

S H E A' S

EARLY SOUTHERN TRACTS.

No. II.

[Pg ii]

THE

Hot-weed Factor:

Or, a Voyage to

MARYLAND.

A

SATYR.

In which is describ'd

The Laws, Government, Courts and Constitutions of the Country, and also the Buildings, Feasts, Frolicks, Entertainments and Drunken Humours of the Inhabitants of that Part of *America*.

In Burlesque Verse.

By *Eben. Cook*, Gent.

LONDON:

Printed and Sold by *D. Bragg*, at the *Raven* in *Pater-Noster-Row*. 1708. (Price 6d.)



“The Sot-weed Factor” by Ebenezer Cook (1708) (*)

Condemn'd by Fate to way-ward Curse,
Of Friends unkind, and empty Purse;
Plagues worse than fill'd *Pandora's* Box,
I took my leave of *Albion's* Rocks:
 With heavy Heart, concerned that I
 Was forc'd my Native Soil to fly,
 And the *Old World* must bid good-buy
But Heav'n ordain'd it should be so,
And to repine is vain we know:
Freighted with Fools from *Plymouth* sound
To *Mary-Land* our Ship was bound,
Where we arrived in dreadful Pain,
Shock'd by the Terrours of the Main;
For full three Months, our wavering Boat,
Did thro' the surley Ocean float,
And furious Storms and threat'ning Blasts,
Both tore our Sails and sprung our Masts;
Wearied, yet pleas'd we did escape
Such Ills, we anchor'd at the (a) *Cape*;
But weighing soon, we plough'd the Bay,
To (b) *Cove* it in (c) *Piscato-way*,
Intending there to open Store,
I put myself and Goods a-shoar:
 Where soon repair'd a numerous Crew,
 In Shirts and Drawers of (d) *Scotch-cloth Blue*
 With neither Stockings, Hat nor Shooe.
These *Sot-weed* Planters Crowd the Shoar,
In hue as tawny as a Moor:
Figures so strange, no God design'd,
To be a part of Humane kind:
But wanton Nature, void of Rest,
Moulded the brittle Clay in Jest.
At last a Fancy very odd
Took me, this was the Land of *Nod*;
Planted at first, when Vagrant *Cain*,
His Brother had unjustly slain;
Then Conscious of the Crime he'd done
From Vengeance dire, he hither run,
And in a hut supinely dwelt,
The first in *Furs* and *Sot-weed* dealt.
And ever since his Time, the Place,
Has harbour'd a detested Race;
Who when they cou'd not live at Home,
For refuge to these Worlds did roam;
In hopes by Flight they might prevent,
The Devil and his fell intent;

Obtain from Tripple-Tree reprieve,
And Heav'n and Hell alike deceive;
 But e're their Manners I display,
 I think it fit I open lay
 My Entertainment by the way:
That Strangers well may be aware on,
What homely Diet they must fare on.
To touch that Shoar where no good Sense is found,
But Conversation's lost, and Manners drown'd.
 I cros't unto the other side,
 A River whose impetuous Tide,
 The Savage Borders does divide;
In such a shining odd invention,
I scarce can give its due Dimention.
The *Indians* call this watry Waggon
(e) *Canoo*, a Vessel none can brag on;
Cut from a *Popular-Tree* or *Pine*,
And fashion'd like a Trough for Swine:
In this most noble Fishing-Boat,
I boldly put myself afloat;
Standing erect, with Legs stretch'd wide,
We paddled to the other side:
Where being Landed safe by hap,
As *Sol* fell into *Thetis'* Lap.
A ravenous Gang bent on the stroul,
Of (f) *Wolves* for Prey, began to howl;
This put me in a pannick Fright,
Least I should be devoured quite;
But as I there a musing stood,
And quite benighted in a Wood,
A Female Voice pierc'd, thro' my Ears,
Crying, *You Rogue drive home the Steirs*.
 I listen'd to th' attractive sound,
 And straight a Herd of Cattel found
 Drove by a Youth, and homeward bound;
Cheer'd with the fight, I straight thought fit,
To ask where I a Bed might get.
The surley Peasant bid me stay,
And ask'd from whom (g) I'de run away.
Surprized at such a saucy Word,
I instantly lugg'd out my Sword;
 Swearing I was no Fugitive,
 But from *Great-Britain* did arrive,
 In hopes I better there might Thrive.
To which he mildly made reply,
I beg your Pardon, Sir, that I

Should talk to you Unmannerly;
But if you please to go with me,
To yonder House, you'll welcome be.
 Encountring soon the smoaky Seat,
 The Planter old did thus me greet:
 "Whether you come from Goal or Colledge,
 You're welcome to my certain Knowledge;
 And if you please all Night to stay,
 My Son shall put you in the way."
 Which offer I most kindly took,
 And for a Seat did round me look;
 When presently amongst the rest,
 He plac'd his unknown *English* Guest,
 Who found them drinking for a whet,
 A Cask of (h) Syder on the Fret,
 Till Supper came upon the Table,
 On which I fed whilst I was able.
 So after hearty Entertainment,
 Of Drink and Victuals without Payment;
 For Planters Tables, you must know,
 Are free for all that come and go.
 While (i) Pon and Milk, with (k) Mush well stoar'd,
 In Wooden Dishes grac'd the Board;
 With (l) Homine and Syder-pap,
 (Which scarce a hungry dog wou'd lap)
 Well stuff'd with Fat from Bacon fry'd,
 Or with *Mollossus* dulcify'd.
 Then out our Landlord pulls a Pouch,
 As greasy as the Leather Couch
 On which he sat, and straight begun
 To load with Weed his *Indian* Gun;
 In length, scarce longer than one's Finger.
 His Pipe smoak'd out with awful Grace,
 With aspect grave and solemn pace;
 The reverend Sire walks to a Chest,
 Of all his Furniture the best,
 Closely confined within a Room,
 Which seldom felt the weight of Broom;
 From thence he lugs a Cag of Rum,
 And nodding to me, thus begun:
 I find, says he, you don't much care
 For this our *Indian* Country Fare;
 But let me tell you, Friend of mine,
 You may be glad of it in time,
 Tho' now your Stomach is so fine;
 And if within this Land you stay,
 You'll find it true what I do say.
 This said, the Rundlet up he threw,
 And bending backwards strongly drew:
 I pluck'd as stoutly for my part,
 Altho' it made me sick at Heart,
 And got so soon into my Head
 I scarce cou'd find my way to Bed;
 Where I was instantly convey'd
 By one who pass'd for Chamber-Maid,
 Tho' by her loose and sluttish Dress,

She rather seem'd a *Bedlam-Bess*:
 Curious to know from whence she came,
 I prest her to declare her Name.
 She Blushing, seem'd to hide her Eyes,
 And thus in Civil Terms replies;
 In better Times, e'er to this Land,
 I was unhappily Trapann'd;
 Perchance as well I did appear,
 As any Lord or Lady here,
 Not then a Slave for twice two (m) Year.
 My Cloaths were fashionably new,
 Nor were my Shifts of Linnen Blue;
 But things are changed, now at the Hoe,
 I daily work, and Bare-foot go,
 In weeding Corn or feeding Swine,
 I spend my melancholy Time.
 Kidnap'd and Fool'd, I hither fled,
 To shun a hated Nuptial (n) Bed,
 And to my cost already find,
 Worse Plagues than those I left behind.
 Whate'er the Wanderer did profess,
 Good-faith I cou'd not chuse but guess
 The Cause which brought her to this place,
 Was supping e'er the Priest laid Grace.
 Quick as my Thoughts, the Slave was fled,
 (Her Candle left to shew my Bed)
 Which made of Feathers soft and good,
 Close in the (o) Chimney-corner stood;
 I threw me down expecting Rest,
 To be in golden Slumbers blest:
 But soon a noise disturb'd my quiet,
 And plagu'd me with nocturnal Riot;
 A Puss which in the ashes lay,
 With grunting Pig began a Fray;
 And prudent Dog, that feuds might cease,
 Most strongly bark'd to keep the Peace.
 This Quarrel scarcely was decided,
 By stick that ready lay provided;
 But *Reynard*, arch and cunning Loon,
 Broke into my Appartment soon:
 In hot pursuit of Ducks and Geese,
 With fell intent the same to seize:
 Their Cackling Plaints with strange surprize,
 Chac'd Sleep's thick Vapours from my Eyes;
 Raging I jump'd upon the Floar,
 And like a Drunken Saylor Swore;
 With Sword I fiercely laid about,
 And soon dispers'd the Feather'd Rout
 The Poultry out of Window flew,
 And *Reynard* cautiously withdrew:
 The Dogs who this Encounter heard,
 Fiercely themselves to aid me rear'd,
 And to the Place of Combat run,
 Exactly as the Field was won.
 Fretting and hot as roasting Capon,
 And greasy as a Flitch of Bacon;

I to the Orchard did repair,
 To Breathe the cool and open Air;
 Expecting there the rising Day,
 Extended on a Bank I lay;
 But Fortune here, that fancy Whore,
 Disturb'd me worse and plagu'd me more,
 Than she had done the night before:
 Hoarse croaking (p) Frogs did 'bout me ring,
 Such Peals the Dead to Life wou'd bring,
 A Noise might move their Wooden King.
 I stuffed my Ears with Cotten white,
 For fear of being deaf out-right,
 And curst the melancholy Night;
 But soon my Vows I did recant,
 And Hearing as a Blessing grant;
 When a confounded Rattle-Snake,
 With hissing made my Heart to ake:
 Not knowing how to fly the Foe,
 Or whither in the Dark to go;
 By strange good Luck, I took a Tree,
 Prepar'd by Fate to set me free;
 Where riding on a Limb a stride,
 Night and the Branches did me hide,
 And I the Devil and Snake defy'd.
 Not yet from Plagues exempted quite,
 The curst Muskitoes did me bite;
 Till rising Morn' and blushing Day,
 Drove both my Fears and Ills away;
 And from Night's Errors set me free.
 Discharg'd from hospitable Tree;
 I did to Planter's Booth repair,
 And there at Breakfast nobly Fare
 On rashier broil'd of infant Bear:
 I thought the Cub delicious Meat,
 Which ne'er did ought but Chesnuts eat;
 Nor was young Orsin's flesh the worse,
 Because he sucked a Pagan Nurse.
 Our Breakfast done, my Landlord stout,
 Handed a Glass of Rum about;
 Pleas'd with the Treatment I did find,
 I took my leave of Oast so kind;
 Who to oblige me, did provide,
 His eldest son to be my Guide,
 And lent me Horses of his own,
 A skittish Colt, and aged Rhoan,
 The four-leg'd prop of his Wife *Joan*:
 Steering our Barks in Trot or Pace,
 We sail'd directly for a place
 In *Mary-Land*, of high renown,
 Known by the Name of Battle-Town.
 To view the Crowds did there resort,
 Which Justice made, and Law their sport,
 In that sagacious County Court:
 Scarce had we enter'd on the way,
 Which thro' thick Woods and Marshes lay;
 But *Indians* strange did soon appear,

In hot pursuit of wounded Deer;
 No mortal Creature can express,
 His wild fantastick Air and Dress;
 His painted Skin in Colours dy'd,
 His sable hair in Satchel ty'd,
 Shew'd Savages not free from Pride;
 His tawny Thighs, and Bosom bare,
 Disdain'd a useless Coat to wear,
 Scorn'd Summer's Heat, and Winter's Air;
 His manly shoulders such as please
 Widows and Wives, were bathed in grease,
 Of Cub and Bear, whose supple Oil
 Prepar'd his Limbs 'gainst Heat or Toil.
 Thus naked Pict in Battel fought,
 Or undisguis'd his Mistress sought;
 And knowing well his Ware was good,
 Refus'd to screen it with a Hood;
 His visage dun, and chin that ne'er
 Did Raizor feel or Scissors bare,
 Or knew the Ornament of Hair,
 Look'd sternly Grim, surprized with Fear,
 I spur'd my Horse as he drew near:
 But Rhoan who better knew than I,
 The little Cause I had to fly;
 Seem'd by his solemn steps and pace,
 Resolv'd I shou'd the Specter face,
 Nor faster mov'd, tho' spur'd and lick'd,
 Than *Balaam's* Ass by Prophet kick'd.
Kekicknitop (q) the Heathen cry'd;
 How is it, *Tom*, my Friend reply'd,
 Judging from thence the Brute was civil,
 I boldly fac'd the Courteous Devil;
 And lugging out a Dram of Rum,
 I gave his Tawny worship some:
 Who in his language as I guess,
 (My Guide informing me no less.)
 Implored the (r) Devil, me to bless.
 I thank'd him for his good Intent,
 And forwards on my Journey went,
 Discoursing as along I rode,
 Whether this Race was framed by God,
 Or whether some Malignant pow'r,
 Contriv'd them in an evil hour,
 And from his own Infernal Look,
 Their Dusky form and Image took:
 From hence we fell to Argument
 Whence Peopled was this Continent.
 My Friend suppos'd *Tartarians* wild,
 Or *Chinese* from their Home exiled,
 Wandering thro' Mountains hid with Snow
 And Rills did in the Vallies flow
 Far to the South of *Mexico*:
 Broke thro' the Barrs which Nature cast
 And wide unbeaten Regions past,
 Till near those Streams the humane deluge roll'd,
 Which sparkling shin'd with glittering Sands of Gold

