

MARYLAND GAZETTE.

THURSDAY, MAY 9, 1776

To the PEOPLE of PENNSYLVANIA. LETTER VIII.

THE all wise CREATOR having enabled every man to judge, in some degree, what is good for himself, the study of government is a duty of the highest concern to all the members of a free state.

Numerous are the evils which spring from distractions and convulsions in a state; but they are often productive of one advantage which outweighs them all. The civil constitution of countries, although long neglected, through the indolence of the people and tottering on the verge of dissolution, have nevertheless been thus purged of their corruptions, brought back to their first principles, and made to flourish, with renewed vigour, through many succeeding ages.

Had the author of Common Sense considered this, or were he possessed with the least reverence for the judgment or feelings of a great and enlightened people, whom he has thought himself fit to address, his performance would have been of a different nature. It would at least have worn the resemblance of argument, and contained something which had a chance to meet the reason of wise men, and to stand the test of their candid examination.

The public will excuse the occasional notice I am forced to take of the answers hitherto given to my letters. Were I disposed to deviate from my plan, or, by immediate retaliation, to draw the attention of the reader to the "political characters, connections and dependencies" of my antagonists (which the author of Common Sense, in his new character of the Forester, allows to be very essential in such a controversy) I believe it would add little to the credit of their works; especially if upon enquiry it should be found that they have neither "character nor connections" in this place; and that they are the avowed instruments and dependents of some, who, having no concern in our domestic affairs, are nevertheless constantly intermeddling with them, to the great disturbance of the province, and injury of the public cause.

But I have no immediate occasion to enter into such an enquiry, and am happy to find that, although near a dozen answers have been given in one shape or another

to my two or three first letters, nothing has been yet offered worthy of a particular reply. The Forester seems the chief champion against me. He makes me write what he pleases, that he may answer as he pleases. The following is a specimen of his justice, in quoting from me.

"If we now EFFECT independence, we must be considered as a faithless people, in the sight of all mankind, and could scarcely expect the confidence of any nation upon earth, or look up to heaven for its approving sentence;...and upon this he exclaims,--'Art thou mad, Cato, or art thou foolish, or art thou bold, or art thou worse than both?' Now, I can fairly leave those who have read my letters, to apply any or all of these epithets to me as their candour shall direct. But those who read but one paper (in which it is thought proper only to publish the answers to my letters, without the letters themselves) may verily believe I have asserted, that, if ever we effect independence, neither heaven nor earth will smile upon us. It is hoped, therefore, that the publishers of that paper, if they should never insert any other part of my letters (in which they may use their own pleasure) will be so just as to give this mangled paragraph entire; and then it will be in these words:--

"In short, (if thus contradicting all our former public professions (we) should (now) AFFECT independency) as our own act, before it appears clearly to the world to have been forced upon us by the cruel hand of the parent-state, we could neither hope for union nor success in the attempt. (We must be considered as a faithless people in the sight of all mankind, and could scarcely expect the confidence of any nation upon earth, or look up to heaven for its approving sentence.)"

The discerning reader will easily see that our honest Forester has not scrupled to take part of one sentence and connect it with another; which wholly alters the sense. He gives us only what is included within the above parentheses, and suppresses all that essential part which is in italics. He who can thus pilfer from the sense of another is come to his last shift, and it may be presumed would not stick at anything to promote his cause. But what can I expect from one who uses the immortal Milton much in the same way?

In the pamphlet called Common Sense, endeavouring to establish his favourite doctrine, that reconciliation with Great-Britain is now impossible, and urging us on to blood whatever terms may be offered, he has the unparalleled confidence to add as follows:--"For, as MILTON wisely expresses--never can true reconciliation grow where wounds of deadly hate have pierc'd so deep."--How unlucky is this quotation! Our author thinks he has snatched a coal from the altar; but it is like that which the foolish eagle stole, and thereby set her nest on fire, which consumed herself and her brood. Would not the reader believe that the author had here given us some wise sentiment of MILTON, fit to be copied in the conduct of a christian people? But look at the place (Parad. Lost, B. iv.) and you will find that it was the speech of the Devil, meditating the destruction of mankind; and suited only to the desperate purposes of those, who are in the same dreadful state of mind in which our divine poet describes the Devil to have been at the time.

