

MR. ADAMS'S LETTERS.

LETTER XXIII.

AMSTERDAM, OCT. 27, 1780.

S I R,

QUESTION twenty-fifth.—"Do they who have lost their possessions or fortunes by the war, endure it patiently, as com-patriots, so that nothing can be feared from them?"

Losing fortunes in America has not such dreadful consequences, to individuals or families, as it has in Europe. The reason is obvious; because the means of subsistence are easier to be obtained, so that nobody suffers for want. As far as I am acquainted with sufferers, they have borne their losses, both of poverty, and relations, with great fortitude; and, so far from producing in their minds a desire of submission, they have only served to irritate them,—to convince them more fully of the precarious and deplorable situation they would be in under the government of the English, and to make them more eager to resist it.

Question twenty-sixth.—How has it gone with the cultivation of the land, before the troubles, at their commencement, and at present? What change has taken place?"

Agriculture ever was, and ever will be, the dominant interest in America. Nevertheless, before this war, perhaps, she run more into commerce than was for her interest. She depended too much, perhaps, upon importations for cloathing, utensils, &c. and indulged in too many luxuries. When the prospect opened in 1775, of an interruption of her commerce, she applied herself more to agriculture; and many places that depended upon the lumber trade, the fishery, &c. for the importation of even their bread, have turned their labor and attention to raising corn, wool, flax and cattle, and have lived better, and advanced in wealth and independence faster than ever they did. For example, the towns in the neighborhood of the sea, in the Massachusetts Bay, used to depend upon the fishery and commerce, to import them their wheat and flour from Philadelphia, Maryland, and Virginia, and rice from South-Carolina and Georgia: The communication being interrupted by sea, since the war, they have planted their own corn.

The eastern parts of the Massachusetts Bay, before the war, depended on the commerce of lumber for the West-India market, and of masts, yards, and bowsprits, for the royal navy of Great Britain, to procure them cloaths, meat, and strong liquors. Since the war, they have cultivated their lands, raised their own corn, wool, flax; and planted the apple tree, instead of drinking rum: In consequence of which they are more temperate, wealthy, and independent than ever.

North-Carolina depended upon the commerce of pitch, tar and turpentine, and tobacco, for the importation of many things. Since the war, they have turned their labor to raise more of the things which they wanted.

Maryland, Virginia, and North-Carolina, depended upon the trade of tobacco to import coarse cloths for their negroes. Since the war, they have raised less tobacco, and more wheat, wool, and cotton, and made the coarse cloths themselves.

So that, upon the whole, the lessening of commerce, and the increase of agriculture, has rendered America more independent than she ever was. I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

MR. CALKOEN.

ANECDOTE.

LORD LYTTLETON, upon inviting his Son to pass the evening with him, received for answer, he was engaged to pass the evening with ten or a dozen friends. Whereupon his Lordship, grown old in the knowledge of the world, replied, "I am glad to hear, George, you are so very fortunate." Having made the best search I could for three score years, I can hardly say it has been my fate to meet one friend; and you, it seems, find them already by dozens."

LONDON.

EXTRACTS.

From a POEM on the Bill lately passed for regulating the Slave Trade.

By Miss HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS.

From the MONTHLY REVIEW, for March, 1780.

THE accounts lately given, say the Reviewers, to the public, respecting the Slave Trade, were horrid enough to call into vigorous exercise the amiable sensibility of the female breast. By the ladies this subject has been contemplated through the pure medium of virtuous pity, unmixed with those political, commercial, selfish considerations which operated in steeling the hearts of some men against the pleadings of humanity! To find THEM, therefore, writing on it, by no means excited wonder.—Though among the last, Miss Williams is not the least deserving notice. In easy, harmonious verse she pours fourth the sentiments

of her mind; nor do we recollect among the poems that have lately attracted our attention, to have perused one with more pleasure than that which now lies before us.

She thus addresses her country on the subject of her poem:

BRITAIN! the noble, blest decree That foeths despair, is fram'd by thee! Thy powerful arm has interpos'd; And one dire scene forever clos'd; Its horror shall no more belong To that foul drama, deep with wrong. O, first of EUROPE's polish'd lands, To ease the captive's iron bands! Long as thy glorious annals shine, This proud distinction shall be thine: Not first alone when valor leads To rush on danger's noblest deeds; When mercy calls thee to explore A gloomy path untrod before, Thy ardent spirit springs to heal! And, greatly gen'rous, dares to feel! Valor is like the meteor's light, Whose partial flash leaves deeper night; While mercy, like the lunar ray, Gilds the thick shade with softer day.

