

opposition? A little reflection would have discovered advocates in their favour, in every county. I am one, not from affection or interest, but because, as it has been clearly proved by the Senator, we cannot take their property without violating the principles of justice, our constitution, and our bill of rights, and the law of civilized nations. The ties of gratitude, honour, blood, and friendship, may induce others to give their opposition. The proprietary had great influence in this country, from the offices of profit and trust in his gift. Many of his officers and placemen have engaged in the war, and accepted places of honour and great trust under our present government; but how base would be their ingratitude, if they could with indifference behold his property wrested from him, to promote the designs and interests of a few individuals! Arguments presented themselves to save his property. He is an *infant*, he is an *innocent* subject of Great-Britain; and he is *not an alien*. His agent, the president of the Senate, may be well justified in his partiality to the old government, which he ever openly and candidly avowed. His affection, his attachment to the proprietor and his interests cannot be questioned. His negative to the bill therefore might have been expected; and his friends and connections, numerous and powerful, will support his conduct, and join in opposition to the measure. "It always appeared to me an impropriety, that the agent of the proprietor should have any share in divesting *himself* of his rights." It has been said that he qualified as a senator, on a stipulation, that compensation should be made to the proprietor for what necessity might oblige the people to take from him. There are many others, who have been raised to affluence and importance, by the bounty of Mr. Harford and his ancestors.

Our late governors, col. Sharpe and Sir Robert Eden, have their friends and connections, men of abilities and fortunes; they will combine, and draw into the opposition their relations and friends. The British-merchants, and owners of iron-works, have many advocates. Their factors, agents, and old correspondents, will, and ought to exert themselves. Gratitude for former services, and expectation of future benefits, will urge them, openly or secretly, to excite the people to join in the opposition. The absentees from this state, are connected with, or related to, men of the first abilities and influence, and some of them are connected with the first characters, in the first offices of our present government. I wish to inform the advisers of confiscation of the difficulties they have to encounter, that they may recede in time, and before it is too late. We have but a few of those, who are called disaffected, in this county, but the advocates for confiscation may add to the number of their opposers, all the nonjurors, Tories and moderate men in the state, and many, many good whigs, as the Senator and myself, who, from principle, are averse to the measure. "It is not my wish or desire to excite the resentment of the public" against the popular leaders, (for some of whom I have a personal regard and respect) but if they will obstinately persist in their scheme of iniquity, and at any rate confiscate British property, in violation of our common law, our bill of rights and constitution, and law of nations, they must abide by the consequences. I would advise them to remember the sentiment of the judicious Roman, "that councils which at first view may appear *crafty or bold*, are often difficult in the execution, and disastrous in the end." I would exhort them to consider "the vicissitude of all human affairs, more especially in war, and that even our independence is not beyond the reach of adverse fortune, I would wish them to act with moderation, for fear an alteration in our affairs should make their own weapons recoil, and return upon themselves the usage they intend for others; I would earnestly recommend to them not to set an example to our enemies, which one time or other may be of dangerous consequence to themselves." In our hour of prosperity and insolence we may confi-

cate British property, but if the arms of Great-Britain should prevail, they may exceed our example, and forfeit life as well as property.

It was observed to me by one of my neighbours, that he was for confiscating British property, and particularly the proprietor's estate, for two reasons; 1st. To prevent the payment of the quit rents, which in justice must still be paid (with the arrears) if the confiscation should not take place. 2^d. To enable the assembly to comply with their promise of giving land, within the state, to our officers and soldiers. I shall make an observation or two on this subject, for his satisfaction, and that of others who may entertain the same opinion, and because such arguments of interest too often have weight with the common people. No argument of interest should induce us to infringe the rules of justice, or to make the least breach in our constitution; "the precedent may be of dangerous consequence." The quit-rents are of no great value; the net sum amounted in 1774 (I am told) to only £.7096 12 6 sterling. It is probable the proprietor, Mr. Harford, would accept, in lieu and satisfaction of his quit-rents, as much principal money as will produce the same yearly salary, at the interest of six per cent. this would be £.118,277 2 6 sterling. I would rather consent to pay my proportion of twice this sum, than do an act of injustice, or violate one article of our bill of rights. As to procuring lands for our officers and soldiers, in the state, (for sound policy forbids purchasing out of it) I suppose we should not want above 150,000 acres. I imagine we could buy of Mr. Harford his reserved and ungranted lands, on very reasonable terms.

I flatter myself the public are now able, from the labours of the Senator, and my feeble endeavours, to form some judgment of the rectitude of the motives which induced the popular leaders to urge the senate to the passage of the bill for confiscation, and of the true principles which induced that honourable body to give it their negative.

The Senator has been pleased to profess, and I as sincerely make the same declaration, that "the writer has no interests distinct from that of his country, the prosperity of which he has always endeavoured to promote to the best of his power and abilities, and wishes to see established, on the sure foundations, the principles of liberty, of justice, and of our constitution."

A PLEBEAN.

Prince-George's county, March 1, 1780.

Mess. FRED. and SAM. GREEN,

Gentlemen,

INSERT this in your paper, and it will oblige A READER.