Horror and doubt distract His troubled thoughts; and from the bottom stir The hell within him. For within him hell He brings, and round about him, nor from hell One step, no more than from himself, can fly.--

"Get thee behind me" thou abandoned writer; and take back another of thy compliments! For canst thou "have the feelings of a man"!--thou who art labouring to fill the hearts of thy fellow-mortals with irreconcilable hatred, and the feelings of the Devil? As for my feelings on this occasion, I trust they are founded on the doctrines of the SAVIOUR OF MANKIND, who teaches that no offences in this world can be so great among brethren as to preclude reconciliation. "If thy brother repent forgive him"---and if thou canst not forgive, How canst thou lift up thine eyes to thy Heavenly Father for forgiveness of thy sins, or even those of thy single pamphlet? Hadst thou done justice to MILTON, thou mightest have shewn him in his own proper person, upon my side of the question; proclaiming the doctrines of his Heavenly Master.--

Oh shame to men! Devil with Devil damn'd Firm concord holds; men only disagree Of creatures rational, though under hope Of heavenly grace: And God proclaiming peace, Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife Among themselves, and levy cruel wars, Wasting the earth, each other to destroy.

Thou mayst apply this to our cruel oppressors; and I say nothing against thee therein, except where thou urgest thy terrible doctrine of the impossibility of reconciliation; and to make it wholly impossible art striving to inspire sentiments into thy brethren which would disgrace their christian profession. But I leave thee on this head; and if thou dost not too much interrupt me, shall, in two or three letters more, leave the public and posterity finally to judge between thee and me. *Suum cuique decus posteritas referendis.* I proceed then, with my remarks upon thy furious antipathy to mixt governments, in which thou hast surpassed all the writers I have met with; nor shall I quote any against thee except those who are acknowledged to have stood foremost in their opposition to the encroachments of monarchy. The popular leaders, who overturned the monarchy in the last age, were not themselves friends to republics. They only made use of the name to procure the favour of the people; and whenever by such means they had mounted to the proper height, each of them, in his

turn, began to kick the people from him, as a ladder then useless.

Cromwell exercised the power of a king, and of the most absolute king, under the cautious name of a Protector. The instrument of republican government, which he had at first extolled as the most perfect work of human invention, he began (as soon as he thought his authority sufficiently established) to represent "as a rotten plank upon which no man could trust himself without sinking." He had his eye fixed upon the crown; but when he procured an offer of it from a packed parliament, his courage failed him. He had outwitted himself, by his own hypocrisy; and in his way to power had thrown such an odium upon the name of king, that his own family, apprehensive he would be murdered the moment the diadem should touch his brow, persuaded him to decline that honour.

The great SIDNEY never meant more, by his celebrated work, than to reform the abuses of mixt government; and to restrain the rapid progress which the nation was making, in his time, towards absolute monarchy. And he was as much a foe to Cromwell as to Charles the First, considering both as governing above the laws. But he did not write against kings generally, more than other rulers who might abuse their power.

"Nothing, says he, is farther from my intention than to speak irreverently of kings," and he explains what kings he means, viz. those limited by law, in mixt governments. He has wrote a whole section to shew that the best governments in the world have been composed (as the English is) of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. He says God ordained a mixt government, answering to this in all its parts; and consisting of a single judge or chief captain (we contend not for names) a council of seventeen chosen men, or sanhedrim; and the general assemblies of the people. Is not this our own form complete? When he speaks of popular governments, he uses the utmost precision. "To avoid unnecessary disputes (says he) I give the name of popular governments to those of Rome, Athens, Sparta, and the like; but improperly, unless the same may also be given to many that are usually called monarchies, since there is nothing of violence in either. As to popular governments, in the strict sense, that is pure democracy, where the people in themselves, and by themselves, perform all that belongs to government, I know of no such thing; and if it be in the world, I have nothing to say for it."

And more explicitly still he says, "being no way concerned in the defence of democracy--I may leave our knight (Fisher) like Don Quixote, fighting against the phantasm of his own brain, and to say what he pleases against such governments as never were, unless in such a place as a Marino, near Senegaglia in Italy, where an hundred men govern a barbarous rock that no man invades. As for democracy, he may say what he pleases of it; and I believe it can suit only with the convenience of a small town, accompanied with such circumstances as are seldom to be found." If Sidney understood any thing of the matter, we see that every colony in America is a ready too unwieldy for such a government, and therefore it cannot be a model for an immense continent. In a word, although this great man lived before the revolution, he laid its foundation, died a martyr to its principles, and by one of the first acts of parliament made under it, his attainder was repealed, and a solemn national sanction given to his writings.

