

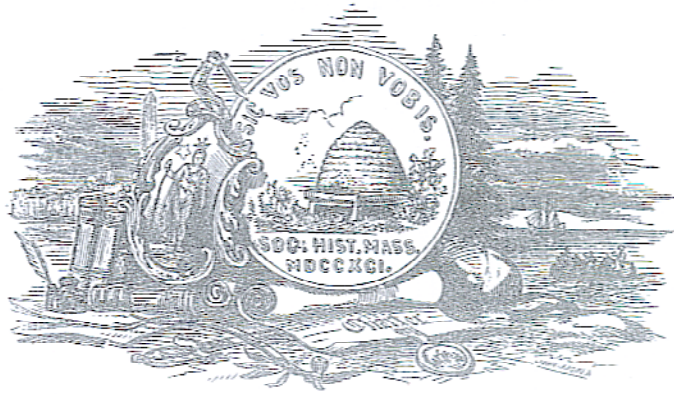
COLLECTIONS

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Letter Book
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M.DCCCLXXXVIII.

MEMORANDUM OF LETTER.

To Col. John Otis at Barnstable, }
 To Mr. James Pain of Barnstable. } Feb. 21, 1713. To
 excite them to endeavour an Accomodation in the Admiralty Case depending in the Superiour Court to be held at Plimouth. To Agree will be acceptable to the Judges, Best for the Parties, and County.

SAMUEL SEWALL TO ADOLPHE PHILLIPSE.

To Adolphe Phillipse Esqr. at New-york.

SIR, — These are to acknowledge the Favour of yours of the 13th January: and the continued pains taken by you in procuring an Account for Sir William Ashhurst. I visit you again, and entreat you to hold on in providing such an Account as you describe. But (if you have not done it already) don't tell Mr. Lane the End for which you are at all this Labour; because Sir William is something jealous, lest Mr. Lane should be over much in Mr. Gough's Interests. You will take this Hint, so as may make for the advantage of Sir William; and not otherwise. Let not my Slowness prejudice your early Advice of what you further effect. They begin to complain of Sickness and Mortality to the eastward of Pascataqua River. I pray God to heal them; and preserve this Town and New-York, in Health; and not draw the Line of Connecticut over us. I am with all due Regards, Sir, your most humble Serv^t

S. S.

MEMORANDUM OF LETTER.

March 11th, 1713. To Mr. Edward Taylor inclosing Mr. Walter of the Glory of Christ. Madam Elisha Hutchinson, Madam Addington, Mr. Whiting of Billerica buried

the same day. Scottish Address 9th 9th from Inverbervy. D. Hamilton and Ld. Moon.¹ Cease not to pray for us.

SAMUEL SEWALL TO COUSIN —

Copy of what I writ to Col. Penn Townsend.

Boston; Febr. 23, 1703.

DEAR COUSIN, — I have yours dated Febr. 11th which I receiv'd this week, wherein you ask my Advice in a very important Affair; viz. that of your Marriage. — you have been advised to marry the widow of your Cousin German: 'Tis pity any should be so unadvised, as to prompt you to doe a needless thing, about which Advice is needed, to know whether it be lawfull or no. Some scruple it, you say. And if you do not scruple it at present, you are not sure you shall not scruple it, after you are married; and that in such a distressing manner, as all the Divines in New-England shall not be able to relieve you, or give you satisfaction. There have been, and are such Instances. For my own part, it is not plain to me that it is lawfull for First Cousins to Marry: I rather incline to think it is unlawfull. We ought to have a great care, that we be not so ignorantly zealous in casting off the yoke of Antichrist, as therewithal to cast off Any part of the yoke of Christ. It is not easy to conceive, how a man's marrying his sister should be a capital crime; and yet the marriage of cousin Germans should be blameless, and commendable. Levit. 20, 17.

Dr. Owen hath this passage — “Brotherhood with respect to a near stock, as the children of the same parents; which in the Scripture is constantly extended unto Grandfathers also.” Heb. 13. 1. p. 203.

¹ Doubtless referring to the famous duel between the Duke of Hamilton and Lord Mohun, November 15, 1712. Both were killed. In Brydges' edition of Collins' Peerage, the date of this duel is incorrectly stated to have been November 15, 1713. — Eds.

If the Scripture reckons Grandfathers, Fathers; the Scripture likewise reckons Cousin Germans, among Brothers and Sisters. Who can think it a comly and pleasant sight, for a Grandfather to see his own children joint together in Marriage? Who can think it prudent and profitable, for Cousin-Germans to seek a Marriage Union, whenas they see themselves One already, in their Grandfather? Who can think that it is not unreasonable and absurd, for a man to marry his Great Unkle's widow? And yet this will also be justified; if the Marriage of Cousin Germans be allowed. And it has been done: But tell it not in Gath! I transcribe you a few passages out of the Assembly's Annotations on Leviticus, 18. —

I must needs say, it grieves me, that the sweet and amiable Relations and Names of Unkle and Aunt, should be sunk and drown'd in this torrent of Confusion. Learned Men, and Councils have been against these Kind of Matches; yet because you ask my Advice, I will not refrain to give it.

