation ; and chose only those tragedies where little exertion was necessary. The first piece I saw her in was Shakspeare's "Othello." She was interesting beyond any actress I had ever seen ; but I lost much of the pleasure of the play, from the sooty appearance of the Moor. Perhaps it may be early prejudice ; but I could not separate the African color from the man, nor prevent that disgust and horror which filled my mind every time I saw him touch the gentle Desdemona ; nor did I wonder that Brabantio thought some love potion or some witchcraft had been practised to make his daughter fall in love with what she scarcely dared to look upon.

I have been more pleased with her since in several other characters, particularly in Matilda in "The Carmelite," a play which I send you for your amusement. Much of Shakspeare's language is so uncouth that it sounds very harsh. He has beauties which are not equalled ; but I should suppose they might be rendered much more agreeable for the stage by alterations. I saw Mrs. Siddons a few evenings ago in "Macbeth," a play, you recollect, full of horror. She supported her part with great propriety ; but she is too great to be put in so detestable a character. I have not yet seen her in her most pathetic characters, which are Jane Shore,

Belvidera in "Venice Preserved," and Isabella in "The Fatal Marriage." For you must make as much interest here to get a box when she plays, as to get a place at Court; and they are usually obtained in the same way. It would be very difficult to find the thing in this country which money will not purchase, provided you can bribe high enough.

What adds much to the merit of Mrs. Siddons, is her virtuous character; slander itself never having slurred it. She is married to a man who bears a good character; but his name and importance are wholly swallowed up in her fame. She is the mother of five children; but from her looks you would not imagine her more than twenty-five years old. She is happy in having a brother who is one of the best tragic actors upon the stage, and always plays the capital parts with her; so that both her husband and the virtuous part of the audience can see them in the tenderest scenes without once fearing for their reputation. I scribble to you upon these subjects, yet fear they do not give you the pleasure I wish to communicate; for it is with the stage as with Yorick's "Sentimental Journey," — no person can have an equal relish for it with those who have been in the very place described.

I can, however, inform you of something which will be more interesting to you, because it is the work of one of our own countrymen, and of one of the most important events of the late war. Mr. Trumbull has made a painting of the battle at Charlestown, and the death of General Warren. To

speak of its merit, I can only say that in looking at it my whole frame contracted, my blood shivered, and I felt a faintness at my heart. He is the first painter who has undertaken to immortalize by his pencil those great actions, that gave birth to our nation. By this means he will not only secure his own fame, but transmit to posterity characters and actions which will command the admiration of future ages, and prevent the period which gave birth to them from ever passing away into the dark abyss of time. At the same time, he teaches mankind that it is not rank nor titles, but character alone, which interests posterity. Yet, notwithstanding the pencil of a Trumbull and the historic pen of a Gordon and others, many of the component parts of the great whole will finally be lost. Instances of patience, perseverance, fortitude, magnanimity, courage, humanity, and tenderness, which would have graced the Roman character, are known only to those who were themselves the actors, and whose modesty will not suffer them to blazon abroad their own fame. These, however, will be engraven by Yorick's recording angel upon unfading tablets, in that repository, where a just estimate will be made both of principles and actions.

Your letters of September and January I have received with much pleasure, and am happy to find that the partiality of a parent with regard to a very dear son, had not lessened him in the eyes of his friends; for praises are often so many inquisitors, and always a tax where they are lavished. I think

I may with justice say, that a due sense of moral obligation, integrity, and honor, are the predominant traits of his character ; and these are good foundations, upon which one may reasonably build hopes of future usefulness. The longer I live in the world, and the more I see of mankind, the more deeply I am impressed with the importance and necessity of good principles and virtuous examples being placed before youth, in the most amiable and engaging manner, whilst the mind is uncontaminated, and open to impressions. Yet precept without example is of little avail, for habits of the mind are produced by the exertion of inward practical principles. The "soul's calm sunshine" can result only from the practice of virtue, which is congenial to our natures. If happiness is not the immediate consequence of virtue, as some devotees to pleasure affirm, yet they will find that virtue is the indispensable condition of happiness ; and, as the poet expresses it,

"Peace, O Virtue ! peace is all thy own."

But I will quit this subject, lest my good brother should think I have invaded his province, and subscribe myself

Your sister,

A. A.

TO MISS LUCY CRANCH.

London, 2 April, 1786.

YOUR kind letter, my dear niece, was received with much pleasure. These tokens of love and regard which I know flow from the heart, always find their way to mine, and give me a satisfaction and pleasure beyond any thing which the ceremony and pomp of courts and kingdoms can afford. The social affections are and may be made the truest channels for our pleasures and comforts to flow through. Heaven formed us not for ourselves but others,

“ And bade self-love and social be the same.”

Perhaps there is no country where there is a fuller exercise of those virtues than ours at present exhibits, which is in a great measure owing to the equal distribution of property, the small number of inhabitants in proportion to its territory, the equal distribution of justice to the poor as well as the rich, to a government founded in justice and exercised with impartiality, and to a religion which teaches peace and good will to man ; to knowledge and learning being so easily acquired and so universally distributed ; and to that sense of moral obligation which generally inclines our countrymen to do to others as they would that others should do to them. Perhaps you will think that I allow to them

more than they deserve, but you will consider that I am only speaking comparatively. Human nature is much the same in all countries, but it is the government, the laws, and religion, which form the character of a nation. Wherever luxury abounds, there you will find corruption and degeneracy of manners. Wretches that we are, thus to misuse the bounties of Providence, to forget the hand that blesses us, and even deny the source from whence we derived our being.

But I grow too serious. To amuse you, then, my dear niece, I will give you an account of the dress of the ladies at the ball of the Comte d'Adhémar; as your cousin tells me that she some time ago gave you a history of the birth-day and ball at Court, this may serve as a counterpart. Though, should I attempt to compare the apartments, St. James's would fall as much short of the French Ambassador's, as the Court of his Britannic Majesty does of the splendor and magnificence of that of his Most Christian Majesty. I am sure I never saw an assembly room in America, which did not exceed that at St. James's in point of elegance and decoration; and, as to its fair visitors, not all their blaze of diamonds set off with Parisian rouge, can match the blooming health, the sparkling eye, and modest deportment of the dear girls of my native land. As to the dancing, the space they had to move in gave them no opportunity to display the grace of a minuet, and the full dress of long court-trains and enormous hoops, you well know were not favorable for country

dances, so that I saw them at every disadvantage ; not so the other evening. They were much more properly clad ;—silk waists, gauze or white or painted tiffany coats decorated with ribbon, beads or flowers, as fancy directed, were chiefly worn by the young ladies. Hats turned up at the sides with diamond loops and buttons of steel, large bows of ribbons and wreaths of flowers, displayed themselves to much advantage upon the heads of some of the prettiest girls England can boast. The light from the lustres is more favorable to beauty than daylight, and the color acquired by dancing, more becoming than rouge, as fancy dresses are more favorable to youth than the formality of a uniform. There was as great a variety of pretty dresses, borrowed wholly from France, as I have ever seen ; and amongst the rest, some with sapphire-blue satin waists, spangled with silver, and laced down the back and seams with silver stripes ; white satin petticoats trimmed with black and blue velvet ribbon ; an odd kind of head-dress, which they term the “ helmet of Minerva.” I did not observe the bird of wisdom, however, nor do I know whether those who wore the dress had suitable pretensions to it. “ And pray,” say you, “ how were my aunt and cousin dressed ? ” If it will gratify you to know, you shall hear. Your aunt, then, wore a full-dress court cap without the lappets, in which was a wreath of white flowers, and blue sheafs, two black and blue flat feathers (which cost her half a guinea a-piece, but that you need not tell of), three pearl pins, bought for Court, and a pair of pearl ear-

rings, the cost of them — no matter what ; less than diamonds, however. A sapphire blue *demi-saison* with a satin stripe, sack and petticoat trimmed with a broad black lace ; crape flounce, &c. ; leaves made of blue ribbon, and trimmed with white floss ; wreaths of black velvet ribbon spotted with steel beads, which are much in fashion, and brought to such perfection as to resemble diamonds ; white ribbon also in the Vandyke style, made up of the trimming, which looked very elegant ; a full dress handkerchief, and a bouquet of roses. “ Full gay, I think, for my *aunt*.” That is true, Lucy, but nobody is old in Europe. I was seated next the Duchess of Bedford, who had a scarlet satin sack and coat, with a cushion full of diamonds, for hair she has none, and is *but seventy-six*, neither. Well, now for your cousin ; a small, white Leghorn hat, bound with pink satin ribbon ; a steel buckle and band which turned up at the side, and confined a large pink bow ; large bow of the same kind of ribbon behind ; a wreath of full-blown roses round the crown, and another of buds and roses withinside the hat, which being placed at the back of the hair, brought the roses to the edge ; you see it clearly ; one red and black feather, with two white ones, completed the head-dress. A gown and coat of Chambéri gauze, with a red satin stripe over a pink waist, and coat flounced with crape, trimmed with broad point and pink ribbon ; wreaths of roses across the coat ; gauze sleeves and ruffles. But the poor girl was so sick with a cold, that she could not enjoy herself, and we re-

tired about one o'clock without waiting supper, by which you have lost half a sheet of paper, I dare say ; but I cannot close without describing to you Lady N—— and her daughter. She is as large as Captain C——'s wife, and much such a made woman, with a much fuller face, of the color and complexion of Mrs. C——, who formerly lived with your uncle Palmer, and looks as if porter and beef stood no chance before her ; add to this, that it is covered with large red pimples, over which, to help the natural redness, a coat of rouge is spread ; and, to assist her shape, she was dressed in white satin, trimmed with scarlet ribbon. Miss N—— is not so large, nor quite so red, but has a very small eye with the most impudent face you can possibly form an idea of, joined to manners so masculine, that I was obliged frequently to recollect that line of Dr. Young's,

“ Believe her dress ; she 's not a grenadier,”

to persuade myself that I was not mistaken.

Thus, my dear girl, you have an account which perhaps may amuse you a little. You must excuse my not copying ; I fear, now, I shall not get nearly all my letters ready, — my pen very bad, as you see ; and I am engaged three days this week, — to a rout at the Baroness de Nolken's, the Swedish minister's, to a ball on Thursday evening, and to a dinner on Saturday. Do not fear that your aunt will become dissipated, or in love with European manners ; but, as opportunity offers, I wish to see this European

world in all its *forms* that I can with decency. I still moralize with Yorick, or with one more experienced, and say "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

Adieu, and believe me yours,

A. ADAMS.

TO MRS. CRANCH.

London, 6 April, 1786.

MY DEAR SISTER,

ALTHOUGH I was at a stupid rout at the Swedish minister's last evening, I got home about twelve, and rose early this morning to get a few things ready to send out by Lyde. When a body has attended one of these parties, you know the whole of the entertainment. There were about two hundred persons present last evening. Three large rooms full of card-tables; the moment the ceremony of curtseying is past, the lady of the house asks you, "Pray, what is your game; whist, cribbage, or commerce?" And then the next thing is to hunt round the room for a set to make a party; and, as the company are coming and going from eight till two in the morning, you may suppose that she has enough to employ her from room to room. The lady and

her daughter last night were almost fatigued to death, for they had been out the night before till morning, and were toiling at pleasure for seven hours, in which time they scarcely sat down. I went with a determination not to play, but could not get off; so I was set down to a table with three perfect strangers, and the lady who was against me stated the game at half a guinea a-piece. I told her I thought it full high; but I knew she designed to win, so I said no more, but expected to lose. It however happened otherwise. I won four games of her. I then paid for the cards, which is the custom here, and left her to attack others, which she did, at three other tables, where she amply made up her loss. In short, she was an old, experienced hand, and it was the luck of the cards rather than skill, though I have usually been fortunate, as it is termed; but I never play when I can possibly avoid it, for I have not conquered the disagreeable feeling of receiving money for play. But such a set of gamblers as the ladies here are! and such a life as they lead! Good Heavens! were reasonable beings made for this? I will come and shelter myself in America from this scene of dissipation, and upbraid me whenever I introduce the like amongst you. Yet here you cannot live with any character or consequence, unless you give in some measure into the ton.

Mr. Adams is gone to accompany Mr. Jefferson into the country to some of the most celebrated gardens. This is the first tour he has made since I first came abroad; during which time we have lived

longer unseparated than we have ever done before since we were married.

Adieu. Your sister,

A. A.

TO MRS. CRANCH.

London, 21 May, 1786.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I WISH I had one of my nieces with me whilst I remain in this country ; but it will not be long before I shall quit it. Not ten days ago I expected to have taken my passage in the July packet, in consequence of some intelligence which afterwards wore a different appearance ; things are so fluctuating upon both sides the water, that it is really difficult to draw up conclusions. Prussia has treated, Portugal has treated, and the Emperor's minister has just received powers to treat also ; but, very unfortunately, the joint commission of the American ministers expired this month, so that nothing can be concluded until new powers arrive. Whoever has any thing to do with courts, must have patience for their first, second, and third requisites. I wish I was well out of the way of all of them. My object is to return to America early next spring, if nothing arises to

oblige us to take this step sooner. I cannot think of a fall passage. Of this, I shall be better informed in a few weeks. But there is no office more undesirable than that of Minister of the United States ; under the present embarrassments, there is no reputation to be acquired, and there is much to lose. Negotiations with other powers may be and have been effected ; but with England there is not the least probability of a treaty, until the States are united in their measures, and invest Congress with full powers for the regulation of commerce. A minister here can be of very little service until that event takes place. It is true, he may be invested with other powers, and one, more important than treating with this country, is, making peace with the Barbary States ; but as Mr. Adams foretold, so it has turned out. Lamb is returning without being able to effect any thing. The Dey would not even see him, and the demand for the poor fellows who are in captivity is a thousand dollars per man, and there are twenty-one of them. The sum allotted by Congress is so inadequate to the thing, that we must look only for war upon us. Unless Congress endeavour to borrow the sum demanded, and treat immediately, their demands will increase in proportion to the captures they make ; but of all this they are regularly and fully informed. You will not, however, make these matters known till you hear them from some other quarter. These are dull subjects for one lady to write to another upon ; but our country is so much interested in these affairs, that you

must excuse me for troubling you with them, and you can communicate with discretion.

I thank you most sincerely for all your kindness to my dear sons, and hope they will ever bear a grateful remembrance of it; the account you give of their behaviour and conduct is such as I hope they merit. The idea that their success in life depends upon their diligence and application to their studies, and a modest and virtuous deportment, cannot be too strongly impressed upon their minds. The foolish idea in which some of our youth are educated, of being born gentlemen, is the most ridiculous, in the world for a country like ours. It is the mind and manners which make the gentleman, and not the estate. There is no man with us so rich as to breed up a family in idleness, with ideas of paternal inheritance, and far distant may that day be from our land; he who is not in some way or other useful to society, is a drone in the hive, and ought to be hunted down accordingly. I have very different ideas of the wealth of my countrymen from what I had when I left. Much of that wealth has proved fallacious, and their debts exceed their property. Economy and industry may retrieve their affairs. I know that the country is capable of great exertions; but, in order to this, they must curtail their ideas of luxury and refinement, according to their ability. I do not believe any country exceeds them in the article of dress. In houses, in furniture, in gardens and pleasure-grounds, and in equipage, the wealth of France and England is displayed to a high pitch of

grandeur and magnificence ; but, when I reflect upon the thousands who are starving, and the millions who are loaded with taxes to support this pomp and show, I look to my happier country with an enthusiastic warmth, and pray for the continuance of that equality of rank and fortune which forms so large a portion of our happiness.

I yesterday dined at the Bishop of Saint Asaph's, in company with Dr. Priestley and Dr. Price and some strangers. The Bishop's character is well known and respected, as a friend to America, and justly does he deserve the character of a liberal man. He is polite, affable, and consequently agreeable. He has a lady and an unmarried daughter, both of whom are well-bred, according to my ideas ; according to British ideas, good breeding consists in an undaunted air and a fearless, not to say bold, address and appearance. The old lady is both sensible and learned, quite easy and social ; the young one is modest and attentive. This is a family, the friendship and acquaintance of which I should like to cultivate.

Dr. Priestley is a gentleman of a pale complexion, spare habit, placid, thoughtful countenance, and very few words. I heard him preach for Dr. Price. His delivery is not equal to the matter of his discourses. I dined twice in company with the Doctor, and was mortified that I could not have more of his company at our own house, but he was engaged every moment of his time whilst in London. I believe I have frequently mentioned Dr. Price ; he is a

good and amiable man, a little inclined to lowness of spirits which partly arises from the melancholy state of Mrs. Price, who two years ago had a paralytic stroke, and has been helpless ever since.

Believe me yours affectionately,

A. A.

TO MISS LUCY CRANCH.

London, 20 July, 1786.

MY DEAR NIECE,

My fourth letter I begin to you. I dare not reckon the number I have to write ; lest I should feel discouraged in the attempt, I must circumscribe myself to half a sheet of paper. Raree-shows are so much the taste of this country, that they make one even of the corpse of great people ; and the other day a gentleman presented me with a card to go and see the corpse of the Duke of Northumberland, who died at his house in the country, but was brought here to be laid in state. "It is," said he, "a senseless piece of pageantry ; but, as such, I would advise you to see it." It is practised only with crowned heads, and some of the most ancient families of Dukes. The late Duke was father to Lord Percy, whom the Americans well remember. His Lordship (who lives a few doors from us), being the elder son, inherits the title and estate, and is now Duke of Northumberland.

Northumberland House is in the city. A great, immense pile of building, to which one enters through massy iron gates. At these gates stood four porters, clad in black ; the court, up to the house, was hung in black, and divided by a temporary railing, that the spectators might pass in upon one side, and out upon the other. From the court we entered a long suite of rooms, five in number, through rows of servants, one each side of us, all sabled as well as the rooms. I never before understood that line of Pope's,

“ When Hopkins dies, a thousand lights attend.”

I believe there were two thousand here, for daylight was totally excluded. Upon the walls were as many escutcheons as candles. These are formed so as to place a light in each. These plates are all washed with silver ; being put upon the black cloth and lighted in this manner, they gave the rooms a tomb-like appearance ; for in this manner are the tombs of the dead enlightened in Catholic countries, and it is not uncommon for the great to leave a large sum of money for lights to be kept constantly burning. Through these rooms we moved, with a slow pace and a solemn silence, into that which contained the corpse. Here, upon a superb bed of state, surrounded with twenty-four wax lights upon enormous silver candlesticks, lay the remains of his Grace, as I presume, but so buried amidst stars and garters, and the various insignia of the different offices he sustained, that he might as well have

been at Sion House, for all that one could see of him ; for these ornaments are displayed like flags,

“ The George and garter dangling from the bed,
Where gaudy yellow strove with flaming red.”

Upon the bolster lay the ducal coronet, and round the bed stood a dozen men in black, whom they call *mutes*. It was said that the corpse was clothed in a white satin tunic, and cap richly trimmed with blonde lace ; but for this I cannot vouch, though I do not think it more ridiculous than the other parts of the parade which I saw ; and this farce was kept up two days. The body was then deposited in Westminster Abbey, with as much parade and show as possible ; but, being out of town, I did not see it.

We made an excursion as far as Portsmouth, which lies about seventy-five miles from London. I was much disappointed in the appearance of the country, great part of it being only barren heath. Within eighteen miles of the town, it appears fruitful and highly cultivated. We spent only one day at Portsmouth, but returned by another road, which brought us back through Windsor. Here we stopped a day and a half, and I was charmed and delighted with it. The most luxuriant fancy cannot exceed the beauties of this place. I do not wonder that Pope styled it the seat of the muses. Read his “ Windsor Forest,” and give full credit to his most poetic flights. The road by which we entered the town was from the top of a very steep hill ; from this hill, a lawn presents itself on each side. Before you, a

broad, straight road, three miles in length ; upon each side a double plantation of lofty elms lift their majestic heads, which is exceeded only by a view of the still grander forest, at a distance, which is thirty miles in circumference. From this hill you have a view of the Castle and the town. This place, as in former days, is the retreat of the monarch. The royal family reside here nine months of the year, not in the Castle, as that would require the attendance of ministers, &c. The present Queen has a neat lodge here, close to the Castle ; and there is another, a few rods distant, for the Princesses. His Majesty is a visiter to the Queen, and the family reside here with as little parade as that of a private gentleman. It is the etiquette, that none of his Majesty's ministers approach him upon business here. Despatches are sent by messengers, and answers returned in the same way. He holds his levees twice a week, in town. The Castle is one of the strongest places in Europe, as it is said, and a safe retreat for the family in case any more revolutions should shake this kingdom. It was first built by Edward the Third. Charles the Second kept his Court here during the summer months, and spared no expense to render it worthy the royal residence. He furnished it richly, and decorated it with paintings by the first masters. It is situated upon a high hill, which rises by a gentle ascent, and enjoys a most delightful prospect round it. In front is a wide and extensive vale, adorned with fields and meadows, with groves on either side,

and the calm, smooth water of the Thames running through them. Behind it are hills, covered with fine forests, as if designed by nature for hunting.