The last lines of this extract lead us to observe, that our poetess is peculiarly happy in the choice and application of her families:

The traders in slaves are described as beings,

Whose harden'd souls no more retain Impressions nature stamp'd in vain; All that distinguishes their kind, For ever blotted from their mind: As streams that once the landscape gave, Reflected on the trembling wave, Their substance change, when lock'd in frost, And rest, in dead contraction lost; Who view unmov'd, the look, that tells The pang that in the bosom dwells.

The picture that follows, of the wretched Negro just landed in the West-Indies, and sold, is extremely natural:

When borne at length to western lands, Chain'd on the beach the captive stands, Where man, dire merchandize, is sold, And barter'd life is paid for gold; In mute affliction, see him try To read his new possessor's eye; If one blest glance of mercy there, One half-form'd tear may check despair!

What is said of avarice must not be here omitted:

His sway the harden'd bosom leads To cruelty's remorseless deeds; Like the blue lightning when it springs With fury on its livid wings, Darts to its goal with baleful force, Nor heeds that ruin marks its course.

PROCEEDINGS OF CONGRESS.

ABSTRACT of JOURNAL of the FIRST SESSION of the SENATE of the UNITED STATES.

SATURDAY, July 18.

ON motion to strike out of line 13th these words, "To be appointed by the said principal officer," passed in the negative. Agreed to expunge the proviso in lines 17th, 18th, and 19th, to wit:

"Provided nevertheless, That no appointment of such chief clerk shall be valid, until the same shall have been approved by the President of the United States."

Upon the question, "To concur in this bill as amended?" and one fifth of the Senators present requiring the yeas and nays, the determination was as follows:

YEAS. Mr. Bassett, Mr. Carroll, Mr. Dalton, Mr. Ellsworth, Mr. Elmer, Mr. Henry, Mr. Morris, Mr. Patterfson, Mr. Read, Mr. Strong.

NAYS. Mr. Few, Mr. Grayson, Mr. Gunn, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Izard, Mr. Langdon, Mr. Lee, Mr. Maclay, Mr. Wingate. So the bill was concurred with amendments.

MONDAY, July 20.

Agreeably to the order of the day, proceeded to the second reading of the bill, entitled, "An act to regulate the collection of the duties imposed by law on the tonnage of ships or vessels, and on goods, wares and merchandize imported into the United States."

And after debate it was committed to Mr. Morris, Mr. Langdon, Mr. Carroll, Mr. Dalton, and Mr. Lee, to report such additions and alterations as they may judge requisite.

A message from the House of Representatives.

Mr. President, The House of Representatives have passed a bill, entitled, "An act for the establishment and support of light-houses, beacons, and buoys." They have concurred in the amendments proposed by the Senate to a bill, entitled, "An act for establishing an Executive Department, to be denominated the Department of Foreign Affairs." And they have received from the President of the United States an enrolled bill, entitled, "An act imposing duties on tonnage," with his signature affixed thereto. Adjourned.

TUESDAY, July 21.

A message from the House of Representatives, with a bill, entitled, "An act to provide for the government of the territory north-west of the river Ohio;" which was read a first time.

THURSDAY, July 23.

The bill, entitled, "An act for the establishment and support of light-houses, beacons, and buoys," was read a second time, and committed to Mr. Morris, Mr. Langdon, and Mr. Dalton.

On the question, whether the clauses in the bill, entitled, "An act to regulate the collection of the duties imposed by law on the tonnage of ships or vessels, and on goods, wares, and merchandize imported into the United States," providing, "That oaths shall be administered to the master, or other persons having the charge or command of any ship or vessel," shall be expunged, and the words "And the owner and master's declaration, with penalties for false entry," be substituted? Passed in the negative. Adjourned.

SATURDAY, July 25. The honorable Rufus King, from the State of New-York, appeared, produced his credentials and took his seat; and the oath was administered to him according to law.

MONDAY, July 27.

The honorable Philip Schuyler, from the State of New-York, appeared, produced his credentials and took his seat; and the oath was administered to him according to law.

Mr. Patterfson had leave of absence for four days.

A message from the House of Representatives, with a bill, entitled, "An act for settling the accounts between the United States and individual States," for concurrence; and informed the Senate, that the President of the United States had affixed his signature to a bill, entitled, "An act for the establishment of an Executive Department, to be denominated the department of Foreign Affairs;" and had returned the same to the House of Representatives.

The first mentioned bill was read a first time, Proceeded to the third reading of a bill, entitled, "An act to regulate the collection of the duties imposed by law, on the tonnage of ships or vessels, and on goods, wares and merchandizes imported into the United States;"

And resolved that the Senate do concur therein with amendments.

TUESDAY, July 28.

Mr. Johnson, in behalf of the committee appointed the 23d of May, reported a bill, entitled, "An act for the punishment of certain crimes against the United States;" which was read a first time.

