

MARYLAND GAZETTE.

THURSDAY, JUN 14, 1781.

to the PEOPLE of MARYLAND.

THE enemy are thundering at your gates; it is time to arouse from the fatal lethargy, which has so long benumbed your faculties, and stilled your virtue in your breasts. It is high time to awake from your dreams of security, and "to play the man for the day of your God." When you have witnessed the tender mercies of a British Army; when you have viewed your country in flames, the works of your industry laid waste; your wives and daughters the trembling objects of British brutality; it may then be too late to reform your conduct. Their devastations may tempt you with a mitour, in which you may behold your past follies strikingly reflected; but you may then only have power of weeping over them. The notion, that these evils might have been averted by proper exertions, will be rendered more poignant, when you find a remedy within your reach. Your situation is now alarming, but by no means desperate. It is still in your power to redeem your character, and to save your country from the calamities with which she is threatened by the progress of the British foe. Spirited and manly exertions may yet prevent you from reaping the fruits of your folly and inactivity; your blunders may yet be turned to your advantage; they will be a useful lesson to your future conduct if you have the care to profit by them.

The ruinous state of your finances is a source of most, if not all, your miseries. Hence has flowed all the emblems of government; the want of credit and stability in your currency has had a languor over the whole body politic; has delayed, or rendered useless, your military operations; has impeded the raising of troops, and, when raised, rendered their march impracticable.

There was an era of this present war, when the want of money would not have been sensibly felt; there was a time when Americans blush for the rapid depreciation from public virtue that ever distinguished the annals of mankind! there was a time when the patriotism of the community was an ample fund for all the expenses of war. What a sad reverse to our principles experienced! Contending is that flame which spread from the altar to break, and kindled Americans in a nation of patriots. Sullied is that altar, which Europe applauded and revered! The public good is no longer sacred to us! Even those, who early in the war worshipped with pure and fervent hearts the sacred shrine of freedom; who were wont to have sacrificed on her altars to private view; even these no longer bow before the idol self-interest hath set up. This idol has become the religion of the people, and if a reformation does not speedily take place, our independence will fall a prey to its blind, ungovernable zeal.

Let us learn to regulate our private interests by the public good, or our ruin will be inevitable. Can we expect that laws and decisions of our public bodies will be productive of any good effects, when the vices of the community impede their operations? All laws must be a dead letter, unless inspired by the co-operation and united efforts of the people at large. Why then do we censure the legislature for misfortunes, which originate in our avarice or criminal attachment to individual interest? Why do we look up to the legislature to remedy evils, which it is in our

power alone to remove? How unjust, how unreasonable, such conduct! What a pity it is so universally prevalent! This injustice appears in nothing more striking, than in saddling the legislature with the rapid depreciation of the new emissions. It is imputed to a breach of faith, made in the resolves of congress of the 13th of March, 1780, and is considered as coeval with the birth of the money. Like all human things, it was supposed to carry with it, from its birth, the seeds of its own dissolution. Neither my abilities nor inclination leads me to enter into speculative reasonings on this subject; if the measure was justifiable, it needs no defence; if wrong, it deserves none. Certain I am, that however blameable the legislature were in adopting the forty for one plan, they are not the only source whence the present currency's depreciation flows. They have done every thing in the power of human laws to support its credit; they have provided a fund sufficient for its redemption; they have blighted its fame by no dishonest tender laws; they have enriched it by an annual interest, which, though a work of supererogation, ought to enervate its value. It was impossible for legislative wisdom to devise a stauncher prop for its support; but there was one thing, which must influence its credit, which knows not the restraint of law: the public opinion must be in its favour, or all the hedges set round it by the legislature must prove ineffectual to exclude the demon of depreciation. Unhappily for our cause, the vices of the community prevailed; dark doubts, sly insinuations, and open assertions, were aimed at its fame; the farmer, the merchant, and the mechanic, vied with each other in destroying its character. In vain were legal mounds opposed to the efforts of the whole community; the torrent of depreciation rushed in, and left these, who had raised it, to view their own interest buried in one common ruin with that of the public. Because congress and the legislatures did not think it expedient to redeem the old continental money at its nominal value in gold and silver, and thus disappointed the golden prospects of speculation, the community entered into a league to damn all paper money. The consequences are, that the new emissions have depreciated more in two months, than the old continental did in as many years. Though it is evident to every person of the least observation, that this new emission is the only source from which supplies can be drawn to carry on the war, and that unless its credit is established none can be afforded, such is the obstinacy, such the folly of the people, that they can stand by and see their country verging to its ruin, and not make a single effort to save her. For shame, Marylanders! for shame! Recollect the high character which your troops have fought and bled to establish, and to which the wisdom and decisions of your councils have given an additional lustre, and determine to snatch them from disgrace.

