

# HENRY ADAMS

THE LIFE OF  
ALBERT  
GALLATIN

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# Henry Adams

## The Life of Albert Gallatin

### PREFACE

A LARGE part of the following biography relates to a period of American history as yet unwritten, and is intended to supply historians with material which, except in such a form, would be little likely to see the light. The principal private source from which the author has drawn his information is of course the rich collection of papers which Albert Gallatin left behind him in the hands of his only now surviving son and literary executor, under whose direction these volumes are published. By the liberality and courtesy of Mr. Evarts, Secretary of State, and the active assistance of the admirable organization of the State Department, much material in the government archives at Washington has been made accessible, without which the story must have been little more than a fragment. The interesting series of letters addressed to Joseph H. Nicholson are drawn from the Nicholson MSS., which Judge Alexander B. Hagner kindly placed in the author's hands at a moment when he had abandoned the hope of tracing them. For other valuable papers and information he is indebted to Miss Sarah N. Randolph, of Edgehill, the representative of Mr. Jefferson, the Nicholases,

and the Randolphs. The persevering inquiries of Mr. William Wirt Henry, of Richmond, have resulted in filling some serious gaps in the narrative, and the antiquarian research of Mr. James Veech, of Pittsburg, has been freely put at the author's service. Finally, he has to recognize the unfailing generosity with which his numerous and troublesome demands have been met by one whose path it is his utmost hope in some slight degree to have smoothed, – his friendly adviser, George Bancroft.

Washington, May, 1879.

# BOOK I.

## YOUTH. 1761-1790

*1761.*

Jean De Gallatin, who, at the outbreak of the French revolution, was second in command of the regiment of Châteaueux in the service of Louis XVI., and a devout believer in the antiquity of his family, maintained that the Gallatins were descended from A. Atilius Callatinus, consul in the years of Rome 494 and 498; in support of this article of faith he fought a duel with the Baron de Pappenheim, on horseback, with sabres, and, as a consequence, ever afterwards carried a sabre-cut across his face. His theory, even if held to be unshaken by the event of this wager of battle, is unlikely ever to become one of the demonstrable facts of genealogy, since a not unimportant gap of about fifteen hundred years elapsed between the last consulship of the Roman Gallatin and the earliest trace of the modern family, found in a receipt signed by the Abbess of Bellacomba for “quindecim libras Viennenses” bequeathed to her convent by “Dominus Fulcherius Gallatini, Miles,” in the year 1258. Faulcher Gallatini left no other trace of his existence; but some sixty years later, in 1319, a certain Guillaume Gallatini, Chevalier, with his son Humbert Gallatini, Damoiseau, figured dimly in legal documents, and Humbert’s

grandson, Henri Gallatini, Seigneur de Granges, married Agnes de Lenthénay, whose will, dated 1397, creating her son Jean Gallatini her heir, fixes the local origin of the future Genevan family. Granges was an estate in Bugey, in the province of which Bellay was the capital, then a part of Savoy, but long since absorbed in France, and now embraced in the Département de l'Ain. It lay near the Rhone, some thirty or forty miles below Geneva, and about the same distance above Lyons. This Jean Gallatini, Seigneur de Granges and of many other manors, was an equerry of the Duke of Savoy, and a man of importance in his neighborhood. He too had a son Jean, who was also an equerry of the Duke of Savoy, and a man of gravity, conscientious in his opinions and serious in his acts. Not only Duke Philibert but even Pope Leo X. held him in esteem; the Duke made him his secretary with the title of Vice Comes, and the Pope clothed him with the dignity of Apostolic Judge, with the power to create one hundred and fifty notaries and public judges, and with the further somewhat invidious privilege of legitimatizing an equal number of bastards. Notwithstanding this mark of apostolic favor conferred on the "*venerabilis vir dominus Johannes Gallatinus, civis Gebennensis*" by a formal act dated at Salerno in 1522, Jean Gallatin was not an obedient son of the Church. For reasons no longer to be ascertained, he had in 1510 quitted his seigniories and his services in Savoy and caused himself to be enrolled as a citizen of Geneva. The significance of this act rests in the fact that the moment he chose for the

change was that which immediately preceded the great revolution in Genevan history when the city tore itself away not only from Savoy but from the Church. Jean Gallatin was a man of too much consequence not to be welcomed at Geneva. He linked his fortunes with hers, became a member of the Council, and joined in the decree which, in 1535, deposed the Prince Bishop and abrogated the power of the Pope. He died in 1536, the year Calvin came to Geneva, and the Gallatins were so far among the close allies of the great reformer that a considerable number of his letters to them were still preserved by the family until stolen or destroyed by some of the wilder reformers who accompanied the revolutionary armies of France in 1794.<sup>1</sup>

After the elevation of Geneva to the rank of a sovereign republic in 1535, the history of the Gallatins is the history of the city. The family, if not the first in the state, was second to none. Government was aristocratic in this small republic, and of the eleven families into whose hands it fell at the time of the Reformation, the Gallatins furnished syndics and counsellors, with that regularity and frequency which characterized the mode of selection, in a more liberal measure than any of the other ten. Five Gallatins held the position of first syndic, and as such were the chief magistrates of the republic. Many were in the Church; some were professors and rectors of the University. They counted at least one political martyr among their number, –

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<sup>1</sup> A more detailed account of the Gallatin genealogy will be found in the Appendix to vol. iii. of Gallatin's Writings, p. 598.



a Gallatin who, charged with the crime of being head of a party which aimed at popular reforms in the constitution, was seized and imprisoned in 1698, and died in 1719, after twenty-one years of close confinement. They overflowed into foreign countries. Pierre, the elder son of Jean, was the source of four distinct branches of the family, which spread and multiplied in every direction, although of them all no male representative now exists except among the descendants of Albert Gallatin. One was in the last century a celebrated physician in Paris, chief of the hospital established by Mme. Necker; another was Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Duke of Brunswick, who, when mortally wounded at the battle of Jena, in 1806, commended his minister to the King of Würtemberg as his best and dearest friend. The King respected this dying injunction, and Count Gallatin, in 1819, was, as will be seen, the Würtemberg minister at Paris.

That the Gallatins did not restrict their activity to civil life is a matter of course. There were few great battle-fields in Europe where some of them had not fought, and not very many where some of them had not fallen. Voltaire testifies to this fact in the following letter to Count d'Argental, which contains a half-serious, half-satirical account of their military career:

## **VOLTAIRE TO THE COUNT D'ARGENTAL**

*9 février, 1761.*

Voici la plus belle occasion, mon cher ange, d'exercer votre ministère céleste. Il s'agit du meilleur office que je puisse recevoir de vos bontés.

Je vous conjure, mon cher et respectable ami, d'employer tout votre crédit auprès de M. le Duc de Choiseul; auprès de ses amis, s'il le faut, auprès de sa maîtresse, &c., &c. Et pourquoi osé-je vous demander tant d'appui, tant de zèle, tant de vivacité, et surtout un prompt succès? Pour le bien du service, mon cher ange; pour battre le Duc de Brunswick. M. Galatin, officier aux gardes suisses, qui vous présentera ma très-humble requête, est de la plus ancienne famille de Genève; ils se font tuer pour nous de père en fils depuis Henri Quatre. L'oncle de celui-ci a été tué devant Ostende; son frère l'a été à la malheureuse et abominable journée de Rosbach, à ce que je crois; journée où les régiments suisses firent seuls leur devoir. Si ce n'est pas à Rosbach, c'est ailleurs; le fait est qu'il a été tué; celui-ci a été blessé. Il sert depuis dix ans; il a été aide-major; il veut l'être. Il faut des aides-major qui parlent bien allemand, qui soient actifs, intelligens; il est tout cela. Enfin vous saurez de lui précisément ce qu'il lui faut; c'est en général la permission d'aller vite chercher la mort à votre service. Faites-lui cette grâce, et qu'il ne soit point tué, car il est fort aimable et il est neveu de cette Mme. Calendrin que vous avez vue étant enfant. Mme. sa mère est bien aussi aimable que Mme. Calendrin.

One Gallatin fell in 1602 at the Escalade, famous in Genevan history; another at the siege of Ostend, in 1745; another at the

battle of Marburg, in 1760; another, the ninth of his name who had served in the Swiss regiment of Aubonne, fell in 1788, acting as a volunteer at the siege of Octzakow; still another, in 1797, at the passage of the Rhine. One commanded a battalion under Rochambeau at the siege of Yorktown. But while these scattered members of the family were serving with credit and success half the princes of Christendom, the main stock was always Genevan to the core and pre-eminently distinguished in civil life.

In any other European country a family like this would have had a feudal organization, a recognized head, great entailed estates, and all the titles of duke, marquis, count, and peer which royal favor could confer or political and social influence could command. Geneva stood by herself. Aristocratic as her government was, it was still republican, and the parade of rank or wealth was not one of its chief characteristics. All the honors and dignities which the republic could give were bestowed on the Gallatin family with a prodigal hand; but its members had no hereditary title other than the quaint prefix of Noble, and the right to the further prefix of *de*, which they rarely used; they had no great family estate passing by the law of primogeniture, no family organization centring in and dependent on a recognized chief. Integrity, energy, courage, and intelligence were for the most part the only family estates of this aristocracy, and these were wealth enough to make of the little city of Geneva the most intelligent and perhaps the purest society in Europe. The austere morality and the masculine logic of Calvin were here

at home, and there was neither a great court near by, nor great sources of wealth, to counteract or corrupt the tendencies of Calvin's teachings. In the middle of the eighteenth century, when Gallatins swarmed in every position of dignity or usefulness in their native state and in every service abroad, it does not appear that any one of them ever attained very great wealth, or asserted a claim of superior dignity over his cousins of the name. Yet the name, although the strongest, was not their only common tie. A certain François Gallatin, who died in 1699, left by will a portion of his estate in trust, its income to be expended for the aid or relief of members of the family. This trust, known as the Bourse Gallatin, honestly and efficiently administered, proved itself to be all that its founder could ever have desired.

One of the four branches of this extensive family was represented in the middle of the eighteenth century by Abraham Gallatin, who lived on his estate at Pregny, one of the most beautiful spots on the west shore of the lake, near Geneva, and who is therefore known as Abraham Gallatin of Pregny. His wife, whom he had married in 1732, was Susanne Vaudenet, commonly addressed as Mme. Gallatin-Vaudenet. They were, if not positively wealthy, at least sufficiently so to maintain their position among the best of Genevese society, and Mme. Gallatin appears to have been a woman of more than ordinary character, intelligence, and ambition. The world knows almost every detail about the society of Geneva at that time; for, apart from a very distinguished circle of native Genevans, it was the society in

which Voltaire lived, and to which the attention of much that was most cultivated in Europe was for that reason, if for no other, directed. Voltaire was a near neighbor of the Gallatins at Pregny. Notes and messages were constantly passing between the two houses. Dozens of these little billets in Voltaire's hand are still preserved. Some are written on the back of ordinary playing-cards. The deuce of clubs says:

“Nous sommes aux ordres de Mme. Galatin. Nous tâcherons d'employer ferblantier. Parlement Paris refuse tout édit et veut que le roi demande pardon à Parlement Bezançon. Anglais ont voulu rebombarder Hâvre. N'ont réussi. Carosse à une heure ½. Respects.”

There is no date; but this is not necessary, for the contents seem to fix the date for the year 1756. A note endorsed “Des Délices” is in the same tone:

“Lorsque V. se présente chez sa voisine, il n'a d'autre affaire, d'autre but, que de lui faire sa cour. Nous attendons pour faire des répétitions le retour du Tyran qui a mal à la poitrine. S'il y a quelques nouvelles de Berlin, Mr. Gallatin est supplié d'en faire part. Mille respects.”

Another, of the year 1759, is on business:

“Comment se porte notre malade, notre chère voisine, notre chère fille? J'ai été aux vignes, madame. Les guèpes mangent tout, et ce qu'elles ne mangent point est sec. Le vigneron de Mme. du Tremblay est venu me faire ses représentations. Mes tonneaux ne sont pas reliés, a-t-il dit; différez vendange. Relie

tes tonneaux, ai-je dit. Vos raisins ne sont pas mûrs, a-t-il dit. Va les voir, ai-je dit. Il y a été; il a vu. Vendangez au plus vite, a-t-il dit. Qu'ordonnez-vous, madame, au voisin V.?"

Another of the same year introduces Mme. Gallatin's figs, of which she seems to have been proud:

"Vos figes, madame, sont un présent d'autant plus beau que nous pouvons dire comme l'autre: *car ce n'était pas le temps des figes*. Nous n'en avons point aux Délices, mais nous aurons un théâtre à Tourney. Et nous partons dans une heure pour venir vous voir. Recevez vous et toute votre famille, madame, les tendres respects de V."

"Vous me donnez plus de figes, madame, qu'il n'y en a dans le pays de papimanie; et moi, madame, je suis comme le figuier de l'Évangile, sec et maudit. Ce n'est pas comme acteur, c'est comme très-attaché à toute votre famille que je m'intéresse bien vivement à la santé de Mme. Galatin-Rolaz. Nous répétons mardi en habits pontificaux. Ceux qui ont des billets viendront s'ils veulent. Je suis à vous, madame, pour ma vie. V."

Then follows a brief note dated "Ferney, 18<sup>e</sup> 7re," 1761:

"Nous comptons revenir tous souper à Ferney après la comédie. Mr. le Duc de Villars nous retint; notre carosse se rompit; nous essayâmes tous les contretemps possibles; la vie en est semée; mais le plus grand de tous est de n'avoir pas eu l'honneur de souper avec vous."

One of the friends for whom Mme. Gallatin-Vaudenet seems to have felt the strongest attachment, and with whom she

corresponded, was the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, a personage not favorably known in American history. The Landgrave, in 1776, sent Mme. Gallatin his portrait, and Mme. Gallatin persuaded Voltaire to write for her a copy of verses addressed to the Landgrave, in recognition of this honor. Here they are from the original draft:

“J’ai baisé ce portrait charmant,  
Je vous l’avourai sans mystère.  
Mes filles en ont fait autant,  
Mais c’est un secret qu’il faut taire.  
Vous trouverez bon qu’une mère  
Vous parle un peu plus hardiment;  
Et vous verrez qu’également  
En tous les temps vous savez plaire.”<sup>2</sup>

The success of Mme. Gallatin in the matter of figs led Voltaire to beg of her some trees; but his fortune was not so good as hers.

“10e Auguste, 1768, à Ferney. Vous êtes bénie de Dieu, madame. Il y a six ans que je plante des figuiers, et pas un ne réussit. Ce serait bien là le cas de sécher mes figuiers. Mais si j’avais des miracles à faire, ce ne serait pas celui-là. Je me borne à vous remercier, madame. Je crois qu’il n’y a que les vieux figuiers qui donnent. La vieillesse est encore bonne à quelque chose. J’ai comme vous des chevaux de trente ans; c’est ce qui fait que je les aime; il n’y a rien de tel que les vieux amis. Les jeunes pourtant

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<sup>2</sup> Printed in Voltaire’s Works, xii. 371 (ed. 1819.)

ne sont pas à mépriser, mesdames. V.”

One more letter by Voltaire is all that can find room here. The Landgrave seems to have sent by Mme. Gallatin some asparagus seed to Voltaire, which he acknowledged in these words:

## **VOLTAIRE TO THE LANDGRAVE OF HESSE**

*Le 15e septembre, 1772, de Ferney.*

Monseigneur, – Mme. Gallatin m’a fait voir la lettre où votre Altesse Sérénissime montre toute sa sagesse, sa bonté et son goût en parlant d’un jeune homme dont la raison est un peu égarée. Je vois que dans cette lettre elle m’accorde un bienfait très-signalé, qu’on doit rarement attendre des princes et même des médecins. Elle me donne un brevet de trois ans de vie, car il faut trois ans pour faire venir ces belles asperges dont vous me gratifiez. Agréez, monseigneur, mes très-humbles remerciements. J’ose espérer de vous les renouveler dans trois années; car enfin il faut bien que je me nourrisse d’espérance avant que de l’être de vos asperges. Que ne puis-je être en état de venir vous demander la permission de manger celles de vos jardins! La belle révolution de Suède opérée avec tant de fermeté et de prudence par le roi votre parent, donne envie de vivre. Ce prince est comme vous, il se fait aimer de ses sujets. C’est assurément de toutes les ambitions la plus belle. Tout le reste a je ne sais quoi de chimérique et souvent de très-funeste. Je souhaite à Votre Altesse



Sérénissime de longues années. C'est le seul souhait que je puisse faire; vous avez tout le reste. Je suis, avec le plus profond respect, monseigneur, de Votre Altesse Sérénissime le très-humble et très-obéissant serviteur,

*“Le vieux malade de Ferney,  
“Voltaire.”*

The correspondence of his Most Serene Highness, who made himself thus loved by his subjects, cannot be said to sparkle like that of Voltaire; yet, although the Landgrave's French was little better than his principles, one of his letters to Mme. Gallatin may find a place here. The single line in regard to his troops returning from America gives it a certain degree of point which only Americans or Hessians are likely to appreciate at its full value.

## **THE LANDGRAVE OF HESSE TO M<sup>E</sup>. GALLATIN-VAUDENET**

Madame! – Je vous accuse avec un plaisir infini la lettre que vous avez bien voulu m'écrire le 27 mars dernier, et je vous fais bien mes parfaits remerciemens de la part que vous continuez de prendre à ma santé, dont je suis, on ne peut pas plus, content. La vôtre m'intéresse trop pour ne pas souhaiter qu'elle soit également telle que vous la désirez. Puisse la belle saison qui vient de succéder enfin au tems rude qu'il a fait, la raffermir pour

bien des années, et puissiez-vous jouir de tout le contentement que mes vœux empressés vous destinent.

Quoique la lettre dont vous avez chargé Mr. Cramer m'ait été rendue, j'ai bien du regret d'avoir été privé du plaisir de faire sa connaissance personnelle, puisqu'il ne s'est pas arrêté à Cassel, et n'a fait que passer. Le témoignage favorable que vous lui donnez ne peut que prévenir en sa faveur.

Au reste je suis sur le point d'entreprendre un petit voïage que j'ai médité depuis longtems pour changer d'air. Je serais déjà en route, sans mes Troupes revenus de l'Amérique, que je suis bien aise de revoir avant mon départ, et dont les derniers régimens seront rendus à Cassel vers la fin du mois.

Continuez-moi en attendant votre cher souvenir, et, en faisant bien mes complimens à Mr. et à Mlle. Gallatin, persuadez-vous que rien n'est au-dessus des sentimens vrais et invariables avec lesquels je ne finirai d'être, madame, votre très-humble et très-obéissant serviteur.

*Frédéric L. d'Hesse.*

*Cassel, le 25 mai, 1784.*

*1761-1775.*

Mme. Gallatin-Vaudenet had three children, – one son and two daughters. The son, who was named Jean Gallatin, was born in 1733, and in 1755 married Sophie Albertine Rolaz du Rosey of Rolle, – the Mme. Gallatin-Rolaz already mentioned in one of Voltaire's notes. They had two children, – a boy, born on the

29th of January, 1761, in the city of Geneva, and baptized on the following 7th of February by the name of Abraham Alfonse Albert Gallatin; and a girl about five years older.

Abraham Gallatin, the grandfather, was a merchant in partnership with his son Jean. Jean died, however, in the summer of 1765, and his wife, Mme. Gallatin-Rolaz, who had talent and great energy, undertook to carry on his share of the business in her own separate name. She died in March, 1770. The daughter had been sent to Montpellier for her health, which she never recovered, and died a few years after, in 1777. The boy, Albert, was left an orphan when nine years old, with a large circle of blood-relations; the nearest of whom were his grandfather Abraham and his grandmother the friend of Voltaire and of Frederic of Hesse. The child would naturally have been taken to Pregny and brought up by his grandparents, but a different arrangement had been made during the lifetime of his mother, and was continued after her death. Mme. Gallatin-Rolaz had a most intimate friend, a distant relation of her husband, Catherine Pictet by name, unmarried, and at this time about forty years old. When Jean Gallatin died, in 1765, Mlle. Pictet, seeing the widow overwhelmed with the care of her invalid daughter and with the charge of her husband's business, insisted on taking the boy Albert under her own care, and accordingly, on the 8th of January, 1766, Albert, then five years old, went to live with her, and from that time became in a manner her child.

Besides his grandfather Abraham Gallatin at Pregny, and his other paternal relations, Albert had a large family connection on the mother's side, and more especially an uncle, Alphonse Rolaz of Rolle, kind-hearted, generous, and popular. Both on the father's and the mother's side Albert had a right to expect a sufficient fortune. His interests during his minority were well cared for, and nothing can show better the characteristic economy and carefulness of Genevan society than the mode of the boy's education. For seven years, till January, 1773, he lived with Mlle. Pictet, and his expenses did not exceed eighty dollars a year. Then he went to boarding-school, and in August, 1775, to the college or academy, where he graduated in May, 1779. During all this period his expenses slightly exceeded two hundred dollars a year. The Bourse Gallatin advanced a comparatively large sum for his education and for the expenses of his sister's illness. "No necessary expense was spared for my education," is his memorandum on the back of some old accounts of his guardian; "but such was the frugality observed in other respects, and the good care taken of my property, that in 1786, when I came of age, all the debts had been paid excepting two thousand four hundred francs lent by an unknown person through Mr. Cramer, who died in 1778, and with him the secret name of that friend, who never made himself known or could be guessed." In such an atmosphere one might suppose that economists and financiers must grow without the need of education. Yet the fact seems to have been otherwise, and in Albert Gallatin's

closest family connection, both his grandfather Abraham and his uncle Alphonse Rolaz ultimately died insolvent, and instead of inheriting a fortune from them he was left to pay their debts.

Of the nature of Albert's training the best idea can be got from his own account of the Academy of Geneva, contained in a letter written in 1847 and published among his works.<sup>3</sup> At that time the academy represented all there was of education in the little republic, and its influence was felt in every thought and act of the citizens. "In its organization and general outlines the academy had not, when I left Geneva in 1780, been materially altered from the original institutions of its founder. Whatever may have been his defects and erroneous views, Calvin had at all events the learning of his age, and, however objectionable some of his religious doctrines, he was a sincere and zealous friend of knowledge and of its wide diffusion among the people. Of this he laid the foundation by making the whole education almost altogether gratuitous, from the A B C to the time when the student had completed his theological or legal studies. But there was nothing remarkable or new in the organization or forms of the schools. These were on the same plan as colleges were then, and generally continue to be in the old seminaries of learning... In the first place, besides the academy proper, there was a preparatory department intimately connected with it and under its control. This in Geneva was called 'the College,' and consisted of nine classes, ... the three lower of which, for reading, writing,

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<sup>3</sup> Letter to Eben Dodge, 21st January, 1847. Writings, vol. ii. p. 638.

and spelling, were not sufficient for the wants of the people, and had several *succursales* or substitutes in various parts of the city. But for that which was taught in the six upper classes (or in the academy), there were no other public schools but the college and the academy. In these six classes nothing whatever was taught but Latin and Greek, – Latin thoroughly, Greek much neglected. Professor de Saussure used his best endeavors about 1776, when rector of the academy, to improve the system of education in the college by adding some elementary instruction in history, geography, and natural science, but could not succeed, a great majority of his colleagues opposing him...

“When not aided and stimulated by enlightened parents or friends, the students from the time when they entered the academy (on an average when about or rather more than fifteen years old) were left almost to themselves, and studied more or less as they pleased. But almost all had previously passed through at least the upper classes of the college. I was the only one of my class and of the two immediately preceding and following me who had been principally educated at home and had passed only through the first or upper class of the college... In the years 1775-1779 the average number of the scholars in the four upper classes of the college was about one hundred, and that of the students in the four first years of the academical course, viz., the *auditoires* of *belles-lettres* and philosophy, about fifty, of whom not more than one or two had not passed through at least the three or four upper classes

of the college. Very few mechanics, even the watchmakers, so numerous in Geneva and noted for their superior intelligence and knowledge, went beyond the fifth and sixth classes, which included about one hundred and twenty scholars. As to the lower or primary classes or schools, it would have been difficult to find a citizen *intra muros* who could not read and write. The peasantry or cultivators of the soil in the small Genevese territory were, indeed, far more intelligent than their Catholic neighbors, but still, as in the other continental parts of Europe, a distinct and inferior class, with some religious instruction, but speaking *patois* (the great obstacle to the diffusion of knowledge), and almost universally not knowing how to read or to write. The population *intra muros* was about 24,000 (in 1535, at the epoch of the Reformation and independence, about 13,000), of whom nearly one third not naturalized, chiefly Germans or Swiss, exercising what were considered as lower trades, tailors, shoemakers, &c., and including almost all the menial servants. I never knew or heard of a male citizen or native of Geneva serving as such. The number of citizens above twenty-five years of age, and having a right to vote, amounted, exclusively of those residing abroad, to 2000...

“There was in Geneva neither nobility nor any hereditary privilege but that of citizenship; and the body of citizens assembled in Council General had preserved the power of laying taxes, enacting laws, and ratifying treaties. But they could originate nothing, and a species of artificial aristocracy,

composed of the old families which happened to be at the head of affairs when independence was declared, and skilfully strengthened by the successive adoption of the most distinguished citizens and emigrants, had succeeded in engrossing the public employments and concentrating the real power in two self-elected councils of twenty-five and two hundred members respectively. But that power rested on a most frail foundation, since in a state which consists of a single city the majority of the inhabitants may in twenty-four hours upset the government. In order to preserve it, a moral, intellectual superiority was absolutely necessary. This could not be otherwise attained than by superior knowledge and education, and the consequence was that it became disgraceful for any young man of decent parentage to be an idler. All were bound to exercise their faculties to the utmost; and although there are always some incapable, yet the number is small of those who, if they persevere, may not by labor become, in some one branch, well-informed men. Nor was that love and habit of learning long confined to that self-created aristocracy. A salutary competition in that respect took place between the two political parties, which had a most happy effect on the general diffusion of knowledge.

“During the sixteenth and the greater part of the seventeenth century the Genevese were the counterpart of the Puritans of Old and of the Pilgrims of New England, – the same doctrines, the same simplicity in the external forms of worship, the same austerity of morals and severity of manners, the same attention



to schools and seminaries of learning, the same virtues, and the same defects, – exclusiveness and intolerance, equally banishing all those who differed on any point from the established creed, putting witches to death, &c., &c. And with the progress of knowledge both about at the same time became tolerant and liberal. But here the similitude ends. To the Pilgrims of New England, in common with the other English colonists, the most vast field of enterprise was opened which ever offered itself to civilized man. Their mission was to conquer the wilderness, to multiply indefinitely, to settle and inhabit a whole continent, and to carry their institutions and civilization from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. With what energy and perseverance this has been performed we all know. But to those pursuits all the national energies were directed. Learning was not neglected; but its higher branches were a secondary object, and science was cultivated almost exclusively for practical purposes, and only as far as was requisite for supplying the community with the necessary number of clergymen and members of the other liberal professions. The situation of Geneva was precisely the reverse of this. Confined to a single city and without territory, its inhabitants did all that their position rendered practicable. They created the manufacture of watches, which gave employment to near a fourth part of the population, and carried on commerce to the fullest extent of which their geographical situation was susceptible. But the field of active enterprise was still the narrowest possible. To all those who were ambitious of renown,

fame, consideration, scientific pursuits were the only road that could lead to distinction, and to these, or other literary branches, all those who had talent and energy devoted themselves.

“All could not be equally successful; few only could attain a distinguished eminence; but, as I have already observed, a far greater number of well educated and informed men were found in that small spot than in almost every other town of Europe which was not the metropolis of an extensive country. This had a most favorable influence on the tone of society, which was not light, frivolous, or insipid, but generally serious and instructive. I was surrounded by that influence from my earliest days, and, as far as I am concerned, derived more benefit from that source than from my attendance on academical lectures. A more general fact deserves notice. At all times, and within my knowledge in the years 1770-1780, a great many distinguished foreigners came to Geneva to finish their education, among whom were nobles and princes from Germany and other northern countries; there were also not a few lords and gentlemen from England; even the Duke of Cambridge, after he had completed his studies at Göttingen. Besides these there were some from America, amongst whom I may count before the American Revolution those South Carolinians, Mr. Kinloch, William Smith, – afterwards a distinguished member of Congress and minister to Portugal, – and Colonel Laurens, one of the last who fell in the war of independence. And when I departed from Geneva I left there, besides the two young Penns,

proprietors of Pennsylvania, Franklin Bache, grandson of Dr. Franklin, – Johannot, grandson of Dr. Cooper, of Boston, who died young. Now, amongst all those foreigners I never knew or heard of a single one who attended academical lectures. It was the Genevese society which they cultivated, aided by private teachers in every branch, with whom Geneva was abundantly supplied.”

At the academy Albert Gallatin associated of course with all the young Genevese of his day. As most of these had no permanent influence on him, and maintained no permanent relations with him, it is needless to speak of them further. There were but two whose names will recur frequently hereafter. Neither of them was equal to Gallatin in abilities or social advantages, but in politics and philosophy all were evidently of one mind, and the fortunes of all were linked together. The name of one was Henri Serre, that of the other was Jean Badollet.

What kind of men they were will appear in the course of their adventures. A fourth, whose name is better known than those just mentioned, seems to have been a close friend of the other three, but differed from them by not coming to America. He was Étienne Dumont, afterwards the friend and interpreter of Bentham.

However enlightened the society of Pregny may have been under the influence of Voltaire and Frederic of Hesse, it is not to be supposed that Mme. Gallatin-Vaudenet or any other members of the Gallatin family were by tastes and interests likely to lean towards levelling principles in politics. Of all people

in Geneva they were perhaps most interested in maintaining the old Genevese régime. The Gallatins were for the most part firm believers in aristocracy, and Albert certainly never found encouragement for liberal opinions in his own family, unless they may have crept in through the pathway of Voltairean philosophy as mere theory, the ultimate results of which were not foreseen. This makes more remarkable the fact that young Gallatin, who was himself a clear-headed, sober-minded, practical Genevan, should, by some bond of sympathy which can hardly have been anything more than the intellectual movement of his time, have affiliated with a knot of young men who, if not quite followers of Rousseau, were still essentially visionaries. They were dissatisfied with the order of things in Geneva. They believed in human nature, and believed that human nature when free from social trammels would display nobler qualities and achieve vaster results, not merely in the physical but also in the moral world. The American Revolutionary war was going on, and the American Declaration of Independence embodied, perhaps helped to originate, some of their thoughts.

*1780.*

With minds in this process of youthful fermentation, they finished their academical studies and came out into the world. Albert was graduated in May, 1779, first of his class in mathematics, natural philosophy, and Latin translation. Before this time, in April, 1778, he had returned to Mlle. Pictet, and his principal occupation for the year after graduating was as

tutor to her nephew, Isaac Pictet. Both Gallatin and Badollet were students of English, and the instruction given to Isaac Pictet seems to have been partly in English. Of course the serious question before him was that of choosing a profession, and this question was one in which his family were interested; in which, indeed, their advice would naturally carry decisive weight. The young man was much at Pregny with his grandparents, where, daring his childhood, he often visited Voltaire at Ferney. His grandmother had her own views as to his career. She wished him to take a commission of lieutenant-colonel in the military service of her friend the Landgrave of Hesse, with whom her interest was sufficient to insure for him a favorable reception and a promising future. At that moment, it is true, the military prospects of the Landgrave's troops in the Jerseys were not peculiarly flattering, and the service can hardly have been popular with such as might remember the dying words of Colonel Donop at Red Bank; but after all the opportunity was a sure one, suitable for a gentleman of ancient family, according to the ideas of the time, and flattering to the pride of Mme. Gallatin-Vaudenet. She spoke to her grandson on the subject, urging her advice with all the weight she could give it. He replied, abruptly, that he would never serve a tyrant. The reply was hardly respectful, considering the friendship which he knew to exist between his grandmother and the Landgrave, and it is not altogether surprising that it should have provoked an outbreak of temper on her part which took the shape of a box on the ear: "she gave me a cuff," were Mr.

Gallatin's own words in telling the story to his daughter many years afterwards. This "cuff" had no small weight in determining the young man's course of action.

Yet it would be unfair to infer from this box on the ear that the family attempted to exercise any unreasonable control over Albert's movements. If any one in the transaction showed himself unreasonable, it was the young man, not his relations. They were ready to aid him to the full extent of their powers in any respectable line of life which might please his fancy. They would probably have preferred that he should choose a mercantile rather than a military career. They would have permitted, and perhaps encouraged, his travelling for a few years to fit himself for that object. It was no fault of theirs that he suddenly took the whole question into his own hands, and, after making silent preparations and carrying with him such resources as he could then raise, on the 1st April, 1780, in company with his friend Serre, secretly and in defiance of his guardian and relations, bade a long farewell to Geneva and turned his back on the past.

The act was not a wise one. That future which the young Gallatin grasped so eagerly with outstretched arms had little in it that even to an ardent imagination at nineteen could compensate for the wanton sacrifice it involved. There is no reason to suppose that Albert Gallatin's career was more brilliant or more successful in America than with the same efforts and with equal sacrifices it might have been in Europe; for his character and abilities must have insured pre-eminence in whatever path he

chose. Both the act of emigration and the manner of carrying it out were inconsiderate and unreasonable, as is clear from the arguments by which he excused them at the time. He wished to improve his fortune, he said, and to do this he was going, without capital, as his family pointed out, to a land already ruined by a long and still raging civil war, without a government and without trade. This was his ostensible reason; and his private one was no better, – that “daily dependence” on others, and particularly on Mlle. Pictet and his grandmother, which galled his pride. That he was discontented with Geneva and the Genevan political system was true; but to emigrate was not the way to mend it, and even in emigrating he did not pretend that his object in seeking America was to throw himself into the Revolutionary struggle. He felt a strong sympathy for the Americans and for the political liberty which was the motive of their contest; but this sympathy was rather a matter of reason than of passion. He always took care to correct the idea, afterwards very commonly received, that he had run away from his family and friends in order to fight the British. So far as his political theories were concerned, aversion to Geneva had more to do with his action than any enthusiasm for war, and in the list of personal motives discontent with his dependent position at home had more influence over him than the desire for wealth. At this time, and long afterwards, he was proud and shy. His behavior for many years was controlled by these feelings, which only experience and success at last softened and overcame.

The manner of departure was justified by him on the ground that he feared forcible restraint should he attempt to act openly. The excuse was a weak one, and the weaker if a positive prohibition were really to be feared, which was probably not the case. No one had the power to restrain young Gallatin very long. He might have depended with confidence on having his own way had he chosen to insist. But the spirit of liberty at this time was rough in its methods. Albert Gallatin's contemporaries and friends were the men who carried the French Revolution through its many wild phases, and at nineteen men are governed by feeling rather than by common sense, even when they do not belong to a generation which sets the world in flames.

However severe the judgment of his act may be, there was nothing morally wrong in it; nothing which he had not a right to do if he chose. In judging it, too, the reader is affected by the fact that none of his letters in his own defence have been preserved, while all those addressed to him are still among his papers. These, too, are extremely creditable to his family, and show strong affection absolutely free from affectation, and the soundest good sense without a trace of narrowness. Among them all, one only can be given here. It is from Albert's guardian, a distant relative in an elder branch of the family.



## P. M. GALLATIN TO ALBERT GALLATIN

*Genève, 21e mai, 1780.*

Monsieur, – Avant que de vous écrire j'ai voulu m'assurer d'une manière plus précise que je n'avais pu le faire les premiers jours de votre départ, et par vous-même, quels étaient vos projets, le but et le motif de votre voyage, les causes qui avaient fait naître une pareille idée dans votre esprit, vos sentimens passés et présens et vos désirs pour l'avenir. Il m'était difficile à tous ces égards de comprendre comment vous ne vous étiez ouvert ni à Mlle. Pictet qui, vous le savez bien, ne vous avait jamais aimé pour elle-même mais pour vous seul, qui n'a jamais voulu que votre plus grand bien, qui a pris de vous non-seulement les soins que vous auriez pu attendre de madame votre mère avec laquelle elle s'était individualisée à votre égard, mais même ceux que peu d'enfans éprouvent de leurs pères; ni à moi, qui jamais ne vous ai refusé quoi que ce soit, parce qu'en effet les demandes en petit nombre que vous m'aviez faites jusqu'à présent m'ont toujours paru sages et raisonnables; ni à aucun de vos parens, de qui vous n'avez reçu que des douceurs dans tout le cours de votre vie. C'est, je vous l'avouerai, ce défaut de confiance, qui continue encore chez vous à notre égard, qui m'afflige le plus vivement, voyant surtout qu'il tourne contre vous au lieu de servir à votre avantage. Croyez-vous donc, monsieur,

à votre âge, calculer mieux que les personnes qui ont quelque expérience? ou nous supposiez-vous assez déraisonnables pour nous refuser à entrer dans des plans qui auraient pu un jour vous conduire au bonheur que vous cherchez? Il est vrai qu'il n'est point de bonheur parfait en ce monde; mais pensez-vous que nous aurions été sourds ou insensibles à vos motifs les plus secrets? vous défiez-vous de notre discrétion pour nous refuser la confiance qui nous était due du développement successif de vos sentimens? est-ce la contrainte pour le choix d'un état, sont-ce les lois que nous vous avons imposées pour quelque objet que ce soit, qui nous ont enlevé votre confiance? au contraire, ne vous avons-nous pas déclaré en diverses occasions que nous vous laissions cette liberté? devons-nous et pouvions-nous nous attendre que vous l'interpréteriez en une indépendance absolue qui ne reconnaît pas non-seulement l'autorité légitime mais la déférence naturelle et le besoin de direction et de conseils? Que vos motifs fussent bons ou mauvais pour prendre le parti que vous avez pris, je n'entre plus là-dedans. La démarche est faite et surtout la résolution est prise; je ne chercherai point à vous en détourner; si vous ne réussissez pas, vous aurez été trompé par de faux raisonnemens, comme vous le dites, et voilà tout. Et quand ce projet nous aurait été communiqué avant son exécution, quand nous vous l'aurions représenté aussi extravagant qu'il nous le paraît, quand nous vous aurions détaillé les inconvéniens, si vous y aviez persisté, nous aurions dit Amen; mais alors du moins nous aurions pu d'avance en prévenir un grand nombre, diminuer

la grandeur de quelques autres, vous aider avec plus de fruit pour le projet même, et avec moins d'inconvéniens en cas de non-réussite; nous aurions préparé les voies autant qu'il nous aurait été possible pour l'exécution et nous vous aurions facilité le retour en fondant votre espérance d'un sort heureux si jamais vous étiez forcé de revenir ici. Monsieur du Rosey votre oncle vous avait fait entrevoir une situation aisée pour l'avenir; mais si une honnête médiocrité n'eut pas satisfait vos désirs ambitieux, ses offres généreuses ne devaient-elles pas lui ouvrir votre cœur et vous déterminer à lui confier vos projets que (s'il n'eut pas pu les anéantir par le raisonnement et la persuasion) il eut sans doute favorisés? *Un ordre positif!* Avec quels yeux nous avez-vous donc vos? Aujourd'hui croyez-vous cette défiance injuste que vous nous avez montrée et par votre conduite et par vos lettres, bien propre à le disposer en votre faveur? Soyez certain cependant, monsieur, que je vous aiderai autant que votre fortune pourra le permettre sans déranger vos capitaux, dont je dois vous rendre compte un jour et que vous me saurez peut-être gré de vous avoir conservés; en attendant je suis obligé par un serment solennel prêté en justice que j'observerai inviolablement jusques à ce que j'en sois juridiquement dégagé; et vous refuser vos capitaux pour un projet dont je ne saurais voir la fin, n'est ni infamie ni dureté, mais prudence et sagesse.