And fetch'd (s) *Pizarro* from the (t) *Iberian* Shoar,
 To rob the Natives of their fatal Stoar.
 I smil'd to hear my young Logician
 Thus reason like a Politician;
 Who ne're by Father's Pains and Earning
 Had got at Mother *Cambridge* Learning;
 Where Lubber youth just free from birch
 Most stoutly drink to prop the Church;
 Nor with (u) *Grey Groat* had taken Pains
 To purge his Head and Cleanse his Reines:
 And in obedience to the Colledge,
 Had pleas'd himself with carnal knowledge:
 And tho' I lik'd the youngster's Wit,
 I judg'd the Truth he had not hit;
 And could not chuse but smile to think
 What they could do for Meat and Drink,
 Who o'er so many Desarts ran
 With Brats and Wives in *Caravan*;
 Unless perchance they'd got the Trick,
 To eat no more than Porker sick;
 Or could with well contented Maws
 Quarter like (v) Bears upon their Paws.
 Thinking his Reasons to confute,
 I gravely thus commenc'd Dispute,
 And urged that tho' a *Chinese* Host,
 Might penetrate this *Indian* Coast,
 Yet this was certainly most true,
 They never cou'd the Isles subdue;
 For knowing not to steer a Boat,
 They could not on the Ocean float,
 Or plant their Sunburnt Colonies,
 In Regions parted by the Seas;
 I thence inferr'd (w) *Phœnicians* old,
 Discover'd first with Vessels bold
 These Western Shoars, and planted here,
 Returning once or twice a Year,
 With *Naval Stoars* and Lasses kind,
 To comfort those were left behind;
 Till by the Winds and Tempest toar,
 From their intended Golden Shoar,
 They suffer'd Ship-wreck, or were drown'd,
 And lost the World so newly found.
 But after long and learn'd Contention,
 We could not finish our dissention;
 And when that both had talk'd their fill,
 We had the self same Notion still.
 Thus Parson grave well read and Sage,
 Does in dispute with Priest engage;
 The one protests they are not Wise,
 Who judge by (x) Sense and trust their Eyes;
 And vows he'd burn for it at Stake,
 That Man may God his Maker make;
 The other smiles at his Religion,
 And vows he's but a learned Widgeon:
 And when they have empty'd all their Stoar

From Books or Fathers, are not more
 Convinc'd or wiser than before.

Scarce had we finish'd serious Story,
 But I espy'd the Town before me,
 And roaring Planters on the ground,
 Drinking of Healths in Circle round:
 Dismounting Steed with friendly Guide,
 Our Horses to a Tree we ty'd,
 And forwards pass'd among the Rout,
 To chuse convenient *Quarters* out:
 But being none were to be found,
 We sat like others on the ground
 Carousing Punch in open Air,
 Till Cryer did the Court declare;
 The planting Rabble being met
 Their Drunken Worships likewise set;
 Cryer proclaims that Noise shou'd cease
 And streight the Lawyers broke the Peace:
 Wrangling for Plaintiff and Defendant,
 I thought they ne'er wou'd make an end on't:
 With nonsense, stuff and false quotations,
 With brazen Lyes and Allegations;
 And in the splitting of the Cause,
 They used much Motions with their Paws,
 As shew'd their Zeal was strongly bent,
 In Blows to end the Argument.
 A reverend Judge, who to the shame
 Of all the Bench, cou'd write his (y) his Name;
 At Petty-fogger took offence,
 And wonder'd at his Impudence.
 My Neighbour *Dash* with scorn replies,
 And in the Face of Justice flies;
 The Bench in fury streight divide,
 And Scribble's take or Judge's side;
 The Jury, Lawyers and their Clyents,
 Contending fight like earth-born Gyants;
 But Sheriff wily lay perdue,
 Hoping Indictments wou'd ensue,
 And when—————
 A Hat or Wig fell in the way,
 He seized them for the *Queen* as stray:
 The Court adjourn'd in usual manner
 In Battle Blood and fractious Clamour;
 I thought it proper to provide,
 A Lodging for myself and Guide,
 So to our Inn we march'd away,
 Which at a little distance lay;
 Where all things were in such Confusion,
 I thought the World at its conclusion;
 A Herd of Planters on the ground,
 O'er-whelm'd with Punch, dead drunk, we found;
 Others were fighting and contending,
 Some burnt their Cloaths to save the mending.
 A few whose Heads by frequent use,
 Could better bare the potent Juice,

Gravely debated State Affairs.
 Whilst I most nimbly trip'd up Stairs;
 Leaving my Friend discoursing oddly,
 And mixing things Prophane and Godly;
 Just then beginning to be Drunk,
 As from the Company I slunk,
 To every Room and Nook I crept,
 In hopes I might have somewhere slept;
 But all the bedding was possess'd
 By one or other drunken Guest:
 But after looking long about,
 I found an antient Corn-loft out,
 Glad that I might in quiet sleep,
 And there my bones unfractur'd keep.
 I lay'd me down secure from Fray,
 And soundly snor'd till break of Day;
 When waking fresh I sat upright,
 And found my Shoes were vanish'd quite;
 Hat, Wig, and Stockings, all were fled
 From this extended *Indian* Bed;
 Vext at the Loss of Goods and Chattel,
 I swore I'd give the Rascal battel,
 Who had abus'd me in this fort,
 And Merchant Stranger made his Sport.
 I furiously descended Ladder;
 No Hare in *March* was ever madder;
 In vain I search'd for my Apparel,
 And did with Oast and Servants Quarrel;
 For one whose Mind did much aspire
 To (z) Mischief, threw them in the Fire:
 Equipt with neither Hat nor Shooe,
 I did my coming hither rue,
 And doubtful thought what I should do:
 Then looking round, I saw my Friend
 Lie naked on a Table's end;
 A sight so dismal to behold,
 One wou'd have judg'd him dead and cold,
 When wringing of his bloody Nose,
 By fighting got we may suppose;
 I found him not so fast asleep,
 Might give his friends a cause to weep:
 Rise (aa) *Oronooko*, rise said I,
 And from this *Hell* and *Bedlam* fly.
 My Guide starts up, and in amaze,
 With blood-shot Eyes did round him gaze;
 At length with many a sigh and groan,
 He went in search of aged Rhoan;
 But Rhoan, tho' seldom us'd to falter,
 Had fairly this time slipt his Halter;
 And not content all Night to stay
 Ty'd up from Fodder, ran away:
 After my Guide to ketch him ran,
 And so I lost both Horse and Man:
 Which Disappointment tho' so great,
 Did only Mirth and Jests create:
 Till one more Civil than the rest,

In Conversation for the best,
 Observing that for want of Rhoan,
 I should be left to walk alone;
 Most readily did me intreat,
 To take a Bottle at his Seat;
 A Favour at that time so great,
 I blest my kind propitious Fate;
 And finding soon a fresh supply,
 Of Cloaths from Stoar-house kept hard by,
 I mounted streight on such a Steed,
 Did rather curb, than whipping need;
 And straining at the usual rate,
 With spur of Punch which lay in Pate,
 E'er long we lighted at the Gate:
 Where in an antient *Cedar* House,
 Dwelt my new Friend a (bb) Cockerouse;
 Whose Fabrick tho' 'twas built of Wood,
 Had many Springs and Winters stood;
 When sturdy Oaks, and lofty Pines
 Were level'd with (cc) Musmillion Vines,
 And Plants eradicated were,
 By Hurricanes into the air;
 There with good Punch and Apple Juice,
 We spent our Hours without abuse;
 Till Midnight in her sable Vest,
 Persuaded Gods and Men to rest;
 And with a pleasing kind surprize,
 Indulg'd soft Slumbers to my Eyes.
 Fierce (dd) *Aethon* courser of the Sun,
 Had half his Race exactly run;
 And breath'd on me a fiery Ray,
 Darting hot Beams the following Day,
 When snug in Blanket white I lay:
 But Heat and (ee) Chinces rais'd the Sinner,
 Most opportunely to his Dinner;
 Wild Fowl and Fish delicious Meats,
 As good as *Neptune's* doxy eats,
 Began our Hospitable Treat;
 Fat Venson follow'd in the Rear,
 And Turkeys wild (ff) Luxurious Chear:
 But what the Feast did most commend,
 Was hearty welcom from my Friend.
 Thus having made a noble Feast,
 And eat as well as pamper'd Priest,
Madera strong in flowing Bowls,
 Fill'd with extream delight our Souls;
 Till wearied with a purple Flood,
 Of generous Wine (the Giant's blood,
 As Poets feign) away I made,
 For some refreshing verdant Shade;
 Where musing on my Rambles strange,
 And Fortune which so oft did change;
 In midst of various Contemplations
 Of Fancies odd, and Meditations,
 I slumbered long—————
 Till hazy Night with noxious Dews

Did sleep's unwholsom Fetters lose;
 With Vapors chil'd, and misty air,
 To fire-side I did repair;
 Near which a jolly Female Crew,
 Were deep engag'd at *Lanctre-Looe*;
 In Night-rails white, with dirty Mein,
 Such Sights are scarce in *England* seen:
 I thought them first some Witches bent,
 On Black Designs in dire Convent.
 Till one who with affected air,
 Had nicely learn'd to Curse and Swear;
 Cry'd Dealing's lost is but a Flam,
 And vow'd by G——d she'd keep her *Pam*.
 When dealing through the board had run,
 They ask'd me kindly to make one;
 Not staying often to be bid,
 I sat me down as others did;
 We scarce had play'd a Round about,
 But that these *Indian* Froes fell out.
 D——m you, says one, tho' now so brave,
 I knew you late a Four-Years Slave;
 What if for Planter's Wife you go,
 Nature designed you for the Hoe.
 Rot you replies the other streight,
 The Captain kiss'd you for his Freight;
 And if the Truth was known aright,
 And how you walk'd the Streets by night
 You'd blush (if one cou'd blush) for shame,
 Who from *Bridewell* or *New gate* came:
 From Words they fairly fell to Blows,
 And being loath to interpose,
 Or meddle in the Wars of Punk,
 Away to Bed in hast I slunk.
 Waking next day, with aking Head,
 And Thirst, that made me quit my Bed;
 I rigg'd myself, and soon got up,
 To cool my Liver with a Cup
 Of (gg) *Succahana* fresh and clear,
 Not half so good as *English* Beer;
 Which ready stood in Kitchin Pail,
 And was in fact but *Adam's* Ale;
 For Planter's Cellars you must know,
 Seldom with good *October* flow,
 But Perry Quince and Apple Juice,
 Spout from the Tap like any Sluce;
 Untill the Cask's grown low and stale,
 They're forc'd again to (hh) Goud and Pail:
 The soathing drought scarce down my Throat,
 Enough to put a ship afloat,
 With Cockerouse as I was sitting,
 I felt a Feaver Intermitting;
 A fiery Pulse beat in my Veins,
 From Cold I felt resembling Pains:
 This cursed seasoning I remember,
 Lasted from *March* to cold *December*;
 Nor would it then its *Quarters* shift

