

MARYLAND GAZETTE.

T H U R S D A Y, APRIL 18, 1776.

(Concluded from our last.)

THERE is nothing in Cato's first letter worthy of notice but the following insinuating falshood: "Grievous as the least restraint of the press must always be, to a people entitled to freedom, it must be the more so, when it is not only unwarranted by those to whom they have committed the care of their liberties; but cannot be warranted by them, consistent with liberty itself."—The rude and unchristianlike confusion of persons in the above paragraph, though it throws an obscurity on the meaning, still leaves it discoverable. Who, Sir, hath laid any restraint on the liberty of the press? I know of no instance in which the press hath been even the object of notice, in this province, except on account of the Tory letter from Kent county, which was published last spring in the *Pennsylvania Ledger*, and which it was the duty of every good man to detect, because the honesty of the press is as great an object to society as the freedom of it. If this is the restraint you complain of we know your true character at once; and that it is so, appears evident from the expression which immediately follows the above quotation; your words are, "Nevertheless, we readily submitted to it, while the least colourable pretence could be offered for requiring such a submission." Who submitted, Cato? we Whigs, or we Tories? Until you clear up this, Sir, you must content yourself with being ranked among the rank of the *writing* Tories; because no other body of men can have any pretence to complain of want of freedom of the press. It is not your throwing out now and then a little popular phrase, which can protect you from suspicion; they are only the gildings under which the poison is conveyed, and without which you dared not to renew your attempts on the virtue of the people.

Cato's second letter, or the greatest part thereof, is taken up with the reverence due from us to the persons and authority of the commissioners, whom Cato vainly and ridiculously styles *AMBASSADORS* coming to negotiate a peace. How came Cato not to be let a little better into the secret? The act of parliament which describes the powers of these men hath been in this city upwards of a month, and in the hands of Cato's friends. No, Sir, they are not the *ambassadors of peace*, but the distributors of pardons, mischief and insult. Cato discovers a gross ignorance of the British constitution, in supposing that these men can be empowered to act as ambassadors. To prevent his future errors I will let him right. The present war differs from many others in this instance, viz. that it is not carried on under the prerogative of the crown as other wars have always been, but under the authority of the whole legislative power united, and as the barriers which stand in the way of a negotiation, are not proclamations but acts of parliament, it evidently follows, that were even the king of England here in person, he could not ratify the terms or condition of a reconciliation; because in the single character of king he could not stipulate for the repeal of any acts of parliament; neither can the parliament stipulate for him. There is no body of men more jealous of their privileges than the commons; because they fell them: Mark that, Cato.

I have not the least doubt upon me but that their business (exclusive of granting us pardons) is downright bribery and corruption. It is the machine by which they effect all their plans. We ought to view them as enemies of a most dangerous species, and he who means not to be corrupted by them will enter his protest in time. Are they not the very men who are paid in every measure for voting a grant us, and ought we not to suspect their designs? Can we view the barbarians as friends? Would it be prudent to trust the viper in our very bosoms; or to suffer them to ramble at large among us, while such doubtful characters as Cato have a being upon the continent? Yet let their persons be safe from injury and outrage—but trust them not. Our business with them is short and explicit, viz. We are desirous of peace, Gentlemen; we are ready to ratify the terms, and will virtuously fulfil the conditions thereof; but we should deserve all and every misery which tyranny can inflict; were we, after suffering such a repetition of savage barbarities, to come under your government again.

Cato, by way of stealing into credit, says, that "the contest we are engaged in is founded on the most noble and virtuous principles which can animate the mind of man. We are contending (says he) against an arbitrary ministry, for the rights of our countrymen." No, Cato, we are now contending against an arbitrary king, to get clear of his tyranny. While the dispute is in words only, it might be called "contending with the ministry;" but since it is broken out into open war, it is high time to be done with such sly and water-gruel definitions. But it suits not Cato to speak the truth. It is his interest to creep up the feathered savage in the mildest colours. Cato's patent for a large tract of land is yet unsigned. Alas poor Cato!

Cato proceeds very importantly to tell us, "that the eyes of all Europe are upon us." His stale and hackneyed phrase hath had a regular descent from many of the king's speeches down to several of the speeches in parliament; from thence, it took a turn among the little wits and bucks of St. James's, till after suffering all the torture of sentence's repetition, and being reduced to a state of vagrancy, was charitably picked up to embellish the second letter of Cato. It is truly of the bugbear kind, contains no meaning, and the very meaning, and the very using it uncovers a barrenness of invention. It signifies nothing to tell us, "that the eyes of all Europe are upon us;" unless we had likewise told us what they are looking at us for, which, as he hath not done, I will. They are looking at us, Cato, in hopes of seeing

a final separation between Britain and the colonies, that they, the *lookers on*, may partake of a free and uninterrupted trade with the whole continent of America. Cato! thou reasonest wrong.