The terrace round the Castle is a noble walk, covered with fine gravel. It is raised on a steep declivity of a hill, and overlooks the whole town. Here the King and royal family walk on Sunday afternoons, in order to show themselves to those of their subjects who choose to repair to Windsor for that purpose. In fine weather the terrace is generally thronged. From the top of this tower on the Castle, they showed us thirteen different counties. To describe to you the apartments, the paintings and decorations within this Castle, would require a volume instead of a letter. I shall mention only two rooms; and the first is that called the Queen's bed-chamber, where, upon the top of the ceiling, is painted the story of Diana and Endymion. The bed of state was put up by her Majesty; the inside and counterpanes are of white satin, the curtains of pea green, richly embroidered by a Mrs. Wright, embroiderer to her Majesty. There is a full length picture of the Queen, with her fourteen children in miniature, in the same piece, taken by Mr. West. It is a very handsome likeness of her. The next room is called "the room of beauties"; so named for the portraits of the most celebrated beauties in the reign of Charles the Second. They are fourteen in number. There is also Charles's Queen, a very handsome woman. The dress of many of them is in the style of the present day. Here is also Queen Caroline's

china closet, filled with a great variety of curious china, elegantly disposed.

I have come now to the bottom of the last page. If I have amused my dear niece, it will give great pleasure to her affectionate aunt,

A. A.

TO MRS. CRANCH.

London, 12 September, 1786.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I AM again safe arrived in this city, after an absence of five weeks. By the last vessels, I wrote some of my friends that I was going to visit Holland. That I had a desire to see that country you will not wonder at, as one of those theatres, upon which my partner and fellow-traveller had exhibited some of his most important actions, and rendered to his country lasting blessings. It has been the policy of some of our allies to keep, as much as possible, these events out of sight, and of some of our countrymen to lessen their value in the eyes of mankind. I have seen two Histories of the American war, written in French, and one lately published in English by a Mr. Andrews. In one of them, no notice is taken, or mention made, of our alliance with Holland, and the two others mention it as slightly as possible; and our own countrymen set them the

example. France, to be sure, was the first to acknowledge our independence, and to aid us with men and money, and ought always to be first ranked amongst our friends; but Holland, surely, ought not to be totally neglected. From whence have we drawn our supplies for these five years past, even to pay to France the interest upon her loan, and where else could we now look in case of a pressing emergency? Yet have I observed, in sermons upon public occasions, in orations, &c., France is always mentioned with great esteem, Holland totally neglected. This is neither policy nor justice. I have been led to a more particular reflection upon this subject, from my late visit to that country. The respect, attention, civility, and politeness, which we received from that people, wherever we went, was a striking proof, not only of their personal esteem, but of the ideas they entertain with respect to the revolution which gave birth to their connexion with us, and laid, as they say, the foundation for their restoration to privileges, which had been wrested from them, and which they are now exerting themselves to recover. The spirit of liberty appears to be all alive in them; but whether they will be able to accomplish their views, without a scene of blood and carnage, is very doubtful.

As to the country, I do not wonder that Swift gave it the name of "Nick Frog," though I do not carry the idea so far as some, who insist that the people resemble the frog in the shape of their faces and the form of their bodies. They appear to

be a well-fed, well-clothed, contented, happy people. Very few objects of wretchedness present themselves to your view, even amidst the immense concourse of people in the city of Amsterdam. They have many public institutions which do honor to humanity, and to the particular directors of them. The money allotted to benevolent purposes is applied solely to the benefit of the charities, instead of being wasted and expended in public dinners to the guardians of them, which is said to be the case too much in this country. The civil government, or police, must be well regulated, since rapine, murder, and robbery are very seldom found amongst them.

The Exchange of Amsterdam is a great curiosity. As such, they carried me to see it. I was with Mr. Van Staphorst; and, though the crowd of people was immense, I met with no difficulty in passing through, every person opening a passage for me. The Exchange is a large square, surrounded with a piazza. Here, from twelve till two o'clock, all and every person who has business of any kind to transact, meet, sure of finding the person they want; and it is not unusual to see ten thousand persons collected at once. I was in a chamber above the Exchange; the buzz from below was like the swarming of bees. The most important places which I visited, were Rotterdam, Delft, the Hague, Leyden, Haarlem, Amsterdam, and Utrecht. I went through many other villages and towns; the names I do not recollect. I was eight days at the Hague, and visited every village round it, amongst

which is Scheveling, a place famous for the embarkation of King Charles. From Utrecht I visited Zest, a small town belonging wholly to the Moravians, who maintain the same doctrines with the Moravians at Bethlehem, in Pennsylvania, but which are not the best calculated for fulfilling the great command of replenishing the earth. I visited Gouda, and saw the most celebrated paintings upon glass which are to be found. These were immense windows, reaching from the top to the bottom of a very high church, and containing Scripture history. Neither the faces nor attitudes had any thing striking ; but the colors, which had stood for near two hundred years, were beautiful beyond imagination. From Amsterdam, we made a party one day to Saardam, a few hours' sail only. It was their annual fair, and I had an opportunity of seeing the people in their holiday suits. This place is famous for being the abode of the Czar Peter, whose ship-carpenter's shop they still show. At every place of note, I visited the cabinets of paintings and natural history, and all the public buildings of distinction, as well as the seats of several private gentlemen, and the Prince of Orange's house at the Hague, where he holds his court during the summer months ; but the difference, which subsists between him and the States, occasioned his retreat to Loo. Consequently I had no opportunity of being presented to that Court. We were invited to dine one day at Sir James Harris's, the British minister at that Court, who appears a very sensible, agreeable man. Lady Harris, who is

about twenty-four years old, may be ranked with the first of English beauties. She was married at seventeen, and has four fine children ; but, though very pretty, her Ladyship has no dignity in her manners, nor solidity in her deportment. She rather seems of the good-humored, giggling class,—a mere trifler ; at least, I saw nothing to the contrary. I supped at the Marquis de Verac's, the French Ambassador's, with about fifty gentlemen and ladies. His own lady is dead. He has a daughter-in-law, who usually lives with him, but was now absent in France.

Upon the whole, I was much gratified with my excursion to a country, which cannot show its like again. The whole appearance of it is that of a meadow. What are called the dikes, are the roads, which, being raised, separate the canals. Upon these you ride, through rows of willow trees upon each side. Not a hill to be seen. It is all a continued plain, so that trees, meadows, and canals, canals, trees, and meadows, are the unvaried scene. The houses are all brick, and the streets are paved with brick. It is very unusual to see a single square of glass broken, or a brick out of place, even in the meanest house. They paint every piece of wood within and without their houses ; and, what I thought not so wholesome, their milk-pails are painted, within and without, and so are their horse-carts ; but it is upon a principle of economy. The country is exceeding fruitful, and every house has a garden spot, plentifully stored with vegetables. The dress

of all the country people is precisely the same that it was two hundred years ago, and has been handed down from generation to generation unimpaired. You recollect the short petticoats, and long short-gowns, round-eared caps with straight borders, and large straw hats, which the German women wore when they first settled at Germantown. Such is now the dress of all the lower class of people, who do not even attempt to imitate the gentry. I was pleased with the trig neatness of the women ; many of them wear black tammy aprons, thick quilted coats, or russet skirts, and small hoops ; but only figure to yourself a child of three or four, dressed in the same way. They cut a figure, I assure you. Gold ear-rings are universally worn by them, and bracelets upon holidays. The dress of the men is full as old-fashioned ; but the Court and genteel people dress part English and part French. They generally speak both the languages, but French most. Since their intercourse with America, the English language is considered as an essential part of education. I would not omit to mention that I visited the church at Leyden, in which our forefathers worshipped, when they fled from hierarchi-cal tyranny and persecution. I felt a respect and veneration upon entering the doors, like what the ancients paid to their Druids.

Upon my return home, I found that Captain Cushing had arrived in my absence, and a noble packet was handed to me by your niece soon after I arrived ; but, as we had not seen each other for

five weeks, we had much to say ; and, in addition to that, I had not closed my eyes for two days and nights, having had a stormy, boisterous passage of three days, attended with no small danger ; and, as I had rode seventy-five miles that day, they all voted against my opening my letters that night. Mortifying as it was, I submitted, being almost light-headed with want of rest, and fatigue. But I rose early the next morning and read them all before breakfast ; and here let me thank my dear sister for the entertainment hers afforded me ; but, like most of the scenes of life, the pleasure was mixed with pain. The account of the death of our dear and worthy aunt reached me in a letter from cousin W. Smith, the week before I went my journey. Although I took a final leave of her when I quitted America, yet I have been willing to flatter myself with the hope that I might be mistaken, and that her life would be prolonged beyond my expectations. How often has her image appeared to my mind in the same form in which she addressed me when I left her house. You know how susceptible her heart was to every tender impression. She saw how much I was distressed, and strove herself for a magnanimity that gave to her whole appearance a placid solemnity which spoke more forcibly than words. There was a something indescribable, which to me seemed angelic, in her whole manner and appearance, that most powerfully impressed my mind ; and I could not refrain, when I arrived here, from mentioning it to Mr. Smith, who, I dare say, will recollect it. Like

the angel she then appeared, she now really is, fitted by a life of piety and benevolence to join her kindred spirits. She has left us her example, and the memory of her many virtues, to comfort our afflicted hearts. Beloved, regretted, and lamented ! She was like a parent to me, and my full heart has paid the tributary tears to her memory.

Adieu. Believe me yours very affectionately,
A. A.

TO JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

London, 27 September, 1786.

MY DEAR SON,

SINCE I wrote you last, I have made two excursions, one to Holland, and one of a week to the Hyde, the seat of Mr. Brand-Hollis. Here I was both entertained and delighted. In the first place, I must describe Mr. Hollis to you. He is a neat, nice bachelor, about fifty years old ; a learned, sensible antiquarian. The late Mr. Hollis whose name he bears, could not have chosen a better representative to have bestowed his mantle upon, for with it has descended that same love of liberty, benevolence, and philanthropy, which distinguished his worthy benefactor. At the entrance of the hall

you discover the prevailing taste. There are a number of ancient busts, amongst which is one of Marcus Aurelius, who is a great favorite of Mr. Hollis. - He told us, that all the great painters who had drawn Jesus Christ, had taken the busts of Marcus Aurelius as a model. There is a fine white marble bust of the late Mr. Hollis in this collection. This hall is large and spacious, and has been added to the house by Mr. Brand-Hollis since the death of his father¹ who left it to him. The chamber where we lodged was hung round with portraits of his family. It is at one end of the house, and from two windows in front, and one at the end, we had a beautiful view of lawns and glades, clumps of trees and stately groves, and a piece of water full of fish. The borders of the walks in the pleasure-grounds are full of rare shrubs and trees, to which America has contributed her full proportion. To give you some idea of the singularity in which this good man discovers his taste, near the walk from his door to the road, he has a large and beautiful fir, which he calls Dr. Jebb. Having paled this tree in with a neat ornament, he has consecrated it to the memory of that excellent man, with whom I had only the pleasure of a short acquaintance, before he was called to the regions of immortality. He possessed an excellent understanding, an unshaken integrity, and a universal benevolence, and

¹ Mr. Brand assumed the name of Hollis, in consequence of the bequest of his fortune made to him by Thomas Hollis.

was one of the few firm and steady friends to America. Cut off in middle age, he left a companion endowed with an understanding superior to most of her sex ; always in delicate health, but now a prey to the most piercing grief, which will shortly close the scene with her. They had no children, and, being wholly a domestic woman, the pleasures of the world have no relish for her. Her friends have at length prevailed with her to go into the country for a few weeks.

But to return to Mr. Hollis's curiosities. In his garden he has a tall cypress, which he calls General Washington, and another by its side, which he has named for Colonel Smith, as his aid-de-camp. This gentleman possesses a taste for all the fine arts. In architecture, Palladio is his oracle. Amongst his paintings are several of the first masters. Over his chimney, in his cabinet, are four small portraits, which he told me were his hero, his general, his philosopher, and his writer. Marcus Aurelius was his general ; his hero, pardon me, I have forgotten him. Plato was his writer, and Hutcheson his philosopher, who was also his preceptor. Mr. Hollis speaks also of him with great veneration and affection. In the dining-room is a luxuriant picture for a bachelor, a Venus and Adonis, by Rembrandt, and two views, of a modern date, of the estate in Dorsetshire, which the late Mr. Hollis gave him. As there is only a farm-house upon it, he never resides there. There are three pastures belonging to it, which are called Hollis, Mead, and Brand. In Hollis pasture

are the remains of its late owner, who left it as an order, which was faithfully executed, to be buried there, and ten feet deep, the ground to be ploughed up over his grave, that not a monument nor stone should tell where he lay. This was whimsical and singular, be sure, but singularity was his characteristic, as many of his works show.

Between Mr. Hollis's drawing-room and his library, is a small cabinet which he calls the Boudoir, which is full of curiosities ; amongst them a dagger made of the sword which killed Sir Edmondbury Godfrey, and an inscription, " Memento Godfrey, Protomartyr, pro Religione Protestantium." In every part of the house you see Mr. Hollis's owl, cap of liberty. and dagger. In this cabinet is a silver cup, with a cover in the shape of an owl, with two rubies for eyes. This piece of antiquity was dug up at Canterbury from ten feet depth, and is considered a monkish conceit. Amongst the curiosities in this room is a collection of duodecimo prints, to the number of forty-five, of all the orders of nuns, which Mr. Bridgen purchased some years ago in the Austrian Netherlands, and presented to Mr. Hollis. Mr. Bridgen has lately composed some verses which are placed by the side of them. The idea is, that, banished from Germany by the Emperor, they have taken an asylum at the Hyde in sight of the Druids, the Portico of Athens, and the venerable remains of Egyptian, Greek, and Roman antiquities. I would not omit the mention of a curious medallion, on which is wrought a feast of all the heathen gods and god-

desses sitting round a table. Jupiter throws down upon the middle of it one of his thunderbolts, flaming at each end with lightning ; he lights his own pipe at it, and all the rest follow his example ; Venus, Minerva, and Diana are whiffing away. This is the first time I ever conceived tobacco an ingredient in the feast of the Celestials. It must have been the invention of some Dutchman.

As select and highly-honored friends, we were admitted into the library and to a view of the Miltonian Cabinet. In this, he has the original edition of Milton's works, and every other to the present day. His library, his pictures, busts, medals, coins, Greek, Roman, Carthaginian, and Egyptian, are really a selection, as well as a collection, of most rare and valuable curiosities. In the early part of his life, he visited Rome, Italy, and many other countries. His fortune is easy, and, as he has lived a bachelor, his time is occupied wholly by the sciences. He has a maiden sister of forty-five, I should judge, who lives with him when he is in the country. They each of them own a house in town, and live separate during the winter. Miss Brand is curious in China and in birds. She has a piece of all the different manufactures of Porcelain made in this kingdom ; either a cup or bowl, a mug or jar. She has also a variety of singing-birds. But what I esteem her much more for is, that she has taken from the streets half a dozen poor children, clothed them, and put them to school. This is doing good not only to the present, but future generations. 'T is really curious to see how the

taste of the master has pervaded all the family. John, the coachman, has a small garden spot, which he invited me to see. Here was a collection of curious flowers, and a little grotto filled with fossils and shells. The gardener, whose house stands within a few rods of the mansion-house, is bee mad. He has a great number of glass hives, in which you may see the bees at work ; and he showed me the queen's cell. He handles the bees as one would flies ; they never sting him. He insists that they know him, and will, with great fluency, read you a lecture of an hour, upon their laws and government. He has an invention for excluding the drones, who are larger bees than the rest, and when once out of the hive, they cannot return.

It would require a whole volume to enumerate to you all that was worthy attention, and, had you been one of the visiters, I dare say you would have collected a larger stock of improvement, and been much more minute than I have been in my account of curiosities ; but I could not remember amidst such a variety. I enclose you a drawing of the house, which Mr. Hollis gave me.

My visit to Holland was agreeable, but to your aunt Cranch I must refer you for particulars. Madam Dumas and Miss were absent upon her estate until the evening before I came away. I called to pay them a visit, and had a very cordial reception. Mr. Dumas speaks of you with great affection, as well as Madame, and Miss looked kind. The Marquis de Verac inquired after you with great politeness ;

said you were interpreter for him and Mr. Dana when you were at Petersburg, and that, if I was dressed in your clothes, he should have taken me for you. "Years excepted," he should have added; but that was a mental reservation. He is ambassador at the Hague.

Remember me affectionately to your brothers, and to all other friends; and believe me most tenderly

Your ever affectionate mother,

A. A.

October 14th. Enclosed, you will find a medal of his present Majesty. As you have no great affection for him, you may exchange it for any property you like better.

TO MRS. SHAW.

London, 21 November, 1786.

MY DEAR SISTER,

MR. S—— called upon us a day or two ago, and delivered me your kind letter of July the 20th. It was of a later date than any I had received from you, though near four months old. It was a little unfortunate for the gentleman, that Mr. Adams entered immediately into an inquiry of him respecting

the state and commerce of the Massachusetts, of which, be sure, the gentleman drew a most gloomy picture, and finished the whole by saying, that the people in the United States were as much oppressed by taxes as they were in Europe. This being so wholly groundless, it roused the quick feelings of Mr. Adams, who replied, a little warmly, "Give me leave to tell you, Sir, that people who hold this language, betray a total ignorance of the subject. Name the article in this country, even to the light of heaven, the air you breathe, and the water you drink, which is not taxed. Loaded down with accumulated burdens is this *free people*, yet the whole is not sufficient to pay even the interest of the national debt, and the charges of government. Mr. Pitt's surplus is a vision, and new methods of taxation must be devised. Pray, are our farmers perishing in the midst of plenty, as in Ireland? Are our fishermen starving? Cannot the laborer find a subsistence? Or has the price of labor fallen to sixpence, and subsistence risen to a shilling? Or is it only trade that languishes? Thank God, that necessity, then, will oblige those who have lived luxuriously at the expense of others, and upon property which was not their own, to do so no longer. There is not a merchant in England, France, or Holland, with a capital which could buy fifty of our most opulent merchants, that lives at half the expense which I have been informed many of ours have run into during the war, and since."

By this time I had got into that part of your letter,

which informed me that Mr. S —— had been unfortunate in business. I knew Mr. Adams was a perfect stranger to this, and could design nothing against the gentleman; but still I felt pained for him, as I presumed he had never had such a lesson before. He drew in his horns, and was more upon his guard the remainder of the time. We asked him to dine with us the next day, but he was engaged. Mr. Adams will return his visit, and then we shall send him a card of invitation. In his manners and address he appears much of a gentleman.

The accounts you gave me of the singing of your birds, and the prattle of your children, entertained me much. Do you know that European birds have not half the melody of ours? Nor is their fruit half so sweet, nor their flowers half so fragrant, nor their manners half so pure, nor their people half so virtuous; but keep this to yourself, or I shall be thought more than half deficient in understanding and taste. I will not dispute what every person must assent to; that the fine arts, manufactures, and agriculture have arrived at a greater degree of maturity and perfection. But what is their age? What their individual riches, when compared with us? Far removed from my mind may the national prejudice be, of conceiving all that is good and excellent comprised within the narrow compass of the United States. The Universal Parent has dispensed his blessings throughout all creation, and, though to some he hath given a more goodly heritage than to others, we have reason to believe that

a general order and harmony are maintained by apportioning to each his proper station. Though seas, mountains, and rivers are geographical boundaries, they contract not the benevolence and good will of the liberal mind, which can extend itself beyond the limits of country and kindred, and claim fellowship with Christian, Jew, or Turk. What a lesson did the great Author of our religion give to mankind by the parable of the Jew and the Samaritan ; but how little has it been regarded ! To the glory of the present age, they are shaking off that narrow, contracted spirit of priestcraft and usurpation, which has for so many ages tyrannized over the minds of mankind, and deluged the world in blood. They consider religion not as a state stalking-horse, to raise men to temporal power and dignity ; but as a wise and benevolent system, calculated to still the boisterous passions, to restrain the malevolent ones, to curb the ambitious, and to harmonize mankind to the temper of its great Author, who came to make peace, and not to destroy. The late act of toleration, passed by Virginia, is esteemed here as an example to the world.

We are now really in the gloomy month of November, such as I have heard it described, but did not last year experience. Now we have it, all smoke, fog, and darkness ; and the general mourning for the Princess Amelia adds to the gloom of the scene. I was yesterday at the drawing-room, for the first time since her death ; and, though I cannot say all faces gathered blackness, all bodies appeared

so. As she had given her fortune to her German nephews, it would have been absurd to have shown any appearance of grief. Poor John Bull is vastly angry and mortified. Had it been given to the Prince of Wales, *his liberal hand* would soon have poured forth the golden shower; and, as his aunt acquired it all in this nation, here it ought to have remained, says John; but he cannot alter it, so he vents himself, as usual, in abuse and bellowing.

