INTRODUCTION

1. The Letters

About three-quarters of the letters included in this volume have not been published before. The place of first publication of all but a few of the remainder was Sir John Bowring's Memoirs of Bentham, in volume x of his edition of The Works of Jeremy Bentham. Wherever possible the present text has been taken from original manuscripts, and at times the inadequacy of Bowring's editing stands clearly revealed—a fact which renders the more unhappy the circumstance that the originals of a few of the letters he printed have disappeared, leaving his text as the only source.

The main manuscript sources for the letters in this volume are the two great collections of Bentham's papers, in the library of University College London, and in the manuscript department of the British Museum. Since the relationship between their contents is not altogether clear, some recapitulation is given here of explanations made in the Introduction to volume i. The first of these collections came into the hands of Bowring as Bentham's literary executor, and was deposited by him at the College in 1849. Although the main bulk of this collection is made up of Bentham's works, it contains a substantial number of letters written to Bentham during the period covered by this volume, and also some of his drafts—in a few cases it has been proved, by the discovery of the originals elsewhere or of replies to them, that these represent letters actually sent.

The second collection, now in the British Museum, was not known to Bowring when he edited Bentham's papers. This collection contains the main mass of the family correspondence—for this period Bentham's letters to his father and those received by him from his brother which he regularly forwarded on to his father. Bentham himself believed this correspondence had been destroyed by his stepmother before her death in 1809. However, at some time presumably after his death it passed into the hands of his nephew George or sister-in-law Mary Bentham—possibly after lying forgotten in a lawyer's vault—and Mary Bentham, when writing her sketch of her husband's life, probably incorporated with it a mass of Samuel Bentham's correspondence which it now contains. After the death of her son George Bentham, the collection passed to Joseph Dalton
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Hooker, and from Hooker by purchase to the British Museum.

There are problems relating to the contents of this collection, to Bowring's possible indirect connection with it, and to its connection through him with the papers now in University College. There are two apparent intrusions. One consists of a number of Bentham's letters to George Wilson, to the Daviseses, to James Anderson and to one or two other addressees. The other is made up of letters to him from such correspondents as Lord Lansdowne, Baron von Raigersfeld, Reginald Pole Carew, François Xavier Schwediauer and Jacques Pierre Brissot de Warville.

How did these letters reach their present location? It seems certain that at some point Bowring was involved. The letters written by Bentham must have been assembled by him as an artificial collection to assist him with the Memoirs; and in some cases where only his printed text is now known, presumably he either returned the manuscripts to the addressees or their heirs, or else disposed of them in some other way. The letters to Bentham, of which he printed only a selection, can only have been extracted from the papers which passed into his keeping in 1832 and which still contain other letters from some of these correspondents. There is later evidence, referred to below, that a private Bowring collection was formed out of these papers; but there is no information as to how this group of letters, or most of it, came to be amalgamated with the papers now in the British Museum.

A small proportion of the letters in this volume are printed from originals in private collections: among these are to be noted especially the Lansdowne Mss. at Bowood and the Pole Carew Mss. at Antony, Cornwall. Bowring's handling of the correspondence between Bentham and Lansdowne merits comment. It is evident that he did not obtain access to the Lansdowne archives, for in cases where a manuscript is known to exist, his texts of Bentham's letters to Lansdowne are derived from drafts or copies in what is now the University College collection. There is also evidence that he abstracted a personal collection of the more interesting of Lansdowne's letters to Bentham from the papers under his control: his grandson Wilfred Joseph Bowring sent one of these to the 5th Marquess in 1910 and mentioned his possession of many others.

All known letters of Bentham's belonging to the period covered by this volume have been printed in full; so have practically all letters to him, save for those from his brother.