Après ces observations, dont j'ai cru que vous aviez besoin, permettez-moi quelques réflexions sur votre projet. D'abord j'ai lieu de croire que la somme qui vous reste, ou qui vous restait,

n'est pas à beaucoup près de cent cinquante louis; secondement, le gain que vous prétendez faire par le commerce d'armement est très-incertain; il est en troisième lieu très-lent à se faire apercevoir; en attendant il faut vivre; et comment vivrez-vous? de leçons? quelle pitoyable ressource, pour être la dernière, dans un pays surtout où les vivres sont si exorbitamment chers et où tout le reste se paye si mal! Des terres incultes à acheter? avec quoi? plus elles sont à bas prix, plus elles indiquent la cherté des denrées; le grand nombre de terres incultes, le besoin qu'on a de les défricher, sont deux preuves des sommes considérables qu'il en coûte pour vivre. Vos réflexions sur le gain à faire sur ces terres et sur le papier, supposent d'abord que vous aurez de quoi en acheter beaucoup, supposition ridicule, et feraient croire que vous vous êtes imaginé disposer des évènements au gré de vos souhaits et selon vos besoins...

Mr. Franklin doit vous recommander à Philadelphie. Vous y trouverez des ressources que bien d'autres n'auraient pas, mais vous en aurez moins et vous les aurez plus tard que si nous avions été prévenus à tems. Mr. Kenlock, connu de Mlle. Beaulacre et de M. Muller, y est actuellement au Congrès; ne faites pas difficulté de le voir; je ne saurais douter qu'il ne vous aide de ses conseils et que vous ne trouviez auprès de lui des directions convenables.

Malgré les choses désagréables que je puis vous avoir écrites dans cette lettre, vous ne doutez pas, je l'espère, mon cher monsieur, du tendre intérêt que je prends à votre sort, qui me les a dictées, et vous devez être persuadé des vœux sincères que je fais

pour l'accomplissement de vos désirs. Le jeune Serre est plus fait que vous pour réussir; son imagination ardente lui fera aisément trouver des ressources, et son courage actif lui fera surmonter les obstacles; mais votre indolence naturelle en vous livrant aux projets hardis de ce jeune homme vous a exposé sans réflexion à des dangers que je redoute pour vous, et si vous comptez sur l'amitié inviolable que vous vous êtes vouée l'un à l'autre (dont à Dieu ne plaise que je vous invite à vous défier) croyez-vous cependant qu'il soit bien délicat de se mettre dans le cas d'attendre ses ressources pour vivre, uniquement de l'imagination et du courage d'autrui? Adieu, mon cher monsieur; ne voyez encore une fois dans ce que je vous ai écrit que le sentiment qui l'a dicté, et croyez-moi pour la vie, mon cher monsieur, votre très-affectionné tuteur.

As has been said, none of Albert's letters to his family have been preserved. Fortunately, however, his correspondence with his friend Badollet has not been lost, and the first letter of this series, written while he was still in the Loire, from on board the American vessel, the Katty, in which the two travellers had taken passage from Nantes to Boston, is the only vestige of writing now to be found which gives a certain knowledge of the writer's frame of mind at the moment of his departure.

## GALLATIN TO BADOLLET

*Pimbeuf, 16 mai, 1780.*

*C'est un port de mer, 8 lieues*

*[au-dessous de Nantes. Nous]*

*nous y ennuyons beaucoup.*

Mon cher ami, pourquoi ne m'as-tu point écrit? j'attendois pour t'écrire de savoir si tu étois à Clérac ou à Genève. J'espère que c'est à Clérac, mais si notre affaire t'a fait manquer ta place, j'espère, vu tout ce que je vois, que nous pourrons t'avoir cette année; j'aimerois cependant mieux que tu eusses quelque argent, parcequ'en achetant des marchandises tu gagnerais prodigieusement dessus. Si tu es à Clérac, c'est pour l'année prochaine. J'ai reçu des lettres fort tendres qui m'ont presque ébranlé et dans lesquelles on me promet en cas que je persiste, de l'argent et des recommandations. J'ai déjà reçu de celles-ci, et j'ai fait connoissance ici avec des Américains de distinction. En cas que tu sois à Clérac, je t'apprendrai que nous sommes venus à Nantes dans cinq jours fort heureusement, que nous avons trouvé un vaisseau pour Boston nommé la Katti, Cap. Loring, qui partoit le lendemain, mais nous avons été retenus ici depuis 15 jours par les vents contraires et nous irons à Lorient chercher un convoi. Mon adresse est à Monsieur Gallatin à Philadelphie, sous une enveloppe adressée: A Messieurs Struikmann & Meinier frères, à Nantes, le tout

affranchi. Des détails sur ta place, je te prie. Nous ne craignons plus rien; on nous a promis de ne pas s'opposer à notre dessein si nous persistions. Hentsch s'est fort bien conduit. Adieu; la poste part, j'ai déjà écrit cinq lettres. Tout à toi.

Serre te fait ses compliments; il dort pour le moment.

The entire sum of money which the two young men brought with them from Geneva was one hundred and sixty-six and two-thirds louis-d'or, equal to four thousand livres tournois, reckoning twenty-four livres to the louis. One-half of this sum was expended in posting across France and paying their passage to Boston. Their capital for trading purposes was therefore about four hundred dollars, which, however, belonged entirely to Gallatin, as Serre had no means and paid no part of the expenses. For a long time to come they could expect no more supplies.

Meanwhile, the family at Geneva had moved heaven and earth to smooth their path, and had written or applied for letters of introduction in their behalf to every person who could be supposed to have influence. One of these persons was the Duc de la Rochefoucauld d'Enville, who wrote to Franklin a letter which may be found in Franklin's printed correspondence.<sup>4</sup> The letter tells no more than we know; but Franklin's reply is characteristic. It runs thus:

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<sup>4</sup> Sparks's Franklin, viii. 454.

## **BENJ. FRANKLIN TO THE DUC DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULD D'ENVILLE**

*Passy, May 24, 1780.*

Dear Sir, – I enclose the letter you desired for the two young gentlemen of Geneva. But their friends would do well to prevent their voyage.

With sincere and great esteem, I am, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

*B. Franklin.*

The letter enclosed was as follows:

*Passy, May 24, 1780.*

Dear Son, – Messrs. Gallatin and Serres, two young gentlemen of Geneva, of good families and very good characters, having an inclination to see America, if they should arrive in your city I recommend them to your civilities, counsel, and countenance.

*I am ever your affectionate father,*

*B. Franklin.*

### **To Richard Bache, Postmaster-General, Philadelphia**

Lady Juliana Penn, also, wrote to John Penn at Philadelphia in



their favor. Mlle. Pictet wrote herself to Colonel Kinloch, then a member of the Continental Congress from South Carolina. Her description of the young men is probably more accurate than any other: “Quoique je n’ai pas l’avantage d’être connue de vous, j’ai trop entendu parler de l’honnêteté et de la sensibilité de votre âme pour hésiter à vous demander un service absolument essentiel au bonheur de ma vie. Deux jeunes gens de ce pays, nommé Gallatin et Serre, n’étant pas contents de leur fortune, qui est effectivement médiocre, et s’étant échauffé l’imagination du désir de s’en faire une eux-mêmes, aidés d’un peu d’enthousiasme pour les Américains, prennent le parti de passer à Philadelphie. Ils sont tous deux pleins d’honneur, de bons sentiments, fort sages, et n’ont jamais donné le moindre sujet de plainte à leurs familles, qui ont le plus grand regret de leur départ... Ils ont tous deux des talents et des connaissances; mais je crois qu’ils n’entendent rien au commerce et à la culture des terres qui sont les moyens de fortune qu’ils ont imaginés.” ...

With such introductions and such advantages, aided by the little fortune which Gallatin would inherit on coming of age in 1786, in his twenty-fifth year, the path was open to him. He had but to walk in it. Success, more or less brilliant, was as certain as anything in this world can be.

He preferred a different course. Instead of embracing his opportunities, he repelled them. Like many other brilliant men, he would not, and never did, learn to overcome some youthful prejudices; he disliked great cities and the strife of crowded

social life; he never could quite bring himself to believe in their advantages and in the necessity of modern society to agglomerate in masses and either to solve the difficulties inherent in close organization or to perish under them. He preferred a wilderness in his youth, and, as will be seen, continued in theory to prefer it in his age. It was the instinct of his time and his associations; the atmosphere of Rousseau and Jefferson; pure theory, combined with shy pride. He seems never to have made use of his introductions unless when compelled by necessity, and refused to owe anything to his family. Not that even in this early stage of his career he ever assumed an exterior that was harsh or extravagant, or manners that were repulsive; but he chose to take the world from the side that least touched his pride, and, after cutting loose so roughly from the ties of home and family, he could not with self-respect return to follow their paths. His friends could do no more. He disappeared from their sight, and poor Mlle. Pictet could only fold her hands and wait. Adoring her with a warmth of regard which he never failed to express at every mention of her name, he almost broke her heart by the manner of his desertion, and, largely from unwillingness to tell his troubles, largely too, it must be acknowledged, from mere indolence, he left her sometimes for years without a letter or a sign of life. Like many another woman, she suffered acutely; and her letters are beyond words pathetic in their effort to conceal her suffering. Mr. Gallatin always bitterly regretted his fault: it was the only one in his domestic life.

His story must be told as far as possible in his own words; but there remain only his letters to Badollet to throw light on his manner of thinking and his motives of action at this time. In these there are serious gaps. He evidently did not care to tell all he had to endure; but with what shall be given it will be easy for the reader to divine the rest.

The two young men landed on Cape Ann on the 14th July, 1780. The war was still raging, and the result still uncertain. General Gates was beaten at Camden on the 16th August, and all the country south of Virginia lost. More than a year passed before the decisive success at Yorktown opened a prospect of peace. The travellers had no plans, and, if one may judge from their tone and behavior, were as helpless as two boys of nineteen would commonly be in a strange country, talking a language of which they could only stammer a few words, and trying to carry on mercantile operations without a market and with a currency at its last gasp. They had brought tea from Nantes as a speculation, and could only dispose of it by taking rum and miscellaneous articles in exchange. Their troubles were many, and it is clear that they were soon extremely homesick; for, after riding on horseback from Gloucester to Boston, they took refuge at a French coffee-house kept by a certain Tahon, and finding there a Genevan, whom chance threw in their way, they clung to him with an almost pathetic persistence. On September 4 they bought a horse and yellow chaise for eight thousand three hundred and thirty-three dollars. Perhaps it was in this chaise that they made an

excursion to Wachusett Hill, which they climbed. But their own letters will describe them best.

## GALLATIN TO BADOLLET

No. 2.

*Boston, 14 septembre, 1780.*

Mon cher ami, je t'ai déjà écrit une lettre il y a quatre jours, mais elle a bien des hazards à courir, ainsi je vais t'en récrire une seconde par une autre occasion, et je vais commencer par un résumé de ce que je te disais dans ma première.

Nous partîmes le 27<sup>e</sup> mai de Lorient, après avoir payé 60 louis pour notre voyage, les provisions comprises. Notre coquin de capitaine, aussi frippon que bête et superstitieux, nous tint à peu près tout le tems à viande salée et à eau pourrie. Le second du vaisseau, plus frippon et plus hypocrite que le premier, nous vola 6 guinées dans notre poche, plus la moitié de notre linge, plus le 3½ pour 100 de fret de notre thé. (Il avait demandé 5 pr. cent. de fret pour du thé que nous embarquions, et il a exigé 8½.) Au reste, point de tempête pour orner notre récit, peu malades, beaucoup d'ennui, et souvent effrayés par des corsaires qui nous ont poursuivis. Enfin nous arrivâmes le 14<sup>e</sup> juillet au Cap Anne à huit lieues de Boston où nous nous rendîmes le lendemain à cheval.

Ce qui suit n'étoit pas dans [ma première lettre].

Boston est une ville d'environ 18 mille âmes, bâtie sur une presque île plus longue que large. Je la crois plus grande que Genève, mais il y a des jardins, des prairies, des vergers au milieu de la ville et chaque famille a ordinairement sa maison. Ces maisons out rarement plus d'un étage ou deux. Elles sont de briques ou de bois, couvertes de planches et d'ardoises, avec des terrasses sur les toits et dans beaucoup d'endroits avec des conducteurs qui ont presque tous trois pointes. Une ou deux rues tirées au cordeau, point d'édifices publics remarquables, un hâvre très-vaste et défendu par des îles qui ne laissent que deux entrées très-étroites, une situation qui rendrait la ville imprenable si elle était fortifiée, voilà tout ce que j'ai à te dire de Boston. Les habitans n'ont ni délicatesse ni honneur ni instruction, et il n'y a rien de trop à l'égard de leur probité, non plus qu'à l'égard de celles des Français qui sont établis ici et qui sont fort haïs des naturels du pays. On s'ennuye fort à Boston. Il n'y a aucun amusement public et beaucoup de superstition, en sorte que l'on ne peut pas le dimanche chanter, jouer du violon, aux cartes, aux boules, &c. Je t'assure que nous avons grand besoin de toi pour venir augmenter nos plaisirs. En attendant, donne-nous de tes nouvelles et fais-nous un peu part de la politique de Genève. Je vais te payer en te disant quelque chose de ce pays...

Then follow four close pages of statistical information about the thirteen colonies, of the ordinary school-book type, which may be omitted without injury to the reader; at the end of which the letter proceeds:

On m'a dit beaucoup de mal de tous les habitans de la Nouvelle-Angleterre; du bien de ceux de la Pensilvanie, de la Virginie, du Maryland, et de la Caroline Septentrionale; et rien des autres.

J'en viens à l'Etat de Massachusetts, que je connais le mieux et que j'ai gardé pour le dernier.

Il est divisé en huit comtés et chaque comté en plusieurs villes. Car il n'y a point de bourgs. Dès qu'un certain nombre de familles veulent s'aller établir dans un terrain en friche et qu'elles consentent à entretenir un ministre et deux maîtres d'école, on leur donne un espace de deux lieues en quarré nommé *township* et l'établissement obtient le nom de ville et en a tous les privilèges. Les habitans de toutes les villes au-dessus de vingt-et-un ans et qui possèdent en Amérique un bien excédant trois livres sterling de revenu, s'assemblent une fois l'an pour élire un gouverneur et un sénat de la province, composé de six membres, dont on remplace deux membres par an. On compte les suffrages dans chaque ville et ceux qui out la pluralité des villes sont élus. Car les suffrages de chaque ville sont égaux. Boston n'a pas plus de droit qu'un village de deux cents hommes. Le sénat élit un conseil au gouverneur et chaque ville envoie le nombre de députés à Boston qu'elle veut. Cela forme la chambre des représentans et

l'on prend toujours les suffrages par ville. Environ deux cents villes envoient des députés et plus de cent ne sont pas assez riches pour en entretenir. Il faut le consentement de ces trois corps pour faire une loi, repartir les impôts (car c'est le Congrès Général qui les fixe sur chaque province, qui décide la paix ou la guerre, &c.), &c. Chaque ville élit les magistrats de police. Tout homme croyant un Dieu rémunérateur et une autre vie est toléré chez lui; et nombre de sectes ont des églises. Il y a cent ans qu'on y persécutait les Anglicans. Tel est le nouveau plan de gouvernement qui a eu l'approbation des villes après que deux autres ont été rejetés et qui sera en vigueur dans trois mois. Cette province est la plus commerçante de toutes et une des plus peuplées. Elle ne produit guère que du maïs, des patates, du poisson, du bois et des bestiaux. Ce sont actuellement ses corsaires qui la soutiennent. On fait ici d'excellent voiliers. Mais il n'y a aucune fabrique (excepté des toiles grossières). Il y a un collège et une académie et une bibliothèque à Cambridge, petite ville à une lieue de Boston. Je n'ai pas encore pu voir cela. Il n'y a aucune ville considérable excepté Boston dans cet état. A l'égard du comté de Main, les Anglais y ont un fort nommé Penobscot où les Américains se sont fait brûler 18 vaisseaux l'année dernière en voulant l'attaquer. Il est à peu près au milieu du comté. Au nord sont des tribus de sauvages; au nord-est, l'Acadie ou Nouvelle-Ecosse; et au nord-ouest, le Canada. Je te dirai plus de choses de ce pays dans peu de tems, car nous y allons faire un petit voyage pour commercer en pelleteries. Nous allons à Machias

(on prononce Maitchais) qui est la dernière place au nord. Aye la bonté de t'informer de toutes les particularités que tu pourras apprendre sur les manufactures des environs de Bordeaux, sur la difficulté qu'il y aurait à en transporter des ouvriers ici, de même que des agriculteurs, sur le prix des marchandises qui doivent y être à bon compte tant parcequ'on les y fabrique que parcequ'elles y arrivent aisément, sur ce que coûtent les pendules de bois en particulier, &c. J'espère que nous te verrons dans peu auprès de nous. Cela se fera sur un vaisseau que nous pourrons t'indiquer. Nous aurons fait marché avec le capitaine et j'espère que tu pourras faire la traversée plus agréablement et économiquement que nous. Adieu, mon bon ami. Pense aussi souvent à nous que nous à toi et écris-nous longuement et très-souvent, car il y a bien des vaisseaux de pris.

“A Monsieur Badollet, Etudiant en Théologie.”

Whoever gave the writer his information in regard to the Massachusetts constitution was remarkably ill informed. But this is a trifle. The next letter soon follows:

## GALLATIN TO BADOLLET

No. 3.

*Machias, 29 8re, 1780.*

Mon cher ami, tu ne t'attendais sans doute pas à recevoir des lettres datées d'un nom aussi baroque, mais c'est celui que les



sauvages y ont mis, et comme ils sont les premiers possesseurs du pays, il est juste de l'appeler comme eux. (On prononce Maitchais.) C'est ici que nous allons passer l'hiver. Nous avons préféré les glaces du nord au climat tempéré qu'habitent les Quakers, et si nous t'avions avec nous pour célébrer l'Escalade et pour vivre avec nous, je t'assure que nous serions fort contents de notre sort actuel. Car jusqu'à présent notre santé et nos affaires pécuniaires vont fort bien; quand je dis fort bien, c'est qu'à l'égard du dernier article nous ne sommes pas trop ambitieux. Je vais te détailler tout l'état de nos affaires. Dans la maison où nous demeurions à Boston nous rencontrâmes une Suisse qui avait épousé un Genevois nommé de Lesdernier de Russin et dont je crois t'avoir dit deux mots dans une de mes lettres précédentes. Il y avait trente ans qu'il était venu s'établir dans la Nouvelle-Ecosse. Tu sais que cette province et le Canada sont les seules qui soient restées sous le joug anglais. Une partie des habitons de la première essaya cependant de se révolter il y a deux ou trois ans. Mais n'ayant pas été soutenus ils furent obligés de s'enfuir dans la Nouvelle-Angleterre. Parmi eux était un des fils de de Lesdernier. Il vint dans cette place où il fut fait lieutenant. Il fut ensuite fait prisonnier et mené à Halifax (la capitale de la Nouvelle-Ecosse). Son père l'alla voir en prison et la lui fit adoucir jusqu'à ce qu'il fut échangé. Mais il essuya beaucoup de désagrémens de la part de ses amis qui lui reprochaient d'avoir un fils parmi les rebelles. Il eut ensuite une partie de ses effets pris par les Américains tandis qu'il les faisait transporter sur mer

d'une place à une autre où il allait s'établir. L'espérance de les recouvrer s'il venait à Boston jointe au souvenir de l'affaire de son fils l'engagea à quitter la Nouvelle-Ecosse avec un autre de ses fils (trois autres sont au service du roi d'Angleterre) et sa femme. Quand nous vinmes à Boston, n'ayant rien pu recouvrer, il était allé jusqu'à Baltimore dans le Maryland voir s'il ne trouverait rien à faire; et à l'arrivée de la flotte française à Rhode Island, il y alla et y prit un Capucin pour servir de missionnaire parmi les sauvages dans cette place. Car ils sont tous catholiques et du parti des Français. Dans ce même temps ayant de la peine à vendre notre thé et voyant beaucoup de difficultés pour le commerce du côté de la Pensilvanie, nous échangeâmes notre thé contre des marchandises des îles, et nous résolûmes de venir ici acheter du poisson et faire la traite de la pelleterie avec les sauvages. Machias est la dernière place au nord-est de la Nouvelle-Angleterre, à environ cent lieues de Boston, dans le comté de Main qui est annexé à l'état de Massachusetts Bay. Il n'y a que quinze ans qu'on y a formé un établissement qui est fort pauvre à cause de la guerre et qui ne consiste qu'en 150 familles dispersées dans un espace de 3 à 4 lieues. Nous sommes dans le chef-lieu, où est un fort, le colonel Allan commandant de la place et surintendant de tous les sauvages qui sont entre le Canada, la Nouvelle-Ecosse et la Nouvelle-Angleterre, et tous les officiers. Le dernier le fils, chez qui nous logeons, est un très-joli garçon. Nous y passerons l'hiver et probablement nous prendrons des terres le printemps prochain, non pas ici mais un peu plus au

nord ou au sud où elles sont meilleures. On les a pour rien, mais elles sont en friche et assez difficiles à travailler. Ajoute à cela le manque d'hommes. C'est pourquoi je te le répète, informe-toi des conditions auxquelles des paysans voudraient venir ici. Celles que nous pourrions accorder à peu près seraient de les faire transporter gratis, de les entretenir la première année, après quoi la moitié du revenu des terres qu'ils défricheraient en cas que ce fussent des bleds, ou le quart si c'étaient des pâturages, leur resteraient pendant dix, quinze ou vingt ans suivant les arrangemens (le plus longtems serait le mieux), et au bout de ce tems la moitié ou le quart des terres leur appartiendrait à perpétuité sans qu'ils fussent obligés de cultiver davantage l'autre moitié ou les autres trois quarts. En cas que tu en trouvasses, écris-nous le avec les conditions, le nombre, &c.

Nous avons déjà vu plusieurs sauvages, tous presque aussi noirs que des nègres, habillés presque à l'Européenne excepté les femmes qui – Mais je veux te laisser un peu de curiosité sans la satisfaire, afin que tu ayes autant de motifs que possible pour venir nous joindre au plus tôt. Mais ne pars que quand nous te le dirons, parcequ'en cas que tu ayes de l'argent, nous t'indiquerons quelles marchandises tu dois acheter, et parceque nous tâcherons de te procurer un embarquement agréable. Dans notre passage de Boston ici nous avons couru plus de risque qu'en venant d'Europe. Le second jour de notre voyage nous relâchâmes à Newbury, jolie ville à dix lieues de Boston et nous y fûmes retenus 5 à 6 jours par les vents contraires. L'entrée du

hâvre est très-étroite et il y a un grand nombre de brisans, de manière que quand les vents ont soufflé depuis le dehors pendant quelque tems il y a des vagues prodigieuses qui pouvaient briser ou renverser le vaisseau quand nous voulûmes sortir. Nous fûmes donc obligés de rester encore quelques jours jusqu'à ce que la mer fût calmée. Enfin nous partîmes après nous être échoué 2 fois dans le havre. Après deux jours de navigation les vents contraires et très-forts nous obligèrent d'entrer à Casco Bay, où est la ville de Falmouth, une des premières victimes de cette guerre, car elle a été presque entièrement brûlée par les Anglais en '79. Le lendemain nous en partîmes. Bon vent tout le jour, la nuit et le lendemain, mais un brouillard épais. Le lendemain un coup de vent déchira notre grande voile. On la raccommoda tant bien que mal, et à peine était-elle remplacée que le vent augmenta et un quart d'heure après on découvrit tout à coup la terre à une portée-de-fusil à gauche. Nous allions nord-est et le vent était ouest, c'est à dire qu'il portait droit contre terre, et la marée montait. L'on ne pouvait plus virer de bord et l'on fut obligé d'aller autant contre le vent qu'on le pouvait (par un angle de 80 degrés); malgré cela on approchait toujours de terre, mais on en voyait le bout et heureusement elle tournait moyennant quoi nous échappâmes, mais nous n'étions pas à deux toises d'un roc qui était à l'avant de la terre quand nous la dépassâmes. Nous gagnâmes le large au plus vite, et après avoir été battus par la tempête toute la nuit, nous arrivâmes le lendemain ici.

Je n'ai pas besoin de te dire que ceci est écrit au nom de tous

les deux, et comme tu le vois le papier ne me permet pas de causer plus longtems avec toi. Adieu, mon bon ami. Cette lettre est achevée le 7<sup>e</sup> novembre. Je numérote mes lettres. Fais-en autant et dis-moi quels numéros tu as reçus.

Tu ne recevras point de lettres de nous d'ici au printems, la communication étant fermée.

En relisant ma lettre je vois que je ne t'ai rien dit de la manière de vivre de ce pays. Le commerce consiste en poisson, planches, mâtures, pelleteries, et il est fort avantageux. Avant la guerre on ne faisait que couper des planches, depuis on a défriché les terres; il n'y a encore que fort peu de bleds, mais des patates et des racines de toute espèce en abondance, point de fruits, et du bétail mais peu. Nous avons déjà une vache. C'est un commencement de métairie, comme tu vois. Trois rivières se jettent dans le hâvre et c'est à deux lieues au-dessus de leur embouchure que nous sommes à la jonction de deux d'entr'elles. Nous allons en bateaux de toute espèce et entr'autres sur des canots d'écorce, dont tu seras enchanté, quelques fragiles qu'ils soient. Tout cela gèle tout l'hyver et on peut faire dix lieues en patins. On va sur la neige avec une sorte de machine qui s'attache aux pieds, nommée raquettes, et avec laquelle on n'enfonce point, quelque tendre qu'elle soit. On fait trente, quarante lieues à travers les bois, les lacs, les rivières, en raquettes, en patins, en canots d'écorce. Car on les porte sur son dos quand on arrive à un endroit où il n'y a plus d'eau jusqu'au premier ruisseau, où l'on se rembarque.

Dis-nous quelque chose de Genève; des affaires politiques, du

procès Rilliet, de ta manière de passer ton tems à présent, &c. Adresse-nous tes lettres à Boston.

Monsieur Jean Badollet,

Chez Monsieur le Chevalier de Vivens, à Clérac.

A letter from Serre, which was enclosed with the above long despatch from Gallatin, throws some light on Serre's imaginative and poetical character and his probable influence on the more practical mind of his companion, although, to say the truth, his idea of life and its responsibilities was simply that of the runaway school-boy.

## SERRE TO BADOLLET

Mon cher ami Badollet, nous sommes ici dans un pays où je crois que tu te plaindras bien; nous demeurons au milieu d'une forêt sur le bord d'une rivière; nous pouvons chasser, pêcher, nous baigner, aller en patins quand bon nous semble. A présent nous nous chauffons gaillardement devant un bon feu, et ce qu'il y a de mieux c'est que c'est nous-mêmes qui allons couper le bois dans la forêt. Tu sais comme nous nous amusons à Genève à nous promener en bateau. Eh bien! je m'amuse encore mieux ici à naviguer dans des canots de sauvages. Ils sont construits avec de l'écorce de bouleau et sont charmants pour aller un ou deux dedans; on peut s'y coucher comme dans un lit, et ramer tout à son aise; il n'y a pas de petit ruisseau qui n'ait assez d'eau pour ces jolies voitures. Il y a quelque tems que je descendis une petite

rivière fort étroite; le tems était superbe; je voyais des prairies à deux pas de moi; j'étais couché tout le long du canot sur une couverture, et il y avait si peu d'eau qu'il me semblait glisser sur les près et les gazons. Je tourne, je charpente, je dessine, je joue du violon; il n'y a pas diablerie que je ne fasse pour m'amuser. Note avec cela que nous sommes ici en compagnie de cinq bourgeois et bourgeoises de Genève. Il est bien vrai qu'il y en a trois de nés en Amérique, mais ils n'en ont pas moins conservé le sang républicain de leurs ancêtres, et M. Lesdernier le fils, né dans ce continent d'un père genevois, est celui de tous les Américains que j'ai vu encore le plus zélé et le plus plein d'enthousiasme pour la liberté de son pays.

Adieu, mon cher ami. J'espère que l'été prochain tu viendras m'aider à *pagailler* (signifie *ramer*) dans un canot de sauvage. Nous irons remonter la rivière St. Jean ou le fleuve St. Laurent, visiter le Canada. Si tu pouvais trouver moyen de m'envoyer une demi-douzaine de bouts de tubes capillaires pour thermomètre, tu obligerais beaucoup ton affectionné ami.

P.S. – Nous allons bientôt faire un petit voyage pour voir une habitation de sauvages.

A little more information is given by the fragment of another letter, written nearly two years afterwards, but covering the same ground.

# GALLATIN TO BADOLLET

*Cambridge, 15 septembre, 1782.*

Mon bon ami, je t'écris sans savoir où tu es, et sans savoir si mes lettres te parviendront, ou si même tu te soucies d'en recevoir; car si je ne comptais pas autant sur ton amitié que je le fais, je serais presque porté à croire que tu n'as répondu à aucune des lettres que nous t'avons écrites, Serre et moi, depuis plus de deux ans. Cependant te jugeant par moi-même et surtout te connaissant comme je fais, j'aime mieux penser que toutes nos lettres ont été perdues, ou que toutes les tiennes ont subi ce sort. Ainsi commençant par la deuxième supposition, je vais te faire un court narré de nos aventures.

Notre voyage jusqu'en Amérique ne fut marqué par aucun évènement remarquable excepté le vol que le second du vaisseau nous fit de la moitié de notre linge et de quelqu'argent. Nous arrivâmes à Boston le 15 juillet, 1780, et nous y restâmes deux mois avant de pouvoir nous défaire de quelques caisses de thé que nous avions achetées avant de nous embarquer. La difficulté de se transporter à Philadelphie et le désir d'augmenter un peu nos fonds avant d'y aller, nous détermina à passer dans le nord de cet état dans le dernier établissement qu'aient les Américains sur les frontières de la Nouvelle-Ecosse. Cette place se nomme Machias et est un port de mer situé sur la baye Funday, ou



Française, à cent lieues N. – E. de Boston. Un Genevois nommé Lesdernier, un bon paysan de Russin, qui après avoir fait de fort bons établissements en Nouvelle-Ecosse, les avait perdus en partie par sa faute, en partie par son attachement pour la cause des Américains, et qui allait avec un capucin (destiné à prêcher des sauvages) joindre son fils qui est lieutenant au service américain à Machias, – ce Genevois, dis-je, fut un des motifs qui nous entraîna dans le nord, où notre curiosité ne demandait pas mieux que de nous conduire. Nous partîmes de Boston le 1er octobre, 1780, et après avoir relâché à Newbury et à Casco Bay (deux ports de la Nouvelle-Angleterre, situés le premier à quinze lieues et le second à quarante-cinq nord-est de Boston), et avoir pensé nous perdre dans un brouillard contre un rocher, en grande partie par l'ignorance de nos matelots, nous arrivâmes le 15e octobre dans la rivière de Machias. Te donner une idée de ce pays n'est pas bien difficile; quatre ou cinq maisons ou plutôt cahutes de bois éparses dans l'espace de deux lieues de côte que l'on découvre à la fois, deux ou trois arpens de terre défrichés autour de chaque cahute, et quand je dis défrichés j'entends seulement qu'on a coupé les arbres des alentours et que l'on a planté quelques patates entre les souches, et au delà, de quel côté que l'on se tourne, rien que des bois immenses qui bornent la vue de tous côtés, voilà ce que le premier coup-d'œil présente. Il ne laisse cependant pas que d'y avoir quelques variétés dans cette vue, quelque uniforme qu'elle soit naturellement. Le port que la rivière forme à son embouchure, port qui pour le dire en passant

est assez beau et très-sûr, est parsemé de quelques petites îles. Les différentes réflexions du soleil sur les arbres de différentes couleurs dont elles sont couvertes, sur les rocs escarpés qui en bordent quelques-unes et sur les vagues qui se brisent à leur pied, forment des contrastes assez agréables. Ajoute à cela quelques bateaux à voiles ou à rames et quelques petits canots, les uns de bois, les autres d'écorce d'arbre et faits par les sauvages, qui sont menés par un ou deux hommes, souvent par quelques jolies jeunes filles vêtues très-simplement mais proprement, armés chacun d'une pagaie avec laquelle ils font voler leur fragile navire, et tu auras une idée de la vue de toutes les côtes et bayes du nord de la Nouvelle-Angleterre. Cinq milles au-dessus de l'embouchure de la rivière est le principal établissement, car il y a une vingtaine de maisons et un fort de terre et de bois défendu par sept pièces de canon, et par une garnison de 15 à 20 hommes. C'est un colonel nommé Allan qui est le commandeur de cette redoutable place, mais il a un emploi un peu plus important, celui de surintendant de tous les sauvages de cette partie. Je t'ai dit qu'un de nos motifs pour aller à Machias était d'augmenter un peu nos fonds; pour cela nous avons employé les deux mille livres argent de France qui formait notre capital, à acheter du rhum, du sucre et du tabac, que nous comptons vendre aux sauvages ou aux habitants; mais ces derniers n'ayant point d'argent, la saison du poisson salé qu'ils pêchent en assez grande quantité...

The remainder of this letter is lost, and the loss is the more unfortunate because the next movements of the two travellers

are somewhat obscure. They appear to have wasted a year at Machias quite aimlessly, with possibly some advantage to their facility of talking, but at a serious cost to their slender resources. In the war, though they were on the frontier, and no doubt quite in the humor for excitement of the kind, they had little opportunity to take part. "I went twice as a volunteer," says Mr. Gallatin, in a letter written in 1846,<sup>5</sup> "to Passamaquoddy Bay, the first time in November, 1780, under Colonel Allen, who commanded at Machias and was superintendent of Indian affairs in that quarter. It was then and at Passamaquoddy that I was for a few days left accidentally in command of some militia, volunteers, and Indians, and of a small temporary work defended by one cannon and soon after abandoned. As I never met the enemy, I have not the slightest claim to military services." But what was of much more consequence, he advanced four hundred dollars in supplies to the garrison at Machias, for which he was ultimately paid by a Treasury warrant, which, as the Treasury was penniless, he was obliged to sell for what it would bring, namely, one hundred dollars. Nevertheless he found Machias and the Lesderniers so amusing, or perhaps he felt so little desire to throw himself again upon the world, that he remained all the following summer buried in this remote wilderness, cultivating that rude, free life which seems to have been Serre's ideal even more than his own. They came at length so near the end of their resources that they were forced to seek some new means

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<sup>5</sup> Letter to John Connor, 9th January, 1846. Writings, vol. ii. p. 621.

of support. In October, 1781, therefore, they quitted Machias and returned to Boston, where Gallatin set himself to the task of obtaining pupils in French. None of his letters during this period have been preserved except the fragment already given, and the only light that can now be thrown on his situation at Boston is found in occasional references to his letters by his correspondents at home in their replies.

*1781.*

## **MLLE. PICTET TO GALLATIN**

No. 5.

