

Marshal Bellefleur, who is actually in London, is charged with a Commission from the French Court, and that it partly tends to facilitate the Conclusion of a Convention between the English and French East India Companies.

Fourteen Men of War of the Line are put into Commission, 12 of which are of 60 Guns and upwards, and two of 50 Guns.

This Morning the Duke of Newcastle kiss'd his Majesty's Hand on being appointed First Lord Commissioner of the Treasury.

March 11. A few Days ago was finally determined a Cause brought by Appeal before his Majesty in Council, in which William Vassal, Esq; a Gentleman of Boston, in New England, was Appellant, and William Fletcher, of the same Place, Respondent. The Suit was commenced originally at Boston, by the said Fletcher, against Mr. Vassal, for Defamation. Fletcher had been in London to solicit the Recovery of some Prize Money for a Privateer or two that were present at the taking of Cape Breton; and, succeeding in Part of his Claim, he made at his return to Boston, such an elegant Appearance, that he became the Subject of Conversation. Mr. Vassal having said in public Company that Fletcher had little or nothing of his own to support his Grandeur or made use of Words to that Purpose, an Action was brought against him, and a Verdict was given in Favour of Fletcher for 1500 l. Sterling, Damages and Costs, which is near 16000 l. Currency, and which Mr. Vassal was obliged to pay: But, by Virtue of the Charter granted to that Province, he has since appealed to his Majesty in Council, who has been pleased to reverse the former Judgment, and to decree the said William Vassal, Esq; Repayment of the Money, with Interest and all Costs.

Last Saturday near 100 Convicts under Sentence of Transportation, were conveyed from Newgate to Blackwall, and there put on board the Thames Frigate, Captain Dobbins, bound for Maryland.

Extracts from two Letters from Virginia.

Williamsburg, Dec. 16, 1753. We have at length checked in the Lottery House, this new and extravagant Demand of a Golden Fee for passing every Patent of above 400 Acres. The Authorities produced to us on our Address, were only fit to be left neglected on our Table, since the taxing us one Penny without our full Consent, ought to be opposed to the utmost. Twenty five hundred Pounds have been voted to support our Cause at home, and we depend on the Weight of all the mercantile Interest there. A great Number of these Patents are delayed for the Payment of this Pistol; and many Hundreds of the German Protestants may, perhaps, leave us; for how should they, poor Creatures, raise this Pistol, to secure the perpetual Possession of their new Estates? But these are the blessed Practices of the Desires of our old Constitution in Church and State; your true N—b C—y Whig being always arbitrary in Power, and factious out of it.

Virginia, Dec. 22, 1753. Your favourite Observation may be true, but it is certainly true, that "no Public News from our Colonies is good News." I heartily wish I had none to send you now; but our worthy Governor's Obedience (though with the unanimous Consent of his Council) to the Directions he received from home, for demanding sixteen Shillings and Sixpence Sterling, on granting every Portion exceeding 400 Acres of the Crown Land, has been so represented by those who delight in Confusion, (notwithstanding some of them are professedly Messengers of Peace) that we are at present absolutely possessed by those horrid Fiends, frantic Zeal, and blind Opposition.

"A Demand! made as an Act of Duty, which the Head of this Country owes to the Head of yours; which must be confessed moderate enough, for ascertaining the Property and Inheritance of an Estate of no dissimilable Extent, in the lowest Instance; and which, in Truth, no actual cultivating Proprietor of his distinct Portion, (who alone deserves the Countenance of the Mother Country) could either be unable or unwilling to comply with.

