

DOCUMENTS

1. *A Letter of Ferdinand of Aragon to Diego Columbus, 1510.*

The interest connected with the name of Columbus gives factitious importance to all documents relating to the governorship exercised by him and his son over the Spanish New World, which may perhaps serve as an excuse for printing the subjoined letter. It appears that among the early adventurers seeking the New World there were some debtors of persons condemned by the Inquisition, and the zealous receiver of confiscations at Seville sent out an agent to hunt them up and collect from them, for the royal treasury, the amounts owing to the victims. To enable him to perform his errand successfully the king orders the admiral of the ocean and governor of the Indies and Tierra Firma and his subordinates to lend aid and compel summary settlements. The document is in the archives of Simancas, Consejo de la Inquisicion, Libro III., fol. 47.

HENRY CHARLES LEA.

EL REY

Don Diego Colon, almirante del mar oceano e governador de las indias e tierra firma e a vuestros alcaldes e justicias, Por parte de Pedro de Villacis receptor de los bienes confiscados por el delito de la heregia en la cibdad e arcobispado de Sevilla, me es fecha relacion que en estas villas e lugares hay algunas personas, que deven e son obligados a pagar a mi camera e fisco algunas coantias e sumas de maravedis por contratos o alvalaes e syn ellos que se devia a Diego Deça que por el delito de la heregia fue condepnado a carcel perpetua e sus bienes confiscados, e a otras personas de la dicha cibdad e arcobispado de Sevilla muchos bienes fueron confiscados lo qual el dicho receptor embia a lo cobrar en mi nombre e con su poder, por ende yo vos mando que cada e quando fuere-des requerido por su parte sobre lo suso dicho fagades parecer ante vos a los tales debdores e sabida la verdad brevemente e de plano syn estrepitu ni figura de juicio le administrais entero cumplimiento de justicia e lo que asi fallaredes que le es devido compelades y apremiedes a los tales debdores que luego gelo den e paguen sin dilacion alguna dandole parte dello el favor e ayuda que menester oviere, e non fagades ende al. Fecha en Valladolid a 19 dias de enero de 1510 años. Yo el Rey. Por mandado de su alteza Juan Roiz de Calcena. Estava señalada del licenciado Aguirre.

2. *Letters of Christopher Gadsden, 1778.*

For the following letters of General Christopher Gadsden THE REVIEW is indebted to Edward I. Renick, Esq., of the Department

of State, Washington. The first of them was written two days after General Gadsden's duel with General Robert Howe. Drayton (d. 1779) was at this time a member of the Continental Congress.

I. CHRISTOPHER GADSDEN TO WILLIAM HENRY DRAYTON.

CHAS TOWN 15th Augst 1778.

Dear Sir :

I am indebted for yours of 6th and 14th July. All your friends I assure you are concerned that any difficulties should happen so as to occasion hesitation to sign the Confederation. We cannot see the least force in the objections. A confederation ought most certainly to have been signed long since. What must the French think? Have they not made an alliance with 13 States? But how can that be while no confederation is made between themselves and if even upon arrival of their Ambassadeur, every State must be separately pleased and throw so many difficulties in the way? What! Because one State has orders not to sign, and another State has not received instructions to sign, Shall we who had positive orders to agree to the determinations of Congress, withdraw our consent and make the breach still wider and do all in our power to make Maryland more obstinate? Had our confederation been signed there would be no room for any political powers or parties, allies or not allies, to interfere for their own purposes. This is no new thing (I am sure you know) in Europe. Witness Holland, Germany, Switzerland &c. Let us prevent all such manoeuvres as soon as possible. Nothing will do it so speedily or effectively as a ratify'd Confederation. There is abundantly less risk in trusting to a future Congress some 10 or 20 years hence for correcting what may be amiss, than to let this matter lay any longer open. I dread ten thousand times more the restless ambition of a few individuals in each State to overset our matters and enthrall us, than I do anything of that sort from the States themselves. Yr expences must be great at Philad^a immediately upon the British troops leaving it. This is an extraordinary event, and I think we ought not to suffer you to be out of pocket and I hope we shall not.

