of receiving and communicating to Congress your favour of the 15th October last. The apprehensions you then entertained have been removed by the subsequent estrangements between France and Britain. For my part I wish they may continue at peace, as well because war always brings distress upon great numbers as because the present state of our affairs is not accommodated to the circumstances and consequences which such a war would produce. You have doubtless seen the plan of government recommended by the late convention at Philadelphia. Six States have adopted it; what the others will do is not certain. It is the subject of animated discussions among the people. In this State the opposition is considerable. A few months more will decide the great question.

The late commercial regulations of France relative to this country are certainly very acceptable, but my private opinion is that much more is yet to be done before the interests of France and America will be properly provided for. I fear the prejudices and partial views of your people will restrain the court from going all the lengths which true policy seems to dictate; nor can I answer for opinions on this side of the water. I will tell you very candidly what I think on the subject; it is this—that your people should have all the commercial privileges of American citizens, and our people all the commercial privileges of French subjects. I have not at present health or leisure to explain the reasons on which this opinion rests, nor is it necessary, for I am persuaded that few of them will escape your observation. Mr. Jefferson’s letters mention your constant attention and attachment to the interests of this country, and how much he and we are indebted to your friendly aid and exertions.

With very sincere esteem and regard, I have the honour to be, dear sir, your most obedient and humble servant,

John Jay.

GRANVILLE SHARP TO THE PRESIDENT,1 VICE-PRESIDENT, AND TREASURER OF THE SOCIETY ESTABLISHED IN NEW YORK FOR THE MANUMISSION OF SLAVES.

LONDON, May 1, 1788.

Gentlemen:

We received your favour of the 28th of Feb. last which afforded us much satisfaction, and we have now the pleasure of informing you that our cause is daily gaining ground in this Country. Our opponents have long urged the supposed incapacity of the black people to enjoy the blessings of freedom and civilization, as a plea for Slavery; but they now seem to be sensible of its futility.—Their Arguments, or rather insinuations, have lately been more particularly confined to the impolicy of abolishing the Slave trade, on which they would have it believed that the existence of the Plantations and the consequent revenue of this Kingdom essentially depends. On the other hand it is contended, and we trust on much better authority, that neither injury to the Plantations nor defalcation of revenue would eventually ensue.—

To the doubts industriously suggested by some who are interested in favouring the former Opinion we may partly

1 To Jay as President of the Society. See his letters to the French Society, June, 1788, and to Lafayette and Sharp, September 1st following.
attribute the prayers of some of the numerous petitions which have already been presented to the House of Commons requesting the mere regulation of a Commerce which no possible modification can rectify. But we are inclined to believe that many of them were so expressed from inadvertence, or the want of a thorough knowledge of the subject.

Remembering the declarations of the American Congress so frequently repeated during the contention with Britain, we could not but flatter ourselves that the late Convention would have produced more unequivocal proofs of a regard to consistency of character than an absolute prohibition of Federal Government from complying with the acknowledged obligations of humanity and justice, for the term of twenty-one years.

What may be the event of the Parliamentary discussion of this important business is yet uncertain at present; the prospect is encouraging and though we are aware how liable those expectations are to fail, which depend upon simple and honest principles when opposed by the intrigues of wealth and power, yet we can scarcely avoid flattering ourselves with the hope arising from the number and respectability of the patrons of this undertaking that it will at length be successful.—Our adversaries, who had till lately, been remarkably quiet, probably because they held our endeavours in contempt, have now taken the alarm, and use every artifice of Sophistry and misrepresentation to defeat our purpose. One of their most plausible Allegations is that, if the British Nation should lay down the trade, other Nations will take it up; and therefore that the situation of the Africans would not be improved, though England would sustain a considerable loss. The reply is obvious; that this Nation ought to do what is right, let others do as they please; and we have a strong persuasion that, on the whole, the African Trade is a losing one to this Country. It is however our fervent wish, that an Appeal might be made to the humanity of other Countries and Governments; and for this purpose we some time ago commenced a Correspondence in France. A Society is now forming there, whose object it will be to diffuse the knowledge of this traffic and shew it in its true colours.—It may perhaps be in your power to assist our views in thus extending the sphere of action. The Privy Council is now engaged in enquiries into the Slave Trade, and the Colonial Slavery; and we expect the Subject will shortly be investigated in Parliament. The University of Cambridge has expressed its sense of it, in a very forcible Petition to the House of Commons, and the Clergy of the established Church in many other parts have equally testified their zeal in the Common Cause. Many Counties, Cities, and Towns have sent up Petitions. Amongst the Cities we have the satisfaction to enumerate Bristol, one capital Seat of the African Trade. The Presbyterians, Independants, and Baptists have petitioned collectively; and the religious Society called Quakers have repeated their applications on the occasion. More petitions are expected from various quarters. The attempt to retrieve the National Character and assert the common rights of our Nature has awakened the attention, and excited the good wishes of people of all descriptions. It was only necessary that the torch of truth should be lighted to flash conviction in the face of humanity. But Avarice is willfully blind. One solitary petition is come up against us from the town of Liverpool; yet we are not without well wishers and even Advocates in that Summary of Slave traders. We shall herewith send you some copies of this committee's report to our Society at large, as also such other of the tracts lately published here on the Subject as we can collect; some of these you may think it proper to republish and we shall be obliged by any returns of the same kind you may be able to make. Referring you to our
DEAR SIR:

I am indebted to you for your favors of the 20th and 24th ult., and thank you for your care of my foreign letters. I do the same for the pamphlet you were so obliging as to send me. The good sense, forcible observations, temper and moderation with which it is written cannot fail, I should think, of making a serious impression even upon the antifederal mind where it is not under the influence of such local views as will yield to no arguments—no proofs.

Could you conveniently, furnish me with another of these pamphlets I would thank you, having sent the last to a friend of mine.

Since the elections in this State little doubt is entertained of the adoption of the proposed Constitution with us (if no mistake has been made with respect to the sentiments of the Kentucky members).—The opponents to it I am informed are now also of this opinion.—Their grand manoeuvres were exhibited at the elections, and some of them, if report be true, were not much to their credit.—Failing in their attempt to exclude the friends to the new Government from the Convention, and baffled in their exertions to effect an adjournment in Maryland, they have become more passive of late. Should South Carolina (now in session) decide favourably, and the government thereby (nine States having acceded) get in motion, I can scarcely conceive that any one of the remainder, or all of them together, were they to converse for the purpose of deliberation, would (separated from each other as they then would be in a geographical point of view) incline to withdraw from the union with the other nine.

Mrs. Washington unites with me in compliments and good wishes for you and Mrs. Jay, and with sentiments of very great esteem and regard I am, Dear Sir,

Yr. most obedient and affectionate servant,

G. WASHINGTON.

JAY TO TENCH COXE.

New York, 18th May, 1788.

SIR:

Your favour of the 8th instant was delivered to me this morning.

It is much to the honour of Pennsylvannia that the cause of humanity has in so many instances been patronized and asserted by her citizens. The situation of our unfortunate countrymen in captivity at Algiers is greatly to be lamented. Congress has not been unmindful of them. Everything has been done and is doing that circumstances would permit. That business is now under the direction of Mr. Jefferson who is very able as well as willing to conduct it properly. There is reason to fear that every measure that may now be taken publicly for their redemption will enhance the price of it, and increase the difficulties which at present exist. In my opinion nothing better can be done than to leave the matter
Advises from your country lead us to expect some important changes in government will likewise take place there. It is to be hoped that neither party will extend their views too far, and that an undue desire of innovation may not make them forget that the prerogatives of the crown and the rights of the people may and ought to be so defined and confirmed, as that instead of being hostile to each other they may conspire in promoting the glory and happiness of the kingdom.

With the best wishes for your health and prosperity I have the honor to be, dear sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

John Jay.

JAY TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

New York, 1st September, 1788.

Dear Sir:
The society in this city for promoting the manumission of slaves, etc., were much pleased to find you were a member of a similar one at Paris. They have admitted you an honourary member of theirs, and sincerely wish that your generous exertions in the cause of freedom and humanity may continue to be crowned with success.

With sentiments of real esteem and attachment, I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate and humble servant,

John Jay,

President.

JAY TO GRANVILLE SHARPE.

New York, 1st September, 1788.

Sir:
The society established in this city for promoting the manumission of slaves did at their last meeting admit you an honourary member of it, and I have now the pleasure of transmitting to you herewith enclosed a certified extract from their minutes on the subject. Be pleased, sir, to consider this as a mark of the esteem and respect with which your exertions in the cause of humanity have inspired them, and permit me to assure you that, with similar sentiments, I have the honour, to be, sir,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

John Jay.

JAY TO WILLIAM CARMICHAEL.

Office for Foreign Affairs, 9th September, 1788.

