

ships (some of them of great value) have been taken since Christmas in all not less than 250 or 300 Sail!

From the complection of affairs in America I was apprehensive of a rupture there, but I am happy to say I think that will not only be avoided but an amicable termination of all our disputes be affected. Mr Jay having lately arrived as ambassador extraordinary from them for that purpose and been well received here. Indemnification for all the ships taken & detained as we[ll (torn)] as the surrender of the posts will be agreed to. it is probable a reasonable time however will be given to those embarked in Upper country trade who may not choose to remain under their government to collect their debts & withdraw their effects: at the same time a man may remain (I should suppose so at least) as a merchant under their government after such surrender of the posts, without becoming a cit[i]zen of theirs, just as a British merchant may & does at Lisbon, Cadiz, Amsterdam or Vienna. People however will do well not to extend & scatter their property too widely in the mean time. The merchants here mean, in due time, to pray the posts may be retained three years, & the Indian country remain free & neutral: the first may in part be complied with, but I hardly hope for the last. As I wrote my brother a few days ago I shall not write again now, & therefore will thank you to make him acquainted with the contents of this, as it will answer the same purpose. I saw Mr & Mrs Mercer & spent part of last week with them & the young ladies, who grow very fine girls. they are all well. Mr & Mrs Meredith & children are the same. I saw them only yesterday & Mr Meredith this morning on his way down to camp at Warley—better & quieter ground then Flanders.

I beg my kind compliments to Mrs & Miss Askin & the rest of your family, Com^r & Mrs Grant, Mrs Wright &c. I remain, Dear Sir, Your very Hbl^e Servt

William Robertson

I had forgot to tell you, under my political head, that the *good* old empress of Russia is likely to have all her work to do over again as well as the king of Prussia. The government