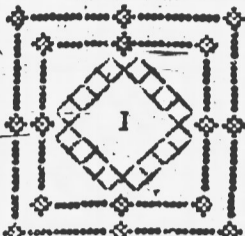


MARYLAND GAZETTE

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1773.

To the INHABITANTS OF MARYLAND.



I AM one of those invisible spirits created by the great, the all-ruling GENIUS of the universe, to preside more immediately over the politicks and government of civilized societies. We inhabit the element of thinner air, called ether by philosophers, midway between the moon and this earthly orb; but our abode is not confined to that expanse alone; we can tread the ooze of the salt deep, run upon the sharp wind of the north, do business in the veins of the earth, dive into the fire, and ride on the curled clouds, penetrate the compact and solid walls of palaces and temples; be invisible in the midst of whispering politicians, fearing the very winds should bear their plots, and counsels.—We cannot pry into the deep recesses of the human mind, but we can guess, almost with certainty, at its secret thoughts, affections, and designs, by a lively and quick perception of the outward emotions of the countenance. Future events we cannot foretell with absolute certainty; these are only known to the great GENIUS; our existence however being coeval with the world, and our memory of past events retentive, complete and perfect, our knowledge of the causes, which have produced the various vicissitudes in the different governments of the earth, enables us to judge of what is to happen, with a certitude approaching to infallibility. We haunt the guilty politician in his dreams, and supply the place of a waking ulcerated conscience: we fill his imagination with terrors and with scenes of death; we lead him up in fancy to the giddy height of some frightful precipice, and then hurl him headlong down the vast depth. Such are our employments; ever attentive to and watching over the conduct of rulers, legislators, and politicians intrusted with the administration of government.—Toward the latter end of the month of November, in the year of the Christian era 1770, I was commanded to take my stand near the staid-house in your metropolis, where I diligently observed all that was passing in, or near that edifice; then it was that I overheard the conversation, which I now communicate to you mortals whom it most concerns; depend upon its authenticity, we spirits never lie. The pernicious designs of some of your citizens are now disclosed; profit by the discovery, slight not this friendly admonition.

ARIEL.

A Dialogue between an OFFICER, and a LAWYER, and LAYMAN, Members of Assembly.

Officer. Good Heavens, Sir, how fatal an insatiation has overtaken you Gentlemen of the Bar! what in the name of God could induce you to act so strange, so unaccountable a part! were you apprehensive, that the UPPER HOUSE, composed chiefly of Officers, would concur with the patriotic party in passing a Law injurious to your profession? Considering the close connexion of our mutual interests, you could not seriously apprehend any such design; and I am confident the Patriots without our uniting with them against you, or your joining with them against us, never could have brought matters to this pass. It is true, in consequence of your unexpected, and unprovoked desertion, out of mere spite, and in an angry mood, we sent a Bill down to your House, which, had it passed, would have effectually ruined your brethren, and have answered in the end all our purposes.

Lawyer. YOUR INTENTION was easily seen through; and therefore your Bill was unanimously rejected. The LAWYERS were not apprehensive of a confederacy between the Lay-Members of their House, and the Officers in yours. We knew you would take no step to hurt us provided we would let you quietly enjoy your old salaries; we were also sensible, that an union betwixt us would long elude, if not entirely baffle all the efforts of patriotism, to relieve this country from oppression. I will briefly explain to you the motive of my conduct. I reflected that if the Inspection Law should be continued for any length of time on its late footing, that the GOOD PEOPLE of MARYLAND, in the course of some years, would be ear up by OFFICERS, CLERGYMEN, and LAWYERS; that, oppression would occasion one of these two evils, either a total dependency and extinction of liberty, or anarchy and subversion of government; that, the people made desperate by necessity would endeavor to overthrow a system of policy oppressive and unequal, or might be provoked to get rid of their oppressions, by methods the most violent

Ariel seems here to allude to the dreams of a certain politician, called by the first Citizen The wicked Minister. I have heard that he has heretofore been sorely troubled with uneasy dreams; that he has frequently dreamed of falling from the top of the monument of London, and of fighting battles with his enemies; and that once waking in the transports of his fury, he brake a glass tumbler instead of killing his antagonist.

SCRIBLERUS.

and unjustifiable. Grievances ought never to be suffered to run on, and get to such a height, as to occasion dangerous commotions. Whatever sentiments you may entertain of my conduct, I can assure you, it has been regulated by principle; and I believe, I may safely say as much for my brethren.

Officer. How awkward is this declaration in the mouth of a LAWYER! As well might a Politician talk of honesty and sincerity, as a LAWYER of principle; I do not credit a syllable of what you have said.

Lawyer. A Courtier, and so little politeness! Whatever other good qualities he might want, I always imagined politeness, at least, essential to his character; but I perceive Court-bredness has not yet refined and polished your manners; you still retain certain marks of rusticity, which cannot be rubbed off on a sudden. However, since you will have it, that a LAWYER cannot act upon principle, suppose we acted from caution and policy.