Do that which is safe, which is most safe, in a matter of the greatest Importance. If one were to purchase Land to build and plant on; one would chuse to have an undoubted and undefamed Title to it: and not venture the perplexity and Disapointment of a crazie Title: Much more sure ought a man to be, that he has Heaven's License to produce for his Marriage.

Do that which is honorable, and of good Report, Philip. 4. 8, 9. Marriage is Honorable. James Printer told me, that the Indians call Cousin-Germans Brothers, as the Jews did. And he told me, the Indians seldom marry so near.

'Tis pity that any English Christian should need to be put to an Indian School, to learn the practise of Temperance and Sobriety. The generality of good people use to be displeas'd and griev'd at these Matches: And

ordinarily, That which grieves the Saints, grieves the Holy Spirit of God. 1 Cor. 8. 12. —

Your loving Unkle S. S.

The Law of Marriage was in the Hands of Papists; and without question, they went too far in their Prohibitions. But then, I fear, the English Nation went beyond the Golden Mean towards the other Extream, when by the Statute of the 32. of H. 8. c. 38. they expressly made the Marriage of Cousin-Germans Lawfull. Cousin Germans are near of Kin; either his Unkle, or his Unkle's son may Redeem him, or any that is nigh of Kin unto him; Levit. 25. 49. This Law came very conveniently, to comply with King Henry's Occasions, who had the First Fruits thereof, and presently after married Katharine Howard Cousin German to Anna Bollen, his second wife.

Fuller's Church History, Cent. 16. p. 236.

The Act for Marriage of Cousin Germans, took place, July 1. 1540. and the eighth of August following, Katharine Howard was shewed openly as Queen, at Hampton Court. And within less than two years time, the King cut her Head off. They that will, from this Example, be fond of Marrying Cousin-Germans, Let 'em!

July 16. 1708.

S. S.

MEMORANDUM.

In Genealogiés comonly, the mention is of Men: So in these descriptions of Marriages, lawfull, and unlawfull, mention is made but only of women. But the same Degrees restrain both Men and Women.

If any man think of some Marriages of holy men in Scripture, contrary to these Rules; let him remember, that we live now by Laws, and not by Examples. What God then either approved, or tolerated, let us neither

rashly condemn, nor unadvisedly follow; but obediently tarry within the precincts of the Law of Nature. And again, in these cases let it ever be remembred, as good reason it should, Not only what is Lawfull; but what also is convenient, and fit to be done. For many things are Lawfull, which are no way yet Expedient; but most Unfit, in regard of some circumstances.

Babington, Levit. 18. 13. p. 480.

SAMUEL SEWALL TO ———.

Boston, March 23, 1713¹.

HON^{DE} SIR, — Upon what you said to me last week in the Council Chamber, I use the freedom of this Communication. Ministers have been wont to dissuade persons from Marrying Cousin Germans. But to what purpose will they do it, if they themselves practise it. Actions are Stronger than Words. I heartily wish your daughter a good Husband; and your Nephew, a good Wife; and am Sir,

your friend and humble Servant

SAMUEL SEWALL.

MEMORANDUM OF LETTER.

To Mr. John Love Merchant in London, May 12, 1713, Desiring him to undertake Mr. Peter Thachers Business. And I put Mr. Thacher of Milton, his Packet, and this my Letter into Capt. Hewit's Bag at the Coffee-House in Queen-Street, with my own hand.

SAMUEL SEWALL TO ADOLPH PHILLIPSE.

To Adolph Philipse Esqr.

May 18, 1713.

SIR. — Your welcom Letter of the 23^d March last, I received the 6th of April after my return from Plymouth

Am very thankfull to you for your Condescension in undertaking that Affair, and for your effectual pursuing it to so good an Issue. Mr. Lane, no doubt, will inform S^r William Ashhurst of your diligent Travail therein. However I have my self acquainted Him therewith. One reason why I gave you the trouble of Postage was because the Letters might possibly, in that way goe the safer. And you must favour me in this, that I may not finally suffer you to be at any Expence.

We are in danger of losing Mr. Thomas Brattle (He is alive and that's all) who is a great Ornament to our College on account of his eminent Learning especially in the Mathematicks: Is also very usefull as their Treasurer, very serviceably and excellently performing that office.¹

I again Thank you for the Honour you have done me in transacting the difficult business of the perplexing Accounts, and pray, that if in any thing, I am capable of Serving you here, you will command,

Sir, your most humble Serv^t

SAMUEL SEWALL.

SAMUEL SEWALL TO REV. EBENEZER PEMBERTON.

To Mr. E. Pemberton.

June 8, 1713.

REVD. SIR, — Next to forwarding others in doing Good; Not to hinder them, is to be chosen. I more and more perceive, That the frequent Journies enjoind me by the Government; and my other circumstances, will render me unfit to attend the Service of Ordering the Seats in the South-Meetinghouse. And therefore I desire to be discharged of that Trust: And I do accordingly Resign

¹ Mr. Brattle, so well known in connection with the founding of Brattle Street Church and as Treasurer of Harvard College for twenty years, died May 21, 1713. In 1712 he was offered the position of Judge of the Superior Court, but declined to accept on account of debility and want of legal training. See Sewall's Diary, II, 346, note. — Eps.