Let your first object be to restore the credit of your money; it would be madness longer to doubt the inefficacy of laws for this purpose; the value of your currency will rise and fall with your good and bad opinion, as the quicksilver in the barometer by the effects of heat and cold. This truth points out a remedy, plain and easy to be carried into execution. Associations can alone produce this desirable end. The farmer, the merchant, and the mechanic, must enter into solemn agreements, that the money shall pass at its

real value, and determine to hold no intercourse with those who will not assist their endeavours. As their interest is the same, their exertions should be united; those who would raise any distinction between these classes, have either weak heads or bad hearts; it is by a harmony between them; that riches can only flow into a state.

There is no doubt, but that a general adoption of this plan would stamp the new emissions with all the extrinsic value of specie. Money is always worth just as much as the community pleases to give for it. A few retailers in Philadelphia have for some time past proposed the exchange, and to the disgrace of that commercial city, it has always become current. Surely, then, a scheme, flowing from such virtuous motives, and supported by the respectable part of the society, cannot fail of being attended with immediate success. Baltimore should, without delay, set the example; none of the counties can be so lost to their interest, as not to follow it; a general adoption will be accompanied by a general advantage, and must soon retrieve our sinking money. The political machine will receive new motion. Our military operations will no longer move with tortoise pace; galleys may be built to protect our commerce from the pitiful refugee marauders, who have so long insulted the dignity of the republic with impunity; our troops in the field may be well clothed and fed; new levies may be raised and equipped; all our affairs will wear a new face. How great the advantage! how simple, how easy the plan! It would be an insult to your whiggism to suppose you would not adopt it.

But the present crisis of your affairs demand still further exertions. It is not enough that you should fix the credit of your money. It is a business of time to raise regular troops; the enemy are fast approaching to your borders; you must leave a while the shades of domestic happiness, to secure their future enjoyment; you must march forth to the field of blood; you must encounter all the difficulties and fatigues, and hazard every danger of war. There is no medium; you must either by a brave and determined opposition defeat the army of your enemy, or be spectators of a series of cruelty and devastation shocking to humanity. Sleep no more. Arm, and go forth with a fixed resolution to conquer or die; of this you may be assured, should the enemy triumph, the state of a galley-slave will be not less tolerable than that of a citizen of America.

A W H I G.

Harford county, June 4, 1781.

L O N D O N, February 11.

ON Monday last the following unhappy accident happened at Ferry-bridge, in Yorkshire; a gentleman (said to be a son of lord V.) accompanied by a lady, with whom he had been on a matrimonial expedition to Scotland, stopped at the White-Swan. After his departure it was discovered that he had left a purse behind him. The boot catcher was immediately dispatched on horseback with it; he overtook the carriage, and rode up to one of the windows, but his horse not standing, he turned him round to the other window, and called out to the gentleman, "Your purse, your purse, Sir." The gentleman supposing he demanded his purse, let down the window, and instantly shot him dead. The coroner's jury brought in their verdict accidental death.

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