

MARYLAND GAZETTE.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1774.

plantation of Henry Lowe, near Prince George's county, taking the mare, branded on the neck with about 25 hands and a horse 6 or 7 years old. The owner proving property and paying...

JOHN WELSH, JUNIOR, KNEWARD. June 3, 1774. I am the subscriber, living on the near Little Pipe-Creek, in the land, two Irish servant men, a well set fellow, about 30 years of age, short straight brown hair, down look, and fair complexion, down look, and fair complexion, down look, and fair complexion...

Virginia, June, 1774. The honourable the general attorney under colonel George Washington in London, will be sold of land in the county of ordinary about 12 miles from Alexandria, and 35 from the Run Mountains, and is very...

JOHN TAYLOR, GEORGE WASHINGTON. county, August 29, 1774. I am Barker, William Beck, son, who intend to be benefitted by their estates, under an act of assembly for the relief of the said Barker's creditors is read in Annapolis, on Thursday the last day of September...

The following Piece, wrote by the Rev. Dr. JONATHAN SHIPLEY, late bishop of St. Asaph, was intended to have been spoken on the bill for altering the charter of the colony of the Massachusetts-bay; and is now exhibited to the public for their perusal. It is the whole of the pamphlet, save an advertisement that preceded the work, which we thought needless to insert.

It is of such great importance to compose or even to moderate the diffension, which subsist at present between our unhappy country and her colonies, that I cannot help endeavouring, from the faint prospect I have of contributing something to so good an end, to overcome the inexorable reluctance I feel at uttering my thoughts before the most respectable of all audiences.

The true object of all our deliberations on this occasion, which I hope we shall never lose sight of, is a full and cordial reconciliation with North America. Now, my lords, I have many doubts whether the errors and punishments we hang out to them at present are the surest means of producing this reconciliation. Let us at least do this justice to the people of North America to own, that we can all remember a time when they were much better friends than at present to their mother country. They are neither our natural nor our determined enemies. Before the stamp-act, we considered them in the light of as good subjects as the natives of any county in England.

It is worth while to enquire by what steps we first gained their affection, and preserved it so long; and by what conduct we have lately lost it. Such an enquiry may point out the means of restoring peace, and make the use of force unnecessary against a people, whom I cannot yet forbear to consider as our brethren.

It has always been a most arduous task to govern distant provinces, with even a tolerable appearance of justice. The viceroys and governors of other nations are usually temporary tyrants, who think themselves obliged to make the most of their time; who not only plunder the people, but carry away their spoils, and dry up all the sources of commerce and industry. Taxation in their hands, is an unlimited power of oppression; but in whatever hands the power of taxation is lodged, it implies and includes all other powers. Arbitrary taxation is plunder authorized by law: it is the support and the essence of tyranny; and has done more mischief to mankind, than those other three scourges from heaven, famine, pestilence and the sword. I need not carry your lordships out of your own knowledge, or out of your own dominions, to make you conceive what misery this right of taxation is capable of producing in a provincial government. We need only recollect that our countrymen in India have, in the space of five or six years, in virtue of this right, destroyed, starved, and driven away more inhabitants from Bengal, than are to be found at present in all our American colonies; more than all those formidable numbers which we have been nursing up for the space of two hundred years, with so much care and success, to the astonishment of all Europe. This is no exaggeration, my lords, but plain matter of fact, collected from the accounts sent over by Mr. Hastings, whose name I mention with honour and veneration. And, in my own, such accounts have very much lessened the pleasure I used to feel in thinking myself an Englishman. We ought surely not to hold our colonies totally inexcusable for wishing to exempt themselves from a grievance, which has caused such unexampled devastation; and, my lords, it would be too disgraceful to ourselves, to try so cruel an experiment more than once. Let us reflect, that before these innovations were thought of, by following the line of good conduct which had been marked out by our ancestors, we governed North America with mutual benefit to them and ourselves. It was a happy idea, that made us first consider them rather as instruments of commerce than as objects of government. It was wise and generous to give them the form and the spirit of our own constitution; an assembly in which a greater equality of representation has been preserved than at home; and councils and governors, such as were adapted to their situation, though they must be acknowledged to be very inferior copies of the dignity of this house, and the majesty of the crown.

