

ed they were in the possession and enjoyment of such right, either at the time of the declaration of independence, or of signing the treaties of Paris, nor that it was ever included in any one of the charters of the United States; it cannot be surprising that many, who judge a peace to be of the utmost importance to the interest and happiness of these states, should be afraid of the consequences which may follow from making this an ultimatum in a negotiation; nor that, as France by treaty is not bound to guarantee any thing out of the dominions of these states to them, unless acquired by their arms, and in their possession at the time of pacification, can it be strange that some men should be apprehensive whether France will support this claim, and whether insisting on it may not tend to prevent the interposition and mediation of other powers? It is very natural that congress should be divided on so important a question; for though all of them are interested in obtaining this point, yet some of them are very remotely so, compared with others. It is very unhappy that this question has been touched on or agitated at all at this time; and though the delay in resolving finally upon it has been a principal cause of the continuance of the war, of this campaign at least,—yet I cannot consider, either those who are for insisting on this as an ultimatum, or those who are against saying any thing about it at present, to merit the harsh epithet of execrable faction. The policy of Britain, ever since the declaration of the Spanish ambassador to that court, that his master could not remain an idle spectator, but must offer his mediation, has been to postpone and put off this mediation as far as possible, and at all events until the end of this campaign, which they, in the mean time, resolved to push with vigour, hoping to be able at the close to treat on better terms than at the opening of it. There is undoubtedly a British faction in these states, and many among us who are at heart in the British interest, and with success to our enemies. These persons and their faction may be justly styled execrable; and the more so, as they frequently conceal and mask themselves, under the appearance of patriotism, and zeal for the public interest and honour. There are also not a few, who, though they will on no occasion give up the independence of these states,—yet in their hearts prefer a connection and alliance with England to any other, and will not be displeas'd to see the war continued, until such an event can by some means or other be brought about. Though it cannot be supposed there are many of these characters in congress (if indeed there are any) yet it cannot be doubted that there are but too great a number out of doors, who exert themselves incessantly on this occasion, by throwing embarrassments in the way of congress, and who at the same time, with a well affected zeal for the peace, liberty and happiness of these states, pursue measures pregnant with anarchy, confusion, and evils as dreadful as the ravages of the most barbarous war itself can possibly be. The delaying the resolutions, as to the terms on which we are willing to treat, has already produced the most mischievous, if not fatal effects; among which we may number,—the rapid depreciation of our paper money, the fall of which, since the good people of these states found themselves deceived, as to the good news said to have been received the beginning of February last, has been astonishingly great,—and the expenses, as well as calamities and distresses of this campaign; the events of which are at best doubtful. If the insisting on conditions and terms, which neither the declaration of independence, nor the treaties of Paris, authorized us to challenge as our rights, has caused the late, otherways unaccountable delays, and prevented a peace, or at least a negotiation being opened for one, those who have challenged and insisted on those claims are justly responsible for all the consequences.

Governor Johnstone, in the house of commons, freely declared he had made use (whilst in America) of other means to effect the purposes of his commission, than simply those of reason and argument. Have we not good right, from present appearances, to believe that in this instance he declared the truth? But to whom is it to be supposed he applied these means? To professed Tories, and British partizans, to keep them steady to the cause? To your moderate men, to induce them to persevere in their hypocritical neutrality? No. He knew his business better; the first wanted no bribing, and the latter would but ill repay the purchase.

"Your cold hypocrisy's a state device,  
"A worn-out trick; wouldst thou be thought in earnest,  
"Cloath thy feign'd zeal in rage, in fire, in fury."  
Philadelphia, June 13. AMERICANUS.

**The ADDRESS of the COMMITTEE of the city and liberties of Philadelphia, to their fellow-citizens throughout the United States, Friends and countrymen,**

NECESSITY and convenience, have again called into being a body of men, hitherto known throughout the several parts of America by the name of committees; and we presume that when the several reasons therefor are collected and considered, that their re-institution at this time will not only be justified, but approved and followed.

However, in the tranquil hours of peace, we may admire, and confine ourselves to the guidance of written laws, yet in times of traitorous war, and more especially so in an invaded country, they will in general be found too slow in their operation, too uncertain in their effects.

The ingenuity of men in the invention of new crimes, the prostituted ingenuity of others, in screening criminality from legal punishment; the additional opportunities which a state of war affords to the subtle, the selfish, and disaffected, together with the impossibility of legally describing the numerous kinds of disaffection, practicable in an invaded country, render the revival of committees during the present war, not only a convenient but a necessary appendage to civil government.

There are offences against society which are not in all cases offences against law, and for the prevention or punishment of which, no written laws can be timely constructed, or sufficiently applied. Circumstances may combine to prove a man deserving the rank he may hold on the residence he may enjoy among the citizens of this or any other state; and yet by some accidental defect of the laws in being, the perversion of

a well intended clause, the failure of immediate evidence, or even from the novelty of the crime, he may escape the punishment of a court of justice—in all such cases therefore, or others of a similar nature, we hold this maxim, that where the offence is publicly dangerous or injurious, and the laws unable to relieve or punish, the community in its own defence, and for its further security, has a right to expel.