Adieu.

Your sister,

A. A.

TO MRS. CRANCH.

London, 20 January, 1787.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I WILL now give you some account of my late tour to Bath, that seat of fashionable resort, where, like the rest of the world, I spent a fortnight in amusement and dissipation, but returned, I assure you, with double pleasure to my own fireside, where only, thank Heaven, my substantial happiness subsists. Here I find that satisfaction, which neither satiates by enjoyment, nor palls upon reflection; for, though I like sometimes to mix in the gay world, and view the manners as they rise, I have much reason to be grateful to my parents, that my early education gave me not an habitual taste for what is termed fashionable life. The Eastern monarch,

after having partaken of every gratification and sensual pleasure, which power, wealth, and dignity could bestow, pronounced it all vanity and vexation of spirit; and I have too great a respect for his wisdom to doubt his authority. I, however, passed through the routine, and attended three balls, two concerts, one play, and two private parties, besides dining and breakfasting abroad. We made up a party of Americans; Mr. and Mrs. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Rucker, and Miss Ramsay, Mr. Shippen, Mr. Harrison, Mr. Murray, Mr. Paradise, Mr. Bridgen, and a Count Zenobia, a Venetian nobleman. These, with our domestics, made a considerable train, and when we went to the rooms, we at least had a party to speak to. As I had but one acquaintance at Bath, and did not seek for letters of introduction, I had no reason to expect half the civility I experienced. I was, however, very politely treated by Mr. Fairfax and his lady, who had been in America, and own an estate in Virginia, and by a sister of Mr. Hartley's, who, though herself a cripple, was every way attentive and polite to us. Mr. John Boylston, whom I dare say you recollect, was the acquaintance I mentioned. He visited us immediately upon our arrival, and during our stay made it his whole study to show us every civility in his power. We breakfasted with him, and he dined with us. He has very handsome apartments, though he lives at lodgings. We drank tea and spent an evening with him, in a style of great elegance; for he is one of the nicest bachelors in the world, and bears his age

wonderfully, retaining the vivacity and sprightliness of youth. He has a peculiarity in his manners, which is natural to him ; but is a man of great reading and knowledge. He is a firm friend and well-wisher to America, as he amply testified during the war by his kindness to the American prisoners.

And now you will naturally expect that I should give you some account of Bath, the antiquity of it, and the fame of its waters, having been so greatly celebrated. The story, which is related of its first discovery, is not the least curious part of it. A certain King Bladud, said to be a descendant from Hercules, was banished his father's court, on account of his having the leprosy. Thus disgraced, he wandered in disguise into this part of the country, and let himself to a swine-herd, to whom he communicated the disease, as well as to the hogs. In driving his hogs one day at some distance from his home, they wandered away to one of these streams, of which they were so fond that he could not get them out, until he enticed them with acorns. After their wallowing in them for several successive days, he observed that their scales fell off, and that his herd were perfectly cured. Upon which he determined to try the experiment upon himself ; and, after a few bathings, he was made whole. And Bladud's figure, in stone, is placed in the bath known by the name of the King's Bath, with an inscription relating his discovery of these baths, eight hundred and sixty-three years before Christ.

Bath lies in a great valley, surrounded with hills.

It is handsomely built, chiefly with free-stone, which is its own growth, and is dug from the sides of its hills. The streets are as narrow and inconvenient for carriages as those of Paris, so that chairs are chiefly used, particularly in the old town. Bath was formerly walled in, and was a very small place ; but of late years it is much extended, and the new buildings are erected upon hills. Since it has become a place of such fashionable resort, it has been embellished with a Circus and a Crescent. The Parades are magnificent piles of buildings, the square is a noble one, and the Circus is said to be a beautiful piece of architecture ; but what I think the beauty of Bath, is the Crescent. The front consists of a range of Ionic columns on a rustic basement ; the ground falls gradually before it down to the river Avon, about half a mile's distance, and the rising country on the other side of the river holds up to it a most delightful prospect. The Crescent takes its name from the form in which the houses stand ; all of which join. There is a parade and street before them, a hundred feet wide, and nothing in front to obstruct this beautiful prospect. In this situation are the new assembly-rooms, which are said to exceed any thing of the kind in the kingdom, both as to size and decoration ; but, large as they are, they were completely crowded the evenings that I attended. There is a constant emulation subsisting between the new and old rooms, similar to the North and South Ends of Boston. It was said whilst I was there, that there were fourteen thousand persons

more than the inhabitants of Bath. By this you may judge what a place of resort it is, not only for the infirm, but for the gay, the indolent, the curious, the gambler, the fortune-hunter, and even for those who go, as the thoughtless girl from the country told Beau Nash, (as he was styled,) that she came, *out of wantonness*. It is one constant scene of dissipation and gambling, from Monday morning till Saturday night, and the ladies sit down to cards in the public rooms as they would at a private party; and not to spend a fortnight or a month at Bath at this season of the year, is as unfashionable as it would be to reside in London during the summer season. Yet Bath is a place I should never visit a second time for pleasure. To derive a proper improvement from company, it ought to be select, and to consist of persons respectable both for their morals and their understanding; but such is the prevailing taste, that, provided you can be in a crowd, with here and there a glittering star, it is considered of little importance what the character of the person is who wears it. Few consider that the foundation stone, and the pillar on which they erect the fabric of their felicity, must be in their own hearts, otherwise the winds of dissipation will shake it, and the floods of pleasure overwhelm it in ruins. What is the chief end of man? is a subject well worth the investigation of every rational being. What, indeed, is life, or its enjoyments, without settled principle, laudable purposes, mental exertions, and internal comfort, that sunshine of the soul; and how are

these to be acquired in the hurry and tumult of the world? My visit to Bath, and the scenes which I mixed in, instead of exciting a gayety of disposition, led me into a train of moral reflections, which I could not refrain from detailing to you in my account of it.

Upon my return, I had a new scene of folly to go through, which was, preparing for the birth-day. But as the fashionable Magazine will detail this matter, I shall omit any account of birth-day dresses and decorations, only that I most sincerely wish myself rid of it. It is a prodigious expense, from which I derive neither pleasure nor satisfaction.

The riots and dissensions in our State have been matter of very serious concern to me. No one will suppose that our situation here is rendered more eligible in consequence of it; but I hope it will lead the wise and sensible part of the community in our State, as well as in the whole Union, to reflect seriously upon their situation, and, having wise laws, to execute them with vigor, justice, and punctuality. I have been gratified with perusing many late publications in our Boston papers; particularly the speech of the Chief Justice, which does him great honor. Mr. Adams, you will see by the books which Captain Cushing has carried out, has been employed in strengthening and supporting our governments, and has spared no pains to collect examples for them, and show them, in one short, comprehensive statement, the dangerous consequences of unbalanced power. We have the means of being the first and the happiest people upon the globe.

Captain Scott, I hear, is just arrived ; but it may be a week, perhaps ten days, before he will get up himself, so that, whatever letters he may have, I shall not be able to get them before Captain Cushing sails. This is rather unfortunate, as there may be something I might wish to reply to. As to India handkerchiefs, I give two guineas a-piece here for them, so that they are lower with you, as well as all other India goods. I give more for an ounce of spice than I used to do for a quarter of a pound in America. Only think, too, of five shillings sterling for every pound of coffee we use ! O, pray, by the next opportunity, send me a peck of Tuscarora rice. Let it be sifted. I want it only to scour my hands with. “Tuscarora rice ?” say you, “why, I suppose she means Indian meal.” Very true, my dear sister ; but I will tell you a good story about this said rice. An ancestor of a family, who now hold their heads very high, is said to have made a fortune by it. The old grand-dame went out to America, when its productions were not much known here, and returned in rather indigent circumstances. After some time, knowing the taste in all ages for cosmetics, she made out a pompous advertisement of a costly secret which she possessed for purifying and beautifying the complexion, — nothing less than the “Tuscarora rice” at a guinea an ounce. The project took like the “Olympian dew” at this day, and barrel after barrel was disposed of at the moderate price before mentioned, till one fatal day, a sailor, whose wife had procured one quarter of an ounce,

was caught in the very act of using it. The sailor very roughly threw away the darling powder, upon which his wife exclaimed that he had ruined her, as she could procure no more, there being an unusual scarcity at that time. The fellow examined the paper, and swore it was nothing but Indian meal, and that he would bring her two barrels for a guinea, the next voyage he went. Upon this, the imposture was discovered, and the good woman obliged to decamp. Now, though I do not esteem it so highly as the sailor's wife, I pronounce it the best antidote to sea-coal black, that can be found. One friend and another have supplied me ever since I have been here, but now I am quite destitute. It is an article in so small quantity, that it will not be an object for the custom-house, so that it may come safely.

Remember me most affectionately to all my friends. I cannot write to half of them ; my nieces shall hear from me by Raimond ; in the mean time be assured, my dear sister, of the warmest affection of

Your sister,

A. A.

TO MRS. CRANCH.

London, 25 February, 1787.

MY DEAR SISTER,

CAPTAIN DAVIS called yesterday to let me know that he should sail in the course of the week. Captain Barnard will not be long after him, and I almost wish I was going to embark with him. I think I should not feel more anxious if I was in the midst of all the disturbances, than I do at this distance, where imagination is left at full liberty. When law and justice are laid prostrate, who or what is secure? I received your letters, which came by Captain Scott, just as I was going to step into the carriage to go into the City upon some business. As I was alone, I took them with me to read; and, when I came to that part of your letter wherein you say that you had hoped to have seen only peace in future, after surmounting the horrors of one war, the idea was too powerful for me, and the tears involuntarily flowed. I was obliged to quit the letter till I had finished my business; the thoughts which naturally occurred to me were, — “For what have we been contending against the tyranny of Britain, if we are to become the sacrifice of a lawless banditti? Must our glory be thus shorn and our laurels thus blasted? Is it a trifling matter to destroy a government? Will my countrymen justify the maxim of tyrants, that mankind are not made for freedom? I will, however, still hope

that the majority of our fellow-citizens are too wise, virtuous, and enlightened, to permit these outrages to gain ground and triumph. Solon, the wise lawgiver of Athens, published a manifesto for rendering infamous all persons who, in civil seditions, should remain spectators of their country's danger by a criminal neutrality. The spirit shown by the gentleman volunteers, and the capture of Shattuck, does honor to our State. More energy in government would have prevented the evil from spreading so far as it has done.

“Mercy but gives sedition time to rally.
Every soft, pliant, talking, busy rogue,
Gathering a flock of hot-brained fools together,
Can preach up new rebellion,
Spread false reports of the Senate, working up
Their madness to a fury quick and desperate,
Till they run headlong into civil discords,
And do our business with their own destruction.”

This is a picture of the civil dissensions in Rome, and to our mortification we find, that human nature is the same in all ages. Neither the dread of tyrants, the fall of empires, the havoc and desolation of the human species, nor the more gloomy picture of civil discord, are sufficient to deter mankind from pursuing the same steps which have led others to ruin; selfishness and spite, avarice and ambition, pride and a levelling principle, are qualities very unfavorable to the existence of civil liberty. But, whatever is to be the fate of our country, we have determined to come home and share it with you. Con-

gress have never given Mr. Adams a recall from Holland, and he is vested (with Mr. Jefferson) with powers to form treaties with several other countries. His commission to this Court will terminate this time twelve months, and he has written to Congress his fixed and full determination to resign his commission and return at that period, if not before. So that, my dear sister, I most joyfully accept your invitation, and will come home, God willing, ere another year expires. Disagreeable as the situation of my native State appears, I shall quit Europe with more pleasure than I came into it, uncontaminated, I hope, with its manners and vices. I have learned to know the world and its value ; I have seen high life ; I have witnessed the luxury and pomp of state, the power of riches and the influence of titles, and have beheld all ranks bow before them as the only shrine worthy of worship. Notwithstanding this, I feel that I can return to my little cottage, and be happier than here ; and, if we have not wealth, we have what is better, — integrity.

27 February, 1787.

I had written you thus far with an intention of sending by Davis, but received a card to-day from Captain Barnard, that he will sail at the same time, which is a fortnight sooner than I expected. I have concluded to send by him. I wrote you by Captain Cushing, on board of whom I got Mr. Elworthy to put a small present for you, but was much mortified

a day or two after to find, by a Boston paper, that they were prohibited articles. I hope you will not meet with trouble on account of them. I cannot but approve the spirit which dictated the measure ; the causes which gave rise to it must be deplored, for it is evidently a work of necessity rather than choice. The luxury, which had made such rapid strides amongst our countrymen, was more criminal than that which is founded upon real wealth, for they have rioted upon the property which belonged to others. It is a very just observation, that those who have raised an empire have always been grave and severe ; they who have ruined it have been uniformly distinguished for their dissipation. We shall wait with impatience for the result of General Lincoln's expedition. Much depends upon his success. Government seem afraid to use the power they have, and recommend and entreat, where they ought to *command* ; which makes me apprehend that the evil lies deeper than the heads or hands of Shays or Shattuck. From letters received here both from Boston and New York, it is to be feared that visionary schemes and ambitious projects are taking possession of men of property and science ; but, before so important an edifice as an established government is altered or changed, its foundation should be examined by skilful artists, and the materials of which it is composed, duly investigated.

The "Defence of the American Constitutions" is a work which may, perhaps, contribute to this end,

and I most sincerely wish it may do the good intended.

I lament with you the loss of a worthy man, for such indeed was the friend of my dear Eliza. Our own duration is but a span ! then shall we meet those dear friends and relatives who have gone before us, and be engaged together in more elevated views, and purer pleasures and enjoyments, than mortality is capable of. Let this idea soothe the afflicted mind, and administer balm to the wounded heart. All things are under the government of a supreme, all-wise Director ; to Him commit the hour, the day, the year.

Affectionately your sister,

A. A.

TO MRS. CRANCH.

London, 28 April, 1787.

MY DEAR SISTER,

WE have accounts, by way of New York, to the 8th of March, which inform us that General Lincoln had met with more resistance from the insurgents than we had reason to expect from former accounts ; that an engagement had taken place, in which several persons on both sides fell, but we do not learn who ; that Shays had got off into Vermont, where it

was probable he would meet with protection. I hope these accounts are not well founded. Let not the patriots of our country be discouraged or disheartened ; although their affairs are much embarrassed, the country is fruitful in resources. Patience, perseverance, industry, and frugality will accomplish great things. Our countrymen create most of the misfortunes they feel, for want of a disinterested spirit, a confidence in each other, and a union of the whole. It is a great misfortune, when one State thwarts the measures of eleven or twelve, and thus injures the credit and reputation of the whole. The situation of our country greatly damps the pleasure I should feel in anticipating my return to it. You may well suppose that falsehoods in abundance are circulated here ; an attempt to publish the truth or contradict them, would have no other effect than raising a nest of hornets and wasps, and would employ the whole time of one person. An extract of a letter published, from Dr. Rush to Dr. Price, giving an account of the establishment of two or three new societies, drew upon the latter so much abuse and scurrility as would disgrace any people. The writer, like an envenomed toad, spit forth his poison. There are a set of refugees residing here, the enormity of whose offences forbids their ever returning again to America. Like Satan, they look to the heights, from whence they have fallen, with a malice and envy similar to that which the arch fiend felt, when he beheld the glory of the new world ; and, like him, they wish to destroy the happiness of its inhabitants.

Such are Galloway, and Smith, who is gone prime minister to Lord Dorchester. A few days before he left this country, he gave it as his solid opinion, that he should live to see America sue to Britain for protection, and to be received again by it; he might have added, it should not be his fault if they did not. I hope a watchful eye will be kept over Lord Dorchester and all his movements. This government are as much disposed to sow seeds of dissension among us as ever, and build wholly upon our splitting to pieces.

Adieu. Yours,

A. A.

TO MRS. CRANCH.

London, 16 July, 1787.

MY DEAR SISTER,

IF, as the poet says, "expectation makes the blessing sweet," your last letter was peculiarly so. As you conjectured, I was not a little anxious that neither Captain Barnard nor Davis brought me a line. I was apprehensive that something was the matter, some imminent danger threatening some friend, of which my friends chose not to inform me until their fate was decided. I sent on board the ship; the solitary box of meal was searched throughout. What, not

one line from my dear sister Cranch, she who has never before failed me ? Can it be possible ? Uncle Smith did not, as usual, say in his letter, that all friends were well. Dr. Tufts, for the first time, omitted mentioning my children. That might be because he thought that they had written. Thus was my mind agitated until Captain Scott's arrival, who brought me your kind letter of May the 20th, but none from either of my nieces or children. Those dear lads do not write so often as I wish them to do, because they have nothing more to say than that they are well ; not considering how important that intelligence is to an affectionate parent. Mr. J. Cranch wrote to me soon after Barnard's arrival, and sent me an extract of a letter from Miss B. Palmer, with a particular account of the performances in April, at Cambridge, in which your son and mine bore a part. These young gentlemen are much indebted to her for her partiality and the very flattering manner in which she describes them. I hope they will continue to deserve the esteem of all good judges, and do honor to themselves and their country. The account you give me of the health of J. Q. A. is no more than I expected to hear. I warned him frequently before he left me, and have been writing him ever since. I hope he will take warning before it is too late. It gives me great satisfaction to learn that he has passed through the University with so much reputation, and that his fellow students are attached to him. I have never once regretted the resolution he took of quitting Europe, and placing himself upon

the theatre of his own country ; where, if his life is spared, I presume he will neither be an idle nor useless spectator. Heaven grant, that he may not have more distressing scenes before him, and a gloomier stage to tread, than those on which his father has acted for twelve years past. But the curtain rises before him, and instead of Peace waving her olive-branch, or Liberty seated in a triumphal car, or Commerce, Agriculture, and Plenty, pouring forth their stores, Sedition hisses, Treason roars, Rebellion gnashes her teeth, Mercy suspends the justly merited blow, but Justice strikes the guilty victim. Here may the scene close, and brighter prospects open before us in future. I hope the political machine will move with more safety and security this year than the last, and that the new head may be endowed with wisdom sufficient to direct it. There are some good spokes in the wheels, though the master workmen have been unskilful in discarding some of the best, and choosing others not sufficiently seasoned ; but the crooked and cross-grained will soon break to pieces ; though this may do much mischief in the midst of a journey, and shatter the vehicle, yet another year may repair the damages. But to quit allegory, or you will think I have been reading Johnny Bunyan, the conduct of a certain gentleman is rather curious. I really think him an honest man, but ambition is a very wild passion, and there are some characters, that never can be pleased unless they have the entire direction of all public affairs. And, when they are unemployed, they are continually blaming those

in office, and accusing them of ignorance or incapacity, and spreading alarms that the country is ruined and undone ; but put them into office, and it is more than probable they will pursue the same conduct which they had before condemned. But no man is fit to be trusted, who is not diffident of himself. Such is the frailty of human nature, and so great a flatterer is self-love, that it presents false appearances, and deceives its votaries.

I have had with me for a fortnight a little daughter of Mr. Jefferson's, who arrived here with a young negro girl, her servant, from Virginia. Mr. Jefferson wrote me some months ago that he expected them, and desired me to receive them. I did so, and was amply repaid for my trouble. A finer child of her age I never saw. So mature an understanding, so womanly a behaviour, and so much sensibility, united, are rarely to be met with. I grew so fond of her, and she was so attached to me, that, when Mr. Jefferson sent for her, they were obliged to force the little creature away. She is but eight years old. She would sit sometimes, and describe to me the parting with her aunt who brought her up, the obligations she was under to her, and the love she had for her little cousins, till the tears would stream down her cheeks ; and how I had been her friend, and she loved me. Her papa would break her heart by making her go again. She clung round me so that I could not help shedding a tear at parting with her. She was the favorite of every one in the house. I regret that such

fine spirits must be spent in the wall of a convent. She is a beautiful girl, too.

This, I presume, is Commencement day. I dare say the young folks feel anxious. I don't know whether I should venture to be a hearer, if I was in America. I should have as many perturbations as the speakers. I hope they will acquit themselves with honor. Mr. Adams desires me to tell cousin Cranch that any of his books are at his service. I believe we must send some of these young men to settle in Vermont. Can they get their bread in Massachusetts? But "the world is all before them"; may "Providence be their guide."

Your sister,

A. A.

TO MRS. CRANCH.

Grosvenor Square, 15 September, 1787.

MY DEAR SISTER,

WHEN I wrote you last, I was just going to set out on a journey to the West of England. I promised you to visit Mr. Cranch's friends and relatives. This we did, as I shall relate to you. We were absent a month, and made a tour of about six hundred miles. The first place we made any stay at was Winchester. There was formerly an Earl of Winchester, by the name of Saer de Quincy. He

was created Earl of Winchester by King John, in 1224, and signed Magna Charta, which I have seen ; the original being now in the British Museum, with his handwriting to it.