I am sorry my friend Lee seemed so indifferent with regard to my affair with Howe. I shall trouble you no farther on that subject, only hope the Carolina Delegates will at least disabuse the Congress publicly and not let them continue to think that my resignation was intended as an insult to them, than which nothing was farther from me, for I never thought them to blame. Had they sent Howe to take the command of me, as we were of equal rank, and he of another State, and had no greater opportunities in the military way than myself, I should certainly have felt very sensibly the stroke; concluded it proceeded from their distrust of me, as not being of equal industry, capacity, or integrity with him, and then should most certainly have sent *them* my Commission, and eased their fears, at the same time lamenting the low state I stood in their opinion. But as I always thought, and think still, they knew nothing of

the matter, but thought Lee had given him orders to come here—and found that my country would not hear me through the party intrigues of a thin house—I therefore threw up my commission *here*, and out of delicacy to the Congress did not send it to them myself. All I expected was the common compliment to an officer that I thought they did not wish (and I am sure had no reason) to get rid of—that of giving him an opportunity before they accepted his commission to tell what hurt him. Howe has had an exact copy of my letter of the 4th July to you and numbers in town have seen it, many of his friends. I say the Congress was never so grossly imposed upon, and if they do not resent such impositions, they deserve to be so again and again. *Qui vult decipi, decipiatur*. I wish you were able to read the copy I sent you. I was resolved to send my observations by the return of same express that brought yours concerning Howe's extract. I wished for a little longer time to furbish it up. From what dropt from Heyward my apprehensions were first grounded, of the Congress looking upon my resignation as an intended insult to them. I therefore make no doubt he will do the justice to set the matter to rights, and in order that he may be the better enabled so to do, I shall be obliged to you to give him with my compliments the inclosed copy of my letter on that subject to you, which is fairly and exactly made out, and also let him see what farther is mentioned in this letter relative to that subject. Yr last letter tastes Moreish—we long for another express. Nothing here worth notice only that we had almost a hurricane last Monday. My bridge received very little damage indeed.

I am D^r S^r

Yr &c &c

C. G.

II. CHRISTOPHER GADSDEN TO WILLIAM HENRY DRAYTON.

CHAS^TTOWN 14 Octo^r 1778.

D^r Sir

I am obliged to you for the paper sent me by last Express. I find you are indefatigable. God prosper you. We are obliged to you for it. Johnson is driven off the American Stage, I find, but pondering revenge, however I hope his sting is taken out. The House met according to Adjournment, very few members indeed. The Presd^t made a very proper and spirited representation of the behaviour of the mob in Charles Town the 5th June which mob was ostensibly on account of his proclamation, but really (as I am verily persuaded) artfully stirred up and set a going by a cabal. The House after having it before them a month, through the influence of the Town members put it off to the next House. In the meantime the Presd^t and privy council is to put [up] with the insult. I was much afraid Mr. Lowndes would have resigned, which would have put the State into great confusion, and would have given the party who were hopeful that officers would not have been found to set the new Constitution a going the utmost pleasure. The resignation of the Council would have done the same. As for my part as Vice President and a new election so near at hand, I thought my resignation could be of little mo-

ment to the State, and at the same time thinking it would be of some good consequence that some part of the Executive should show a feeling upon so monstrous an insult as they received, I thought myself in a manner peculiarly called upon to do it from my station, and accordingly wrote the within letter to the Speaker which was laid before the House, who I expected would have accepted my resignation immediately. However I was mistaken for they did me the honour unanimously to send 2 members to desire I would continue. This I could not refuse, therefore still remain in statu quo and I am not without reason to think my letter has done some good that may appear in future. Williams and Hopton arrived a few days ago in their Flag. I am glad of anything to rouse us if possible from our lethargy, but the conversation with Johnson I look upon as a matter of course and highly probable that had Mr Williams been a N. Carolinian or Georgian just the same would have been said to him with regard to either of those States. If anything is intended, I rather think Johnson wishes to brew it up after his arrival in England than that any danger may be apprehended this winter from Clinton—Our masters the Assembly, Legislative and Executive examined Hopton and Williams themselves and discharged them. The Council had examined the last the evening before; but the people of the town seeming so enraged, it was thought absolutely necessary to refer him to the House, even for our own sakes, for had we discharged him, and we could not have done otherwise, I make no doubt St. Michael's bell would have been set a ringing in a few minutes afterwards—

We are going to fortify in all haste and make no doubt shall persist till we have half finished some works and then, what then? do as——heretofore

I [am] D^r Sir &c.

P. S. The express is waiting.

C. G.

III. CHRISTOPHER GADSDEN TO THOMAS BEE, SPEAKER.

To the Honble Tho^s Bee Esq^r

Speaker to the Honble the Commons House of Assembly of the State of South Carolina.

5 Octo 1778.

D^r Sir

The Honble House thinking proper after having had his Excellency the Presd^{ts} message relative to his proclamation of the 5th June and the outrageous treatment it met with from a part of the people of Chas Town a month before them to postpone the matter to the next House in parliam^y language ad Gracias Calendas; considering the part I acted in earnestly advising that step in w^h I am conscious of having done nothing improper, I submit it to the House how they think I must feel under such at least negative censure, especially after the deliberately gross treatment the Executive received from a Body of men mentioned in no part of our Constitution as I can recollect, who called themselves the Flint Club.