Formidable as the punishment of expulsion may appear, we nevertheless justify the right of using it on the grounds and principles of citizenship, and the admitted and immemorial custom of mankind. It is a right claimed and exercised by every separate society in this and all other countries; and as the community at large is an incorporated collection of the several parts, therefore the right of the whole cannot be inferior to the parts of which it is composed.

It is inconsistent to suppose that the lenity of our laws, or their silence on crimes we can have no conception of, are to become a safeguard to the disaffected in their acts of studied delinquency, or that no other offences are punishable in an invaded country, than what are to be found in the laws of a settled and well regulated society. We cannot construct laws that will reach all cases, and therefore we maintain the right, as well as the necessity of holding every man accountable to the community, for such parts of his conduct by which the public welfare appears to be injured or dishonoured, and for which no legal redress can be obtained.

In times of war and invasion, we conceive it necessary that a discretionary power should exist somewhere; for as the authority of civil government cannot, without exceeding its bounds, or descending from its character, extend to all the circumstances that may arise; therefore a numerous race of subtle or new invented offences, will, without the interposition of such a power, have a certain and extensive latitude to act in, unrestrained and unpunishable by law.

To blend such a power with the constitutional authority of the state, would, according to our ideas of liberty and conception of things, be unwise and unsafe; because being once incorporated therewith, the separation might afterwards be difficult, and that which was originally admitted as a temporary convenience, justified by necessity, might in time establish itself into a perpetual evil, and be claimed as a matter of right.

The exertions which are sometimes necessary to be made by the inhabitants of an invaded country, for their own preservation and defence, are frequently of such a peculiar and extraordinary quality, that as they ought not to become the rule of legal government in times of peace, should not be mixed therewith in times of war; for that which in the community may be the spirit of liberty, introduced into the laws would become its destroyer. Therefore as we cannot, on the one hand, permit our laws to be equivocally constructed and discretionarily applied; in order to fit and bend them to every new case, so neither ought we on the other hand, to suffer the general interest to be sapped by a species of delinquents, who governed by avarice, or prompted by deflection, are studying to evade what they dare not transgress.

It is to those evils, too amphibious to be defined, and too subtle as well as too transitory to become the object of established laws, that we wish to apply a remedy, capable of suiting itself to the variety of the offence, without opposing the rules of its institution, and this we conceive can be no other than the discretionary power of the citizens organized, and acting through a committee.

The condition of an invaded country sufficiently proves the exercise of such a power necessary, and we have already stated our reasons why it ought to be detached from the legal government. It is furthermore our opinion that the exercise of discretionary powers for the redress of temporary evils, is best intrusted with temporary bodies, because when the necessity which called forth such powers shall cease, the occasion of such bodies ceases therewith, and the authority of civil government, undisturbed and untempted, continue its original channel.

We are likewise of opinion that the laws already in being, would derive great support from the re-institution of committees, and that such a reinforcement of power to the powers of government is necessary in an invaded country. It is the best if not the only mode by which the community can conveniently throw in their portion of assistance, and contribute to the authority of the state. The fear of offending against the general interest, where a mode of punishment is provided, which can be easily and powerfully executed, is a forcible inducement to legal obedience, and operates with peculiar efficacy on those whom no public principle can restrain.

Such being our thoughts on the subject, we submit them to the consideration of our fellow-citizens; in every part of the United States, and shall now proceed to give our sentiments on a matter to which the usefulness of committees may with particular advantage be easily and extensively applied. We mean the re-institution and supporting the credit of our currency.

It is a well known maxim, that that which is every body's business, is no body's business. Each one looks with discontent at the other; the expectation is returned and continued, and every one is surprised that no one begins. Such has been the state of our currency for some considerable time past, and such it will continue to be, until it be put under the care of particular bodies; present in all places, who shall be empowered to watch against the means by which it has been depreciated, prevent their increase, and punish their detection.

The hope of the enemy appears to be principally fixed on what they would stile the bankruptcy of the continent, occasioned by a failure of the currency. Every one among us seemed to apprehend its probability, and though all appeared to be it to heart, no one lent his hand to prevent it. Every day made the matter worse, and the talk heavier. We looked at one another, complained, murmured and went away.

Yet so mistaken and extraordinary have been our conduct, that while we dreaded the evil we invited it on, and hastened to meet the event we wished to avoid. At the rate we were going from January to May, a state of bankruptcy, must have taken place in the space of a few weeks. A bankruptcy of a paradoxical kind. A bankruptcy produced, not by the want of money, but by the abundance of it. Such has been the con-

dition we were unwisely exposed to; and such it now become the object that claims our attention. By the efforts of the inhabitants of this city on the 25th of May, a stop has been put to the depreciation, and afforded us an opportunity of stating the case to the consideration of all.