It is said, that, in the year 1321, the title became extinct through failure of male heirs, but I rather think through the poverty of some branch, unable to contend for it. The family originally came from Normandy, in the time of William the Conqueror. They bear the same arms with those of our ancestors, except that ours substituted an animal for the crest, in lieu of an earl's coronet. I have a perfect remembrance of a parchment in our grandmother's possession, which, when quite a child, I used to amuse myself with. This was a genealogical table, which gave the descent of the family from the time of William the Conqueror. This parchment Mr. Edmund Quincy borrowed, on some occasion, and I have often heard our grandmother say, with some anger, that she could never recover it. As the old gentleman is still living, I wish Mr. Cranch would question him about it, and know what hands it went into, and whether there is any probability of its ever being recovered ; and be so good as to ask uncle Quincy how our grandfather came by it, and from whence our great-grandfather came, where he first settled, and take down in writing all you can learn from him and Mr. Edmund Quincy respecting the family. You will smile at my zeal, perhaps, on this occasion ; but can it be wondered at that I should wish to trace an ancestor amongst the signers of

Magna Charta? Amongst those who voted against receiving an explanatory charter in the Massachusetts, stands the name of our venerable grandfather, accompanied with only one other ; this the journals of the House will show, to his immortal honor. I do not expect either titles or estate from the recovery of the genealogical table, were there any probability of obtaining it. Yet, if I was in possession of it, money should not purchase it from me.

But to return to Winchester. It is a very ancient place, and was formerly the residence of the Saxon and Norman kings. There still remains a very famous cathedral church, in the true Gothic architecture, being partly built in the year 1079. I attended divine service there, but was much more entertained with the venerable and majestic appearance of the ancient pile, than with the modern, flimsy discourse of the preacher. A meaner performance I do not recollect to have heard ; but, in a church which would hold several thousands, it might truly be said, two or three were met together, and those appeared to be the lower order of the people.

From Winchester we proceeded to Southampton, which is a very pretty seaport town, and much frequented during the summer months as a bathing-place ; and here, for the first time in my life, I tried the experiment. It would be delightful in our warm weather, as well as very salubrious, if such conveniences were erected in Boston, Braintree, and Weymouth, which they might be, with little expense. The places are under cover. You have

a woman for a guide, a small dressing-room to yourself, an oil-cloth cap, a flannel gown, and socks for the feet. We tarried only two days at Southampton, and went ten miles out of our way in order to visit Weymouth, merely for its name. This, like my native town, is a hilly country, a small seaport, with very little business, and wholly supported by the resort of company during the summer months. For those persons, who have not country-houses of their own, resort to the watering-places, as they are called, during the summer months, it being too vulgar and unfashionable to remain in London. But where the object of one is health, that of fifty is pleasure, however far they fall short of the object. This whole town is the property of a widow lady. Houses are built by the tenants, and taken at life-rents, which, upon the decease of the lessees, revert back again to the owner of the soil. Thus is the landed property of this country vested in lordships and in the hands of the rich altogether. The peasantry are but slaves to the lord, notwithstanding the mighty boast they make of liberty. Sixpence and sevenpence per day is the usual wages given to laborers, who are to feed themselves out of the pittance. In travelling through a country, fertile as the garden of Eden, loaded with a golden harvest, plenty smiling on every side, one would imagine that the voice of Poverty was rarely heard, and that she was seldom seen, but in the abodes of indolence or vice. But it is far otherwise. The money earned by the sweat of the brow must go to feed the pam-

pered lord and fatten the greedy bishop, whilst the miserable, shattered, thatched-roof cottage crumbles to the dust for want of repair. To hundreds and hundreds of these abodes have I been a witness in my late journey. The cheering rays of the sun are totally excluded, unless they find admittance through the decayed roof, equally exposed to cold and the inclement season. A few rags for a bed and a joint-stool comprise the chief of their furniture, whilst their own appearance is more wretched than one can well conceive. During the season of hay and harvest, men, women, and children are to be seen laboring in the fields; but, as this is a very small part of the year, the little they then acquire is soon expended; and how they keep soul and body together the remainder of the year is very hard to tell. It must be owing to this very unequal distribution of property, that the poor-rate is become such an intolerable burden. The inhabitants are very thinly scattered through the country, though large towns are well peopled. To reside in and near London, and to judge of the country from what one sees here, would be forming a very erroneous opinion. How little cause of complaint have the inhabitants of the United States, when they compare their situation, not with despotic monarchies, but with this land of freedom! The ease with which honest industry may acquire property in America, the equal distribution of justice to the poor as well as the rich, and the personal liberty they enjoy, all, all call upon them to support their government and laws, to re-

spect their rulers, and gratefully acknowledge their superior blessings, lest Heaven in wrath should send them a — .

From Weymouth, our next excursion was to Axminster, the first town in the county of Devonshire. It is a small place, but has two manufactures of note ; one of carpets, and one of tapes ; both of which we visited. The manufactory of the carpets is wholly performed by women and children. You would have been surprised to see in how ordinary a building this rich manufactory was carried on. A few glass windows in some of our barns would be equal to it. They have but two prices for their carpets woven here ; the one is eighteen shillings, and the other twenty-four, a square yard. They are woven of any dimensions you please, and without a seam. The colors are most beautiful, and the carpets very durable. Here we found Mr. J. Cranch. He dined with us, and we drank tea with him. This is a curious genius. He is a middle-sized man, of a delicate countenance, but quite awkward in his manners. He seldom looks one in the face, and seems as if he had been cramped and cowed in his youth. In company, one is pained for him ; yet he is a man of reading, and an accurate taste in the fine arts. Poetry, painting, music, sculpture, architecture, all of them have engaged his attention. His profession does not seem to be the object of his affections, and he has given up the practice, with an intention of pursuing some other employment. He appears to be a man whose soul

wants a wider expansion than his situation and circumstances allow. Dejected spirits he is very liable to. I do not think him a happy man. His sentiments are by no means narrow or contracted; yet he is one by himself. He accompanied us in our journey to Exeter, Plymouth, and Kingsbridge. At Exeter, we tarried from Saturday till Monday afternoon. Mr. Bowring came to visit us. You know him by character. He appears a friendly, honest, worthy man, active in business, a warm and zealous friend to America, ready to serve his friends, and never happier than when they will give him an opportunity of doing it. His wife and daughter were on a visit to their friends at Kingsbridge, so that we did not see them. He requested, however, that we would drink tea with him after meeting; and, as our intention was to see Mr. Cranch's brother Andrew, he engaged to get him to his house. The old gentleman came with some difficulty, for he is very lame and infirm. He seemed glad to see us, and asked many questions respecting his brother and sister in America. I think he must have had a paralytic stroke, as his speech is thick. He has not been able to do any business for a number of years, and I believe is chiefly supported by his son, who is in the clothier's business with Mr. Bowring. Mrs. Cranch, though nearly as old as her husband, is a little smart, sprightly, active woman, and is wilted just enough to last to perpetuity. She told me that her husband took it very hard, that his brother had not written to him for a long time. I promised her

that he should hear from him before long ; and I know he will not let me be surety for him without fulfilling my engagement. Mr. Cranch's daughter married Mr. Bowring's brother ; they have three sons. She is a sprightly woman, like her mother. And Mr. Bowring's daughter married a son of Mr. Nathaniel Cranch, so that the family is doubly linked together, and what is more, they all seem united by the strongest ties of family harmony and love. From Exeter, we went to Plymouth ; there we tarried several days, and visited the fortifications and Plymouth dock, and crossed over the water to Mount Edgcombe, a seat belonging to Lord Edgcombe. The natural advantages of this place are superior to any I have before seen, commanding a wide and extensive view of the ocean, the whole town of Plymouth, and the adjacent country, with the mountains of Cornwall. I have not much to say with respect to the improvements of art. There is a large park, well stocked with deer, and some shady walks ; but there are no grottos, statuary, sculpture, or temples. At Plymouth, we were visited by a Mr. and Mrs. Sawry, with whom we drank tea one afternoon. Mr. Sawry is well known to many Americans, who were prisoners in Plymouth jail during the late war. The money which was raised for their relief passed through his hands, and he was very kind to them, assisting many in their escape. From Plymouth, we made an enterprise one day to Horsham, and, as we attempted it in a coach and four, we made a curious piece of work, taking by mistake a wrong

road, — but this part of my story I must reserve for my dear Eliza.

Our next movement was to Kingsbridge ; but, before I relate this, I ought to inform you that we made a stop at a place called Ivy Bridge, where we dined ; and Mr. Adams accompanied Mr. Cranch to Brook, about three miles distant, to visit his uncle, Mr. William Cranch, who has been for several years quite lost to himself and friends. There is some little property in the hands of the family, who take charge of him, sufficient to support a person who has no more wants than he has. He appeared clean and comfortable, but took no notice, either of the conversation or persons. The only thing which in the least roused him was the mention of his wife. He appeared to be restless when that subject was touched. The character of this man, as given by all his friends and acquaintance, leads one to regret, in a particular manner, the loss of his intellect. Possessed of a genius superior to his station, a thirst for knowledge which his circumstances in life permitted him not to pursue, most amiable and engaging in his manners, formed to have adorned a superior rank in life, fondly attached to an amiable wife, whom he very soon lost, he fell a sacrifice to a too great sensibility ; unable to support the shock, he grew melancholy, and was totally lost.

But to return to Kingsbridge, the chief resort of the Cranch family. We arrived at the inn about six o'clock on Saturday evening. About eight, we were saluted with a ringing of bells, a circumstance we

little expected. Very soon we were visited by the various branches of the Cranch family, both male and female, amounting to fifteen persons ; but, as they made a strange jumble in my head, I persuaded my fellow traveller to make me out a genealogical table, which I send you. Mr. and Mrs. Burnell, and Mr. and Mrs. Trathan, both offered us beds and accommodations at their houses ; but we were too numerous to accept their kind invitations, though we engaged ourselves to dine with Mr. Burnell, and to drink tea with Mr. Trathan, the next day. Mrs. Burnell has a strong resemblance to Mrs. Palmer. She is a genteel woman, and easy and polite. We dined at a very pretty dinner, and after meeting drank tea at the other house, Mr. Trathan's. Their houses are very small, but every thing neat and comfortable. Mr. Burnell is a shoemaker, worth five thousand pounds ; and Mr. Trathan a grocer, in good circumstances. The rest of the families joined us at the two houses. They are all serious, industrious, good people, amongst whom the greatest family harmony appears to subsist. The people of this county appear more like our New England people than any I have met with in this country before ; but the distinction between tradesmen and gentry, as they are termed, is widely different from that distinction in our country. With us, in point of education and manners, the learned professions, and many merchants, farmers and tradesmen, are upon an equality with the gentry of this country. It would be degrading to compare them with many of

the nobility here. As to the ladies of this country, their manners appear to be totally depraved. It is in the middle ranks of society, that virtue and morality are yet to be found. Nothing does more injury to the female character than frequenting public places ; and the rage which prevails now for the watering-places, and the increased number of them, are become a national evil, as they promote and encourage dissipation, mix all characters promiscuously, and are the resort of the most unprincipled female characters, who are not ashamed to show their faces wherever men dare to go. Modesty and diffidence are called ill-breeding and ignorance of the world ; an impudent stare is substituted in lieu of that modest deportment, and that retiring grace, which awes whilst it enchants. I have never seen a female model here of such unaffected, modest, and sweetly amiable manners as Mrs. Guild, Mrs. Russell, and many other American females exhibit.

Having filled eight pages, I think it is near time to hasten to a close. Cushing and Folger are both arrived ; by each I have received letters from you. A new sheet of paper must contain a reply to them. This little space shall assure you of what is not confined to time or place,—the ardent affection of your sister,

A. A.

TO MISS LUCY CRANCH.

London, 3 October, 1787.

I THANK you, my dear Lucy, for writing by Mr. Jenks.

You learnt by Captain Barnard, that I was going a journey. I have given your mamma and sister some account of my late excursion to Devonshire. We returned home through Bristol, and took Oxford in our way, from whence we went to Woodstock, and visited Blenheim, the seat of the Duke of Marlborough, which was built at the public expense, and granted by the Crown to the Duke, for the services he had rendered his country. This castle is upon the grandest scale of any thing I have ever yet seen. We enter the park through a spacious and elegant portal, of the Corinthian order, from whence a noble prospect is opened to the palace, the bridge, the lake, with its valley, and other beautiful scenes. The front of this noble edifice, which is of stone, is three hundred and forty-eight feet from wing to wing. On the pediment of the south front, towards the garden, is a noble bust of Louis the Fourteenth, taken by the Duke from the gates of Tournai. This, the gardener told us, he never failed pointing out to the French gentlemen who visited the place, and that they shrugged their shoulders and *mon-Dieu'd*. But, before I describe to you the gardens, I will at-

tempt to give you a short, though imperfect account of the palace. It would require a week to view it, and a volume to describe it particularly. I will, therefore, only collect from my little journal the most remarkable objects.

We entered the palace through a magnificent hall, supported by Corinthian pillars. Over the door, going into the saloon, is a bust of John, Duke of Marlborough, and two statues in bronze, namely, the Venus de' Medici and a Faun. The ceiling is painted allegorically, representing Victory crowning John, Duke of Marlborough, and pointing to a plan of the battle of Blenheim. From the saloon, we pass through a suite of rooms, all of them containing a most costly and beautiful collection of paintings, many of them originals of the first masters. In the dining-room is a family-piece, the present Duke and Duchess, and six of their children, by Sir Joshua Reynolds. The furniture of the rooms is different-colored damask. The family being at the house, we saw only the lower apartments. The winter drawing-room is of tapestry, upon which is represented the Cardinal Virtues; chairs and curtains, white damask. From a series of smaller, though magnificent apartments, we were suddenly struck at entering the library, which is one hundred and eighty-three feet long, and the most costly, as well as beautiful place I ever saw. The Doric pilasters are of marble, with complete columns of the same, which support a rich entablature; the window frames, the surrounding basement of black marble, and the

stuccoed compartments of the vaulted ceiling, are in the highest taste, both of design and finishing. There is a person, who always attends at these seats, who has by heart the whole history of all that is to be seen ; and he makes a very handsome sum of money by it. This library was originally intended as a gallery for paintings ; but the late Duke of Marlborough chose to have it furnished with the noble collection of books made by Lord Sunderland, his Grace's father, which amounts to twenty-four thousand volumes, and is said to be the best private collection in England. They are kept under gilt wire lattices, and make a superb appearance. At one end of the room, is a highly finished marble statue of Queen Anne, with this inscription ; "To the memory of Queen Anne, under whose auspices John, Duke of Marlborough, conquered, and to whose munificence, he and his posterity with gratitude owe the possession of Blenheim, in A. D. 1746." There are two marble busts over the chimney, one of Charles, Earl of Sunderland, who collected the books, and another of Charles Spencer, Duke of Marlborough ; and, at the farther end of the room, is a fine Greek bust of Alexander the Great, and fourteen full-length family portraits. From two bow windows in this noble gallery, the eye is delighted with a view of the declivity, descending to the water, and the gradual ascent of the venerable grove, which covers the opposite hill. In short, whether we look within or without, all is on the scale of the sublime and the beautiful. I must not overlook

the chapel, which makes one of the wings of the house, and in which there is a proud monument, of white marble, to the memory of the renowned Duke and Duchess of Marlborough. The group of marble figures, large as life, upon this monument, are the Duke and Duchess, with two of their sons, who died young. They are supported by two figures, Fame and History. The altar-piece is the best painting I ever saw ; our Saviour taken down from the cross.

From the house, we visited the gardens ; and here I am lost, not in confusion, but amidst scenes of grandeur, magnificence, and beauty. They are spacious, and include a great variety of ground. The plain, or as artists term it, the lawn, before the palace, is kept in the most perfect order ; not a single spire of grass rises above another. It is mowed and swept every other day, and is as smooth as the surface of a looking-glass. The gardener, who has lived twenty-five years upon the place, told us that he employed about sixty-three hands during the summer, in mowing, sweeping, pruning, lopping, and in ornamenting the grounds. From this lawn is a gradual descent to the water, and you pass through spacious gravel walks, not in straight lines, as Pope expresses it,

“ where each alley has a brother,
And half the platform just reflects the other ; ”

but pleasing intricacies intervene. Through the winding paths, and every step, open new objects of beauty, which diversified nature affords of hill, valley,

water, and woods; the gardens finally are lost in the park, amidst a profusion of venerable oaks, some of which are said to have stood nine hundred years. The gardens are four miles round, which I walked; the park is eleven. There is a magnificent bridge consisting of three arches; the water which it covers, is formed into a spacious lake, which flows the whole extent of a capacious valley. This was built at the expense of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, as well as a column which I shall mention in turn. The gardener, who was very loquacious and swelled with importance, told us, that since his residence there, the present Duke had greatly enlarged and improved the grounds; that he had beautified them by the addition of some well-placed ornaments, particularly the temple of Diana, and a noble cascade, round which are four river gods, represented as the guardian genii of the water.

This celebrated park was first enclosed in the reign of Henry the First. His successor, Henry the Second, resided at this seat, and erected in this park a palace, and encompassed it with a labyrinth, which was fair Rosamond's bower, celebrated by Addison. There are now no remains of it, except a spring at the foot of the hill, which still bears the name of Rosamond's Well. This palace is celebrated as the birth-place of Edmund, second son of Edward the First, and of Edward the Black Prince. Elizabeth was kept a prisoner there under the persecutions of Queen Mary; and it continued to be the residence of kings until the reign of Charles the First, but it was demol-

ished in succeeding times of confusion. There are now two sycamores planted as a memorial upon the spot where the old palace stood. The column will close my narrative. This is in front of the palace of Blenheim at about half a mile distance, and is one hundred and thirty feet high ; on the top of which is John, Duke of Marlborough, and on which is the following inscription, supposed to be written by the late Lord Bolingbroke.

“ The Castle of Blenheim was founded by Queen Anne,
 In the fourth year of her reign,
 In the year of the Christian era, 1705.

A monument designed to perpetuate the memory of the
 Signal Victory

 Obtained over the French and Bavarians

 On the banks of the Danube

 By John, Duke of Marlborough ;

 The Hero not only of this nation, but of this age ;

Whose glory was equal in the council and in the field.

 Who, by wisdom, justice, candor, and address,

 Reconciled various, and even opposite interests ;

 Acquired an influence

 Which no rank, no authority can give,

 Nor any force but that of superior virtue ;

 Became the fixed, important centre

 Which united in one common cause

 The principal States of Europe.

Who, by military knowledge and irresistible valor,

 In a long series of uninterrupted triumphs,

 Broke the power of France

When raised the highest, and when exerted the most ;

 Rescued the empire from desolation,

 Asserted and confirmed the liberties of Europe.”

Thus is the gratitude of the nation expressed, and thus do the heirs of Marlborough triumph. The present Duke is a man of literary pursuits, domestic, and a great astronomer. He has a fine observatory and apparatus. From this observatory he makes signals to Herschel at Windsor, and they study the stars together.

I have made a very long letter of it. I hope it may prove an amusement to you.

Remember me kindly to all inquiring friends, and believe me, my dear niece,

Your ever affectionate

A. A.

TO JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

London, 12 October, 1787.

MY DEAR SON,

I CANNOT begin my letter by thanking you for yours. You write so seldom that you do not give me the opportunity. Yet I think you would feel disappointed if you did not get a few lines from me. I congratulate you upon your success at Commencement, and, as you have acquired a reputation upon entering the stage of the world, you will be no less solicitous to preserve and increase it through the whole drama. It is said of Hannibal, that he wanted

nothing to the completion of his martial virtues, but that, when he had gained a victory, he should know how to use it. It is natural to the human heart, to swell with presumption, when conscious of superior power; yet all human excellence is comparative, and he, who thinks he knows much to-day, will find much more still unattained, provided he is still eager in pursuit of knowledge.

Your friends are not anxious that you will be in any danger through want of sufficient application, but that a too ardent pursuit of your studies will impair your health, and injure those bodily powers and faculties upon which the vigor of the mind depends. Moderation in all things is conducive to human happiness, though this is a maxim little heeded by youth, whether their pursuits are of a sensual or a more refined and elevated kind.

It is an old adage, that a man at thirty must be either a fool or a physician. Though you have not arrived at that age, you would do well to trust to the advice and experience of those who have. Our bodies are framed of such materials as to require constant exercise to keep them in repair, to brace the nerves, and give vigor to the animal functions. Thus do I give you "line upon line, and precept upon precept."