Until by *Cardus* turn'd adrift,
 And had my Doctress wanted skill,
 Or Kitchin Physick at her will,
 My Father's Son had lost his Lands,
 And never seen the *Goodwin Sands*:
 But thanks to Fortune and a Nurse
 Whose Care depended on my Purse,
 I saw myself in good Condition,
 Without the help of a Physitian:
 At length the shivering ill relieved,
 Which long my Head and Heart had grieved;
 I then began to think with Care,
 How I might sell my *British* Ware,
 That with my Freight I might comply,
 Did on my Charter party lie;
 To this intent, with Guide before,
 I tript it to the Eastern Shoar;
 While riding near a Sandy Bay,
 I met a *Quaker*, *Yea* and *Nay*;
 A Pious Consientious Rogue,
 As e'er wear Bonnet or a Brogue,
 Who neither Swore nor kept his Word
 But cheated in the Fear of God;
 And when his Debts he would not pay,
 By Light within he ran away.
 With this sly Zealot soon I struck
 A Bargain for my *English* Truck
 Agreeing for ten thousand weight,
 Of *Sot-weed* good and fit for freight,
 Broad *Oronooko* bright and sound,
 The growth and product of his ground;
 In Cask that should contain compleat,
 Five hundred of Tobacco neat.
 The Contract thus betwixt us made,
 Not well acquainted with the Trade,
 My Goods I trusted to the Cheat,
 Whose crop was then aboard the Fleet;
 And going to receive my own,
 I found the Bird was newly flown:
 Cursing this execrable Slave,
 This damn'd pretended Godly Knave;
 On dire Revenge and Justice bent,
 I instantly to Counsel went,
 Unto an ambodexter (ii) *Quack*,
 Who learnedly had got the Knack
 Of giving Glisters, making Pills,
 Of filling Bonds, and forging Wills;
 And with a stock of Impudence,
 Supply'd his want of Wit and Sense;
 With Looks demure, amazing People,
 No wiser than a Daw in Steeple;
 My Anger flushing in my Face,
 I stated the preceeding Case:
 And of my Money was so lavish,
 That he'd have poyson'd half the Parish,
 And hang'd his Father on a Tree

For such another tempting Fee;
 Smiling, said he, the Cause is clear,
 I'll manage him you need not fear;
 The Case is judg'd, good Sir, but look
 In *Galen*, No—in my Lord Cook,
 I vow to God I was mistook:
 I'll take out a Provincial Writ,
 And trounce him for his Knavish Wit;
 Upon my Life we'll win the Cause,
 With all the ease I cure the (kk) Yaws;
 Resolv'd to plague the holy Brother,
 I set one Rogue to catch another;
 To try the cause then fully bent,
 Up to (ll) *Annapolis* I went,
 A City Situate on a Plain,
 Where scarce a House will keep out Rain;
 The Buildings framed with Cyprus rare,
 Resembles much our *Southwark* Fair:
 But Stranger here will scarcely meet
 With Market-place, Exchange, or Street;
 And if the Truth I may report,
 'Tis not so large as *Tottenham Court*.
 St *Mary's* once was in repute,
 Now here the Judges try the Suit
 And Lawyers twice a year dispute.
 As oft the Bench most gravely meet,
 Some to get Drunk, and some to eat
 A swinging share of Country Treat.
 But as for Justice right or wrong,
 Not one amongst the numerous throng,
 Knows what they mean, or has the Heart,
 To give his Verdict on a Stranger's part:
 Now Court being call'd by beat of Drum,
 The Judges left their Punch and Rum,
 When Pettifogger Docter draws,
 His Paper forth, and opens Cause;
 And least I shou'd the better get,
 Brib'd *Quack* suppress his knavish Wit.
 So Maid upon the Downy Field
 Pretends a Force, and Fights to yield:
 The Byst Court without delay,
 Adjudg'd my Debt in Country Pay;
 In (mm) Pipe staves, Corn or Flesh of Boar,
 Rare Cargo for the *English* Shoar;
 Raging with Grief, full speed I ran
 To joyn the Fleet at (nn) *Kicketan*;
 Embarqu'd and waiting for a Wind
 I left this dreadful Curse behind.

May Canniballs transported o'er the Sea
 Prey on these Slaves, as they have done on me;
 May never Merchant's trading Sails explore
 This Cruel, this inhospitable Shoar;
 But left abandon'd by the World to starve,
 May they sustain the Fate they well deserve;
 May they turn Savage, or as *Indians* Wild,

From Trade, Converse and Happiness exil'd;
 Recreant to Heaven, may they adore the Sun,
 And into Pagan Superstitions run
 For Vengeance ripe—————
 May Wrath Divine then lay those Regions wast
 Where no Man's (oo) Faithful, nor a Woman Chast.

Footnotes

(*) The “The Sot-weed Factor” means “The Tabacco Agent.” The text and notes are edited by Bryan Ness, for Project Gutenberg. The footnotes, other than this one, are from the original 1708 printing of the poem.

(a) By the Cape is meant the *Capes of Virginea* [*sic.*], the first Land on the Coast of *Virginia* and *Mary-Land*.

(b) To *Cove* is to lie at Anchor safe in Harbour.

(c) The Bay of *Piscato-way*, the usual place where our Ships come to an Anchor in *Mary-Land*.

(d) The Planters generally wear *Blue Linnen*.

(e) A *Canoo* is an *Indian* Boat, cut out of the body of a *Popular-Tree* [*sic.*, *Poplar-Tree*].

(f) Wolves are very numerous in *Mary-Land*.

(g) 'Tis supposed by the Planters that all unknown Persons run away from some Master.

(h) Syder-pap is a sort of Food made of Syder and small Homine, like our Oatmeal.

(i) Pon is Bread made of *Indian-Corn*.

(k) Mush is a sort of hasty-pudding made with water and *Indian* Flower.

(l) Homine is a dish that is made of boiled *Indian* Wheat, eaten with Molossus, or Bacon-Fat.

(m) 'Tis the Custom for Servants to be obliged for four Years to very servile work; after which time they have their Freedom.

(n) These are the general Excuses made by *English* Women, which are sold, or sell themselves to *Mary-Land*.

(o) Beds stand in the Chimney-corner in this Country.

(p) Frogs are called *Virginia* Bells and make (both in that country and *Mary-Land*) during the Night, a very hoarse ungrateful Noise.

(q) *Kekicknitop* is an *Indian* Expression, and signifies no more than this, *How do you do?*

(r) These *Indians* worship the Devil, and pray to him as we do to God Almighty. 'Tis suppos'd, that *America* was peopled from *Scythia* or *Tartaria*, which Borders on *China*, by reason the *Tartarians* and *Americans*, very much agree in their Manners, Arms and Government. Other persons are of Opinion, that the *Chinese* first peopled the *West-Indies*; imagining *China* and the Southern part of *America* to be contiguous. Others believe that the Phœnicians who were very skilful Mariners, first planted a Colony in the Isles of *America*, and supply'd the Persons left to inhabit there with Women and all other Necessaries; till either the Death or Shipwreck of the first Discoverers, or some other Misfortune, occasioned the loss of the Discovery, which had been purchased by the Peril of the first Adventurers.

(s) Pizarro was the Person that conquer'd Peru; a Man of a most bloody Disposition, base, treacherous, covetous and revengeful.

(t) *Spanish Shoar*.

(u) There is a very bad Custom in some Colledges, of giving the Students *A Groat ad purgandas Rhenes*, which is usually employ'd to the use of the *Donor*.

(v) Bears are said to live by sucking of their *Paws*, according to the Notion of some Learned Authors.

(w) The *Phœnicians* were the best and boldest Saylor of Antiquity, and indeed the only Persons, in former Ages, who durst venture themselves on the Main Sea.

(x) The *Priests* argue, That our Senses in point of *Transubstantiation* ought not to be believed, for tho' the Consecrated Bread has all the accidents of Bread, yet they affirm, 'tis the Body of Christ, and not of Bread but Flesh and Bones.

(y) In the County-Court of Mary-Land, very few of the Justices of the Peace can write or read.

(z) 'Tis the Custom of the Planters to throw their own, or any other Person's Hat, Wig, Shooes or Stockings in the Fire.

(aa) Planters are usually call'd by the Name of *Oronooko*, from their Planting *Oronooko-Tobacco*.

(bb) Cockerouse, is a Man of Quality.

(cc) Musmilleon Vines are what we call Musk milleon Plants.

(dd) *Aethon* is one of the Poetical Horses of the Sun.

(ee) *Chinces* are a sort of Vermin like our *Bugs* in *England*.

(ff) Wild Turkeys are very good Meat, and prodigiously large in *Mary-Land*.

(gg) *Succahana* is Water.

(hh) A Goud grows upon an *Indian* Vine, resembling a Bottle, when ripe it is hollow; this the Planters make use of to drink water out of.

(ii) This Fellow was an Apothecary, and turned an Attorney at Law.

(kk) The *Yaws* is the *Pox*.

(ll) The chief of *Mary-Land* containing about twenty-four *Houses*.

(mm) There is a Law in this Country, the Plaintiff may pay his Debt in Country pay, which consists in the produce of his Plantation.

(nn) The home ward bound fleet meets here.

(oo) The Author does not intend by this any of the *English* Gentlemen resident there.

From J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer*

LETTER III. WHAT IS AN AMERICAN?

I wish I could be acquainted with the feelings and thoughts which must agitate the heart and present themselves to the mind of an enlightened Englishman, when he first lands on this continent. He must greatly rejoice that he lived at a time to see this fair country discovered and settled; he must necessarily feel a share of national pride, when he views the chain of settlements which embellishes these extended shores. When he says to himself, this is the work of my countrymen, who, when convulsed by factions, afflicted by a variety of miseries and wants, restless and impatient, took refuge here. They brought along with them their national genius, to which they principally owe what liberty they enjoy, and what substance they possess. Here he sees the industry of his native country displayed in a new manner, and traces in their works the embryos of all the arts, sciences, and ingenuity which flourish in Europe. Here he beholds fair cities, substantial villages, extensive fields, an immense country filled with decent houses, good roads, orchards, meadows, and bridges, where an hundred years ago all was wild, woody and uncultivated! What a train of pleasing ideas this fair spectacle must suggest; it is a prospect which must inspire a good citizen with the most heartfelt pleasure. The difficulty consists in the manner of viewing so extensive a scene. He is arrived on a new continent; a modern society offers itself to his contemplation, different from what he had hitherto seen. It is not composed, as in Europe, of great lords who possess every thing and of a herd of people who have nothing. Here are no aristocratical families, no courts, no kings, no bishops, no ecclesiastical dominion, no invisible power giving to a few a very visible one; no great manufacturers employing thousands, no great refinements of luxury. The rich and the poor are not so far removed from each other as they are in Europe. Some few towns excepted, we are all tillers of the earth, from Nova Scotia to West Florida. We are a people of cultivators, scattered over an immense territory communicating with each other by means of good roads and navigable rivers, united by the silken bands of mild government, all respecting the laws, without dreading their power, because they are equitable. We are all animated with the spirit of an industry which is unfettered and unrestrained, because each

person works for himself. If he travels through our rural districts he views not the hostile castle, and the haughty mansion, contrasted with the clay-built hut and miserable cabin, where cattle and men help to keep each other warm, and dwell in meanness, smoke, and indigence. A pleasing uniformity of decent competence appears throughout our habitations. The meanest of our log-houses is a dry and comfortable habitation. Lawyer or merchant are the fairest titles our towns afford; that of a farmer is the only appellation of the rural inhabitants of our country. It must take some time ere he can reconcile himself to our dictionary, which is but short in words of dignity, and names of honor. (There, on a Sunday, he sees a congregation of respectable farmers and their wives, all clad in neat homespun, well mounted, or riding in their own humble wagons. There is not among them an esquire, saving the unlettered magistrate. There he sees a parson as simple as his flock, a farmer who does not riot on the labor of others. We have no princes, for whom we toil, starve, and bleed: we are the most perfect society now existing in the world. Here man is free; as he ought to be; nor is this pleasing equality so transitory as many others are. Many ages will not see the shores of our great lakes replenished with inland nations, nor the unknown bounds of North America entirely peopled. Who can tell how far it extends? Who can tell the millions of men whom it will feed and contain? for no European foot has as yet traveled half the extent of this mighty continent!