In one respect this volume contrasts markedly with its predecessor. Bentham's side of the voluminous correspondence which
was being carried on with Samuel Bentham in Russia has disappeared—clearly through some artificial division of the papers, since the break comes at the beginning of the calendar year 1781. In Samuel’s replies, and occasionally in Bentham’s letters to his father, and elsewhere, there are specific references to some thirty-eight of Bentham’s letters to Samuel, but there is sufficient indication that the number missing is far greater than this. In the year 1780, the last for which the archive seems complete, Bentham wrote nineteen letters to his brother. Fourteen are known by reference for the first ten months of 1781. One he wrote in September 1783 was numbered ‘XXV’ in a sequence relating to that year (only this one and five of its predecessors of that year are known by specific reference). He sent at least thirteen in the first seven months of 1784. To judge by these figures an average of twenty letters a year seems a conservative estimate. On this basis at least ninety letters are missing for the period from January 1781 till Bentham’s departure from England for Russia in August 1785, plus two sent to Samuel from Constantinople at the end of 1785 and at least another two written towards the end of 1787. The possibility that these exist in some portion of Samuel Bentham’s papers left behind him in Russia cannot be excluded, although the Institute of History of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, which has kindly provided information on surviving letters of Bentham in Russia, has not found trace of them. Of this great series there survive only three incomplete drafts and also one long letter which may have been preserved in special circumstances because of its particularly intimate personal character.

Something of the contents of Bentham’s missing letters to his brother can occasionally be deduced from Samuel’s replies. Judging by their number Samuel’s letters to Bentham have survived almost completely and their bulk has presented a considerable problem of selection. In order not to destroy the balance and proper emphasis of this volume it has seemed advisable rigorously to exclude material dealing with Samuel’s own activities in Russia, and to print only those letters or parts of letters which yield information about Bentham by reference to what he himself had written or to activities in which he was involved on Samuel’s behalf.

Bentham’s surviving correspondence with his father during this period is irregular but not unsubstantial. In the main it falls into three periods; 1783, when the chief topics were Samuel Bentham’s love affair with the Countess Sof’ya Dmitriyevna Matyushkina and the momentary prospect that Samuel might become temporary
British chargé d'affaires at St Petersburg; 1786–7, when Bentham was writing to his father from Russia; and 1788, when they were both avidly following the naval war news from the Black Sea. As might be expected from the relations between father and son, there is little evidence in this run about Bentham's intellectual pursuits. But a rich vein of description and narrative characterizes the second group, and this is also a notable feature of the long journal-letters which Bentham wrote about his stay at Bowood in 1781 and again, between August 1785 and February 1786, about his journey to Russia. Throughout this period it was George Wilson who, more than anyone save his brother, shared his confidence and his intellectual interests. This stands out both in the striking run of the letters to Wilson from Bowood in 1781 and in those exchanged between them while Bentham was in Russia.

The remainder of the letters printed in this volume reflect the growing range of Bentham's contacts. For the most part these are letters to Bentham. Practically all such known letters have been included, as they yield information about his activities and his intellectual interests not otherwise available, and sometimes, as in the case of Brissot de Warville, provide the only evidence for the widening of his circle which was taking place at this time. Some of them have a biographical interest, not least one or two which show him at work as the business assistant of his brother at Krichëv. Two long and difficult drafts to Lord Ashburton in 1782 provide the fullest information available on the development of his writings on jurisprudence at this time. Every item relating to Bentham's contact with Lord Lansdowne has been included, however slight, on the ground that for both men it has a cumulatively important biographical significance. Unfortunately Bentham's own letters to a number of these correspondents remain undiscovered (if they still survive) notably those to Prince Grigoriy Aleksandrovich Potëmkin, Count Sergey Ivanovich Pleshcheyev, François Xavier Schwediauer, James Trail and Brissot de Warville.

For notes on details of editorial practice, see the Introduction to volume i at pages xxi–xxii. In transliterating Russian names the Russian modified ‘e’ (= ‘yo’, or ‘o’ after ‘ch’ and ‘sh’) has been rendered as ‘ë’ in preference to the also frequently-used ‘yo’ or ‘o’.