For once we shall leave public spirit and public virtue out of the question, and address our arguments to the interest, rather than the honesty, to the aversion, rather than the patriotism of individuals.

To what end is it that we get money with one hand, and depreciate in the other? Let the planter, the merchant, the miser, and any or every other order of men, reckon their wealth at this time, and they will find themselves poorer in value though richer in quantity than they were last Christmas or a year ago. Our agriculture in this instance operates without its usual cunning, and we mutually impoverish ourselves to be a match for each other.

Were it possible that the property of America could fail, her lands become barren, her rivers dried up, agriculture extinguished and population extinct, the currency would then want a foundation for its credit, an ability for its redemption, because in both cases it would be a representation of nothing. Or did the credit of it depend on foreign loans, it would then, like all other matters of favour, be subject to interruption, and disappointment. Besides which we should, by so doing only exchange one debt for another, less suited to our interest and more expensive to redeem. But the case now is otherwise. We are both debtor and creditor. We not only hold the money, but we possess the property by which it is to be made good, and nothing but our own consent is wanting to make it of what value we please.

Yet notwithstanding these advantages, the rage for raising prices will, unless it be put a stop to, become the ruin both of those who contrived it, and those who follow it. We shall descend from pounds to shillings, from shillings to pence, and from pence to nothing. It has long been said that trade will regulate itself, yet sufficient experience has shown that the maxim, though admittedly true in some cases, is not so in all. While monopolizers are suffered to exist, who by stepping in between the importer and the retail purchaser can produce a scarcity when they chuse, or by their transporting their goods backward and forward from state to state can occasionally create a want in any or in all, or while the retailer by laying on what profits he pleases, becomes regardless of what prices he gives, or how much they outbid each other. In all these cases trade is deprived of its chance and becomes clogged with a disease, which left to itself will destroy its credit and produce its destruction.

By laying an additional price on what we have to sell, be it what it may, we lay a loss upon the money we have in hand, more than equal to the advance we get; and while we are counting the profits of a sale, the depreciation upon the capital makes a balance against us: the instant one article rises another rises in double proportion against it, and the hope of him who made the first advance is defeated by the practice of all around him. In short, we seem not to be sensible that we cannot raise our prices without turning the tide of our own currency against us, which running faster and more forcibly down, than we are able to row up, carry us deceitfully away, and all our labour turns to account.

If for the sake of leaving a little trade to regulate itself, the whole community is to be impoverished, the public faith suspected and impeached, and the abilities of the states reduced and weakened, it is time to take the matter up on the most serious and determined grounds; for we had better be without trade, than exposed to the consequences it has hitherto produced.

Under proper regulations, and carried on with principle and honesty, it might render to us every advantage which, in times like these, we ought to look for; but left to itself, to find its own balance by no other practice than extortion, and to regulate itself upon the ruins of public credit, and at the hazard of national success, is an evil too dangerous to be admitted, too serious to be trifled with.

It is in vain that we complain of the currency, unless we comply with measures for restoring it; and which, if we do not, we shall assuredly sink in our own hands the hoards and funds, that if supported would make us rich. The money is our own. No power is bound to make it good, if we, whose property it is, make it otherwise. Besides which, we ought to reflect, that the public faith, or the United States is but another name for ourselves, and that while we individually undervalue the currency we diminish the faith and abilities of the states, on whose credit it is uttered. Neither can we have any right to demand in one character a value, we deny to it in the other.

The means by which it has been depreciated are too numerous to be ascertained, and too intricate to be explained; but we in a particular manner caution you against those who affect to treat it lightly; in order to give a colourable pretence to their own extortion, and then clamorously cry out, "Why is it not made better?" neglecting at the same time to remember, that their own practices contribute to its unnecessary reduction.

Having said thus much on the subject, we shall conclude, with recommending it to our sister states, to concur with us in measures, absolutely necessary, at this time, for redeeming and supporting the credit of our currency, and of consequence, individual prosperity. We wish to see committees formed in every state and county, whose immediate business it shall be to watch against the depreciation, and promote the value of the money; and that whatever they shall discover any person or persons trading the same, by demanding or giving more than a just and regulated price, that they summon a meeting of the inhabitants at some convenient time and place, to determine what portion of disgrace and disapprobation such person or persons shall undergo.

We have for the present proposed to reduce our prices month by month. But in order to carry the matter into extensive and effectual execution, by a rule that will agree to all places and things, we are of opinion, that a universal regulation, capable of applying itself in all cases, may be formed on the following plan: each state, for itself, to ascertain what the prices of the several articles of produce and importation were in the year one thousand seven hundred and seventy-four, and to multiply that price by some certain num-

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