*Genève, 5 février, 1782.*

J'ai reçu, mon cher ami, ta lettre de Boston du 18e décembre, 1781, qui m'a fait grand plaisir. Je suis bien aise que vous ne soyez plus dans l'espèce de désert où vous avez passé l'hiver précédent et où je ne voyais rien à gagner pour vous mais beaucoup à perdre par la mauvaise compagnie à laquelle vous étiez réduit. Je suis content aussi de l'aveu naïf que tu fais de ton ennui; ... vous n'êtes peut-être pas beaucoup mieux à Boston, n'y étant connu de personne; mais il n'est pas impossible de faire quelques bonnes connaissances si vous y passez quelque tems. Je t'y adressai une lettre le 6e janvier, 1782, No. 4, sous le couvert de M. le Docteur Samuel Cooper, à laquelle je joignis un mémoire pour lui demander à s'informer de vous à Machias,

où je vous croyais encore, de vouloir bien vous protéger soit à Machias soit à Boston. Je lui contais votre histoire ... et lui disais que M. Franklin, son ami, devait le charger de te remettre mille livres, ... qu'on remettrait ici à M. Marignac, chez lequel M. Johannot son petit-fils est en pension. C'est ce jeune homme, que nous voyons souvent, qui voulut bien envoyer le tout dans une lettre de recommandation pour vous à son grand-père... La lettre par laquelle M. Johannot te recommande à son ami et le charge de te payer mille livres ... n'arrivera vraisemblablement qu'en même tems que celle-ci, ce dont je suis très-fâchée, ne doutant pas que tu n'aies grand besoin d'argent. J'ai peine à croire que les leçons de Français que vous donnez suffisent à vos besoins... Si ton oncle le cadet consent, je t'enverrai à Philadelphie les 800 livres, ... puisque tu dis que tu veux y aller au printemps.

*1782.*

## **MLLE. PICTET TO GALLATIN**

No. 8.

*14 novembre, 1782.*

... Enfin le jeune Johannot vient de recevoir une lettre de M. son grand-père qui lui parle de toi; il t'a fait obtenir une place de Professeur en langue française dans l'académie de Boston...

## MLLE. PICTET TO GALLATIN

No. 9.

*30 novembre, 1782.*

Je reçois, mon cher ami, ta lettre du 5<sup>e</sup> septembre, 1782, No. 3... Elle m'a fait d'autant plus de plaisir que je l'ai trouvée mieux que les précédentes; elle est sensée et dépouillée d'enthousiasme; il me semble que tu commences à voir les choses sous leur vrai point de vue... Je vois avec grand plaisir que tu ne penses plus au commerce... Je ne puis m'empêcher de te répéter que tu dois te défier de l'imagination et de la tête de Serre; il l'a légère; l'imagination a plus de part à ses projets que le raisonnement...

## MLLE. PICTET TO GALLATIN

No. 10.

*26 décembre, 1782.*

... Tu me dis que ta santé est bonne; je trouve que tu la mets à de terribles épreuves, et quoique ta vie soit moins pénible que quand tu étais coupeur de bois à Machias, la quantité de leçons que tu es obligé de donner me paraît une chose bien fatigante et bien ennuyeuse. J'espère que tu seras devenu un peu moins difficile et moins sujet à l'ennui...

## SERRE TO BADOLLET

*Cambridge, 13 décembre, 1782.*

Mon cher ami, ma foi! je perds patience et je n'ai pas tout à fait tort. Tu conviendras avec nous qu'après t'avoir écrit une douzaine de lettres sans recevoir aucune réponse, il nous est bien permis d'être un peu en colère. Au nom de Dieu, dis-nous où es-tu, que fais-tu, es-tu mort ou en vie? Comment serait-il possible que tu n'eusses reçu aucune de nos lettres, ou qu'en ayant reçu, tu te fusses si peu embarrassé de nous; toi sur qui nous comptons si fort! Non; j'aime mieux croire que tu te souviens encore de nous, et attribuer ta négligence apparente au mauvais sort de tes lettres.

Je ne vais point te faire ici le détail de toutes nos aventures dans ce pays, qui sont assez curieuses et intéressantes. Nous avons visité toute la côte septentrionale des États-Unis depuis Boston jusqu'à Pasmacadie, quelquefois séparés l'un de l'autre, mais le plus souvent ensemble; nous avons habité parmi les sauvages, voyagé avec eux, par tems dans leurs canots d'écorce, couché dans leurs cabanes et assisté à un de leurs festins; nous nous sommes trouvés rassemblés cinq Genevois à Machias pendant un hiver, au milieu des bois et des Indiens. Combien de fois nous avons pensé à toi alors; combien de fois nous t'avons désiré pour venir avec nous couper du bois le matin et le transporter dans notre chaumière pour nous en chauffer. Mr.

Le dernier avec qui nous demeurions a été fermier à Russin, et quoique depuis trente ans dans ce pays il a conservé en entier cette humeur joviale et franche et cet esprit libre qui caractérisent nos habitans de la campagne. La première fois que je le vis je me sentis ému de joie, j'aurais voulu lui sauter au cou et l'embrasser; je me crus à Genève parmi nos bons bourgeois de la campagne et il me semblait voir en lui un ancien ami.

Partout où nous avons été nous t'avons toujours regretté. De tous les jeunes gens de notre connoissance à qui nous avons pensé, tu es le seul que nous ayons toujours désiré pour compagnon de fortune et dont le caractère se plairoit le plus à notre genre de vie. Si tu pouvais t'imaginer la liberté dont nous jouissons et tous les avantages qui l'accompagnent, tu n'hésiterais pas un instant à venir la partager avec nous. Nous ne courons point après la Fortune. L'expérience nous a appris qu'elle court souvent après l'homme à qui elle crie: Arrête; mais son ardente ambition le rend sourd et la lui représente toujours comme fuyant devant lui. Alors croyant l'atteindre à force de courses et de fatigues, le malheureux s'en éloigne et lui échappe. De quels regrets ne doit-il pas être consumé si après tant de peines et de travaux il vient à connaître son erreur, misérable par sa faute et trop faible pour retourner sur ses pas. Je ne m'étonnerais point que le désespoir de s'être si cruellement trompé, le portât à se délivrer d'un reste d'existence que le souvenir de sa faute et la pensée rongeante de son ambition déçue lui rendrait insupportable. Ignorant donc si la fortune nous suit



ou si elle nous précède, nous ne risquerons point notre bonheur pour la joindre, et nous aimons mieux un état qui procure une jouissance modérée mais présente et continue, que celui qui demande des souffrances préliminaires et n'offre en retour qu'un avenir plus séduisant, il est vrai, mais éloigné et incertain. Et même en le supposant certain, le grand avantage pour un homme qui a employé toute sa jeunesse (c'est à dire toute la partie de sa vie susceptible de jouissance) en veilles et en fatigues, de posséder dans un âge avancé des richesses qui lui sont alors inutiles et superflues! Ce n'est pas lorsqu'il est devenu incapable de sentir, qu'il a perdu presque toute la vivacité de ses sens et de ses passions, qu'il a besoin de l'instrument pour les satisfaire; le plaisir le plus vif que ressent un vieillard est le ressouvenir de ceux de la jeunesse, mais celui-ci n'aura que celui de ses peines passées et cette réflexion le rendra triste et mélancolique.

Notre but donc, mon cher ami, est le plus tôt que nous pourrons de nous procurer un fond de terre et de nous mettre fermiers; ayant ainsi une ressource sûre pour vivre agréablement et indépendants, nous pourrons lorsque l'envie nous en prendra, aller de tems en tems faire quelques excursions dans le dehors et courir le pays, ce qui est un de nos plus grands plaisirs; or nous n'attendrons que toi pour accomplir notre projet; fais ton paquet, je t'en prie, et hormis que tu ne sois dans des circonstances bien avantageuses, viens nous joindre tout de suite. Je ne saurais croire avec quel plaisir je m'imagine quelquefois nous voir tous les trois dans notre maison de campagne occupés des différents

soins de la campagne, puis de tems en tems pour varier, aller visiter quelque nouvelle partie du monde; si la fortune se trouve en passant, nous mettons la main dessus; si au contraire quelque revers nous abat, nous nous en revenons vite dans notre ferme, où nous en sommes quittes pour couper notre bois nous-mêmes et labourer notre champ; voilà notre pis-aller, et quel pis-aller! un de nos plus grands amusements!

Ah çà, nous t'attendons pour le plus tard le printems prochain. Pourvu que tu aies de quoi payer ton passage, ne t'inquiète pas du reste. Nous ignorons où nous serons positivement dans ce temps, mais dès le moment que tu seras arrivé, si c'est à Boston va loger chez Tahon qui tient une auberge française à l'enseigne de *l'alliance* dans la rue appelée Fore Street, prononcé Faure Strite. Si tu n'arrives pas à Boston, écris à Tahon, qui t'indiquera où nous sommes. Emporte avec toi tout ce que tu possèdes et tâche de te munir d'un ou deux bons baromètres et thermomètres et de tubes pour en faire, avec une longue vue.

Adieu, mon cher ami; je ne sais point à qui adresser cette lettre pour qu'elle te parvienne, car j'ignore totalement où est ta résidence actuelle. Gallatin t'écrit aussi, ainsi je ne te dis rien de lui.

It was the watchful care and forethought of Mlle. Pictet that enabled Gallatin to tide over the difficulties of these two years, by obtaining the countenance and aid of Dr. Cooper, which opened to him the doors of Harvard College. The following paper shows the position he occupied at the college, which has

been sometimes dignified by the name of Professorship:

“At a meeting of the President and Fellows of Harvard College, July 2, 1782: Vote 5. That Mr. Gallatin, who has requested it, be permitted to instruct in the French language such of the students as desire it and who shall obtain permission from their parents or guardians in writing, signified under their hands to the President; which students shall be assessed in their quarter-bills the sums agreed for with Mr. Gallatin for their instruction; and that Mr. Gallatin be allowed the use of the library, a chamber in the college, and commons at the rate paid by the tutors, if he desire it.

*“Copy. Attest,*

*“Joseph Willard, President.”*

The list of students who availed themselves of this privilege is still preserved, and contains a number of names then best known in Boston. The terms offered were: “Provided fifty students engage, the sum will be five dollars per quarter each, and provided sixty (not included Messrs. Oatis, Pyncheon, and Amory) have permits from their relations, the price will be four dollars each. They are under no obligation to engage more than by the quarter.” The “Mr. Oatis” was apparently Harrison Gray Otis. About seventy appear to have taken lessons, which was, for that day, a considerable proportion of the whole number of students. Gallatin’s earnings amounted to something less than three hundred dollars, and he seems to have found difficulty in procuring payment, for he intimates on a memorandum that this

was the sum *paid*.

1783.

Of his life while in Boston and Cambridge almost nothing can be said. He was not fond of society, and there is no reason to suppose that he sought the society of Boston. The only American friend he made, of whose friendship any trace remains, was William Bentley, afterwards a clergyman long settled at Salem, then a fellow-tutor at Cambridge. When Gallatin left Cambridge after a year of residence, President Willard, Professor Wigglesworth, and Dr. Cooper, at his request, gave him a certificate that he had “acquitted himself in this department with great reputation. He appears to be well acquainted with letters, and has maintained an unblemished character in the University and in this part of the country.” And Mr. Bentley, in whose bands he left a few small money settlements, wrote to him as follows, enclosing the testimonial:

## **WILLIAM BENTLEY TO GALLATIN**

*Hollis Hall, Cambridge, August 20, 1783.*

Mr. Gallatin, – I profess myself happy in your confidence. Your very reputable conduct in the University has obliged all its friends to afford you the most full testimony of their esteem and obligation, as the within testimonials witness. I should have answered your letter of July 11 sooner had not the call

of a dissenting congregation at Salem obliged my absence at that time, and the immediately ensuing vacation prevented my attention to your business... I expect soon to leave Cambridge, as the day appointed for my ordination at Salem is the 24th of September. In every situation of life I shall value your friendship and company, and subscribe myself your devoted and very humble servant.

N.B. – The tutors all expressed a readiness to subscribe to any recommendation or encomium which could serve Mr. Gallatin's interest in America; but our names would appear oddly on the list with the president, professors, and Dr. Cooper.

If Gallatin gained the esteem of so excellent a man as Bentley, there can be no doubt that he deserved it. In the small collegiate society of that day there was little opportunity to deceive, and Bentley and President Willard only repeat the same account of Gallatin's character and abilities which comes from all other sources. There is, too, an irresistible accent of truth in the quaint phraseology of Bentley's letter.

But he had no intention to stop here. In July, 1783, he took advantage of the summer vacation to travel.

## **GALLATIN TO SERRE**

*New York, 22e juillet, 1783.*

Mon bon ami, nous voici arrivés heureusement à New York

après un passage plus long que nous n'avions compté. Nous laissâmes Providence jeudi passé, 17<sup>e</sup> courant, et arrivâmes le lendemain à Newport, où nous ne fîmes que dîner, et que j'ai trouvé mieux situé et plus agréable quoique moins bien bâti et moins commerçant que Providence. Apropos de cette dernière ville, j'ai été voir le collège, où il n'y a que 12 écoliers; je ne pus voir le président, mais le tutor, car il n'y en a qu'un, me parla de Poullin; il me dit qu'ils seraient très-charmés d'avoir un maître français; que le collège ni les écoliers ne pourraient lui donner que peu de chose, mais qu'il se trouverait dans la ville un nombre assez considérable d'écoliers pour l'occuper autant qu'il voudrait; qu'en cas qu'il s'en présentât un, le collège le ferait afficher sur la gazette afin qu'on ouvrît pour lui une souscription dans la ville et qu'il sût sur quoi compter. Pour revenir, nous laissâmes Newport vendredi à 2h. après dîner, et ne sommes arrivés ici que hier, lundi, à la nuit. Nous avons eu beau tems mais calme. Les bords de la Longue-Isle près de New-York sont passables, mais ceux de l'île même où est bâtie New-York sont couverts de campagnes charmantes au-dessus de la ville. Le port paraît fort beau et il y a deux fois autant de vaisseaux qu'à Boston. Ce que j'ai vu de la ville est assez bien, mais il y fait horriblement chaud. Il y a comédie et nous comptons y aller demain. Il y a aussi beaucoup de soldats, de marins, et de réfugiés, les derniers très honnêtes et polis à ce qu'on dit, mais les autres fort insolens. Nous comptons partir après-demain pour Philadelphie, où j'espère trouver de tes nouvelles et de celles de N.W. Dans notre passage

de Providence nous avons pour compagnon de passage (parmi plusieurs autres) un docteur français ou barbier, plus bavard que La Chapelle, plus impudent que St. Pri et plus bête – ma foi, je ne sais à qui le comparer pour cela; c'était un sot français au superlatif; il a réussi à nous escroquer trois piastres, sans compter ce qu'il a fait aux autres. Les filles ne sont pas si jolies ici qu'à Boston et nous n'avons pas encore eu la moindre aventure galante dans toute notre route. Au reste, comme tu es sans doute à présent un grave maître d'école et que tu dois avoir pris toute la pédanterie inséparable du métier, ce n'est plus à toi que j'oserais faire de telles confidences. J'espère cependant que tu n'auras pas longtemps à t'ennuyer à ce sot emploi et je t'écirai tout ce que nous avons à espérer dès que je serai à Philadelphie. Porte-toi bien. Tout à toi.

Mr. Savary te fait bien des complimens. Notre autre compagnon de voyage n'est pas ici. Aussi je les supposerai en son nom. Il est arrivé hier ici une frégate d'Angleterre qui a, dit-on, apporté le traité définitif ... traité de commerce de...

The M. Savary mentioned here as Gallatin's fellow-traveller from Boston was to have a great influence on his fortunes. M. Savary de Valcoulon was from Lyons. Having claims against the State of Virginia, he had undertaken himself to collect them, and meeting Gallatin at Boston, they had become travelling companions. They went to Philadelphia together, where they remained till November. Serre rejoined them there; but Gallatin's means were now quite exhausted. Their combined expenses,

since quitting Geneva, had been in three years about sixteen hundred dollars, including three hundred dollars lost by the Treasury warrant. Of this sum Gallatin had advanced about thirteen hundred dollars, Serre's father resolutely refusing to send his son any money at all or to honor his drafts. A settlement was now made. Serre gave to Gallatin his note for half the debt, about six hundred dollars, and, joining a countryman named Mussard, went to Jamaica, where he died, in 1784, of the West India fever. Fifty-three years afterwards his sister by will repaid the principal to Mr. Gallatin, who had, with great delicacy, declined to ask for payment. But when this separation between Gallatin and Serre took place, it was intended to be temporary only; Serre was to return and to rejoin his friend, who meanwhile was to carry out their scheme of retreat by a new emigration. The sea-coast was not yet far enough removed from civilization; they were bent upon putting another month's journey between themselves and Europe; the Ohio was now their aim. There may be a doubt whether they drew Savary in this direction, or whether Savary pointed out the path to them. In any case, Serre sailed for Jamaica in the middle of September, before the new plans were entirely settled, and nothing was ever heard from him again until repeated inquiries produced, in the autumn of 1786, a brief but apparently authentic report of his death two years before. Gallatin accepted Savary's offers, and went with him to Richmond to assist him in the settlement of his claims. But before they left Philadelphia a larger scheme was projected.



Savary and Gallatin were to become partners in a purchase of one hundred and twenty thousand acres of land in Western Virginia, Gallatin's interest being one-fourth of the whole, and his share to be paid, until his majority, in the form of personal superintendence.

Meanwhile, a premonitory symptom of revolution had occurred in Geneva. The two parties had come to blows; blood was shed; the adjoining governments of Switzerland, France, and Savoy had interposed, and held the city in armed occupation. The Liberals were deeply disgusted at this treatment, and to those who had already left their country the temptation to return became smaller than ever.

## GALLATIN TO BADOLLET

*Philadelphie, ce 1er octobre, 1783.*

Mon bon ami, je viens de recevoir ta lettre du 20 mars qui à quelques égards m'a fait le plus grand plaisir, mais qui en m'apprenant toutes les circonstances des troubles de notre malheureuse patrie a achevé de m'ôter toute espérance de jamais pouvoir m'y fixer. Non, mon ami, il est impossible à un homme de sens et vertueux, né citoyen d'un état libre, et qui est venu sucer encore l'amour de l'indépendance dans le pays le plus libre de l'univers; il est impossible, dis-je, à cet homme, quelques puissent avoir été les préjugés de son enfance, d'aller jouer nulle

part le rôle de tyran ou d'esclave, et comme je ne vois pas qu'il y ait d'autre situation à choisir à Genève, je me vois forcé de renoncer pour toujours à ces murs chéris qui m'ont vu naître, à ma famille, à mes amis; à moins qu'une nouvelle révolution ne change beaucoup la situation des affaires. Tu vois par ce que je viens de te dire que la façon de penser de mes parens n'influe point sur la mienne et que j'en ai changé depuis mon départ d'Europe. Il est tout simple qu'étant entouré des gens qui pensent tous de la même manière, on s'habitue à penser comme eux; dès que l'on commence à être de leur parti, le préjugé a déjà pris possession de vous et à moins que par un heureux hasard la raison et le bon droit ne soient du côté que vous avez embrassé, vous tomberez d'écarts en écarts, de torts en torts, et vous ne verrez les excès auxquels vous vous serez abandonné que lorsque quelqu'évènement d'éclat vous aura ouvert les yeux. En voilà je crois assez pour me justifier d'avoir été Négatif à 19 ans lorsque j'abandonnai Genève. Mais à 1200 lieues de distance on juge bien plus sainement; le jugement n'étant plus embarrassé par les petites raisons, les petits préjugés, les petites vues et les petits intérêts de vos alentours, ne voit plus que le fond de la question, et peut décider hardiment. Si l'on se laisse gagner par un peu d'enthousiasme il y a mille à gager contre un que ce sera en faveur de la bonne cause. Voilà ce qui peu à peu produisit un grand changement dans mon opinion après mon arrivée en Amérique. Je fus bientôt convaincu par la comparaison des gouvernemens américains avec celui de Genève que ce dernier était fondé sur

de mauvais principes; que le pouvoir judiciaire tant au civil qu'au criminel, le pouvoir exécutif en entier, et  $\frac{2}{3}$  du pouvoir législatif appartenant à deux corps qui se créaient presque entièrement eux-mêmes, et dont les membres étaient élus à vie, il était presque impossible que cette formidable aristocratie ne rompît tôt ou tard l'équilibre que l'on s'imaginait pouvoir subsister à Genève. Je compris que le droit d'élire la moitié des membres de l'un de ces conseils sans avoir celui de les déplacer et le droit de déplacer annuellement la 6<sup>me</sup> partie des membres de l'autre n'étaient que de faibles barrières contre des hommes qui avaient la fortune et la vie des citoyens entre les mains, le soin de la police de la manière la plus étendue, deux négatifs sur toutes les volontés du peuple, et dont les charges étaient à vie, pour ne pas dire héréditaires. Quelle différence entre un tel gouvernement et celui d'un pays où les différents conseils à qui sont confiés les pouvoirs législatifs et exécutifs ne sont élus que pour une année, où les juges, qui ne font qu'expliquer la loi, une fois élus ne sont plus sous l'influence du souverain et ne peuvent être déplacés que juridiquement, où enfin l'on est jugé non pas même par ces juges de nom, mais par 12 citoyens pris parmi les honnêtes gens et que les parties peuvent récuser. (Tu ne seras pas étonné, mon ami, après une telle comparaison, que je me sois décidé à me fixer ici.) En voyant les défauts du gouvernement genevois, je sentis qu'il était de l'intérêt des partisans de la liberté de veiller de près les aristocrates, mais non pas de vouloir les combattre. Le parti violent qu'ont embrassé les représentans ne peut être

justifié qu'en disant que les circonstances les ont entraînés, car il était impossible de n'en pas prévoir les conséquences et que la politique artificieuse des négatifs en tireroit tout le parti possible; je n'ai rien à ajouter à ce que tu dis sur la bassesse de ces derniers, et la faute des citoyens produite par l'enthousiasme de liberté n'est que trop sévèrement punie.

La lettre que je viens de recevoir est la première qui nous soit parvenue de celles que tu nous annonces nous avoir écrites. J'ai quitté Cambridge en juillet de cette année et je suis venu ici où je n'ai encore rien trouvé à faire qui me convienne. Serre n'est pas ici; je l'ai laissé à Boston d'où il est parti pour aller à ... et d'où il ne reviendra que l'année prochaine. Ce n'est pas pour toi que je cache le lieu actuel de sa résidence, mais il a des raisons pour que d'autres l'ignorent et j'ai peur que cette lettre n'éprouve des accidents. J'irai en Virginie bientôt, mais écris-moi à Philadelphie: To Albert Gallatin, citizen of Geneva, Philadelphia. Ce n'est que de peur d'équivoque que je conserve le titre de *citizen of Geneva*. Ecris à Serre sous mon adresse. Tu ne saurais croire le plaisir que j'ai éprouvé en apprenant que tu étais agréablement et avantageusement placé, mais tu ne m'a pas donné assez de détails sur ce qui te concerne; répare ta faute par ta première lettre.

Tu désires sans doute savoir quelles sont mes vues pour l'avenir; les voici! Ayant pour ainsi dire renoncé à Genève, je n'ai pas dû hésiter sur la choix de la patrie que je devais choisir, et l'Amérique m'a paru le pays le plus propre à me fixer par sa

constitution, son climat, et les ressources que j'y pouvais trouver. Mais il serait bien dur pour moi de me voir séparé de tous mes amis et c'était sur toi que je comptais pour me faire passer une vie agréable. Dumont, dis-tu, te retient; mais qu'est-ce qui retient Dumont? Il ne doit pas douter de tout le plaisir que j'aurais à le voir. Si toi, lui, Serre et moi étions réunis, ne formerions-nous pas une société très-agréable? Tu vois que je compte que vous seriez tous les deux aussi charmés d'être avec Serre et moi que nous deux d'être avec vous. Reste à proposer les moyens de pouvoir être passablement heureux quand nous serons réunis en ayant un honnête nécessaire et jouissant de cette médiocrité à laquelle je borne tous mes vœux. Comme la campagne est notre passion favorite, c'est de ce côté que se tournent entièrement mes projets. Dans l'espace situé entre les Apalaches et les Mississippi, sur les deux rives de l'Ohio se trouvent les meilleures terres de l'Amérique, et comme le climat en est tempéré je les préférerais à celles de Machias et de la Nouvelle-Angleterre. Celles au nord de l'Ohio appartiennent au Congrès, et celles du sud à la Virginie, aux Carolines et à la Georgie. Le Congrès n'en a encore point vendu ou donné. C'est donc de celles de Virginie dont je vais parler, quoique ce que j'en dirai puisse s'appliquer au nord de l'Ohio si les achats quand ils se feront y étaient plus avantageux. Je rejette les deux Carolines et la Georgie comme malsaines et moins avantageuses. Les terres depuis le grand Canaway qui se jette dans l'Ohio 250 milles au-dessous du Fort Duquesne ou Fort Pitt ou Pittsburg, jusques tout près de l'endroit

où l'Ohio se décharge dans le Mississippi, ont été achetées à très-bas prix par divers particuliers de l'État de Virginie, et c'est d'eux qu'il faudrait les racheter. Elles valent depuis 30 sols à 20 francs (argent de France) l'acre suivant leur qualité et surtout leur situation. Celles qui sont situées près de la chute de l'Ohio, le seul établissement qu'il y ait dans cet espace, sont les plus chères. On peut en avoir d'excellentes partout ailleurs pour 50 sols ou 3 francs. Je vais actuellement en Virginie et d'après mes informations j'en achèterai 2 à 3 mille acres dans une situation avantageuse. Si tu te détermènes à venir te fixer avec moi, je tournerai sur-le-champ toutes mes vues de ce côté-là. Je ne te demanderais pas de quitter immédiatement la place avantageuse que tu as, mais seulement de me donner une réponse décisive. Aussitôt que ma majorité, qui sera le 29 janvier, 1786, sera arrivée, j'emploierai ma petite fortune à fixer un certain nombre de familles de fermiers irlandais, américains, &c., autour de moi, parcequ'ils m'enrichiront en se rendant heureux (enrichir veut dire une médiocrité aisée). Tu sens bien que si c'est mon avantage de faire des avances à des indifférents, ce sera me rendre service que de venir te joindre à nous, et que le peu que tu pourras apporter, joint à ce qu'il sera de mon propre intérêt de t'avancer, te mettra en état de te former une habitation par toi-même, car depuis ton paragraphe des deux louis je n'ose plus te dire que ce que j'ai t'appartient comme à moi-même. Quant à moi j'accepterais, je ne dis pas un prêt mais un don de toi comme si je prenais dans ma bourse, et je suis tellement identifié

avec toi et Serre que toutes les fois que je dis *Je* en parlant ou en pensant à quelque plan de vie ou à quelque établissement, j'entends toujours *Badollet, Serre et Moi*. Je ne suis pas tout-à-fait aussi lié avec Dumont, mais je le suis autant avec lui qu'avec qui que ce soit excepté Serre et toi, et comme depuis mon départ de Genève je me suis beaucoup rapproché de sa façon de penser à bien des égards, comme il réunit les qualités du cœur et de l'esprit, il n'y a personne que je désirasse voir venir avec toi plus que lui, et à qui, si je le pouvais, je fusse de quelque utilité avec plus de plaisir. J'espère qu'en voilà assez pour l'engager à nous joindre s'il n'est pas retenu à Genève par des liens bien forts, et si ses goûts sont les mêmes que les nôtres. Je n'ai pas besoin de te dire qu'en s'établissant dans un bois loin des villes et n'ayant que peu d'habitans autour de soi, l'on doit s'attendre dans les commencements à bien des privations et surtout ne compter sur aucune des jouissances raffinées des villes. Je me sens assez de courage pour cela, mais je ne conseillerais à personne de prendre ce parti sans s'être bien consulté. Comme je suis très-gueux dans ce moment-ci, comme plus tu restes dans ta place actuelle et plus tu te prépares de moyens de réussite pour l'avenir, et comme il vaut mieux perdre un an que de s'apprêter des regrets, attends des nouvelles plus positives pour partir à moins que tu n'aies rien de mieux à faire. Mais surtout ne prends point d'engagemens en Europe qui pussent t'empêcher de venir nous joindre dans l'année prochaine ou au plus tard dans la suivante.

Si parmi les personnes que les malheurs de notre patrie en

chassent, il s'en trouvait quelques-unes qui désirassent réunir leurs petites fortunes pour former un établissement un peu plus considérable, je désirerais que tu me le fisses savoir. Je pourrai depuis la Virginie leur proposer un plan plus déterminé et plus sûr. Je ne crois pas ce pays bien propre à établir des manufactures; je ne parle que de petits capitalistes comme moi, et de fermiers ou ouvriers, ces derniers (les ouvriers) en petit nombre. S'il y avait un nombre suffisant de gens qui voulussent s'expatrier, peut-être le Congrès leur accorderait des terres. Je serais charmé de pouvoir être utile à tous ceux de mes compatriotes que leur amour pour la liberté a forcés de quitter Genève, et s'ils tournaient leur vue sur les États-Unis ils pourraient compter sur mon zèle à leur donner tous les renseignemens et à faire toutes les démarches qui pourraient leur être de quelque utilité. Les citoyens américains sont très-bien intentionnés à leur égard et il y a eu beaucoup de refroidissemens entre eux et les Français à leur sujet. Il y a environ un mois qu'un homme d'un rang et d'un mérite distingué de Philadelphie demandait à l'Ambassadeur français pourquoi sa Majesté Très-Chrétienne s'était mêlée des divisions des Genevois. C'était pour leur bien, répondit Mr. de Marbois, consul de France. J'espère, répliqua l'Américain, que le roi ne prendra jamais notre bien assez à cœur pour se mêler de nos brouilleries intestines. On ne lui fit aucune réponse. Quelque haine que je puisse avoir contre le Ministère français qui nous a perdus, elle ne s'étend point jusque sur toute leur nation; je fais le plus grand cas d'un grand nombre



de ses individus et il y en a quelques-uns à qui personnellement j'ai des obligations essentielles.

Je souhaiterais que cette lettre ne fût pas vue de mes parens à Genève, non pas que je veuille qu'ils ignorent ma façon de penser politique, ou que des vues intéressées me fassent désirer que mes oncles ne sussent pas que je veux me fixer en Amérique, ce qui est renoncer à toutes mes espérances de ce côté-là, mais parceque cette résolution, si elle était connue, ferait trop de peine à ma tendre mère Mlle. Pictet, qui est le seul chaînon subsistant des liens qui me retenaient à Genève. Je ne veux pas dire par là qu'elle soit la seule personne qui m'y attire; j'y ai des amis et surtout une amie qu'il me serait bien dur de quitter; mais tu me connais assez pour comprendre quels doivent être mes sentimens à l'égard de la personne à qui je dois tout et que j'ai bien mal récompensée de son amitié et de ses soins.

Mille amitiés à Dumont. Fais faire mes complimens à d'Ivernois; la manière dont il s'est comporté lui fait beaucoup d'honneur. Ecris-moi promptement et longuement. Je te donnerai des nouvelles plus positives dans deux mois. Si tu changes de demeure, prie M<sup>me</sup>. de Vivens de t'envoyer les lettres qui te parviendront, et indique-moi ton adresse. J'espère que tu viendras bientôt tirer parti de ton Anglais. Tout homme qui a des terres ici devient citoyen et a droit de donner sa voix pour envoyer son représentant ou député à l'Assemblée Générale, et celui d'être élu soi-même s'il en est digne. Adieu, mon bon ami. Tout à toi.

Cette lettre est mise aboard du brig Le Comte du Duras, Capitaine Fournier, allant à Bordeaux, et adressée à Messrs. Archer, Baix & Cie.

*12 novembre, 1783.*

Mon bon ami, le sus-dit vaisseau a fait naufrage à l'entrée de la Delaware. L'équipage s'est sauvé et ma lettre m'est revenue. Je me porte toujours bien. Je pars demain matin pour Virginie d'où je reviendrai dans deux mois. Adresse toujours à Philadelphie. Je suis entré pour  $\frac{1}{4}$  dans une spéculation de 120,000 acres de terre en Virginie. Cela de toi à moi. Tout à toi.

Clearly young Gallatin now thought that he had found the destiny so long imagined, and, modest as his sketch of their future prospects may appear, his acts show that the original scheme of bettering his fortune was by no means abandoned, but rather entertained on a vaster scale. He had solved the difficulty of speculating without capital and without debt; for certainly that modest retreat which he imagined for himself, Serre, and Badollet, did not require operations on the scale of a hundred thousand acres, and the element of speculation must have absorbed four-fifths of his thoughts. At this time, indeed, and for many years afterwards, all America was engaged in these speculations. General Washington was deep in them, and, as will be seen, jostled against Gallatin in the very act of opening up his lands. Robert Morris was a wild speculator, and closed his public career a bankrupt and in prison for that reason. Promising as the prospect was and certain as the ultimate profits

seemed, it would be difficult to prove that any one was ever really enriched by these investments; certainly in Gallatin's case, as in the case of Washington and Robert Morris, the result was trouble, disappointment, and loss. It was for Gallatin something worse; it was another false start.

For the moment, however, he was with Savary at Richmond, attending to Savary's claims and making preparations for his Western expedition. No more complaints of ennui are heard. Richmond has far other fascinations than Boston. To the end of his life Mr. Gallatin always recalled with pleasure his experiences at this city, where he first began to feel his own powers and to see them recognized by the world. In a letter written in 1848, a few months before his death, to the Virginia Historical Society, he expressed this feeling with all the warmth that age gives to its recollections of youth.<sup>6</sup>

"I cannot complain of the world. I have been treated with kindness in every part of the United States where I have resided. But it was at Richmond, where I spent most of the winters between the years 1783 and 1789, that I was received with that old proverbial Virginia hospitality to which I know no parallel anywhere within the circle of my travels. It was not hospitality only that was shown to me. I do not know how it came to pass, but every one with whom I became acquainted appeared to take an interest in the young stranger. I was only the interpreter of a gentleman the agent of a foreign house that had a large claim for

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<sup>6</sup> See Writings, vol. ii., p. 659.

advances to the State; and this made me known to all the officers of government and some of the most prominent members of the Legislature. It gave me the first opportunity of showing some symptoms of talent, even as a speaker, of which I was not myself aware. Every one encouraged me and was disposed to promote my success in life. To name all those from whom I received offers of service would be to name all the most distinguished residents at that time at Richmond. I will only mention two: John Marshall, who, though but a young lawyer in 1783, was almost at the head of the bar in 1786, offered to take me in his office without a fee, and assured me that I would become a distinguished lawyer. Patrick Henry advised me to go to the West, where I might study law if I chose; but predicted that I was intended for a statesman, and told me that this was the career which should be my aim; he also rendered me several services on more than one occasion."

*1784.*

Gallatin remained in Richmond till the end of February, 1784, and then returned to Philadelphia, where he made the final preparations for his expedition to the West. None of his letters are preserved, but his movements may be followed with tolerable accuracy. He remained in Philadelphia during the month of March, then crossed the mountains to Pittsburg in April, went down the Ohio with his party, and passed the summer in the occupation of selecting and surveying the lands for which he and his associates had purchased warrants. These lands were in what was then part of Monongalia County, Virginia;

but this county was in wealth and resources far behind the adjacent one of Fayette, in Pennsylvania, where no Indians had ever penetrated since its first settlement in 1769, whereas Monongalia had suffered severely from Indian depredations in the Revolution, a fact which decided Savary and Gallatin to fix upon a base of operations as near the Pennsylvania line as possible. They selected the farm of Thomas Clare, situated on the river Monongahela and George's Creek, about four miles north of the Virginia line, and here they established a store.

Gallatin seems to have been detained till late in the year by these occupations. They excluded all other thoughts from his mind. He wrote no letters; perhaps it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to find a conveyance if he had written them. There is but one fragment of his handwriting before the close of the year, and this only an unfinished draft of a letter to Badollet, which is worth inserting, not only because there is nothing else, but because it shows what was engaging his thoughts.

## GALLATIN TO BADOLLET

*Des Bords de la Susquehanna, 29 décembre, 1784.*

Mon bon ami, retenu ici aujourd'hui par le mauvais temps dans une misérable auberge, je vais tâcher de passer quelques moments agréables en causant avec toi. Je laissai Boston en juillet, 1783, et vins à Philadelphie avec M. Savary de Valcoulon

de Lyon, appelé par ses affaires en Amérique et qui n'entendant pas l'Anglais était bien aise d'avoir avec lui quelqu'un qui le sût; ou qui plutôt ayant pris de l'amitié pour moi et voyant que ma situation dans la Nouvelle-Angleterre était loin d'être gracieuse, crut qu'il me serait plus avantageux de changer de place et me promit de m'être aussi utile qu'il le pourrait. Il m'a bien tenu parole. Non-seulement il m'a aidé de sa bourse et de son crédit, mais il m'a mis à même d'espérer un jour de pouvoir jouir du plaisir de vivre heureux avec Serre et toi. Tu sens qu'un homme à qui j'ai consenti d'avoir des obligations doit avoir un cœur digne d'être mon ami, et je crois te faire plaisir en t'annonçant que ses plans sont les mêmes que les nôtres et que probablement tu auras dans ce pays un ami de plus que tu ne l'espérais. Après avoir passé quatre mois à Philadelphie, pendant lesquels Serre fut forcé par notre situation de passer à la Jamaïque avec Mussard de Genève, M. Savary passa en Virginie pour des dettes que cet état avait contractées avec sa maison, et je l'y accompagnai. Ses plans de retraite étant les mêmes que les miens, nous formions souvent ensemble des châteaux-en-Espagne lorsque le hasard nous offrit une occasion qui nous fit espérer que nous pourrions les réaliser. L'état de Virginie est borné au sud par la Caroline, à l'est par la mer, au nord par le Maryland et la Pensilvanie, au nord-ouest et à l'ouest par la rivière Ohio, ou Belle Rivière, et par le Mississippi. Une chaîne de montagnes nommées Apalaches ou Allegheny qui courant sud-ouest et nord-est à environ 50 lieues de la mer traverse tous

les États-Unis de l'Amérique, sépare la Virginie en deux parties, dont la plus petite comprise entre la mer et les montagnes est sans comparaison la plus peuplée. L'autre, infiniment plus grande, ne contient que deux établissements. L'un joignant les montagnes et le reste des anciens établissements s'étend sur l'Ohio jusqu'à Fishing Creek 150 milles au-dessous de Fort Pitt, et de là par une ligne parallèle à peu près aux montagnes, formant au-delà de ces montagnes une lisière d'environ 10 à 20 lieues de largeur qui contient environ 500 familles. Le second établissement qui est celui de Kentuckey, que tu écris Quintoquay, est situé sur la rivière du même nom qui tombe dans l'Ohio 700 milles au-dessous de Fort Pitt. Il contient à présent 20 à 30 mille âmes et est entouré et séparé de tous les pays habités par des déserts...