The next wish of this traveler will be to know whence came all these people? they are mixture of English, Scotch, Irish, French, Dutch, Germans, and Swedes. From this promiscuous breed, that race now called Americans have arisen. The eastern provinces must indeed be excepted, as being the unmixed descendants of Englishmen. I have heard many wish that they had been more intermixed also: for my part, I am no wisher, and think it much better as it has happened. They exhibit a most conspicuous figure in this great and variegated picture; they too enter for a great share in the pleasing perspective displayed in these thirteen provinces. I know it is fashionable to

reflect on them, but I respect them for what they have done; for the accuracy and wisdom with which they have settled their territory; for the decency of their manners; for their early love of letters; their ancient college, the first in this hemisphere; for their industry; which to me who am but a farmer, is the criterion of everything. There never was a people, situated as they are, who with so ungrateful a soil have done more in so short a time. Do you think that the monarchical ingredients which are more prevalent in other governments, have purged them from all foul stains? Their histories assert the contrary.

In this great American asylum, the poor of Europe have by some means met together, and in consequence of various causes; to what purpose should they ask one another what countrymen they are? Alas, two thirds of them had no country. Can a wretch who wanders about, who works and starves, whose life is a continual scene of sore affliction or pinching penury; can that man call England or any other kingdom his country? A country that had no bread for him, whose fields procured him no harvest, who met with nothing but the frowns of the rich, the severity of the laws, with jails and punishments; who owned not a single foot of the extensive surface of this planet? No! urged by a variety of motives, here they came. Every thing has tended to regenerate them; new laws, a new mode of living, a new social system; here they are become men: in Europe they were as so many useless plants, wanting vegetative mould, and refreshing showers; they withered, and were mowed down by want, hunger, and war; but now by the power of transplantation, like all other plants they have taken root and flourished! Formerly they were not numbered in any civil lists of their country, except in those of the poor; here they rank as citizens. By what invisible power has this surprising metamorphosis been performed? By that of the laws and that of their industry. The laws, the indulgent laws, protect them as they arrive, stamping on them the symbol of adoption; they receive ample rewards for their labors; these accumulated rewards procure them lands; those lands confer on them the title of freemen, and to that title every benefit is affixed which men can possibly require. This is the great operation daily performed by our laws. From whence proceed these laws? From our government. Whence the government? It is derived from the original genius and strong desire of the people ratified and confirmed by the crown. This is the great chain which links us all, this is the picture which every province exhibits, Nova Scotia excepted. There the

crown has done all; either there were no people who had genius, or it was not much attended to: the consequence is, that the province is very thinly inhabited indeed; the power of the crown in conjunction with the muskets has prevented men from settling there. Yet some parts of it flourished once, and it contained a mild harmless set of people. But for the fault of a few leaders, the whole were banished. The greatest political error the crown ever committed in America, was to cut off men from a country which wanted nothing but men!

What attachment can a poor European emigrant have for a country where he had nothing? The knowledge of the language, the love of a few kindred as poor as himself, were the only cords that tied him: his country is now that which gives him land, bread, protection, and consequence: *Ubi panis ibi patria* ["Where there is bread, there is my country"], is the motto of all emigrants. What then is the American, this new man? He is either an European, or the descendant of an European, hence that strange mixture of blood, which you will find in no other country. I could point out to you a family whose grandfather was an Englishman, whose wife was Dutch, whose son married a French woman, and whose present four sons have now four wives of different nations. *He* is an American, who leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys, and the new rank he holds.

He becomes an American by being received in the broad lap of our great *Alma Mater*. Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labors and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world. Americans are the western pilgrims, who are carrying along with them that great mass of arts, sciences, vigor, and industry which began long since in the east; they will finish the great circle. The Americans were once scattered all over Europe; here they are incorporated into one of the finest systems of population which has ever appeared, and which will hereafter become distinct by the power of the different climates they inhabit. The American ought therefore to love this country much better than that wherein either he or his forefathers were born. Here the rewards of his industry follow with equal steps the progress of his labor; his labor is founded on the basis of nature, *self-interest*; can it want a stronger allurements? Wives and children, who before in vain demanded of him a morsel of

bread, now, fat and frolicsome, gladly help their father to clear those fields whence exuberant crops are to arise to feed and to clothe them all; without any part being claimed, either by a despotic prince, a rich abbot, or a mighty lord. I lord religion demands but little of *him*; a small voluntary salary to the minister, and gratitude to God; can he refuse these? The American is a new man, who acts upon new principles; he must therefore entertain new ideas, and form new opinions. From involuntary idleness, servile dependence, penury, and useless labor, he has passed to toils of a very different nature, rewarded by ample subsistence. --This is an American.

British America is divided into many provinces, forming a large association, scattered along a coast 1500 miles extent and about 200 wide. This society I would fain examine, at least such as it appears in the middle provinces; if it does not afford that variety of tinges and gradations which may be observed in Europe, we have colors peculiar to ourselves. For instance, it is natural to conceive that those who live near the sea, must be very different from those who live in the woods; the intermediate space will afford a separate and distinct class.

Men are like plants; the goodness and flavor of the fruit proceeds from the peculiar soil and exposition in which they grow. We are nothing but what we derive from the air we breathe, the climate we inhabit, the government we obey, the system of religion we profess, and the nature of our employment. Here you will find but few crimes; these have acquired as yet no root among us. I wish I were able to trace all my ideas; if my ignorance prevents me from describing them properly, I hope I shall be able to delineate a few of the outlines, which are all I propose.

[Crèvecoeur here discusses differences among Americans that he traces to their various living situations – along the sea coast, in agricultural areas, and on the frontier – as well as differences between the colonies and religious differences, returning at the end to the “back settlers,” or those on the frontier.]

But to return to our back settlers. I must tell you, that there is something in the proximity of the woods, which is very singular. It is with men as it is with the plants and animals that grow and live in the forests; they are entirely different from those that live in the plains. I will candidly tell you all

my thoughts but you are not to expect that I shall advance any reasons. By living in or near the woods, their actions are regulated by the wildness of the neighborhood. The deer often come to eat their grain, the wolves to destroy their sheep, the bears to kill their hogs, the foxes to catch their poultry. This surrounding hostility, immediately puts the gun into their hands; they watch these animals, they kill some; and thus by defending their property, they soon become professed hunters; this is the progress; once hunters, farewell to the plough. The chase renders them ferocious, gloomy, and unsociable; a hunter wants no neighbor, he rather hates them, because he dreads the competition. In a little time their success in the woods makes them neglect their tillage. They trust to the natural fecundity of the earth, and therefore do little; carelessness in fencing, often exposes what little they sow to destruction; they are not at home to watch; in order therefore to make up the deficiency, they go oftener to the woods. That new mode of life brings along with it a new set of manners, which I cannot easily describe. These new manners being grafted on the old stock, produce a strange sort of lawless profligacy, the impressions of which are indelible. The manners of the Indian natives are respectable, compared with this European medley. Their wives and children live in sloth and inactivity; and having no proper pursuits, you may judge what education the latter receive. Their tender minds have nothing else to contemplate but the example of their parents; like them they grow up a mongrel breed, half civilized, half savage, except nature stamps on them some constitutional propensities. That rich, that voluptuous sentiment is gone that struck them so forcibly; the possession of their freeholds no longer conveys to their minds the same pleasure and pride. To all these reasons you must add, their lonely situation, and you cannot imagine what an effect on manners the great distances they live from each other has I Consider one of the last settlements in it's first view: of what is it composed? Europeans who have not that sufficient share of knowledge they ought to have, in order to prosper; people who have suddenly passed from oppression, dread of government, and fear of laws, into the unlimited freedom of the woods. This sudden change must have a very great effect on most men, and on that class particularly. Eating of wild meat, what ever you may think, tends to alter their temper though all the proof I can adduce, is, that I have seen it: and having no place of worship to resort to, what little society this might afford, is denied them. The Sunday meetings, exclusive of religious benefits, were the only social bonds that might have inspired

them with some degree of emulation in neatness. Is it then surprising to see men thus situated, immersed in great and heavy labors, degenerate a little? It is rather a wonder the effect is not more diffusive. The Moravians and the Quakers are the only instances in exception to what I have advanced. The first never settle singly, it is a colony of the society which emigrates; they carry with them their forms, worship, rules, and decency: the others never begin so hard, they are always able to buy improvements, in which there is a great advantage, for by that time the country is recovered from its first barbarity. Thus our bad people are those who are half cultivators and half hunters; and the worst of them are those who have degenerated altogether into the hunting state. As old ploughmen and new men of the woods, as Europeans and new made Indians, they contract the vices of both; they adopt the moroseness and ferocity of a native, without his mildness, or even his industry at home. If manners are not refined, at least they are rendered simple and inoffensive by tilling the earth; all our wants are supplied by it, our time is divided between labor and rest, and leaves none for the commission of great misdeeds. As hunters it is divided between the toil of the chase, the idleness of repose, or the indulgence of inebriation Hunting is but a licentious idle life, and if it does not always pervert good dispositions; yet, when it is united with bad luck, it leads to want: want stimulates that propensity to rapacity and injustice, too natural to needy men, which is the fatal gradation. After this explanation of the effects which follow by living in the woods, shall we yet vainly flatter ourselves with the hope of converting the Indians? We should rather begin with converting our back-settlers; and now if I dare mention the name of religion, its sweet accents would be lost in the immensity of these woods. Men thus placed, are not fit either to receive or remember its mild instructions; they want temples and ministers, but as soon as men cease to remain at home, and begin to lead an erratic life, let them be either tawny or white, they cease to be its disciples.

Thus have I faintly and imperfectly endeavored to trace our society from the sea to our woods ! Yet you must not imagine that every person who moves back, acts upon the same principles, or falls into the same degeneracy. Many families carry with them all their decency of conduct, purity of morals, and respect of religion; but these are scarce, the power of example is sometimes irresistible. Even among these back-settlers, their depravity is greater or less, according to what nation or province they belong. Were I to adduce proofs of this, I might be

accused of partiality. If there happens to be some rich intervals, some fertile bottoms, in those remote districts, the people will there prefer tilling the land to hunting, and will attach themselves to it; but even on these fertile spots you may plainly perceive the inhabitants to acquire a great degree of rusticity and selfishness. It is in consequence of this straggling situation, and the astonishing power it has on manners, that the back-settlers of both the Carolinas, Virginia, and many other parts, have been long a set of lawless people; it has been even dangerous to travel among them. Government can do nothing in so extensive a country, better it should wink at these irregularities, than that it should use means inconsistent with its usual mildness. Time will efface those stains: in proportion as the great body of population approaches them they will reform, and become polished and subordinate. Whatever has been said of the four New England provinces, no such degeneracy of manners has ever tarnished their annals; their back-settlers have been kept within the bounds of decency, and government, by means of wise laws, and by the influence of religion. What a detestable idea such people must have given to the natives of the Europeans They trade with them, the worst of people are permitted to do that which none but persons of the best characters should be employed in. They get drunk with them, and often defraud the Indians. Their avarice, removed from the eyes of their superiors, knows no bounds; and aided by a little superiority of knowledge, these traders deceive them, and even sometimes shed blood. Hence those shocking violations, those sudden devastations which have so often stained our frontiers, when hundreds of innocent people have been sacrificed for the crimes of a few. It was in consequence of such behavior, that the Indians took the hatchet against the Virginians in 1774. Thus are our first steps trod, thus are our first trees felled, in general, by the most vicious of our people and thus the path is opened for the arrival of a second and better class, the true American freeholders; the most respectable set of people in this part of the world: respectable for their industry, their happy independence, the great share of freedom they possess, the good regulation of their families, and for extending the trade and the dominion of our mother country. Europe contains hardly any other distinctions but lords and tenants; this fair country alone is settled by freeholders, the possessors of the soil they cultivate, members of the government they obey, and the framers of their own laws, by means of their representatives. This is a thought which you have taught me to cherish; our difference from

Europe, far from diminishing, rather adds to our usefulness and consequence as men and subjects. Had our forefathers remained there, they would only have crowded it, and perhaps prolonged those convulsions which had shook it so long. Every industrious European who transports himself here may be compared to a sprout growing at the foot of a great tree; it enjoys and draws but a little portion of sap; wrench it from the parent roots, transplant it, and it will become a tree bearing fruit also. Colonists are therefore entitled to the consideration due to the most useful subjects; a hundred families barely existing in some parts of Scotland, will here in six years, cause an annual exportation of 10,000 bushels of wheat: 100 bushels being but a common quantity for an industrious family to sell, if they cultivate good land. It is here then that the idle may be employed, the useless become useful, and the poor become rich; but by riches I do not mean gold and silver, we have but little of those metals; I mean a better sort of wealth, cleared lands, cattle, good houses, good clothes, and an increase of people to enjoy them.