By the time this reaches you, you will have heard of the humiliating condition of Holland. History does not furnish a more striking instance of abject submission and depression, totally and almost unresistingly conquered by a few Prussian troops; a na-

tion, that formerly withstood the whole power and force of Spain, and gave such proofs of bravery and prowess as astonished surrounding nations, now humbled to the dust by an imperious and haughty woman, backed by the troops of Prussia, for a mere trifling affront; or rather, this has been the specious pretence for all the horrors which are brought upon the patriots and friends of liberty in Holland. May her name descend with eternal obloquy to future ages.

Poor Dumas and family have lived in a state worse than death; since to exist in constant dread of being dragged a victim to an enraged mob, who were constantly threatening him and his family with destruction, is worse than death. His friends all forsook him, or dared not appear in his behalf. He wrote a most afflicting account to your father, and begged him to claim protection for him, as acting for the United States; but, as he never had any public character, or, rather, never was commissioned by Congress, it could not be done. Mr. Dumas, you know, has been engaged in the service of France, and has received a salary from that government, besides his being opposed to the measures of the Stadtholder; all of which renders him particularly obnoxious to the Princess and her party.

This nation piqued at the treaty of alliance which was last winter made between France and Holland, has been ever since seeking revenge, by fomenting the troubles in Holland, and seized the first opportunity she had in her power, to bully

France. The death of Vergennes, the deranged state of the finances in France, and the dispute between the King and his Parliament, all, all have contributed to hasten the downfall of liberty in Holland. England has held a very high tone, and given it out, that, if France marched a single man to the assistance of Holland, it should be considered as a commencement of hostilities; and, from the conduct of France, she appears to have been intimidated and held in awe by it. This is another lesson to us not "to put our trust in princes." England, not content with the tame and pacific conduct of France, is arming with a zeal and eagerness really astonishing to every person of reflection, who can see no object which she can have in view adequate to or a compensation for the horror and distress she must bring upon her subjects by the increase of expenses, and the accumulation of the national debt.

If I was not present to see and hear it, I could scarcely credit that a whole people should not only tamely submit to the evils of war, but appear frantic with joy at the prospect; led away by false glory, by their passions and their vices, they do not reflect upon past calamities nor approaching destruction; and few of them have better reasons to offer for their conduct, than the lady with whom I was in company the other day, who hoped there would be a war. "Pray," said I, "how can you wish so much misery to mankind?" "O," said she, "if there is a war, my brother and several of my friends will be promoted." In the general flame, which

threatens Europe, I hope and pray our own country may have wisdom sufficient to keep herself out of the fire. I am sure she has been a sufficiently burnt child. Remember me to your brothers, if I do not write to them.

Your ever affectionate mother,

A. A.

TO MRS. SHAW.

Richmond Hill, (N. Y.), 27 September, 1789.

I WRITE to you, my dear sister, not from the disputed banks of the Potomac, the Susquehanna, or the Delaware, but from the peaceful borders of the Hudson; a situation where the hand of nature has so lavishly displayed her beauties, that she has left scarcely any thing for her handmaid, art, to perform.

The house in which we reside is situated upon a hill, the avenue to which is interspersed with forest trees, under which a shrubbery rather too luxuriant and wild has taken shelter, owing to its having been deprived by death, some years since, of its original proprietor, who kept it in perfect order. In front of the house, the noble Hudson rolls his majestic waves, bearing upon his bosom innumerable small vessels, which are constantly forwarding the rich products of the neighbouring soil to the busy hand of a more extensive commerce. Beyond the Hudson rises to

our view the fertile country of the Jerseys, covered with a golden harvest, and pouring forth plenty like the cornucopia of Ceres. On the right hand, an extensive plain presents us with a view of fields covered with verdure, and pastures full of cattle. On the left, the city opens upon us, intercepted only by clumps of trees, and some rising ground, which serves to heighten the beauty of the scene, by appearing to conceal a part. In the back ground, is a large flower-garden, enclosed with a hedge and some very handsome trees. On one side of it, a grove of pines and oaks fit for contemplation.

“ In this path

How long soe'er the wanderer roves, each step
Shall wake fresh beauties ; each last point present
A different picture, new, and yet the same.”

If my days of fancy and romance were not past, I could find here an ample field for indulgence ; yet, amidst these delightful scenes of nature, my heart pants for the society of my dear relatives and friends who are too far removed from me. I wish most sincerely to return and pass the recess of Congress at my habitation in Braintree ; but the season of the year, to which Congress has adjourned, renders the attempt impracticable. Although I am not the only person who questions their making a Congress again until April, yet the punctuality of Mr. Adams to all public business would oblige him strictly to adhere to the day of adjournment, however inconvenient it might prove to him. He has

never been absent from his daily duty in Senate a single hour from their first meeting ; and the last month's business has pressed so hard, that his health appears to require a recess.

Shall I ask my sister why she has not written me a line since I came to this place ? With regard to myself, I own I have been cautious of writing. I know that I stand in a delicate situation. I am fearful of touching upon political subjects ; yet, perhaps, there is no person who feels more interested in them. And, upon this occasion, I may congratulate my country upon the late judicial appointments, in which an assemblage of the greatest talents and abilities are united which any country can boast of ; gentlemen in whom the public have great confidence, and who will prove durable pillars in support of our government.

Mr. Jefferson is nominated for Secretary of State in the room of Mr. Jay, who is made Chief Justice. Thus have we the fairest prospect of sitting down under our own vine in peace, provided the restless spirit of certain characters, who foam and fret, is permitted only its hour upon the stage, and then shall no more be heard of, nor permitted to sow the seeds of discord among the real defenders of the faith.

Your affectionate sister,

A. A.

TO THOMAS BRAND-HOLLIS.¹

New York, 6 September, 1790.

MY DEAR SIR,

You ask in one of your letters to Mr. Adams, "What is become of Mrs. Adams, that I do not hear from her?"

If my heart had not done you more justice than my pen, I would disown it. I have so long omitted writing to you, that my conscience has been a very severe accuser of me. But, be assured, my dear Sir, that I never fail to talk of you with pleasure, and think of you with affection. I place the hours spent at the Hyde amongst some of the most pleasurable of my days, and I esteem your friendship as one of the most valuable acquisitions that I made in your country; a country that I should most sincerely rejoice to visit again, if I could do it without crossing the ocean. I have sometimes been suspected of partiality, for the preference which I have given to England; and, were I to live out of America, that country would have been my choice.

I have a situation here, which, for natural beauty may vie with the most delicious spot I ever saw. It is a mile and a half distant from the city of New York. The house is situated upon an eminence; at

¹ This letter has been printed in the Notes to the Memoirs of Thomas Brand-Hollis, Esq., by Dr. Disney, from which it is taken.

an agreeable distance flows the noble Hudson, bearing upon its bosom the fruitful productions of the adjacent country. On my right hand, are fields beautifully variegated with grass and grain, to a great extent, like the valley of Honiton in Devonshire. Upon my left, the city opens to view, intercepted, here and there, by a rising ground, and an ancient oak. In front, beyond the Hudson, the Jersey shores present the exuberance of a rich, well-cultivated soil. The venerable oaks and broken ground, covered with wild shrubs, which surround me, give a natural beauty to the spot, which is truly enchanting. A lovely variety of birds serenade me morning and evening, rejoicing in their liberty and security ; for I have, as much as possible, prohibited the grounds from invasion, and sometimes almost wished for game laws, when my orders have not been sufficiently regarded. The partridge, the woodcock, and the pigeon are too great temptations to the sportsmen to withstand. How greatly would it add to my happiness to welcome here my much esteemed friend. 'Tis true, we have a large portion of the blue and gold, of which you used to remind me, when you thought me an Egyptian ; but, however I might hanker after the good things of America, I have been sufficiently taught to value and esteem other countries besides my own.

You were pleased to inform us, that your adopted family¹ flourished in your soil ; mine has received an

¹ His trees. The allusion is explained in a preceding letter, p. 154 of this volume.

addition. Mrs. Smith, Mr. Adams's daughter, and the wife of Colonel W. Stephens Smith, respecting the name of the great literary benefactor of her native state, and in grateful remembrance of the friendly attention and patriotic character of its present possessor, has named his new-born son Thomas Hollis. She desires me to present you her affectionate remembrance. Mr. Adams is absent upon a journey, or he would have written you a letter of a later date than that which Mr. Knox is the bearer of. This gentleman is a brother of our Secretary of War, and is appointed consul to Dublin. He is intelligent, and can answer you any question respecting our government and politics, which you may wish to ask ; but, if he should not see you, I know it will give you pleasure to learn that our union is complete, by the accession of Rhode Island ; that our government acquires strength, confidence, and stability daily ; that peace is in our borders, and plenty in our dwellings ; and we earnestly pray, that the kindling flames of war, which appear to be bursting out in Europe, may by no means be extended to this rising nation. We enjoy freedom in as great a latitude as is consistent with our security and happiness. God grant that we may rightly estimate our blessings.

Pray remember me, in the most affectionate terms, to Dr. Price and to Mrs. Jebb ; and be assured, my dear sir, that I am, with every sentiment of regard and esteem,

Yours, &c.,

ABIGAIL ADAMS.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Philadelphia, 21 November, 1790.

MY DEAR,

I SUPPOSE you wish to hear from me and from your little boy. He is very well, and very amusing, as usual ; talks of William, and of the other papa ; is as fond as ever of the “fosses,” and has a great addition to his amusement and pleasures from a flock of sheep, which are daily pastured by a shepherd and his dog upon the lawn in front of our house. Bush Hill, as it is called, though by the way there remains neither bush nor shrub upon it, and very few trees, except the pine grove behind it,—yet Bush Hill is a very beautiful place. But the grand and sublime I left at Richmond Hill. The cultivation in sight and prospect are superior, but the Schuylkill is no more like the Hudson, than I to Hercules. The house is better finished within ; but, when you come to compare the conveniences for store-room, kitchen, closets, &c., there is nothing like it in the whole house. As chance governs many actions of my life, when we arrived in the city, we proceeded to the house. By accident, the vessel, with our furniture, had arrived the day before, and Briesler was taking in the first load into a house all green-painted, the workmen there with their brushes in hand. This was a cold comfort in a house, where I suppose

no fire had been kindled for several years, except in a back kitchen ; but, as I expected many things of this kind, I was not disappointed nor discomfited. As no wood nor fodder had been provided beforehand, we could only turn about, and go to the City Tavern for the night.

The next morning was pleasant, and I ventured to come up and take possession ; but what confusion ! Boxes, barrels, chairs, tables, trunks, &c. ; every thing to be arranged, and few hands to accomplish it, for Briesler was obliged to be at the vessel. The first object was to get fires ; the next to get up beds ; but the cold, damp rooms, the new paint, &c., proved almost too much for me. On Friday we arrived here, and late on Saturday evening we got our furniture in. On Sunday, Thomas was laid up with the rheumatism ; on Monday, I was obliged to give Louisa an emetic ; on Tuesday, Mrs. Briesler was taken with her old pain in her stomach ; and, to complete the whole, on Thursday, Polly was seized with a violent pleuritic fever. She has been twice bled, a blister upon her side, and has not been out of bed since, only as she is taken up to have her bed made. And every day, the stormy ones excepted, from eleven until three, the house is filled with ladies and gentlemen. As all this is no more nor worse than I expected, I bear it without repining, and feel thankful that I have weathered it out without a relapse, though some days I have not been able to sit up.

Mrs. Bingham has been twice to see me. I think

she is more amiable and beautiful than ever. I have seen many very fine women since I have been here. Our Nancy Hamilton is the same unaffected, affable girl we formerly knew her. She made many kind inquiries after you ; so did Mrs. Bingham. I have not yet begun to return visits, as the ladies expect to find me at home, and I have not been in a state of health to do it ; nor am yet in a very eligible state to receive their visits. I, however, endeavoured to have one room decent to receive them, which, with my own chamber, is as much as I can boast of, at present, being in tolerable order. The difficulty of getting workmen, Mr. Hamilton pleads as an excuse for the house not being ready. Mrs. Lear was in to see me yesterday, and assures me that I am much better off than Mrs. Washington will be when she arrives, for that their house is not likely to be completed this year. And, when all is done, it will not be Broadway. If New York wanted any revenge for the removal, the citizens might be glutted if they would come here, where every article has become almost double in price, and where it is not possible for Congress, and the appendages, to be half as well accommodated for a long time. One would suppose that the people thought Mexico was before them, and that Congress were the possessors.

28 November. Sunday.

I wrote you thus far on Sunday last. Polly is on the recovery, but your brother Thomas is very ill,

and almost helpless with the rheumatism. You recollect how he formerly had it. It seems as if sickness followed me wherever I go. The President got to town on Saturday ; I have not yet seen him or Mrs. Washington. We have had two severe storms ; the last was snow. Poor Mrs. Knox is in great tribulation about her furniture. The vessel sailed the day before the first storm, and had not been heard of on Friday last. I had a great misfortune happen to my best trunk of clothes. The vessel sprung a leak, and my trunk got wet a foot high, by which means I have several gowns spoiled ; and the one you worked is the most damaged, and a black satin ; — the blessed effects of tumbling about the world. Adieu. Write me soon. Love to all.

A. A.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Bush Hill, 26 December, 1790.

DEAR CHILD,

I WOULD tell you that I had an ague in my face, and a violent toothache, which has prevented my writing to you all day ; but I am determined to brave it out this evening, and inquire how you do. Without further complaint, I have become so tender, from keeping so much in a warm chamber, that, as soon

as I set my foot out, I am sure to come home with some new pain or ache.

On Friday evening last, I went with Charles to the drawing-room, being the first of my appearance in public. The room became full before I left it, and the circle very brilliant. How could it be otherwise, when the dazzling Mrs. Bingham and her beautiful sisters were there; the Misses Allen, and Misses Chew; in short, a constellation of beauties? I am serious when I say so, for I really think them what I describe them. Mrs. Bingham has certainly given laws to the ladies here, in fashion and elegance; their manners and appearance are superior to what I have seen. I have been employed, for several days last week, in returning visits. Mrs. Powell, I join the general voice in pronouncing a very interesting woman. She is aunt to Mrs. Bingham, and is one of the ladies you would be pleased with. She looks turned of fifty, is polite and fluent as you please, motherly and friendly.

I have received many invitations to tea and cards, in the European style, but have hitherto declined them, on account of my health and the sickness of your brother. I should like to be acquainted with these people, and there is no other way of coming at many of them, but by joining in their parties; but the roads to and from Bush Hill are all clay, and, in open weather, up to the horses' knees; so you may suppose that much of my time must be spent at home; but this, you know, I do not regret, nor is it any mortification to me. If I could send for you, as

usual, and my dear boys, it would add greatly to my pleasure and happiness. Mrs. Otis comes frequently, and passes the day with me, and yesterday I had the whole family to keep Christmas with me.

The weather is winter in all respects, and such a plain of snow puts out my eyes. We have a warm side, as well as a cold one, to our house. If there is any thing we can do for you, let me know. You cannot regret your separation more than I do, for morn, noon, and night, you rest upon the mind and heart of your ever affectionate

A. ADAMS.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Philadelphia, 8 January, 1791.

MY DEAR MRS. SMITH,

I RECEIVED, by Mr. King, your letter of December 30th. I am uneasy if I do not hear from you once a week, though you have not any thing more to tell me than that you and your little ones are well. I think you do perfectly right in refusing to go into public during the absence of Colonel Smith. The society of a few friends is that from which most pleasure and satisfaction are to be derived. Under the wing of parents, no notice would be taken of your going into public, or mixing in any amusement; but the eyes of the world are always placed

upon those whose situation may possibly subject them to censure, and even the friendly attentions of one's acquaintance are liable to be misconstrued, so that a lady cannot possibly be too circumspect. I do not mention this to you through apprehension of your erring, but only as approving your determination.

I should spend a very dissipated winter, if I were to accept of one half the invitations I receive, particularly to the routs, or tea and cards. Even Saturday evening is not excepted, and I refused an invitation of that kind for this evening. I have been to one assembly. The dancing was very good ; the company of the best kind. The President and Madam, the Vice-President and Madam, Ministers of State, and their Madams, &c. ; but the room despicable ; the etiquette, — it was difficult to say where it was to be found. Indeed, it was not New York ; but you must not report this from me. The managers have been very polite to me and my family. I have been to one play, and here again we have been treated with much politeness. The actors came and informed us that a box was prepared for us. The Vice-President thanked them for their civility, and told them that he would attend whenever the President did. And last Wednesday we were all there. The house is equal to most of the theatres we meet with out of France. It is very neat, and prettily fitted up ; the actors did their best ; “ The School for Scandal ” was the play. I missed the divine Farren ; but upon the whole it was very well per-

formed. On Tuesday next I go to a dance at Mr. Chew's, and on Friday sup at Mr. Clymer's ; so you see I am likely to be amused.

We have had very severe weather for several weeks ; I think the coldest I have known since my return from abroad. The climate of Old England for me ; people do not grow old half so fast there ; two-thirds of the year here, we must freeze or melt. Public affairs go on so smoothly here, that we scarcely know that Congress are sitting ; North Carolina a little delirious, and Virginia trying to give law. They make some subject for conversation ; but, after all, the bluster will scarcely produce a mouse.

Present me kindly to your mamma and sisters. How I long to send for you all, as in days past ; my dear little boys, too. As to John, we grow every day fonder of him. He has spent an hour this afternoon in driving his grandpapa round the room with a willow stick. I hope to see you in April. Congress will adjourn in March, and it is thought will not meet again till December.

Good night, my dear. Heaven's blessings alight on you and yours,

A. ADAMS.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Philadelphia, 25 January, 1791.

MY DEAR CHILD,

You must not flatter yourself with the expectation of hearing from Colonel Smith until the February packet arrives. It is as soon as you ought to think of it. You see by the papers, that a minister is in nomination from England, and, Mrs. C—— writes, will come out soon. Mrs. P——, from whom I received a letter, writes me by the last packet, that Mr. Friere is certainly appointed from Portugal, and that he only waits for the arrival of Count ——, his successor, in England, before he sails for America. Mrs. P—— likewise communicates the agreeable intelligence of Mr. P——'s having forsaken the bottle, and that the Countess B—— had another child, and was vastly happy, beloved by her dear Count, &c.; all in the true style of Mrs. P——. She desires to be kindly remembered to you and the Colonel.

Present me kindly to all my New York friends. That I was attached to that place is most true, and I shall always remember with pleasure the fifteen months passed there; but, if I had you and your family, I could be very well pleased here, for there is an agreeable society and friendliness kept up with all the principal families, who appear to live in great harmony, and we meet at all the parties nearly the

same company. To-morrow the President dines with us, the Governor, the Ministers of State, and some Senators. Of all the ladies I have seen and conversed with here, Mrs. Powell is the best informed. She is a friendly, affable, good woman, sprightly, full of conversation. There is a Mrs. Allen, who is as well-bred a woman as I have seen in any country, and has three daughters, who may be styled the three Graces.

My best respects to your good mamma and family. Tell Mrs. C—— I hope she makes a very obedient wife. I am sure she will be a good one. I think I shall see you in April. Why do you say that you feel alone in the world? I used to think that I felt so too; but, when I lost my mother, and afterwards my father, *that* “alone” appeared to me in a much more formidable light. It was like cutting away the main pillars of a building; and, though no friend can supply the absence of a good husband, yet, whilst our parents live, we cannot feel unprotected. To them we can apply for advice and direction, sure that it will be given with affection and tenderness. We know not what we can do or bear, till called to the trial. I have passed through many painful ones, yet have enjoyed as much happiness through life as usually falls to the lot of mortals; and, when my enjoyments have been damped, curtailed, or molested, it has not been owing to vice, that great disturber of human happiness, but sometimes to folly, in myself or others, or the hand of Providence, which has seen fit to afflict me. I feel

grateful for the blessings which surround me, and murmur not at those which are withheld. — But my pen runs on, and my lads, at whose table I write, wonder what mamma can find to write about.

Adieu. My love to the children. From your ever affectionate

A. ADAMS.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Philadelphia, 21 February, 1791.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I RECEIVED yours of February 13th, and was happy to learn that you and your little ones were well. I wrote to you by the Chief Justice, and sent your silk by him. He promised me to visit you, and from him you will learn how we all are. We have had, ever since this month began, a succession of bad weather, and, for this week past, the coldest weather that I have experienced this winter. The ground is now covered with snow. This, if it would last, would let me out of my cage, and enable me to go to the assembly on the birth-day of the President, which will be on Tuesday next. On Thursday last I dined with the President, in company with the ministers and ladies of the court. He was more than usually social. I asked him after Humphreys,

from whom I knew he had received despatches a few days before. He said that he was well, and at Lisbon. When I returned home, I told your father that I conjectured Mr. Humphreys would be nominated for Lisbon, and the next day the Senate received a message, with his nomination, as resident minister at the Court of Portugal ; the President having received official information that a minister was appointed here, Mr. Friere, as I before informed you. He asked very affectionately after you and the children, and at table picked the sugar-plums from a cake, and requested me to take them for master John. Some suppose, that, if your husband was here, he would have the command of the troops which are to be raised and sent against the Indians. If such an idea as that is in his mind, I am happy that your friend is three thousand miles distant. I have no fancy that a man, who has already hazarded his life in defence of his country, should risk a tomahawk and scalping-knife, where, though a conqueror, no glory is to be obtained, though much may be lost. I most sincerely hope he may be successful in his private enterprise ; for the way to command Fortune is to be as independent of her as possible.

