

**A FEW OF HAMILTON'S LETTERS:  
INCLUDING HIS DESCRIPTION  
OF THE GREAT WEST INDIAN  
HURRICANE OF 1772. WITH  
PORTRAITS**

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A Few of Hamilton's Letters: Including His Description of the Great West Indian Hurricane of 1772. With Portraits by Alexander Hamilton & Gertrude Atherton

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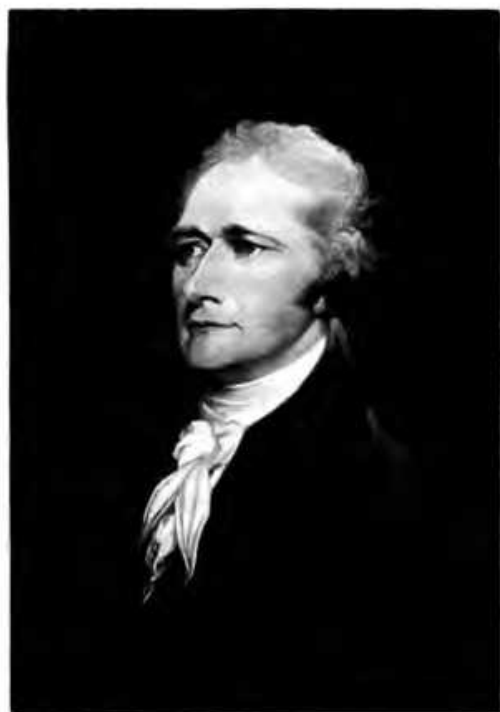
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**ALEXANDER HAMILTON & GERTRUDE ATHERTON**

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OF THE GREAT WEST INDIAN  
HURRICANE OF  
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*A Hamilton*

A FEW OF HAMILTON'S  
LETTERS

Alexander  
1  
1757-1804.  
A.C.

INCLUDING HIS DESCRIPTION OF  
THE GREAT WEST INDIAN  
HURRICANE OF 1772

EDITED BY

GERTRUDE ATHERTON

AUTHOR OF "THE CONQUEROR," "THE SPLENDID IDLE FORTIES"  
ETC., ETC.

WITH PORTRAITS

New York

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1903

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TO  
CAPTAIN WILLIAM RAMSING  
OF DENMARK  
AND  
THE REVEREND W. C. WATSON  
OF ST. CROIX, DANISH WEST INDIES  
FROM WHOM I HAVE RECEIVED INVALUABLE HELP  
IN MY RESEARCHES





## INTRODUCTION

HAMILTON'S entire correspondence, exclusive of his state papers, pamphlets, etc., fills three octavo volumes. Much of it is uninteresting to-day to any but a student of the past, and will never be approached by the general reader. Taken as a whole, the letters form almost a history of the times, but that history has been written more than once in a manner to require less effort on the part of the temperately inquiring mind. This selection has been made with a view to throw as much light as possible on the *man*. They reveal him in many of his moods, and although they have not, in every case, the high literary quality peculiar to his great reports and pamphlets, a few, the letter to Laurens, describing the capture and death of André, for instance, could hardly be improved upon. The letter to Duane is the most remarkable; and even by those to whom at first glance it may appear very long and very dry, it will well repay a careful study, — not only because in it a young man of twenty-three first hewed the foundation stones of a great

Republic, but because it throws many side-lights on the workings of Hamilton's mind and character. In it, indeed, are to be found indications of every part of the immediate and future Hamilton, with the sole exception of that not inconsiderable spot which was more than responsive to the other sex.

Those who would fill in the spaces which exist necessarily between the letters of this little collection, will find the missing links in the first, fifth, and sixth volumes of "The Works of Alexander Hamilton," J. C. Hamilton edition. They are in every public library. Those so fortunate as to possess the Lodge edition are not in need of instructions.

The letters to the Provincial Congress are to be found in the Journal of that body.

The letter to James Hamilton, Jr., and the correspondence with Burr are contained in the last pages of the "History of the Republic." The correspondence of Washington with Hamilton and Jefferson, regarding the battle in the Gazettes between the Secretaries, is copied from the tenth volume of Sparks' "Writings of George Washington."

The several letters *to* Hamilton, scattered through

this volume, are introduced for too obvious reasons to require explanation.

If Hamilton kept his love-letters, some true friend suppressed them after his death. But, reasoning from the well-known honour and wariness of his character, it is more than likely that he destroyed all such effusions promptly. But where are those he himself wrote? Not one to a woman but his wife has ever come to light. Had they outlasted him a generation they would have been bought or stolen by his enemies, and flung to the public long since. Perhaps he never wrote any. When a man has the brain thoroughly to appreciate his weakness for woman he is often very careful of himself on paper. And Hamilton's short life was a phenomenally busy one. It is a wonder he ever found time to make love; the inditing of his sentiments must surely have seemed superfluous. But his annual receipts must have been heavy.

The reviewers of "The Conqueror" have accused me of too much enthusiasm, which, logically, they decide has led to a violent partisanship and much one-sidedness. Probably no reviewer living has any enthusiasm left in him, — small blame to him, — and it is one of the peculiar weaknesses of human