

# MARYLAND GAZETTE.

T H U R S D A Y, M A Y 17, 1781.

For the MARYLAND GAZETTE.

**I**T is one of the strongest symptoms of the decline of public virtue and patriotism, in a free state, when the people, in general, grow indifferent and inattentive to the choice or conduct of their rulers. It is a very painful task for a contemplative sensible whig to compare the conduct of our people in the commencement, and for the three first years of the war, with their behaviour since. Every breast glowed with the love of country, and every one offered his services to the public without any reward: our whole people seemed to be animated with one soul. A gradual and fatal change has taken place. Avarice, dissipation, folly, and lethargy, has succeeded public virtue, industry, wisdom, and the most vigorous exertions. The causes are various, and it is not my intention, at present, to explain them. The citizens of this state, for some time past have been wholly unconcerned in the election, or conduct of their representatives; they seem to declare to the world, that tho' all that is dear and valuable to themselves and their posterity is at stake, yet that they care not who play the game, or in what manner. For almost a year our bay and rivers have been infested and plundered, and our houses laid in ashes, by a few of the lowest, and most infamous of the British robbers, and our more infamous refugees, aided by the two traitor pilots Anderson and Whaland, and a number of our runaway slaves, in two or three small armed vessels, and some barges. Have we the feelings and the spirit of men? If virtue and love of country is lost, our safety, our criminal love of property require us to exert ourselves. Our wicked refugees, Robert Alexander, Anthony Stewart, Esquires, and their worthy companions, have associated to plunder us, and have had the impudence to threaten their vengeance, if we punished their cut-throats and robbers. The situation of this state, and her means of defence, in case of invasion, the state of our public credit, and finances, must be known to our rulers; and it is not necessary, for my purpose, to make them public, at this time. Our governor thought the public good required the legislature to meet as on last Thursday, and I wish it had been called before. On this day there is not a sufficient number of members to compose a house of delegates, and there are but five members of the senate, in the city. Every man of common understanding must see a necessity for the meeting of our assembly, as soon as possible. When gentlemen accept a seat in the senate, or house of delegates, the most honourable and important trust in the power of the people to bestow, they are bound by the ties of honour, and duty, to their constituents and country, to attend the public service; to neglect it is almost a criminal, as to betray. If the present shameful delay in the members was the only instance, the people might pardon it; but for three years, at every session, but on the members of both houses have neglected to come for a week, ten days, and sometimes a fortnight, after the day on which the assembly was called. This neglect of duty adds greatly to the expences of government, and every very heavy, and must be very disagreeable and inconvenient to the few who attended. As honour, and a sense of duty were insufficient motives to induce the members to discharge their trust, a law was passed (after several negatives by the senate) to compel

their attendance, under a fine, for each day's neglect. At the first session afterwards there was a full house, on the day appointed for the meeting, and excuses were sent by those who were prevented by sickness, or other unavoidable accident, some few resigned their seats. The senators, as usual, did not attend, and it was considered as degrading to the dignity of the body, to fine any of their members. At the next session, very many of the house of delegates, and the greater part of the senate, neglected to attend at the day, and for above a week afterwards. Some of those chosen delegates resigned, and to the disgrace of the county, they were re-elected. No fines were imposed, and the law has remained a dead letter ever since. If a house of delegates neglect to enforce obedience to a law, which they are to execute, because it may affect themselves, with what propriety can they complain that the laws in general, are disregarded and not obeyed? Our delegates ought to set an example, as individuals, and more especially as a body, of obedience to the laws, which they have made. They ought to be the patterns of public virtue. It cannot be expected that the house of delegates, at the present session, will fine any of their members, for his breach of duty and the positive law, and the injury and expence thereby incurred by the public. Almost the whole are guilty, and no member will choose to draw on himself the resentment of numbers. There can be no great hopes of a reformation, and unless the people will route, and enquire into the conduct of their representatives, and discard, at the next election, those who do not merit their confidence, our affairs will grow desperate, and without any remedy. I consider the present senate as *self-elected*, and not the choice of the people. Their conduct may be the subject of future enquiry. The law to compel the attendance of the members of the assembly, unless enforced this session, and every other law not executed, ought immediately to be repealed.

