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MARYLAND GAZETTE.

T H U R S D A Y, J U N E 21, 1781.

MARYLAND GAZETTE.

BLACK gown sometimes covers a scoundrel, and a red coat a coward, and the garb of patriotism frequently conceals a traitor. Professions to be trusted, fools only are misled; promises, wise men never credit, and no prudent man will suffer to be twice deceived. For almost years our public councils have been led by intrigue, cabal, party and After the alliance with France announced to America, in the spring many men changed their line of On that memorable event, who had openly, and others secretly our independence, and many only acquiesced in the measures America, commenced advocates in of them, and from moderate men, ics, they became violent whigs, being patriots; from an opinion the alliance would probably secure independence of which they before These men relied on their and cunning, and the credulous, vicious temper of my countrymen, the fickle and inconstant opinion of public. They pretended love of coun- tial resentment to Great Britain, or oppression and cruelties, when view was to obtain trust, office ver under the new government. people at large, who judge only appearances, gave credit to their ions, and elected several of them to is our legislature. The proceed- of the house of delegates shew that of the members have uniformly against every measure proposed, ery law passed, to raise men, or, ince the war. Can such then up? I he assembly, from a credulity at to all public bodies, appointed of the new patriots to high offices fare. The power and places ob- ly address and intrigue have been by party and faction. Hence our councils wanted firmness and de- and temporary expedients were ed, divisions created, and suspicions ed, and industriously circulated, real whigs, and friends to the re- A tory cannot love a whig, sible whig will never trust a tory. ter is governed by no principles, a bigoted catholic hold no faith ertics, so Tories do not esteem are bound by any ties of honour many from destroying the prop- of blighting the character of a whig. object being good and virtuous, it, they disregard all rules, mo- religious. To remove whigs from or to destroy their influence in our councils, was politic in the Tories, hat the whigs should join not only in honour raised, but even the censure condemnation of their faithful ser- without a hearing, is truly ama- and only to be accounted for, from neness and versatility of human na- The opinion of the people is al- led by a few. The applause, love and of the populace may be ob- without any merit, and lost with- cause. Ancient and modern his- anishes innumerable instances of ly and ingratitude of the people to and friends and patriots. It is the of a republic to be more ungrate- any other government. These ns; the practices of the Tories; ty of the whigs; and the ingratia- of the state; have been manifested eral instances, but more especially,

as to a gentleman formerly one of our delegates to congress. The general assembly have, by the con- stitution, a right to appoint, and displace certain public officers; and the individual dismissed, though injured in reputation; or fortune, cannot with propriety, en- quire of them the reason of their con- duct; but the legislative, as well as the executive, are answerable to their consti- tuents for a proper exercise of their powers, not only in the choice of officers, but also when they remove them from office. It is their duty to nominate men of integrity and abilities to fill the public stations of government, to displace those who misbehave, or prove unworthy, and to bestow rewards and honour on those who serve the public with integrity and diligence. The one operates as a punish- ment to vice, the other promotes and encourages virtue and patriotism. The gentleman alluded to had many years served his country in the most honourable stations, without receiving (or wishing to receive) any reward. He devoted his youth, gave up his profession, and greatly injured his private fortune, for the public service. He bestowed his time and labour and sacrificed his domestic felicity to his public station. His uniform and steady opposition to the officers of the old government, and to the 40 per poll, claimed by the clergy, created him many great and powerful enemies. His un- wearied assiduity to rouse the people to resist the designs of Great-Britain, at the time of the stamp act; and his exertions, since the present contest, and his dislike to moderate men, and aversion to Tories, added greatly to the number. There is not a tory or nonjuror in the state but bears him a mortal hatred. In Novem- ber 1778, this gentleman was left out of the delegation to congress; his duty to his family and the accumulating expence in- cident to that station, ought to have in- duced him long before to have resigned his seat. A few weeks before the election of delegates, reports were circulated that he was concerned with a gentleman in Baltimore in engraving large quantities of wheat and flour, which was represented as the cause of the then high price of those articles; that our poor, and the army were distressed, and likely to suffer greatly from such conduct; that he was one of a committee of congress, who was informed of the expected distress of the army, and appointed to devise means to remove it; that he betrayed the secrets of congress, and made use of the knowledge he acquired as a member of that body, to his own private emolument, to the great injury of his country; that he was an advocate for the confederacy, from interest, and was bribed to such con- duct by some persons of the state of Vir- ginia. Candour and justice require that when any misconduct is alleged against any delegate, or other officer, that an enquiry into the truth should precede judgment of condemnation. The day before the choice of delegates to congress, the gentleman, with his colleagues, was called before the house of delegates to give them an account of the state of public affairs in Europe and America. I was present and heard him declare that it was with pleasure he took the opportunity to express his hearty approbation of such enquiry; that he wished the house could be informed of the conduct of their dele-

gates, that they might know their merit or demerit; that reports had been pro- pagated to the injury of one of them, and that he was ready, and desirous to give them every information in his power, and to answer any questions, any member should propose." None were asked. He proposed to attend again, "that gentle- men might prepare their questions." These were his words immediately after- wards reduced to writing, and the fact must be admitted. However, the arts and management of a few men prevailed, and without any enquiry, though asked, an old and faithful servant was discarded, and in my opinion treated by the legisla- ture with injustice and ingratitude. As the public opinion originates, and is di- rected by a few; in like manner, the ac- tions of popular bodies are generally go- verned by some two or three, who are en- trusted with the conduct of the public bu- siness; and the good and virtuous are of- ten misled, slide into the views of party, and unknowingly become the instruments to gratify the pride and passions of the hypocrite or knave, and often stab the character they ought to protect. The instructions reported at November session 1778, by the committee of both houses, to the delegates in congress, were intend- ed to convey to the public, that the re- ports circulated of the delegate dismissed were true. Neither the draughtsman of the instructions, or any other person (though frequently called on) have ever attempted to support the truth of the facts charged against the gentleman. They were false and infamous, and the author was a calumniator and a villain. The malice of enemies may be forgiven, but it requires some time to forget the ungen- erous perfidious conduct of false friends. In July session 1779, a bill originated in the senate, to prevent any person being elected a delegate to congress, unless he took an oath, that he would not directly or indirectly engage in any trade foreign or domestic, which was assented to by the house of delegates, without any debate, and for two years all merchants were disquali- fied and rendered ineligible, and un- worthy to a seat in congress. The pre- sence for the law was this. It was re- ported, and believed, that some of the members of congress were concerned in trade with Mr. Deane, late one of our ministers to the court of Versailles, who was accused of having embezzled the public money. It was urged, and with great propriety, that members of con- gress ought not to be in partnership with ministers, or commercial agents abroad; because as they might be interested, they would prevent enquiry into the conduct of the public servants in Europe. It is well known, that after Mr. Deane re- turned to America, and became a private citizen; some members of congress en- gaged in some commercial schemes with him, but it has not been discovered that any delegate was ever concerned with him in trade, while in his public cha- racter. No gentleman in the delegation from this state was suspected. If other reasons can be suggested for the making the law, the advisers and supporters of it are called on to assign them to the public. It may be admitted, that the public in- terest, and the suspicions entertained, and clamour raised, against members of con- gress being concerned in trade with Mr. Deane, would well justify a law to restrict delegates of congress from any commer- cial connection with public ministers or agents; but to declare all merchants in- eligible was an unnecessary and wanton violation of their rights of citizenship.

* These slanders were published in the Fifth-Kill Gazette by an anonymous writer, and the printer was called on but refused to deliver up the author.

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