

# The MARYLAND GAZETTE, REVISED.

[XXI<sup>st</sup> Year.]

THURSDAY, February 20, 1766.

[N<sup>o</sup>. 1068.]

FROM A LATE NORTHERN PAPER.

My Dear COUNTRYMEN,

**W**HILE our Courts of Justice are shut up, in Deference to a Law passed in Defiance to the first Principles of the Constitution, and my Country is groaning under the Difficulties arising from it, as well as exposing Herself to infinitely greater, I cannot be silent. I cannot help giving Vent to the Fulness of my Heart on this alarming Occasion, and hope my Forwardness will be forgiven, as it flows from a strong Solicitude for our common Interests. Perhaps some Gentlemen of Abilities may take the Hint to set the Subject in the striking Light this Conjunction deserves.

It has been demonstrated, that our stopping Business will draw after it the most ruinous Consequences, and that the most effectual Method to obtain a Repeal of that detestable Act, is, perfectly to disregard it, and behave ourselves as far as possible in all Respects as if it did not exist. If more Arguments are required to fasten a full Conviction of this in every Mind, I could easily add them: When I reflect on the Subject with but very small Attention, they pour in upon me from every Quarter---but they are needless. The public Voice concurs in this Sentiment. What then do we wait for? Is it not as clear as the Sun at Noon Day, that it is absurd to pay any Regard to a Law made by a Body of Men, who have no more Legislative Authority over us than those that lived before the Flood? Do we not all profess an inviolable Attachment to our Constitution, and an unalterable Resolution to maintain it? Why then do we in the least give Way to a wicked Attempt to subvert it altogether? Have we not the Means in our Hands to baffle all such Attempts effectually, without failing in our Duty to Great-Britain or our native Country? The Means of Defence proposed are of the most pacific Nature: they cannot offend the most scrupulous Consciences, all Denominations may join Heartily in them. Frugality, Industry, steady Resolution and Unanimity are the only Weapons our Cause requires, and these every One may wield from the Highest to the Lowest. Are we waiting to see what the neighbouring Provinces will do? They probably are also waiting to see what we will do; and at this Rate, while each is hanging back till others begin, we may wait on to Eternity. But we are not without Examples of a glorious Forwardness to break the Shackles of Tyranny. Boston, Rhode-Island, and Maryland have generously led the Way; they have opened their Courts and administered Justice as usual. Shall we then stand trifling and hesitating, when some of the smaller and weaker Colonies have exposed themselves foremost in the common Cause? But why wait for Examples in so clear a Case? We ought to be nobly emulous of the Honour of being First to manifest our Love of Liberty and Contempt of every insolent Attack upon it: Backwardness is dishonourable as well as hurtful in the highest Degree, as it shews great Meanness of Spirit, and is one of the strongest Invitations of Oppression in the World.

Can any be at a Loss how we must proceed to open the Courts of Justice? We have nothing to do but assemble ourselves together in such Places as are most convenient, and declare our united Resolution to submit to and maintain the Laws of our Country. Let Magistrates of all Ranks be requested to discharge their Offices, and let all that have any Weight or Influence join to support them. We have an indubitable Right to have Justice administered; none pretends to say we have forfeited it: Let us then boldly claim it: While it is denied us we are robbed of the most essential Benefit of Society: Let us endure the Robbery no longer; every Moment we patiently submit to it we are shamefully neglecting our Duty to Ourselves, and

Posterity. Public Officers have no Right to oppose the Voice of their Country, she supports them in Dignity to do Justice, not to restrain it. He that shews any Reluctance against doing his Duty, deserves the Brand of a public Enemy. But I hope better Things of all our Magistrates: I dare answer for them, that they will be as ready to comply with our Requests as we are to make them. I am not recommending Riots and Tumults: It can be no Breach of the Laws of Nature nor of our Country for People to assemble together peaceably and resolve to submit to those Laws, and demand their Execution, though Tyrants may call it Seditious and Treasonable; and so they will every Thing that is done in Opposition to their lawless Will and Pleasure.