But what is far more valuable than all the rest, we gave them liberty. We allowed them to use their own judgment in the management of their own interest. The idea of taxing them never entered our heads. On the contrary they have experienced our liberality on many public occasions: we have given them bounties to encourage their industry, and have demanded no return but what every state exact from its colonies, the advantages of an exclusive commerce, and the regulations that are necessary to secure it. We made requisitions to them on great occasions, in the same manner as our princes formerly asked benevolence of their subjects; and as nothing was asked but what was visibly for the public good, it was always granted; and they sometimes did more than we expected. The matter of right was neither disputed, nor even considered. And let us not forget that the people of New England were themselves, during the last war, the most forward of all in the national cause; that every year we voted them a considerable sum, in acknowledgment of their zeal and their services; that in the preceding war, they alone enabled us to make the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, by furnishing us with the only equivalent for the towns that were taken from our allies in Flanders; and that in times of peace, they alone have taken from us six times as much of our woollen manufactures as the

whole kingdom of Ireland. Such a colony, my lords, not only from the justice, but from the gratitude we owe them, have a right to be heard in their defence; and, if their crimes are not of the most inexcusable kind, I could almost say, they have a right to be forgiven.

Put in the times we speak of, our public intercourse was carried on with ease and satisfaction. We regarded them as our friends and fellow-citizens, and relied as much upon their fidelity as on the inhabitants of our own country. They saw our power with pleasure; for they considered it only as their protection. They inherited our laws, our language, and our customs; they preferred our manufactures, and followed our fashions with a partiality that secured our exclusive trade with them more effectually than all the regulations and vigilance of the custom-house. Had we suffered them to enrich us a little longer, and to grow a little richer themselves, their men of fortune, like the West-Indians, would undoubtedly have made this country the place of their education and resort. For they looked up to England with reverence and affection, as to the country of their friends and ancestors. They esteemed and they called it their home, and thought of it as the Jews once thought of the land of Canaan.

Now, my lords, consider with yourselves what were the chains and ties that united this people to their mother-country with so much warmth and affection, at so amazing a distance. The colonies of other nations have been discontented with their treatment, and not without sufficient cause; always murmuring at their grievances, and sometimes breaking out into acts of rebellion. Our subjects at home, with all their reasons for satisfaction, have never been entirely satisfied. Since the beginning of this century we have had two rebellions, several plots and conspiracies; and we ourselves have been witnesses to the most dangerous excesses of sedition. But the provinces in North America have engaged in no party, have excited no opposition, they have been utter strangers even to the name of whig and tory. In all changes, in all revolutions, they have quietly followed the fortunes and submitted to the government of England.

Now let me appeal to your lordships as to men of enlarged and liberal minds, who have been led by your office and rank to the study of history. Can you find in the long succession of ages, in the whole extent of human affairs, a single instance, where distant provinces have been preserved in so flourishing a state, and kept at the same time in such due subjection to their mother country? My lords, there is no instance; the case never existed before. It is perhaps the most singular phenomenon in all civil history; and the cause of it well deserves your serious consideration. The true cause is, that a mother country never existed before, who placed her natives and her colonies on the same equal footing; and joined with them in fairly carrying on one common interest.

You ought to consider this, my lords, not as a mere historical fact, but as a most important and invaluable discovery. It enlarges our ideas of the power and energy of good government beyond all former examples; and shews that it can act like gravitation at the greatest distances. It proves to a demonstration that you may have good subjects in the remotest corners of the earth, if you will but treat them with kindness and equity. If you have any doubts of the truth of this kind of reasoning, the experience we have had of a different kind will entirely remove them.

The good genius of our country had led us to the simple and happy method of governing freemen, which I have endeavoured to describe. Our ministers received it from their predecessors, and for some time continued to observe it; but without knowing its value. At length, presuming on their own wisdom, and the quiet dispositions of the Americans, they flattered themselves that we might reap great advantages from their prosperity by degrading the cause of it. They chose in an unbecoming hour to treat them as other nations have thought fit to treat their colonies; they threatened and they taxed them.

I do not now enquire whether taxation is matter of right; I only consider it as matter of experiment; for surely the art of government itself is founded on experience. I need not suggest what were the consequences of this change of measures. The evils produced by it were such as we will remember and still feel. We suffered more by our loss of trade with them, than the wealth flowing in from India was able to recompense. The bankruptcy of the East-India company may be sufficiently accounted for by the rapine abroad and the knavery at home; but it certainly would have been delayed some years, had we continued our commerce with them in the single article of tea. But that and many other branches of trade have been diverted into other channels, and may probably never return into their own old course. But what is worst of all, we have lost their confidence and friendship; we have ignorantly undermined the most solid foundation of our own power.