The contemptible, suspicious, and useless situation wth regard to the

publick I find myself reduced to upon this occasion lays me under the necessity of entreating you to request the Honble House for the public sake as well as my own, to deliver me from it by accept^g my resignation as V. President. It may not be proper for me to let my feelings carry me farther. Am therefore resigned to stop here if Sir you think my particular reasons following are too free, improper from me, or will give offence to the House, which I should be sorry to be thought capable of intending; but if you judge not and the House will bear wth the remonstrance of an old and faithful servant, I shall then be obliged to you to lay them before them——

I was the first man that moved in Council for our compliance with that recommendation of Congress w^{ch} is the subject of the President's proclamation of the 5th June and never consented to any publick Act more heartily and wth clearer judgment as the best measure this State could pursue at that very critical period exclusive of that respect for Congress w^c the true Interest of America and even the Existence of its free States always did and still requires to be shewn. A copy of this Proclamⁿ his Excellency laid before the House wth an acct of the outrageous treatment it met wth more than a month since in full as mild terms as it deserves.

The advice just mentioned to the Prest. I avow to have given, am accountable for it to the State, and knew so at the time. Tis either impeachable or not, if the first I ask no favour but heartily wish to be tryed as the Constitution has appointed, being not conscious of any guilt and have a right to a fair trial. If the last, the future peace and safety of the State, good order, and good policy require that the Executive should be supported. Principiis obsta has been ever looked upon as an excellent maxim, for unchecked insolence very rarely decreases of itself and this I am persuaded the Presd and privy Council will soon amply experience. The very existence of the State during the present war upon a sudden emergency in the recess of the House (and none of us can tell how soon such emergency may happen), may oblige the Privy Council to advise the Presd to act really very opposite to some of our most favourite laws. This advice indeed they must give at their own risk, and rightly so and tho' it would be as great political cowardice not to give it upon a proper occasion as it would be personal cowardice to turn one's back upon an enemy in the Field of inferior Force, yet must not men be blessed with an exalted virtue indeed and a superlative degree of firmness to run such risks when they have any reason to apprehend they will not be supported? If a proclamⁿ of the Presdt in consequ^{ce} of a recommendation of Congress and the advice of the Privy Council is to be counteracted and defeated by a managed misinformed part of the Town dextrously practiced on (imperceptibly I am fully persuaded to themselves) by the bellowing tools of a few ill-intending, restless, disappointed, self-important men behind the scenes (as I verily believe was the case the 5th June): if the magistrates are to be intimidated; if the presses are to be stopt at their nod and all this to pass without proper notice, the Privy Council will soon be of little use and must rapidly dwindle into

that insignificancy, discredit and contempt which an artful and indefatigable cabal earnestly wish to see them in and will miss no other *sly* opportunity to bring about. The next step to making that necessary and useful part of the Constitution contemptible will be of course to expunge them altogether when it is found (as in the nature of things must happen speedily if not timely prevented) that none but dastardly Trimmers, ambitious Caballers, interested jobbers will serve in a Department rendered so low, suspicious and despicable.

As V. President the devolving part of the Executive on me being altogether contingent and the election of a new Assembly being so very near, the chance is very little indeed that my resignation now can be of any moment to the public. Did I think it of consequence no feelings ever so disagreeable, no indelicate treatment whatever would make me entertain the least thought of resigning. But when I consider too of what essential and lasting importance a Privy Council chosen as ours is must be to a free State; from the nature of their duty how obnoxious they are to selfish and ambitious men who wish to take advantage of the publick: how grossly the present Council has been treated: How Cheap that alone must make them: convinced too that it is the duty of every man called upon by his country to fill a publick station to hand it down unsullied as far as in him lies to his successor—these considerations all put together call on me particularly to shew a feeling (as well for the public sake as from a regard to my own character) by desiring to quit in the manner I do a station in w^h much insult has been experienced, more may be expected and little probability thro' want of *undelayed* support and countenance of being of any use.

I am sure your Honour must be persuaded from the many peculiar and remarkable circumstances w^{ch} attended my appoint^{mt} that nothing could have induced me to accept it but the apprehension that an excellent Constitution w^{ch} no individual took more pains about than myself might otherwise want some formal officer thought necessary in putting it in motion. I hardly know of any material fault in it but the great disproportion of members in a few Parishes wth respect to others, a matter w^{ch} tho' generally seen and admitted, having got a footing from necessity could not for want of proper data at its framing be *then* better regulated and w^{ch} the Constitution in its 15th Clause has provided shall be set to rights at a future period, in the interim trusting to the virtue common prudence and true policy of such parts as glaringly have the greatest superiority both w^{ch} regard to situation and number of representatives that no inconveniences or disturbances would arise on their part by their ungenerously and unwisely assuming too much on their present advantages.