The testimony of another professed WHIG, nay an INDEPENDENT WHIG (the famous Gordon, in his discourses upon Tacitus) shall come next: "Monarchy, according to Plato, is the best government or the worst; to which opinion, says he, I subscribe, as I do to that of Philip de Commines, that England is the place in the world where the public is most equally administered, and where the people suffer the least violence. We are blessed with a form of government, which Tacitus mentions as the most perfect, and thinks the hardest to be framed; that happy balance and mixture of interests, that secures every interest."

Polybius (as he is quoted by Montagu, on the rise and fall of republics) agrees with Plato. "The best form of government, says he, is that which is composed of a due admixture of monarchy, aristocracy and democracy."--Of all legislators he prefers Lycurgus, whom he looks upon rather as divinely inspired, than as a man. To perpetuate the Spartan government, he united the peculiar excellencies of the best forms into one, that neither of the three parts, by swelling beyond its just bounds, might ever be able to deviate into its original inborn defects. Montagu adds:--"I cannot help observing, on this occasion, that our own constitution, as settled at the revolution, so nearly coincides with Lycurgus's general plan, that it seems at first sight to be formed by that very model." And indeed in the constitution of mixt governments, there is something more substantial than an attachment to the mystical number three, in this triple union of powers. All power lodged, uncontrolled, in one, or many, has been shewn to be full of danger; lodged in two distinct bodies, they may chance to disagree long; but the addition of a third turns the scale, and further additions would only be clogs.

I have not lost sight of Montesquieu, whose sentiments, as applicable to the English constitution, in practice as well as theory, shall be briefly introduced in my next, to close this part of my work; and then let the author of Common Sense combat the arguments of these great men as well as he can; for he has yet said nothing that is any way applicable to them; and must look for better arguments than those drawn from the nature of the English constitution, if he expects to serve his cause. For my part I will stand upon my first ground, and have no sentiment which I will to hide on this occasion. When it shall clearly appear, that we can be no longer

WELL, in West Street, Ann... military gentlemen... is become absolutely necessary... of American liberty... gentlemen; that he makes... metal sword bills; like... the same. Those gentlemen... with their custom, may do... work done with the greatest... most reasonable rate, which... faction to the public in gene... regular appointments to the... verfmth...

Iron-Works, February 6, 1776... sitting the estate of our father... late of the Patent Iron-... quest, all such as are indebted... immediate payment, as no longer... in them. Also all persons that... Patent Iron-Works Company, on... standing, are requested to... make payment, and those who... power to make immediate pay... they will come and settle their... md. If the above requests are... shall take such methods as will... without respect to persons, al... ceable to

DEL and JOHN SNOWDEN... be sold at the Printing-offic... ED IN G S... THE... ENT P O N... OF MARYLAND... anapolis, on Thursday the 9th of... mber, 1775.

FIVE OFFICE... ch 11, 1776.

ords of the commissary's offic... Upper Marlborough, by the... of Safety for the province of... ed to give this public notice... of that office will from hence... r place.

ry's courts are by law appointed... of Annapolis, where the same... continued, the commissary ge... as far as in his power, the... come, from the removal of the... from the cabinet hath refused... f in every Court week, which... eddays of May, July, Septemb... and to that end, will hold an... edday in said months at the city... convenience of the inhabitants... and others whom it may be... thence proceed on the Thurs... ough; there to sit during the... for the dispatch of public bus...

at for the greater ease and con... ants of Anne Arundel county... with me as deputy commissary... five attendances every Tuesday... nelius Garretson in the city of... ose.

ELIE VALLETTE, register

delivered at the contractor's... in Annapolis... of potatoes, parsneps, carrots... beans, or any kind of food... given the highest price; by... RAC M'HAID... for Mr. ROBERT CUSHMAN...

Annapolis: March 26, 1776... the subscribers, an indentured... d Edward Burford, born in... feet two inches high, his... hair had with him two cloths... brown, the other of coarse... with waistcoat of the same... skin breeches; ribb'd worsted... made shoes. He is very fond... he no better reason for his... he often merited chastisement... He was seen at Mr. Jacob... George's county, pretending... ata. Should he be taken to... l. give 40. shillings reward

J. CLAPHAM

AM CLAUDE... WELLES, and SILVERMITH... fison's tavern; ANNAPOLIS... acquaint the public in general... particular, that he still con... said trades in all their variou... most reasonable rates; also that... all sorts of fire-arms, small... cutlery. He also makes book... and most approved manner... al. galls, of boots, and every...

XXXI YEAR.

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