There is, however, one proof that he was at George's Creek in the month of September of this year. Among Mr. John Russell Bartlett's "Reminiscences of Mr. Gallatin" is the following anecdote, which can only refer to this time:

"Mr. Gallatin said he first met General Washington at the office of a land agent near the Kenawha River, in North-Western Virginia, where he (Mr. G.) had been engaged in surveying. The office consisted of a log house fourteen feet square, in which was but one room. In one corner of this was a bed for the use of the agent. General Washington, who owned large tracts of land in this region, was then visiting them in company with his nephew, and at the same time examining the country with a view of opening a road across the Alleghanies. Many of the settlers

and hunters familiar with the country had been invited to meet the general at this place for the purpose of giving him such information as would enable him to select the most eligible pass for the contemplated road. Mr. Gallatin felt a desire to meet this great man, and determined to await his arrival.

“On his arrival, General Washington took his seat at a pine table in the log cabin, or rather land agent’s office, surrounded by the men who had come to meet him. They all stood up, as there was no room for seats. Some of the more fortunate, however, secured quarters on the bed. They then underwent an examination by the general, who wrote down all the particulars stated by them. He was very inquisitive, questioning one after the other and noting down all they said. Mr. Gallatin stood among the others in the crowd, though quite near the table, and listened attentively to the numerous queries put by the general, and very soon discovered from the various relations which was the only practicable pass through which the road could be made. He felt uneasy at the indecision of the general, when the point was so evident to him, and without reflecting on the impropriety of it, suddenly interrupted him, saying, ‘Oh, it is plain enough, such a place [a spot just mentioned by one of the settlers] is the most practicable.’ The good people stared at the young surveyor (for they only knew him as such) with surprise, wondering at his boldness in thrusting his opinion unasked upon the general.

“The interruption put a sudden stop to General Washington’s inquiries. He laid down his pen, raised his eyes from his paper,



and cast a stern look at Mr. Gallatin, evidently offended at the intrusion of his opinion, but said not a word. Resuming his former attitude, he continued his interrogations for a few minutes longer, when suddenly stopping, he threw down his pen, turned to Mr. Gallatin, and said, 'You are right, sir.'

"It was so on all occasions with General Washington,' remarked Mr. Gallatin to me; 'he was slow in forming an opinion, and never decided until he knew he was right.'

"To continue the narrative: the general stayed here all night, occupying the bed alluded to, while his nephew, the land agent, and Mr. Gallatin rolled themselves in blankets and buffalo-skins and lay upon the bare floor. After the examination mentioned, and when the party went out, General Washington inquired who the young man was who had interrupted him, made his acquaintance, and learned all the particulars of his history. They occasionally met afterwards, and the general urged Mr. Gallatin to become his land agent; but as Mr. Gallatin was then, or intended soon to become, the owner of a large tract of land, he was compelled to decline the favorable offer made him by General Washington."

This is the story as told by Mr. Bartlett, and there can be no doubt of its essential correctness. But General Washington made only one journey to the West during which he could possibly have met Mr. Gallatin. This journey was in the month of September, 1784, and was not to the Kanawha, though originally meant to be so. He went no farther than to George's Creek, and it so happens

that he kept a diary of every day's work during this expedition. The diary has never been published; but it is among the archives in the State Department at Washington. In it are the following entries:

*1785.*

“September 23. Arrived at Colonel Phillips’ about five o’clock in the afternoon, sixteen miles from Beason Town and near the mouth of Cheat River; ... crossed no water of consequence except George’s Creek. An apology made me from the court of Fayette (through Mr. Smith) for not addressing me, as they found my horses saddled and myself on the move. Finding by inquiries that the Cheat River had been passed with canoes through those parts which had been represented as impassable, and that a Captain Hanway, the surveyor of Monongahela, lived within two or three miles of it, south side thereof, I resolved to pass it to obtain further information, and accordingly, accompanied by Colonel Phillips, set off in the morning of the

“24th, and crossed it at the mouth... From the fork to the surveyor’s office, which is at the house of one Pierpont, is about eight miles along the dividing ridge... Pursuing my inquiries respecting the navigation of the Western waters, Captain Hanway proposed, if I would stay all night, to send to Monongahela [Monongalia] court-house at Morgantown for Colonel Zach. Morgan and others who would have it in their power to give the best accounts that were to be obtained, which assenting to, they were sent for and came, and from them I received the following

intelligence, viz.," &c.

No mention is made of Mr. Gallatin, nor indeed of any others besides Colonel Morgan, from whom the information was derived; but there can hardly be a doubt that this was the occasion of the meeting. The only possible importance of this district of country, in which both Washington and Gallatin had at times large interests, was derived from the fact that it lay between the head-waters of the Potomac and the nearest navigable branches of the Ohio.<sup>7</sup> The reason why Gallatin and Savary selected George's Creek for their base of operations was that in their opinion they thus held in their hands the best practicable connection between the Ohio and the Potomac which was their path to Richmond and a market. Probably this subject had engaged much of Gallatin's attention during a good part of this summer, and it is not unlikely that he had already arrived, from his own study, at the conclusion which he found Washington so slow to adopt.

The following winter was also passed in Richmond, where Savary ultimately built a brick house, long remembered for its tall, round chimneys. Gallatin was now established here so firmly that he regarded himself as a Virginian, and seems to have been regarded as such by his acquaintances, as the following paper testifies:

"The bearer hereof, Mr. Albert Gallatine, is going from this place to Greenbriar County, and from thence towards

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<sup>7</sup> See map, p. 126.

Monongalia and the Countys northwestward. His business is with the surveyors of some of these Countys, particularly with him of Greenbriar. And I do request that from him in particular, as well as from all others, he may meet with particular attention and respect.

“I feel it my duty in a peculiar manner to give every possible facility to this gentleman, because his personal character, as well as his present designs, entitle him to the most cordial regards.

“Given under my hand at Richmond this 25th March, 1785.

*“P. Henry.”*

Governor Henry also intrusted Gallatin with the duty of locating two thousand acres of land in the Western country for Colonel James Le Maire, or of completing the title if the land were already located. This commission is dated March 29. On the 30th, Gallatin wrote to Badollet a letter, of which the following extract is all that has interest here. He at length tells Badollet to come over at once. His own position is sufficiently secure to warrant a decisive step of this kind. The next day began his second expedition to the West.

## **GALLATIN TO BADOLLET**

*Richmond (en Virginie), ce 30 mars, 1785.*

Mon bon ami, j'espère que tu as reçu la lettre que je t'ai écrite de Philadelphie en décembre dernier par laquelle je t'annonçais

la réception de la tienne du 9e avril, 1784, et par laquelle je te renvoyais à ma première pour de plus grands détails sur ce qui me regardait. C'est avec le plus grand plaisir que je puis enfin te dire de partir par la première occasion pour venir me joindre; ce n'est qu'après m'être longtems consulté que j'ai pris ce parti, ayant toujours craint de te faire sacrifier un bien-être réel à des avantages incertains. Cependant, considérant ma position actuelle et voyant par tes lettres que ton attachement pour moi et ton goût pour la retraite sont toujours les mêmes, je crois que je puis accorder mon amitié et ton bonheur; du reste, voici l'état exact où je suis, tu jugeras par là s'il te convient de venir le partager.

J'ai fait connaissance avec M. Savary de Lyon, homme d'un rare mérite, et dont le cœur vaut mieux que l'esprit; après l'avoir aidé pendant quelque tems à suivre ses affaires, il m'a intéressé d'abord pour un quart et ensuite pour une moitié dans une spéculation de terres dans l'état de Virginie. Sans entrer dans tous les détails de cette affaire, dont la réussite est due en partie à mes soins pendant le voyage que j'ai fait l'été dernier dans les derrières de la Virginie, il te suffira de savoir que nous possédons actuellement plus de cent mille acres de terre sur les bords ou près de l'Ohio, 250 milles par eau au-dessous du Fort Pitt, autrefois Fort Duquesne, à 350 milles de Philadelphie et environ 300 de Baltimore. Elles sont situées entre le grand et le petit Kanhawa (ou Canhaway, ou Canway), deux rivières qui se jettent dans l'Ohio. C'est un pays montueux, très-coupé, mais

fertile, propre surtout à la culture du bled et à élever du bétail. J'ai fait arpenter presque toutes ces terres l'année dernière; je pars demain pour aller finir cet ouvrage et pour mener quelques familles afin de commencer un établissement. Nous avons au reste revendu quelques petites portions qui nous ont remboursé les trois quarts des premières avances...

During this summer Gallatin kept a brief diary, so that it is possible to follow all his movements. Leaving Richmond on the 31st of March, alone, on horseback, he ascended James River, crossed the Blue Ridge near the Peaks of Otter, and arrived at the Court-House of Greenbrier County on the 18th April. Having seen the surveyor and attended to his locations of land, he started northwards on the 21st, and on the 29th reached his headquarters at Clare's on George's Creek. Here Savary joined him, and after making their preparations they set off on the 26th May, and descended the Ohio with their surveying party to the mouth of Little Sandy Creek, where from June 3 to July 1 they were engaged in surveying, varied by building a log cabin, clearing land, and occasionally killing a bear or a buffalo. On the 1st July, Gallatin, leaving Savary and four men at "Friends' Landing" to carry on the work, set off by water for the Grand Kanawha, and surveyed country about the head-waters of the Big Sandy and between the Elk and the Pocotaligo. On August 13 he descended the Pocotaligo, and on the 15th, striking across country to the southward, he reached "Meeting Camp," on the Elk, and received letters from Savary announcing that the Indians

had broken up his operations on the Ohio and compelled him to abandon the cabin and clearing.

This Indian outbreak deranged all their plans. It had been their intention to settle on these lands between the two Kanawhas, and for this purpose they had engaged men, built the log cabin, and cleared several acres on the banks of the Ohio adjoining the lands located by General Washington and known as "Washington's Bottom." They themselves, it is true, were not directly molested by the Indians, but boats had been captured and emigrants murdered a few miles from their settlement. They were obliged to abandon their plan and to return to Clare's. This wild attempt to make his home in an utter solitude one hundred and twenty miles beyond the last house then inhabited on the banks of the Ohio, was obviously impracticable even to Gallatin's mind, without incurring imminent danger of massacre.

The friends returned to George's Creek. It was then, at the October court of Monongalia County, Virginia, according to the record, that Gallatin at last "took the oath of allegiance and fidelity to the Commonwealth of Virginia." He had long considered himself an American citizen; this act merely fixed the place of citizenship. By the laws of his native country he was still a minor. He was actually residing in Pennsylvania. The old Confederation was still the only national government. Virginia was the State to which he was attached, and of Virginia he wished to be considered a citizen, so that even a year later he signed himself in legal documents "of Monongalia County, Virginia."

He had fully determined to remain in the Western country, and he chose Monongalia County because his lands lay there; but the neighboring Pennsylvania county of Fayette was both by situation and resources a more convenient residence, and even so early as 1784, as has already been shown, Savary and he had established a store and made their base of operations in Fayette County. In November of this year 1785 they leased from Thomas Clare for five years a house and five acres of land at George's Creek, in Springhill Township, on the Monongahela: here they made their temporary residence, transferring their store to it, and placing in it several men who had been engaged as settlers and had remained in their service. After the joint establishment had been carried on for two or three years, Gallatin bought a farm of four hundred acres about a mile higher up the river, to which he transferred the establishment, and which ultimately became his residence, under the name of Friendship Hill, perhaps to commemorate the friendship of Serre, Savary, and Badollet.

This then was the promised land, the "fond de terre" which poor Serre had described, and to which Badollet was now on his way. In point of fact it suggested Switzerland. No better spot could have been found in the United States for men who had passed their youth by the shore of Lake Geneva, overlooked by the snow summit of Mont Blanc. Friendship Hill rises abruptly from the Monongahela, and looks eastward to the Laurel Ridge, picturesque as Serre could have imagined, remote as Rousseau could have wished. But as a place of permanent residence for



men who were to earn their living according to the Genevan theory, it had one disadvantage which is pointedly described by Gallatin himself in a letter to Badollet, written about half a century afterwards.<sup>8</sup> “Although I should have been contented to live and die amongst the Monongahela hills, it must be acknowledged that, beyond the invaluable advantage of health, they afforded either to you or me but few intellectual or physical resources. Indeed, I must say that I do not know in the United States any spot which afforded less means to earn a bare subsistence for those who could not live by manual labor than the sequestered corner in which accident had first placed us.”

Thus much accomplished, Gallatin and Savary left George’s Creek on the 22d November, making their way to Cumberland on the Potomac, and so down the river to Richmond. But in the following February he again returned to George’s Creek, and there he kept house for the future, having never less than six persons and afterwards many more in his family. Here Badollet now came, in obedience to his friend’s wishes. With him Gallatin buried himself in the wilderness, and his family entreated for letters in vain.

## **ABRAHAM GALLATIN TO ALBERT GALLATIN**

*Pregny, ce 20 juin, 1785.*

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<sup>8</sup> See below, p. 646.

Quand une correspondance, mon cher fils, est aussi mal établie que la nôtre, on ne sait par où commencer. Je t'ai écrit quelques lettres dont j'ignore le sort; j'en ai reçu une de toi, il y a deux ou trois ans; si la date en était exacte, elle me fût rendue ici dans trente jours ... d'où je conclus que nous étions assez voisins et qu'il ne tenait qu'à toi de nous donner plus souvent de tes nouvelles. Nous n'en avons eu que bien peu et la plupart indirectes. Mais enfin je ne te fais point de reproches; je sais que les jeunes gens s'occupent rarement de leurs vieux parents et que d'ailleurs j'ai cru entrevoir que tes occupations et tes divers déplacements out dû avoir de longs momens inquiétans et pénibles. Il y a quelques mois qu'un Mr. Jennings qui a été ton ami et qui est parti pour l'île de Grenade, écrivit à Mlle. Pictet de Baltimore le 28e février qu'il avait été à Philadelphie où il avait compté de te trouver, mais que malheureusement pour lui tu en étais parti pour une province à 3 ou 400 lieues de là pour y faire arpenter un très-grand terrain inculte que tu avais acheté à vil prix. Il ajoutait ensuite que s'étant informé exactement de diverses personnes qui te connaissent, on avait fait de toi un très-bon rapport sur l'estime et le crédit que tu y avais acquis... Tu n'as pas oublié sans doute que tu seras majeur dans le courant du mois de janvier prochain, 1786...

## MLLE. PICTET TO GALLATIN

*22 juillet, 1785.*

*1786.*

Enfin j'ai reçu ta lettre du 29<sup>e</sup> mars... J'ai peine à excuser ce long silence; je ne saurais même prendre pour bonnes les raisons que tu en donnes; il me paraît plus vraisemblable que l'amour-propre t'empêche d'écrire lorsque tu n'as rien à dire d'avantageux de ta situation... Je me flatte que M. Savari a un mérite plus sûr que Serre et Badollet. Quant à Serre, je comprends qu'il y a quelques nuages entre vous... Son goût sera toujours de courir des aventures...

## ANNE GALLATIN TO ALBERT GALLATIN

*6 mars, 1786.*

Monsieur, – Je ne puis imaginer que vous soyez instruit que le bruit de votre mort est parvenu jusqu'à Genève comme la chose du monde la plus certaine et que vous ne vous soyez pas hâté de le détruire par vos lettres...

## MLLE. PICTET TO GALLATIN

*1 octobre, 1787.*

... Monsieur Chaston ... m'a parlé de toi; ... il m'a dit que tu avais conservé ton ancienne indolence; que tu te souciais peu du monde, et que lorsque tu avais demeuré chez lui à Philadelphie il ne pouvait t'engager à voir le monde ni à t'habiller. Il dit que tu aimes toujours l'étude et la lecture. Voilà des goûts qui ne paraissent pas s'accorder avec tes grandes entreprises et pour lesquels une grande fortune est bien inutile, que tu aurais pu suivre sans quitter ton pays...

*1787.*

So widely accredited was the rumor of his death that his family in Geneva made an application to Mr. Jefferson, then the United States minister at Paris, through the Genevan minister at that Court, who was a connection of the Gallatin family; and Mr. Jefferson on the 27th January, 1786, wrote to Mr. Jay on the subject a letter which will be found in his printed works. Mr. Jay replied on the 16th June, reassuring the family; but in the mean while letters had arrived from Gallatin himself. There were indeed other reasons than mere family affection which made correspondence at this moment peculiarly necessary. Gallatin reached his twenty-fifth year on the 29th January, when his little patrimony became his own to dispose of at his will; and without

attributing to him an inordinate amount of self-interest, it would seem that he must certainly have been heard from at this time if at no other, seeing that he was pledged to undertakings which had been entered into on the strength of this expected capital. The family were not left long in doubt. Letters and drafts soon arrived, and Gallatin duly received through the firm of Robert Morris about five thousand dollars, – the greatest part of his patrimony and all that could at once be remitted. This was the only capital he could as yet command or call his own. What he might further inherit was highly uncertain, and he seems to have taken unnecessary pains to avoid the appearance of courting a bequest. His grandfather's letter, just given, shows how little there was of the mercenary in the young man's relations with the wealthier members of his family, from whom he might originally have hoped, and in fact had reason to expect, an ultimate inheritance. In the course of time this expectation was realized. He was left heir to the estates of both his grandfather and his uncle, but the inheritance proved to be principally one of debts. After these had been discharged there remained of a fortune which should properly have exceeded one hundred thousand dollars only a sum of about twenty thousand dollars, which he practically sunk in Western lands and houses. But as yet his hopes from such investments were high, and he had no reason to be ashamed of his position.

Nevertheless, he was not yet quite firmly established in his American life. His existence at George's Creek was not all that

imagination could paint; perhaps not all it once had painted. The business of store-keeping and land-clearing in a remote mountain valley had drawbacks which even the arrival of Badollet could not wholly compensate; and finally the death of Serre, learned only in the summer of 1786, was a severe blow, which made Gallatin's mind for a time turn sadly away from its occupations and again long for the sympathy and associations of the home they had both so contemptuously deserted.

There was indeed little at this time of his life, between 1786 and 1788, which could have been greatly enjoyable to him, or which can be entertaining to describe, in long residences at George's Creek, varied by journeys to Richmond, Philadelphia, and New York, land purchases and land sales, the one as unproductive as the other, house-building, store-keeping, incessant daily attention to the joint interests of the association while it lasted, endless trials of temper and patience in dealing with his associates, details of every description, since nothing could be trusted to others, and no pleasures that even to a mind naturally disposed, like his, to contentment under narrow circumstances, could compensate for its sacrifices.

In point of fact, too, nothing was gained by thus insisting upon taking life awry and throwing away the advantages of education, social position, and natural intelligence. All the elaborate calculations of fortune to result from purchases of land in Western Virginia were miscalculations. Forty years later, after Mr. Gallatin had made over to his sons all his Western lands, he

summed up the result of his operations in a very few words: "It is a troublesome and unproductive property, which has plagued me all my life. I could not have vested my patrimony in a more unprofitable manner." It is, too, a mistake to suppose that he was essentially aided even in his political career by coming to a border settlement. There have been in American history three parallel instances of young men coming to this country from abroad and under great disadvantages achieving political distinction which culminated in the administration of the national Treasury. These were, in the order of seniority, Alexander Hamilton, Albert Gallatin, and A.J. Dallas, the latter of whom came to America in 1783 and was Gallatin's most intimate political friend and associate. Neither Hamilton nor Dallas found it necessary or advisable to retire into the wilderness, and political distinctions were conferred upon them quite as rapidly as was for their advantage. The truth is that in those days, except perhaps in New England, the eastern counties of Virginia and South Carolina, there was a serious want of men who possessed in any degree the rudimentary qualifications for political life. Even the press in the Middle States was almost wholly in the hands of foreign-born citizens. Had Gallatin gone at once to New York or Philadelphia and devoted himself to the law, for which he was admirably fitted by nature, had he invested his little patrimony in a city house, in public securities, in almost any property near at hand and easily convertible, there is every reason to suppose that he would have been, financially and politically, in a better position than ever

was the case in fact. In following this course he would have had the advantage of treading the path which suited his true tastes and needs. This is proved by the whole experience of his life. In spite of himself, he was always more and more drawn back to the seaboard, until at length he gave up the struggle and became a resident of New York in fact, as he had long been in all essentials.

The time was, however, at hand in these years from 1786 to 1788 when, under the political activity roused by the creation of a new Constitution and the necessity of setting it in motion, a new generation of public men was called into being. The constitutional convention sat during the summer of 1787. The Pennsylvania convention, which ratified the Constitution, sat shortly afterwards in the same year. Their proceedings were of a nature to interest Gallatin deeply, as may be easily seen from the character of the letters already given. His first appearance in political life naturally followed and was immediately caused by the great constitutional controversy thus raised.

But before beginning upon the course of Mr. Gallatin's political and public career, which is to be best treated by itself and is the main object of this work, the story of his private life shall be carried a few steps further to a convenient halting-point.

In the winter of 1787-88, according to a brief diary, he made a rapid journey to Maine on business. He was at George's Creek a few days before Christmas. On Christmas-day occurs the following entry at Pittsburg: "Fait Noël avec Odrin (?) et Breckenridge chez Marie." Who these three persons were is not



clear. Apparently, the Breckenridge mentioned was not Judge H. H. Brackenridge, who, in his “Incidents of the Insurrection,” or whiskey rebellion, declares that his first conversation with Gallatin was in August, 1794. Marie was not a woman, but a Genevan emigrant.

1788.

January 5, 1788, he was in Philadelphia, where he remained till the 28th. On the 29th, his birthday, he was at Paulus Hook, now Jersey City. On the 2d February occurs the following entry at Hartford: “Depuis que je suis dans l’état de Connecticut, j’ai toujours voyagé avec des champs des deux côtés, et je n’ai rien vu en Amérique d’égal aux établissements sur la rivière Connecticut.” On the 6th: “Déjeûné à Shrewsbury. Souvenirs en voyant Wachusett Hill... Couché à Boston.” On the 11th of February he started again for the East by the stage: “Voyagé avec Dr. Daniel Kilham de Newbury Port, opposé à la Constitution. Vu mon bon ami Bentley à Salem; il me croyait mort. Diné à Ipswich avec mes anciens écoliers Amory et Stacey.” On the 14th: “Loué Hailey et un sloop; descendu sur la glace partie d’Amoruscoguin [Androscoggin] River et Merrymeeting Bay, et traversé Kennebeck, abordé à Woolwich, traversé un Neck, puis sur la glace une cove de Kennebeck, et allé par terre à Wiscasset Point sur Sheepscutt River.” Apparently at this time of his life Gallatin was proof against hardship and fatigue. In returning he again crossed the bay and ascended the Androscoggin on the ice: “Tout le jour il a neigé; voyagé sur la glace sans voir le rivage;

gouverné notre course par la direction du vent.” His return was much retarded by snow, but he was again in Boston on the 27th, and in New York on the 5th of March.

*1789.*

He passed the summer, apparently, in the West at his George’s Creek settlement, at least partially engaged in politics, as will be shown hereafter. He passed also the winter here, and it was not till the 12th March, 1789, that he set out on his usual visit to Richmond, which he reached on the 1st April.

The following letter shows him occupied with a new interest. Sophia Allegre was the daughter of William Allegre, of a French Protestant family among the early settlers in this country. William Allegre married Jane Batersby, and died early, leaving his widow with two daughters and a son. A young Frenchman, Louis Pauly, who came to Virginia on some financial errand of his government, took lodgings with Mrs. Allegre, fell in love with her daughter Jane, and married her against her mother’s consent. Young Gallatin also lodged under Mrs. Allegre’s roof, and fell in love with her other daughter, Sophia.

## **GALLATIN TO BADOLLET**

*Richmond, 4 mai, 1789.*

Mon bon ami, je suis arrivé ici le 1er avril et ai été jusques à présent si occupé de mes amours que je n’ai eu la tête à rien

d'autre. Sophie était chez son beau-frère Pauli à New Kent. J'y ai passé plus de 15 jours à deux fois différentes. Elle n'a point fait la coquette avec moi, mais dès le second jour m'a donné son plein consentement, m'a avoué qu'elle me l'aurait donné à mon dernier voyage ou peut-être plus tôt si je le lui avais demandé, avait toujours cru que je l'aimais, mais avait été surprise de n'avoir pas entendu parler de moi pendant plus d'un an, ce qui avait causé sa réponse à Savary que tu m'apportas; n'avait pas voulu s'ouvrir depuis à Savary parceque n'ayant pas répondu à ma lettre, elle avait peur que je n'eusse changé et ne voulait pas s'aventurer à faire une confidence inutile. Voilà le bien; voici le mal. La mère, qui s'est bien doutée que je n'étais pas à New Kent pour l'amour de Pauly, a ordonné à sa fille de revenir, et je l'ai en effet amenée à Richmond. Je lui ai alors demandé Sophie. Elle a été furieuse, m'a refusé de la manière la plus brutale et m'a presque interdite sa maison. Elle ne veut point que sa fille soit traînée sur les frontières de la Pensilvanie par un homme sans agrémens, sans fortune, qui bredouille l'Anglais comme un Français et qui a été maître d'école à Cambridge. J'ai ri de la plupart de ses objections, j'ai tâché de répondre aux autres, mais je n'ai point pu lui faire entendre raison et elle vient d'envoyer Sophie en campagne chez un de ses amis. C'est une diablesse que sa fille craint horriblement, en sorte que j'aurai de la peine à lui persuader de se passer du consentement maternel. Je crois pourtant que je réussirai, et c'est à quoi je vais travailler malgré la difficulté que j'éprouve à la voir et à lui parler. Dès

que cette affaire sera décidée, je penserai à celles d'intérêt. Je suis encore plus décidé que jamais à tout terminer avec Savary, dont la conduite pendant mon absence a été presque' extravagante. Mais motus sur cet article. J'ai vu ici Perrin, qui vient de repartir pour France, Savary ayant payé son passage. Il a soutenu jusques au bout son digne caractère, ayant dit à Mme. Allegre tout le mal possible de la Monongahela, tandis qu'il savait par une lettre volée que j'aimais sa fille, et ayant fini par mentir et tromper Savary qui est bien revenu sur son compte. Tout le monde ici m'en a dit du mal.

Je crois que vu tout ce que j'ai à faire ici je ne pourrai guère partir avant le mois prochain. Si je me marie, ce sera dans environ 15 jours, et il faudra ensuite que je prenne des arrangemens avec Savary (quand je taxe sa conduite d'extravagante, ce n'est que sa tête que je blâme; son cœur est toujours excellent mais trop facile et il lui fait souvent faire des sottises); ainsi tu ne dois m'attendre qu'au milieu de juin. Tâche de faire planter bien abondamment des patates, afin qu'il y en ait pour toi et pour moi. J'aurais bien à cœur que la maison se finît, mais si tu ne veux pas t'en mêler, fais-moi le plaisir de prier Clare de pousser Weibel. Je ne te parle point de nos arrangemens futurs, parceque je n'y vois encore rien de clair et qu'il faut que préalablement je finisse avec Savary. Rien de nouveau ici. Tu auras sans doute su que le roi d'Angleterre était devenu fou et que le Prince de Galles avait été nommé Régent. Par les dernières nouvelles il est rétabli et va reprendre les rênes du gouvernement,

à la grande satisfaction de la nation, qui avec raison préfère Pitt à Fox. Il y a apparence que la guerre continuera en Europe et que la Prusse prendra ouvertement le parti de la Suède contre le Danemark. Embrasse Peggy pour moi; je pense souvent à elle et après ne l'avoir aimée pendant longtems que par rapport à toi, je commence à l'aimer pour elle-même. Je compte trouver Albert sur ses jambes si je reste aussi longtems ici. Fais mes complimens à Clare et à la famille Philips. Dis à Pauly que son frère se porte bien à un rhumatisme près; son frère Joseph va revenir pour le joindre et prendre la *tann-yard* que Maesh quittera. Mme. Pauly, la sœur de Sophie, m'a aidé autant qu'elle a pu auprès de sa mère, mais elle dissuade sa sœur d'un mariage contre son consentement. Au reste, la mère dit à tout le monde qu'elle voit autant de mal qu'elle peut de moi et se fait par là plus de tort qu'à moi-même. Adieu, mon bon ami; je pense à toi tout le tems que je ne suis pas occupé de Sophie; j'espère que lorsque nous ne serons plus liés à un tiers, nos jours seront encore heureux. Crois mon pronostic et ne perds pas courage. Tout à toi.

The records of Henrico County Court contain the marriage bond, dated May 14, 1789, declaring that "We, Albert Gallatin and Savary de Valcoulon, are held and firmly bound unto Beverly Randolph, Esq., Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, in the sum of fifty pounds, current money," the condition being "a marriage shortly to be solemnized between the above-bound Albert Gallatin and Sophia Allegre." In a little account-book of that date are some significant entries: "Ruban de queue, 1/5.

Veste blanche 9/. Tailleur, £2.16. Souliers de satin, gants, bague, £1.11.6. License, ministre, £4.4. Perruquier, nègre, £0.2.0.” Finally, many years afterwards, the following letter was printed as a historical curiosity in “The Staunton Vindicator”:

## **SOPHIA ALLEGRE TO HER MOTHER**

*New Kent, May 16, 1789.*

My dear Mama, – Shall I venture to write you a few lines in apology for my late conduct? and dare I flatter myself that you will attend to them? If so, and you can feel a motherly tenderness for your child who never before wilfully offended you, forgive, dear mother, and generously accept again your poor Sophia, who feels for the uneasiness she is sure she has occasioned you. She deceived you, but it was for her own happiness. Could you then form a wish to destroy the future peace of your child and prevent her being united to the man of her choice? He is perhaps not a very handsome man, but he is possessed of more essential qualities, which I shall not pretend to enumerate; as coming from me, they might be supposed partial. If, mama, your heart is inclinable to forgive, or if it is not, let me beg you to write to me, as my only anxiety is to know whether I have lost your affection or not. Forgive me, dear mama, as it is all that is wanting to complete the happiness of her who wishes for your happiness and desires to be considered again your dutiful daughter,

*Sophia.*

*1790.*

No trace of Sophia Allegré now remains except this letter and a nameless gravestone within the grounds of Friendship Hill. Gallatin took her home with him to George's Creek; for a few months they were happy together, and then suddenly, in October, she died; no one knows, perhaps no one ever knew, the cause of her death, for medical science was not common at George's Creek. Gallatin himself left no account of it that has been preserved. He suffered intensely for the time; but he was fortunately still young, and the only effect of his wretchedness was to drive him headlong into politics for distraction.

## **GALLATIN TO BADOLLET**

*Philadelphia, 8 mars, 1790.*

Mon cher Badollet... Tu sens sûrement comme moi que le séjour du comté de Fayette ne peut pas m'être bien agréable, et tu sais que je désirerais m'éloigner même de l'Amérique. J'ai fait mes efforts pour réaliser ce projet, mais j'y trouve tous les jours de nouvelles difficultés. Il m'est absolument impossible de vendre mes terres de Virginie à quel prix que ce soit, et je ne sais comment je trouverais à vivre à Genève. Sans parler de mon âge et de mes habitudes et de ma paresse, qui seraient autant d'obstacles aux occupations quelconques que je serais

obligé d'embrasser en Europe, il s'en rencontre un autre dans les circonstances actuelles de notre patrie. Les révolutions dans la politique et surtout les finances de la France ont opéré si fortement sur Genève que les marchands y sont sans crédit et sans affaires, les artisans sans ouvrage et dans la misère, et tout le monde dans l'embarras. Non-seulement les gazettes en ont fait mention, mais j'en ai reçu quelques détails dans une lettre de M. Trembley, qui quoiqu'antérieure aux derniers avis reçus par plusieurs Suisses ici, et écrite dans un tems où les calamités publiques n'étaient pas au point où elles sont à présent, m'apprenait que les difficultés et les dangers étaient tels qu'il avait déposé le peu d'argent qu'il avait à moi dans la caisse de l'hôpital. Tous les étrangers établis ici s'accordent à dire que les ressources pour se tirer d'affaires en Europe sont presque anéanties, au moins pour ceux qui n'en ont d'autre que leur industrie, et ces faits sont confirmés par nombre d'émigrants de toutes les nations et de tous les états. Dans ces circonstances la petite rente que j'ai en France étant très-précaire tant à cause de la tournure incertaine que prendront les affaires que parcequ'elle est sur d'autres têtes et sur des têtes plus âgées que la mienne, il est bien clair que je n'aurais d'autres ressources que celles que je pourrais tirer des *dons* de ma famille, vu que leurs efforts seraient probablement inutiles quant à me procurer quelque occupation à laquelle je fusse propre. Cette circonstance de recevoir serait non-seulement désagréable, mais l'espérance en serait fort incertaine; mon oncle Rolas, le cadet, le seul qui n'ait pas d'enfans, passe pour être



généreux, mais il dépense beaucoup, plus, je crois, que ses revenus; sa fortune qui est en partie en France et en Hollande recevra probablement quelque échec dans ce moment de crise, et la seule occupation que je pourrais suivre en Europe serait celle de courtiser un héritage que je ne serais ni fâché ni honteux de recevoir s'il ne me coûtait aucunes bassesses, pour lequel je me serais cru peut-être obligé de faire quelques démarches si une épouse chérie avait vécu, mais qui dans mes circonstances actuelles ne saurait m'engager seul à retourner à Genève pour y vivre dans une totale indépendance. Ce que je dois à ma digne mère est la seule raison qui en pourrait contrebalancer d'aussi fortes; et si je puis entrevoir seulement la possibilité de vivre dans ma patrie pauvrement mais sans être à charge à personne, cette raison seule me décidera, mais jusqu'alors je ne vois que trop la nécessité de rester ici. Ce n'est pas que je me fasse illusion et que je crois pouvoir faire beaucoup mieux en Amérique, mais si j'y puis seulement vivre indépendant, c'est toujours plus que je ne peux espérer en Europe, du moins à présent, et je crois qu'un an d'application à l'étude des lois me suffira non pas pour faire une fortune ou une figure brillante, mais pour m'assurer du pain quelques puissent être les événemens. Je t'ai parlé bien longuement de moi seul, et la seule apologie que je te donnerai c'est de ne l'avoir pas fait plus tôt. Ne crois pas cependant que dans mes incertitudes et les différentes idées qui m'ont agité, je n'aie pas pensé à toi. Je te déclarerai d'abord franchement que je n'aurais pas balancé entre Mlle. Pictet et toi, et que si je voyais

possibilité d'aller la joindre, elle l'emporterait sûrement; l'idée de devoir et de reconnaissance est si intimement liée chez moi avec l'affection que j'ai pour cette respectable personne que quelques regrets que j'eusse de te quitter, j'éprouverais même du plaisir en le faisant dans l'intention de contribuer à son bonheur; mais ce seul objet excepté, il n'y a rien que je ne te sacrifiasse; je ne te sacrifierais même rien en te préférant au reste de mes amis et parens à Genève, et si le temps pouvait effacer le souvenir de mes chagrins, j'aimerais mieux vivre près de toi en Amérique que sans toi dans ma patrie, et même dans ce moment je sens combien de consolations je recevrais du seul ami qui ait connu mon aimable Sophie; en un mot je n'ai pas besoin de te dire que si je reste ici, mon sort doit être intimement lié avec le tien. Mais à l'égard de la manière, du lieu futur de notre séjour, je ne puis encore former d'opinion vu l'arrivée de ton frère... Quelque parti que nous puissions prendre pour l'avenir, je désire aussi fortement que toi que nous soyons indépendants l'un et l'autre, quant à notre manière de vivre. Si tu crois que nous ne quittons pas Fayette, ne néglige pas l'ouvrage que tu avais commencé pour vivre chez toi en préparant une cabane joignant le champ de Robert. Si tu supposes qu'il soit probable que nous changions de demeure, attends jusques à l'arrivée de ton frère pour faire une dépense qui n'augmenterait pas la valeur de la terre... Voilà, je crois, tout ce que j'ai à te dire pour le présent; si je ne peux pas vendre cette semaine une traite, je serai dans 15 à 20 jours avec toi...

Every letter received by Gallatin from Geneva between 1780 and 1790 had, in one form or another, urged his return or expressed discontent at his situation. But the storm of the French revolution had at last fairly begun, and Geneva felt it severely and early. Not till the 7th of April, 1790, did Gallatin overcome his repugnance to writing in regard to his wife's death to Mlle. Pictet, and he then expressed to her his wish to return for her sake. At this critical moment of his life the feelings of his family had begun to change. They no longer looked upon him as a subject of pity. "L'état précaire de la France" is mentioned by Mlle. Pictet in June and July, 1790, as a subject of anxiety; "nous ignorons encore quel il sera, notre gouvernement;" "quant aux conseils que tu me demandes par rapport à ton retour, et aux ressources que tu pourrais trouver dans notre pays, je suis bien embarrassée à te répondre." It was too late. Indeed, it may be doubted whether this idea of returning to Geneva for the sake of Mlle. Pictet was really more than the momentary sickness at heart consequent on a great shock, which in any case could not have lasted long. Gallatin's career already lay open before him. His misfortunes only precipitated the result.