The equanimity of your disposition will lead you to a patient submission to the allotments of Providence. The education of your children will occupy much of your time, and you will always keep in mind the great importance of first principles, and the necessity of instilling the precepts of morality very early into their minds. Youth is so imitative,

that it catches at every thing. I have a great opinion of Dr. Watts's "Moral Songs for Children." They are adapted to their capacities, and they comprehend all the social and relative duties of life. They impress the young mind with the ideas of the Supreme Being, as their creator, benefactor, and preserver. They teach brotherly love, sisterly affection, and filial respect and reverence. I do not know any book so well calculated for the early period of life ; and they may be made as pleasant to them, by the method of instructing, as a hundred little stories, which are taught them, containing neither a rule of life, nor a sentiment worth retaining, such as little John will now run over, of "Jack and Jill," and "Little Jack Horner." As a trial of their memory, and a practice for their tongues, these may be useful, but no other way.

I am sometimes led to think that human nature is a very perverse thing, and much more given to evil than good. I never had any of my own children so much under my eye, and so little mixed with other children or with servants, as this little boy of yours. Whatever appears is self-taught, and, though a very good boy and very orderly, he frequently surprises me with a new air, a new word, or some action, that I should ascribe to others, if he mixed with them at all. He is never permitted to go into the kitchen. Every day, after dinner, he sets his grandpapa to draw him about in a chair, which is generally done for half an hour, to the derangement of my carpet and the amusement of his grandpapa.

Remember me affectionately to all inquiring friends.
I hope to see you ere long.

Your ever affectionate mother,

A. ADAMS.

TO MRS. SHAW.

Bush Hill, (near Philadelphia,) 20 March, 1791.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I RECEIVED, by Dr. W——, your kind letter of February 14th. He was very punctual to his commission. He has been three times to visit us. He came out this afternoon to let me know that he should leave Philadelphia on Tuesday. By him I have to thank my dear sister for three letters, and to confess myself much in arrears. 'Tis in vain to say that I have had a sick family ; that I have had a large family ; that I have been engaged in company. These are poor excuses for not writing ; nor will I exculpate myself by alleging that I wanted a subject. My pride would not suffer such a plea. What, then, has been the cause ? “ Confess freely, and say that it was mere indolence, — real laziness,” as in truth I fear it has been. Yet conscience, that faithful monitor, has reprehended me very, very often. I was very sick ; (so sick, that I have not yet recovered the shock I

received from it,) for near two months before I left New York. When I got to this place, I found this house just calculated to make the whole family sick ; cold, damp, and wet with new paint. A fine place for an invalid ; but, through a kind Providence, I sustained it, though others suffered. Happily, after a very tedious two months, Thomas recovered so as to get abroad ; but his health is now very infirm, and I fear an attendance upon two offices through the day, and studying through the evening at home, is not calculated to mend it. But it is a maxim here, that he who dies with studying dies in a good cause, and may go to another world much better calculated to improve his talents, than if he had died a block-head. Well, knowledge is a fine thing, and mother Eve thought so ; but she smarted so severely for hers, that most of her daughters have been afraid of it since.

We have had a very severe winter in this State, as you may judge when I tell you that we have consumed forty cords of wood in four months. It has been as cold as any winter we have at the northward. The 17th and 18th of this month I dined with all my windows open, put out the fires, and ate ice to cool me ; the glasses at 80. This is the 20th. Yesterday it snowed nearly the whole day, and to-day it is a keen northwester ; and I presume it will freeze hard to-night. Yet the verdure is beautiful ; full as much as I shall find by the middle of May in Massachusetts, where I hope then to be. Yet I shall have some regrets at leaving this place,

just as the season begins to open all its beauties upon me. I am told that this spot is very delightful as a summer residence. The house is spacious. The views from it are rather beautiful than sublime ; the country round has too much of the level to be in my style. The appearance of uniformity wearies the eye, and confines the imagination. We have a fine view of the whole city from our windows ; a beautiful grove behind the house, through which there is a spacious gravel walk, guarded by a number of marble statues, whose genealogy I have not yet studied, as the last week is the first time I have visited them. A variety of fine fields of wheat and grass are in front of the house, and, on the right hand, a pretty view of the Schuylkill presents itself. But now for the reverse of the picture. We are only two miles from town, yet have I been more of a prisoner this winter than I ever was in my life. The road from hence to the pavement is one mile and a half, the soil a brick clay, so that, when there has been heavy rain, or a thaw, you must wallow to the city through a bed of mortar without a bottom, the horses sinking to their knees. If it becomes cold, then the holes and the roughness are intolerable. From the inhabitants of this place I have received every mark of politeness and civility. The ladies here are well-educated, well-bred, and well-dressed. There is much more society than in New York, and I am much better pleased and satisfied than I expected to be when I was destined to remove here. Adieu.

Your sister,

A. A.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Quincy, 3 February, 1794.

MY DEAR MRS. SMITH,

I HAVE not written to you since I received yours of January 5th. I go from home but very little, yet I do not find my time hang heavy upon my hands. You know that I have no aversion to join in the cheerful circle, or mix in the world, when opportunity offers. I think it tends to rub off those austerities, which age is apt to contract, and reminds us, as Goldsmith says, "that we once were young." Whilst our presence is easy to youth, it will tend to guide and direct them.

" Be to their faults a little blind,
Be to their virtues ever kind,
And fix the padlock on the mind."

To-morrow our theatre is to open. Every precaution has been taken to prevent such unpleasant scenes as you represent are introduced upon yours. I hope the managers will be enabled to govern the mobility, or the whole design of the entertainment will be thwarted.

Since I wrote you last, a renewal of the horrid tragedies has been acted in France, and the Queen is no more.

" Set is her star of life ; — the pouring storm
Turns its black deluge from that aching head ;
The fiends of murder quit that bloodless form,
And the last animating hope is fled.

“Blest is the hour of peace, though cursed the hand
Which snaps the thread of life’s disastrous loom ;
Thrice blest the great, invincible command,
That deals the solace of the slumbering tomb.”

Not content with loading her with ignominy, whilst living, they blacken her memory by ascribing to her the vilest crimes. Would to Heaven that the destroying angel might put up his sword, and say, “It is enough ;” that he would bid hatred, madness, and murder cease.

“Peace o’er the world her olive branch extend,
And white-robed Innocence from Heaven descend.”

I wish, most ardently, that every arm extended against that unhappy country might be withdrawn, and they left to themselves, to form whatever constitution they choose ; and whether it is republican or monarchical is not of any consequence to us, provided it is a regular government of some form or other, which may secure the faith of treaties, and due subordination to the laws, whilst so many governments are tottering to the foundations. Even in one of the freest and happiest in the world, restless spirits will aim at disturbing it. They cry “A lion ! a lion !” when no real dangers exist, but from their own halloo, which in time may raise other ferocious beasts of prey.

I hope to hear from you soon. I wrote to you by Dr. Appleton. Your grandmother has been very sick, and is still in so poor a way that I have very little expectation of her ever going abroad again.

She is cheerful and pleasant, and loves to hear from her children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She has ever been a woman of exemplary benevolence, a friendly, open, candid mind, with a naturally good understanding, and zealously anxious for the welfare and prosperity of her family, which she has always promoted by every exertion in her power. Her only anxiety seems to be, lest she should live to be a burden to her friends; but this will not be her hard lot.

Your mother,

A. ADAMS.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Quincy, 8 March, 1794.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I RECEIVED your kind letter of February 12th, as well as one, by Mr. Storer, of February 2d. I have been every day since thinking that I would write to you, but a superior duty has occupied all my time for six weeks past. I have been only two days (when I was too sick to attend) absent from the sick bed of your grandmother. Your desire, that her last days might be rendered as comfortable as it is possible to make them, has been fulfilled. There has been no attention on my part, nor any comfort in my power to render her, that she has one moment wanted. She had spent a day with me the week

she was taken sick. A severe storm had prevented me from hearing from her for a couple of days. I then learnt that she had a violent cold, as it was supposed. I went immediately to see her, and found her sick with a lung fever. Her granddaughters have been affectionate, tender, and watchful of her, but she has lived all the days of her appointed time, and is now ready to depart. Her senses are bright and quick, her hearing better than for years past. Upon looking back she has no regrets ; upon looking forward she has all hope and comfort. Her hourly wish is to be at rest. She took her leave of me this evening, with her blessing upon me and mine to the latest posterity. I told her to-day that you desired to be remembered to her. She asked me if I thought there was any thing, which she had, that you would accept of. I answered, that what she had I thought her granddaughters, who were with her, deserved, and that I was sure you would value her blessing more than any thing else. " Well," she replied, " I pray God to bless her and her children ; and tell all who belong to me to consider, that a virtuous and a religious life is the only solid comfort upon a death-bed." She has mourned much, since her sickness, that she should never see your father again ; but she now seems reconciled to the thought of her approaching dissolution, which cannot be far distant. She has no rest, night nor day, her cough is so constant and troublesome ; and she can take scarcely any nourishment. If she had reached the 17th of this month, she would

have been eighty-five years old. I can say with Pope upon a similar occasion, "that my constant attendance upon her has indeed affected my mind very much, and lessened my desire of long life, since the best that can come of it is a miserable benediction." "Nothing," says Seneca, "is so melancholy a circumstance in human life, or so soon reconciles us to the thought of our own death, as the reflection and prospect of one friend after another dropping around us. Who would stand alone, the sole remaining ruin, the last tottering column of all the fabric of friendship, seemingly so strong, once so large, and yet so suddenly sunk and buried?"

Present me kindly to all my friends. In some future letter I may notice several things in yours; but my mind is too much solemnized by the scene before me to add any thing more, than that I am

Your affectionate mother,

A. ADAMS.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Quincy, 10 March, 1794.

MY DEAR MRS. SMITH,

ALTHOUGH the scenes in which I have been engaged for six weeks past, have been very different from those which you describe, I have been amused and entertained by your account. Though I cannot say

that I am charmed with your hero's personal accomplishments, as you describe them, yet you find

“A man of wealth is dubbed a man of worth ;
Venus can give him form, and Anstis birth.”

I think our ladies ought to be cautious of foreigners. I am almost led to suspect a spy in every strange character. It is much too easy a matter for a man, if he has property, to get introduced into company in this country of the best kind, and that without recommendations. The entertainment you describe was really very curious.

“Men overloaded with a large estate,
May spill their treasure in a queer conceit ;”

and I am sure this was of that kind.

You may mix in these scenes, and sometimes join in the society ; but neither your habits, your inclination, nor your natural disposition are formed for them. By nature you have a grave and thoughtful cast of temper, by habit you have been trained to more rational and durable pleasures, and by inclination you delight more in them. The frivolity of the present day has been much increased by our foreign connexions. I pray Heaven to preserve us from that dissoluteness of manners, which is the bane of society, and the destroyer of domestic happiness. I think, with the poet,

“If individual good engage our hope,
Domestic virtues give the largest scope ;
If plans of public eminence we trace,
Domestic virtues are its surest base.”

You complain that there is, in the rising generation, a want of principle. This is a melancholy truth. I am no friend of bigotry; yet I think the freedom of inquiry, and the general toleration of religious sentiments, have been, like all other good things, perverted, and, under that shelter, deism, and even atheism, have found refuge. Let us, for one moment, reflect as rational creatures, upon our "being, end, and aim," and we shall feel our dependence, we shall be convinced of our frailty, and satisfied that we must look beyond this transitory scene for a happiness large as our wishes, and boundless as our desires. True, genuine religion is calm in its inquiries, deliberate in its resolves, and steady in its conduct; is open to light and conviction, and labors for improvement. It studies to promote love and union in civil and in religious society. It approves virtue, and the truths which promote it, and, as the Scripture expresses it, "is peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated." It is the anchor of our hope, the ornament of youth, the comfort of age; our support in affliction and adversity, and the solace of that solemn hour, which we must all experience. Train up, my dear daughter, your children, to a sober and serious sense of the duty which they owe to the Supreme Being. Impress their infant minds with a respect for the Sabbath. This is too much neglected by the rising generation. Accustom them to a constant attendance upon public worship, and enforce it by your own example and precept, as often as you can with any convenience attend. It is a duty, for which we are accountable to the Supreme Being.

My pen has again taken a serious turn. I shall not apologize for it. Your own letter led to these reflections ; and I am sure they flow from a heart anxiously solicitous for the happiness of you and yours. That they may make a due impression, is the ardent and affectionate wish of

Your mother,

A. ADAMS.

TO THOMAS B. ADAMS.

Quincy, 8 November, 1796.

MY DEAR SON,

I HAVE just received your letter sent by the *General Green*, Capt. Sheldon, via Rhode Island, dated August 27th. I believe I have scarcely lost a letter from you or your brother, notwithstanding the many hazards and chances to which they have been liable. Accept my thanks for your last communications.

I rejoice at the return of your health, strength and spirits ; and most sincerely wish that your constitution may be mended by the ordeal you have passed.

I have much upon my mind which I could say to you ; prudence forbids my committing it to writing. At this eventful period, I can judge of your solicitude to learn, through a channel upon which you could depend, whatever affects the interests of our country.

In a quotation from the Chronicle you cannot expect truth. Falsehood and malevolence are its strongest features. It is the offspring of faction, and nursed by sedition, the adopted bantling of party. It has been crying monarchy and aristocracy, and vociferating anathemas against the "Defence," as favouring monarchy ; and making quotations of detached sentences, as the atheist endeavoured to prove from scripture that "there is no God," by omitting, "the fool hath said in his heart."


One writer asserts, that "Mr. Adams has immortalized himself as an advocate for hereditary government, as much as Mr. Jefferson has distinguished himself, in and out of office, as a true republican. Mr. Adams has sons placed in high offices, and who are, no doubt, understood to be what he calls the well-born, and who, following his own principle, may as he hopes, one time become the seigneurs or lords of this country. Mr. Jefferson has daughters only, and had he the wish, has no male successor."

By such false and glaring absurdities do these miserable beings endeavour to deceive and delude the people into a distrust of their most disinterested friends, the real guardians of their liberties and defenders of their privileges.

I feel anxious for the fate of my country. If the administration should get into hands which would depart from the system under which we have enjoyed so great a share of peace, prosperity and happiness, we should soon be involved in the wars and calamities which have deluged other nations in blood. We

should soon become a divided and a miserable people. I have been too long a witness to the scenes which have been acted for years past, and know too well what must be endured, to have any other sensations, when I look to an elevated seat, than painful solicitude and anxiety. It is a mark at which envy, pride and malevolence will shoot their envenomed arrows. Joy dwells in these dear silent shades at Quincy; and domestic pleasures, in peace and tranquillity. If I should be called to quit you, with what regret shall I part from you.

I feel perhaps too keenly the abuse of party. Washington endured it; but he had the support of the people and their undiminished confidence to the hour of his resignation, and a combination of circumstances which no other man can look for. First, a unanimous choice. Secondly, personally known to more people by having commanded the armies, than any other man. Thirdly, possessed of a large landed estate. Fourthly, refusing all emoluments of office both in his military and civil capacity. Take his character all together, and we shall not look upon his like again; notwithstanding which, he was reviled and abused, his administration perplexed, and his measures impeded. What is the expected lot of a successor? He must be armed as Washington was with integrity, with firmness, with intrepidity. These must be his shield and his wall of brass; and religion too, or he never will be able to stand sure and steadfast. Dr. Priestley, in a dedication of some sermons which he delivered last winter, and which he



dedicated to the Vice President of the United States, observes to him, "that religion is of as much use to a statesman as to any individual whatever; for christian principles will best enable men to devote their time, their lives, their talents, and what is often a greater sacrifice, their characters, to the public good; and in public life, he observes, this will often be in a great measure necessary. Let a man attain to eminence of any kind, and by whatever means, even the most honorable, he will be exposed to envy and jealousy. And of course he must expect to meet with calumny and abuse. What principles can enable a man to consult the real good of his fellow citizens without being diverted from his generous purpose by a regard to their opinion concerning him, like those of the christian who can be satisfied with the approbation of his own mind, and who, though not insensible to due praise, can despise calumny, and steadily overlooking every thing which is intermediate, patiently wait for the day of final retribution?"

Thus says the Poet;

"Fame for good deeds is the reward of virtue;
Thirst after fame is given us by the gods
Both to excite our minds to noble acts,
And give a proof of some immortal state,
Where we shall know that Fame we leave behind,
That highest blessing which the gods bestow."

As I consider it one of my chief blessings to have sons worthy of the confidence of their country, so I hope, in imitation of their father, they will serve it with honor and fidelity, and with consciences void

of offence ; and though they may sometimes meet with ingratitude, they will have

“The soul’s calm sunshine and the heart-felt joy.”

Adieu, my dear son. I hope to see you in the course of another year. Time, which improves youth, every year furrows the brow of age.

“ Our years
As life declines, speed rapidly away ;
And not a year but pilfers, as he goes,
Some youthful grace that age would gladly keep,
A tooth or auburn lock.”

Thus, my son, in the course of three years absence, you will find many depredations of time upon those whom you left advanced in life, and in none more, perhaps, than in your mother, whose frequent indispositions hasten its strides and impair a frail fabric. But neither time, absence nor sickness have lessened the warmth of her affection for her dear children, which will burn with undiminished fervour until the lamp of life is extinguished together with the name of

ABIGAIL ADAMS.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

Quincy, 8 February, 1797.

“The sun is dressed in brightest beams,
To give thy honors to the day.”

AND may it prove an auspicious prelude to each ensuing season. You have this day to declare yourself head of a nation. “And now, O Lord, my God, thou hast made thy servant ruler over the people. Give unto him an understanding heart, that he may know how to go out and come in before this great people; that he may discern between good and bad. For who is able to judge this thy so great a people?” were the words of a royal sovereign; and not less applicable to him who is invested with the chief magistracy of a nation, though he wear not a crown, nor the robes of royalty.

My thoughts and my meditations are with you, though personally absent; and my petitions to Heaven are, that “the things which make for peace may not be hidden from your eyes.” My feelings are not those of pride or ostentation, upon the occasion. They are solemnized by a sense of the obligations, the important trusts, and numerous duties connected with it. That you may be enabled to discharge them with honor to yourself, with justice and impartiality to your country, and with satisfac-

tion to this great people, shall be the daily prayer of your

A. A.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

Quincy, 26 April, 1797.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THIS, I hope, is the last letter which you will receive from me at Quincy. The funeral rites performed, I prepare to set out on the morrow. I long to leave a place, where every scene and object wears a gloom, or looks so to me. My agitated mind wants repose. I have twice the present week met my friends and relatives, and taken leave of them in houses of mourning. I have asked, "Was all this necessary to wean me from the world? Was there danger of my fixing a too strong attachment upon it? Has it any allurements, which could make me forget, that here I have no abiding-place?" All, all is undoubtedly just and right. Our aged parent is gone to rest.¹ My mind is relieved from any anxiety on her account. I have no fears lest she should be left alone, and receive an injury. I have no apprehen-

¹ The mother of Mr. Adams, who survived the illness described in a preceding letter of March 8th, 1794, died at this time, at the age of eighty-eight.

sions, that she should feel any want of aid or assistance, or fear of becoming burdensome. She fell asleep, and is happy.

Mary,¹ in the prime of life, when, if ever, it is desirable, became calm, resigned, and willing to leave the world. She made no objection to her sister's going, or to mine, but always said she should go first.

I have received your letters of April 16th and 19th. I want no courting to come. I am ready and willing to follow my husband wherever he chooses; but the hand of Heaven has arrested me. Adieu, my dear friend. Excuse the melancholy strain of my letter. From the abundance of the heart the stream flows.

Affectionately yours,

A. ADAMS.

TO THOMAS B. ADAMS.

Washington, 13 November, 1800.

WELL, my dear son, South Carolina has behaved as your father always said she would. The consequence to us, personally, is, that we retire from public life. For myself and family, I have few re-

¹ A niece of the writer.

grets. At my age, and with my bodily infirmities, I shall be happier at Quincy. Neither my habits, nor my education or inclinations, have led me to an expensive style of living, so that on that score I have little to mourn over. If I did not rise with dignity, I can at least fall with ease, which is the more difficult task. I wish your father's circumstances were not so limited and circumscribed, as they must be, because he cannot indulge himself in those improvements upon his farm, which his inclination leads him to, and which would serve to amuse him, and contribute to his health. I feel not any resentment against those who are coming into power, and only wish the future administration of the government may be as productive of the peace, happiness, and prosperity of the nation, as the two former ones have been. I leave to time the unfolding of a drama. I leave to posterity to reflect upon the times past; and I leave them characters to contemplate. My own intention is to return to Quincy as soon as I conveniently can; I presume in the month of January.