It is no wonder that this country has so many charms, and presents to Europeans so many temptations to remain in it. A traveler in Europe becomes a stranger as soon as he quits his own kingdom; but it is otherwise here. We know, properly speaking, no strangers; this is every person's country; the variety of our soils, situations, climates, governments, and produce, hath something which must please every body. No sooner does an European arrive, no matter of what condition, than his eyes are opened upon the fair prospect; he hears his language spoke, he retraces many of his own country manners, he perpetually hears the names of families and towns with which he is acquainted; he sees happiness and prosperity in all places disseminated; he meets with hospitality, kindness, and plenty every where; he beholds hardly any poor, he seldom hears of punishments and executions; and he wonders at the elegance of our towns, those miracles of industry and freedom. He cannot admire enough our rural districts, our convenient roads, good taverns, and our many accommodations; he involuntarily loves a country where every thing is so lovely. When in England, he was a mere Englishman; here he stands on a larger portion of the globe, not less than its fourth part, and may see the productions of the north, in iron and naval stores; the provisions of Ireland, the grain of Egypt, the indigo, the rice of China. He does not find, as Europe, a crowded society, where every place is over-stocked; he does not feel that perpetual collision of parties, that

difficulty of beginning, that contention which oversets so many. There is room for every body in America; has he any particular talent, or industry? he exerts it in order to procure a livelihood, and it succeeds. Is he a merchant? the avenues of trade are infinite; is he eminent in any respect? he will be employed and respected. Does he love a country life? pleasant farms present themselves; he may purchase what he wants, and thereby become an American farmer. Is he a laborer, sober and industrious? he need not go many miles, nor receive many informations before he will be hired, well fed at the table of his employer, and paid four or five times more than he can get in Europe. Does he want uncultivated lands? Thousands of acres present themselves, which he may purchase cheap. Whatever be his talents or inclinations, if they are moderate, he may satisfy them. I do not mean that every one who comes will grow rich in a little time; no, but he may procure an easy, decent maintenance, by his industry. Instead of starving he will be fed, instead of being idle he will have employment; and these are riches enough for such men as come over here. The rich stay in Europe, it is only the middling and the poor that emigrate. Would you wish to travel in independent idleness, from north to south, you will find easy access, and the most cheerful reception at every house; society without ostentation, good cheer without pride, and every decent diversion which the country affords, with little expense. It is no wonder that the European who has lived here a few years, is desirous to remain; Europe with all its pomp, is not to be compared to this continent, for men of middle stations, or laborers.

An European, when he first arrives, seems limited in his intentions, as well as in his views; but he very suddenly alters his scale; two hundred miles formerly appeared a very great distance, it is now but a trifle; he no sooner breathes our air than he forms schemes, and embarks in designs he never would have thought of in his own country. There the plenitude of society confines many useful ideas, and often extinguishes the most laudable schemes which here ripen into maturity. Thus Europeans become Americans.

But how is this accomplished in that crowd of low, indigent people, who flock here every year from all parts of Europe? I will tell you; they no sooner arrive than they immediately feel the good effects of that plenty of provisions we possess: they fare on our best food, and the visitors are kindly entertained; their talents, character, and peculiar

industry are immediately inquired into; they find countrymen everywhere disseminated, let them come from whatever part of Europe. Let me select one as an epitome of the rest; he is hired, he goes to work, and works moderately; instead of being employed by a haughty person, he finds himself with his equal, placed at the substantial table of the farmer, or else at an inferior one as good; his wages are high, his bed is not like that bed of sorrow on which he used to lie: if he behaves with propriety, and is faithful, he is caressed, and becomes as it were a member of the family. He begins to feel the effects of a sort of resurrection; hitherto he had not lived, but simply vegetated; he now feels himself a man, because he is treated as such; the laws of his own country had overlooked him in his insignificance; the laws of this cover him with their mantle. Judge what an alteration there must arise in the mind and thoughts of this man; he begins to forget his former servitude and dependence, his heart involuntarily swells and glows; this first swell inspires him with those new thoughts which constitute an American. What love can he entertain for a country where his existence was a burthen to him; if he is a generous good man, the love of this new adoptive parent will sink deep into his heart. He looks around, and sees many a prosperous person, who but a few years before was as poor as himself. This encourages him much, he begins to form some little scheme, the first, alas, he ever formed in his life. If he is wise he thus spends two or three years, in which time he acquires knowledge, the use of tools, the modes of working the lands, felling trees, &c. This prepares the foundation of a good name, the most useful acquisition he can make. He is encouraged, he has gained friends; he is advised and directed, he feels bold, he purchases some land; he gives all the money he has brought over, as well as what he has earned, and trusts to the God of harvests for the discharge of the rest. His good name procures him credit. He is now possessed of the deed, conveying to him and his posterity the fee simple and absolute property of two hundred acres of land, situated on such a river. What an epocha in this man's life! He is become a freeholder, from perhaps a German boor--he is now an American, a Pennsylvanian, an English subject. He is naturalized, his name is enrolled with those of the other citizens of the province. Instead of being a vagrant, he has a place of residence; he is called the inhabitant of such a county, or of such a district, and for the first time in his life counts for something; for hitherto he has been a her. I only repeat what I have heard man say, and no wonder their hearts should glow, and be agitated with a multitude of feelings, not easy to

describe. From nothing to start into being; from a servant to the rank of a master; from being the slave of some despotic prince, to become a free man, invested with lands, to which every municipal blessing is annexed! What a change indeed! It is in consequence of that change that he becomes an American. This great metamorphosis has a double effect, it extinguishes all his European prejudices, he forgets that mechanism of subordination, that servility of disposition which poverty had taught him; and sometimes he is apt to forget too much, often passing from one extreme to the other. If he is a good man, he forms schemes of future prosperity, he proposes to educate his children better than he has been educated himself; he thinks of future modes of conduct, feels an ardor to labour he never felt before. Pride steps in and leads him to every thing that the laws do not forbid: he respects them; with a heartfelt gratitude he looks toward the east, toward that insular government from whose wisdom all his new felicity is derived, and under whose wings and protection he now lives. These reflections constitute him the good man and the good subject. Ye poor Europeans, ye, who sweat, and work for the great--ye, who are obliged to give so many sheaves to the church, so many to your lords, so many to your government, and have hardly any left for yourselves--ye, who are held in less estimation than favorite hunters or useless lap-dogs--ye, who only breathe the air of nature, because it cannot be withheld from you; it is here that ye can conceive the possibility of those feelings I have been describing; it is here the laws of naturalization invite every one to partake of our great labors and felicity, to till unrented untaxed lands! Many, corrupted beyond the power of amendment, have brought with them all their vices, and disregarding the advantages held to them, have gone on in their former career of iniquity, until they have been overtaken and punished by our laws. It is not every emigrant who succeeds; no, it is only the sober, the honest, and industrious: happy those to whom this transition has served as a powerful spur to labor, to prosperity, and to the good establishment of children, born in the days of their poverty; and who had no other portion to expect but the rags of their parents, had it not been for their happy emigration. Others again, have been led astray by this enchanting scene; their new pride, instead of leading them to the fields, has kept them in idleness; the idea of possessing lands is all that satisfies them--though surrounded with fertility, they have moldered away their time in inactivity, misinformed husbandry, and ineffectual endeavors.

{Crevecoeur now considers differences between Americans of various European ethnicities, especially those from Germany, Scotland, and Ireland.]

. . . It is of very little importance how, and in what manner an indigent man arrives; for if he is but sober, honest, and industrious, he has nothing more to ask of heaven. Let him go to work, he will have opportunities enough to earn a comfortable support, and even the means of procuring some land; which ought to be the utmost wish of every person who has health and hands to work. I knew a man who came to this country, in the literal sense of the expression, stark naked; I think he was a Frenchman and a sailor on board an English man of war. Being discontented, he had stripped himself and swam ashore; where finding clothes and friends, he settled afterwards at Maranock, in the county of Chester, in the province of New York: he married and left a good farm to each of his sons. I knew another person who was but twelve years old when he was taken on the frontiers of Canada, by the Indians; at his arrival at Albany he was purchased by a gentleman, who generously bound him apprentice to a tailor. He lived to the age of ninety, and left behind him a fine estate and a numerous family, all well settled; many of them I am acquainted with. Where is then the industrious European who ought to despair? After a foreigner from any part of Europe is arrived, and become a citizen; let him devoutly listen to the voice of our great parent, which says to him, "Welcome to my shores, distressed European; bless the hour in which thou didst see my verdant fields, my fair navigable rivers, and my green mountains! If thou wilt work, I have bread for thee; if thou wilt be honest, sober, and industrious, I have greater rewards to confer on thee-- ease and independence. I will give thee fields to feed and clothe thee; a comfortable fireside to sit by, and tell thy children by what means thou hast prospered; and a decent bed to repose on. I shall endow thee beside with the immunities of a freeman. If thou wilt carefully educate thy children, teach them gratitude to God, and reverence to that government that philanthropic government, which has collected here so many men and made them happy. I will also provide for thy progeny; and to every good man this ought to be the most holy, the most Powerful, the most earnest wish he can possibly form, as well as the most consolatory prospect when he dies. Go thou and work and till; thou shalt prosper, provided thou be just, grateful and industrious."

Thomas Paine (1737–1809), *Common Sense* (1776): Excerpts

I. Of the origins and design of government in general, with concise remarks on the English Constitution

SOME writers have so confounded society with government, as to leave little or no distinction between them; whereas they are not only different, but have different origins. Society is produced by our wants, and government by wickedness; the former promotes our happiness POSITIVELY by uniting our affections, the latter NEGATIVELY by restraining our vices. The one encourages intercourse, the other creates distinctions. The first is a patron, the last a punisher.

Society in every state is a blessing, but government even in its best state is but a necessary evil; in its worst state an intolerable one; for when we suffer, or are exposed to the same miseries BY A GOVERNMENT, which we might expect in a country WITHOUT GOVERNMENT, our calamity is heightened by reflecting that we furnish the means by which we suffer. Government, like dress, is the badge of lost innocence; the palaces of kings are built on the ruins of the bowers of paradise. For were the impulses of conscience clear, uniform, and irresistibly obeyed, man would need no other lawgiver; but that not being the case, he finds it necessary to surrender up a part of his property to furnish means for the protection of the rest; and this he is induced to do by the same prudence which in every other case advises him out of two evils to choose the least. WHEREFORE, security being the true design and end of government, it unanswerably follows that whatever FORM thereof appears most likely to ensure it to us, with the least expence and greatest benefit, is preferable to all others.

In order to gain a clear and just idea of the design and end of government, let us suppose a small number of persons settled in some sequestered part of the earth, unconnected with the rest, they will then represent the first peopling of any country, or of the world. In this state of natural liberty, society will be their first thought. A thousand motives will excite them thereto, the strength of one man is so unequal to his wants, and his mind so unfitted for perpetual solitude, that he is soon obliged to seek assistance and relief of another, who in his turn requires the same. Four or five united would be able to raise a tolerable dwelling in the midst of a

wilderness, but ONE man might labour out the common period of life without accomplishing any thing; when he had felled his timber he could not remove it, nor erect it after it was removed; hunger in the mean time would urge him from his work, and every different want call him a different way. Disease, nay even misfortune would be death, for though neither might be mortal, yet either would disable him from living, and reduce him to a state in which he might rather be said to perish than to die.

This necessity, like a gravitating power, would soon form our newly arrived emigrants into society, the reciprocal blessing of which, would supersede, and render the obligations of law and government unnecessary while they remained perfectly just to each other; but as nothing but heaven is impregnable to vice, it will unavoidably happen, that in proportion as they surmount the first difficulties of emigration, which bound them together in a common cause, they will begin to relax in their duty and attachment to each other; and this remissness, will point out the necessity, of establishing some form of government to supply the defect of moral virtue.

Some convenient tree will afford them a State-House, under the branches of which, the whole colony may assemble to deliberate on public matters. It is more than probable that their first laws will have the title only of REGULATIONS, and be enforced by no other penalty than public disesteem. In this first parliament every man, by natural right, will have a seat.