2. **Outline of Bentham's Life, January 1781 to October 1788**

1781 The beginning of this year was marked by the break-down, for reasons not disclosed in the correspondence, of Bentham's
plans for a German translation of the Introduction of his Plan of a Penal Code (later published as An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation). The English text had now been set in type, but he proceeded no further with this, being hard at work on part of what he regarded as the main body of his future publication, his Plan of a Penal Code itself, which is referred to for short as ‘Code’ in the Correspondence of this and the following years. In February some light relief was afforded by his cousin Gregory Bentham’s discovery of a graft being carried on over the sale of admiralty appointments, which Bentham took upon himself to report to the First Lord of the Admiralty. There is some indication of continued contact with Shelburne House, for about the end of April a correspondence with the earl’s librarian seems to show that Bentham had agreed to look out for copies of Prynne’s tracts and in exchange he was offered duplicates from Shelburne’s collection. It was possibly this matter that gave Shelburne the opening at the beginning of July for his descent upon Bentham’s chambers at Lincoln’s Inn. Shelburne seems there to have enjoyed a lively and critical discussion of Bentham’s work. He was sufficiently impressed to borrow a copy of the Fragment on Government for perusal at leisure, and to follow up his visit with a pressing invitation to Bentham to spend part of the summer at Bowood and bring his work so that it might be submitted to the judgment of Shelburne’s legal friends, Lord Camden and John Dunning.

Though Bentham showed some hesitation, it was impossible to refuse. At the beginning of August he stayed for a fortnight with the Davieses at Chatham, where he went sea-bathing on his doctor’s instructions. He then travelled down to Bowood where he remained until the middle of October. It was a memorable experience of gracious living in an intellectual household which was also a focus of national politics. During this period, apart from much stimulating conversation he had the diverse pleasures of romping with Shelburne’s infant son, performing violin and harpsichord duets with Lady Shelburne, playing chess with the future prime minister, William Pitt, and indulging just a little (but not too much) tendresse towards one of Lady Shelburne’s kinswomen. Long afterwards he wrote: ‘Those days with the exception of a few months passed in the same company about eight years afterwards, were the happiest of my life’; and his zestful descriptions of the people he met and the gossip he heard in a long series of letters to George Wilson form the major part of his correspondence during this year. During his stay at Bowood, Lord Camden looked through the
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*Fragment* and made little of it; but John Dunning was not able to do so, his wife’s pregnancy obliging him to leave Bowood almost immediately after he arrived. At parting Shelburne urged Bentham not to let his brother stay too long abroad, and gave advice that he should take in the naval yards of the Scandinavian countries on his way back to England. If he were ever in a position to do so he would bring Samuel forward in public employment; meanwhile he held out the offer to him of a house at Wycombe, where he had an estate, and a retainer of £1000. Puzzled and not wholly convinced of the sincerity of these offers, Bentham duly relayed them to his brother, but with a caution not to take them too seriously. Leaving Bowood in mid-October Bentham travelled via Oxford and Slough to Thorpe, where he stopped briefly—for the last time, for Wilson was abandoning the cottage he had shared with him there—and by the end of the month he was back at Lincoln’s Inn.

1782 The scanty information available suggests that during most of this year Bentham presumably remained at Lincoln’s Inn at work on his writings. He spent the autumn at Brompton near Chatham, staying with the Davieses, whose home was now to some extent to take the place for him of Wilson’s cottage at Thorpe as a retreat from London.

Shelburne kept in touch with him, and in June, on Shelburne’s insistence, he sent to Lord Ashburton (as Dunning had now become) the printed sheets of the *Introduction* and a plan, now some months out of date, of the way he intended to develop his study. According to a later memorandum these were never returned to him. Later on Shelburne seems also to have pressed him to tell his brother to return, holding out the prospect of a commissionership of the Navy Board. Bentham reported this proposal to his brother with strong warnings to treat it with caution; he was anxious that Samuel should not on this ground throw up promising prospects in Russia. In fact, for various reasons, Samuel stayed at St Petersburg after his return (in October) from the long tour of exploration in Siberia which had occupied him since February 1781.