## **BOOK II.**

### **THE LEGISLATURE. 1789-1801**

THE Federal Constitution of 1787, accepted only a few years later by all parties and by the whole people as the last word of political wisdom, was at its birth greatly admired by no one. The public mind was divided between two classes of axioms and theories, each embodying sound reasoning and honest conviction, but resting at bottom upon divergent habits of life and forms of industry. Among the commercial and professional citizens of the sea-board towns a strong government was thought necessary to protect their trade and their peace; but there was a wide latitude of opinion in regard to the degree of strength required for their purpose, and while a few of the ablest and most determined leaders would have frankly accepted the whole theory of the English constitution and as much of its machinery as possible, the mass even of their own followers instinctively preferred a federative and democratic system. Among the agricultural and scattered population of the country, where the necessity of police and authority was little felt, and where a strong government was an object of terror and hatred, the more ignorant and the more violent class might perhaps honestly deny the necessity for any national government at all; with the great majority, however, it was somewhat

unwillingly conceded that national government was a necessary evil, and that some concessions of power must be made to it; their object was to reduce these concessions to the lowest possible point. No one can doubt where Mr. Gallatin's sympathies would lie as between the two great social and political theories. The reaction against strong governments and their corruptions had a great part in that general feeling of restlessness and revolt which drew him from the centre of civilization to its outskirts. There could be no question of the "awful squinting towards monarchy" in portions of the proposed constitution, more especially in the office of President, and no one pretended that the instrument as it stood contained sufficient safeguards against abuse of public or of private liberties. It could expect little real sympathy among the western counties of Pennsylvania.

Nevertheless, in the convention, which was immediately called to ratify the Constitution on the part of the State, there was a majority in its favor of nearly two to one; a majority so large and so earnest that extremely little respect was paid to the minority and its modest proposals of amendments, the vote of ratification being at last carried against a helpless opposition by a species of force. Of this convention Mr. Gallatin was not a member; but when the action of other States, and notably of Massachusetts, Virginia, and New York, in recommending amendments at the moment of ratification, gave to the opposition new hopes of yet carrying some of their points, the party made a last effort in Pennsylvania, which resulted in calling a

conference at Harrisburg on the 3d September, 1788. There thirty-three gentlemen assembled, of whom Mr. Gallatin was one; Blair McClanachan was chosen chairman; "free discussion and mature deliberation" followed, and a report, or declaration of opinion, was formally adopted. Two drafts of this document are among Mr. Gallatin's papers, both written in his own hand, one of them, much amended and interlined, obviously a first sketch, used probably in committee as the ground-work of the adopted instrument. It is only a natural inference that he was the draughtsman.

There can be no doubt that Mr. Gallatin was one of those persons who thought the new Constitution went much too far. He would, doubtless, have preferred that all the great departments – executive, legislative, and judicial – should have been more closely restricted in their exercise of power, and, indeed, he would probably have thought it better still that the President should be reduced to a cipher, the legislature limited to functions little more than executive, and the judiciary restricted to admiralty and inter-state jurisdiction, with no other court than the Supreme Court, and without appellate jurisdiction other than by writ of error from the State courts. This would best have suited his early theories and prejudices. This rough draft, therefore, has some interest as showing how far he was disposed to carry his opposition to the Constitution, and it seems to show that he was inclined to go considerable lengths. The resolutions as there drafted read as follows:

“1st. Resolved, that in order to prevent a dissolution of the Union, and to secure our liberties and those of our posterity, it is necessary that a revision of the Federal Constitution be obtained in the most speedy manner.

“2d. That the safest manner to obtain such a revision will be, in conformity to the request of the State of New York, to use our endeavors to have a convention called as soon as possible;

“Resolved, therefore, that the Assembly of this State be petitioned to take the earliest opportunity to make an application for that purpose to the new Congress.

“3d. That in order that the friends to amendments of the Federal Constitution who are inhabitants of this State may act in concert, it is necessary, and it is hereby recommended to the several counties in the State, to appoint committees, who may correspond one with the other and with such similar committees as may be formed in other States.

“4th. That the friends to amendments to the Federal Constitution in the several States be invited to meet in a general conference, to be held at , on , and that members be elected by this conference, who, or any of them, shall meet at said place and time, in order to devise, in concert with such other delegates from the several States as may come under similar appointments, on such amendments to the Federal Constitution as to them may seem most necessary, and on the most likely way to carry them into effect.”

But it seems that the tendency of opinion in the meeting

was towards a less energetic policy. The first resolution was transformed into a shape which falls little short of tameness, and has none of the simple directness of Gallatin's style and thought:

"1st. Resolved, that it be recommended to the people of this State to acquiesce in the organization of the said government. But although we thus accord in its organization, we by no means lose sight of the grand object of obtaining very considerable amendments and alterations which we consider essential to preserve the peace and harmony of the Union and those invaluable privileges for which so much blood and treasure have been recently expended.

"2d. Resolved, that it is necessary to obtain a speedy revision of said Constitution by a general convention.

"3d. Resolved that, therefore, in order to effect this desirable end, a petition be presented to the Legislature of the State requesting that honorable body to take the earliest opportunity to make application for that purpose to the new Congress."

Thus it appears that if Mr. Gallatin went to this conference with the object indicated in his first draft, he abandoned the scheme of a national organization for a reform of the Constitution, and greatly modified his attitude towards the Constitution itself before the conference adjourned. The petition, with which the report closed, recommended twelve amendments, drawn from among those previously recommended by Massachusetts, Virginia, New York, and other States, and containing little more than repetitions of language already



familiar. How far Mr. Gallatin led or resisted this acquiescent policy is unknown; at all events, it was the policy henceforth adopted by the opposition, which readily accepted Mr. Madison's very mild amendments and rapidly transformed itself into a party organization with hands stretched out to seize for itself these dangerous governmental powers. But Mr. Gallatin never changed his opinion that the President was too powerful; even in his most mature age he would probably have preferred a system more nearly resembling some of the present colonial governments of Great Britain.

In the course of the next year the Legislature of Pennsylvania summoned a convention to revise the State constitution. There was perhaps some ground for doubting the legality of this step, for the existing constitution of 1776 gave to the Council of Censors the power to devise and propose amendments and to call a convention, and the Assembly had properly nothing to do with the subject. Mr. Gallatin held strong opinions upon the impropriety of obtaining the desired amendments by a process which was itself unconstitutional, and he even attempted to organize an opposition in the western counties, and to persuade the voters of each election district to adopt resolutions denouncing the proceeding as unconstitutional, unnecessary, and highly improper, and refusing to elect delegates. Early in October, 1789, he wrote to this effect to the leading politicians of Washington and Alleghany Counties, and, among the rest, to Alexander Addison, who was a candidate for the convention, and

whom he urged to withdraw. A part of this letter, dated October 7, ran as follows:

“Alterations in government are always dangerous, and no legislator ever did think of putting, in such an easy manner, the power in a mere majority to introduce them whenever they pleased. Such a doctrine once admitted would enable not only the Legislature but a majority of the more popular house, were two established, to make another appeal to the people on the first occasion, and instead of establishing on solid foundations a new government, would open the door to perpetual changes and destroy that stability so essential to the welfare of a nation; as no constitution acquires the permanent affection of the people but in proportion to its duration and age. Finally, those changes would, sooner or later, conclude in an appeal to arms, – the true meaning of those words so popular and so dangerous, *An appeal to the People.*”

Mr. Gallatin's opposition came too late. His correspondents wrote back to the effect that combined action was impossible, and a few days later he was himself chosen a delegate from Fayette County to this same convention which he had felt himself bound in conscience to oppose. This was in accordance with all his future political practice, for Mr. Gallatin very rarely persisted in following his own judgment after it had been overruled, but in this instance his course was perhaps decisively affected by the sudden death of his wife, which occurred at this moment and made any escape from his habitual mode of life seem a relief and

an object of desire.

The convention sat from November 24, 1789, till February 26, 1790, and was Gallatin's apprenticeship in the public service. Among his papers are a number of memoranda, some of them indicating much elaboration, of speeches made or intended to be made in this body; one is an argument in favor of enlarging the number of Representatives in the House; another, against James Ross's plan of choosing Senators by electors; another, on the liberty of the press, with "quotations from Roman code, supplied by Duponceau." There is further a memorandum of his motion in regard to the right of suffrage, by virtue of which every "freeman who has attained the age of twenty-one years and been a resident and inhabitant during one year next before the days of election;" every naturalized freeholder, every naturalized citizen who had been assessed for State or county taxes for two years before election day, or who had resided ten years successively in the State, should be entitled to the suffrage, paupers and vagabonds only being excluded. Gallatin seems also to have been interested, both at this time and subsequently, in an attempt to lessen the difficulties growing from the separation of law and equity. On this subject he wrote early to John Marshall for advice, and although the reply has no very wide popular interest, yet, in the absence of any collection of Marshall's writings, this letter may claim a place here, illustrating, as it does, not only the views of the future chief justice, but the interests and situation of Mr. Gallatin:

# JOHN MARSHALL TO GALLATIN

*Richmond, January 3, 1790.*

Dear Sir, – I have received yours of the 23d of December, and wish it was in my power to answer satisfactorily your questions concerning our judiciary system, but I was myself in the army during that period concerning the transactions of which you inquire, and have not since informed myself of the reasons which governed in making those changes which took place before the establishment of that system which I found on my coming to the bar. Under the colonial establishment the judges of common law were also judges of chancery; at the Revolution these powers were placed in different persons. I have not understood that there was any considerable opposition to this division of jurisdiction. Some of the reasons leading to it, I presume, were that the same person could not appropriate a sufficiency of time to each court to perform the public business with requisite despatch; that the principles of adjudication being different in the two courts, it was scarcely to be expected that eminence in each could be attained by the same man; that there was an apparent absurdity in seeing the same men revise in the characters of chancellors the judgments they had themselves rendered as common-law judges. There are, however, many who think that the chancery and common-law jurisdiction ought to be united in the same

persons. They are actually united in our inferior courts; and I have never heard it suggested that this union is otherwise inconvenient than as it produces delay to the chancery docket. I never heard it proposed to give the judges of the general court chancery jurisdiction. When the district system was introduced in '82, it was designed to give the district judges the powers of chancellors, but the act did not then pass, though the part concerning the court of chancery formed no objection to the bill. When again introduced it assumed a different form, nor has the idea ever been revived.

The first act constituting a high court of chancery annexed a jury for the trial of all important facts in the cause. To this, I presume, we were led by that strong partiality which the citizens of America have for that mode of trial. It was soon parted with, and the facts submitted to the judge, with a power to direct an issue wherever the fact was doubtful. In most chancery cases the law and fact are so blended together that if a jury was impanelled of course the whole must be submitted to them, or every case must assume the form of a special verdict, which would produce inconvenience and delay.

The delays of the court of chancery have been immense, and those delays are inseparable from the court if the practice of England be observed. But that practice is not necessary. 'Tis greatly abridged in Virginia by an Act passed in 1787, and great advantages result from the reform. There have been instances of suits depending for twenty years, but under our

present regulations a decision would be had in that court as soon as any other in which there were an equal number of weighty causes. The parties may almost immediately set about collecting their proofs, and so soon as they have collected them they may set the cause on the court docket for a hearing.

It has never been proposed to blend the principles of common law and chancery so as for each to operate at the same time in the same cause; and I own it would seem to me to be very difficult to effect such a scheme, but at the same time it must be admitted that could it be effected it would save considerable sums of money to the litigant parties.

I enclose you a copy of the act you request. I most sincerely condole with you on your heavy loss. Time only, aided by the efforts of philosophy, can restore you to yourself.

I am, dear sir, with much esteem, your obedient servant,

*J. Marshall.*

In a letter written in 1838, when the constitution was revised, Mr. Gallatin gave an account of the convention of 1789, which was, he said, “the first public body to which I was elected, and I took but a subordinate share in its debates. It was one of the ablest bodies of which I was a member and with which I was acquainted. Indeed, could I except two names, Madison and Marshall, I would say that it embraced as much talent and knowledge as any Congress from 1795 to 1812, beyond which my personal knowledge does not extend. But the distinguishing feature of the convention was that, owing

perhaps to more favorable times, it was less affected by party feelings than any other public body that I have known. The points of difference were almost exclusively on general and abstract propositions; there was less prejudice and more sincerity in the discussions than usual, and throughout a desire to conciliate opposite opinions by mutual concessions. The consequence was that, though not formally submitted to the ratification of the people, no public act was ever more universally approved than the constitution of Pennsylvania at the time when it was promulgated.”<sup>9</sup>

The next year, in October, 1790, Mr. Gallatin was elected to the State Legislature, to which he was re-elected in 1791 and 1792. In 1790 there was a contest, and he had a majority of about two-thirds of the votes. Afterwards he was returned without opposition.

The details of State politics are not a subject of great interest to the general public, even in their freshest condition, and the local politics of Pennsylvania in 1790 are no exception to this law. They are here of importance only so far as they are a part of Mr. Gallatin’s life, and the medium through which he rose to notice. He has left a memorandum, which is complete in itself, in regard to his three years’ service in the State Legislature:

“I acquired an extraordinary influence in that body (the Pennsylvania House of Representatives), – the more remarkable, as I was always in a *party* minority. I was indebted for it to my

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<sup>9</sup> Writings, ii. 523.

great industry and to the facility with which I could understand and carry on the current business. The laboring oar was left almost exclusively to me. In the session of 1791-1792 I was put on thirty-five committees, prepared all their reports, and drew all their bills. Absorbed by those details, my attention was turned exclusively to administrative laws, and not to legislation properly so called. The great reforms of the penal code, which, to the lasting honor of Pennsylvania, originated in that State, had already been carried into effect, principally under the auspices of William Bradford. Not being a professional lawyer, I was conscious of my incapacity for digesting any practicable and useful improvement in our civil jurisprudence. I proposed that the subject should be referred to a commission, and Judge Wilson was accordingly appointed for that purpose. He did nothing, and the plan died away. It would have been better to appoint the chief justice and the attorney-general of the State (McKean and Bradford), and, in the first instance at least, to have confined them to a revision of the statute law, whether colonial, State, or British, still in force.

*1790-1793*

“I failed, though the bill I had introduced passed the House, in my efforts to lay the foundation for a better system of education. Primary education was almost universal in Pennsylvania, but very bad, and the bulk of schoolmasters incompetent, miserably paid, and held in no consideration. It appeared to me that in order to create a sufficient number of competent teachers, and to



raise the standard of general education, intermediate academical education was an indispensable preliminary step; and the object of the bill was to establish in each county an academy, allowing to each out of the treasury a sum equal to that raised by taxation in the county for its support. But there was at that time in Pennsylvania a Quaker and a German opposition to every plan of general education.

“The spirit of internal improvements had not yet been awakened. Still, the first turnpike-road in the United States was that from Philadelphia to Lancaster, which met with considerable opposition. This, as well as every temporary improvement in our communications (roads and rivers) and preliminary surveys, met, of course, with my warm support. But it was in the fiscal department that I was particularly employed, and the circumstances of the times favored the restoration of the finances of the State.

“The report of the Committee of Ways and Means of the session 1790-1791 (presented by Gurney, chairman) was entirely prepared by me, known to be so, and laid the foundation of my reputation. I was quite astonished at the general encomiums bestowed upon it, and was not at all aware that I had done so well. It was perspicuous and comprehensive; but I am confident that its true merit, and that which gained me the general confidence, was its being founded in strict justice, without the slightest regard to party feelings or popular prejudices. The principles assumed, and which were carried into effect, were the immediate

reimbursement and extinction of the State paper money, the immediate payment in specie of all the current expenses or warrants on the treasury (the postponement and uncertainty of which had given rise to shameful and corrupt speculations), and provision for discharging without defalcation every debt and engagement previously recognized by the State. In conformity with this the State paid to its creditors the difference between the nominal amount of the State debt assumed by the United States and the rate at which it was funded by the Act of Congress.

*1790-1793*

“The proceeds of the public lands, together with the arrears, were the fund which not only discharged all the public debts but left a large surplus. The apprehension that this would be squandered by the Legislature was the principal inducement for chartering the Bank of Pennsylvania with a capital of two millions of dollars, of which the State subscribed one-half. This and similar subsequent investments enabled Pennsylvania to defray out of the dividends all the expenses of government without any direct tax during the forty ensuing years, and till the adoption of the system of internal improvement, which required new resources.

“It was my constant assiduity to business and the assistance derived from it by many members which enabled the Republican party in the Legislature, then a minority on a joint ballot, to elect me, and no other but me of that party, Senator of the United States.”

Among the reports enumerated by Mr. Gallatin as those of which he was the author is the following, made by a committee on the 22d March, 1793:

“That they ... are of opinion that slavery is inconsistent with every principle of humanity, justice, and right, and repugnant to the spirit and express letter of the constitution of this Commonwealth; therefore submit the following resolution, viz.:

“Resolved, that slavery be abolished in this Commonwealth, and that a committee be appointed to bring in a bill for that purpose.”

A certificate dated “Philadelphia, 3d month, 25th, 1793,” signed by James Pemberton, President, records that Albert Gallatin “is a member of the Pennsylvania Society for promoting the abolition of slavery, the relief of free negroes unlawfully held in bondage, and for improving the condition of the African race.”

*1791.*

Party spirit was not violent in Pennsylvania during these few years of Washington's first Administration. As yet Mr. Madison was a good Federalist; Mr. Jefferson, as Secretary of State, was the champion of his country against Genet and French aggression; Governor Mifflin was elected without opposition from the Republican interest; Alexander J. Dallas was appointed by him Secretary of State for Pennsylvania; and Albert Gallatin was elected Senator by a Federalist Legislature. Gallatin, who at every period of his life required the spur of sincere conviction to act a partisan part, found in this condition of things precisely

the atmosphere most agreeable to his tastes; but there was one political issue which had already risen, and which, while tending to hasten the rapid growth of parties, threatened also to wreck his entire career. This was the excise.

So far as Mr. Gallatin himself was concerned, the tax on whiskey-stills could hardly have been a matter of serious importance, and he must have seen that as a political issue it was not less dangerous to his own party than to the Administration; but he was the representative of a remote border county, beyond the mountains, where the excise was really oppressive and worked injustice, and where the spirit of liberty ran high. Opposition to the tax was a simple matter to Republicans elsewhere; they had merely to vote and to argue, and make what political advantage they might from this unpopular measure into which the Administration was dragged in attempting to follow out the policy of Mr. Hamilton; but the case was very different with Mr. Gallatin. He had not only to lead the attack on Mr. Hamilton, but to restrain his own followers from fatal blunders to which they were only too well disposed; over these followers, at least outside his own county, he had absolutely no authority and very little influence. From the first it became a mere question of policy how far he could go with his western friends. The answer was simple, and left a very narrow margin of uncertainty: Mr. Gallatin, like any other political leader, could go to the limits of the law in opposition to the tax, and no further. His political existence depended on his nerve in applying this rule at the

moment of exigency.

The excise on domestic spirits was a part of Mr. Hamilton's broad financial scheme, and the necessary consequence of the assumption of the State debts. To this whole scheme, and to all Mr. Hamilton's measures, the Republican party, and Gallatin among them, were strongly opposed. In the original opposition, however, Gallatin had no public share; he began to take a part only when his position as a Representative required him to do so.

The very first legislative paper which he is believed to have drafted is a series of resolutions on the excise, introduced into the Pennsylvania Legislature, by Francis Gurney, on the 14th January, 1791, and intended to affect the bill then before Congress. These resolutions were very strong, and intimated a distinct opinion that the excise bill, as it stood, was "subversive of the peace, liberty, and rights of the citizen," and "exhibited the singular spectacle of a nation resolutely opposing the oppression of others in order to enslave itself." Strong as they were, however, the House of Representatives adopted them by a vote of 40 to 16.

The reasons of the peculiar hostility of the western counties to the whiskey tax are clearly given in the petition which Gallatin drafted in 1792 for presentation to Congress on the part of the inhabitants of that country:

"Our peculiar situation renders this duty still more unequal and oppressive to us. Distant from a permanent market and separate from the eastern coast by mountains, which render the communication difficult and almost impracticable, we have no

means of bringing the produce of our lands to sale either in grain or in meal. We are therefore distillers through necessity, not choice, that we may comprehend the greatest value in the smallest size and weight. The inhabitants of the eastern side of the mountains can dispose of their grain without the additional labor of distillation at a higher price than we can after we have bestowed that labor upon it. Yet with this additional labor we must also pay a high duty, from which they are exempted, because we have no means of selling our surplus produce but in a distilled state.

*1792.*

“Another circumstance which renders this duty ruinous to us is our scarcity of cash. Our commerce is not, as on the eastern coast, carried on so much by absolute sale as by barter, and we believe it to be a fact that there is not among us a quantity of circulating cash sufficient for the payment of this duty alone. We are not accustomed to complain without reason; we have punctually and cheerfully paid former taxes on our estates and possessions because they were proportioned to our real wealth. We believe this to be founded on no such equitable principles, and are persuaded that your honorable House will find on investigation that its amount, if duly collected, will be four times as large as any taxes which we have hitherto paid on the whole of our lands and other property.”

The excise law was passed in 1791, and in that year a public meeting was held in the town of Washington, and adopted

resolutions, one of which brought the remonstrants to the extreme verge of lawful opposition. They agreed to hold no communication with, and to treat with contempt, such men as accepted offices under the law. Mr. Gallatin was not present at this meeting, which was held while he was attending to his duties as a member of the State Legislature.

Few of his letters at this period have been preserved, and of these none have any public interest. During the session of 1792 the following extracts from letters to Badollet are all that have the smallest political importance:

## **GALLATIN TO BADOLLET**

*Philadelphia, 7th January, 1792*

... We have yet done nothing very material, and Congress do not seem to be over-anxious to shorten their sitting, if at least we can form any judgment from the slowness of their proceedings. As to that part of their laws which concerns us more immediately, – I mean the excise and the expected amendments, – all the papers relative to it, petitions, &c., have been referred to the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Hamilton, by the House of Representatives. That officer has not yet reported, nor can we guess at what will probably be the outlines of his report, although I am apt to think the amendments he will propose will fall short of our wishes and expectations. As to a

repeal, it is altogether out of the question.

But the event which now mostly engrosses the public attention, and almost exclusively claims ours, is the fatal defeat of St. Clair's army. Our frontiers are naked; the Indians must be encouraged by their success; the preparations of the United States must take some time before they are completed, and our present protection must rest chiefly on the security we may derive from the season of the year and on the exertions of the people and of the State government...

## GALLATIN TO BADOLLET

*Philadelphia, February 22, 1792.*

Dear Friend, – ...You must observe, on the whole, that for this year past we have not gone backwards, as we had the five preceding, and that being the most difficult part of anything we might undertake, we may hope that, better taught by experience, we will in future be more successful. It is true the part of the country where we have fixed our residence does not afford much room for the exercise of the talents we may possess; but, on the other hand, we enjoy the advantage in our poverty not to be trampled upon or even hurt by the ostentatious display of wealth. The American seaports exhibit now such a scene of speculation and excessive fortunes, acquired not by the most deserving members of the community, as must make any person



who has yet some principles left, and is not altogether corrupted or dazzled by the prospect, desirous of withdrawing himself from these parts, and happy to think he has a retreat, be it ever so poor, that he may call his own. Do not think, however, from what I now say that I am dissatisfied at my being here; I should not wish to reside at Philadelphia, but feel very happy to stay in it a few months in the station I am now in, and nothing would be wanted to render this kind of life perfectly satisfactory to me except seeing you happy, and finding a home and a family of my own when I return to Fayette...

As to ourselves we have yet done but little, and have a great deal to do. We will this session pay the principal of all our debts, and remain rich enough to go on three or four years without taxes. We have a plan before us, which I brought forward, to establish a school and library in each county; each county to receive £1000 for buildings and beginning a library, and from £75 to £150 a year, according to its size, to pay at least in part a teacher of the English language and one of the elements of mathematics, geography, and history. I do not know whether it will succeed; it is meant as a preparatory step to township schools, which we are not yet rich enough to establish. I had the plan by me, but your letter, in which you mention the want of more rational teachers, &c., spurred me in attempting to carry it this session. I have also brought forward a new plan of county taxation, but am not very satisfied with it myself. We are trying to get the land office open upon generous terms to actual settlers; if we succeed, we will

have a settlement at Presqu' Isle, on Lake Erie, within two years, if the Indians permit us. But the illiberality of some members of the lower counties throws every possible objection and delay in the way of anything which may be of advantage to the western country. Some, however, now join us for fear that the other States should become more populous, and of course have a larger representation in Congress than Pennsylvania. We have thrown out a chancery bill a few days ago, and are now attempting to engraft in our common law the beneficial alterations adopted by the courts of equity in England, without their delays, proceedings and double jurisdiction, so as to have but one code. But I much doubt our ability to carry it into execution; the thing is difficult in itself, and our lawyers either unwilling or not capable to give us the requisite assistance...

Modifications of the excise law were made on the recommendation of Mr. Hamilton, but without pacifying the opposition, and on the 21st August, 1792, another meeting was held, this time at Pittsburg, and of this meeting John Canon was chairman and Albert Gallatin clerk. Among those present were David Bradford, James Marshall, John Smilie, and John Badollet. The meeting appointed David Bradford, James Marshall, Albert Gallatin, and others to draw up a remonstrance to Congress. They appointed also a committee of correspondence, and closed by reiterating the resolution adopted by the Washington meeting of 1791. This resolution is as follows: "Whereas, some men may be found among us so far lost to

every sense of virtue and feeling for the distresses of this country as to accept offices for the collection of the duty,

“Resolved, therefore, that in future we will consider such persons as unworthy of our friendship, have no intercourse or dealings with them, withdraw from them every assistance and withhold all the comforts of life which depend upon those duties that as men and fellow-citizens we owe to each other, and upon all occasions treat them with that contempt they deserve, and that it be and it is hereby most earnestly recommended to the people at large to follow the same line of conduct towards them.”

To these resolutions Mr. Gallatin's name is appended as clerk of the meeting. It is needless to say that he considered them unwise, and that they were adopted against his judgment; but he did not attempt to throw off his responsibility for them on that score. In his speech on the insurrection, delivered in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in January, 1795, he took quite a different ground. “I was,” said he, “one of the persons who composed the Pittsburg meeting, and I gave my assent to the resolutions. It might perhaps be said that the principle of those resolutions was not new, as it was at least partially adopted on a former period by a respectable society in this city, – a society that was established during the late war in order to obtain a change of the former constitution of Pennsylvania, and whose members, if I am accurately informed, agreed to accept no offices under the then existing government, and to dissuade others from accepting them. I might say that those resolutions

did not originate at Pittsburg, as they were almost a transcript of the resolutions adopted at Washington the preceding year; and I might even add that they were not introduced by me at the meeting. But I wish not to exculpate myself where I feel I have been to blame. The sentiments thus expressed were not illegal or criminal; yet I will freely acknowledge that they were violent, intemperate, and reprehensible. For by attempting to render the office contemptible, they tended to diminish that respect for the execution of the laws which is essential to the maintenance of a free government; but whilst I feel regret at the remembrance, though no hesitation in this open confession of that *my only political sin*, let me add that the blame ought to fall where it is deserved," that is to say, on the individuals who composed the meeting, not on the people at large.

Who, then, was the person who introduced these violent resolutions? This is nowhere told, either by Gallatin, Findley, or Brackenridge in their several accounts of the troubles. Perhaps a guess may be hazarded that David Bradford had something to do with them. Bradford was a lawyer with political aspirations, and had seized on the excise agitation as a means of riding into power; as will be seen, he was jealous of Gallatin, – a jealousy requited by contempt. He was this year returned by Washington County as a member of the House of Representatives of the State, and went up to Philadelphia with other delegates.

## GALLATIN TO THOMAS CLARE

*Philadelphia, December 18, 1792.*

Dear Sir, – We arrived here, Bradford, Smilie, Torrence, Jackson, and myself, the first Sunday of this month, all in good health, and have found our friends as kind and even our opponents as polite as ever, so that the apprehensions of some of our fearful friends to the westward who, from the President's proclamation and other circumstances, thought it was almost dangerous for us to be here, were altogether groundless. True it is that our meeting at Pittsburg hurt our general interest throughout the State, and has rather defeated the object we had in view, to wit, to obtain a repeal of the excise law, as that law is now more popular than it was before our proceedings were known. To everybody I say what I think on the subject, to wit, that our resolutions were perhaps too violent, and undoubtedly highly impolitic, but in my opinion contained nothing illegal. Indeed, it seems that last opinion generally prevails, and no bills having been even found at York against the members of the committee must convince everybody that our measures were innocent, and that the great noise that was made about them was chiefly, if not merely, to carry on electioneering plans. In this, however, the views of the high-fliers have been so completely defeated, and the election of Smilie has disappointed them to such a degree,

that I believe they rather choose to be silent on the subject, and are now very willing to give us districts for the next election. I must add that the conduct of Clymer has rendered him obnoxious to many of his own friends and ridiculous to everybody. He has published a very foolish piece on the occasion, to which Wm. Findley has answered under the signature of Monongahela; as the pieces were published before my coming to town, I have not got the newspapers in which they were published, but I suppose they have been reprinted in the Pittsburg Gazette...

## GALLATIN TO BADOLLET

*Philadelphia, December 18 1792.*

My dear Friend, – I found on my arrival here a letter from Geneva, dated the last spring, which announced to me the death of my grandfather, which has happened more than one year ago, and which was followed a short time after by that of my aunt, – his only daughter. My grandmother, worn out by age and disorders, had, happily perhaps for herself, fell in a state of insensibility bordering upon childhood, which rendered those losses less painful to her and my presence altogether useless to her, as she would not be able to derive much comfort from it and had preserved but very faint ideas of me. Yet it may perhaps be necessary that in order finally to settle my business I should go over there, but I have resolved not to go the ensuing summer,

so that I will have time to speak to you more largely on the subject. My grandfather has left but a small landed estate, much encumbered with debts. That and the settlement of what may be my share of the West India inheritance of my Amsterdam relation would be the reasons that might oblige me to go; the pleasure to see once more my respectable mother would perhaps be sufficient to induce me to take that trip, was it not that I think she would grieve more at seeing me setting off again for this country than she possibly can now at my absence...

*1793.*

We have not yet done any business here; we are generally blamed, by even our friends, for the violence of our resolutions at Pittsburg, and they have undoubtedly tended to render the excise law more popular than it was before. It is not perhaps a bad sign on the whole in a free country that the laws should be so much respected as to render even the appearance of an illegal opposition to a bad law obnoxious to the people at large, although I am still fully convinced that there was nothing illegal in our measures, and that the whole that can be said of them is that they were violent and impolitic. Two bills have been found in the federal court against Alexander Beer and – Carr, of the town of Washington, as connected with the riot there. I believe them to be innocent, and I think the precedent a very dangerous one to drag people at such a distance in order to be tried on governmental prosecutions. I wish, therefore, they may keep out of the way and not be found when the marshal will go to serve the writ; but, at

all events, I hope the people will not suffer themselves to be so far governed by their passions as to offer any insult to the officer, as nothing could be more hurtful to our cause, and indeed to the cause of liberty in general. It must also be remembered that he is a man who did not accept the office with a view of hurting our western country, but that mere accident obliges him to go there in the discharge of the duties of his office...

## GALLATIN TO THOMAS CLARE

*Philadelphia, March 9, 1793.*

My dear Sir, – ...I have attended but very little to the land or other business I was intrusted with, owing to the great attention I have been obliged to pay, much against my inclination you may easily guess, to our business both in the House and in committees, owing to the very great indolence of most of our members this year. I have not, however, neglected your bill for Dublin, which I got at par. We have now got to work in earnest, and I believe three weeks will finish the whole of our business, but I will be obliged to stay some time longer in order to complete the private business of other people. You will see by the enclosed papers that the whole world is in a flame, – England ready to make war against France, Ireland ready to assert her own rights, &c. As to our private news, I can tell you that three commissioners are appointed to treat with the Indians, – General



Lincoln, Tim. Pickering, and Beverly Randolph; what they can possibly do nobody pretends to say, but every person seems tired of Indian wars; about twelve hundred thousand dollars a year might be better employed; but I do not like the idea of a disgraceful peace.

You will see by the papers that I am elected one of the Senators to represent this State in the Senate of the United States, an appointment which has exceedingly mortified the high-fliers, but which, notwithstanding its importance, I sincerely wish had not taken place for more reasons than I can write at present, but Gappen may give you some details relative to that point until I have the pleasure to see you myself. It will be enough to say that none of my friends wished it, and that they at last consented to take me up because it was nearly impossible to carry any other person of truly Republican principles. The votes were, for myself, 45; for Henry Miller, of York, 35; for General Irvine, 1; and for General St. Clair, 1; absent members, 5.

... Congress died away last Sunday; our friends will have a majority of ten or fifteen votes in the next, so that if the Indian war is at an end, I am not without hopes to see the excise law repealed... Poor Bradford makes but a poor figure in our Legislature. Tenth-rate lawyers are the most unfit people to send there. He has done nothing but drafting a fee bill, which is not worth a farthing as far as I am able to judge...

## GALLATIN TO BADOLLET

*Philadelphia, 9th March, 1793.*

My dear Friend, – I thank you for your letter, which has pleased me exceedingly, on account both of the sentiments it contains and of the situation of mind it seems to show you are in. May you long remain so, and enjoy that happiness which depends more upon ourselves than we are commonly aware of. I wrote you, I believe, that I had some thoughts of going to Geneva this summer, in order to try to settle finally my business there; but I can assure you nothing was more remote from my mind than finally to fix there. Your supposing that if a change of government was to take place there I might be of use, shows your good opinion of me, but not your knowledge of men; for you may rely upon it that opportunity and circumstances will have more influence towards giving weight to a man, and of course rendering him useful, than his talents alone; and, granting I have some in politics, I think at Geneva they would be of no use, as prejudices would there strongly operate against me. A complete revolution, however, has taken place there. Hardly had the Swiss troops left Geneva, in conformity with the agreement made with France, when the looks, the discourse, and the rising commotions of the mass of the people began to foretell a storm. The magistrates for once were wise enough to avert it by yielding

before it was too late. An almost unanimous vote of the three councils has extended the right of citizenship to every native, and has given a representation to the people, who are now acting under the name of Genevan Assembly. I believe that fear of the people joining France has been the real motive which has induced their proud aristocracy at last to bend their necks.

I have found myself, however, obliged to lay aside my plan of an European trip. The two Houses of Assembly having at last agreed to choose a Senator of the United States by joint vote, I have been elected from necessity rather than from the wishes of our friends, and although there is yet a doubt whether I will take my seat there, I cannot run the risk of being absent at the next meeting of Congress... Your Bradford is an empty drum, as ignorant, indolent, and insignificant as he is haughty and pompous. I do not think he'll wish himself to come another year, for his vanity must be mortified on account of the poor figure he has been cutting here...

We have before us a militia law, a fee bill, a law to reduce the price of improved lands, a new system of county taxation, where I have introduced trustees yearly elected, one to each township, without whose consent no tax is to be raised, nor any above one per cent. on the value of lands, &c., which I hope, if carried, will, by uniting the people, tend to crush the aristocracy of every petty town in the State; also, a plan for schools, &c...

## GALLATIN TO THOMAS CLARE

*Philadelphia, 3d May, 1793.*

... You must have heard that I cannot go home this summer; the reason is that Mr. Nicholson, the comptroller-general, having been impeached by the House for misdemeanor in office, it was thought proper to appoint a committee of three members to investigate all his official accounts and transactions during the recess, and to report to the House at their next meeting, which will be the 27th of August I am one of the committee, and the business we are to report on is so complex and extensive, that it will take us the whole of the recess to do it even in an imperfect manner.

As these letters show, Mr. Gallatin left the western country at the beginning of December, 1792, passed his winter in Philadelphia, laboring over legislation of an almost entirely non-partisan character, and was still detained in Philadelphia by public business during the summer of 1793. From the time of his leaving home, in December, 1792, till the time of his next return there, in May, 1794, his mind was occupied in matters much more attractive than the tax on whiskey ever could have been.

In fact, his opposition to the excise and his strong republican sympathies did not prevent his election to the Senate of the United States by a Federalist Legislature, notwithstanding the

feet that he did not seek the post and his closer friends did not seek it for him. At the caucus held to select a candidate for Senator, when his name was proposed, he made a short speech to the effect that there were many other persons more proper to fill the office, and indeed that it was a question whether he was eligible, owing to the doubt whether he had been nine years a citizen. His reasons for not wishing the election are nowhere given, but doubtless one of the strongest was that the distinction was invidious and that it was likely to make him more enemies than friends. His objection as to citizenship was overruled by the caucus at its next meeting. He was accordingly chosen Senator on the 28th February, under circumstances peculiarly honorable to him, by a vote of 45 to 37; yet one member of his party – a member, too, from the county of Washington – refused to support him, and threw away his vote on General Irvine. This was David Bradford, who from the beginning of Mr. Gallatin's political career was uniformly, openly, and personally hostile to him, from motives, as the latter believed, of mere envy and vanity; such at least is the statement made by Mr. Gallatin himself in a note written on the margin of p. 104 in Brackenridge's "Incidents of the Insurrection."

Other matters, however, soon began to engage Mr. Gallatin's thoughts, and made even the Senatorship and politics less interesting than heretofore. Immediately after the Legislature adjourned he joined his friends Mr. and Mrs. Dallas on an excursion to Albany.