"This Demand of sixteen Shillings and Sixpence (and some Acknowledgment, reasonable Men have long expected should be settled), has been treated as the greatest Extortion, those who should submit to it proscribed, an Agent solemnly appointed to solicit against it at home, and ten Times the Sum necessary to defray the Expence of his Errand irregularly raised for that Purpose. In the mean Time, the King's most gracious Intimation to us, to attend to the daily Encroachments of the Enemy on our Frontier; and the Offers of present Assistance, have been totally neglected, with all our interior Concerns; and our Burgesses separated this Week, without a single Step taken either in the Militia, Forts, Tobacco, &c. for the Security of the Public, or the Regulation of Individuals.—Some have been wild enough to assert,

that the Governor's Pistol Tax, as they ridiculously call it, will drive away those foreign Families that have settled here, each at fifty Times that Expence. And it is at present forgotten, that Mr. DUNWIDDIE was not less acceptable to Virginia for his private Circumstances than public Virtues; that he was no hungry unknown Courtier sent hither to recruit a shattered Estate, but will more probably leave a Fortune with us than draw one from us: Nor will this absurd Buffle admit the Remembrance of his having spent his Life hitherto in promoting Integrity in Office, and planning the Security of British America. A candid Retrospection would soon convince every Opponent, that our Governor has been equally distant from Injustice and Oppression, wherever resident; but as no Man is fit to command, that knows not how to obey, his Perseverance, in the present Case, ought not to be censured by any."

CHARLES-TOWN, South-Carolina, March 12.

On Sunday, the 3d Inst. a most shocking and barbarous Murder was committed on the High Road, about a Mile from Charles Town, by John Toomer, upon the Body of William Butler, Son of Thomas. They were both young Gentlemen of good Families, Inhabitants of Prince William's Parish, intimate Acquaintance, and near Neighbours; had slept in one House the Night before this unhappy Affair, breakfasted and rode together about 8 Miles that Morning, when they alighted, in Company with another Gentleman they had met; and then Mr. Toomer offered the Deceased a Pistol, who not accepting it, he fired in his Face, and after he fell, discharged the other thro' his Head, then charged his Pistols again, mounted his Horse, and rode off full Speed.

On the Receipt of the above Account at Charles-Town, his Excellency JAMES GLEN, Esq; Governor of that Province, issued a Proclamation, with a Reward of 500 l. Currency, for apprehending the above mentioned John Toomer; who is about 28 Years of Age, six Feet high, red Hair, ruddy Complexion, and the Fingers of his left Hand cramped. WILLIAMSBURG.

April 25. Last Saturday Night, about Eight o'Clock, a terrible Fire broke out in the Store of Mr. Charles Osborne, of this City, which burnt for two Hours with great Vehemence, and entirely consumed the same, together with two Dwelling Houses and a Jeweller's Shop, adjoining; but was, by the Vigilance and Activity of several Gentlemen present, prevented from doing any further Mischief, the whole Loss is computed at upwards of Five Thousand Pounds.

ANNAPOLIS.

Yesterday the General Assembly of this Province met, when his Excellency the Governor opened the Session with the following SPEECH, viz.

Gentlemen of the Upper and Lower Houses, of Assembly,

I AM very much concerned that the great Progress, the vast Preparations, and the avowed Designs, of our common Enemy, whose Encroachments and Depredations on his Majesty's Territories, occasioned our last Meeting, have necessitated the neighbouring Governments to repeat again, most earnestly, their Solicitations for us to engage and unite with them, in supporting his Majesty's just Right and Pretensions to these his American Dominions, at this Time attacked and invaded. Some Letters and Papers that I shall submit to your Perusal, will shew to what a Pass Matters are already come; what Armaments have been and are now making against us; what Wrongs and Indignities the Enemy hath already offered; with what Arrogance they presume to obstruct the Freedom of a Commerce that has been enjoyed by our Ancestors, without Interruption, ever since the English first made Settlements on the Continent.

The particular and express Orders which his Majesty has been pleased to give for raising Fortresses on the Ohio, and the Resolutions taken in a neighbouring Colony, after the most abundant Caution, as they serve to confirm me, in my private Opinion, concerning the indubitable Property of the Country Westward of these Provinces, may, I hope, with some Effect be urged to obviate and remove such Scruples and Doubts as have lately been started, about the Extent of his Majesty's American Dominions.