For the present, Sir, farewell. I have seen thy folioly and despite it. Remember, thou hast thrown me the glove, Cato, and either thee or I must tire. I fear not the field of fair debate, but thou hast stepped aside and made it personal—thou hast tauntingly called on me by name; and if I cease to hunt thee from every lane and lurking hole of mischief, and bring thee not a trembling culprit before the public bar, then brand me with reproach, by naming me in the list of your confederates.

THE FORRESTER.

CASSANDRA TO CATO.

SIR,

THOUGH the *Common Man's* advice has come rather too late, as Cato and I amet can witness; though his manner of stating the points to be discussed decides to which party he belongs; though he has studiously evaded the main question, and thereby shewn the public that *security to our rights* forms no share of the debate he wishes to open; and though in the manner in which he attempts to expose Cato and Cassandra evidently roves whose faults he is most inclined to conceal; yet I heartily join him in his censure on personal reflection. I thank him too for his candour in tacitly informing the public that you have not come to the point as yet, though you have already published five letters, and heartily cote with his proposal of laying aside all personality. I shall therefore proceed to the main point; and if you are willing to enter the lists as a fair antagonist, and meet me on the ground of reason and argument, on that ground will Cassandra meet you: but if, contrary to your own proposal, and the advice of your friend, you continue to amuse your countrymen with declamation and assertion, and study to terrify rather than inform, to address their passions rather than enlighten their understandings, I shall still be personal. Your talent lies in strong painting and declamation, and you expect to hold up such a terrific picture to the imaginations of the people, as will effectually frighten them into submission; but the extinction of your person at the side of your productions will ever prove a perfect antidote to their poison. Giving you this fair warning, I shall now proceed to your third, fourth, and fifth letters, and nothing which can point out the man shall drop from my pen until Cato gives occasion for it.

I agree with the *Common Man* thus far, that some propositions he mentions ought, *one day*, to be discussed; but as there is one point not only prior to any of them, but of infinitely greater importance than them all, viz. *an absolute security for the enjoyment of our liberties*, I must and will insist on the discussion of this point first, as not only prior in order, but most essential; and when it shall be fairly proved that our rights can be as effectually secured in a state of dependency as in an independent state, then, and not before, will be the proper time to examine which would be most to our advantage. We entered the contest with a determination to secure our rights at every hazard. This is therefore what we are first to provide for. If two ways of equal security should present themselves, then will come on the other question, viz. *which will not only secure our liberties but bring us the greatest advantages besides*. Now when Cato, the *Common Man*, or any other man, shall exhibit a plan by which we can absolutely secure our liberties and continue dependent, then Cassandra will be ready to enter upon the discussion of this point. But Cassandra assures Cato, the *Common Man*, and every other man, that no sophistical proposals of any man will turn his eyes from the main object until he sees a way of permanent security to our rights; and he trusts his countrymen, who first armed for this purpose, will still continue of that mind, and then he fears neither the threats nor efforts of Cato and the aristocratical junto, who are straining every nerve to frustrate our virtuous endeavours, and to make the common and middle class of people their *beasts of burden*. Those freemen who nobly refuse to be ridden by a king, lords and commons, will scarcely be tame enough to take Cato and his party on their backs. I shall therefore proceed. And

Passing, for the present, those parts of your letters which contain nothing but the most illiberal abuse and scurrilous invectives against committees, conventions, &c. I shall take up your political creed and examine with the greatest freedom the arguments on which you have founded your faith. You believe, "That the true interest of America lies in a reconciliation with Great-Britain on constitutional principles, and that you wish it upon none else." Sir, I earnestly intreat you as you wish not to mislead your dear countrymen, to explain what you understand by a *reconciliation on constitutional principles*, that I may not mistake your meaning. It will save much writing on both sides to give such definitions of general terms as we are determined to abide by. I wish to see the *whole truth* laid fairly before the people, and that they may coolly consider, and with the utmost impartiality weigh every circumstance, and choose that alone which promises the greatest security to their rights and privileges, and affords them the just prospect of *peace and happiness*. I shall therefore cheerfully define every term which Cato may think dubious or calculated to mislead; and I demand the same of Cato. If he is the *brave man* he wishes to appear he will not refuse me. Let us canvass each thing to the bottom, and let not dark hints, unproved assertions, or ungenerous insinuations against the designs of incorruptible patriots be hereafter palmed on the people for argument; but

when truth is exhibited to them in the fullest and plainest manner let them judge for the selves. Upon due information I doubt not they will judge rightly; and that judgment I am resolved to abide by.