Towards the end of the year Bentham had evidently gone some way towards producing a French version of the general treatise on jurisprudence which, in one form or another, had occupied him since about 1770. In a letter to his brother he referred to this as a ‘projet d’un corps de droit’ and as being near completion—the latter statement, however, being characteristically over-optimistic. About this time, too, he made a new friend in the person of the
French journalist, Jacques Pierre Brissot de Warville, who in November came over to London in connection with various literary ventures.

1783 This year saw the development of an intimate friendship between Bentham and Brissot, marked by several exchanges of letters, of which only Brissot’s side appears to survive. Bentham’s relationship with Shelburne remained cordial: in February he sought his favour to help in securing French publications on law questions. In the spring of 1783 he found a new friend in the young Cornish member of parliament, Reginald Pole Carew of Antony. Pole Carew had travelled in Russia and had become friendly with Samuel Bentham. After he returned to London it is not clear which sought out the other—possibly the first approach to Carew was taken by Jeremiah Bentham—but a common interest in Samuel’s romance with the Countess Sof’ya Dmitriyevna Matyushkina drew them together. Bentham obtained information about the Countess, owing to Carew’s friendship with Prince A. V. Vyazemskiy, who was then on a visit to England and who, as a relative of the Countess, was making enquiries about Samuel’s family on her behalf.

Bentham’s intellectual interests are reflected in correspondence with an old acquaintance, Baron von Raigersfeld, the secretary of the Austrian legation, who tried to get information for him about German law, and also with a new one, David Steuart, recently provost of Edinburgh, who promised to help him on the subject of Scottish criminal law. His old friend, James Anderson, consulted him about the draft of his pamphlet concerning the development of the Scottish fisheries. Out of the blue an obscure Russian army surgeon, whom his brother had met in southern Siberia, sent him a consignment of seeds which had to be acknowledged; and when a proposal came up for Samuel to act as temporary chargé d’affaires at St Petersburg on the retirement of Sir James Harris, he was drawn into a flurry of correspondence and personal consultation with the new ambassador’s brother, his old friend, William Fitzherbert.

At the end of July Bentham once again left London to join the Davieses at Brompton, and in the autumn he removed with them to their new home at Linstead near Sittingbourne. There is some indication that at this time Bentham was continuing to eke out his slender allowance by hack-work for London booksellers, including the translation of works into English. Meanwhile Samuel Bentham, finally settled in the imperial service in the civilian rank of conseiller de la cour at St Petersburg, began to press his brother
to pay a visit to him in Russia, an idea which seems already to have crossed Bentham's mind. Bentham returned to Lincoln's Inn about the middle of November. Towards the end of this year he received the first of a string of letters from his brother about his want of skilled craftsmen of various kinds who might be recruited to help him with the mechanical inventions he was trying to develop.

1784 The correspondence of the early part of the year reveals little about Bentham's activities, save that he was in London. A growing interest in things Russian is evident from his brother's replies to his enquiries and from his draft of a letter to Samuel discussing the qualities of a possible recruit for service in Russia. In April the reopening of a brief correspondence with his old friend, Francis Villion, who for some years had been dropped from his acquaintance, about the return of books which each had lent to the other, may indicate a desire to tidy up his affairs before going to visit Samuel. There was discussion of plans for employment in Russia for James Anderson and indications multiply that Samuel, who in March was transferred to the army as lieutenant-colonel under the immediate patronage of Potëmkin, was beginning to use his brother as a private recruiting agent for technical experts.