Officer. How! caution and policy! Do you call a measure, which has so considerably reduced your incomes, cautious and political? If this be policy it is to me most incomprehensible; pray explain yourself.

Lawyer. I think it more advisable to have a moderate income on a secure, than a large one, on a precarious footing. As I said before, things would not long have gone on in the old way, without producing one of the effects just now mentioned.

Officer. Visionary fears! You was too timorous; I am satisfied, the present set of OFFICERS, LAWYERS and CLERGYMEN would have continued to receive without diminution their late fees, and dues; perhaps the discontented might have grumbled a little; I know the people can bear a great deal; they are not so easily roused by oppression, or misled by popular leaders, as we sometimes suggest in our messages to your House; and whatever might be their inclination, I am sure a good understanding and self-willing among OFFICERS, LAWYERS, and CLERGYMEN, would effectually curb the populace, and keep it in subjection. Those three orders of men acting in conjunction have been an overmatch for all the world besides.

Lawyer. I am not quite so sanguine, as you seem to be; but admitting your confidence to be justly grounded, have you no compassion for your country? Do you not wish well to it? Are you not interested in its prosperity? Have you not as deep a stake as any man in its safety? Consider, Sir, what a wretched state it would soon be reduced, if no prudent men, but Officers, Lawyers and Churchmen were to be found in it; in time too great a share of the wealth of the province would center in them. LAWYERS I own, have sometimes united with the other two orders, to oppress their fellow subjects, and to establish tyranny, guided by a policy equally criminal, and weak. OUR profession can never flourish but in a free government; at least it can in no other obtain a real consequence, and weight. INDIVIDUALS of it may amass wealth; but of what significance is wealth, where the possession of it is insecure, where it may draw on the possessor the persecution of a rapacious and all-powerful Minister! You see our conduct has been directed by policy as well as principle.

Officer. If a reduction of our incomes was thought necessary, why were you not satisfied with that very considerable one, which we consented to, by offering to take our fees in money at the rate of twelve shillings and six-pence currency for every hundred pounds of tobacco? Surely by dispassionate people, that concession will be deemed great enough, and perhaps greater, than what was at first expected by the majority of your House.

Lawyer. If the difference between the selling price of tobacco for some years past and twelve shillings and six-pence currency per hundred pounds be solely considered, the reduction is certainly considerable; but the principle which originally established, and reasonably enough, the different modes of payment by planters, and farmers, can no longer be supported. At the passing of the late Inspection Law in 1747, twelve shillings and six-pence currency was thought the just equivalent of 100 lb. of tobacco; some years after that period, tobacco greatly increased in value; nor was that increase in the price (as has been falsely and designedly suggested) owing solely to the Inspection Law, and to the encouragement given by it to farmers, induced by which numbers left off making tobacco, but to other causes, the scarcity of the crops, and to the practice, not long since introduced, of purchasing tobacco in the country. It is absurd, it is unjust, that a planter should pay forty shillings for the same service, which costs the farmer only twenty; such absurdity, such injustice can find no advocates even in your House; even the alternative of paying tobacco, or money, at the option of the planter, which you now urge as a proof of your disinterestedness, reasonable as it was, was extorted from you; you did not make the offer, till the LAWYERS had publicly advertised to take 12/6 currency per 100 lb. in lieu of their tobacco fees; till then you had some hopes that a reconciliation between Officers and Lawyers might take place, and that they would still, perhaps, unite in defence of their joint in-

terests, as they had done on former occasions. You have yielded to necessity, and yet you cannot claim the slender merit of having yielded with a good grace. In reducing your fees, we are not, I apprehend, to consider what they have been, but what they ought to be. In many instances, the fees, as regulated by the old table, are too great; on an inspection of that table it will appear, that many articles are become common place charges, where no service is done; it will also appear, that where from the want of precision, or from the doubtfulness of expression, a colourable pretext has been afforded for a new charge, combined interest and ingenuity have seized on the opportunity of making the charge and succeeding Officers have adopted it. I hat any and considerable abuses have crept into practice by unwarrantable methods of charging under the old table of fees, none but an interested and prejudiced person can deny; to correct those abuses we formed a new table of fees.

Officer. If a correction of abuses was principally intended, why did you not accept the offer made by the JUDGES of the Land Office, the SECRETARY and COMMISSARY GENERAL, to receive a stated income of £. 600 sterling per annum in lieu of all fees, perquisites, and emoluments of office? Had you consented to that proposal, you might then have made what reform you would have been deemed proper, and have corrected all abuses.

Lawyer. We did not accept that offer because it was thought insolent, and extravagant; insolent in making yourselves judges of your own merit, and services; extravagant, in over rating them; we had other reasons for rejecting it; if fixed salaries were to be allowed to those Officers, and in consideration thereof, the fees heretofore paid to them, were to be paid to the public, we apprehended that such a novelty in our constitution might occasion a remissness, and inattention in those Gentlemen to their duty, and might introduce many inconveniences, which an entire new system is ever liable to, and which could not be foreseen, or guarded against till felt, and perhaps not even then be effectually prevented for the future. The sum demanded appeared also unreasonable in another view. There are very few Gentlemen, who neat as much from their lands, after employing great care, industry, and labour, to improve them; the requisite, duty, and trouble in executing those offices are by no means proportionable to so large an annual salary as £. 600 sterling; deputies do the drudgery of the business for inconsiderable wages compared to that sum, and the principals have full leisure and time to attend to their private concerns.

