turn Fishmongers & retail out by the Single fish that we may be able to obtain a living price." [24] To preserve a connection once made goods were held long periods for a rise in price and small shipments sometimes reported sold when they were still on hand. Wary of competition from all quarters, the brothers reported to each other gossip about freights, commission "deals," ship ownership, and to their correspondents vigorously defended any aspersions on their business ability.

> A person from Balte. has acquainted you that the people here are not punctual, it is true many are not so . . . but those who are can more readily & extensively obtain Credit it has ever been our endeavour to be so, we have the Credit of it & reap great advantage by it nor will we (if possible to avoid the contrary) sacrafice our reputation on any account however indifferent others may be about it & the man who told you it is an insinuating busybody who is using every art to gain business here at the expense of others & is wholly ignorant of it himself. . . .[25]

If all else failed against competition or complaint, a plea to provincial loyalty was tried:

> Let us trade together like friends & countrymen & not throw our business into the hands of those whom N. Englandmen are to consider as foreigners.[26]

In addition to maintaining the correspondence, Henry had many other activities to occupy him in November and December. He handled the few cargoes that came in, supervised the completion of the store on Hollingsworth's wharf, and thought much about the future. He believed timber could always be imported to Baltimore with profit and considered buying a ship, even a "grey haired" one, to engage in the timber trade. He thought about stocking retail stores in Baltimore and Virginia. He spent long hours studying plans for the distillery and caculating the cheapest means of getting house and equipment made and installed. Until the distillery was erected he urged the desirability of gaining some income from a bakehouse, ". . . as we can carry Bread as Cheap to New England as they can bake it there, or Cheaper on Accot of the advantages of purchasing flour low, and we can send it in Bulk." [27] By purchasing flour low, Henry meant exactly what he said, for he proposed that baking be done ". . . out of Flour that will not bear Inspection which is not perceptible in Bread." [28]

Throughout December Henry looked forward to the arrival of his younger half-brother George, especially since he wished his assistance in the store and in establishing connections in Virginia. Always business minded, he advised George to ". . . set off in a Clever Sley to get as far as he can on with it, as there are no such things here, or at least they are very scarce." [29]

[24] Henry Johnson to Daniel Sargent, January 2, 174, JJLB.
[25] George Johonnot to John Bromfield, September 4, 1784, JJLB.
[26] George Johonnot to John Bromfield, August 18, 1784, JJLB.
[27] Henry Johnson to Francis Johonnot, January 10, 1784, JJLB.
[28] Henry Johnson to Johnson, Johonnot, and Co., December 26, 1783, JJLB.
[29] Henry Johnson to Johnson, Johonnot, and Co., December 26, 1783, JJLB.