Governor Davie arrived yesterday with the treaty. Judge Ellsworth was landed in England for the benefit of his health. The public curiosity will be soon satisfied. Peace with France, — a revenue increased beyond any former years, — our prospects brightening upon every side. What must be the thoughts and the reflections of those, who, calling themselves Federalists, have placed their country in a situation full of dangers and perils; who have

wantonly thrown away the blessings Heaven seemed to have in reserve for them? The defection of New York has been the source. That defection was produced by the intrigues of two men. One of them sowed the seeds of discontent and division amongst the Federalists, and the other seized the lucky moment of mounting into power upon the shoulders of Jefferson. The triumph of the Jacobins is immoderate, and the Federalists deserve it. It is an old and a just proverb, "Never halloo until you are out of the woods." So completely have they gulled one another by their Southern promises, which have no more faith, when made to Northern men, than lovers' vows.

I have not heard from New York since I wrote you last.

I am, my dear Thomas,

Your ever affectionate mother,

A. ADAMS.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Washington, 21 November, 1800.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I ARRIVED here on Sunday last, and without meeting with any accident worth noticing, except losing ourselves when we left Baltimore, and going eight or

nine miles on the Frederick road, by which means we were obliged to go the other eight through woods, where we wandered two hours without finding a guide, or the path. Fortunately, a straggling black came up with us, and we engaged him as a guide, to extricate us out of our difficulty ; but woods are all you see, from Baltimore until you reach *the city*, which is only so in name. Here and there is a small cot, without a glass window, interspersed amongst the forests, through which you travel miles without seeing any human being. In the city there are buildings enough, if they were compact and finished, to accommodate Congress and those attached to it ; but as they are, and scattered as they are, I see no great comfort for them. The river, which runs up to Alexandria, is in full view of my window, and I see the vessels as they pass and repass. The house is upon a grand and superb scale, requiring about thirty servants to attend and keep the apartments in proper order, and perform the ordinary business of the house and stables ; an establishment very well proportioned to the President's salary. The lighting the apartments, from the kitchen to parlours and chambers, is a tax indeed ; and the fires we are obliged to keep to secure us from daily agues is another very cheering comfort. To assist us in this great castle, and render less attendance necessary, bells are wholly wanting, not one single one being hung through the whole house, and promises are all you can obtain. This is so great an inconvenience, that I know not what to do, or how to do. The la-

dies from Georgetown and in the city have many of them visited me. Yesterday I returned fifteen visits,—but such a place as Georgetown appears,—why, our Milton is beautiful. But no comparisons;—if they will put me up some bells, and let me have wood enough to keep fires, I design to be pleased. I could content myself almost anywhere three months; but, surrounded with forests, can you believe that wood is not to be had, because people cannot be found to cut and cart it! Briesler entered into a contract with a man to supply him with wood. A small part, a few cords only, has he been able to get. Most of that was expended to dry the walls of the house before we came in, and yesterday the man told him it was impossible for him to procure it to be cut and carted. He has had recourse to coals; but we cannot get grates made and set. We have, indeed, come into *a new country*.

You must keep all this to yourself, and, when asked how I like it, say that I write you the situation is beautiful, which is true. The house is made habitable, but there is not a single apartment finished, and all withinside, except the plastering, has been done since Briesler came. We have not the least fence, yard, or other convenience, without, and the great unfinished audience-room I make a drying-room of, to hang up the clothes in. The principal stairs are not up, and will not be this winter. Six chambers are made comfortable; two are occupied by the President and Mr. Shaw; two lower rooms,

one for a common parlour, and one for a levee-room. Up stairs there is the oval room, which is designed for the drawingroom, and has the crimson furniture in it. It is a very handsome room now; but, when completed, it will be beautiful. If the twelve years, in which this place has been considered as the future seat of government, had been improved, as they would have been if in New England, very many of the present inconveniences would have been removed. It is a beautiful spot, capable of every improvement, and, the more I view it, the more I am delighted with it.

Since I sat down to write, I have been called down to a servant from Mount Vernon, with a billet from Major Custis, and a haunch of venison, and a kind, congratulatory letter from Mrs. Lewis, upon my arrival in the city, with Mrs. Washington's love, inviting me to Mount Vernon, where, health permitting, I will go, before I leave this place.

The Senate is much behind-hand. No Congress has yet been made. 'T is said — — is on his way, but travels with so many delicacies in his rear, that he cannot get on fast, lest some of them should suffer.

Thomas comes in and says a House is made; so to-morrow, though Saturday, the President will meet them. Adieu, my dear. Give my love to your brother, and tell him he is ever present upon my mind.

Affectionately your mother,

A. ADAMS.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Washington, 27 November, 1800.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I RECEIVED your letter by Mr. Pintard. Two articles we are much distressed for; the one is bells, but the more important one is wood. Yet you cannot see wood for trees. No arrangement has been made, but by promises never performed, to supply the newcomers with fuel. Of the promises Briesler had received his full share. He had procured nine cords of wood; between six and seven of that was kindly burnt up to dry the walls of the house, which ought to have been done by the commissioners, but which, if left to them, would have remained undone to this day. Congress poured in, but shiver, shiver. No woodcutters nor carters to be had at any rate. We are now indebted to a Pennsylvania waggon to bring us, through the first clerk in the Treasury Office, one cord and a half of wood, which is all we have for this house, where twelve fires are constantly required, and where, we are told, the roads will soon be so bad that it cannot be drawn. Briesler procured two hundred bushels of coals or we must have suffered. This is the situation of almost every person. The public officers have sent to Philadelphia for woodcutters and waggons.

You will read in the answer of the House to the President's Speech a full and explicit approbation of

the Administration ; a coöperation with him equal to his utmost expectations ; this passed without an amendment or any debate or squabble, and has just now been delivered by the House in a body. The vessel which has my clothes and other matters is not arrived. The ladies are impatient for a drawing-room ; I have no looking-glasses but dwarfs for this house ; nor a twentieth part lamps enough to light it. Many things were stolen, many more broken, by the removal ; amongst the number, my tea china is more than half missing. Georgetown affords nothing. My rooms are very pleasant and warm whilst the doors of the hall are closed.

You can scarce believe that here in this wilderness city, I should find my time so occupied as it is. My visiters, some of them, come three and four miles. The return of one of them is the work of one day ; most of the ladies reside in Georgetown or in scattered parts of the city at two and three miles distance. Mrs. Otis, my nearest neighbour, is at lodgings almost half a mile from me ; Mrs. Senator Otis, two miles.

We have all been very well as yet ; if we can by any means get wood, we shall not let our fires go out, but it is at a price indeed ; from four dollars it has risen to nine. Some say it will fall, but there must be more industry than is to be found here to bring half enough to the market for the consumption of the inhabitants.

With kind remembrance to all friends

I am your truly affectionate mother,

A. A.

TO COLONEL W. S. SMITH.

Quincy, 3 May, 1801.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of the raspberry bushes, and the pot of strawberry vines, for which accept my thanks. I have had them placed in a good part of the garden, and shall pay particular attention to them. I hope I shall be able to treat you with a plate of them, when I shall have the pleasure of seeing you at Quincy.

Whatever strange events occur in the political world, I think your path plain; the strict and impartial discharge of the duties of your office, with a prudent silence, without becoming the demagogue of any party.

Be so good as to send the enclosed by a safe hand. My love to Mrs. Smith and the children. Tell her I have commenced my operations of dairy-woman; and she might see me, at five o'clock in the morning, skimming my milk. Adieu, my dear Sir.

Your affectionate

A. ADAMS.

TO THOMAS B. ADAMS.

Quincy, 12 July, 1801.

MY DEAR SON,

I AM much delighted to learn that you intend making a visit to the old mansion. I wish you could have accomplished it so as to have been here by this time, which would have given you an opportunity of being at Commencement, meeting many of your old acquaintance, and visiting the seat of science, where you received your first rudiments. I shall look daily for you. You will find your father in his fields, attending to his hay-makers, and your mother busily occupied in the domestic concerns of her family. I regret that a fortnight of sharp drought has shorn many of the beauties we had in rich luxuriance. The verdure of the grass has become a brown, the flowers hang their heads, droop, and fade, whilst the vegetable world languishes; yet still we have a pure air. The crops of hay have been abundant; upon this spot, where eight years ago we cut scarcely six tons, we now have thirty. "We are here, among the vast and noble scenes of nature, where we walk in the light and open ways of the divine bounty, and where our senses are feasted with the clear and genuine taste of their objects."

"Who, that has reason and his smell,
Would not among roses and jasmine dwell,

Rather than all his spirits choke
With exhalations of dirt and smoke,
And all the uncleanness which does drown
In pestilential clouds a populous town."

At this season, it is best to take the packet by way of Providence.

I have received Mr. J——'s play. It is better executed than I believed him capable of performing. As a youthful specimen of genius, it has merit. I presume S—— has sent you Mr. Paine's Oration upon July the 4th. I think you will be pleased with it.

I am, my dear Thomas,

Affectionately your mother,

A. A.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Quincy, 20 May, 1804.

SIR,

HAD you been no other than the private inhabitant of Monticello, I should, ere this time, have addressed you with that sympathy which a recent event has awakened in my bosom; but reasons of various kinds withheld my pen, until the powerful feelings of my heart burst through the restraint, and called upon me to shed the tear of sorrow over the departed remains of your beloved and deserving daughter. An event which I most sincerely mourn,

The attachment which I formed for her, when you committed her to my care upon her arrival in a foreign land, under circumstances peculiarly interesting, has remained with me to this hour; and the account of her death, which I read in a late paper, recalled to my recollection the tender scene of her separation from me, when with the strongest sensibility, she clung around my neck and wet my bosom with her tears, saying, "Oh! now I have learned to love you, why will they take me from you."

It has been some time since I conceived that any event in this life could call forth feelings of mutual sympathy. But I know how closely entwined around a parent's heart are those cords which bind the parental to the filial bosom; and when snapped asunder, how agonising the pangs. I have tasted of the bitter cup and bow with reverence and submission before the great Dispenser of it, without whose permission and overruling Providence, not a sparrow falls to the ground. That you may derive comfort and consolation in this day of your sorrow and affliction from that only source calculated to heal the wounded heart, a firm belief in the being, perfections and attributes of God, is the sincere and ardent wish of her, who once took pleasure in subscribing herself your friend

ABIGAIL ADAMS.¹

¹ The answer to this letter will be found in the correspondence of Mr. Jefferson, published by his grandson, Thomas Jefferson Randolph, Vol. 4, p. 17.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Quincy, 1 July, 1804.

SIR,

YOUR letter of June 13th, came duly to hand. If it had contained no other sentiments and opinions than those which my letter of condolence could have excited, and which are expressed in the first page of your reply, our correspondence would have terminated here. But you have been pleased to enter upon some subjects which call for a reply ; and as you observe that you have wished for an opportunity to express your sentiments, I have given them every weight they claim.

“ One act of Mr. Adams’s life, and *one* only (you repeat) ever gave me a moment’s personal displeasure. I did consider his last appointments to office as personally unkind ; they were from my most ardent political enemies.”

As this act, I am certain, was not intended to give any personal pain or offence, I think it a duty to explain it, so far as I then knew his views and designs. The Constitution empowers the President to fill up offices as they become vacant. It was in the exercise of this power, that appointments were made, and characters selected, whom Mr. Adams considered as men faithful to the constitution, and where he personally knew them, such as were capable of fulfilling their duty to their country. This

was done equally by General Washington in the last days of his administration, so that not an office remained vacant for his successor to fill upon his coming into office. No offence was given by it and no personal unkindness thought of.

But the different political opinions, which have so unhappily divided our country, must have given rise to the idea that personal unkindness was intended. You will please to recollect, Sir, that at the time these appointments were made, there was not any certainty that the Presidency would devolve upon you, which is another circumstance to prove that no personal unkindness was intended. No person, I am sure, was ever selected from such a motive, and so far was Mr. Adams from harboring such a sentiment, that he had not any idea of the intolerance of party spirit at that time. I know it was his opinion, that if the Presidency devolved upon you, except in the appointment of Secretaries, no material change would be made. I perfectly agree with you in opinion that those should be men in whom the President can repose confidence, possessing opinions and sentiments corresponding with his own; or if differing with him, that they ought rather to resign their offices than to cabal against measures which he may consider essential to the honor, safety and peace of the country. Neither ought they to unite with any bold and daringly ambitious character to overrule the Cabinet or to betray the secrets of it to friends or enemies. The two gentlemen who held the offices of secretaries, when you became President, were not of this

character. They were persons appointed by your predecessor nearly two years previous to his retirement. They had cordially coöperated with him, and were gentlemen who enjoyed the public confidence. Possessing, however, different political sentiments from those which you were known to have embraced, it was expected that they would, as they did, resign.

I have never felt any enmity towards you, Sir, for being elected President of the United States. But the instruments made use of and the means which were practised to effect a change have my utter abhorrence and detestation, for they were the blackest calumny and the foulest falsehoods. I had witnessed enough of the anxiety and solicitude, the envy, jealousy and reproach attendant upon the office, as well as the high responsibility of the station, to be perfectly willing to see a transfer of it; and I can truly say, that at the time of election, I considered your pretensions much superior to his who shared an equal vote with you. Your experience, I dare venture to affirm, has convinced you, that it is not a station to be envied. If you feel yourself a freeman, and can conduct, in all cases, according to your own sentiments, opinions and judgment, you can do more than either of your predecessors could, and are awfully responsible to God and your country for the measures of your administration. I must rely upon the friendship you still profess to entertain for me, (and I am conscious I have done nothing to forfeit it), to excuse the freedom of this discussion, to which you have led with an unreserve, which has taken off

the shackles I should, otherwise, have found myself embarrassed with. And now, Sir, I will freely disclose to you what has severed the bonds of former friendship, and placed you in a light very different from what some viewed you in.

One of the first acts of your administration was to liberate a wretch, who was suffering the just punishment of his crimes for publishing the basest libel, the lowest and vilest slander which malice could invent or calumny exhibit, against the character and reputation of your predecessor; of him, for whom you professed a friendship and esteem, and whom you certainly knew incapable of such complicated baseness. The remission of Callender's fine was a public approbation of his conduct. If abandoned characters do not excite abhorrence, is not the last restraint of vice, a sense of shame rendered abortive? If the Chief Magistrate of a nation whose elevated station places him in a conspicuous light and renders his every action a concern of general importance, permits his public conduct to be influenced by private resentment, and so far forgets what is due to his character as to give countenance to a base calumniator, is he not answerable for the influence which his example has upon the manners and morals of the community?

Until I read Callender's seventh letter containing your compliment to him as a writer and your reward of fifty dollars, I could not be made to believe that such measures could have been resorted to, to stab the fair fame and upright intentions of one who, to

use your own language, "was acting from an honest conviction in his own mind that he was right." This Sir, I considered as a personal injury ; this was the sword that cut asunder the Gordian knot, which could not be untied by all the efforts of party spirit, by rivalry, by jealousy, or any other malignant fiend.

The serpent you cherished and warmed bit the hand that nourished him and gave you sufficient specimens of his talents, his gratitude, his justice and his truth. When such vipers are let loose upon society, all distinction between virtue and vice is levelled ; all respect for character is lost in the deluge of calumny ; that respect, which is a necessary bond in the social union, which gives efficacy to laws, and teaches the subject to obey the magistrate, and the child to submit to the parent.

There is one other act of your administration which I considered as personally unkind, and which your own mind will easily suggest to you ; but as it neither affected character nor reputation, I forbear to state it.

This letter is written in confidence. Faithful are the wounds of a friend. Often have I wished to have seen a different course pursued by you. I bear no malice. I cherish no enmity. I would not retaliate if it was in my power ; nay more, in the true spirit of Christian charity, I would forgive as I hope to be forgiven. With that disposition of mind and heart, I subscribe the name of

ABIGAIL ADAMS.¹

¹ The answer to this letter will be found in the correspondence of Mr. Jefferson, Vol. 4, p. 22.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Quincy, 18 August, 1804.

SIR,

YOUR letter of July 22 was by some mistake in the post-office at Boston sent back as far as New York, so that it did not reach me until the eleventh of this month. Candor requires of me a reply. Your statement respecting Callender, and your motives for liberating him wear a different aspect as explained by you, from the impression which the act had made, not only upon my mind, but upon the minds of all those whom I have ever heard speak upon the subject. With regard to the law under which he was punished, different persons entertain different opinions respecting it. It lies not with me to determine its validity or constitutionality. That devolved upon the Supreme Judges of the nation. I have ever understood that the power which makes a law is only competent to the repeal of it. If a Chief Magistrate can by his will annul it, where is the difference between a republican and a despotic government?

That some restraint should be laid upon the assassin who stabs reputation, all civilized nations have assented to. In no country have calumny, falsehood and reviling stalked abroad more licentiously than in this. No political character has been secure from its attacks; no reputation so fair as not to be

wounded by it, until truth and falsehood lie in one undistinguished heap. If there is no check to be resorted to in the laws of the land, and no reparation to be made to the injured, will not man become the Judge and avenger of his own wrongs, and, as in a late instance, the sword and pistol decide the contest? All christian and social virtues will be banished the land. All that makes life desirable and softens the ferocious passions of man will assume a savage deportment, and like Cain of old, every man's hand will be against his neighbor. Party spirit is blind, malevolent, uncandid, ungenerous, unjust and unforgiving. It is equally so under federal as under democratic banners, and it would be difficult to decide which is the least guilty. Upon both sides are characters who possess honest views and act from honorable motives; who disdain to be led blindfold, and who, though entertaining different sentiments, have for their object the public welfare and happiness. These are the characters who abhor calumny and evil speaking, and who will never descend to newspaper reviling. You have done Mr. Adams justice in believing him incapable of such conduct. He has never written a line in any newspaper to which his signature has not been affixed since he was first elected President of the United States. The writers in the public papers and their employers are altogether unknown to him.

I have seen and known that much of the conduct of a public ruler is liable to be misunderstood and misrepresented. Party hatred, by its deadly poison,

blinds the eyes and envenoms the heart. It is fatal to the integrity of the moral character—it sees not that wisdom dwells with moderation, and that firmness of conduct is seldom united with outrageous violence of sentiment. Thus blame is too often liberally bestowed upon actions, which if fully understood and candidly judged, would merit praise. And it is only by the general issue of measures producing baneful or beneficial effects, that they ought to be tested. You exculpate yourself from any intentional act of unkindness towards any one. I will, however, freely state that which I considered as such. Soon after my eldest son's return from Europe, he was appointed by the District Judge to an office in which no political concerns entered. Personally known to you, and possessing all the qualifications, you yourself being judge, which you had designated for office, as soon as Congress gave the appointments to the President, you removed him. This looked so particularly pointed, that some of your best friends in Boston at that time expressed their regret that you had done so. I must do him the justice to say that I never heard an expression from him of censure or disrespect towards you in consequence of it. With pleasure I say, that he is not a blind follower of any party.

I have written to you with a freedom which only former friendship would warrant; and to which I would gladly return, could all causes but mere difference of opinion be removed. I wish to lead a tranquil and retired life under the administration of the

government, disposed to heal the wounds of contention, to cool the raging fury of party animosity, to soften the rugged spirit of resentment, and desirous of seeing my children and grandchildren heirs to that freedom and independence which you and your predecessor united your efforts to obtain. With these sentiments, I reciprocate my sincere wishes for your health and happiness.¹

ABIGAIL ADAMS.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Quincy, 25 October, 1804.

SIR,

SICKNESS for three weeks past has prevented my acknowledging the receipt of your letter of Sept. 11th. When I first addressed you, I little thought of entering into a correspondence with you upon subjects of a political nature. I will not regret it, as it has led to some elucidations, and brought on some explanations, which place in a more favorable light occurrences which had wounded me.