About the end of April, however, the normal tenor of Bentham's life and whatever plans he had in view were disrupted by the death of his uncle George Woodward Grove. This event brought Bentham a small legacy, which, together with his father's allowance, was just sufficient to save him from some of the shifts to which hitherto he had occasionally been driven to make ends meet. But the duties of executor involved him in several months of wearying toil at Grove's country house at Whitchurch in Hampshire—he was back in London for a week or so at the end of May to deal with probate, but did not finally leave Whitchurch till some time in early November. For some weeks his eyes suffered severely from overstrain: in July he wrote that for two months he had been unable to make any progress with his work. Apart from a stream of letters from Samuel Bentham about workmen wanted in Russia his correspondence during this period included letters to his father about the disposal of Grove's estate, a long letter to Anderson discussing Russian prospects, two from F. X. Schwediauer about the supply of a set of the new *Encyclopaedia Britannica* for Samuel and containing chit-chat about intellectual life in Edinburgh; and London gossip from his Lincoln's Inn friends, George Wilson and James Trail.

1785 During the winter and spring Bentham, now back at
Lincoln’s Inn, was actively preparing for his forthcoming trip to Russia. He was again in fairly frequent contact with the Marquis of Lansdowne (as Shelburne had now become); in April, perhaps in view of favours to come, he offered a gift of drawings to Lady Lansdowne; and before his departure Lansdowne provided him with some letters of introduction. He now had specific commissions from Samuel on Potëmkin’s behalf. These related to taking out a botanist to serve in the Crimea and arranging the movement of other craftsmen to help develop Potëmkin’s White Russian estate of Krichëv. Somewhat to his brother’s dismay, he wrote at least four letters direct to Potëmkin on these matters. Lansdowne’s friend, John Symonds, the professor of modern history at Cambridge, furnished information about Italy which Bentham planned to visit briefly on the way.

At the end of June Bentham’s baggage was sent off on board the *Mary Frances*, commanded by Captain Richard Brine, which he planned to join about the end of August at Nice after travelling overland across France. In the following weeks his last preparations were completed. These included a visit to the Foreign Office to pick up letters of recommendation, when he took occasion to draw the secretary of state’s attention to his brother’s interest in commercial development in eastern Siberia and the North Pacific. Early in August he set out from London, reached Brighton on the 6th, and on the night of the 7th–8th crossed to Dieppe. This time there was no dallying as there had been in 1770 along the pleasant country of the looping Seine between Rouen and Paris: leaving Dieppe on the 11th by Saturday, 13 August, he reached the French capital. Here he stayed barely a week, entertained by friends of his father’s, paying a courtesy call on Lansdowne’s friend, the secretary of the French department of foreign affairs, Gérard de Rayneval, who provided him with further letters of introduction, and gathering up the rest of his party which was to accompany him to Russia—the Scottish adventurer, Logan Henderson, whom he had recruited as a botanist and the two Miss Kirtlands, whom he understood to be Henderson’s nieces, who were to run a dairy in the Crimea.

In the small hours of Saturday, 20 August, the party left Paris. They travelled partly by coach and partly by river, via Châlons, Lyons and Montpellier to Marseilles and then to Nice, which they reached on 9 September. They rested there for the weekend, and set out again on the 12th travelling by felucca to Genoa, where, on the 14th, they caught up with the *Mary Frances*. Here they
embarked on the 17th for the voyage to Smyrna. However, the ship’s captain passed ten days or so (20 September–1 October) doing business at Leghorn. This enabled Bentham to spend three days at Florence, where he lived ‘lodging excepted’, at the house of the British resident, Sir Horace Mann, to whom Lansdowne had given him an introduction. Finding, when he returned to Leghorn, that Brine was not sailing so early as he had at first intended, he made a further expedition to Pisa.

About 1 October the Mary Frances left Leghorn on the last stage of her voyage to Smyrna with no further planned port of call en route. Prone to sea-sickness, Bentham seems to have been ill for the next ten days, but after the passage of the Straits of Messina the weather was good and he found energy to write an ample letter-journal. After encountering a severe storm off the Asian coast, the Mary Frances anchored at Smyrna on 24 October.