Tyranny, my dear Countrymen, is rattling her Chains over our Heads, and will rivet them upon us, if we sleep much longer; Tyranny, that worst of Plagues angry Heaven ever inflicts on a Rebel World! This extirpates Mankind more effectually than the Sword, Famine, Pestilence, or wild Beasts. It has laid waste many of the finest Regions of the Earth, and transformed whole Countries, once swarming with Inhabitants, and the delightful Seats of Liberty and Learning into little better than a howling Wilderness. Italy, Greece, Asia Minor, and Palestine, Once were Free; and for Populousness like one continued City, but ever since they have lost their Liberty they have been losing their People, and now many Parts of them are quite depopulated. Little strikes the Traveller but Scenes of Ruin and Desolation; and the few remaining Inhabitants are in the lowest Degree of Wretchedness imaginable. This will be the woeful Condition of these Colonies, if ever they shall be enslaved. Let us not expect gentler Treatment than others; unlimited Power is not to be trusted in the Hands of any but a Being of infinite Wisdom and Goodness; Men always have and will abuse it. It is the very Nature of Tyranny to produce these tremendous Effects: to submit to it is to deliver up ourselves and all our Posterity to be butchered by Peacemeal; it is virtually to murder unnumbered Millions. Such a Complication of Misery and Despair is too shocking for the Imagination to dwell upon; what then must it be to see and feel its unmitigated Horrors! Who would not prefer Gibbets, Fires, and Racks, if by them he could save his Country from such a horrid Train of Woes? Can there be found such a Miferant as One not determined to run the utmost Risk to keep out this infernal Monster? Surely such a Wretch does not disgrace the Continent. Our Blood should boil at her first Approaches, and the least Appearance of a sneaking Submission should be the Object of our Abhorrence. But our suffering the Channels of Justice to be stopped, because a villainous Ministry have contrived one of the most hellish Schemes to ruin us, that ever was hatched by merciless Policy, has at least such an Appearance. It is a vile Badge of Slavery lying at our Doors. It is putting it out of our Power to stand our Ground long against a Destruction that will waste at Noon Day. Oh my Country! my Country! Are there none to arise and resent thy Wrongs! Has the Genius of Liberty fled never to return! Is it come to this that we are ready to give up our dearest Rights without any farther Struggle, after all our boasted Love of them! Oh Shame! Oh Scandal! Shalt thou be enslaved by the parricidal Conduct of thy free-born Sons! It cannot be. We dare rise and dash the most horrid Engine of Tyranny that ever was framed. We scorn to let our Enemies suspect we have not the Spirit of Freemen. Ye Gentlemen of the Law, your Country calls upon you to exert yourselves to vindicate her from Oppression; and you love her too well to let her call in vain. You have shewn her what she may expect from you by your noble Example of disinterestedness in sacrificing your private Gain to the public Good, when you cheerfully resolved to

give up your Business, rather than touch the fatal Stamps. Your known Acquaintance with the Constitution is such that you cannot doubt of the Propriety of the Measure proposed. You have been strenuous Assertors of our Rights; our Eyes are upon you. We expect you, Gentlemen, will lead the Way, as your Profession requires, and you will fix yourselves in the Esteem of every free-born Son of America.

Ye Merchants, who have also given a generous Specimen of your Zeal in the common Cause by stopping your Orders for Goods; you have declined to reap the Profits of a Trade your Country's Interest forbids you to carry on. You have by this secured the public Esteem, and shewn an Example of Patriotism fit for the Imitation of future Ages. Your Influence, Gentlemen, is very considerable, and can do much towards our Deliverance in this critical Juncture. Resolve to maintain the Validity of all Writings on unstamped Paper, and their Credit will soon be as universal as before. Your Country calls for your Assistance, and I am sure you have too keen a Sense of her Wrongs to deny it.

Ye Sons of LIBERTY in every Province, who have proved yourselves her true Votaries by your undaunted Struggles to defend her. Your glorious Efforts animated the most drooping Spirits and almost dissipated our tears. Your injured, insulted Country places her chief Confidence in you; she implores, she demands your Courage and Unanimity once more; and I am sure you are better Patriots than ever to let her demand in Vain. You bravely prevented the Distribution of the Stamps, and put it beyond the Power of the hardiest Ministers of Oppression to issue them; so that our Fears are over from that Quarter. For this you are never thought of but with Gratitude. But while Justice is denied to the Injured, and the Honest, and Industrious are embarrassed in their most necessary Business by the Occlusion of the Courts of Law, your Victory is not complete. One vigorous Effort more, and the Day is your own; unite your Influence to open every public Office; let it be insisted upon as our Right: Take no Denial, and none will dare to risk your Resentment. Then will the Cause of Liberty be triumphant, and Tyranny lie gasping at her Feet. But let the Peace of Individuals, unless they declare themselves Enemies to their Country, be undisturbed: This your generous Behaviour hitherto gives us a Right to expect.

We cannot be enslaved unless we enslave Ourselves; nothing is necessary to break at once the Fetters that have been forged for us, so that it shall be forever beyond the Power and Skill of all the first Ministers that may ever plague the Nation, to mend them, but our unanimous Resolution to do it. Let us only strike the Stroke, the Undertaking will afterwards finish itself. If we lie still, all Posterity will scorn and detest us as Traitors to the Cause of Liberty. Many of us have vindicated our Country's Wrongs in the bloody Field, have despised the Yells of Savages and trod down the Armies of France. Shall we then crouch to Tyranny obtruding itself under the Sanction of a Law, when we have defied foreign Legions to force it upon us? Have Native Americans stood undaunted before the roaring Cannon, and shall they be affrighted at the Threats of haughty Ministers, and their vile Instruments? We have shewn our Firmness of Soul in facing the most hideous Forms of Death, we may shew it now in a Way not less beneficial to our Country. The steady Patriot deserves no less Honour than the Hero. How would our glorious Ancestors have behaved in this Juncture; would those renowned Worthies, who with such insipid Toil formed and delivered to us their generous Plan of Liberty, have stood hesitating and trifling when an outrageous Attempt was made to subvert it at once? The immortal Hampden would not pay one Farthing