

Amsterdam Aug: 28th 1785

Dear Sir

I wrote you last from the Hague - Since that I have pass'd through Leyden & Haarlem on my way to this Place which I find as busy & commercial as I think it can be - & yet I am told it has declined & is declining - This gives me Concern because I find several attributing it to an Intercourse with America & to the Independence of the latter - How true this may be in Fact I cannot say, yet an Opinion of it prevailing, will injure in some measure the American Character as well as the American Commerce here I should suppose. - No Truth of the Case seems to me to be that the great Wealth of this Country having rais'd the Price of Labor, their poorer Neighbours ~~are~~ by that Means enabled to undertake their carrying Business at a cheaper Rate & by that ^{means}

affect them in a vital Part. Yet it is so much the Fashion in the commercial World at present to attribute all Misfortunes to America that they do not look farther & draw all their Reasonings from thence.

I received great Pleasure ^{at Leyden} from viewing the University - the Anatomical Apparatus - the Botanical Garden & the Cabinet of Natural History - In the Garden are several Acaes - luckily this is the Year for one to bloom so that I had an Opportunity of seeing that which so rarely occurs - it is not yet in Perfection - Seven years hence there are two more which are to bloom. - Mr. Lurze ^{of the Gazette} is made Professor of the University. It was my Intention to have waited on him but was hurried from Leyden in Order to hear the famous Organ at Haarlem - which is only played three Times a Week at particular Hours - It is much admired by the Amateurs - The Information I had with Respect to the Opera was bad - it had ceased before I arrived.

Yet the View of this exquisite Piece of Mechanism
was very agreeable - I entered into no Description of it
because I find Descriptions of these Things always dif-
ficult - I was still more curious to have seen the
first Book that was ever printed by the famous Hoe-
tor the Inventor of this valuable Art - It is kept
in the Red Chamber to be shewn - but this also is only at
particular Hours - so Strangers are frequently disap-
pointed as I was - & they are so rigid here in the Obser-
vance of all their Customs that neither Civility or
Hospitality can make them deviate from them. - This
Town values itself not a little on giving Birth
the Inventor of the Art of Printing - as well as the
Success of the three Ships which it furnished in one of the
holy Wars. that broke the Chains laid across the Channel
at Damietta & let in all the Fleet - the Models
of these Ships are hung up in the great Church in
which stands the Organ.

I think it probable I shall return to the Hague before your
Answer to my former Letter will get there - If not Mr Dar-
mas will send me Information the first Moment of its
Arrival - after which nothing shall detain me an Instant.
I am very anxious to know if you have had any late News from
America - You have long ago no Doubt heard of Mr Put-
ledge's Appointment - The Boston Navigation Act
arrived in London & was published in their Papers the Day
before I left it will certainly produce a serious Consi-
deration there. —

I am anxious to know if all my young Country-
men & Acquaintances are gone from Paris - I rather suppose
they will stay there longer than I had thought when I saw
them last. — Bingham & his Lady left this Place Yesterday
Morning for the Hague - on their Way to Brussels &
Paris. — It is the Favor of you to send the inclosed
Letter to the petite Poste - — Make my Compliments to
Colo Humphries & believe me with the most sincere
Friendship & Affection
Yours
W. Short