Sir:
You will receive herewith enclosed a certified copy of an act of Georgia of the 30th January last, and of a letter from Governor de Lespíos dated the 12th of December, 1787. These papers I have the honor of transmitting to you by order of Congress. They respect the inconveniences which the States bordering on the Floridas experience from the asylum afforded to their fugitive slaves in those provinces of her Catholic Majesty. Although this is a practice not consistent with good neighbourhood, yet it seems from the letter of Governor Lespíos that without instructions from her court it will not be in his
JAY TO MRS. JAY.

MY DEAR SALLY:  
Poughkeepsie, 21 June, 1788.

A gentleman now in town, and who will set out for New York in about an hour, gives me an opportunity of writing you a few lines. The convention assembled with unusual punctuality. There are not more than two members that I recollect absent, and the house has entered on the business with great assiduity and regularity. As yet, these proceedings and debates have been temperate and inoffensive to either party. The opposition to the proposed Constitution appears formidable, though more so from numbers than other considerations. What the event will be is uncertain. For my part I do not despair on the one hand, although I see much room for apprehension on the other.

It would give me great pleasure to hear that your health has been mended by the leisure, air, and exercise which your present situation affords. Mine continues in the state it was when we parted. As Peter omitted to take leave of me, I hope he will think it but right to make amends by the number of his letters. Remember me affectionately to all the family. Adieu, my dear Sally. Yours very sincerely,

JOHN JAY.

JAY TO THE ENGLISH ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.¹

GENTLEMEN:

Our society has been favoured with your letter of the 1st of May last, and are happy that efforts so honourable to the nation are making in your country to promote the cause of justice and humanity relative to the Africans. That they who know the value of liberty, and are blessed with the enjoyment of it, ought not to subject others to slavery, is, like most other moral precepts, more generally admitted in theory than observed in practice. This will continue to be too much the case while men are impelled to action by their passions rather than their reason, and while they are more solicitous to acquire wealth than to do as they would be done by. Hence it is that India and Africa experience unmerited oppression from nations which have been long distinguished by their attachment to their civil and religious liberties, but who have expended not much less blood and treasure in violating the rights of others than in defending their own. The United States are far from being irreprouachable in this respect. It undoubtedly is very inconsistent with their declarations on the subject of human rights to permit a single slave to be found within their jurisdiction, and we confess the justice of your strictures on that head.

Permit us, however, to observe, that although consequences ought not to deter us from doing what is right, yet that it is not easy to persuade men in general to act on that magnanimous and disinterested principle. It is well known that errors, either in opinion or practice, long entertained or indulged, are difficult to eradicate, and particularly so when they have become, as it were, incorporated in the

¹ In 1788 a society in France, and another in England, formed for promoting the abolition of slavery, opened a correspondence with the New York society through its president. The above letter to the English society was from Jay's pen. See letter from Granville Sharp, May 1, 1788.
civil institutions and domestic economy of a whole people.

Prior to the great revolution, the great majority of rather the great body of our people had been so long accustomed to the practice and convenience of having slaves, that very few among them even doubted the propriety and rectitude of it. Some liberal and conscientious men had, indeed, by their conduct and writings, drawn the lawfulness of slavery into question, and they made converts to that opinion; but the number of those converts compared with the people at large was then very inconsiderable. Their doctrines prevailed by almost insensible degrees, and was like the little lump of leaven which was put into three measures of meal: even at this day, the whole mass is far from being leavened, though we have good reason to hope and to believe that if the natural operations of truth are constantly watched and assisted, but not forced and precipitated, that end we all aim at will finally be attained in this country.

The Convention which formed and recommended the new Constitution had an arduous task to perform, especially as local interests, and in some measure local prejudices, were to be accommodated. Several of the States conceived that restraints on slavery might be too rapid to consist with their particular circumstances; and the importance of union rendered it necessary that their wishes on that head should, in some degree, be gratified.

It gives us pleasure to inform you, that a disposition favourable to our views and wishes prevails more and more, and that it has already had an influence on our laws. When it is considered how many of the legislators in the different States are proprietors of slaves, and what opinions and prejudices they have imbibed on the subject from their infancy, a sudden and total stop to this species of oppression is not to be expected.