Officer. Well then, what salary do you imagine would be thought reasonable? What would you for instance allow the GREAT OFFICERS of Government, the SECRETARY, COMMISSARY GENERAL, and JUDGES of the Land-Office.

Lawyer. Do not think, Sir, to impose on me by high sounding words; you may, if you please, call the REGISTRARS of the Land-Office, JUDGES; the Clerk of the Provincial Court and Register in Chancery you may grace with the appellation of SECRETARY; the COMMISSARY GENERAL, provided he does his duty, deserves a good salary, but his services hitherto have certainly been over-rated, and over-paid; that station I own, requires a man of integrity, an application to business, and well versed in the Common, Statute, and Provincial Laws; a LAWYER ONLY, I think, ought to be COMMISSARY.

Officer. ONCE I thought so too; but I am now of opinion that one nearly related to a Lawyer may do as well; nothing so common as to change our opinions, on a change of circumstances. A PERSON OF GOOD SENSE AND CHARACTER AND WELL ACQUAINTED WITH OUR ACTS OF ASSEMBLY, IS AS WELL QUALIFIED FOR THE COMMISSARY'S OFFICE AS ANY LAWYER WHATSOEVER; but answer my question, how much would you be willing to allow Us? No equivocation, Sir: What in your estimation would be genteel and worth a Gentleman's acceptance? Come, none of your subtleties; be explicit.

Lawyer. As the tranquillity and welfare of the province depend very much upon the regulation of our staple of tobacco, and the fees of Officers, to obtain a due regulation of both, I should be obliged to allow the REGISTRARS of the Land Office a neat annual income of £. 400 sterling between them; to the Secretary, alias Clerk of the Provincial Court, and Register in Chancery £. 300 sterling; to the Commissary General £. 500 sterling; that is, if the fees received by those Officers should amount to the three respective sums clear of all charges, the allowance would, in my estimation, be liberal and genteel.

Officer. What a pitiful sneaking fellow! why such trifling salaries would not buy salt to their porridge; they must reside in the capital, where living is expensive; men in their stations ought to keep a plentiful table, and entertain the best company and a good deal of it.

Lawyer. I do not see the necessity of their residing in the capital; nor is it expected from them merely as Officers, that they should entertain either the best, or

River, Virginia, Jan. 1, 1773. D by the Subscriber, tract of Land, called Moccock's in a Mile of the Mouth of the Mile from James River, a ve Barret's Ferry, and within of Williamsburg; it contains Six e highest, driest, and richest n it's present State during the nts; it will afford grazing for ead of Cattle.

ree Islands; the easternmost or about One Hundred and Fifty l, has Two good Springs upon Quarters, and an Overseer's Mile distant is middle or High Forty Acres, Half a Mile dis- nd, containing Three or Four situated that the banking, in very easy: The eastern and e Islands are divided from the of the River, no more than and the southern and western e main Body of Chickabomoy, Yards broad. Up this River, is of Vessels of Four Thou- ch dividing the Island from the the best fowling and fishing in Low or Great Island, there are Hundred and odd Acres well g to this Plantation, pleasantly g the whole Island. This Land about Half a Mile across the n the Ferry to Williamsburg, so Town is not above Nine Miles; no Part of the Marsh; spring ed North East Wind cover the h Four Inches Water, but the sides over-flowing it, is taken eat Gust on Friday the 8th of d over a great Part of America, ly Seven Inches Water in the on purchasing this Island, may nts upon reasonable Terms.

PATRICK COUTTS.

to Messrs. James Dick and

es Dick and Stewart having be business is now conducted in

d STEWART, and Co.

Wholesale and Retail, at their and London-Town, for ready

ce, or the usual Credit.

ortment of European and East- among which are, Hyson,

hea Teas, London double and

for Sale, old Madeira Wine

ad, or Quarter Cask, West-

m, by the Hoghead, Jamai-

it, by the Hoghead or Quar-

Sugar, by the Hoghead,

Hundred; a few Tierces of

ops, barreled Pork, &c. &c.

raprals, Sail Duck, and all

lery and Cordage, made at

; where Orders for a Ships

ay be complied with on a few

y 13, 1773.

James Dick and Stewart be-

as indebted to us, are request-

ants as soon as it is Conve-

nt.

umble Servants,

JAMES DICK,

ANTHONY STEWART.

arlborough, January 19, 1773.

at a low Advance, for Cash or

Bills,

undred Pounds prime Cost of

orted.

COLIN CAMPBELL.

and his tent stands in much detri-

the Bay in a Yawl with Two other

later is requested to take him away

LIAM NOKE,

Sheriff of Anne-Arundel County.

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