Did I think such Motives were wanting, I might set before you the Examples of the several Provinces around us, to warm and incite you to a generous Emulation of the laudable Zeal they have shewn for the common Cause, and to a just Repentment of the Insults that have been offered the British Name and Dignity: But from a Persuasion that you will be actuated by more noble Principles, than such as arise from the Fear of Censure, I shall satisfy myself with reminding you, that the Enterprize which the Virginians have begun, and

the neighbouring Governments unanimously engaged to prosecute, is undertaken for the Preservation of our common Safety, and that its Mismanagement must be productive of the most fatal Consequences: A due Reflexion on this, I am willing to believe, will sufficiently prompt you to a Performance of the Duty we owe our Sovereign, our Fellow Subjects, Ourselves, and our Posterity. How conducive it would be to the Success of this important Expedition, and to our future Security, to prevail on those Indian Nations, whom the Artifices and Insinuations of our Enemy have hitherto been unable to seduce, to espouse our Cause vigorously at this critical Juncture, I leave your own Reason to suggest to you; That and the cogent Arguments contained in some Letters that shall be offered to your Consideration, will, I am persuaded, convince you of the indispensable Necessity there is of complying with his Majesty's Pleasure, signified to us by the Lords of Trade, concerning an Interview with the Six Nations at Albany; and will also induce you to consent that the Commissioners for this Province, be vested with Power and Liberty to concert Measures, and stipulate with the several Persons that may be deputed thither by the other Provinces, for building Ports and Places for the Reception and Defence of the Indian Wives and Families on Occasion, who must otherwise (while the Warriors are engaged from home in our Service) be deserted and abandoned to the Rage of their incensed and revengeful Enemies.

Upon no Account would I divert your Attention from what has been now premised; but as I perceive that the Pleasantness of the Season will, after the Dispatch of what I have been recommending to have the first Place in your Consultations, tempt you to proceed to other Business, I cannot but take Occasion to acquaint you, with the Pennsylvania Government's having shewed some Inclination to pass a Law, for the more effectual Punishment of such Persons as shall counterfeit and utter, among them, the Paper Currency of this and the other Provinces; as such an Act would be an additional Support to the Credit of our Currency, I flatter myself you will encourage it's being passed, by preparing a similar Law for the Support of the Credit of their Paper Currency among us.

The excessive Charge and Burthen this Country is at present subjected to, by the great Increase of Pensioners in several of our Counties, I believe, might be hinted at, as calling for, and capable of, a Remedy; if it be truly represented, that the Distribution of the great Sums, annually collected for the Relief of the Poor, as it is now made, instead of being an Encouragement to and Reward of Industry, proves too frequently an Incitement only to Debauchery and Idleness.

Shall I also take the Liberty of intimating what considerable Benefit must accrue to the Inhabitants, and what Honour must redound to yourselves, from the Foundation of a more perfect and more public Seminary of Learning in this Province; a Scheme This, long since put in Execution among our Neighbours, to whom our Youth are still obliged, much to the Disadvantage and Discredit of this Province, to recur for a liberal Education: Of such an Establishment, your Descendants and late Posterity will reap the Advantage, and remember the present Age with Gratitude. From my Knowledge of what vast Pleasure and Satisfaction his Lordship receives, from being able to contribute to, and promote, the Reputation, Honour and Prosperity of this Province, I will presume to encourage you to expect something more than his bare Approbation of such a Proposal.

Last Month very considerable Damages were done in Baltimore County by the Firing of the Woods: On Monday the 15th, the Wind came at N. W. blew fresh, and was attended with a great Mist or Smoak, and continued for about a Week, (the Woods being on Fire from the S. W. and N. W. to the N. of Joppa) and the Fire continued for some Days after, so that the People were constantly employed in endeavouring to prevent it's running to their Plantations, and few dare leave their Homes. The Rev. Mr. Deans had his Corn Field Fence destroyed; and about 600 Cords of Wood cut for Mr. Lawton's Iron Works, and a large Quantity for Mr. Onion's, were likewise thereby burnt and destroyed; and it is feared many small Cottages in the back Parts belonging to poor People, have met with the same Fate. It is supposed the Fire began in the Barrens about 12 Miles from Joppa.

Friday last the Malatto Fellow, condemn'd at the Assizes in St. Mary's County, was executed there. On his Trial he pleaded Guilty, as to the Rape and Murder committed on the little Girl; and was afterwards confessed to the Priest, his murdering the Widow Westells last Fall. He was hang'd near

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