We have the means of defending our farms, and houses from plunder and destruction, by the present banquitti in our bay, and indeed from any force which can probably be spared to act against this state, if we had sense, and spirit to exert them. Let the property of the refugees, Robert Alexander, Anthony Stewart, parsons Boucher and Addison, the three Dulans, Lloyds, and the two Daniels, be immediately appropriated as a fund, to purchase, fit out, arm, and man three galleys, and six or eight barges. Their estates will be sufficient for the purpose. Let a law be passed, directing the immediate execution of any pirates, or marauders taken within the state, and to kill on the spot any negroes found in arms. This state is well able to protect itself from any enemy unless in force, and can furnish its proportion of supplies of men and provisions, if our legislature would act with wisdom, firmness, and decision.

### W A T C H.

W A R S A W, December 6.

**N**OTWITHSTANDING the bad weather, the Russian troops in different parts of the kingdom are in motion to march out of it; they have already quitted Thorn, and some regiments of these troops will pass the Vistula here next week.

Dec. 28. It is said the king of Prussia has ordered 24,000 of his best troops to march towards Silesia; which occasions

many conjectures; probably he has the maxim in his mind, *si vis pacem para bellum*.

LAGHORN, Dec. 13. It is reported, that not only the Russian Squadron in this port, but 5 other men of war and 3 frigates of that nation, will shortly sail to the Archipelago, if the differences between that court and the Porte are not settled.

L O N D O N, December 26.

Yesterday a quantity of baggage belonging to the draughted soldiers out of the guards, was shipped on board transports in the river for America.

Dec. 30. The royal manifesto was not merely found on the discoveries made by the capture of Mr. Auren's papers, nor on the intrigues of Van Berchel and his American associates. Government had found that the states refused joining the armed neutrality, in hopes of drawing Russia and Sweden to guarantee their possessions, both foreign and domestic; which those powers at first hesitated to comply with, but had not given an absolute refusal; in this critical juncture a declaration on the part of England became necessary, by which means our court avoid drawing the powers of Russia and Sweden on them, for commencing hostilities against their intended allies; and the states have also lost the opportunity of joining the armed neutrality, which is in itself, become almost inoperative, Denmark having, in the same interval, entered into a treaty with England.

P H I L A D E L P H I A, May 9.

The following intercepted letter is published in the New York Mercury extraordinary, of April 19.

Amsterdam, December 28 1780.

"S I R,  
The Dutch say the English are acting the part of the tailor, who, having quarrelled with three others as about as himself, and got his bones broke, and his eyes beat out in the squabble, shall engage four more to fight him at the same time that he might have an opportunity to make it up with all seven with honour.

"If the English are not actuated by the same blind and vindictive passions, which have governed them for so many years, it is impossible to see through their policy. I think it impossible they should be ignorant of the articles of confederation of the neutral powers; these articles, as I am informed, warrant to all the neutral powers their treaties with England, and stipulate that if either is attacked, after the twentieth of November last, it shall be made a common cause. If the English should issue letters of marque against the Dutch, the states general will not immediately issue letters of marque in return, but will represent the facts to the congress, at Petersburg, and demand the benefit of the treaty of armed neutrality; and all the powers who are parties to that confederation, will join in demanding of England restitution, and in case of refusal will jointly issue letters of marque and reprisal.

"The political machine that is now in motion is so vast, and comprehends so many nations, whose interests are not easy to adjust, that it is perhaps impossible for the human understanding to foresee what events may occur to disturb it. But at present there is no unavourable appearance from any quarter.

"We are in hourly expectation of interesting news from the English, French and Spanish fleets, from Petersburg; Lon-

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