I have had without asking or soliciting any man's vote directly or indirectly the honour to serve my country for many years in various stations, always totally devoted to that particular post occasionally allotted to me; never quitting it while the least hopes remained of having that necessary support the station required:—zealous and attentive in all to the honour of the public and their nearest concern: unbiased either by friend or foe: intimidated by none: constantly attending to my duty

while a member of Assembly : making no promises but always keep^d myself disengaged upon every question for any officer whatever wanted to any Department of the State, or concerning any other matter of moment till it came before the House and then voted according to *my own* best judgment for the good of the whole : always thinking it cowardly to leave the House on a division upon any question whatever, unless it merely concerned myself or I really did not understand the terms it was put in : seldom upon making a motion have I previously secured even a second : but more than that I always looked upon as caballing, warping men's judgments and a kind of treason against or at best pitifully and dirtily crimping for the State and if I now towards the close of a long, disinterested and laborious service ask any favour, either of individuals or the publick in general let it be to be looked upon as a citizen detesting licentiousness and totally devoted to the cause of equal *constitutional* liberty, religious and civil to all, Governors and governed, and having not a desire (and who never had) for himself or family in these respects that he does not from the bottom of his soul wish for every honest man in the State and indeed in all the world.

Believe me Sir the exquisite feelings arising from a consciousness of having acted in this steady uniform manner in publick life has made me more than ample amends for every neglect, every disagreeable circumstance it has occasioned through selfish ambitious arbitrary or designing men whose private views have been occasionally thwarted thereby. I have served with pleasure under the President, am a witness to his indefatigable attention to the publick interest not only in his present, but in several other important stations, on very trying occasions, have long and well known his honest sensible Heart and fixed attachment to the publick good, feel extremely for his delicate situation and most earnestly wish for my Country's sake that he had the support he so much merits from every good and honest man in the State and *to w^{ch} as a private citizen* I am hopeful to contribute my mite. In a publick station, as times go, I can afford him none. Give me leave to conclude wth declaring that had I not thus shewn my publick resentment in the strongest manner I am able agst the proceedings justly represented by his Excell^y, the President in his message of the 3^d Sept^r I should have ever thought myself accountable for all the riots and mobs throughout the State that may happen in consequence of that which happened in Cha^s Town the 5th June and as having abetted the artful opposers and disturbers of our peace by negatively at least assisting them in their indirect underhand practicings on the weakest part of the Constitution, the present allowed disproportion of members in order to throw all into confusion and when an opportunity serves get the whole new modeled more to their go^{ut} ; and as sacrificing the duty I owe as officer to the whole state to the idle tickling of a momentary popularity w^h a too assuming small part.

I am S^r wth great respect

Y^r Honours most obed servt

C. G.

5th October 1778.

3. *Correspondence of Eli Whitney relative to the Invention of the Cotton Gin.*

[For the following contribution the REVIEW is indebted to Dr. M. B. Hammond, of the University of Illinois, author of a monograph on the *Cotton Industry in the United States*, soon to be published by the American Economic Association, and to Eli Whitney, Esq., of New Haven.]

THE story of the invention of the cotton gin by Eli Whitney, of Massachusetts, while he was a guest of the family of General Nathaniel Greene, at their residence near Savannah, Georgia, has long been one of the historic traditions familiar even to school children. But circumstances have arisen within recent years which make it desirable to recall the old story of the invention, and to examine its claim to a place in the history of the industrial development of the nation.

In the recent literature of the cotton industry, especially that contributed by Southern writers, there have appeared numerous references and assertions which show plainly that there is a growing conviction at the South, either that Eli Whitney was not the real inventor of the saw gin, or that his gin became practicable as an instrument for cleaning the green seed cotton, only when supplied with subsequent improvements by other inventors, or, at any rate, that Whitney was aided in the construction of his machine by suggestions derived from witnessing the efforts and partial successes of other experimenters. Instead, therefore, of the cotton gin being an original product of Whitney's brain, it was, say these writers, only the successful combination of the discoveries and experiments of equally brilliant but less fortunate artisans who had wrestled with the same problem.

In support of their statements these writers have usually given a more or less full and plausible account of what they believe to be the true origin of the cotton gin, and of the perversion of history by which Whitney secured the honor which entirely or partly belonged to another.

I have no wish to charge with insincerity any of these persons who either through published writings or through personal correspondence have set forth the claims of those whom they believe to be justly entitled to the credit of having given to the world this great invention. The respectability of these gentlemen, and the manner of their writing, are indisputable witnesses of their candor in this matter. And, indeed, their stories are only in line with the theory of invention which will be found to be the true explanation of the majority of the great discoveries in the arts and sciences.¹

¹ See Brentano, *Ueber die Ursachen der heutigen socialen Noth*, pp. 7 ff.; Hobson, *The Evolution of Modern Capitalism*, p. 58.