On 3 November Bentham and his party, together with a Russian merchant named Schneyer, a surgeon named Griffiths escaping from his creditors, and a slave dealer with a group of African girls bound for the slave market embarked on a heavily overladen Turkish caique for Constantinople. Uncertain weather and the caution of the Turkish captain held up their arrival at the Dardanelles until the 13th and they might have been delayed still longer but for the appearance of an English vessel which took them on board at Kveuned on the 15th and brought them to Pera on the 21st.

By this time the season was too advanced for Bentham to follow his original plan of taking ship from Constantinople to the Crimea; and on reaching Pera letters from Samuel Bentham advised him that his brother was at Krichëv and not in the Russian south. An initial scheme proposed by the Russian ambassador, that Bentham’s group should travel in the company of a Moldavian royal party as far as Jassy, on the first leg of the circuitous land journey to Russia, came to nothing owing to the bad state of the roads west of Constantinople. To a coach (necessary for the women-folk) these were impossible. Accordingly Henderson and the Miss Kirtlands waited at Constantinople till the Black Sea should be open again to navigation; and on 10 December Bentham set off by this route on horse-back. To serve him he borrowed Schneyer’s Polish-born servant Ludwig (who was to stay with him for the duration of his Russian visit). A janissary conducted the party, as Turkish law required, either till it caught up the Moldavian party or else passed out of Turkish territory. With him went a servant. The party was completed by a guide who was responsible for
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bringing back from Bucharest the horses ridden by Bentham and Ludvig and the two pack-animals, which carried their baggage. In all the expedition consisted of five men and seven horses. He reached Bucharest on 26 December.

1786 Bentham continued his journey to Russia, leaving Bucharest on or about 2 January after about a week's stay. Three days later he was at Jassy. After delays caused by the Greek Orthodox Christmas festivals, he got away from here on the 9th, crossed the Dniester into Polish territory near Soroka, and by 5/16 January had reached the Polish side of the Russian frontier at Bohopol, at the confluence of the Sinyuka and the Bug. Here he was held up first by the crossing of the Sinyuka and then by quarantine regulations at the Russian frontier town of Olviopol; but in a few days he was on his way, taking a roundabout route by Kremenchug to Krichëv, where he arrived on 10/21 February.

Bentham’s letters from Krichëv during the rest of 1786 give only a general impression of his life there. Early in the year Potëmkin gave his brother tenancy of a farm in the village of Zadobrast in a bend of the river Sozh about three miles from the township, and here Bentham spent much of his time busy writing in seclusion. Early in the spring a hint that their peace might be disturbed by a visit from their father was met by a superbly tactful intimation that circumstances might not then make this advisable. By the end of the year Bentham was well advanced with the drafts of what he described as ‘Essai sur les Recompenses’ (the basis of the Rationale of Reward) and had completed his work on the nature of civil law. At the same time he found energy to write his Panopticon Letters, describing his brother’s invention of a new form of industrial building described by him as an ‘inspection house’, which Bentham was quick to see also had other possibilities. At the end of December two copies of this work were dispatched to London, one to Jeremiah Bentham, the other, under cover of his agent, Richard King, to George Wilson, who was asked to see the work through the press.

Occasionally this existence was varied by a visit from one of Samuel’s Russian friends or still more rarely by a call on one of their neighbours. In August the brothers entertained the English member of parliament, Sir Richard Worsley, now on the last lap of an extended foreign tour, whom Bentham had already encountered at Smyrna and at Constantinople during his journey the previous autumn; and Bentham accompanied Worsley on a
trial voyage some sixty miles down the Sozh on the prototype of his brother's newly-invented articulated barge-train, which the brothers had christened the 'vermicular'. Reports Worsley brought with him to the effect that the British government intended to impose new legislative restrictions on rates of interest set Bentham's mind at work on the composition of the *Defence of Usury*. Now and again Bentham wrote business letters for Samuel, and at the end of the year a crisis in his brother's affairs at a time when Potёмкин demanded Samuel's attendance in the south occasioned for him a veritable flurry of correspondence.