It is justly alarming to see principles like the Senator's spread in a free country, when two years ago, if any man had talked in that manner, he would as soon have dared to put himself in the fire, or be tarred and feathered, especially a member of our assembly; Good God! What is this state come to, to be the subjects of Great-Britain and *not* cannot take the property of our enemies to pay our taxes, when, if it was in their power they would take our lives. It is time for men to trim, and make fair weather on both sides; but I can say this, though I cannot write, I can think, and I have borne a firelock; and I can say it is damned Toryism. The Plebean is the echo of his voice, and the hot bed of a furnace in all dabolical plots and conspiracies. God deliver this country from them. I am,

Elk-Ridge. Your humble servant,
Feb. 27, 1780. A SENTRY.

For the MARYLAND GAZETTE.

I LIKE well what the Senator has spoken, who writes against the confiscation of British subjects, and in my judgment he is in the right. John Calvin was a great reformer, and subscribed the covenant, and an honest man, and if he has said it, it must have been of his opinion. King James was in the right to make his countrymen his own subjects, and if the union was to break, and the two crowns to become separate, it would be a great consolation, that the British subject would be under both kingdoms, and inherit each other. In America we are British subjects, especially born before the declaration of independence, and such of us as have not taken the oath, it is the reason; but our children may, for it would be against the conscience of the soul, and the holy law of God, to forswear the oath we have already taken to be true to our natural sovereigns. But we may be the subjects of both countries; and it would be a great force upon any who have come to my time of day, to cast off their native country; I would give the best coat on my back to see a renunciation of the dispute. The Plebean speaks like an honest man, and strengthens full well the reasons of the Sena-

tor, and makes appear what the other opens up, to great purpose; that it is against the civil law of nations to pay taxes with other mens property; and the bill of rights of this country, which is against the municipal law, by which, born before the declaration of independence, we are still the subjects of Britain, and under the realm of that kingdom.

A NATIVE OF NORTH-BRITAIN.

Feb. 28, 1780.

PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 24.

Last Tuesday afternoon arrived here captain Palmer, from France, by whom we have the French newspapers in December, but have only time to give the following.

LONDON, Nov. 25.

The earl of Hillsborough is appointed secretary of state, vice lord Weymouth.

Extract of a letter from a gentleman of character in l'Orient, to his friend in this town, dated Nov. 17th, 1779.

"The parliament of Ireland have acted with a degree of spirit, that surprises every body. On their meeting, instead of echoing back the lord lieutenant's speech, as is usual, they in their address to the king, demanded a free trade in every respect; and if this is refused them, there is no doubt but that they will declare themselves independent. Between 50 and 60,000 men, have already formed themselves into independent regiments, and the duke of Leinster is at the head of this association.

Extract of a letter from l'Orient, dated November 18, 1779.

"The Dutch seem at present entirely to disregard Great-Britain. Notwithstanding Sir Joseph Yorke's memorials, they allow captain Jones to rest his little squadron, and give him every assistance possible—nay, he is even allowed possession of a small fort in the Texel, in which he has put his sick and wounded seamen. His own marines constantly mount guard, and the continental colours are hoisted. The English do him the honour to attend with eight ships at the south and four at the north entrance of the Texel to watch his motions. In answer to Sir Joseph Yorke's memorial, and demand of the Seraphis and Countess of Scarborough, the states general have reply'd, that they were a neutral power, that their ports were free, and that they did not take upon them to judge of the validity of any prizes brought into their harbours. It is said that Sir Joseph, in his second memorial, has declared, that if the prizes are not given up, orders will be given to the captains of British men of war, to make reprisals. Captain Jones is expected round here very shortly, if the English do not watch him too closely.

"Affairs in Ireland are at last come to a crisis. The parliament, in their address to the king, were almost unanimous in demanding a free and unrestricted trade, and if this is not complied with, there is scarce a doubt but what they will declare themselves independent, and open their ports to all the world. Sir George Newenham declared in the house, that they were and ought to be independent, to all intents and purposes, and that the parliament of Great-Britain had nothing whatever to do with their trade. Between fifty and sixty thousand men have formed themselves into independent regiments in the different counties, mostly headed by gentlemen of rank and fortune; and the duke of Leinster commands the Dublin volunteers. We have not yet heard what reception the address is like to meet with; but every day we expect very interesting news from that quarter.

"News is this day arrived in town from London, that lord Sandwich has shot himself. People have various conjectures on the cause of this."

Extract of a letter from Nantes, Dec. 13, 1779.

"The count d'Estaing, with four ships of the line is arrived from America at-Brest. The intended invasion of England is laid aside till spring, and the respective fleets are in port."

We have received an account of the following vessels being arrived in the river, viz. the brig Retaliation, captain Kollock, and the sloop Page, captain Palmer, from France; the brig Delaware, captain Collins, and schooner Revenge, captain Carson, from Hispaniola; a brig from Cadiz, and several others.

Captain Wilton, who left the Havannah the latter end of December, informs, that an expedition was going forward from thence, that a large body of men were embarked and hourly expected sailing orders. Their destination was said to be Pensacola. On the 7th ult. in lat. 31. 5, long. 65, he passed a large fleet standing S. E. with the wind at West; some of them gave him chase, but as he was to windward, he easily escaped. It is supposed this is the fleet which left New-York last Christmas.

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