Having once entertained for you a respect and esteem, founded upon the character of an affectionate parent, a kind master, a candid and benevolent

¹ For the reply to this letter see Mr. Jefferson's correspondence, Vol. IV. p. 26.

friend, I could not suffer different political opinions to obliterate them from my mind ; I felt the truth of the observation, that the heart is long, very long in receiving the conviction that is forced upon it by reason. It was not until circumstances concurred to place you in the light of a rewarder and encourager of a libeller, whom you could not but detest and despise, that I withdrew the esteem I had long entertained for you. Nor can you wonder, Sir, that I should consider as a personal unkindness, the instances I have mentioned. I am pleased to find that which respected my son altogether unfounded. He was, as you conjecture, appointed a commissioner of Bankruptcy, together with Judge Dawes, and continued to serve in it with perfect satisfaction to all parties, (at least I never heard the contrary,) until *superseded* by the appointment of others. The idea suggested that no one was in office, and consequently no removal could take place, I cannot consider in any other light than what the gentlemen of the law would term a quibble, — as such I pass it. Judge Dawes was continued or re-appointed, which placed Mr. Adams in a more conspicuous light as the object of personal resentment. Nor could I, upon this occasion, refrain calling to mind the last visit you made me at Washington, when in the course of conversation you assured me, that if it should lay in your power at any time to serve me or my family, nothing would give you more pleasure. With respect to the office, it was a small object, but the disposition of the remover was con-

sidered by me as the barbed arrow. This, however, by your declaration, is withdrawn from my mind. With the public it will remain. And here, Sir, may I be allowed to pause, and ask whether, in your ardent desire to rectify the mistakes and abuses, as you may term them, of the former administrations, you may not be led into measures still more fatal to the Constitution, and more derogatory to your honor and independence of character? I know, from the observations which I have made, that there is not a more difficult part devolves upon a Chief Magistrate, nor one which subjects him to more reproach and censure, than the appointment to office. And all the patronage which this enviable power gives him is but a poor compensation for the responsibility to which it subjects him. It would be well, however, to weigh and consider characters, as it respects their moral worth and integrity. He who is not true to himself, nor just to others, seeks an office for the benefit of himself, unmindful of that of his country.

I cannot accord with you in opinion that the Constitution ever meant to withhold from the National Government the power of self-defence; or that it could be considered an infringement of the Liberty of the Press, to punish the licentiousness of it.

Time must determine, and posterity will judge, with more candor and impartiality, I hope, than the conflicting parties of our day, what measures have best promoted the happiness of the people; what raised them from a state of depression and degrada-

tion to wealth, honor and reputation ; what has made them affluent at home and respected abroad ; and to whomsoever the tribute is due, to them may it be given.

I will not any further intrude upon your time ; but close this correspondence by my wishes that you may be directed to that path which may terminate in the prosperity and happiness of the people over whom you are placed, by administering the government with justice and impartiality. And be assured, Sir, no one will more rejoice in your success than

ABIGAIL ADAMS.

MEMORANDUM,

Subjoined to the copy of this letter, in the handwriting of Mr. Adams.

Quincy, 19 November, 1804.

The whole of this correspondence was begun and conducted without my knowledge or suspicion. Last evening and this morning, at the desire of Mrs. Adams, I read the whole. I have no remarks to make upon it, at this time and in this place.

J. ADAMS.

TO MRS. PACKARD.¹

Quincy, 11 March, 1805.

WITH the only beloved daughter of my late venerable and respected friend, I pour the tear of sympathy, and with a full heart participate in the sorrowful event, which has deprived her of one of the most tender and affectionate of parents; one of the best of mothers; one of the kindest friends; one of the pleasantest companions; and one of the most exemplary of women.

To me she was a "Friend of more than fifty years ripening," my earliest, my constant, and my oldest friend. Dear departed spirit, wilt thou still be my friend in those regions of immortal bliss, to which I trust thou art translated, and whither I hope ere long to follow thee. With Dr. Johnson, I can say "hope dictates what revelation does not confute; that the union of souls may still remain, and we who are struggling with sin, sorrow, and infirmities, may have our part in the attention and kindness of those who have finished their course and are now receiving their reward."

"Hope wipes the tear from sorrow's eye,
And faith points upward to the sky."

¹ Through the kindness of Mr. Benjamin Guild, of Boston, the Editor obtained this letter upon the death of Mrs. Quincy, from her daughter, the lady to whom it was addressed.

Scarcely had the grave closed over the remains of my esteemed friend Madam Sargent, relict of the late Judge, ere it was again opened to receive those of one still dearer to me. It is more than fifty years since my acquaintance commenced with her, who in that period became your mother. I was then a child, and carried by my grandmother, to visit with her, your grandmother, whom she taught me from my earliest infancy to venerate, as well as to love and respect her daughter. And this, before any connexion in the family, united us in closer bonds. The early impressions I received, were indelibly stamped by time, and impressed by my own judgment, as I advanced in life, and became more capable of appreciating the many virtues of your late excellent parent, in the various relations she sustained, of daughter, wife, and mother, in each of which she had few equals, and I know not her superior. You have reason for gratitude and thankfulness, that she was spared to you, to a very advanced age, and with as few of its infirmities as is the lot of humanity ; always possessing a cheerfulness and vivacity, which whilst it enlivened, delighted, for it was chastened with dignity and decorum.

“Peace, and esteem, is all that age can hope,” these she enjoyed through life, and having fixed her hopes and expectations upon a solid foundation, she is gone to reap the fruit of a well-spent life.

“Heaven gives us friends to bless the present scene,
Resumes them, to prepare us for the next.”

Let us, my afflicted friend, improve this dispensation, to that useful purpose, and whilst I reflect upon the many endearing virtues and bright qualities, which adorned the life and conversation of your dear departed parent, strive to emulate her example, and transplant them into our own lives. Thus shall we honor her memory, and transmit it with lustre to posterity.

This is the fervent wish, and ardent desire, of your sympathizing friend,

ABIGAIL ADAMS.

TO MRS. SHAW.

Quincy, 5 June, 1809.

I WAS unable to reply to my dear sister's letter of May 19th when I received it, being visited by St. Anthony, who scourged me most cruelly. I am sure I wished well to the Spanish patriots, in their late struggle for liberty, and I bore no ill-will to those whose tutelar saint, thus unprovoked, beset me. I wish he had been preaching to the fishes, who, according to tradition, have been his hearers; for so ill did he use me, that I came very near losing my senses. I think he must be a very bigoted saint, a favorer of the Inquisition, and a tyrant. If such are the penances of saints, I hope to hold no further intercourse with them. For four days and nights my face was

so swelled and inflamed, that I was almost blind. It seemed as though my blood boiled. Until the third day, when I sent for the doctor, I knew not what the matter was. It confined me for ten days. My face is yet red ; but I rode out to-day, and feel much better. I think a little journey would be of service to me ; but I find, as years and infirmities increase, my courage and enterprise diminish. Ossian says, "Age is dark and unlovely." When I look in my glass, I do not much wonder at the story related of a very celebrated painter, Zeuxis, who, it is said, died of laughing at a comical picture he had made of an old woman. If our glass flatters us in youth, it tells us truths in age. The cold hand of death has frozen up some of the streams of our early friendships ; the congelation is gaining upon our vital powers, and marking us for the tomb. "May we so number our days as to apply our hearts unto wisdom."

"The man is yet unborn, who duly weighs an hour."

When my family was young around me, I used to find more leisure, and think I could leave it with less anxiety than I can now. There is not any occasion for detailing the whys and the wherefores. It is said, if riches increase, those increase that eat them ; but what shall we say, when the eaters increase without the wealth ? You know, my dear sister, if there be bread enough, and to spare, unless a prudent attention manage that sufficiency, the fruits of diligence will be scattered by the hand of dissipa-

tion. No man ever prospered in the world without the consent and coöperation of his wife. It behoves us, who are parents or grandparents, to give our daughters and granddaughters, when their education devolves upon us, such an education as shall qualify them for the useful and domestic duties of life, that they should learn the proper use and improvement of time, since "time was given for use, not waste." The finer accomplishments, such as music, dancing, and painting, serve to set off and embellish the picture; but the groundwork must be formed of more durable colors.

I consider it as an indispensable requisite, that every American wife should herself know how to order and regulate her family; how to govern her domestics, and train up her children. For this purpose, the all-wise Creator made woman an help-meet for man, and she who fails in these duties does not answer the end of her creation.

"Life's cares are comforts; such by Heaven designed;
They that have none must make them, or be wretched.
Cares are employments, and, without employ,
The soul is on a rack, the rack of rest."

I have frequently said to my friends, when they have thought me overburdened with care, I would rather have too much than too little. Life stagnates without action. I could never bear merely to vegetate;

"Waters stagnate when they cease to flow."

Has your son sent you or his sister the "Letters from the Mountains?" I think them the finest selection of letters which I have ever read. You may with safety recommend them to all your young female friends. I cannot find in them any principle, either of morals, manners, or religion, to which I cannot most heartily subscribe. Read them, and give me your opinion of them. Adieu.

Your sister,

A. A.

TO CAROLINE A. SMITH.

Quincy, 26 February, 1811.

YOUR Letter, my dear Caroline, gave me pleasure. As all your's are calculated to enliven the spirits, I take them as a cordial, which during the residence of the baldpated winter and a close confinement to my chamber for several weeks, I have been much in want of. And now what return can I make you—What can you expect from age, debility and weakness?

Why, you shall have the return of a grateful heart, which amidst infirmities is not insensible to the many blessings which encompass it. Food, raiment and fuel, dear and kind friends and relatives, mental food and entertainment sufficient to satisfy the most

craving appetite and the hopes and prospect of another and better country even an heavenly.

“Eternal power ! from whom these blessings flow,
Teach me still more to wonder — more to know,
Here round my home still lift my soul to thee,

And let me ever midst thy bounties raise
An humble note of thankfulness and praise.”

Although my memory is not so tenacious as in youth, nor my eye-sight so clear, my hearing is unimpaired, my heart warm and my affections are as fervent to those in whom “my days renew” as formerly to those from “whom my days I drew.” I have some troubles in the loss of friends by death, and no small solicitude for the motherless offspring, but my trust and confidence are in that being who “hears the young ravens when they cry.” I do not know my dear Caroline, that I ever gave you encouragement to expect me at the valley, although I should rejoice to be able to visit you — but I now look forward with the hope of seeing you here as an attendant upon your mother as soon as the spring opens and the roads will permit.

We have snow by the cargo this winter. Not a bird flits but a hungry crow now and then, in quest of prey. The fruit trees exhibit a mournful picture, broken down by the weight of the snow ; whilst the running of sleighs and the jingle of bells assure us that all nature does not slumber.

As if you love me, proverbially, you must love my dog, you will be glad to learn that Juno yet lives,

although like her mistress she is gray with age. She appears to enjoy life and to be grateful for the attention paid her. She wags her tail and announces a visiter whenever one appears.

Adieu, my dear child — remember me with affection to your brother and with kind affection to your honored father and also to your uncle whose benevolent qualities I respect and whose cheerful spirits have made “the wilderness to smile and blossom as the rose.”

Most affectionately,

Your Grandmother.

ABIGAIL ADAMS.

TO CAROLINE A. SMITH.

Quincy, 19 November, 1812.

MY DEAR CAROLINE,

YOUR neat, pretty letter, looking small, but containing much, reached me this day. I have a good mind to give you the journal of the day.

Six o'clock. Rose, and, in imitation of his Britannic Majesty, kindled my own fire. Went to the stairs, as usual, to summon George and Charles. Returned to my chamber, dressed myself. No one stirred. Called a second time, with voice a little raised.

Seven o'clock. Blockheads not out of bed. Girls in motion. Mean, when I hire another man-servant, that he shall come for *one call*.

Eight o'clock. Fires made, Breakfast prepared. L—— in Boston. Mrs. A. at the tea-board. Forgot the sausages. Susan's recollection brought them upon the table.

Enter ANN. "Ma'am, the man is come with coal." "Go, call George to assist him." [*Exit* ANN.

Enter CHARLES. "Mr. B —— is come with cheese, turnips, &c. Where are they to be put?" "I will attend to him myself." [*Exit* CHARLES.

Just seated at the table again.

Enter GEORGE with "Ma'am, here is a man with drove of pigs." A consultation is held upon this important subject, the result of which is the purchase of two spotted swine.

Nine o'clock. *Enter* NATHANIEL, from the upper house, with a message for sundries; and black Thomas's daughter, for sundries. Attended to all these concerns. A little out of sorts that I could not finish my breakfast. Note; never to be incommoded with trifles.

Enter GEORGE ADAMS, from the post-office, — a large packet from Russia, and from the valley also. Avaunt, all cares, — I put you all aside, — and thus I find good news from a far country, — children, grandchildren all well. I had no expectation of hearing from Russia this winter, and the pleasure was the greater to obtain letters of so recent a date, and

to learn that the family were all in health. For this blessing give I thanks.

At twelve o'clock, by a previous engagement, I was to call at Mr. G ——'s, for cousin B. Smith to accompany me to the bridge at Quincy-port, being the first day of passing it. The day was pleasant; the scenery delightful. Passed both bridges, and entered Hingham. Returned before three o'clock. Dined and,

At five, went to Mr. T. G ——'s, with your grandfather; the third visit he has made with us in *the week*; and let me whisper to you he played at whist with Mr. J. G ——, who was as ready and accurate as though he had both eyes to see with. Returned.

At nine, sat down and wrote a letter.

At eleven, retired to bed. We do not so every week. I tell it you as one of the marvels of the age. By all this, you will learn that grandmother has got rid of her croaking, and that grandfather is in good health, and that both of us are as tranquil as that bald old fellow, called Time, will let us be.

And here I was interrupted in my narrative.

I re-assume my pen upon the 22d of November, being this day sixty-eight years old. How many reflections occur to me upon this anniversary!

What have I done for myself or others in this long period of my sojourn, that I can look back upon with pleasure, or reflect upon with approbation? Many, very many follies and errors of judgment and conduct rise up before me, and ask forgiveness of that Being, who seeth into the secret recesses of the

heart, and from whom nothing is hidden. I think I may with truth say, that in no period of my life have the vile passions had control over me. I bear no enmity to any human being ; but, alas ! as Mrs. Placid said to her friend, by which of thy good works wouldst thou be willing to be judged ? I do not believe, with some divines, that all our good works are but as filthy rags ; the example which our great Master has set before us, of purity, benevolence, obedience, submission and humility, are virtues which, if faithfully practised, will find their reward ; or why has he pronounced so many benedictions upon them in his sermon on the mount ? I would ask with the poet,

“ Is not virtue in mankind
The nutriment that feeds the mind ?
Then who, with reason, can pretend
That all effects of virtue end ? ”

I am one of those who are willing to rejoice always. My disposition and habits are not of the gloomy kind. I believe that “ to enjoy is to obey.”

“ Yet not to Earth’s contracted span,
Thy goodness let me bound ;
Or think thee Lord alone of man,
Whilst thousand worlds are round.”

I have many more subjects, dear Caroline, which I want to write to you upon.

27 November.

Yesterday was our Thanksgiving day. In our own way, and with tempers suited to the occasion, we gave thanks for those blessings which we felt had been granted to us in the year past, for the restoration and recovery from dangerous sickness of members of our own family ; and, although in one instance we had been called to weep, in many others we had cause of rejoicing. We were in health ; we had good news from a far country ; we had food and raiment, and we still enjoyed liberty, and our rulers were men of our own election, and removable by the people. Dear Caroline, I have trespassed upon you. I will close by saying, that your uncle and aunt, with their three children, your aunt Smith, George and John Adams, with our own family, made the joyful group. We remembered the absent, and sent our wishes to Russia and the valley ; but wishes were empty.—No, they bore upon their wings blessings, a portion of which were for my dear Caroline,

From her affectionate grandmother,

ABIGAIL ADAMS.

TO F. A. VANDERKEMP.¹

Quincy, 3 February, 1814.

DEAR SIR,

EVER since your letter to the President, of December last, I have had a great inclination to address a letter to Mr. Vanderkemp ; and, being now confined to my chamber, by an attack of the rheumatism, I find a leisure hour to address my friend in his solitude.

And in the first place, to put him perfectly at his ease, I assure him that I make not any pretensions to the character of a learned lady, and therefore, according to his creed, I am entitled to his benevolence. I can say with Gay's hermit,

"The little knowledge I have gained,
Is all from simple nature drained."

I agree with Mr. Vanderkemp, that, in declaring his opinion, he has expressed that of most gentlemen, the true cause of which I shall trace no farther than that they consider a companion more desirable than a rival. In reading the life of Madame de Staël,

¹ The late Judge Vanderkemp presented the letters which he had received from Mrs. Adams to Mrs. Quincy, the wife of the President of Harvard University. By her, they have been, with great kindness, submitted to the disposal of the Editor, who only regrets the necessity he is under, of confining himself to a single specimen.

I learn that it was her superior talents and learning, perhaps too ostentatiously displayed, which produced that coldness, estrangement, and unhappiness, which marred all her pleasure with the Baron de Staël, soured every domestic enjoyment, and was the occasion of that sarcastic question to her by the Emperor Bonaparte. Upon some occasion, she had solicited an interview with him, and recommended to him some measure for him to pursue. He heard her, but made her no other reply than this; "Madam, who educates your children?"

I like your portrait of female excellence. Solomon has also drawn one in the character of a virtuous woman; but, if a sound understanding had not been united with virtuous habits and principles, is it probable that he would have represented the heart of her husband as safely trusting in her? or that he would have derived so much lustre from her character, as to be known in the gates, when he sat with the elders of the land? It is very certain, that a well-informed woman, conscious of her nature and dignity, is more capable of performing the relative duties of life, and of engaging and retaining the affections of a man of understanding, than one whose intellectual endowments rise not above the common level.

There are so few women who may be really called learned, that I do not wonder they are considered as black swans. It requires such talents and such devotion of time and study, as to exclude the performance of most of the domestic cares and du-

ties which exclusively fall to the lot of most females in this country. I believe nature has assigned to each sex their particular duties and sphere of action, and to act well their part, "there all the honor lies."

Have you seen John Randolph's letter, and Mr. Lloyd's reply?

Present me in friendly terms to Mrs. Vanderkemp. Tell her, I wish we were neighbours. I should then have a pleasure which our residence in the country deprives us of, that of the society and converse of a gentleman of taste, science, and extensive information; and, although much of his learning might be above my comprehension, his benevolence, politeness, and urbanity would render it grateful, and be in unison with the good-will and friendship entertained for him by

ABIGAIL ADAMS.

TO MRS. SHAW.

Quincy, 30 December, 1814.

MY DEAR SISTER,

YOUR imagination was so glowingly alive in your last descriptive letter that mine lags after it in vain. From the vivid warmth of the coloring I should fancy that the cold north wind had not blown rudely upon you this season.

For the numberless blessings which have crowned the past year my heart glows with gratitude and my

mind expands in grateful acknowledgment to that bountiful Being who hath made me to differ from many others.

In the year past, several of my friends and acquaintance have ceased from their labors. Their works remain with us. In the death of Mrs. Warren¹ and Vice President Gerry I recognise that of no ordinary characters. Mrs. Warren was like a shock of corn fully ripe for the harvest. The celestial spirit which animated the clay was not altogether extinct. It ascended to catch new life and vigor in the pure regions of bliss and to share in the joys of our heavenly inheritance.

With Mr. Gerry died one of the first and oldest patriots of the revolution — a firm steady and unshaken friend of more than fifty years ripening. “Such friends grow not thick on every bough.” His age promised a longer life and his usefulness was not impaired by it. “Back-wounding calumny the whitest virtue strikes.” He shared largely in the abuse of party factions and may have been kindly recalled before the next election lacerated his reputation and bespattered his fair and honorable fame. I rejoice that Mr. Gore’s motion in the Senate prevailed, and think it an honorable trait in that gentleman’s character to whom Mr. Gerry had been a successful political competitor and rival, to show himself superior to political division, and become the friend of the

¹ Mrs. Mercy Warren, of Plymouth, several times referred to in the preceding portion of these volumes.

family by exerting himself to assist it. This is the temper and spirit of a Christian.

Adieu. Your sister,
A. A.

TO MRS. DEXTER.¹

Quincy, 12 May, 1816.

DEAR MADAM,

How can I address you, or offer human consolation for a wound which must bleed afresh at every attempt to assuage it?

Yet if the tears of friendship, and a nation's tears can afford any relief, be assured, dear Madam, they flow from all honest hearts, for you, for your children and for a country which mourns one of its brightest luminaries extinguished. A great man, fallen in the zenith of his glory—and in the estimation of his ancient friend, the ablest statesman of his age which his native state could boast. It is no common loss we bewail. Such an assemblage of powerful talents rarely meet in one individual united to such an upright and independent mind, which soared above all

¹ To Mrs. Dexter, the Editor is indebted for furnishing him, at his request, with this letter written upon the death of her husband. Mr. Samuel Dexter had been a member of Mr. Adams's cabinet in the period of his Presidency.

low concerns, and was elevated beyond all selfish considerations and party views.

In domestic life, your own heart alone can do justice to his memory. The news of the death of Mr. Dexter so sudden, so unexpected, was felt by Mr. Adams and myself with the keenest anguish. Out of your own immediate circle you have not any one who more sincerely, tenderly and affectionately sympathizes with you, or who more fervently supplicates the Supreme Being to support and sustain you than your sorrowing friend

ABIGAIL ADAMS.

THE END.