But as the colony increases, the public concerns will increase likewise, and the distance at which the members may be separated, will render it too inconvenient for all of them to meet on every occasion as at first, when their number was small, their habitations near, and the public concerns few and trifling. This will point out the convenience of their consenting to leave the legislative part to be managed by a select number chosen from the whole body, who are supposed to have the same concerns at stake which those have who appointed them, and who will act in the same manner as the whole body would act were they present. If the colony continues increasing, it will become necessary to augment the number of the representatives, and that the interest of every part of the colony may be attended to, it will be found best to divide the

whole into convenient parts, each part sending its proper number; and that the ELECTED might never form to themselves an interest separate from the ELECTORS, prudence will point out the propriety of having elections often; because as the ELECTED might by that means return and mix again with the general body of the ELECTORS in a few months, their fidelity to the public will be secured by the prudent reflexion of not making a rod for themselves. And as this frequent interchange will establish a common interest with every part of the community, they will mutually and naturally support each other, and on this (not on the unmeaning name of king) depends the STRENGTH OF GOVERNMENT, AND THE HAPPINESS OF THE GOVERNED.

Here then is the origin and rise of government; namely, a mode rendered necessary by the inability of moral virtue to govern the world; here too is the design and end of government, viz. freedom and security. And however our eyes may be dazzled with snow, or our ears deceived by sound; however prejudice may warp our wills, or interest darken our understanding, the simple voice of nature and of reason will say, it is right.

I draw my idea of the form of government from a principle in nature, which no art can overturn, viz. that the more simple any thing is, the less liable it is to be disordered, and the easier repaired when disordered; and with this maxim in view, I offer a few remarks on the so much boasted constitution of England. That it was noble for the dark and slavish times in which it was erected, is granted. When the world was over run with tyranny the least remove therefrom was a glorious rescue. But that it is imperfect, subject to convulsions, and incapable of producing what it seems to promise, is easily demonstrated.

Absolute governments (tho' the disgrace of human nature) have this advantage with them, that they are simple; if the people suffer, they know the head from which their suffering springs, know likewise the remedy, and are not bewildered by a variety of causes and cures. But the constitution of England is so exceedingly complex, that the nation may suffer for years together without being able to discover in which part the fault lies, some will say in one and some in another, and every political physician will advise a different medicine.

I know it is difficult to get over local or long standing prejudices, yet if we will suffer ourselves to examine the component parts of the English constitution, we shall find them to be the

base remains of two ancient tyrannies, compounded with some new republican materials.

FIRST. The remains of monarchical tyranny in the person of the king.

SECONDLY. The remains of aristocratical tyranny in the persons of the peers.

THIRDLY. The new republican materials, in the persons of the commons, on whose virtue depends the freedom of England.

The two first, by being hereditary, are independent of the people; wherefore in a CONSTITUTIONAL SENSE they contribute nothing towards the freedom of the state.

To say that the constitution of England is a UNION of three powers reciprocally CHECKING each other, is farcical, either the words have no meaning, or they are flat contradictions.

To say that the commons is a check upon the king, presupposes two things.

FIRST. That the king is not to be trusted without being looked after, or in other words, that a thirst for absolute power is the natural disease of monarchy.

SECONDLY. That the commons, by being appointed for that purpose, are either wiser or more worthy of confidence than the crown.

But as the same constitution which gives the commons a power to check the king by withholding the supplies, gives afterwards the king a power to check the commons, by empowering him to reject their other bills; it again supposes that the king is wiser than those whom it has already supposed to be wiser than him. A mere absurdity!

There is something exceedingly ridiculous in the composition of monarchy; it first excludes a man from the means of information, yet empowers him to act in cases where the highest judgment is required. The state of a king shuts him from the world, yet the business of a king requires him to know it thoroughly; wherefore the different parts, by unnaturally opposing and destroying each other, prove the whole character to be absurd and useless.

Some writers have explained the English constitution thus; the king, say they, is one, the people another; the peers are an house in behalf of the king; the commons in behalf of the people; but this hath all the distinctions of an house divided against itself; and though the expressions be pleasantly arranged, yet when examined they appear idle and ambiguous; and it will always happen, that the nicest construction

that words are capable of, when applied to the description of some thing which either cannot exist, or is too incomprehensible to be within the compass of description, will be words of sound only, and though they may amuse the ear, they cannot inform the mind, for this explanation includes a previous question, viz. HOW CAME THE KING BY A POWER WHICH THE PEOPLE ARE AFRAID TO TRUST, AND ALWAYS OBLIGED TO CHECK? Such a power could not be the gift of a wise people, neither can any power, WHICH NEEDS CHECKING, be from God; yet the provision, which the constitution makes, supposes such a power to exist.

But the provision is unequal to the task; the means either cannot or will not accomplish the end, and the whole affair is a *felo de se*; for as the greater weight will always carry up the less, and as all the wheels of a machine are put in motion by one, it only remains to know which power in the constitution has the most weight, for that will govern; and though the others, or a part of them, may clog, or, as the phrase is, check the rapidity of its motion, yet so long as they cannot stop it, their endeavors will be ineffectual; the first moving power will at last have its way, and what it wants in speed is supplied by time.

That the crown is this overbearing part in the English constitution needs not be mentioned, and that it derives its whole consequence merely from being the giver of places and pensions is self-evident; wherefore, though we have been wise enough to shut and lock a door against absolute monarchy, we at the same time have been foolish enough to put the crown in possession of the key.

The prejudice of Englishmen, in favour of their own government by king, lords and commons, arises as much or more from national pride than reason. Individuals are undoubtedly safer in England than in some other countries, but the WILL of the king is as much the LAW of the land in Britain as in France, with this difference, that instead of proceeding directly from his mouth, it is handed to the people under the more formidable shape of an act of parliament. For the fate of Charles the first, hath only made kings more subtle—not more just.

Wherefore, laying aside all national pride and prejudice in favour of modes and forms, the plain truth is, that IT IS WHOLLY OWING TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE PEOPLE, AND NOT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE GOVERNMENT

that the crown is not as oppressive in England as in Turkey.

An inquiry into the CONSTITUTIONAL ERRORS in the English form of government is at this time highly necessary; for as we are never in a proper condition of doing justice to others, while we continue under the influence of some leading partiality, so neither are we capable of doing it to ourselves while we remain fettered by any obstinate prejudice. And as a man, who is attached to a prostitute, is unfitted to choose or judge of a wife, so any prepossession in favour of a rotten constitution of government will disable us from discerning a good one.

Thoughts on the Present State of American Affairs

IN the following pages I offer nothing more than simple facts, plain arguments, and common sense; and have no other preliminaries to settle with the reader, than that he will divest himself of prejudice and prepossession, and suffer his reason and his feelings to determine for themselves; that he will put ON, or rather that he will not put OFF, the true character of a man, and generously enlarge his views beyond the present day.

Volumes have been written on the subject of the struggle between England and America. Men of all ranks have embarked in the controversy, from different motives, and with various designs; but all have been ineffectual, and the period of debate is closed. Arms, as the last resource, decide the contest; the appeal was the choice of the king, and the continent hath accepted the challenge.

It hath been reported of the late Mr Pelham (who tho' an able minister was not without his faults) that on his being attacked in the house of commons, on the score, that his measures were only of a temporary kind, replied, "THEY WILL LAST MY TIME." Should a thought so fatal and unmanly possess the colonies in the present contest, the name of ancestors will be remembered by future generations with detestation.

The sun never shined on a cause of greater worth. 'Tis not the affair of a city, a country, a province, or a kingdom, but of a continent—of at least one eighth part of the habitable globe. 'Tis not the concern of a day, a year, or an age; posterity are virtually involved in the contest, and will be more or less affected, even to the end of time, by the proceedings now. Now is the seed time of continental union, faith

and honor. The least fracture now will be like a name engraved with the point of a pin on the tender rind of a young oak; The wound will enlarge with the tree, and posterity read it in full grown characters.

By referring the matter from argument to arms, a new era for politics is struck; a new method of thinking hath arisen. All plans, proposals, &c. prior to the nineteenth of April, I. E. to the commencement of hostilities, are like the almanacks of the last year; which, though proper then, are superceded and useless now. Whatever was advanced by the advocates on either side of the question then, terminated in one and the same point, viz. a union with Great Britain; the only difference between the parties was the method of effecting it; the one proposing force, the other friendship; but it hath so far happened that the first hath failed, and the second hath withdrawn her influence.

As much hath been said of the advantages of reconciliation, which, like an agreeable dream, hath passed away and left us as we were, it is but right, that we should examine the contrary side of the argument, and inquire into some of the many material injuries which these colonies sustain, and always will sustain, by being connected with, and dependant on Great Britain. To examine that connexion and dependance, on the principles of nature and common sense, to see what we have to trust to, if separated, and what we are to expect, if dependant.

I have heard it asserted by some, that as America hath flourished under her former connexion with Great Britain, that the same connexion is necessary towards her future happiness, and will always have the same effect. Nothing can be more fallacious than this kind of argument. We may as well assert that because a child has thrived upon milk, that it is never to have meat, or that the first twenty years of our lives is to become a precedent for the next twenty. But even this is admitting more than is true, for I answer roundly, that America would have flourished as much, and probably much more, had no European power had any thing to do with her. The commerce, by which she hath enriched herself are the necessaries of life, and will always have a market while eating is the custom of Europe.

But she has protected us, say some. That she hath engrossed us is true, and defended the continent at our expence as well as her own is admitted, and she would have defended

Turkey from the same motive, viz. the sake of trade and dominion.

Alas, we have been long led away by ancient prejudices, and made large sacrifices to superstition. We have boasted the protection of Great Britain, without considering, that her motive was INTEREST not ATTACHMENT; that she did not protect us from OUR ENEMIES on OUR ACCOUNT, but from HER ENEMIES on HER OWN ACCOUNT, from those who had no quarrel with us on any OTHER ACCOUNT, and who will always be our enemies on the SAME ACCOUNT. Let Britain wave her pretensions to the continent, or the continent throw off the dependance, and we should be at peace with France and Spain were they at war with Britain. The miseries of Hanover last war ought to warn us against connexions.

It hath lately been asserted in parliament, that the colonies have no relation to each other but through the parent country, I. E. that Pennsylvania and the Jerseys, and so on for the rest, are sister colonies by the way of England; this is certainly a very round-about way of proving relationship, but it is the nearest and only true way of proving enemyship, if I may so call it. France and Spain never were, nor perhaps ever will be our enemies as AMERICANS, but as our being the SUBJECTS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

But Britain is the parent country, say some. Then the more shame upon her conduct. Even brutes do not devour their young, nor savages make war upon their families; wherefore the assertion, if true, turns to her reproach; but it happens not to be true, or only partly so, and the phrase PARENT or MOTHER COUNTRY hath been jesuitically adopted by the king and his parasites, with a low papistical design of gaining an unfair bias on the credulous weakness of our minds. Europe, and not England, is the parent country of America. This new world hath been the asylum for the persecuted lovers of civil and religious liberty from EVERY PART of Europe. Hither have they fled, not from the tender embraces of the mother, but from the cruelty of the monster; and it is so far true of England, that the same tyranny which drove the first emigrants from home, pursues their descendants still.

In this extensive quarter of the globe, we forget the narrow limits of three hundred and sixty miles (the extent of England) and carry our friendship on a larger scale; we claim brotherhood with every European christian, and triumph in the generosity of the sentiment.

It is pleasant to observe by what regular gradations we surmount the force of local prejudice, as we enlarge our acquaintance with the world. A man born in any town in England divided into parishes, will naturally associate most with his fellow parishioners (because their interests in many cases will be common) and distinguish him by the name of NEIGHBOUR; if he meet him but a few miles from home, he drops the narrow idea of a street, and salutes him by the name of TOWNSMAN; if he travel out of the county, and meet him in any other, he forgets the minor divisions of street and town, and calls him COUNTRYMAN; i. e. COUNTY-MAN; but if in their foreign excursions they should associate in France or any other part of EUROPE, their local remembrance would be enlarged into that of ENGLISHMEN. And by a just parity of reasoning, all Europeans meeting in America, or any other quarter of the globe, are COUNTRYMEN; for England, Holland, Germany, or Sweden, when compared with the whole, stand in the same places on the larger scale, which the divisions of street, town, and county do on the smaller ones; distinctions too limited for continental minds. Not one third of the inhabitants, even of this province, are of English descent. Wherefore I reprobate the phrase of parent or mother country applied to England only, as being false, selfish, narrow and ungenerous.

