incurred by the delay last night a Ship arrived here from Bristol which she left the 17th of Dec.r She cleared out for Cork to avoid suspicion, notwithstanding which, she was strictly searched & a letter being discovered, directed to a Merch.t in Philadelphia, the ships was detained but the letter being merely on private busings the Capt. on his petition, was discharged & permitted to sail some Newspapers & private letters are brought in they were stowed away by a messenger in the bottom of a Barrel of bread, which being placed in a careless manner, as for the ships use, it escaped the search, one of the letters was directed to Willing & Morris, without any signature it contained a printed copy of my Lord North's conciliatory act by which all American vessels found on the Coast of Great Britain or Ireland are to be seized & confiscated on the first day of January - all american vessels sailing into or out of the ports of America after the first of March are to be seized & confiscated, all foreign vessels trading to America after the first of June to be seized all communication between Great Britain or Ireland or the British West Indies with America to be cut of all captures made by British Ships of War or by the officers of the things troops in America adjudged by this act to be lawful prizes and as such Courts of admiralty to proceed in their condemnation all orders, for the regulation of Courts of Admiralty in America, heretofore made by the thing in council or which may hereafter be made, are confirmed - the Boston port bill, the fishery bill, and the restraining act are repeated by this Bill, the colonies being in the like circumstances & situation - the last clause of this more than diabolical act enables the thing to appoint Commissioners to grant pardons & receive the submissions of any province. County - Town or District - I shall make no comments on this act, it is only a further stay in that system of Tyranny, hitherto pursued by that - who under the influence of a Scotch Junto now disgraces the British throne, what measures Congress may pursue in consequence of this act, I know not with me every Idea of Reconciliation is precluded by the conduct of G. Britain, & the only alternatives, absolute Slavery or Independency, the latter I have often reprobated both in public & private, but am now almost convinced the measure is right & can be justified by necessity - the Gent. who inclosed the Bill to W & M. writes that 26000 troops are to be employed in America that a suff.t body of men are to defend Boston, while diff.t bodies are to attack New York, Virginia & South Carolina, that Lord Cornwallis is destined for the last place with 5000 men & was to sail in January. the Gent. adds the minority gains Ground that some of the Bedford party had deserted , that the Scotch Faction headed by S.r G. Elliot, ostensibly & by Lord Bute & Mansfield privately, directed & influence the councils of measures of the Court - I make no doubt you have heard Mr Chase is ordered to Canada, he sets off in a few days - Mr. Rogers has leave of absence, should he leave congress, Mary.d will be without representation, I mention this, to shew the necessity of your requesting Messrs Johnson & Stone to attend - I wrote Mr. Tilghman,

(but)