1787 Although the Empress Catherine II passed through Krichëv early in February on the start of her great tour of south Russia and the recently annexed Crimean territory, Bentham remained secluded at Zadobrast. By this time he had carried his 'Essai sur les Recompenses' to such a state of completion as to send a copy to Wilson for his comments. He also wrote a long description of 'vermicular' to Wilson, in case there should be any way in which a provisional claim to a patent might be lodged. About the same time he was writing the *Defence of Usury*, which he sent off to Wilson for publication at the beginning of May. This was dispatched via St Petersburg, through the hands of Sergey Ivanovich Pleshcheyev, who, in accordance with Bentham's request, made some minor corrections to references to rates of interest in Russia. Despite a refusal to undertake any more such editorial work, which had crossed this in the post, Wilson did in fact see this pamphlet through the press and it was published towards the end of the year. However, further action on the Panopticon Letters was postponed on Bentham's instructions, chiefly, it seems, because of a temporary misunderstanding between him and his father due to interruption of mails. They were not to be published till 1791.

With the spring the settled life of the Bentham brothers at Zadobrast and Krichëv came to an end. At the beginning of May Samuel was called away to dance attendance on Potёмкин in the south, at least for so long as the Empress's tour lasted. Three weeks later Bentham learned that Potёмкин had sold Krichëv in connection with his purchase of a new estate further to the south-east at Smolian lower down the Dnieper. This was soon seen to imply the transfer there of various undertakings with which Samuel had been concerned. During the early summer Bentham was conducting a slightly embarrassed correspondence with his father about the
repayment of money which had been advanced by the elder Bentham in connection with some of Samuel's projects. He was now anxious to set out for home, but his brother's desire to see him once more before he left obliged him to give up the idea of taking ship from Riga and to plan an overland journey home in the autumn as soon as ice and snow had hardened the winter roads. However, a Turkish declaration of war on Russia on 5/16 August made a meeting between the brothers out of the question. Bentham had no wish to travel hundreds of miles further away from his homeward direction. Samuel was fully employed in the arming of a flotilla of light vessels in the Dnieper estuary. In Samuel's absence Bentham found himself inevitably drawn into the task of settling up Samuel's concerns and in particular seeing to the paying off of some of the British workmen for whom Samuel had no further employment. In consequence on the eve of his departure he became the victim of legal proceedings for the recovery of money claimed (unjustifiably Bentham thought) by one of his brother's Russian creditors. Though the details are not available, he appears to have extricated himself successfully, and he left Krichëv on his way home on 19/30 November. He reached Warsaw on 16 December, after a gruelling journey, of which he left a detailed account; stayed there only forty-eight hours; and by 27 December was at Berlin.

1788 Bentham passed about a fortnight at Berlin, leaving on or soon after 9 January. He spent the next two weeks 'crawling post from Berlin to Holland through vile roads' and reached home early in February. For some time he idled, feeling 'like a fish out of water', and renewing old acquaintanceships. Lansdowne was affable, consulted him on legal points connected with the trial of Warren Hastings, and asked him what sort of office he would like if he, Lansdowne, got back into power. By early May he was ready to move into a new country lodging—a farm-house at Hendon—where he could have absolute peace to get on with his writings and amuse himself with a 'superb' harpsichord on which he decided to squander sixty guineas. Here he spent most of his time henceforth with occasional visits to his parents and his step-brother Farr, at Farr's country house at Putney Heath. Save for one reference to affairs in France in a letter from Lansdowne, his correspondence up till the end of October reveals little but his absorbing interest in the Russian naval operations in the Liman of Ochakov, in which his brother (though he did not yet know this) was for a short time actively engaged.