Before George and the sley arrived, however, the ice did. From January 8 to March 25, the harbor was frozen, business came to a halt and Henry, alone, had ample time to describe the situation and his reaction to it to his correspondents. Initially he took care to explain what the freezing of the harbor meant to Baltimore:

> Our trade at present being chiefly with the Country round us here Consequently the demand for Goods is not so great, as our dependence is on our Eastern & Western Shore Trade by water that being finished on accot of the ice, making Business dull at present.[30]
> Trade is at present dull owing to our Trade by water being stopt *in Consequence of the Rivers being froze up,* which is our greatest support, our Trade by Land being trifling to the other.[31]

As February passed, he became concerned with the financial aspects of the freeze:

> I have no news to comunicate to you, except the scarcity of cash which is horrible—A Bank is on foot to be established here by May next—If that should take place I am in hopes we shall do better. It will give us nearly all the Bay Trade.[32]

On the first of March between restlessness at the inactivity and sympathy for the suffering of those on the boats caught in the ice, he could still joke:

> We have several Vessels in the Bay driftin about—The Bermudians have their Supply of Corn from Norfolk on Sleas from that they Transport it to Antigua on the same Vehicles—[33]

But by March 8, he was out of patience and wrote to Francis,

> I have to say you are a hell of a fellow for Swearing. Have not I wrote you every post that we are froze up, and no Business is doing here, in that Case how the Devil can I give you a price Current. I wish to God the Ice would go that we might have somebody to purchase then we should know what Goods are worth. Tell your correspondents that all the Business is done by Water at Balto. The Instant the harbour is froze up & Trade is totally stagnated.[34]

With the market idle, Henry had time to write fuller observations about Baltimoreans (". . . they are naturally indolent here")[36] and the Baltimore market:

> People in general prefer the Claret in Bottles tho' the Cask maybe equally as good, as the Bottle—Bottles are very scarce here & very few know any thing of bottling off their own Liquors here.[36]
> Mackarel is not so material for this reason—the poorer of people eat the Mackarel and the Richer eat of the Cod which will not go down here without *Butter & Eggs*—the poor are not able to purchase these Articles.[37]

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[30] Henry Johnson to Daniel Sargent, January 2, 1784, JJLB.
[31] Henry Johnson to Enoch Brown, January 6, 1784, JJLB.
[32] Henry Johnson to Francis Johonnot, February 24, 1784, JJLB.
[33] Henry Johnson to Francis Johonnot, March 1, 1784, JJLB.
[34] Henry Johnson to Francis Johonnot, March 8, 1784, JJLB.
[35] Henry Johnson to Noah Parker, February 21, 1784, JJLB.
[36] Henry Johnson to Enoch Brown, January 6, 1784, JJLB.
[37] Henry Johnson to Howes and Downes, March 3, 1784, JJLB.