In order to observe the strictest impartiality, it is but just for us to enquire what we have gained by these taxes as well as what we have lost. I am assured that out of all the sums raised in America the last year but one, if the expences are deducted, which the natives would else have discharged themselves, the net revenue paid into the treasury to go in aid of the sinking fund, or to be employed in whatever public services parliament shall think fit, is eighty-five pounds. Eighty-five pounds, my lords, is the whole equivalent, we have received for all the hatred and mischief, and all the infinite losses this kingdom has suffered during that year in her disputes

with North America. Money that is earned so dearly as this, ought to be expended with great wisdom and economy. My Lords, were you to take up but one thousand pounds more from North America upon the same terms, the nation itself would be a bankrupt. But the most amazing and most alarming circumstances are still behind. It is that our case is so incurable, that all this experience has made no impression upon us. And yet, my Lords, if you could but keep these facts, which I have ventured to lay before you, for a few moments in your minds, (supposing your right of taxation to be never so clear) yet I think you must necessarily perceive that it cannot be exercised in any manner that can be advantageous to ourselves or them. We have not always the wisdom to tax ourselves with propriety; and I am confident we could never tax a people at that distance, without infinite blunders, and infinite oppression. And to own the truth, my lords, we are not honest enough to trust ourselves with the power of shifting our own burthens upon them. Allow me therefore to conclude, I think unanswerably, that the inconvenience and distress we have felt in this change of our conduct, no less than the ease and tranquillity we formerly found in the pursuit of it, will force us, if we have any sense left, to return to the good old path we trode in so long, and found it the way of pleasantness.

I desire to have it understood, that I am opposing no rights legislature may think proper to claim: I am only comparing two different methods of government. By your old rational and generous administration, by treating the Americans as your friends and fellow-citizens, you made them the happiest of human kind; and at the same time drew from them, by commerce, more clear profit than Spain has drawn from all its mines; and their growing numbers were a daily increase and addition to your strength. There was no room for improvement or alteration in so noble a system of policy as this. It was sanctified by time, by experience, by public utility. I will venture to use a bold language my lords; I will assert, that if we had uniformly adopted this equitable administration in all our distant provinces as far as circumstances would admit, it would have placed this country for ages, at the head of human affairs in every quarter of the world. My lords, this is no visionary or chimerical doctrine. The idea of governing provinces and colonies by force is visionary and chimerical. The experiment has often been tried and it never has succeeded. It ends infallibly in the ruin of the one country or the other, or in the last degree of wretchedness.

If there is any truth, my lords, in what I have said, and I most firmly believe it to be true; let me recommend to you to resume that generous and benevolent spirit in the discussion of our differences, which used to be the source of our union. We certainly did wrong in taxing them: when the stamp-act was repealed, we did wrong in laying on other taxes, which tended only to keep alive a claim, that was mischievous, impracticable and useless. We acted contrary to our own principles of liberty, and to the generous sentiments of our sovereign, when we desired to have their judges dependent on the crown for their stipends as well as their continuance. It was equally unwise to wish to make the governors independent of the people for their salaries. We ought to consider the governors, not as spies intrusted with the management of our interest, but as the servants of the people, recommended to them by us. Our ears ought to be open to every complaint against the governors; but we ought not to suffer the governors to complain of the people. We have taken a different method, to which no small part of our difficulties are owing. Our ears have been open to the governors and shut to the people. This must necessarily lead us to countenance the jobs of interested men, under the pretence of defending the rights of the crown. But the people are certainly the best judges whether they are well governed; and the crown can have no rights inconsistent with the happiness of the people.

Now, my lords, we ought to do what I have suggested, and many things more, out of prudence and justice to win their affection, and to do them public service. If we have a right to govern them, let us exert it for the true ends of government. But, my Lords, what we ought to do, from motives of reason and justice, is much more than is sufficient to bring them to a reasonable accommodation. For thus as I apprehend, stands the case. They petition for the repeal of an act of parliament, which they complain of as unjust and oppressive. And there is not a man amongst us, not the warmest friend of administration, who does not sincerely wish that act had never been made. In fact, they only ask for what we wish to be rid of. Under such a disposition of mind, one would imagine there could be no occasion for fleets and armies to bring men to a good understanding. But, my lords, our difficulty lies in the point of honour. We must not let down the dignity of the mother country; but preserve her sovereignty over all the parts of the British empire. This language has something in it that sounds pleasant to the ears of Englishmen, but is otherwise of little weight. For sure, my lords, there are methods of making reasonable concessions; and yet without injuring our dignity. Ministers are generally fruitful in expedients to reconcile difficulties of this kind, to escape the embarrassments of forms, the competitions of dignity and precedence; and to let clashing rights sleep, while they transact their business. Now, my lords, on this occasion can they find no excuse, no pretence, no invention, no happy turn of language, not one colourable argument for doing the greatest service they can ever render to their country? It must be something more than incapacity that makes men barren of expedients at such a season as this. Do, but for once