## GALLATIN TO BADOLLET

*Philadelphia, 30th July, 1793.*

... And so you have a *woman-like* curiosity to know what took me to Albany. Instinct (I beg your pardon) dictated that expression to you, for there was a woman in the way, or rather she fell in the way. I went merely upon an excursion of pleasure, in order to get a little diversion and to recover my health, which so long confinement and so strict an attention to business had rather impaired. Dallas, his wife and another friend, and myself went together to Passyack Falls, in New Jersey, to New York, and thence by water up to Albany, looked at the Mohock Falls, and returned, highly delighted with our journey, which took us near four weeks. I recovered my health, and have not felt myself better these many years. But at New York I got acquainted with some ladies, friends of Mrs. Dallas, who were prevailed upon to go along with us to Albany; and amongst them there was one who made such an impression on me that after my arrival here I could not stay long without returning to New York, from whence I have been back only a few days. I believe the business to be fixed, and (but for some reasons this must remain a secret to anybody but Savary, Clare, and yourself) I know you will be happy in hearing that I am contracted with a girl about twenty-five years old, who is neither handsome nor rich, but sensible, well-informed, good-

natured, and belonging to a respectable and very amiable family, who, I believe, are satisfied with the intended match. However, for some reasons of convenience, it will not take place till next winter...

The young lady in question was Hannah Nicholson, and the characteristic self-restraint of Mr. Gallatin's language in describing her to his friend is in striking contrast with the warmth of affection which he then felt, and ever retained, towards one whose affection and devotion to him during more than half a century were unbounded. Of Mr. Gallatin's domestic life from this time forward little need be said. His temper, his tastes, and his moral convictions combined to make him thoroughly dependent on his wife and his children. He was never happy when separated from them, and he received from them in return an unlimited and unqualified regard.

Hannah Nicholson was the daughter of Commodore James Nicholson, born in 1737 at Chester Town, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, of a respectable family in that province. He chose to follow the sea for a profession, and did so with enough success to cause Congress in 1775, at the outbreak of the Revolutionary war, to place him at the head of the list of captains. In 1778 he took command of the Trumbull, a frigate of thirty-two guns, and fought in her an action with the British ship-of-war Wyatt, which, next to that of Paul Jones with the Serapis, is supposed to have been the most desperate of the war. After a three hours' engagement both ships were obliged to draw off and make port as

best they could. On a subsequent cruise Commodore Nicholson had another engagement of the same severe character, which ended in the approach of a second English cruiser, and after the loss of three lieutenants and a third of her crew the Trumbull was towed a prize into New York harbor without a mast standing. In 1793, Commodore Nicholson was living in New York, a respectable, somewhat choleric, retired naval captain, with a large family, and in good circumstances. He had two brothers, Samuel and John, both captains in the naval service during the Revolution. Samuel was a lieutenant with Paul Jones on the *Bon Homme Richard*, and died at the head of the service in 1811; he had four sons in the navy, and his brother John had three. Eighteen members of this family have served in the navy of the United States, three of whom actually wore broad pennants, and a fourth died just as he was appointed to one.<sup>10</sup> One brother, Joseph, resided in Baltimore, and among his children was Joseph H. Nicholson, of whom more will be said hereafter.

Commodore Nicholson married Frances Witter, of New York, and their second child, Hannah, was born there on the 11th September, 1766. The next daughter was Catherine, who married Colonel Few, the first Senator from Georgia. A third, Frances, married Joshua Seney, a member of Congress from Maryland. Maria, the youngest, in 1793 an attractive and ambitious girl, ultimately married John Montgomery, a member of Congress from Maryland and mayor of Baltimore.

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<sup>10</sup> Cooper's *Naval History*, vol. i. p. 226.



Thus Mr. Gallatin's marriage prodigiously increased his political connection. Commodore Nicholson was an active Republican politician in the city of New York, and his house was a headquarters for the men of his way of thinking. The young ladies' letters are full of allusions to the New York society of that day, and to calls from Aaron Burr, the Livingstons, the Clintons, and many others, accompanied by allusions anything but friendly to Alexander Hamilton. Another man still more famous in some respects was a frequent visitor at their house. It is now almost forgotten that Thomas Paine, down to the time of his departure for Europe in 1787, was a fashionable member of society, admired and courted as the greatest literary genius of his day. His aberrations had not then entirely sunk him in public esteem. Here is a little autograph, found among the papers of Mrs. Gallatin; its address is to

**Miss Hannah Nicholson at The Lord knows where**

You Mrs. Hannah, if you don't come home, I'll come and fetch you.

**T. Paine**

But both Mrs. Nicholson and the Commodore were religious people, in the American sense as well as in the broader meaning

of the term. They were actively as well as passively religious, and their relations with Paine, after his return to America in 1802, were those of compassion only, for his intemperate and offensive habits, as well as his avowed opinions, made intimacy impossible. When confined to his bed with his last illness he sent for Mrs. Few, who came to see him, and when they parted she spoke some words of comfort and religious hope. Poor Paine only turned his face to the wall and kept silence.

When Mr. Gallatin came into the family Paine was in Europe. Party spirit had not yet been strained to fury by the French excesses and by Jay's treaty. In this short interval fortune smiled on the young man as it never had smiled before. He had at length and literally found his way out of the woods in which he had buried himself with so much care; he was popular; a United States Senator at the age of thirty-three; adopted into a new family that received him with unreserved cordiality and attached him by connection and interest to the active intellectual movement of a great city. Revelling in these new sensations, he thought little about Geneva or about Fayette, and let his correspondence, except with Miss Nicholson, more than ever take care of itself.

The meeting of the Pennsylvania Legislature, of which he was still a member, recalled him to business; but his story may now be best gathered from his letters to his future wife:

## GALLATIN TO MISS NICHOLSON

*Philadelphia, 25th July, 1793.*

... For four years I have led a life very different indeed from what I was wont to follow. Looking with equal indifference upon every pleasure of life, upon every object that can render life worth enjoying, and, of course, upon every woman, lost in a total apathy for everything which related to myself, alive only to politics (for an active mind must exert itself in some shape or another), I had become perfectly careless of my own business or my private fortune... Of course I led the most active life as a public man, the most indolent as an individual.

*27th August, 1793.*

... And yet you think that I can improve you. Except some information upon a few useful subjects which you have not perhaps turned your attention to, I will be but a poor instructor. Women are said generally to receive from a familiar intercourse with men several advantages, one of the most conspicuous of which I have often heard asserted to be the acquirement of a greater knowledge of the world, in which they are supposed to live less than our bustling sex. There, however, I am but a child, and will have to receive instruction from you, for most of my life has been spent very far indeed from anything like the polite part of the world. I had but left college when I left Geneva, and

the greatest part of the time I have spent in America has been very far from society, at least from that society I would have relished. Thence, although I feel no embarrassment with men, I never yet was able to divest myself of that anti-Chesterfieldan awkwardness in mixed companies which will forever prevent a man from becoming a party in the societies where he mixes. It is true the four last years, on account of my residence in Philadelphia, I might have improved, but I felt no wish of doing it; so that whilst I will teach you either history, French, or anything else I can teach or you wish to learn, I will have to receive far more important instructions from you. You must polish my manners, teach me how to talk to people I do not know, and how to render myself agreeable to strangers, – I was going to say, to ladies, – but as I pleased you without any instructions, I have become very vain on that head...

*25th August, 1793.*

*1793.*

... Well, my charming patriot, why do you write me about politics?.. I believe that, except a very few intemperate, unthinking, or wicked men, no American wishes to see his country involved in war. As to myself, I think every war except a defensive one to be unjustifiable. We are not attacked by any nation, and unless we were actually so, or had undeniable proofs that we should be in a very short time, we should be guilty of a political and moral crime were we to commence a war or to behave so as to justify any nation in attacking us. As to the

present cause of France, although I think that they have been guilty of many excesses, that they have many men amongst them who are greedy of power for themselves and not of liberty for the nation, and that in their present temper they are not likely to have a very good government within any short time, yet I firmly believe their cause to be that of mankind against tyrants, and, at all events, that no foreign nation has a right to dictate a government to them. So far I think we are interested in their success; and as to our political situation, they are certainly the only real allies we have yet had. I wish Great Britain and Spain may both change their conduct towards us and show that they mean to be our friends, but till then no event could be more unfavorable to our national independence than the annihilation of the power of France or her becoming dependent upon either of those two powers. Yet, considering our not being attacked and our weakness in anything but self-defence, I conceive we should be satisfied with a strict adherence to all our treaties whether with France or with other powers. That is certainly the object of the President, and the only difficulty that has arisen between him and Mr. Genet is upon the construction of some articles of the treaty with France. So far as I am able to judge, it seems to me that the interpretation given by the President is the right one, and I guess that although Mr. Genet is a man of abilities and of firmness, he is not endowed with that prudence and command of his temper which might have enabled him to change the opinion of our Executive in those points where they might be in the

wrong. I have, however, strong reasons to believe that Messrs. Jay and King were misinformed in the point on which they gave their certificate. Upon the whole, I think that unless France or England attack us we shall have no war, and of either of them doing it I have no apprehension... Please to remember that my politics are only for you. Except in my public character I do not like to speak on the subject, although I believe you will agree with me that I need not be ashamed of my sentiments; but moderation is not fashionable just now... This city is now violently alarmed, more indeed than they should, on account of some putrid fevers which have made their appearance in Water Street. I mention this because I suppose you will read it in the newspapers, and I want to inform you that I live in the most healthy part of the city, and the most distant from the infection.

*29th August, 1793.*

... The alarm is greater than I could have conceived it to be, and although there is surely so far this foundation for it, that a very malignant and, to all appearances, infectious fever has carried away about forty persons in a week, yet, when we consider the great population of this city and that the disease is yet local, I believe that with proper care it might be checked, whilst, on the other hand, the fears of people will undoubtedly tend to spread it. Our Legislature are very much alarmed. I believe that if it was not for the comptroller's impeachment they would adjourn at once; and as it is, they may possibly remove to Germantown...

*2d September, 1793.*

I feel, my beloved friend, very much depressed this evening. My worthy friend Dr. Hutchinson lies now dangerously ill with the malignant fever that prevails here, and it is said the crisis of this night must decide his fate. He was the boldest physician in this city, and from his unremitted attention to the duties of his profession, both as physician of the port and as practitioner, he has caught the infection, and such is the nature of that fatal disorder that his best friends, except his family and the necessary attendants, cannot go near him. His death would be a grievous stroke to his family, who are supported altogether by his industry, to his friends, to whom he was endeared by every social virtue, and, indeed, to his country, who had not a better nor more active friend. From his extensive information I had many times derived the greatest assistance, and his principles, his integrity, and the warmth of his affection for me had attached me to him more than to any other man in Philadelphia... The disorder, although it has not yet attacked those who use proper cautions, is rather increasing in the poorer class of people, who are obliged to follow their daily industry in every part of the town, who are less cautious and perhaps less cleanly than others, and who cannot use bark, wine, and other preventives, whose price is above their faculties. The corporation have, however, taken precautions to prevent their spreading the disorder and to provide for their being properly attended. Hamilton's house at Bush Hill is converted into an hospital for that purpose. The members of the Legislature

are so much alarmed and so unfit to attend to business that I believe it is not improbable they will adjourn this week, and the time of the election being so very near, they will, I guess, adjourn *sine die*. If that happens, my intention is to go immediately to New York... I will not dissemble that, although I feel it was of some importance that some public business should have been finished whilst I was in the Legislature (I write to you what I would say to no other person), and although it is not impossible that by using proper exertions the Assembly might have been prevented from breaking up, I have felt more alarmed than I thought myself liable to, as much indeed as most of my fellow-members, and have not attempted anything to inspire the members with a courage I did not feel myself. Can you guess at the reason? Yet I trust that if I thought it an absolute *duty* to stay I should not suffer even love to get the better of *that*. Indeed, I know you would not like me the better for making myself unworthy of you, and if there is any hesitation or any division upon the subject, I think, unless some new argument prevails with me, that I will vote against the adjournment, but if everybody agrees it is best to go, I will throw no objection in the way. So much for my fortitude, which you see is not greater than it ought to be...

*4th September, 1793.*

... Yesterday I was appointed a member of a committee to confer with a committee of the Senate upon the expediency of an adjournment, so that I had to take an active part upon



that very subject which of all I wished to be decided by others. Will it please you to hear that I urged every reason against an adjournment that I could think of? If that does not afford you much satisfaction, it will perhaps relieve you to know that at the same time I was almost wishing that my arguments might have no effect. Whether it arose from that cause or not I do not know, but my eloquence was thrown away upon the Senate, and they immediately after resolved that they would adjourn to-day.

Of that resolution, however, we have in our house taken no notice; but this afternoon the Senate have resolved that they would not try the comptroller's impeachment this session, and as they are the only judges of that point, inasmuch as we cannot oblige them to fix any earlier period, and as that was the only business of sufficient importance to detain us, I rather believe that our house will agree to adjourn to-morrow, as the whole blame of it, if any, will fall upon the Senate. If that takes place, you will easily believe that I do not mean to stay long here... I feel much happier than I did two days ago. Dr. Hutchinson is much better, though not yet out of danger.<sup>11</sup> ... The symptoms of the raging fever are said to be milder than at first. Several have escaped or are in a fair way of recovering who had been attacked, although there was no instance a few days ago of any person once infected being saved. The number of sick and that of deaths are still considerable, but although the first has not diminished, the last, I believe, has; and there is less alarm amongst the citizens

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<sup>11</sup> Dr. Hutchinson died on the 6th.

than there was a few days ago...

## GALLATIN TO BADOLLET

*Philadelphia, 1st February, 1794.*

My dear Friend, – I was deprived of the pleasure of writing you sooner by Major Heaton not calling on me, nor giving me notice of the time of his departure; I hope, however, that notwithstanding your complaints, you know me too well to have ascribed my silence to forgetfulness or want of friendship; but, without any further apologies, let me proceed to answering your letter, which, by the by, is the only one I have received of you since I let you know, in last August, that I was in expectation of getting married after a while. Now for my history since that time. The dreadful calamity which has afflicted this city had spread such an alarm at the time when the Assembly met, that our August session was a mere scene of confusion, and we adjourned the 6th of September. The next day I set off for New York, according to contract; it was agreed that I should go and spend a week there, and from thence go to Fayette County, where I was to remain till December, and then upon my return here we were to fix the time of our union. As I expected to be only a week absent, I left all my papers, clothes, patents, money, &c., in Philadelphia; but on my arrival at New York, and after I had been there a few days, the disorder increased to such a degree in

Philadelphia, it became so difficult to leave that city if you were once in it, and the terrors were so much greater at a distance, that I was easily prevailed upon not to return here, although I was wishing to go nevertheless to Fayette, which I could have done, as I had left my horse in Bucks County. Three weeks, however, elapsed without my perceiving time was running away, and I was in earnest preparing to set off, when I fell sick, a violent headache, fever, &c.; the symptoms would have put me on the list of the yellow fever sick had I been in Philadelphia, and although I had been absent three weeks from thence, the alarm had increased so much at New York, that it was thought that, if the people knew of my disorder, they might insist on my being carried to a temporary hospital erected on one of the islands of the harbor, which was far from being a comfortable place. Under those circumstances Commodore Nicholson (at present my father-in-law) would have me to be removed to his house, where I was most tenderly attended and nursed, and very soon recovered. It was then too late to think of going home before the meeting of Congress, and being under the same roof we agreed to complete our union, and were accordingly married on the 11th of November. And now I suppose you want to know what kind of a wife I have got. Having been married near three months, my description will not be as romantic as it would have been last fall; but I do not know but what it may still be partial, if we feel so in favor of those we love. Her person is, in my opinion, far less attractive than either her mind or her heart, and yet I do

not wish her to have any other but that she has got, for I think I can read in her face the expression of her soul; and as to her shape and size you know my taste, and she is exactly formed on that scale. She was twenty-six when I married her. She is possessed of the most gentle disposition, and has an excellent heart. Her understanding is good; she is as well informed as most young ladies; she is perfectly simple and unaffected; she loves me, and she is a pretty good democrat (and so, by the by, are all her relations). But, then, is there no reverse to that medal? Yes, indeed, one, and a pretty sad one. She is what you will call a city belle. She never in her life lived out of a city, and there she has always lived in a sphere where she has contracted or should have contracted habits not very well adapted to a country life, and specially to a Fayette County life. This I knew before marriage, and my situation she also knew. Nevertheless, we have concluded that we would be happier united than separated, and this spring you will see us in Fayette, where you will be able to judge for yourself. As to fortune, she is, by her grandfather's will, entitled to one-sixth part of his estate at her mother's death (and what that is I do not know); but at present she receives only three hundred pounds, New York money. To return, I attended Congress at their meeting, and upon Mr. and Mrs. Dallas's invitation I brought Mrs. Gallatin to this place about the latter end of December, and have remained at their house ever since. I believe I wrote you, at the time of my being elected a Senator, that the election would probably be disputed. This has, agreeable to my expectation,

taken place, which arises from my having expressed doubts, prior to my election, whether I had been a citizen nine years. The point as a legal one is a nice and difficult one, and I believe it will be decided as party may happen to carry. On that ground it is likely I may lose my seat, as in Senate the majority is against us in general.

I believe I have told you now everything of any importance relative to myself. By the enclosed you will see that your brother is safe at Jeremie, which is now in the possession of the British. Who has been right or in the wrong in the lamentable scene of Hispaniola nobody can tell; but to view the subject independent of the motives and conduct of the agent who may have brought on the present crisis, I see nothing but the natural consequence of slavery. For the whites to expect mercy either from mulattoes or negroes is absurd, and whilst we may pity the misfortune of the present generation of the whites of that island, in which, undoubtedly, many innocent victims have been involved, can we help acknowledging that calamity to be the just punishment of the crimes of so many generations of slave-traders and slaveholders? As to our general politics, I send you, by Jackson, the correspondence between our government and the French and British ministers, which will give you a better idea of our situation in regard to those two countries than either newspapers or anything I could write. The Spanish correspondence and that relative to the Algerian business were communicated by the President "in confidence," and therefore are not printed. If there

be another campaign, as there is little doubt of at present, our situation next summer will be truly critical. France, at present, offers a spectacle unheard of at any other period. Enthusiasm there produces an energy equally terrible and sublime. All those virtues which depend upon social or family affections, all those amiable weaknesses which our natural feelings teach us to love or respect, have disappeared before the stronger, the only, at present, powerful passion the *Amor Patriæ*. I must confess my soul is not enough steeled not sometimes to shrink at the dreadful executions which have restored at least apparent internal tranquillity to that republic. Yet, upon the whole, as long as the combined despots press upon every frontier and employ every engine to destroy and distress the interior parts, I think they and they alone are answerable for every act of severity or injustice, for every excess, nay, for every crime which either of the contending parties in France may have committed.

The above letter to Badollet runs somewhat in advance of the story, which is resumed in the letters to his wife. After their marriage on the 11th November, he remained with her till the close of the month, when he was obliged to take his seat in the Senate.

## GALLATIN TO HIS WIFE

*Philadelphia, 2d December, 1793.*

I have just time to let you know that I arrived safe to this place; indeed, it is not an hour since I am landed, and we must meet an hour hence...

*3d December, 1793.*

... We made a house the first day we met, and have had this day the President's speech. The very day we met, a petition was sent to our house signed by nineteen individuals of Yorktown objecting to my election, and stating that I have not been nine years a citizen of the United States. It lies on the table, and has not yet been taken up. Mr. Morris told me it was first given to him by a member of the Legislature for the county of York, but that he declined presenting it, and that he meant to be perfectly neutral on the occasion...

*6th December, 1793.*

... Till now we have had nothing to do but reading long correspondences and no real business to apply to. Whilst I am on that subject I must add that from all the correspondence of the French minister, I am fully confirmed in the opinion I had formed, that he is a man totally unfit for the place he fills. His abilities are but slender; he possesses some declamatory powers, but not the least shadow of judgment. Violent and self-conceited, he has hurted the cause of his country here more than all her enemies could have done. I think that the convention will recall him agreeable to the request of the President, and that if they do not he will be sent away... I met here with my friend Smilie and

some more, who brought me letters from my, shall I say from our, home. They do not know what has become of me, are afraid I have died of the yellow fever, scold me in case I am alive for having neglected to write, and tell me that neither my barn, my meadow, nor my house are finished. I write back and insist on this last at least being finished this winter...

*11th December, 1793.*

... The situation of America (I know my love is not indifferent to her country's fate) is the most critical she has experienced since the conclusion of the war that secured her independence. On the one hand, the steps taken by the Executive to obtain the recall of Genet, the intemperance of that minister, and the difficulty of forming any rational conjecture of the part the national convention may take, give us sufficient grounds of alarms, whilst, on the other, the declared intentions (declared to us officially) of Great Britain to break through every rule of neutrality and to take our vessels, laden with provisions, the hostility of the Indians and of the Algerines, and our own weakness render it equally difficult to bear so many insults with temper and to save the dignity of the nation. I guess the first step must be to establish some kind of naval force, but I have as yet formed no fixed opinion of my own, nor do I know what is the general intention...

*15th December, 1793.*

I was indeed sadly disappointed, my dearest love, on receiving



your letter of the 12th. Whether it was wiser or not that you should not come here till after the decision of my election I will not pretend to say. To myself that decision will not be very material. As I used no intrigue in order to be elected, as I was indeed so rather against my own inclination, and as I was undoubtedly fairly elected, since the members voted *viva voce*, I will be liable to none of those reflections which sometimes fall upon a man whose election is set aside, and my feelings cannot be much hurt by an unfavorable decision, since having been elected is an equal proof of the confidence the Legislature of Pennsylvania reposed in me, and not being qualified, if it is so decided, cannot be imputed to me as a fault... I hope that a decision will take place this week, and if it does, I will go to New York next Saturday, and once more enjoy the society of my Hannah, either there or here. I think the probability is that it will be there, as the committee (to wit: Livermore, Cabot, Mitchell, Ellsworth, and Rutherford) are undoubtedly the worst for me that could have been chosen, and they do not seem to me to be favorably disposed; this, however, between you and me, as I should not be hasty in forming a judgment, or at least in communicating it... I am happy to see that you are a tolerable democrat, and, at the same time, a moderate one. I trust that our parties at this critical juncture will as far as possible forget old animosities, and show at least to the foreign powers who hate us that we will be unanimous whenever the protection and defence of our country require it. None but such as are entirely

blinded by self-interest or their passions, and such as wish us to be only an appendage of some foreign power, can try to increase our weakness by dividing us. I hope that the public measures will show firmness tempered with moderation, but if France is annihilated, as seems to be the desire of the combined powers, sad indeed will the consequences be for America. They talk of fortifying some of the principal seaports and of building a few frigates. Both measures may probably be adopted...

*18th December, 1793.*

... I really enjoy no kind of pleasure in this city, and if the committee delay their report much longer I believe I may be tempted to run away and let them decide just as they please. I know, or rather I have the best grounds to believe, that they mean to report unanimously against me, and if their report, as it is most likely, is adopted by the Senate, what will my girl say to my dividing our winter into three parts? – the best, the longest, and the most agreeable part to be spent in New York; a fortnight in Philadelphia, with our friends Mr. and Mrs. Dallas, and by myself, four weeks to go, stay, and return from Fayette... You must be sensible, my dearest friend, that it will also be necessary for me this winter to take such arrangements as will enable me to follow some kind of business besides attending my farm. What that will be I cannot yet tell, but it either will be in some mercantile line, but to a very limited and moderate extent, or in some land speculation, those being indeed the two only kinds of business I do understand. As I mentioned that it

would be only to a limited amount that I would follow any kind of mercantile business, I think I will have a portion of time left, which I may devote possibly to the study of law, the principles of which I am already acquainted with, and in which some people try to persuade me I could succeed. My only apprehension is that I am too old, at least my memory is far from being equal to what it was ten years ago. Upon the whole I do not know but what, although perhaps less pleasing, it may not turn out to be more advantageous for me (and of course for my love) to be obliged to abandon those political pursuits in which I trust I have been more useful to the public than to myself...

*20th December, 1793.*

... This committee business is protracted farther than I had expected, and had I nothing but a personal concern in it, I would really leave them to themselves; but as the question seems to be whether Pennsylvania will have one or two Senators (for there is no law to fill the vacancy if I am declared ineligible), and as I owe some regard to the proof of confidence given to me by the Legislature, I am obliged to appear as a party and to support what I conceive to be right as well as I can. I was in hopes they would have reported to-day; now I doubt whether they will do it before Tuesday or Thursday next... 11 o'clock. Notwithstanding what I wrote you this morning, it is not impossible that I may get off to-morrow for New York, in which case I mean that we should return together on Monday evening to this place, as I could not be absent any longer time. The reason of this change of opinion

since this morning is that by the turn which this business takes in the committee, it will not come, I believe, to a conclusion for a fortnight or three weeks, and to be so long absent is too much...

Mr. Gallatin was a member of the Senate only a few weeks, from December 2, 1793, till February 28, 1794, during which time he was, of course, principally occupied with the matter of his own election. There was, however, one point to which he paid immediate attention. Being above all things a practical business man, he had very strict ideas as to the manner in which business should be performed, and the Department of the Treasury was, therefore, in his eyes the most important point to watch. That Department, organized a few years before by Mr. Hamilton, had not yet quite succeeded in finding its permanent place in the political system, owing perhaps partially to the fact that Mr. Hamilton may have, in this respect as in others, adopted in advance some theoretical views drawn from the working of the British system, but also owing to the fact that there had not yet been time to learn the most convenient rules for governing the relations of the Departments to the Legislature. Even the law requiring an annual report from the Secretary of the Treasury was not enacted till the year 1800. In the interval Congress knew of the proceedings of the Treasury only what the Secretary from time to time might please to tell them, or what they themselves might please to call for. The Department was organized on the assumption that Congress would require no more than what the Secretary would naturally and of his

own accord supply; any unusual call for additional information deranged the whole machinery of the Treasury and called forth the most energetic complaints of its officers.<sup>12</sup> Such calls, too, were always somewhat invidious and implied a reflection on the Department; they were therefore not likely to proceed from the friends of the government, and the opposition was not strong in financial ability. The appearance of Mr. Gallatin in the Senate, with already a high reputation as a financier, boded ill for the comfort of the Treasury, and it is difficult to see how a leader of the opposition under the circumstances could possibly have performed his duty without giving trouble. One of Mr. Gallatin's financial axioms was that the Treasury should be made to account specifically for every appropriation; a rule undoubtedly correct, but very difficult to apply. On the 8th of January, 1794, he moved in the Senate that the Secretary of the Treasury be called upon for certain elaborate statements: 1st, a statement of the domestic debt under six specific heads; 2d, of the redeemed domestic debt under specific heads; 3d, of the foreign debt in a like manner; 4th, a specific account of application of foreign loans in like manner; and finally a summary statement, for each year since 1789, of actual receipts and expenditures, distinguishing the receipts according to the branch of revenue, and the expenditures according to the specific appropriations, and stating the balances remaining unexpended either in the Treasury or in the hands of its agents.

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<sup>12</sup> See Hamilton's letter to the Senate of 6th February, 1794, *State Papers*, vii. 274.

1794.

This was a searching inquiry, and one that might give some trouble, unless the books of the Treasury were kept in precisely such a manner as to supply the information at once; probably, too, a portion of the knowledge might have been obtained from previous statements already supplied; but the demand was, from the legislative point of view, not unreasonable, and the resolutions were accordingly adopted, without a division, on the 20th January.

The exclusion of Mr. Gallatin from the Senate on the 28th February put an end to his inquiries, and the only answer he ever got to them came in the shape of an indirect allusion contained in a letter from Secretary Hamilton to the Senate on another subject, dated 22d February, 1794. This letter, which seems never to have been printed, offers an example in some respects so amusing and in some so striking of the political ideas of that day, and of the species of discipline in which Mr. Hamilton trained his majority in Congress, that it must be introduced as an essential element in any account of Mr. Gallatin's political education.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Endorsed by Mr. Gallatin in a later hand, – “complains of *unnecessary* calls, alluding indirectly to certain resolutions, founded on my motion, calling for explanatory financial statements which were never furnished.” ALEXANDER HAMILTON TO THE UNITED STATES SENATE Treasury Department, February 22, 1794. Sir, – I have received a late order of the Senate on the subject of a petition of Arthur Hughes. Diligent search has been made for such a petition, and it has not been found. Neither have I now a distinct recollection of ever having seen it. Whether, therefore, it may not have originally failed in the transmission to me, or may

“The occupations necessarily and permanently incident to the

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have become mislaid by a temporary displacement of the papers of my immediate office, occasioned by a fire which consumed a part of the building in the use of the Treasury, or by some of those accidents which in an extensive scene of business will sometimes attend papers, especially those of inferior importance, is equally open to conjecture. There is no record in the office of its having been received, nor does any of my clerks remember to have seen it. A search in the auditor's office has brought up the enclosed paper, which it is presumed relates to the object of the petition; but this paper, it will appear from the memorandum accompanying it, was placed in that office prior to the reference of the petition. The auditor of the Treasury is of opinion, though his recollection is not positive, that the claim had relation to the services of John Hughes as forage-master. Two objections opposed its admission: 1, the not being presented in time; 2, the name of John Hughes in the capacity in which he claimed not appearing upon any return in the Treasury. If these be the circumstances, I should be of opinion that it would not be advisable by a special legislative interposition to except the case out of the operation of the acts of limitation. The second order of the Senate on the subject of this petition leads to the following reflections: Does this hitherto unusual proceeding (in a case of no public and no peculiar private importance) imply a supposition that there has been undue delay or negligence on the part of the Secretary of the Treasury? If it does, the supposition is unmerited; not merely from the circumstances of the paper, which have been stated, but from the known situation of the officer. The occupations necessarily and permanently incident to the office are at least sufficient fully to occupy the time and faculties of one man. The burden is seriously increased by the numerous private cases, remnants of the late war, which every session are objects of particular reference by the two Houses of Congress. These accumulated occupations, again, have been interrupted in their due course by unexpected, desultory, and distressing calls for lengthy and complicated statements, sometimes with a view to general information, sometimes for the explanation of points which certain leading facts, witnessed by the provisions of the laws and by information previously communicated, might have explained without those statements, or which were of a nature that did not seem to have demanded a laborious, critical, and suspicious investigation, unless the officer was understood to have forfeited his title to a reasonable and common degree of confidence. Added to these things, it is known that the affairs of the country in its external relations have for some time past

office [of Secretary of the Treasury],” said Mr. Hamilton, “are at least sufficient fully to occupy the time and faculties of one man. The burden is seriously increased by the numerous private cases, remnants of the late war, which every session are objects of particular reference by the two Houses of Congress. These accumulated occupations, again, have been interrupted in their due course by unexpected, desultory, and distressing calls for lengthy and complicated statements, sometimes with a view to general information, sometimes for the explanation of points which certain leading facts, witnessed by the provisions of the laws and by information previously communicated, might have explained without those statements, or which were of a nature that did not seem to have demanded a laborious, critical, and

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been so circumstanced as unavoidably to have thrown additional avocations on all the branches of the Executive Department, and that a late peculiar calamity in the city of Philadelphia has had consequences that cannot have failed to derange more or less the course of public business. In such a situation was it not the duty of the officer to postpone matters of mere individual concern to objects of public and general concern, to the preservation of the essential order of the department committed to his care? Or is it extraordinary that in relation to cases of the first description there should have been a considerable degree of procrastination? Might not an officer who is conscious that public observation and opinion, whatever deficiencies they may impute to him, will not rank among them want of attention and industry, have hoped to escape censure, expressed or implied, on that score? I will only add that the consciousness of devoting myself to the public service to the utmost extent of my faculties, and to the injury of my health, is a tranquillizing consolation of which I cannot be deprived by any supposition to the contrary. With perfect respect, I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant, Signed Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury. The Vice-President of the United States and President of the Senate. True copy. Attest: Samuel A. Otis, S. Secretary.



suspicious investigation, unless the officer was understood to have forfeited his title to a reasonable and common degree of confidence... I will only add that the consciousness of devoting myself to the public service to the utmost extent of my faculties, and to the injury of my health, is a tranquillizing consolation of which I cannot be deprived by any supposition to the contrary.”

A country which can read expressions like this with feelings only of surprise or amusement must have greatly changed its character. Only in a simple and uncorrupted stage of society would such a letter be possible, and the time has long passed when a Secretary of the Treasury, in reply to a request for financial details, would venture to say in an official communication to the Senate of the United States: “The consciousness of devoting myself to the public service to the utmost extent of my faculties, and to the injury of my health, is a tranquillizing consolation of which I cannot be deprived by any supposition to the contrary.” Nevertheless, this was all the information which Mr. Gallatin obtained as to the condition of the Treasury in response to his inquiries, and he resigned himself the more readily to accepting assurances of the Secretary’s injured health as an equivalent for a statement of receipts and expenditures, for the reason that the Senate, on this strong hint from the Treasury, proceeded at once to cut short the thread of his own official existence.

The doubt which Mr. Gallatin had expressed in caucus as to his eligibility to the Senate was highly indiscreet; had he

held his tongue, the idea could hardly have occurred to any one, for he was completely identified with America, and he had been a resident since a time antecedent to both the Federal Constitutions; but Article I. Sect. 3, of the new Constitution declared that, "No person shall be a Senator who shall not have attained to the age of thirty years, and been nine years a citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an inhabitant of that State for which he shall be chosen." Mr. Gallatin had come to America, as a minor, in May, 1780, before the adoption of the old Articles of Confederation which created citizenship of the United States. That citizenship was first defined by the fourth of these Articles of Confederation adopted in March, 1781, according to which "the free inhabitants," not therefore the citizens merely, "of each of these States, paupers, vagabonds, and fugitives from justice excepted, shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of free citizens in the several States." Mr. Gallatin had certainly been an inhabitant of Massachusetts from July, 1780.

Moreover, the fact of Mr. Gallatin's citizenship was established by the oath which he had taken as a citizen of Virginia, in October, 1785. Whatever doubt might attach to his previous citizenship, this act had certainly conferred on him *all* the privileges of free citizens in the several States, and without the most incontrovertible evidence it was not to be assumed that the new Constitution, subsequently adopted, was intended to violate this compact by depriving him, and through

him his State, of any portion of those privileges. Equity rather required that the clause of the Constitution which prescribed nine years' citizenship should be interpreted as prospective, and as intended to refer only to persons naturalized subsequently to the adoption of the Constitution. If it were objected that such an interpretation, applied to the Presidency, would have made any foreigner naturalized in 1788 immediately eligible to the chief magistracy of the Union, a result quite opposed to the constitutional doctrine in regard to foreign-born citizens, a mere reference to Article II., Section 1, showed that this was actually the fact: "No person except a natural-born citizen, or a citizen of the United States at the time of the adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the office of President." There never was a doubt that Mr. Gallatin was eligible to the Presidency. That a reasonable interpretation of Article I., Section 3, must have made him equally eligible to the Senate is also evident from the fact that a strict interpretation of that clause, if attempted in 1789 when Congress first met, must have either admitted him or vacated the seat of every other Senator, seeing that technically no human being had been a citizen of the United States for nine years; national citizenship had existed in law only since and by virtue of the adoption of the Articles of Confederation in 1781, before which time State citizenship was the only defined political status.

Opposed to this view stood the letter of the Constitution. We now know, too, through Mr. Madison's Notes, that when the question of eligibility to the House of Representatives came

before the Convention on August 13, 1788, both Mr. Hamilton and Gouverneur Morris tried to obtain an express admission of the self-evident rights of actual citizens. For unknown reasons Mr. Morris's motion was defeated by a vote of 6 States to 5. Failing here, he seems to have succeeded in regard to the Presidency by inserting his proviso in committee, and no one in the Convention subsequently raised even a question against its propriety. Of course the Senate was at liberty now to put its own interpretation on this obvious inconsistency, and the Senate was so divided that one member might have given Mr. Gallatin his seat. The vote was 14 to 12, with Vice-President John Adams in his favor had there been a tie. There was no tie, and Mr. Gallatin was thrown out. He always believed that his opponents made a political blunder, and that the result was beneficial to himself and injurious to them.

## **GALLATIN TO THOMAS CLARE**

*Philadelphia, 5th March, 1794.*

... I have nothing else to say in addition to what I wrote you by my last but what Mr. Badollet can tell you. He will inform you of what passed on the subject of my seat in the Senate, and that I have lost it by a majority of 14 to 12. One vote more would have secured it, as the Vice-President would have voted in my favor; but heaven and earth were moved in order to gain that point by

the party who were determined to preserve their influence and majority in the Senate. The whole will soon be published, and I will send it to you. As far as relates to myself I have rather gained credit than otherwise, and I have likewise secured many staunch friends throughout the Union. All my friends wish me to come to the Assembly next year...

After this rebuff, Mr. Gallatin, being thrown entirely out of politics for the time, began to pay a little more attention to his private affairs. He could not at this season of the year set out for Fayette, and accordingly returned to New York, where he left his wife with her family, while he himself went back to Philadelphia to make the necessary preparations for their western journey and future residence. Here he sold a portion of his western lands to Robert Morris, who was then, like the rest of the world, speculating in every species of dangerous venture. Like everything else connected with land, the transaction was an unlucky one for Mr. Gallatin.

## **GALLATIN TO HIS WIFE**

*Philadelphia, 7th April, 1794.*

We arrived here, my dearest friend, on Saturday last... No news here. You will see by the newspapers the motion of Mr. Clark to stop all intercourse with Great Britain. I believe it is likely to be supported by our friends. Dayton is quite warm. The

other day, when it was observed in Congress by Tracy that every person who would vote for this motion of sequestering the British debts must be an enemy to morality and common honesty, 'I might,' replied Dayton, — 'I might with equal propriety call every person who will refuse to vote for that motion a slave of Great Britain and an enemy to his country; but if it is the intention of those gentlemen to submit to every insult and patiently to bear every indignity, I wish (pointing to the eastern members, with whom he used to vote), —*I wish to separate myself from the herd.*'

The majority of the Assembly of Pennsylvania had several votes, previous to the election of a Senator in my place, to agree upon the man. Sitgreaves, a certain Coleman, of Lancaster County, a fool and a tool, and James Ross, were proposed and balloted for. Ross had but seven votes, on account of his being a western man and a man of talents, who upon great many questions would judge for himself. They divided almost equally between Sitgreaves and Coleman, and at last agreed to take up Coleman, in order to please the counties of Lancaster and York. Our friends, who were the minority, had no meeting, and waited to see what would be the decision of the other party, in hopes that they might divide amongst themselves. As soon as they saw Coleman taken up they united in favor of Ross as the best man they had any chance of carrying, and they were joined by a sufficient number of the disappointed ones of the other party to be able to carry him at the first vote. As he comes chiefly

upon our interest, I hope he will behave tolerably well, and, upon the whole, although it puts any chance of my being again elected a member of that body beyond possibility itself, I am better pleased with the fate of the election than most of our adversaries...