We will cheerfully co-operate with you in endeavouring to procure advocates for the same cause in other countries, and perfectly approve and commend your establishing a correspondence in France. It appears to have produced the desired effect; for Mons. De Varville, the secretary of a society for the like benevolent purpose at Paris, is now here, and comes instructed to establish a correspondence with us, and to collect such information as may promote our common views. He delivered to our society an extract from the minutes of your proceedings, dated 8th of April last, recommending him to our attention, and upon that occasion they passed the resolutions of which the enclosed are copies.

We are much obliged by the pamphlets enclosed with your letter, and shall constantly make such communications to you as may appear to us interesting.

By a report of the committee for superintending the school we have established in this city for the education of negro children, we find that proper attention is paid to it, and that —— scholars are now taught in it. By the laws of this State, masters may now liberate healthy slaves of a proper age without giving security that they shall not become a parish charge; and the exportation as well as importation of
them is prohibited. The State has also manumitted such as became its property by confiscation; and we have reason to expect that the maxim, that every man, of whatever colour, is to be presumed to be free until the contrary be shown, will prevail in our courts of justice. Manumissions daily become more common among us; and the treatment which slaves in general meet with in this State is very little different from that of other servants.

I have the honour to be, gentlemen,

Your humble servant,

JOHN JAY,

President of the Society for Promoting the Manumission of Slaves.

---

JAY TO THE SOCIETY AT PARIS FOR THE MANUMISSION OF SLAVES.

New York, June 7, 1788.

Gentlemen:
The society established here for promoting the manumission of slaves, etc., have lately received from Monsr. Brissot de Varville the letter which you did them the honour to write on the 29th of April last. We have orders to assure you that the institution of a society at Paris for purposes so benevolent gives them very sincere satisfaction, and that they will most cheerfully co-operate with you in every measure that may be deemed conducive to those important ends. You will perceive from the enclosed extracts from their journal that Monsr. de Varville may expect from them all the attention and aid which is due to your recommendation and his personal character, as well as to the interesting objects of his voyage. As a further mark of respect for you and for him they have admitted him as an honorary member of the society, and we flatter ourselves you will soon receive from him such information respecting our views, proceedings, and prospects as to preclude the necessity of such detail at present. 1

We are happy to find that a correspondence subsists between your society and the one in London; and it gives us pleasure to reflect that the cause of humanity cannot fail to derive very essential advantages from the patronage and exertions of the enlightened and respectable characters in both kingdoms who at present advocate it.

---

JAY TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

Poughkeepsie, June 30th, 1788.

Dear Sir:

Your obliging letter of the 8th instant found me at this place. I thank you for the interesting circumstances mentioned in it. The completion of our

1 M. Jean Pierre Brissot de Varville, secretary of the Paris Manumission Society, was introduced to the members of the New York Society in the communication of April 29th, as a gentleman "who, by his Sentiments of humanity, his talents, and his unremitted zeal, has principally contributed to the institution and progress of our Society, and has now undertaken a voyage to North America. In the course of this voyage he proposes to acquire all the information possible, respecting the condition of the negroes in that part of the world, the measures taken either to manumit them or prevent their importation, the result of those measures in relation both to the cultivation of the land, and the moral character of the negroes, and in general, whatever may concern that unfortunate but interesting class of men, and may conduct to incline Governments and individuals in their favor."
MEMOIRS
OF
GRANVILLE SHARP, ESQ.
COMPOSED
FROM HIS OWN MANUSCRIPTS,
AND OTHER
AUTHENTIC DOCUMENTS IN THE POSSESSION OF HIS FAMILY
AND OF THE
AFRICAN INSTITUTION.

BY PRINCE HOARE.

WITH
OBSERVATIONS ON MR. SHARP'S BIBLICAL CRITICISMS,
BY THE
RIGHT REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF SALISBURY.

"INTAMINATI......HONORIBUS."

SECOND EDITION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.
1828.
Some disasters, however, had attended the reinforcement sent by the Myro, and numerous obstacles still opposed themselves to the security of the colony, but not sufficient either to damp the courage and perseverance of its founder, or wholly to destroy the satisfaction which he derived from the success of his last effort.

G. S. to the Hon. John Jay, President of the Society at New York for promoting the Manumission of Slaves, &c. and protecting such of them as have been liberated.

[EXTRACT.]

(In answer to a Letter dated Sept. 1, 1788, inserted vol. i. p. 376.)

"Sir, "March 7, 1789.