But admitting, that we were all of English descent, what does it amount to? Nothing. Britain, being now an open enemy, extinguishes every other name and title: And to say that reconciliation is our duty, is truly farcical. The first king of England, of the present line (William the Conqueror) was a Frenchman, and half the Peers of England are descendants from the same country; wherefore, by the same method of reasoning, England ought to be governed by France.

Much hath been said of the united strength of Britain and the colonies, that in conjunction they might bid defiance to the world. But this is mere presumption; the fate of war is uncertain, neither do the expressions mean any thing; for this continent would never suffer itself to be drained of inhabitants, to support the British arms in either Asia, Africa, or Europe.

Besides, what have we to do with setting the world at defiance? Our plan is commerce, and that, well attended to, will secure us the peace and friendship of all Europe; because, it is the interest of all Europe to have America a FREE PORT. Her trade will always

be a protection, and her barrenness of gold and silver secure her from invaders.

I challenge the warmest advocate for reconciliation, to shew, a single advantage that this continent can reap, by being connected with Great Britain. I repeat the challenge, not a single advantage is derived. Our corn will fetch its price in any market in Europe, and our imported goods must be paid for buy them where we will.

But the injuries and disadvantages we sustain by that connection, are without number; and our duty to mankind at large, as well as to ourselves, instruct us to renounce the alliance: Because, any submission to, or dependance on Great Britain, tends directly to involve this continent in European wars and quarrels; and sets us at variance with nations, who would otherwise seek our friendship, and against whom, we have neither anger nor complaint. As Europe is our market for trade, we ought to form no partial connection with any part of it. It is the true interest of America to steer clear of European contentions, which she never can do, while by her dependance on Britain, she is made the make-weight in the scale on British politics.

Europe is too thickly planted with kingdoms to be long at peace, and whenever a war breaks out between England and any foreign power, the trade of America goes to ruin, BECAUSE OF HER CONNECTION WITH BRITAIN. The next war may not turn out like the last, and should it not, the advocates for reconciliation now will be wishing for separation then, because, neutrality in that case, would be a safer convoy than a man of war. Every thing that is right or natural pleads for separation. The blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature cries, 'TIS TIME TO PART. Even the distance at which the Almighty hath placed England and America, is a strong and natural proof, that the authority of the one, over the other, was never the design of Heaven. The time likewise at which the continent was discovered, adds weight to the argument, and the manner in which it was peopled encreases the force of it. The reformation was preceded by the discovery of America, as if the Almighty graciously meant to open a sanctuary to the persecuted in future years, when home should afford neither friendship nor safety.

The authority of Great Britain over this continent, is a form of government, which sooner or later must have an end: And a serious mind can draw no true pleasure by looking forward, under the painful and positive conviction, that what he calls "the present constitution" is merely

temporary. As parents, we can have no joy, knowing that THIS GOVERNMENT is not sufficiently lasting to ensure any thing which we may bequeath to posterity: And by a plain method of argument, as we are running the next generation into debt, we ought to do the work of it, otherwise we use them meanly and pitifully. In order to discover the line of our duty rightly, we should take our children in our hand, and fix our station a few years farther into life; that eminence will present a prospect, which a few present fears and prejudices conceal from our sight.

Though I would carefully avoid giving unnecessary offence, yet I am inclined to believe, that all those who espouse the doctrine of reconciliation, may be included within the following descriptions. Interested men, who are not to be trusted; weak men, who CANNOT see; prejudiced men, who WILL NOT see; and a certain set of moderate men, who think better of the European world than it deserves; and this last class, by an ill-judged deliberation, will be the cause of more calamities to this continent, than all the other three.

It is the good fortune of many to live distant from the scene of sorrow; the evil is not sufficiently brought to THEIR doors to make THEM feel the precariousness with which all American property is possessed. But let our imaginations transport us for a few moments to Boston, that seat of wretchedness will teach us wisdom, and instruct us for ever to renounce a power in whom we can have no trust. The inhabitants of that unfortunate city, who but a few months ago were in ease and affluence, have now, no other alternative than to stay and starve, or turn out to beg. Endangered by the fire of their friends if they continue within the city, and plundered by the soldiery if they leave it. In their present condition they are prisoners without the hope of redemption, and in a general attack for their relief, they would be exposed to the fury of both armies.

Men of passive tempers look somewhat lightly over the offences of Britain, and, still hoping for the best, are apt to call out, "COME, COME, WE SHALL BE FRIENDS AGAIN, FOR ALL THIS." But examine the passions and feelings of mankind, Bring the doctrine of reconciliation to the touchstone of nature, and then tell me, whether you can hereafter love, honour, and faithfully serve the power that hath carried fire and sword into your land? If you cannot do all these, then are you only deceiving yourselves, and by your delay bringing ruin upon

posterity. Your future connection with Britain, whom you can neither love nor honour, will be forced and unnatural, and being formed only on the plan of present convenience, will in a little time fall into a relapse more wretched than the first. But if you say, you can still pass the violations over, then I ask, Hath your house been burnt? Hath your property been destroyed before your face? Are your wife and children destitute of a bed to lie on, or bread to live on? Have you lost a parent or a child by their hands, and yourself the ruined and wretched survivor? If you have not, then are you not a judge of those who have. But if you have, and still can shake hands with the murderers, then you are unworthy of the name of husband, father, friend, or lover, and whatever may be your rank or title in life, you have the heart of a coward, and the spirit of a sycophant.

This is not inflaming or exaggerating matters, but trying them by those feelings and affections which nature justifies, and without which, we should be incapable of discharging the social duties of life, or enjoying the felicities of it. I mean not to exhibit horror for the purpose of provoking revenge, but to awaken us from fatal and unmanly slumbers, that we may pursue determinately some fixed object. It is not in the power of Britain or of Europe to conquer America, if she do not conquer herself by DELAY and TIMIDITY. The present winter is worth an age if rightly employed, but if lost or neglected, the whole continent will partake of the misfortune; and there is no punishment which that man will not deserve, be he who, or what, or where he will, that may be the means of sacrificing a season so precious and useful.

It is repugnant to reason, to the universal order of things to all examples from former ages, to suppose, that this continent can longer remain subject to any external power. The most sanguine in Britain does not think so. The utmost stretch of human wisdom cannot, at this time, compass a plan short of separation, which can promise the continent even a year's security. Reconciliation is NOW a falacious dream. Nature hath deserted the connexion, and Art cannot supply her place. For, as Milton wisely expresses, "never can true reconcilment grow where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep."

Every quiet method for peace hath been ineffectual. Our prayers have been rejected with disdain; and only tended to convince us, that nothing flatters vanity, or confirms obstinacy in Kings more than repeated petitioning—and

noting hath contributed more than that very measure to make the Kings of Europe absolute: Witness Denmark and Sweden. Wherefore, since nothing but blows will do, for God's sake, let us come to a final separation, and not leave the next generation to be cutting throats, under the violated unmeaning names of parent and child.

To say, they will never attempt it again is idle and visionary, we thought so at the repeal of the stamp act, yet a year or two undeceived us; as well may we suppose that nations, which have been once defeated, will never renew the quarrel.

As to government matters, it is not in the power of Britain to do this continent justice: The business of it will soon be too weighty, and intricate, to be managed with any tolerable degree of convenience, by a power, so distant from us, and so very ignorant of us; for if they cannot conquer us, they cannot govern us. To be always running three or four thousand miles with a tale or a petition, waiting four or five months for an answer, which when obtained requires five or six more to explain it in, will in a few years be looked upon as folly and childishness—There was a time when it was proper, and there is a proper time for it to cease.

Small islands not capable of protecting themselves, are the proper objects for kingdoms to take under their care; but there is something very absurd, in supposing a continent to be perpetually governed by an island. In no instance hath nature made the satellite larger than its primary planet, and as England and America, with respect to each other, reverses the common order of nature, it is evident they belong to different systems: England to Europe, America to itself.

I am not induced by motives of pride, party, or resentment to espouse the doctrine of separation and independance; I am clearly, positively, and conscientiously persuaded that it is the true interest of this continent to be so; that every thing short of THAT is mere patchwork, that it can afford no lasting felicity,—that it is leaving the sword to our children, and shrinking back at a time, when, a little more, a little farther, would have rendered this continent the glory of the earth.

As Britain hath not manifested the least inclination towards a compromise, we may be assured that no terms can be obtained worthy the acceptance of the continent, or any ways equal to the expense of blood and treasure we have been already put to.

The object, contended for, ought always to bear some just proportion to the expense. The

removal of North, or the whole detestable junto, is a matter unworthy the millions we have expended. A temporary stoppage of trade, was an inconvenience, which would have sufficiently ballanced the repeal of all the acts complained of, had such repeals been obtained; but if the whole continent must take up arms, if every man must be a soldier, it is scarcely worth our while to fight against a contemptible ministry only. Dearly, dearly, do we pay for the repeal of the acts, if that is all we fight for; for in a just estimation, it is as great a folly to pay a Bunker-hill price for law, as for land. As I have always considered the independancy of this continent, as an event, which sooner or later must arrive, so from the late rapid progress of the continent to maturity, the event could not be far off. Wherefore, on the breaking out of hostilities, it was not worth the while to have disputed a matter, which time would have finally redressed, unless we meant to be in earnest; otherwise, it is like wasting an estate on a suit at law, to regulate the trespasses of a tenant, whose lease is just expiring. No man was a warmer wisher for reconciliation than myself, before the fatal nineteenth of April 1775, but the moment the event of that day was made known, I rejected the hardened, sullen tempered Pharaoh of England for ever; and disdain the wretch, that with the pretended title of FATHER OF HIS PEOPLE, can unfeelingly hear of their slaughter, and composedly sleep with their blood upon his soul.

But admitting that matters were now made up, what would be the event? I answer, the ruin of the continent. And that for several reasons.

FIRST. The powers of governing still remaining in the hands of the king, he will have a negative over the whole legislation of this continent. And as he hath shewn himself such an inveterate enemy to liberty, and discovered such a thirst for arbitrary power; is he, or is he not, a proper man to say to these colonies, "YOU SHALL MAKE NO LAWS BUT WHAT I PLEASE." And is there any inhabitant in America so ignorant, as not to know, that according to what is called the PRESENT CONSTITUTION, that this continent can make no laws but what the king gives it leave to; and is there any man so unwise, as not to see, that (considering what has happened) he will suffer no law to be made here, but such as suit HIS purpose. We may be as effectually enslaved by the want of laws in America, as by submitting to laws made for us in England. After matters are made up (as it is called) can there be any doubt,

but the whole power of the crown will be exerted, to keep this continent as low and humble as possible? Instead of going forward we shall go backward, or be perpetually quarrelling or ridiculously petitioning. We are already greater than the king wishes us to be, and will he not hereafter endeavour to make us less? To bring the matter to one point. Is the power who is jealous of our prosperity, a proper power to govern us? Whoever says NO to this question is an INDEPENDANT, for independancy means no more, than, whether we shall make our own laws, or, whether the king, the greatest enemy this continent hath, or can have, shall tell us, "THERE SHALL BE NO LAWS BUT SUCH AS I LIKE."

But the king you will say has a negative in England; the people there can make no laws without his consent. In point of right and good order, there is something very ridiculous, that a youth of twenty-one (which hath often happened) shall say to several millions of people, older and wiser than himself, I forbid this or that act of yours to be law. But in this place I decline this sort of reply, though I will never cease to expose the absurdity of it, and only answer, that England being the King's residence, and America not so, make quite another case. The king's negative HERE is ten times more dangerous and fatal than it can be in England, for THERE he will scarcely refuse his consent to a bill for putting England into as strong a state of defence as possible, and in America he would never suffer such a bill to be passed.

America is only a secondary object in the system of British politics, England consults the good of THIS country, no farther than it answers her OWN purpose. Wherefore, her own interest leads her to suppress the growth of OURS in every case which doth not promote her advantage, or in the least interferes with it. A pretty state we should soon be in under such a second-hand government, considering what has happened! Men do not change from enemies to friends by the alteration of a name: And in order to shew that reconciliation NOW is a dangerous doctrine, I affirm, THAT IT WOULD BE POLICY IN THE KING AT THIS TIME, TO REPEAL THE ACTS FOR THE SAKE OF REINSTATING HIMSELF IN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PROVINCES; in order that HE MAY ACCOMPLISH BY CRAFT AND SUBTILITY, IN THE LONG RUN, WHAT HE CANNOT DO BY FORCE AND VIOLENCE IN THE SHORT ONE. Reconciliation and ruin are nearly related.