The Secretary carried to the House of Representatives, the bill entitled, "An act to regulate the collection of the duties imposed by law on the tonnage of ships or vessels, and on goods, wares and merchandizes imported into the United States."

On motion, the Senators from the State of New-York proceeded to draw lots for their classes, in conformity to the resolve of the 14th of May: And two lots, No 3 and a blank, being by the Secretary rolled up, and put into a box, Mr. Schuyler drew blank, and Mr. King having drawn No. 3, his seat shall accordingly be vacated in the Senate at the expiration of the sixth year.

The Secretary proceeded to put two other lots into the box marked No. 1, and No. 2; and Mr. Schuyler having drawn lot No. 1, his seat shall accordingly be vacated in the Senate, at the expiration of the second year.

A message from the House of Representatives.

Mr. President, The House of Representatives have considered the amendments proposed by the Senate upon the bill, entitled, "An act to regulate the collection of the duties imposed by law on the tonnage of ships or vessels, and on goods, wares and merchandize imported into the United States," and concurred therein. Adjourned.

ADVERTISEMENT.

EXTRACTS FROM THE JOURNAL OF THE OHIO COMPANY.

WHEREAS, in the opinion of the Agents, it is very much for the interest of the proprietors at large, that all the lands of the purchase should be divided and allotted as immediately as may be—And in order to accommodate them generally, by the option of classing as they may think proper, and drawing their rights or shares (where they may possess more than one) either together in contiguity, or by detaching and annexing them to distinct classes or divisions (at their own election) to give them the greater chance for variety in soil and situation—It is unanimously resolved, That as soon as the exploring committee shall have appropriated the lands for donation settlements, in quantity sufficient for all the proprietors, WINTHROP SARGENT, JOSEPH GILLMAN, and RETURN J. MEIGS, Esquires, who are hereby appointed a committee for that purpose, shall immediately make out, upon a large scale, a complete map or plan of the whole purchase from the best information, which they may be then able to obtain, expressing all the lands of the eight acre, three acre, city lots and commons, one hundred and sixty acre, and donation lots, the reserved lots of Congress, school lots, and lots appropriated for religious purposes—also, the two townships given by Congress for an university, and the towns or situations for towns to be reserved by the company for a future allotment.—That, all the residuary lands shall be, by them, the said committee of three, divided and numbered upon paper, into forty equal grand divisions of twenty-five shares each, as like in quality as may be: That each grand division be divided into five sub-divisions of five shares each, and each sub-division into sections of single shares.—That as soon as the map or plan is completed, the agents will form or class their subscribers (who shall not previously class themselves) by sections or single shares, into sub-divisions of five, and grand divisions of twenty-five, and immediately proceed to drawing by lot for said lands; by grand divisions, sub-divisions and sections: That in all draughts of sub-divisions (into sections) which may be made up of proprietors, holding four, three, or two and single shares, it shall be the usage for the greatest proprietor, or holder of the greatest number of shares, to take his lands in contiguity, by lot, either in the southern or northern part of the sub-division, where they shall be numbered from north to south, and in the western or eastern (by lot also) where they may be numbered from west to east; and where sub-divisions may be made up of two proprietors of two shares each, and one of one share, the two greatest proprietors shall receive their sections, by lot, either in the southern or western part of the sub-division. Resolved, That the before named committee, be directed to prepare the names and numbers, and make all the necessary arrangements for the intended draught: That previous to the drawing for this ultimate grand division of lands, there shall be returns of the proprietors, as they may be classed by the agents (or otherwise) lodged in the Secretary's office, and it is recommended in all cases to consult the inclinations and interests of the proprietors in the order of classing.

Resolved, That the agents will give public notice of the time and place of drawing, and that there be two persons no ways interested in the draughts, who shall be sworn to the faithfully drawing out the names and numbers from the boxes, and who alone shall be employed in this business for the draught of grand divisions, sub-divisions, and sections.

Resolved, That the Secretary cause the foregoing resolutions to be published in the newspapers of New-York, and the New-England States; to the end that the proprietors at large may have the option of classing themselves as they may think proper: And they are hereby requested so to do, and to express themselves upon this subject, either to their respective agents, or by information in writing addressed to, and to be lodged with the Secretary, at his office in the city of Marietta, previous to the first Monday of March, 1790—Upon which day it is expected the division will take place.

WINTHROP SARGENT, Secretary to the Ohio Company.

Marietta, 3d November, 1789.

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JOHN FENNO.

New-York, Nov. 28, 1789.

Published by JOHN FENNO, No. 9, MAIDEN-LANE, near the Oswego-Market, NEW-YORK.—[3d ed. pr. 2c.]