*Philadelphia, 19th April, 1794.*

... I have concluded this day with Mr. Robert Morris, who, in fact, is the only man who buys. I give him the whole of my claims, but without warranting any title, for £4000, Pennsylvania currency, one-third payable this summer, one-third in one year, and one-third in two years. That sum therefore, my dearest, together with our farm and five or six hundred pounds cash, makes the whole of our little fortune. Laid out in cultivated lands in our neighborhood it will provide us amply with all the necessaries of life, to which you may add that, as property is gradually increasing in value there, should in future any circumstances induce us to change our place of abode, we may always sell to advantage...

Early in May Mr. and Mrs. Gallatin set out for Fayette. His mind was at this time much occupied with his private affairs and private anxieties. His sale of lands to Robert Morris had, as he hoped, relieved him of a serious burden; but he was again trying the experiment of taking an Eastern wife to a frontier home, and he was again driven by the necessities and responsibilities of a family to devise some occupation that would secure him an income. The farm on George's Creek was no doubt security

against positive want, but in itself or in its surroundings offered little prospect of a fortune for him, and still less for his children.

He had barely reached home, and his wife had not yet time to set her house in order and to get the first idea of her future duties in this wholly strange condition of life, when a new complication threatened them with dangers greater than any which their imaginations could have reasonably painted. They suddenly found themselves in the midst of violent political disturbance, organized insurrection and war, an army on either side.

For eighteen months Mr. Gallatin had almost lost sight of the excise agitation, and possibly had not been sorry to do so. Throughout his political life he followed the sound rule of identifying himself with his friends and of accepting the full responsibility, except in one or two extreme cases, even for measures which were not of his own choice. But under the moderation of his expressions in regard to the Pittsburg resolutions of 1792 it seems possible to detect a certain amount of personal annoyance at the load he was thus forced to carry, and a determination to keep himself clear from such complications in future. The year had been rather favorable than otherwise to the operation of the excise law. To use his own language in his speech of January, 1795: "It is even acknowledged that the law gained ground during the year 1793. With the events subsequent to that meeting [at Pittsburg] I am but imperfectly acquainted. I came to Philadelphia a short time after it, and

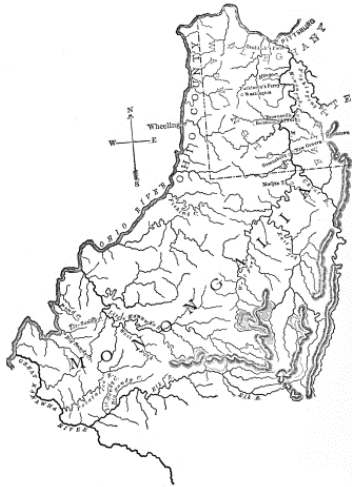


continued absent from the western country upon public business for eighteen months. Neither during that period of absence, nor after my return to the western country in June last, until the riots had begun, had I the slightest conversation that I can recollect, much less any deliberate conference or correspondence, either directly or indirectly, with any of its inhabitants on the subject of the excise law. I became first acquainted with almost every act of violence committed either before or since the meeting at Pittsburg upon reading the report of the Secretary of the Treasury.”

Occasional acts of violence were committed from time to time by unknown or irresponsible persons with intent to obstruct the collection of the tax, but no opposition of any consequence had as yet been offered to the ordinary processes of the courts; not only the rioters, wherever known, but also the delinquent distillers, were prosecuted in all the regular forms of law, both in the State and the Federal courts. The great popular grievance had been that the distillers were obliged to enter appearance at Philadelphia, which was in itself equivalent to a serious pecuniary fine, owing to the distance and difficulty of communication. In modern times it would probably be a much smaller hardship to require that similar offenders in California and Texas should stand their trial at Washington. This grievance had, however, been remedied by an Act of Congress approved June 5, 1794, by which concurrent jurisdiction in excise cases was given to the State courts. Unluckily, this law was held not to apply to distillers

who had previously to its enactment incurred a penalty, and early in July the marshal set out to the western country to serve a quantity of writs issued on May 31 and returnable before the Federal court in Philadelphia. All those in Fayette County were served without trouble, and the distillers subsequently held a meeting at Uniontown about the 20th July, after the riots had begun elsewhere and the news had spread to Fayette; a meeting which Mr. Gallatin attended, and at which it was unanimously agreed to obey the law, and either abandon their stills or enter them. In fact, there never was any resistance or trouble in Fayette County except in a part the most remote from Mr. Gallatin's residence.

But the marshal was not so fortunate elsewhere. He went on to serve his writs in Alleghany County, and after serving the last he was followed by some men and a gun was fired. General Neville, the inspector, was with him, and the next day, July 16, General Neville's house was approached by a body of men, who demanded that he should surrender his commission. They were fired upon and driven away, with six of their number wounded and one killed. Then the smouldering flame burst out. The whole discontented portion of the country rose in armed rebellion, and the well-disposed, although probably a majority, were taken completely by surprise and were for the moment helpless. The next day Neville's house was again attacked and burned, though held by Major Kirkpatrick and a few soldiers from the Pittsburg garrison. The leader of the attacking party was killed.



The whole duration of the famous whiskey rebellion was precisely six weeks, from the outbreak on the 15th July to the substantial submission at Redstone Old Fort on the 29th August. This is in itself evidence enough of the rapidity with which the various actors moved. From the first, two parties were apparent, those in favor of violence and those against it. The violent party had the advantage in the very suddenness of their movement. The moderates were obliged to organize their force at first in the districts where their strength lay, before it became possible to act in combination against the disturbers of the peace. Of course an armed collision was of all things to be avoided by the moderates,

at least until the national government could have time to act; in such a collision the more peaceable part of the community was certain to be worsted.

Mr. Gallatin, far away from the scene of disturbance, did not at first understand the full meaning of what had happened. He and his friend Smilie attended the meeting of distillers at Uniontown, and, although news of the riots had been received there, they found no difficulty in persuading the distillers to submit. He therefore felt no occasion for further personal interference until subsequent events showed him that there was a general combination to expel the government officers.<sup>14</sup> But events moved fast. On the 21st July, the leaders in the attack on Neville's house called a meeting at Mingo Creek meeting-house for the 23d, which was attended by a number of leading men, among whom were Judge Brackenridge and David Bradford.

Judge Brackenridge, then a prominent lawyer of Pittsburg, was a humorist and a scholar, constitutionally nervous and timid, as he himself explains,<sup>15</sup> the last man to meet an emergency such as was now before him, and furthermore greatly inclined to run away, if he could, and leave the rebels to their own devices; he did nevertheless make a fairly courageous stand at the Mingo Creek meeting, and disconcerted the movements of the insurgents for the time. Had others done their duty as well as he, the organization of the insurgents would have ended then

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<sup>14</sup> Gallatin's Deposition in Brackenridge's Incidents, vol. ii. p. 186.

<sup>15</sup> Incidents, vol. ii. p. 68.

and there, but Brackenridge was deserted by the two men who should have supported him. James Marshall and David Bradford had gone over to the insurgents, and by their accession the violent party was enabled to carry on its operations. The Mingo Creek meeting ended in a formal though unsigned invitation to the townships of the four western counties of Pennsylvania and the adjoining counties of Virginia to send representatives on the 14th August to a meeting at Parkinson's Ferry on the Monongahela.

Had this measure been left to itself it is probable that it would have answered sufficiently well the purposes of the peace party, since it allowed them time for consultation and organization, which was all they really required. Bradford and his friends knew this, and were bent on forcing the country into their own support; Bradford therefore conceived the ingenious idea of stopping the mail and seizing the letters which might have been written from Pittsburg and Washington to Philadelphia. This was done on the 26th by a cousin of Bradford, who stopped the post near Greensburg, about thirty miles east of Pittsburg, and took out the two packages. In the Pittsburg package were found several letters from Pittsburg people, the publication of which roused great offence against them, and, what was of more consequence, carried consternation among the timid. It was the beginning of a system of terror.

Certainly Bradford showed energy and ability in conducting his campaign, at least as considered from Brackenridge's point of view. His stroke at the peace party through the mail-robbery

was instantly followed up by another, much more serious and thoroughly effective. On the 28th July he with six others, among whom was James Marshall, issued a circular letter, in which, after announcing that the intercepted letters contained secrets hostile to their interest, they declared that things had now “come to that crisis that every citizen must express his sentiments, not by his words but by his actions.” This letter, directed to the officers of the militia, was in the form of an order to march on the 1st August, with as many of their command as possible, fully armed and equipped, with four days’ provision, to the usual rendezvous of the militia at Braddock’s Field.

This was levying war on a complete scale, but it was well understood that the chief object was to overawe opposition, more especially in Pittsburg, although the Federal garrison and stores in that city were also aimed at. The order met with strong resistance, and under the earnest remonstrances of James Ross and other prominent men, in a meeting at Washington, even Marshall was compelled to retract and assent to a countermand. But, notwithstanding their opposition, the popular vehemence in Washington County was such that it was decided to go forward, and, after a moment’s wavering, Bradford became again the loudest of the insurgent leaders.

On the 1st August, accordingly, several thousand people assembled at Braddock’s Field, about eight miles from Pittsburg. Of these some fifteen hundred or two thousand were armed militia, all from the counties of Washington, Alleghany, and

Westmoreland; there were not more than a dozen men present from Fayette. Brackenridge has given a lively description of this meeting, which he attended as a delegate from Pittsburg, in the hope of saving the town, if possible, from the expected sack. Undoubtedly a portion of the armed militia might easily have been induced to attack the garrison, which would have led to the plundering of the town, but either Bradford wanted the courage to fight or he found opposition among his own followers. He abandoned the idea of assailing the garrison, and this formidable assemblage of armed men, after much vague discussion, ended by insisting only upon marching through the town, which was done on the 2d of August, without other violence than the burning of Major Kirkpatrick's barn. A lively sense of the meaning of excise to the western people is conveyed by the casual statement that this march cost Judge Brackenridge alone four barrels of his old whiskey, gratuitously distributed to appease the thirst of the crowd; how much whiskey the western gentleman usually kept in his house nowhere appears, but it is not surprising under such circumstances that the march should have thoroughly terrified the citizens of Pittsburg and quenched all thirst for opposition in that quarter.

Mr. Gallatin did not attend the meeting at Braddock's Field; it was not till after that meeting that the serious nature of the disturbances first became evident to him. What had been riot was now become rebellion. He rapidly woke to the gravity of the occasion when disorder spread on every side and even Fayette

was invaded by riotous parties of armed men. A liberty-pole was raised, and when he asked its meaning he was told it was to show they were for liberty; he replied by expressing the wish that they would not behave like a mob, and was met by the pointed inquiry whether he had heard of the resolves in Westmoreland that if any one called the people a mob he should be tarred and feathered.<sup>16</sup> Unlike many of the friends of order, he felt no doubts in regard to the propriety of sending delegates to the coming assembly at Parkinson's Ferry, and, feeling that Fayette would inevitably be drawn into the general flame unless measures were promptly taken to prevent it, he offered to serve as a delegate himself, and was elected. All the friends of order did not act with the same decision. The meeting at Braddock's Field was intended to control the elections to the meeting at Parkinson's Ferry, and to a considerable extent it really had this effect. The peace party was overawed by it. The rioters extended their operations; chose delegates from all townships where they were a majority, and from a number where they were not, and made an appearance of election in some places where no election was held. The peace party hesitated to the last whether to send delegates at all.

When the 14th of August came, all the principal actors were on the spot, – Bradford, Marshall, Brackenridge, Findley, and Gallatin, – 226 delegates in all, of whom 93 from Washington, 43 from Alleghany, 49 from Westmoreland, and 33 from Fayette, 2 from Bedford, 5 from Ohio County in Virginia, and about

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<sup>16</sup> Gallatin's Deposition.



the same number of spectators. They were assembled in a grove overlooking the Monongahela. Marshall came to Gallatin before the meeting was organized, and showed him the resolutions which he intended to move, intimating at the same time that he wished Mr. Gallatin to act as secretary. Mr. Gallatin told him that he highly disapproved the resolutions, and had come to oppose both him and Bradford, therefore did not wish to serve. Marshall seemed to waver; but soon the people met, and Edward Cook, who had presided at Braddock's Field, was chosen chairman, with Gallatin for secretary.

Bradford opened the debate by a speech in which, beginning with a history of the movement, he read the original intercepted letters, and stated the object of the present meeting as being to deliberate on the mode in which the common cause was to be effectuated; he closed by pronouncing the terms of his own policy, which were to purchase or procure arms and ammunition, to subscribe money, to raise volunteers or draft militia, and to appoint committees to have the superintendence of those departments. Marshall supported Bradford, and moved his resolutions, which were at once taken into consideration. The first denounced the practice of taking citizens to great distances for trial, and this resolution was put to vote and carried without opposition. The second appointed a committee of public safety "to call forth the resources of the western country to repel any hostile attempt that may be made against the rights of the citizens or of the body of the people." It was dexterously drawn. It did

not call for a direct approval of the previous acts of rebellion, but, by assuming their legality and organizing resistance to the government on that assumption, it committed the meeting to an act of treason.<sup>17</sup>

Mr. Gallatin immediately rose, and, throwing aside all tactical manœuvres, met the issue flatly in face. “What reason,” said he, “have we to suppose that hostile attempts will be made against our rights? and why, therefore, prepare to resist them? Riots have taken place which may be the subject of judicial cognizance, but we are not to suppose hostility on the part of the general government; the exertions of government on the citizens in support of the laws are coercion and not hostility; it is not understood that a regular army is coming, and militia of the United States cannot be supposed hostile to the western country.”<sup>18</sup> He closed by moving that the resolutions should be referred to a committee, and that nothing should be done before it was known what the government would do.

Mr. Gallatin’s speech met the assumption that resistance to the excise was legal by a contrary assumption, without argument, that it was illegal, and thus threatened to force a discussion of the point of which both sides were afraid. Mr. Gallatin himself believed that the resolutions would then have been adopted if put to a vote; the majority, even if disposed to peace, had

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<sup>17</sup> See the resolutions as proposed and as ultimately adopted, in Appendix to Gallatin’s speech on the insurrection. Writings, iii. 56.

<sup>18</sup> Brackenridge, Incidents, vol. i. p. 90; Findley, p. 144; Gallatin’s Deposition.

not the courage to act. Now was the time for Brackenridge to have thrown off his elaborate web of double-dealing and with his utmost strength to have supported Gallatin's lead; but Brackenridge's nerves failed him. "I respected the courage of the secretary in meeting the resolution," he says,<sup>19</sup> "but I was alarmed at the idea of any discussion of the principle." "I affected to oppose the secretary, and thought it might not be amiss to have the resolution, though softened in terms." Nevertheless, the essential point was carried; Marshall withdrew the resolution, and a compromise was made by referring everything to a committee of sixty, with power to call a new meeting of the people.

The third and fourth resolutions required no special opposition. The fifth pledged the people to the support of the laws, except the excise law and the taking citizens out of their counties for trial. Gallatin attacked this exception, and succeeded in having it expunged. A debate then followed on the adoption of the amended resolution, which was supported by both Brackenridge and Gallatin, and an incident said to have occurred in the course of the latter's speech is thus related by Mr. Brackenridge:<sup>20</sup>

"Mr. Gallatin supported the necessity of the resolution, with a view to the establishment of the laws and the conservation of the peace. Though he did not venture to touch on the resistance

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<sup>19</sup> Incidents, vol. i. p. 90.

<sup>20</sup> Incidents, vol. i. p. 91.

to the marshal or the expulsion of the proscribed, yet he strongly arraigned the destruction of property; the burning of the barn of Kirkpatrick, for instance. 'What!' said a fiery fellow in the committee, 'do you blame that?' The secretary found himself embarrassed; he paused for a moment. 'If you had burned him in it,' said he, 'it might have been something; but the barn had done no harm.' 'Ay, ay,' said the man, 'that is right enough.' I admired the presence of mind of Gallatin, and give the incident as a proof of the delicacy necessary to manage the people on that occasion."

Opposite this passage on the margin of the page, in Mr. Gallatin's copy of this book, is written in pencil the following note, in his hand:

"Totally false. It is what B. would have said in my place. The fellow said, 'It was well done.' I replied instantly, 'No; it was not well done,' and I continued to deprecate in the most forcible terms every act of violence. For I had quoted the burning of this house as one of the worst."

The result of the first day's deliberation was therefore a substantial success for the peace party, not so much from what they succeeded in effecting as from the fact that they had obtained energetic leadership and the efficiency which comes from confidence in themselves. The resolutions were finally referred to a committee of four, — Gallatin, Bradford, Herman Husbands, and Brackenridge; a curious party in which Brackenridge must have had a chance to lay up much material for future humor, Bradford being an utterly hollow demagogue,

Husbands a religious lunatic, and Brackenridge himself a professional jester.<sup>21</sup>

This committee, or rather Gallatin and Bradford, the next morning remodelled the resolutions. The only point on which Bradford insisted was that the standing committee to which all business was now to be committed should have power, “in case of any sudden emergency, to take such temporary measures as they may think necessary.”

The next point with Gallatin was to get the meeting dissolved. The Peace commissioners were expected soon to arrive on the opposite bank of the river, and President Washington’s proclamation calling out the militia to suppress the insurrection had already been received. In the general tendency of things

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<sup>21</sup> Badollet, who was at the same time a terribly severe critic of himself and of others, had little patience with Judge Brackenridge, who was perhaps the first, and not far from being the best, of American humorists. Badollet’s own sense of humor seems not to have been acute, to judge from the following extract from one of his letters to Gallatin, dated 18th February, 1790: “J’ai vu Brakenridge à Cat-fish où j’ai été à l’occasion d’Archev, et je puis déclarer en conscience que de mes jours je n’ai vu un si complet impertinent fat. Peut-être ne seras-tu pas fâché de lire une partie d’une conversation qu’il eut devant moi. Un inconnu (à moi du moins) voulant le faire parler, à ce que je suppose, lui adresse ainsi la parole: “N. I think, Mr. Brakenridge, you are one of the happiest men in the world.” “B. Yes, sir; nothing disturbs me. I can declare that I never feel a single moment of discontent, but laugh at everything.” “N. I believe so, sir; but your humor...” “B. Oh, sir, truly inexhaustible; yes, truly inexhaustible, – et tout en disant ces mots avec complaisance il tirait ses manchettes et son jabot, caressait son visage de sa main, et souriait en Narcisse, – truly inexhaustible. Sir, I could set down and write a piece of humor for fifty-seven years without being the least exhausted. I have just now two compositions agoing...” “N. Happy turn of mind!” “B. You may say that, sir. I enjoy a truly inexhaustible richness and strength of mind, &c., &c.”

the army could hardly fail to decide the contest in favor of the peace party by the mere moral effect of its advance; but at the moment the news excited and exasperated the violent, who were a very large proportion, if not a majority, of the meeting. The committee of sixty was chosen, one from each township, from whom another committee of twelve was selected to confer with the Federal and State commissioners. The final struggle came upon the question whether the meeting should be now dissolved, or should wait for a report from their committee of twelve after a conference with the commissioners of the government. Both Gallatin and Brackenridge exerted themselves very much in carrying this point, and after great difficulty succeeded in getting a dissolution.<sup>22</sup>

The result of the Parkinson's Ferry meeting was practically to break the power of the insurrectionary party. Bradford and his friends, instead of carrying the whole country with them, were checked, outmanœuvred, and lost their prestige at the moment when the calling out of a Federal army made their cause quite desperate; nevertheless, owing to the fact that the committee of sixty was chosen by the meeting, and therefore was of doubtful complexion, much remained to be done in order to bring about complete submission; above all, time was needed,

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<sup>22</sup> "In the report of the commissioners of the United States to the President, it was most erroneously stated that I wanted the committee, viz., the Parkinson's Ferry members, to remain till the twelve commissioners or conferees should report. The reverse was the fact." Marginal note by Mr. Gallatin on pp. 98-99 of Brackenridge's Incidents.

and the government could not allow time, owing to the military necessity of immediate action.

On the 20th August the committee of twelve held their conference with the government commissioners at Pittsburg. All except Bradford favored submission and acceptance of the very liberal terms offered by the government. The committee of sixty was called together at Redstone Old Fort (Brownsville) on the 28th. It was a nervous moment. The committee itself was in doubt, and the desperate party was encouraged by the accidental presence of sixty or seventy riflemen, whose threatening attitude very nearly put Brackenridge's nerves to a fatal test; the simple candor with which he relates how Gallatin held him up and carried him through the trial is very honorable to his character.<sup>23</sup> The committee met; Bradford attempted to drive it into an immediate decision and rejection of the terms, and it was with difficulty that a postponement till the next day was obtained. Such was the alarm among the twelve conferees that Gallatin's determination to make the effort, cost what it might, seems to have been the final reason which decided them to support their own report;<sup>24</sup> even then they only ventured to propose half of it; they made their struggle on the question of accepting the government proposals, not on that of submission. The next morning Gallatin took the lead; no one else had the courage. "The committee having convened, with a formidable gallery, as

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<sup>23</sup> Incidents, vol. i. p. 111.

<sup>24</sup> Findley, History of the Insurrection, p. 122; Brackenridge, Incidents, vol. i. p. 111.

the day before, Gallatin addressed the chair in a speech of some hours. It was a piece of perfect eloquence, and was heard with attention and without disturbance.”<sup>25</sup> This is all that is known of what was, perhaps, Mr. Gallatin’s greatest effort. Brackenridge followed, and this time spoke with decision, notwithstanding his alarm. Then Bradford rose and vehemently challenged the full force of the alternative which Gallatin and Brackenridge had described; he advocated the creation of an independent government and war on the United States. James Edgar followed, with a strong appeal in favor of the report. William Findley, who should have been a good judge, says, “I had never heard speeches that I more ardently desired to see in print than those delivered on this occasion. They would not only be valuable on account of the oratory and information displayed in all the three, and especially in Gallatin’s, who opened the way, but they would also have been the best history of the spirit and the mistakes which then actuated men’s minds. But copies of them could not be procured. They were delivered without any previous preparation other than a complete knowledge of the actual state of things and of human nature when in similar circumstances. This knowledge, and the importance of the occasion on which it was exhibited, produced such ingenuity of reasoning and energy of expression as never perhaps had been exhibited by the same orators before.”

Bradford’s power was not yet quite broken; even on the frontiers human nature is timid, and a generation which

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<sup>25</sup> Brackenridge, *Incidents*, vol. i. p. 112.



was shuddering at the atrocities of Robespierre might not unreasonably shrink from the possibilities of David Bradford. Gallatin pressed a vote, but could not induce the committee to take it; the twelve conferees alone supported him. He then proposed an informal vote, and still the sixty hesitated. At last a member suggested that Mr. Gallatin, as secretary, should write the words "yea" and "nay" on sixty scraps of paper, and, after distributing them among the members, should collect the votes in a hat. This expedient was, of course, highly satisfactory to Gallatin, and Bradford could not openly oppose. It was adopted, and, with these precautions, the vote was taken, each man, of his own accord, carefully concealing his ballot and destroying that part of the paper on which was the yea or nay not voted.

The tickets were taken out of the hat and counted; there were 34 yeas and 23 nays; Gallatin had won the battle. The galleries grumbled; the minority were enraged; Bradford's face fell and his courage sank. Outwardly the public expressed dissatisfaction at the result. Brackenridge's terrors became more acute than ever, and not without reason, for had Bradford chosen now to appeal to force, he might have cost the majority their lives; men enough were at the meeting ready to follow him blindly, but either his nerves failed him or he had sense to see the folly of the act; he allowed the meeting to adjourn, and he himself went home, leaving his party without a head and dissolved into mere individual grumblers.

Throughout this meeting, Mr. Gallatin was in personal danger

and knew it. Any irresponsible, drunken frontiersman held the lives of his opponents in his hands; a word from Bradford, the old, personal enemy of Gallatin, would have sent scores of bullets at his rival. Doubtless Mr. Gallatin believed David Bradford to be "an empty drum," deficient in courage as in understanding, and on that belief he risked his whole venture; but it was a critical experiment, not so much for the western country, which had now little to fear from violence, but for the obnoxious leader, who, by common consent, was held by friends and enemies responsible for the submission of the people to the law.

From the time of this meeting, and the vote of 34 to 23 at Redstone Old Fort, the situation entirely changed and a new class of difficulties and dangers arose; it was no longer the insurgents who were alarming, but the government. As Bradford on one side was formally giving in his submission, and, on finding that his speech at Redstone had put him outside the amnesty, made a rapid and narrow escape down the Ohio to Louisiana, on the other side an army of fifteen thousand men was approaching, and the conditions of proffered amnesty could not be fulfilled for lack of time. Before the terms were fixed between the committee of twelve and the government commissioners, three days had passed; to print and prepare the forms of submission to be signed by the people took two days more. The 4th September arrived before these preliminaries were completed; the 11th September was the day on which the people were to sign. No extension of time was possible. In consequence there was only

a partial adhesion to the amnesty, and among those excluded were large numbers of persons who refused or neglected to sign on the ground that they had been in no way concerned in the insurrection and needed no pardon.

Gallatin was active in procuring the adhesion of the citizens of Fayette, and the address he then drafted for a meeting on September 10 of the township committees of that county is to be found in his printed works.<sup>26</sup> There, indeed, the danger was slight, because of all the western counties Fayette had been the least disturbed; yet there, too, numbers were technically at the mercy of the army and the law. Mr. Gallatin was, therefore, of opinion that as the rebellion was completely broken, and the submissions made on the 11th September, if not universal, were so general and had been followed by such prostration among the violent party as to preclude the chance of resistance, a further advance of the army was inadvisable. He drafted a letter on the part of the Fayette townships committee to the governor, on the 17th September, representing this view of the case.<sup>27</sup> The President, however, acting on the report of the government commissioners, decided otherwise, and the order for marching was issued on the 25th September.

The news of the riots and disturbances of July had caused prompt action on the part of the general government for the restoration of order, and on the 7th August, President

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<sup>26</sup> Writings, vol. i. p. 4.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, p. 9.

Washington had issued a proclamation calling out the militia of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, and Virginia. The 1st September was the time fixed for the insurgents to disperse, and active preparations were made for moving the militia when ordered. Naturally the feeling predominant in the army was one of violent irritation, and, as strict discipline was hardly to be expected in a hastily-raised militia force, there was reason to fear that the western country would suffer more severely from the army than from the rebels. The arrival of the President and of Secretary Hamilton, however, and their persistent efforts to repress this feeling and to maintain strict discipline among the troops, greatly diminished the danger, and the army ultimately completed its march, occupied Pittsburg, and effected a number of arrests without seriously harassing the inhabitants. Nevertheless there was, perhaps inevitably, more or less injustice done to individuals, and, as is usual in such cases, the feeling of the army ran highest against the least offending parties. Mr. Gallatin was one of the most obnoxious, on the ground that he had been a prominent leader of opposition to the excise law and responsible for the violence resulting from that opposition. In this there was nothing surprising; Gallatin was unknown to the great mass of the troops, and the victorious party in politics cannot be expected to do entire justice to its opponents. So far as the President was concerned, no one has ever found the smallest matter to blame in his bearing; the only prominent person connected with the government whose

conduct roused any bitterness of feeling was the Secretary of the Treasury. It was asserted, and may be believed, that Mr. Hamilton, who in Pittsburg and other places conducted the examination into the conduct of individuals, showed a marked desire to find evidence incriminating Gallatin. In what official character Mr. Hamilton assumed the duty of examiner, which seems to have properly belonged to the judicial authorities, does not appear; Findley, however, asserts that certain gentlemen, whose names he gives, were strictly examined as witnesses against Gallatin, urged to testify that Gallatin had expressed himself in a treasonable manner at Parkinson's Ferry, and when they denied having heard such expressions, the Secretary asserted that he had sufficient proofs of them already.<sup>28</sup> It is not impossible that Mr. Hamilton really suspected Mr. Gallatin of tampering with the insurgents, and really said that "he was a foreigner, and therefore not to be trusted;"<sup>29</sup> it is not impossible that he thought himself in any case called upon to probe the matter to the bottom; and finally, it is not impossible that he foresaw the advantages his party would gain by overthrowing Mr. Gallatin's popularity. However this may be, the Secretary gave no public expression to his suspicions or his thoughts, and Gallatin was in no way molested or annoyed.

The regular autumnal election took place in Pennsylvania on the 14th October. The army had not then arrived, but

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<sup>28</sup> Findley, *History*, &c., p. 240.

<sup>29</sup> Findley, p. 248.

there was no longer any idea of resistance or any sign of organization against the enforcement of all the laws. More than a month had passed since order had been restored; even Bradford had submitted, and he and the other most deeply implicated insurgents were now flying for their lives. On the 2d October another meeting of the committee had been held at Parkinson's Ferry, and unanimously agreed to resolutions affirming the general submission and explaining why the signatures of submission had not been universal; on the day of election itself written assurances of submission were universally signed throughout the country; but the most remarkable proof of the complete triumph of the peace party was found in the elections themselves.

Members of Congress were to be chosen, as well as members of the State Legislature. Mr. Gallatin was, as a matter of course, sent back to his old seat in the Assembly from his own county of Fayette. In the neighboring Congressional district, comprising the counties of Washington and Alleghany and the whole country from Lake Erie to the Virginia line, there was some difficulty and perhaps some misunderstanding in regard to the selection of a candidate. Very suddenly, and without previous consultation, indeed without even his own knowledge, and only about three days before election, Mr. Gallatin's name was introduced. The result was that he was chosen over Judge Brackenridge, who stood second on the poll, while the candidate of the insurgents, who had received Bradford's support, was lowest among four.

By a curious reverse of fortune Mr. Gallatin suddenly became the representative not of his own county of Fayette, but of that very county of Washington whose citizens, only a few weeks before, had been to all appearance violently hostile to him and to his whole course of action. This spontaneous popular choice was owing to the fact that Mr. Gallatin was considered by friend and foe as the embodiment of the principle of law and order, and, rightly or wrongly, it was believed that to his courage and character the preservation of peace was due. It was one more evidence that the true majority had at last found its tongue.

This restoration of Mr. Gallatin to Congress was by no means pleasing to Mr. Hamilton, who, as already mentioned, on his arrival soon afterwards at Pittsburg expressed himself in strong terms in regard to the choice. From the party point of view it was, in fact, a very undesirable result of the insurrection, but there is no reason to suppose that the people in making it cast away a single thought on the question of party. They chose Mr. Gallatin because he represented order.

The 1st November, 1794, had already arrived before the military movements were quite completed. The army had then reached Fayette, and Mr. Gallatin, after having done all in his power to convince the government that the advance was unnecessary, set off with his wife to New York, and, leaving her with her family, returned to take his seat in the Assembly at Philadelphia. Here again he had to meet a contested election. A petition from citizens of Washington County was presented,

averring that they had deemed it impossible to vote, and had not voted, at the late election, owing to the state of the country, and praying that the county be declared to have been in insurrection at the time, and the election void. The debate on this subject lasted till January 9, 1795, when a resolution was adopted to the desired effect. In the course of this debate Mr. Gallatin made the first speech he had yet printed, which will be found in his collected works.<sup>30</sup> Like all his writings, it is a plain, concise, clear statement of facts and argument, extremely well done, but not remarkable for rhetorical show, and effective merely because, or so far as, it convinces. He rarely used hard language under any provocation, and this speech, like all his other speeches, is quite free from invective and personality; but, although his method was one of persuasion rather than of compulsion, he always spoke with boldness, and some of the passages in this argument grated harshly on Federalist ears.

The decision of the Pennsylvania Legislature, “that the elections held during the late insurrection ... were unconstitutional, and are hereby declared void,” was always regarded by him as itself in clear violation of the constitution, but for his personal interests a most fortunate circumstance. His opponents were, in fact, by these tactics giving him a prodigious hold upon his party; he had the unusual good fortune of being twice made the martyr of a mere political persecution. This second attempt obviously foreshadowed a third, for if the

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<sup>30</sup> Writings, vol. iii. pp. 8-52.



election to the State Legislature was unconstitutional, that to Congress was equally so, and there was no object in breaking one without breaking the other; but the action of the western country rendered the folly of such a decision too obvious for imitation. All the ejected members except one, who declined, were re-elected, and Mr. Gallatin took his seat a second time on the 14th February, 1795, not to be again disturbed. During this second part of the session he seems to have been chiefly occupied with his bill in regard to the school system; but he closed his service in the State Legislature on the 12th of March, when other matters pressed on his attention.

## **GALLATIN TO HIS WIFE**

*Philadelphia, 8d December, 1794.*

... I arrived here without any accident and have already seen several of my friends. The Assembly met yesterday, but my colleague having neglected to take down the return of our election we must wait as spectators till it comes, which will not be before a fortnight, I believe... I saw Dallas yesterday. Poor fellow had a most disagreeable campaign of it. He says the spirits, I call it the madness, of the Philadelphia Gentlemen Corps was beyond conception before the arrival of the President. He saw a list (handed about through the army by officers, nay, by a general officer) of the names of those persons who were

to be destroyed at all events, and you may easily guess my own was one of the most conspicuous. Being one day at table with sundry officers, and having expressed his opinion that the army were going only to support the civil authority and not to do any military execution, one of them (Dallas did not tell me his name, but I am told it was one Ross, of Lancaster, aide-de-camp to Mifflin) half drew a dagger he wore instead of a sword, and swore any man who uttered such sentiments ought to be dagged. The President, however, on his arrival, and afterwards Hamilton, took uncommon pains to change the sentiments, and at last it became fashionable to adopt, or at least to express, sentiments similar to those inculcated by them...

*7th December, 1794.*

... You want me to leave politics, but I guess I need not take much pains to attain that object, for politics seem disposed to leave me. A very serious attempt is made to deprive me of my seat in next Congress. The intention is to try to induce the Legislature of this State either to vacate the seats of the members for the counties of Alleghany and Washington, or to pass a law to declare the whole election both for Congress and Assembly in that district to be null and void, and to appoint another day for holding the same. If they fail in that they will pursue the thing before Congress. A petition was accordingly presented to the Legislature last Friday, signed by thirty-four persons, calling themselves peaceable inhabitants of Washington County, and requesting the Assembly to declare the district to have been in

a state of insurrection at the time of the election, and to vacate the same. John Hoge, who, however, has not signed it, is the ostensible character who has offered it to be signed, but he did not draw it, and I know the business originated in the army. It is couched in the most indecent language against all the members elect from that district. Did those poor people know how little they torment me by tormenting themselves, I guess they would not be so anxious to raise a second persecution against me.

**GALLATIN TO BADOLLET,  
Greensburg, Washington Co**

*Philadelphia, 10th January, 1795.*

... Savary writes you on the fate of our elections. One thing only I wish and I must insist upon. If the same members are not re-elected, the people here will undoubtedly say that our last elections were not fair and that the people were in a state of insurrection. The only danger I can foresee arises from your district. You have been ill-treated; you have no member now, and every engine will now be set at work to mislead you by your very opponents. Fall not in the snare; take up nobody from your own district; re-elect unanimously the same members, whether they be your favorites or not. It is necessary for the sake of our general character...

Meanwhile, a new scheme was brought to Mr. Gallatin's

attention. The French revolution produced a convulsion in Geneva. Large numbers of the Genevese emigrated or thought of emigration. Mr. Gallatin was consulted and made a plan for a joint-stock company, to form a settlement by immigration from Geneva. The expected immigration never came, but this scheme ended in an unforeseen way; Mr. Gallatin joined one or two of the originators of the plan in creating another joint-stock company, and his mind was long busied with its affairs.

## GALLATIN TO BADOLLET

*Philadelphia, 29th December, 1794.*

*1795.*

Mon bon ami, si je t'écris cette lettre en français ce n'est pas qu'elle contienne des secrets d'état, car je n'en ai point à te dire, mais c'est qu'elle renferme plusieurs choses particulières et qui jusqu'à nouvel ordre doivent rester entre toi et moi absolument... Le retour de mon élection est ou perdu ou n'a jamais été envoyé, en sorte que je n'ai pas encore pu prendre siège dans l'Assemblée, et demain l'on va décider si l'élection de nos quatre comtés sera cassée ou non, sans que je puisse prendre part aux débats... Ci-inclus tu trouveras un abrégé de la dernière révolution de Genève, écrit par D'Yvernois qui est à Londres. Genève est dans la situation la plus triste. Affamé également par les Français et par les Suisses, déchiré par des

convulsions sanguinaires auxquelles l'esprit national paraissait si opposé, une grande partie de ses habitants cherchent, et beaucoup sont obligés de quitter ses murs. Plusieurs tournent leurs yeux vers l'Amérique et quelques-uns sont déjà arrivés. D'Yvernois avait formé le plan de transplanter toute l'université de Genève ici, et il m'a écrit sur cet objet ainsi qu'à Mr. Jefferson et à Mr. Adams; mais il supposait qu'on pourrait obtenir des États-Unis pour cet objet 15,000 dollars de revenu, ce qui est impraticable; et il comptait associer à ce projet une compagnie de terres par actions avec un capital de 3 a 400,000 piastres. D'un autre côté les Genevois arrivés ici cherchaient tant pour eux que pour ceux qui devaient les suivre quelque manière de s'établir, de devenir fermiers, &c. Ils se sont adressés à moi, et d'après les lettres de D'Yvernois et les conversations que les nouveaux arrivés et moi avons eues ensemble, nous avons formé un plan d'établissement et une société dans laquelle je t'ai réservé une part. En voici les fondements... Tu sais bien que je n'ai jamais encouragé personne excepté toi à venir en Amérique de peur qu'ils n'y trouvassent des regrets, mais les temps out changé. Il faut que beaucoup de Genevois émigrent et un grand nombre vont venir en Amérique. J'ai trouvé autant de plaisir que c'était de mon devoir de tâcher de leur offrir le plan qui m'a paru devoir leur convenir le mieux en arrivant. En 1er lieu j'ai cru qu'il serait essentiel qu'ils fussent réunis, non-seulement pour pouvoir s'entr'aider, mais aussi afin d'être à même de retrouver leurs mœurs, leurs habitudes et même leurs amusements de Genève.