But why does Cato labour so incessantly to bias his reader by so many and such long and pathetic harangues on the horrors of war and its powers of destruction? Slavery is certainly a much more terrible and every respect than war. For the evils of war are both tolerable and temporary, while the miseries of slavery are intolerable and endless. War may cut off thousands in the bloom of their youth; but slavery destroys the very seeds of generation, not only in the animal but vegetable world. How does it look, Cato, in a point of view of your magnitude to be continually haranguing on the horrors of war at a time when our safety, our peace, and our valuable depends on the success of our arms. Were you in your beloved mother country and the contest with a foreign force, suppose officers, ravaging her coasts, would you harangue on these horrors to discourage her resistance? I counsel myself at great uncertainty what you would do on such an occasion; but I strongly presume that in case you did you would be a most affected traitor, and treated accordingly. But I ask pardon, Sir, you don't like to be questioned. They were you in the councils of the enemy you might have a appetite for peace would soon put a end to their murderous designs; you are not content to be a villainous traitor, for you desire you will turn out against us if there be any attempt to let the reach and language of the ears. Take no help! Take no help! Fight alone, Whigs, till you are all cut off, and then we Tories will submit and have the whole. This is the language of Cato. Now, though I am as content that your publications are intended to reduce us to slavery, as you can be that mine propose a continuation of the war, and though I can more easily prove the one than you can the other; yet I have not endeavoured, by assuming descriptions of the miseries of slavery, to prejudice my reader against the arguments of my opponents. Cassandra has no point to carry, and therefore detests such shifts. God forbid! that I should ever outlive my own interest as separate from the general interest of mankind! And with equal fervency of devotion I pray that all who have may be finally defeated in their attempts against these colonies. You have filed nearly the one half of the five letters you have already published with horrible descriptions alone. Do you imagine, Cato, that we are all affected with nervous complaints? and that you can do more for your cause by alarming our fears, than informing our judgments? If this be not your design, pray publish as many, as terrible, and as animated descriptions of the miseries of slavery as you have done on the horrors of war; and then leave the people to judge which they would choose. Don't let us throw them into a panic and confusion, and then desire them to examine with coolness and deliberation. There is a dignity in honesty, and a pleasing fortitude in conscientious integrity, which I could wish Cato to experience. The subject demands a clear, plain, full, rational and manly discussion, and it ought to have it. It is certainly worthy of all the labour we can bestow upon it. Liberty or slavery is now the question. Let us but fairly discover to the inhabitants of these colonies on which side liberty has erected her banner, and we will leave it to them to determine whether they would choose liberty though accompanied with war, or slavery attended by peace.

The present contest is a contest of constitutions, and the war a war of legislatures. The common wars of nations are the wars of one crowned head against another, in which the people have little share and are as little consulted. The crowned head on each side declares war or negotiates peace without conferring with them—but this war is a war between the British parliament and the colonial assemblies, it is, in fact, a war between the people of Great-Britain and the people of America; and though both have heretofore acknowledged the same king, and he in duty ought to have remained neutral; yet as he has joined the British parliament against us, he is become a party in the quarrel. Hence, so far as the present is a contest of constitutions, the parliament has evidently won the field; for the whole force of the legislature of Great-Britain has been, from the first day of the controversy, armed against us, but we have in no one instance been able to call forth the strength of our legislatures to oppose, nay, we have constantly had them against us ready to join the foe. I ask, how happens this, Cato? Why are you in love with such a constitution? As you are not fond of answering my questions, I will endeavour to answer them myself. It is because our legislatures are dependent on our *very enemies*, and theirs is independent of us. Our constitutional connexion with Britain gives her so prodigious an advantage over us, that if we had strictly adhered to our chartered constitutions, we would have been vanquished before this time. And it will ever be so, as long as we are dependent.

Both the king and parliament of Great-Britain are the choice of the people of Great-Britain; but though our assemblies are our choice, our governors are not; they are either nominated by the king or created by him, or some one of his British subjects, which effectually destroys their utility to us in this and every such controversy, which has a ready or is likely hereafter to happen. Their salaries, though the gift of the people, are evidently no counterpoise to their nomination, if facts can prove any thing. And for this plain reason, that though we grant the wages yet it rests in the power of the king whether they shall enjoy it or not; as entirely dependent the continuance of it depends entirely on him.

(The remainder will be in our next.)

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ELIE VALLETTE, register

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WICK, sheriff of Cecil county.

delivered at the contractor's
in Annapolis,
of potatoes, parsneps, carrots,
beans, or any kind of Indian,
given the highest prices, by
AAC M'HAND,
for Mr. ROBERT CUMMINS.

ge's county, March 18, 1776.
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RALPH FORSTER.

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J. CLAPHAM

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EXHIBED IN THE MUSEUM

E. N.