"I am truly sensible of the honour conferred upon me by the Society at New York for promoting the Manumission of Slaves, &c., and request you, Sir, to return my sincere thanks for so great a mark of their favour, and approbation of my poor endeavours in the same charitable cause which they patronize. I ought, indeed, to have made my acknowledgments much sooner; but I was then in daily expectation of the arrival of a small ship, the Myro brig, Captain Taylor, which I sent out last June to the coast of Africa, with some poor Negroes and other Settlers, to the new settlement at Sierra Leone; and as I had heard that there are also many poor Negroes at New York, and other parts of America, who wish to find a comfortable settlement on the coast of Africa, and that the States were inclined to provide them with shipping, I thought it right to defer my answer, until I should be able (by the return of the Myro) to give some more authentic account of the present state of that settlement; because my only views in promoting it seem to be perfectly similar
to the declared purposes of your Society; for I wished that the Province of Freedom, on the Mountains of Sierra Leone, might become a happy asylum for the liberated Negroes of America and the West Indies, as well as of the Black poor sent from England.—It is but within a very few days that I have received the long-expected letters from the settlement, and the diary of Captain Taylor's proceedings.—I am sorry to inform you, that the accounts are much more unfavourable than I had reason to expect: thirteen persons out of thirty-nine, whom I sent by the Myro, are dead; and almost all the passengers had been ill. This, however, I still find, is not to be attributed altogether to the climate, but to a total neglect in clearing the underwood near the settlement, and to the want of judgment in the Settlers, who have built their houses and huts on swampy ground, near the bottom of a hill, instead of the top of it, where Captain Thompson, who conducted the first Settlers, pitched his tent: for that gentleman assured me that he found a much cooler and fresher sea-breeze at the top of the little hill, than even on board his ship, which lay out at some distance from shore; and that there are some very high hills, on which all degrees of climate are to be found. It seems, also, that too free a use of strong liquors (notwithstanding the earnest warning I gave to the passengers of the Myro concerning the fatal intemperance of the former Settlers) is still to be reckoned among the causes of continued impediment and sickness. I do not yet repent, however, of the great expense I have been at in assisting the settlement; for I still hope that it may be maintained, and improved by a little prudent management.

"Great numbers of the dispersed Settlers returned on the arrival of the Myro; and King Naimbanna, one of the most powerful chiefs in that neighbourhood, who before
refused to sign the former deed of purchase for the land, and lately, just before the arrival of the Myro, had even given the Settlers warning to quit the settlement, has now formed a solemn covenant with Captain Taylor in behalf of the Settlers; and, in consideration of the presents received as the stipulated price of re-purchase, has signed a complete deed of resignation to the Settlers for ever, of all the land before granted by King Tom, whose successor, since his death, has also signed the deed, with some other chiefs: so that my sending the Myro has really saved the settlement. But King Naimbanua has reserved to himself a duty of fifteen bars, to be paid by all ships which water in the Bay: each bar is worth about 8s. 4d.

"Captain Thompson likewise informs me, that the distance from St. George's Bay (formerly called Frenchman's Bay), where the new settlement commences on the west side, to Gambia Island, the eastern boundary of it, is above twenty miles: so that the new territory is really much larger than the whole island of Barbadoes, being twenty miles each way, or full four hundred square miles of land, covered with noble forests of timber and perpetual verdure.

"When Captain Taylor left the settlement last September, the number of people was still about one hundred and thirty in all; and I have no doubt they will gladly receive any free Negroes that the States of America shall be pleased to assist with passage, provisions, and necessaries for defence and establishment; provided that such new Settlers will promise to observe and maintain the present laws and regulations of the settlement, which are founded on the Common Law of England.

"I have not yet been able to hear of any other part of the African coast that is equally fit for a free settlement; and I am well aware that your States may probably be.
unwilling to incur any considerable expense in supplying a territory with inhabitants, who must be required to acknowledge the sovereignty of the Crown of England; the first purchase of the lands, as well as the second, having been made in the King's name. But as the Government of England permits the Settlers to make their own laws (i.e. such as are not inconsistent with the Common Law of England), to hold their own courts, assemblies, folk-motes, &c. to choose their own chiefs and officers, and to keep up a free militia amongst themselves,—the settlement, on such conditions, must of necessity be perfectly free.

"For your further information, I send you the printed Regulations.

"Having incurred a very large expense already in the new settlement, I cannot afford it any further pecuniary assistance at present; but I shall be very happy to use my best endeavours to promote the kind reception of all such free Negroes, or other persons, as the States of America, or your Society, shall think proper to send thither; provided they have no objections to the Regulations.

"I am, with great respect, Sir," &c. &c.