2e, que, comme il y aurait parmi les émigrants bien des artisans, hommes de lettres, &c., et qu'il était bon d'ailleurs d'avoir plus d'une ressource, il conviendrait de former une ville ou village dans le centre d'un corps de terres qu'on achèterait pour cela, en sorte qu'on pût exercer une industrie de ville ou de campagne suivant les goûts et les talents. Ci-inclus tu trouveras deux papiers que je viens de retrouver et qui renferment une esquisse des premières idées que j'avais jetées sur les papiers sur ce sujet, et le brouillon de notre plan d'association qui consiste de 150 actions de 800 piastres chacune, dont nous Genevois ici, savoir Odier, Fazzi, deux Cazenove, Cheriot, Bourdillon, Duby, Couronne, toi et moi avons pris 25; nous en offrons 25 autres ici à des Américains et je les ai déjà presque toutes distribuées; je crois même que je pourrais distribuer cent de plus ici sur-le-champ si je voulais; et nous avons envoyé les cent autres à Genève, en Suisse, et à D'Yvernois pour les Genevois qui voudront y prendre part... En attendant une réponse de Genève nous comptons examiner les terres et peut-être même en acheter, si nous le croyons nécessaire. Il est entendu que c'est à toi et à moi à faire cet examen, car c'est surtout à nous que s'en rapportent tant les émigrés que ceux qui doivent les suivre. J'ai jeté les yeux en général sur la partie nord-est de la Pennsilvanie ou sur la partie de New York qui la joint. Jette les yeux sur la carte et trouve Stockport sur la Delaware et Harmony tout près de là sur la Susquehannah joignant presque l'état de New York. Des gens qui veulent s'intéresser à la chose m'offrent le corps de terres compris

entre le Big Bend de la Susquehannah joignant Harmony et la ligne de New York; mais il faut d'abord examiner. Si on casse nos élections, j'emploierai à ce travail cet hiver; sinon, c'est sur toi que nous comptons, bien entendu que quoique ce ne fût pas aussi nécessaire, il me serait bien plus agréable que tu pusses aller avec moi si j'allais moi-même...

In April, 1795, he made an expedition through New York to examine lands with a view to purchase for the projected Geneva settlement. This expedition brought him at last to Philadelphia, where he was detained till August by the trials of the insurgents and by the business of his various joint-stock schemes.

## GALLATIN TO HIS WIFE

*Catskill Landing, 22d April, 1795.*

... The more I see of this State the better I like Pennsylvania. It may be prejudice, or habit, or whatever you please, but there are some things in the western country which contribute to my happiness, and which I do not find here. Amongst other things which displease me here I may mention, in the first place, *family influence*. In Pennsylvania not only we have neither Livingstones nor Rensselaers, but from the suburbs of Philadelphia to the banks of the Ohio I do not know a single family that has any extensive influence. An equal distribution of property has rendered every individual independent, and there is amongst

us true and real equality. In the next place, the lands on the western side of the river are far inferior in quality to those of Pennsylvania, and in the third place, provisions bear the same price as they do in New York, whence arises a real disadvantage for persons wishing to buy land; for the farmers will sell the land in proportion to the price they can get for their produce, and that price being at present quite extravagant and above the average and common one, the consequence is that the supposed value of land is also much greater. In a word, as I am lazy I like a country where living is cheap, and as I am poor I like a country where no person is very rich...

*Philadelphia, May 6, 1795.*

... I arrived here yesterday, pretty much jolted by the wagon, and went to bed in the afternoon, so that I saw nobody till this morning... Hardly had I walked ten minutes in the streets this morning before I was summoned as a witness before the grand jury on the part of government, and must appear there in a few minutes...

*8th May, 1795.*

... I wrote you that I was summoned on behalf of government. I am obliged to attend every day at court, but have not yet been called upon. I am told the bill upon which I am to be examined is not yet filled. I guess it is against Colonel Gaddis; but I have, so far as I can recollect, nothing to say which in my opinion can hurt him. You remember that Gaddis is the man who gave an affidavit



to Lee against me. He came yesterday to me to inform me that he meant to have me summoned in his favor, as he thought my testimony must get him discharged. I did not speak to him about his affidavit, nor he to me, but he had a guilty look. I guess the man was frightened, and now feels disappointed in his hope that his accusing me would discharge him. The petty jury consists of twelve from each of the counties of Fayette, Washington, and Alleghany, and twelve from Northumberland, but none from Westmoreland. Your friend Sproat is one of them, Hoge another. All from Fayette supposed to have been always friendly to the excise, but I think in general good characters. All those of any note known to have been in general of different politics with us...

*12th May, 1795.*

... The two bills for treason against Mr. Corbly and Mr. Gaddis have been returned *ignoramus* by the grand jury; but there are two bills found against them for misdemeanor, – against the first for some expressions, against the last for having been concerned in raising the liberty-pole in Union town. I am a witness in both cases, – in the case of Mr. Corbly altogether in his favor; in the other case my evidence will about balance itself... The grand jury have not yet finished their inquiry, but will conclude it this morning. They have found twenty-two bills for treason. Some of those against whom bills were found are not here; but I believe fourteen are in jail and will be tried. I do not know one of them. John Hamilton, Sedgwick, and Crawford, whom Judge Peters would not admit to bail, and

who were released little before we left town, after having been dragged three hundred miles and being in jail three months, are altogether cleared, the grand jury not having even found bills for misdemeanor against them. After the strictest inquiry the attorney-general could send to the grand jury bills only against two inhabitants of Fayette, to wit, Gaddis and one Mounts; he sent two against each of them, one for treason and one for misdemeanor. In the case of Mounts, who has been in jail more than five months, and who was not admitted to give bail, although the best security was offered, not a shadow of proof appeared, although the county was ransacked for witnesses, and both bills were found *ignoramus*. And it is proper to observe that the grand jury, who are respectable, were, however, all taken from Philadelphia and its neighborhood, and, with only one or two exceptions, out of one party, so that they cannot be suspected of partiality. In the case of Gaddis the bill for treason was returned *ignoramus*; the bill for misdemeanor was found. So that the whole insurrection of Fayette County amounts to one man accused of misdemeanor for raising a pole. I can form no guess as to the fate of the prisoners who are to be tried for treason, and whether, in case any are found guilty, government mean to put any to death. There is not a single man of influence or consequence amongst them, which makes me hope they may be pardoned. There is one, however, who is said to be Tom the Tinker; he is a New England man, who was concerned in Shay's insurrection, but it is asserted that he signed the amnesty. I have had nothing but that business

in my head since I have been here, and can write about nothing else...

*26th May, 1795.*

I believe, my dear little wife, that I will not be able to see thee till next week, for the trials go on but very slowly; there has been but one since my last letter, and there are nine more for high treason, besides misdemeanors. I am sorry to add that the man who was tried was found guilty of high treason. He had a very good and favorable jury, six of them from Fayette; for, although he is from Westmoreland County, the fact was committed in Fayette... There is no doubt of the man [Philip Vigel] being guilty in a legal sense of levying war against the United States, which was the crime charged to him. But he is certainly an object of pity more than of punishment, at least when we consider that death is the punishment, for he is a rough, ignorant German, who knew very well he was committing a riot, and he ought to have been punished for it, but who had certainly no idea that it amounted to levying war and high treason...

*1st June, 1795.*

... Those trials go still very slowly, only two since I wrote to you; the men called Curtis and Barnet, both indicted for the attack upon and burning Nevil's house, and both acquitted; the first without much hesitation, as there was at least a strong presumption that he went there either to prevent mischief or at most only as a spectator. The second was as guilty as Mitchell,

who has been condemned, but there were not sufficient legal proofs against either. The difference in the verdict arises from the difference of counsel employed in their respective defences, and chiefly from a different choice of jury. Mitchell was very poorly defended by Thomas, the member of Senate, who is young, unexperienced, impudent, and self-conceited. He challenged (that is to say, rejected, for, you know, the accused person has a right to reject thirty-five of the jury without assigning any reason) every inhabitant of Alleghany, and left the case to twelve Quakers (many of them probably old Tories), on the supposition that Quakers would condemn no person to death; but he was utterly mistaken. Lewis defended Barnet, made a very good defence, and got a jury of a different complexion; the consequence of which was that, although the evidence, pleadings, and charge took up from eleven o'clock in the forenoon till three o'clock the next morning, the jury were but fifteen minutes out before they brought in a verdict of not guilty. Brackenridge says that he would always choose a jury of Quakers, or at least Episcopalians, in all common cases, such as murder, rape, etc., but in every possible case of insurrection, rebellion, and treason, give him Presbyterians on the jury by all means. I believe there is at least as much truth as wit in the saying... I have drawn, at the request of the jury who convicted Philip Vigel, a petition to the President recommending him as a proper object of mercy; they have all signed it, but what effect it will have I do not know, and indeed nobody can form any conjecture whether the persons convicted

will be pardoned or not. It rests solely with the President...

## GALLATIN TO BADOLLET

*Philadelphia, 20th May, 1795.*

I am sorry, my dear friend, that I cannot go and meet you, agreeable to our appointment; but I am detained here as an evidence in the case of Corbly, and of two more in behalf of the United States, although I know nothing about any of them except Corbly. I lend my horse to Cazenove, who goes in my room, and who will tell you what little has passed since I saw you on the subject of our plan. Upon the whole, I conceive that further emigrations from Geneva will not take place at present, and that our plan will not be accepted in Europe. We must therefore depend merely on our own present number and strength, and this you should keep in view in the course of the examination you are now making. Our own convenience and the interest of those few Genevans who now are here must alone be consulted, and it may be a question whether under those circumstances it will be worth while for you and me to abandon our present situation, and for them to encounter the hardships and hazards of a new settlement in the rough country you are now exploring; whether, on the contrary, it would not be more advantageous for them to fix either in the more populous parts of the State, or even in our own neighborhood, where they might perhaps find resources

sufficient for a few and enjoy all the advantages resulting from our neighborhood, experience, and influence.

## GALLATIN TO HIS WIFE

*Philadelphia, 29th June, 1795.*

... You will see in this day's Philadelphia paper an abstract of the treaty; it is pretty accurate, for I read the treaty itself yesterday. I believe it will be printed at large within a day or two. It exceeds everything I expected... As to the form of ratification I have not seen it, but from the best information I could collect it is different from what has been printed in some papers. It is, I think, nearly as followeth: The Senate consent to and advise the President to ratify the treaty upon condition that an additional article be added to the same suspending the operation of, or explaining (I do not know which), the 12th Article, so far as relates to the intercourse with the West India Islands. If that information is accurate, it follows that the treaty is not ratified, because the intended additional article, if adopted by Great Britain, is not valid until ratified by the Senate, and unless that further ratification takes place the whole treaty falls through. You know the vote, and that Gunn is the man who has joined the ratifying party. I am told that Burr made a most excellent speech... I think fortitude is a quality which depends very much upon ourselves, and which we lose more and more for want of

exercising it. Indeed, I want it now myself more than you. I have just received a letter from one of my uncles, under date 23d January, which informs me that Miss Pictet is dangerously ill and very little hope of her recovering. She had not yet received my and your letter. I hope she may, for I know how much consolation it would give her; but I have not behaved well...

Gallatin remained in Philadelphia till July 31, to form a new company, dissolving the old one, and joining with Bourdillon, Cazenove, Badollet, and his brother-in-law, James W. Nicholson, in a concern with nine or ten thousand dollars capital, the business being "to purchase lots at the mouth of George's Creek," "a mill or two" in the neighborhood, keeping a retail store and perhaps two (the main business), and land speculations on their own account and on commission. After settling the partnership he remained to buy supplies and to get money from Morris, who at last paid him eight hundred dollars cash and gave a note at ninety days for a thousand. On July 31 he started for Fayette.

## **GALLATIN TO HIS WIFE**

*Philadelphia, 31st July, 1795.*

... After being detained here two days by the rain, we finally go this moment... I have settled with Mr. Morris... I have balanced all my accounts, and find that we are just worth 7000

dollars... In addition to that, we have our plantation, Mr. Morris's note for 3500 dollars, due next May, and about 25,000 acres waste lands...

*Fayette County, September 6, 1795.*

... Upon a further examination of Wilson's estate I have purchased it at £3000, which is a high price, but then we have the town seat (which is the nearest portage from the western waters to the Potowmack and the Federal city, and as near as any to Philadelphia and Baltimore) and three mill seats, one built, another building, and the third, which is the most valuable, will be on the river-bank, so that we will be able to load boats for New Orleans from the mill-door, and they stand upon one of the best, if not the very best, stream of the whole country. The boat-yards fall also within our purchase, so that, with a good store, we will, in a great degree, command the trade of this part of the country. I have also purchased, for about £300, all the lots that remained unsold in the little village of Greensburgh, on the other side of the river, opposite to our large purchase, and 20 acres of the bottom-land adjoining it. It will become necessary, of course, for us to increase our capital... As to politics, I have thought but little about them since I have been here. I wish the ratification of the treaty may not involve us in a more serious situation than we have yet been in. May I be mistaken in my fears and everything be for the best! I would not heretofore write to you on the subject of the dispute between your father and Hamilton, as I knew you were not acquainted with it. I feel indeed exceedingly happy that it has



terminated so, but I beg of you not to express your sentiments of the treatment I have received with as much warmth as you usually do, for it may tend to inflame the passions of your friends and lead to consequences you would forever regret. It has indeed required all my coolness and temper, and I might perhaps add, all my love for you, not to involve myself in some quarrel with that gentleman or some other of that description; but, however sure you may be that I will not myself, others may, so that I trust that my good girl will be more cautious hereafter...

*Philadelphia, 29th September, 1795.*

... I arrived here pretty late last night... Since I wrote to you I received the account which I expected, that of the death of my second mother. I trust, I hope at least, the comfort she must have experienced from hearing she had not been altogether disappointed in the hopes she had formed of me, and in the cares she had bestowed on my youth, will in some degree have made amends for my unpardonable neglect in writing so seldom to her... I expect to set off to-morrow.

The dispute between Commodore Nicholson and Mr. Hamilton, to which allusion is made above, was a private one, which, of course, had its source in politics. For a time the commodore expected a duel, and it may well be imagined that to a gentleman of his fighting temperament a duel was not altogether without its charm. Mr. Hamilton, however, had too much good sense to seek this species of distinction. The dispute was amicably settled, and probably no one was better pleased at

the settlement than Mr. Gallatin, although he had nothing to do with the quarrel.

Mr. Gallatin's career as a member of Congress now began, and lasted till 1801, when he became Secretary of the Treasury. In some respects it was without a parallel in our history. That a young foreigner, speaking with a foreign accent, laboring under all the odium of the western insurrection, surrounded by friendly rivals like Madison, John Nicholas, W. B. Giles, John Randolph, and Edward Livingston; confronted by opponents like Fisher Ames, Judge Sewall, Harrison Gray Otis, Roger Griswold, James A. Bayard, R. G. Harper, W. L. Smith, of South Carolina, Samuel Dana, of Connecticut, and even John Marshall, – that such a man under such circumstances should have at once seized the leadership of his party, and retained it with firmer and firmer grasp down to the last moment of his service; that he should have done this by the sheer force of ability and character, without ostentation and without the tricks of popularity; that he should have had his leadership admitted without a dispute, and should have held it without a contest, made a curious combination of triumphs. Many of the great parliamentary leaders in America, John Randolph, Henry Clay, Thaddeus Stevens, have maintained their supremacy by their dogmatic and overbearing temper and their powers of sarcasm or invective. Mr. Gallatin seldom indulged in personalities. His temper was under almost perfect control. His power lay in courage, honesty of purpose, and thoroughness of study. Undoubtedly his mind was one of rare

power, perhaps for this especial purpose the most apt that America has ever seen; a mind for which no principle was too broad and no detail too delicate; but it was essentially a scientific and not a political mind. Mr. Gallatin always tended to think with an entire disregard of the emotions; he could only with an effort refrain from balancing the opposing sides of a political question. His good fortune threw him into public life at a time when both parties believed that principles were at stake, and when the struggle between those who would bar the progress of democracy and those who led that progress allowed little latitude for doubt on either side in regard to the necessity of their acts. While this condition of things lasted, and it lasted throughout Mr. Gallatin's stormy Congressional career, he was an ideal party leader, uniting boldness with caution, good temper with earnestness, exact modes of thought with laborious investigation, to a degree that has no parallel in American experience. Perhaps the only famous leader of the House of Representatives who could stand comparison with Mr. Gallatin for the combination of capacities, each carried to uniform excellence, was Mr. Madison; and it was precisely Mr. Madison whom Gallatin supplanted.

On the subject of his Congressional service Mr. Gallatin left two fragmentary memoranda, which may best find place here:

“As both that body [Congress] and the State Legislature sat in Philadelphia, owing also to my short attendance in the United States Senate and my defence of my seat, I was as well known to the members of Congress as their own colleagues, and at

once took my stand in that Assembly. The first great debate in which we were engaged was that on the British treaty; and my speech, or rather two speeches, on the constitutional powers of the House, miserably reported and curtailed by B. F. Bache, were, whether I was right or wrong, universally considered as the best on either side. I think that of Mr. Madison superior and more comprehensive, but for this very reason (comprehensiveness) less impressive than mine. Griswold's reply was thought the best; in my opinion it was that of Goodrich, though this was deficient in perspicuity. Both, however, were second-rate. The most brilliant and eloquent speech was undoubtedly that of Mr. Ames; but it was delivered in reference to the expediency of making the appropriations, and treated but incidentally of the constitutional question. I may here say that though there were, during my six years of Congressional service, many clever men in the Federal party in the House (Griswold, Bayard, Harper, Otis, Smith of South Carolina, Dana, Tracy, Hillhouse, Sitgreaves, &c.), I met with but two superior men, Ames, who sat only during the session of 1795-1796, and John Marshall, who sat only in the session of 1799-1800, and who took an active part in the debates only two or three times, but always with great effect. On our side we were much stronger in the Congress of 1795-1797. But Mr. Madison and Giles (an able commonplace debater) having withdrawn, and Richard Brent become hypochondriac, we were reduced during the important Congress of 1797-1799 to Ed. Livingston, John Nicholas, and myself, whilst the Federalists received the

accession of Bayard and Otis. John Marshall came in addition for the Congress of 1799-1801, and we were recruited by John Randolph and Joseph Nicholson.”

“The ground which I occupied in that body [Congress] is well known, and I need not dwell on the share I took in all the important debates and on the great questions which during that period (1795-1801) agitated the public mind, in 1796 the British treaty, in 1798-1800 the hostilities with France and the various unnecessary and obnoxious measures by which the Federal party destroyed itself. It is certainly a subject of self-gratulation that I should have been allowed to take the lead with such coadjutors as Madison, Giles, Livingston, and Nicholas, and that when deprived of the powerful assistance of the two first, who had both withdrawn in 1798, I was able to contend on equal terms with the host of talents collected in the Federal party, – Griswold, Bayard, Harper, Goodrich, Otis, Smith, Sitgreaves, Dana, and even J. Marshall. Yet I was destitute of eloquence, and had to surmount the great obstacle of speaking in a foreign language, with a very bad pronunciation. My advantages consisted in laborious investigation, habits of analysis, thorough knowledge of the subjects under discussion, and more extensive general information, due to an excellent early education, to which I think I may add quickness of apprehension and a sound judgment.

“A member of the opposition during the whole period, it could not have been expected that many important measures should have been successfully introduced by me. Yet an impulse

was given in some respects which had a powerful influence on the spirit and leading principles of subsequent Administrations. The principal questions in which I was engaged related to constitutional construction or to the finances. Though not quite so orthodox on the first subject as my Virginia friends (witness the United States Bank and internal improvements), I was opposed to any usurpation of powers by the general government. But I was specially jealous of Executive encroachments, and to keep that branch within the strict limits of Constitution and of law, allowing no more discretion than what appeared strictly necessary, was my constant effort.

“The financial department in the House was quite vacant, so far at least as the opposition was concerned; and having made myself complete master of the subject and occupied that field almost exclusively, it is not astonishing that my views should have been adopted by the Republican party and been acted upon when they came into power. My first step was to have a standing committee of ways and means appointed. That this should not have been sooner done proves the existing bias in favor of increasing as far as possible the power of the Executive branch. The next thing was to demonstrate that the expenditure had till then exceeded the income: the remedy proposed was economy. Economy means order and skill; and after having determined the proper and necessary objects of expense, the Legislature cannot enforce true economy otherwise than by making *specific* appropriations. Even these must be made with due knowledge

of the subject, since, if carried too far by too many subdivisions, they become injurious, if not impracticable. This subject has ever been a bone of contention between the legislative and executive branches in every representative government, and it is in reality the only proper and efficient legislative check on executive prodigality.

“Respecting the objects of expenditure, there was not, apart from that connected with the French hostilities, any other subject of division but that of the navy. And the true question was whether the creation of an efficient navy should be postponed to the payment of the public debt.” ...

*1796.*

During Mr. Gallatin's maiden session of Congress, the exciting winter of 1795-96, when the first of our great party contests took place, not even a private letter seems to have been written by him that throws light on his acts or thoughts. His wife was with him in Philadelphia. If he wrote confidentially to any other person, his letters are now lost. The only material for his biography is in the Annals of Congress and in his speeches, with the replies they provoked; a material long since worn threadbare by biographers and historians.

Of all portions of our national history none has been more often or more carefully described and discussed than the struggle over Mr. Jay's treaty. No candid man can deny that there was at the time ample room for honest difference of opinion in regard to the national policy. That Mr. Jay's treaty was a bad one few

persons even then ventured to dispute; no one would venture on its merits to defend it now. There has been no moment since 1810 when the United States would have hesitated to prefer war rather than peace on such terms. No excuse in the temporary advantages which the treaty gained can wholly palliate the concessions of principle which it yielded, and no considerations of a possible war with England averted or postponed can blind history to the fact that this blessing of peace was obtained by the sacrifice of national consistency and by the violation of neutrality towards France. The treaty recognized the right of Great Britain to capture French property in American vessels, whilst British property in the same situation was protected from capture by our previous treaty with France; and, what was yet worse, the acknowledgment that provisions might be treated as contraband not only contradicted all our principles, but subjected the United States government to the charge of a mean connivance in the British effort to famish France, while securing America from pecuniary loss.

Nevertheless, for good and solid reasons, the Senate at the time approved, and President Washington, after long deliberation, signed, the treaty. The fear of a war with Great Britain, the desire to gain possession of the Western posts, and the commercial interests involved in a neutral trade daily becoming more lucrative, were the chief motives to this course. So far as Mr. Gallatin's private opinions were concerned, it is probable that no one felt much more aversion to the treaty than



he did; but before he took his seat in Congress the Senate had approved and the President had signed it; a strong feeling in its favor existed among his own constituents, always in dread of Indian difficulties; the treaty, in short, was law, and the House had only to consider the legislation necessary to carry it into effect.

Bad as the treaty was, both in its omissions and in its admissions, as a matter of foreign relations, these defects were almost trifles when compared with its mischievous results at home. It thrust a sword into the body politic. So far as it went, and it went no small distance, it tended to overturn the established balance of our neutrality and to throw the country into the arms of England. Nothing could have so effectually arrayed the two great domestic parties in sharply defined opposition to each other, and nothing could have aroused more bitterness of personal feeling. In recent times there has been a general disposition to explain away and to soften down the opinions and passions of that day; to throw a veil over their violence; to imagine a possible middle ground, from which the acts and motives of all parties will appear patriotic and wise, and their extravagance a mere misunderstanding. Such treatment of history makes both parties ridiculous. The two brilliant men who led the two great divisions of national thought were not mere declaimers; they never for a moment misunderstood each other; they were in deadly earnest, and no compromise between them ever was or ever will be possible. Mr. Jefferson meant

that the American system should be a democracy, and he would rather have let the world perish than that this principle, which to him represented all that man was worth, should fail. Mr. Hamilton considered democracy a fatal curse, and meant to stop its progress. The partial truce which the first Administration of Washington had imposed on both parties, although really closed by the retirement of Mr. Jefferson from the Cabinet, was finally broken only by the arrival of Mr. Jay's treaty. From that moment repose was impossible until one party or the other had triumphed beyond hope of resistance; and it was easy to see which of the two parties must triumph in the end.

One of the immediate and most dangerous results of the British treaty was to put the new Constitution to a very serious test. The theory which divides our government into departments, executive, legislative, and judicial, and which makes each department supreme in its own sphere, could not be worked out with even theoretical perfection; the framers of the Constitution were themselves obliged to admit exceptions in this arrangement of powers, and one of the most serious exceptions related to treaties. The Constitution begins by saying, "*All* legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives," and proceeds to give Congress the express power "to make *all* laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the

United States or in any department or officer thereof.” But on the other hand the Constitution also says that the President “shall have power, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to make treaties,” and finally it declares that “this Constitution, and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof, and *all* treaties made, or which shall be made, under the authority of the United States shall be the supreme law of the land,” State laws or constitutions to the contrary notwithstanding.

Here was an obvious conflict of powers, resulting from an equally obvious divergence of theory. Congress possessed *all* legislative powers. The President and Senate possessed the power to make treaties, which were, like the Constitution and the laws of Congress, the supreme law of the land. Congress, then, did not possess *all* legislative powers. The President alone, with two-thirds of the Senate, could legislate.

The British treaty contained provisions which could only be carried into execution by act of Congress; it was, therefore, within the power of the House of Representatives to refuse legislation and thus practically break the treaty. The House was so evenly divided that no one could foresee the result, when Edward Livingston began this famous debate by moving to call on the President for papers, in order that the House might deliberate with official knowledge of the conditions under which the treaty was negotiated.

The Federalists met this motion by asserting that under the Constitution the House had no right to the papers, no

right to deliberate on the merits of the treaty, no right to refuse legislation. In Mr. Griswold's words, "The House of Representatives have nothing to do with the treaty but provide for its execution." Untenable as this ground obviously was, and one which no respectable legislative body could possibly accept, it was boldly taken by the Federalists, who plunged into the contest with their characteristic audacity and indomitable courage, traits that compel respect even for their blunders.

The debate began on March 7, 1796, and on the 10th Mr. Gallatin spoke, attacking the constitutional doctrine of the Federalists and laying down his own. He claimed for the House, not a power to make treaties, but a check upon the treaty-making power when clashing with the special powers expressly vested in Congress by the Constitution; he showed the existence of this check in the British constitution, and he showed its necessity in our own, for, "if the treaty-making power is not limited by existing laws, or if it repeals the laws that clash with it, or if the Legislature is obliged to repeal the laws so clashing, then the legislative power in fact resides in the President and Senate, and they can, by employing an Indian tribe, pass any law under the color of treaty."

The argument was irresistible; it was never answered; and indeed the mere statement is enough to leave only a sense of surprise that the Federalists should have hazarded themselves on such preposterous ground. Some seventy years later, when the purchase of Alaska brought this subject again before the House

on the question of appropriating the purchase-money stipulated by the treaty, the Administration abandoned the old Federalist position; the right of the House to call for papers, to deliberate on the merits of the treaty, even to refuse appropriations if the treaty was inconsistent with the Constitution or with the established policy of the country, was fully conceded. The Administration only made the reasonable claim that if, upon just consideration, a treaty was found to be clearly within the constitutional powers of the government, and consistent with the national policy, then it was the duty of each co-ordinate branch of the government to shape its action accordingly.<sup>31</sup> This claim was recognized; the House voted the money, and the controversy may be considered at an end. In 1796, on the contrary, Mr. Griswold, whose reply to Mr. Gallatin's argument was considered the most effective, and who never shrank from a logical conclusion however extreme, admitted and asserted that the legislative power did reside in the President and Senate to the exclusion of the House, and added, "Allowing this to be the case, what follows? – that the people have clothed the President and Senate with a very important power."

On this theme the debate was continued for several weeks; but the Federalists were in a false position, and were consequently overmatched in argument. Madison, W. C. Nicholas, Edward Livingston, and many other members of the opposition, in

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<sup>31</sup> See the Speech of N.P. Banks, of June 30, 1868, Cong. Globe, vol. lxxv., Appendix, p. 385.

speeches of marked ability, supported the claim of their House. The speakers on the other side were obliged to take the attitude of betraying the rights of their own body in order to exaggerate the powers of the Executive, and as this practice was entirely in accordance with the aristocratic theory of government, they subjected themselves to the suspicion at least of acting with ulterior motives.

On the 23d March, Mr. Gallatin closed the debate for his side of the House by a second speech, in which he took more advanced ground. He had before devoted his strength to overthrowing the constitutional theory of his opponents; he now undertook the far more difficult task of establishing one of his own. The Federalist side of the House was not the temperate side in this debate, and Mr. Gallatin had more than one personal attack to complain of, but he paid no attention to personalities, and went on to complete his argument. Inasmuch as the Federalists characterized their opponents on this question as disorganizers, disunionists, and traitors, and even to this day numbers of intelligent persons still labor under strong prejudice against the Republican opposition to Washington's Administration, a few sentences from Mr. Gallatin's second speech shall be inserted here to show precisely how far he and his party did in fact go:

“The power claimed by the House is not that of negotiating and proposing treaties; it is not an active and operative power of making and repealing treaties; it is not a power which absorbs

and destroys the constitutional right of the President and Senate to make treaties; it is only a negative, a restraining power on those subjects over which Congress has the right to legislate. On the contrary, the power claimed for the President and Senate is that, under color of making treaties, of proposing and originating laws; it is an active and operative power of making laws and of repealing laws; it is a power which supersedes and annihilates the constitutional powers vested in Congress.

“If it is asked, in what situation a treaty is which has been made by the President and Senate, but which contains stipulations on legislative objects, until Congress has carried them into effect? whether it is the law of the land and binding upon the two nations? I might answer that such a treaty is precisely in the same situation with a similar one concluded by Great Britain before Parliament has carried it into effect.

“But if a direct answer is insisted on, I would say that it is in some respects an inchoate act. It is the law of the land and binding upon the American nation in all its parts, except so far as relates to those stipulations. Its final fate, in case of refusal on the part of Congress to carry those stipulations into effect, would depend on the will of the other nation.”

The Federalists had in this debate failed to hold well together; the ground assumed by Mr. Griswold was too extreme for some even among the leaders, and concessions were made on that side which fatally shook their position; but among the Republicans there was concurrence almost, if not quite, universal in the

statements of the argument by Mr. Madison and Mr. Gallatin, and this closing authoritative position of Mr. Gallatin was on the same day adopted by the House on a vote of 62 to 37, only five members not voting.

The Administration might perhaps have contented itself with refusing the papers called for by the House, and left the matter as it stood, seeing that the resolution calling for the papers said not a word about the treaty-making power, and the journals of the House contained no allusion to the subject; or the President might have contented himself with simply asserting his own powers and the rights of his own Department; but, as has been already seen, there was at this time an absence of fixed precedent which occasionally led executive officers to take liberties with the Legislature such as would never afterwards have been tolerated. The President sent a message to the House which was far from calculated to soothe angry feeling. Two passages were especially invidious. In one the President adverted to the debates held in the House. In the other he assumed a position in curious contrast to his generally cautious tone: "Having been a member of the general convention, and knowing the principles on which the Constitution was formed, I have, &c., &c." For the President of the United States on such an occasion to appeal to his personal knowledge of the intentions of a body of men who gave him no authority for that purpose, and whose intentions were not a matter of paramount importance, seeing that by universal consent it was not their intentions which interpreted the



Constitution, but the intentions of the people who adopted it; and for him to use this language to a body of which Mr. Madison was leader, and which had adopted Mr. Madison's views, was a step not likely to diminish the perils of the situation. Had the President been any other than Washington, or perhaps had the House been led by another than Madison, the opportunity for a ferocious retort would probably have been irresistible. As it was, the House acted with great forbearance; it left unnoticed this very vulnerable part of the message, and in reply to the implication that the House claimed to make its assent "necessary to the validity of a treaty," it contented itself with passing a resolution defining its own precise claim. On this resolution Mr. Madison spoke at some length and with perfect temper in reply to what could only be considered as the personal challenge contained in the message, while Mr. Gallatin did not speak at all. The resolutions were adopted by 57 to 35, and the House then turned to the merits of the treaty.

On this subject Mr. Gallatin spoke at considerable length on the 26th April, a few days before the close of the debate. The situation was extremely difficult. In the country at large opinion was as closely divided as it was in the House itself. Even at the present moment it is not easy to decide in favor of either party. Nothing but the personal authority of General Washington carried the hesitating assent of great masses of Federalists. Nothing but fear of war made approval even remotely possible. Whether the danger of war was really so great as the friends of

the treaty averred may be doubted. No Federalist Administration would have made war on England, for it was a cardinal principle with the Hamiltonian wing of the party that only through peace with England could their ascendancy be preserved, while war with England avowedly meant a dissolution of the Union by their own act.<sup>32</sup> The Republicans wanted no war with England, as they afterwards proved by enduring insults that would in our day rouse to madness every intelligent human being within the national borders. Nevertheless war appeared or was represented as inevitable in 1796; the eloquent speech of Fisher Ames contained no other argument of any weight; it was abject fear to which he appealed: "You are a father: the blood of your sons shall fatten your corn-field. You are a mother: the war-whoop shall wake the sleep of the cradle."

It was the truth of this reproach on the weakness of the argument for the treaty that made the sting of Mr. Gallatin's closing remarks:

"I cannot help considering the cry of war, the threats of a dissolution of government, and the present alarm, as designed for the same purpose, that of making an impression on the fears of this House. It was through the fear of being involved in a war that the negotiation with Great Britain originated; under the impression of fear the treaty has been negotiated and signed; a fear of the same danger, that of war, promoted its ratification: and now every imaginary mischief which can alarm our fears is

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<sup>32</sup> See, among other expressions to this effect, Lodge's Cabot, pp. 342, 345.

conjured up, in order to deprive us of that discretion which this House thinks it has a right to exercise, and in order to force us to carry the treaty into effect.”

Nevertheless Mr. Gallatin carefully abstained from advocating a refusal to carry the treaty into effect. With his usual caution he held his party back from any violent step; he even went so far as to avow his wish that the treaty might not now be defeated:

“The further detention of our posts, the national stain that would result from receiving no reparation for the spoliation on our trade, and the uncertainty of a final adjustment of our differences with Great Britain, are the three evils which strike me as resulting from a rejection of the treaty; and when to these considerations I add that of the present situation of the country, of the agitation of the public mind, and of the advantages that would arise from a union of sentiments; however injurious and unequal I conceive the treaty to be, however repugnant it may be to my feelings and, perhaps, to my prejudices, I feel induced to vote for it, and will not give my assent to any proposition which would imply its rejection.”

He also carefully avoided taking the ground which was undoubtedly first in his anxieties, that of the bearing which the treaty would have on our relations with France. This was a subject which his semi-Gallican origin debarred him from dwelling upon. The position he took was a new one, and for his party perfectly safe and proper; it was that, in view of the conduct of Great Britain since the treaty was signed, her impressment of

our seamen, her uninterrupted spoiliations on our trade, especially in the seizure of provision vessels, “a proceeding which they might perhaps justify by one of the articles of the treaty,” a postponement of action was advisable until assurances were received from Great Britain that she meant in future to conduct herself as a friend.

This was the ground on which the party recorded their vote against the resolution declaring it expedient to make appropriations for carrying the treaty into effect. In committee the division was 49 to 49, – Muhlenberg, the chairman, throwing his vote in favor of the resolution, and thus carrying it to the House. There the appropriation was voted by 51 to 48.

Perhaps the only individual in any branch of the government who was immediately and greatly benefited by the British treaty was Mr. Gallatin; he had by common consent distinguished himself in debate and in counsel; bolder and more active than Mr. Madison, he was followed by his party with instinctive confidence; henceforth his leadership was recognized by the entire country.

Absorbing as the treaty debate was, it did not prevent other and very weighty legislation. One Act, adopted in the midst of the excitement of the treaty, was peculiarly important, and, although the idea itself was not new, Mr. Gallatin was the first to embody it in law, so far as any single individual can lay claim to that distinction. This Act created the land-system of the United States government; it applied only to lands north-west of the Ohio

River, in which the Indian titles had been extinguished, and it provided for laying these out in townships, six miles square, and for selling the land in sections, under certain reservations. This land-system, always a subject of special interest to Mr. Gallatin, and owing its existence primarily to his efforts while a legislator, took afterwards an immense development in his hands while he was Secretary of the Treasury, and, had he been allowed to carry out his schemes, would probably have been made by him the foundation of a magnificent system of internal improvement. Circumstances prevented him from realizing his plan; only the land-system itself and the Cumberland Road remained to testify the breadth and accuracy of his views; but even these were achievements of the highest national importance.

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