SECONDLY. That as even the best terms, which we can expect to obtain, can amount to no more than a temporary expedient, or a kind of government by guardianship, which can last no longer than till the colonies come of age, so the general face and state of things, in the interim, will be unsettled and unpromising. Emigrants of property will not choose to come to a country whose form of government hangs but by a thread, and who is every day tottering on the brink of commotion and disturbance; and numbers of the present inhabitants would lay hold of the interval, to dispose of their effects, and quit the continent.

But the most powerful of all arguments, is, that nothing but independance, i. e. a continental form of government, can keep the peace of the continent and preserve it inviolate from civil wars. I dread the event of a reconciliation with Britain now, as it is more than probable, that it will followed by a revolt somewhere or other, the consequences of which may be far more fatal than all the malice of Britain.

Thousands are already ruined by British barbarity; (thousands more will probably suffer the same fate.) Those men have other feelings than us who have nothing suffered. All they NOW possess is liberty, what they before enjoyed is sacrificed to its service, and having nothing more to lose, they disdain submission. Besides, the general temper of the colonies, towards a British government, will be like that of a youth, who is nearly out of his time; they will care very little about her. And a government which cannot preserve the peace, is no government at all, and in that case we pay our money for nothing; and pray what is it that Britain can do, whose power will be wholly on paper, should a civil tumult break out the very day after reconciliation? I have heard some men say, many of whom I believe spoke without thinking, that they dreaded an independance, fearing that it would produce civil wars. It is but seldom that our first thoughts are truly correct, and that is the case here; for there are ten times more to dread from a patched up connexion than from independance. I make the sufferers case my own, and I protest, that were I driven from house and home, my property destroyed, and my circumstances ruined, that as a man, sensible of injuries, I could never relish the doctrine of reconciliation, or consider myself bound thereby.

The colonies have manifested such a spirit of good order and obedience to continental government, as is sufficient to make every

reasonable person easy and happy on that head. No man can assign the least pretence for his fears, on any other grounds, that such as are truly childish and ridiculous, viz. that one colony will be striving for superiority over another.

Where there are no distinctions there can be no superiority, perfect equality affords no temptation. The republics of Europe are all (and we may say always) in peace. Holland and Swisserland are without wars, foreign or domestic: Monarchical governments, it is true, are never long at rest; the crown itself is a temptation to enterprizing ruffians at HOME; and that degree of pride and insolence ever attendant on regal authority, swells into a rupture with foreign powers, in instances, where a republican government, by being formed on more natural principles, would negotiate the mistake.

If there is any true cause of fear respecting independance, it is because no plan is yet laid down. Men do not see their way out—Wherefore, as an opening into that business, I offer the following hints; at the same time modestly affirming, that I have no other opinion of them myself, than that they may be the means of giving rise to something better. Could the stragling thoughts of individuals be collected, they would frequently form materials for wise and able men to improve into useful matter.

Let the assemblies be annual, with a President only. The representation more equal. Their business wholly domestic, and subject to the authority of a Continental Congress.

Let each colony be divided into six, eight, or ten, convenient districts, each district to send a proper number of delegates to Congress, so that each colony send at least thirty. The whole number in Congress will be least 390. Each Congress to sit and to choose a president by the following method. When the delegates are met, let a colony be taken from the whole thirteen colonies by lot, after which, let the whole Congress choose (by ballot) a president from out of the delegates of THAT province. In the next Congress, let a colony be taken by lot from twelve only, omitting that colony from which the president was taken in the former Congress, and so proceeding on till the whole thirteen shall have had their proper rotation. And in order that nothing may pass into a law but what is satisfactorily just, not less than three fifths of the Congress to be called a majority. He that will promote discord, under a government so equally formed as this, would have joined Lucifer in his revolt.

But as there is a peculiar delicacy, from whom, or in what manner, this business must first arise, and as it seems most agreeable and consistent that it should come from some intermediate body between the governed and the governors, that is, between the Congress and the people, let a CONTINENTAL CONFERENCE be held, in the following manner, and for the following purpose.

A committee of twenty-six members of Congress, viz. two for each colony. Two members for each House of Assembly, or Provincial Convention; and five representatives of the people at large, to be chosen in the capital city or town of each province, for, and in behalf of the whole province, by as many qualified voters as shall think proper to attend from all parts of the province for that purpose; or, if more convenient, the representatives may be chosen in two or three of the most populous parts thereof. In this conference, thus assembled, will be united, the two grand principles of business, KNOWLEDGE and POWER. The members of Congress, Assemblies, or Conventions, by having had experience in national concerns, will be able and useful counsellors, and the whole, being impowered by the people, will have a truly legal authority.

The conferring members being met, let their business be to frame a CONTINENTAL CHARTER, or Charter of the United Colonies; (answering to what is called the Magna Charta of England) fixing the number and manner of choosing members of Congress, members of Assembly, with their date of sitting, and drawing the line of business and jurisdiction between them: (Always remembering, that our strength is continental, not provincial:.) Securing freedom and property to all men, and above all things, the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience; with such other matter as is necessary for a charter to contain. Immediately after which, the said Conference to dissolve, and the bodies which shall be chosen conformable to the said charter, to be the legislators and governors of this continent for the time being: Whose peace and happiness, may God preserve, Amen.

Should any body of men be hereafter delegated for this or some similar purpose, I offer them the following extracts from that wise observer on governments DRAGONETTI. “The science” says he “of the politician consists in fixing the true point of happiness and freedom. Those men would deserve the gratitude of ages, who should discover a mode of government that

contained the greatest sum of individual happiness, with the least national expense.” “DRAGONETTI ON VIRTUE AND REWARDS.”

But where says some is the King of America? I'll tell you Friend, he reigns above, and doth not make havoc of mankind like the Royal Brute of Britain. Yet that we may not appear to be defective even in earthly honors, let a day be solemnly set apart for proclaiming the charter; let it be brought forth placed on the divine law, the word of God; let a crown be placed thereon, by which the world may know, that so far as we approve as monarchy, that in America THE LAW IS KING. For as in absolute governments the King is law, so in free countries the law OUGHT to be King; and there ought to be no other. But lest any ill use should afterwards arise, let the crown at the conclusion of the ceremony be demolished, and scattered among the people whose right it is.

A government of our own is our natural right: And when a man seriously reflects on the precariousness of human affairs, he will become convinced, that it is infinitely wiser and safer, to form a constitution of our own in a cool deliberate manner, while we have it in our power, than to trust such an interesting event to time and chance. If we omit it now, some, [*1] Massanello may hereafter arise, who laying hold of popular disquietudes, may collect together the desperate and discontented, and by assuming to themselves the powers of government, may sweep away the liberties of the continent like a deluge. Should the government of America return again into the hands of Britain, the tottering situation of things, will be a temptation for some desperate adventurer to try his fortune; and in such a case, what relief can Britain give? Ere she could hear the news, the fatal business might be done; and ourselves suffering like the wretched Britons under the oppression of the Conqueror. Ye that oppose independance now, ye know not what ye do; ye are opening a door to eternal tyranny, by keeping vacant the seat of government. There are thousands, and tens of thousands, who would think it glorious to expel from the continent, that barbarous and hellish power, which hath stirred up the Indians and Negroes to destroy us, the cruelty hath a double guilt, it is dealing brutally by us, and treacherously by them.

To talk of friendship with those in whom our reason forbids us to have faith, and our affections wounded through a thousand pores instruct us to detest, is madness and folly. Every

day wears out the little remains of kindred between us and them, and can there be any reason to hope, that as the relationship expires, the affection will increase, or that we shall agree better, when we have ten times more and greater concerns to quarrel over than ever?

Ye that tell us of harmony and reconciliation, can ye restore to us the time that is past? Can ye give to prostitution its former innocence? Neither can ye reconcile Britain and America. The last cord now is broken, the people of England are presenting addresses against us. There are injuries which nature cannot forgive; she would cease to be nature if she did. As well can the lover forgive the ravisher of his mistress, as the continent forgive the murders of Britain. The Almighty hath implanted in us these unextinguishable feelings for good and wise purposes. They are the guardians of his image in our hearts. They distinguish us from the herd of common animals. The social compact would dissolve, and justice be extirpated from the earth, or have only a casual existence were we callous to the touches of affection. The robber, and the murderer, would often escape unpunished, did not the injuries which our tempers sustain, provoke us into justice.

O ye that love mankind! Ye that dare oppose, not only the tyranny, but the tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the old world is overrun with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted round the globe. Asia, and Africa, have long expelled her. Europe regards her like a stranger, and England hath given her warning to depart. O! receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind.

Note 1 Thomas Anello, otherwise Massanello, a fisherman of Naples, who after spiriting up his countrymen in the public market place, against the oppression of the Spaniards, to whom the place was then subject, prompted them to revolt, and in the space of a day became king.

Paul Revere's Ride (1860)
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Listen my children and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.

He said to his friend, "If the British march
By land or sea from the town to-night,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch
Of the North Church tower as a signal light--
One if by land, and two if by sea;
And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm,
For the country folk to be up and to arm."

Then he said "Good-night!" and with muffled oar
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,
Just as the moon rose over the bay,
Where swinging wide at her moorings lay
The Somerset, British man-of-war;
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar
Across the moon like a prison bar,
And a huge black hulk, that was magnified
By its own reflection in the tide.

Meanwhile, his friend, through alley and street
Wanders and watches with eager ears,
Till in the silence around him he hears
The muster of men at the barrack door,
The sound of arms, and the tramp of feet,
And the measured tread of the grenadiers,
Marching down to their boats on the shore.

Then he climbed to the tower of the church,
Up the wooden stairs, with stealthy tread,
To the belfry-chamber overhead,
And startled the pigeons from their perch
On the sombre rafters, that round him made
Masses and moving shapes of shade,--
By the trembling ladder, steep and tall,
To the highest window in the wall,
Where he paused to listen and look down
A moment on the roofs of the town
And the moonlight flowing over all.

Beneath, in the churchyard, lay the dead,
In their night-encampment on the hill,
Wrapped in silence so deep and still
That he could hear, like a sentinel's tread,
The watchful night-wind, as it went

Creeping along from tent to tent,
And seeming to whisper, "All is well!"
A moment only he feels the spell
Of the place and the hour, and the secret dread
Of the lonely belfry and the dead;
For suddenly all his thoughts are bent
On a shadowy something far away,
Where the river widens to meet the bay,--
A line of black that bends and floats
On the rising tide like a bridge of boats.

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride
On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.
Now he patted his horse's side,
Now he gazed at the landscape far and near,
Then, impetuous, stamped the earth,
And turned and tightened his saddle girth;
But mostly he watched with eager search
The belfry-tower of the Old North Church,
As it rose above the graves on the hill,
Lonely and spectral and sombre and still.
And lo! as he looks, on the belfry's height
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!
He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight
A second lamp in the belfry burns!

A hurry of hoofs in a village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a spark
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet;
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and the
light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night;
And the spark struck out by that steed, in his flight,
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.
He has left the village and mounted the steep,
And beneath him, tranquil and broad and deep,
Is the Mystic, meeting the ocean tides;
And under the alders that skirt its edge,
Now soft on the sand, now loud on the ledge,
Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides.

It was twelve by the village clock
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town.
He heard the crowing of the cock,
And the barking of the farmer's dog,
And felt the damp of the river fog,
That rises after the sun goes down.

It was one by the village clock,
When he galloped into Lexington.
He saw the gilded weathercock
Swim in the moonlight as he passed,
And the meeting-house windows, black and bare,
Gaze at him with a spectral glare,
As if they already stood aghast
At the bloody work they would look upon.

It was two by the village clock,
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.
He heard the bleating of the flock,
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze
Blowing over the meadow brown.
And one was safe and asleep in his bed
Who at the bridge would be first to fall,
Who that day would be lying dead,
Pierced by a British musket ball.
You know the rest. In the books you have read
How the British Regulars fired and fled,---
How the farmers gave them ball for ball,
From behind each fence and farmyard wall,
Chasing the redcoats down the lane,
Then crossing the fields to emerge again
Under the trees at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.

So through the night rode Paul Revere;
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex village and farm,---
A cry of defiance, and not of fear,
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo for evermore!
For, borne on the night-wind of the Past,
Through all our history, to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.