

MARYLAND GAZETTE.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 2, 1781.

To Earl CORNWALLIS, lieutenant-general, &c. &c.

MY LORD,

IN every finished character there is some one trait peculiarly ornamental and striking; the tender and delicate strokes of nature in the landscapes of Titian, and the sublime in the paintings of Raphael, demand our attention and excite our applause at the first blush. Chastity is the leading li- quament of the female portrait, and a soldier with- out courage, is as *anré*, as the statue of Venus de Medicis veiled in rags. Fame has given your lord- ship the characteristic of your profession, and it is sincerely to be wished, that your attachment to truth was such, as to leave no doubts of her au- thenticity. An eminent writer has said (with what justice I will not venture to determine) "That he who descends to a wilful falsehood forfeits every pre- tension to true bravery." If an investigation of your official letter to Sir Henry Clinton, relative to lieutenant-colonel Parleton's defeat on the 17th of January last, detects you in a misrepresentation, and subjects you to this censure, you have only yourself to blame. It is a charitable principle, to impute errors to the head, rather than the heart; and I sincerely wish I could do it with respect to your lordship; but it is impossible that your erro- neous representation of this action could have flow- ed from want of information. The loss your troops sustained might have been easily ascertained, by a comparison of their numbers, when detached, with those which rejoined you at Turkey creek. Let me compare your accounts with the truth. "You are apprehensive, that 400 infantry were either killed, wounded, or taken; you are certain that the loss of the cavalry was inconsiderable, and two three pounders fell into our hands; you fear that the colours of the 7th regiment shared the same fate." I wish your regard to truth had been as strong as your fears and apprehensions; you then would not have so far deviated from facts; which are, that 29 commissioned officers were paroled, 300 privates marched off prisoners, and upwards of 800 privates left wounded on the field; 10 commissioned officers and more than 100 privates were killed; the artillery, the music and colours of the whole detachment, were captured; among the prisoners were 130 of the legion, and a large number of dragoon horses were taken. How widely differ your lordship's account and the truth. "Veritas supralucis" is an old maxim, and will be verified to the event.

I am led to call your lordship's attention to the sixth paragraph of your extraordinary letter, from which it appears, that a reconsideration of it will call a blush to your cheek, and for a moment awake the feelings of honour, sleeping in your bosom. Men of integrity generally blend facts with misrepresenta- tions, to render them difficult to be detected; but your lordship, acting with no caution in this in- stance, has wove a web of falsehood, not variegated with a shred of truth. That lieutenant-colonel Parleton gave the waggon guard all the assistance in burning the baggage of the corps, which could be expected from fugitives, winged with apprehen- sions, is a fact; and it is equally true, that nothing but the rapidity of the flight saved them from the punishment they merited, by so flagrant a violation of the law of arms; but that he ever charged and expelled colonel Washington, is a boast without any foundation in truth. One would imagine, that Parleton's prudence would have induced him to have prevailed on your lordship to suppress even the name of that gallant young officer, as it must be engraved on his memory in indelible characters, and with the cavalry, the colonel charged, broke, and pursued, those of his legion (by your accounts) till numbers were killed and taken, and the rest totally dispersed; nor can he have forgotten whatever pain the recollection may give him) that Washington invited him to a rencontre, *comis et ense*, which he wisely declined, and not glowing "with the bravery, which had so often led his troops to vic- tory," sought an inglorious safety, and took shelter among his men!

Though the odium you have attempted to fix on the militia, if established, would encrease the glory of our regular corps, and add to the disgrace of your troops, whilst we have any regard for justice and merit, we cannot admit it. It is the best policy in your lordship to depreciate the character of the armed yeomanry of America, for it is a fact esta- blished by reason and experience, that a respectable

and well regulated militia is the safest palladium of the liberties of a state.

The militia, who composed at least one half of general Morgan's force, had long been pupils in the school of adversity. Deprived of their property, banished from their domestic enjoyments, and fired with the remembrance or repeated injury, aggravated by repeated insult, a noble thirst for revenge conspired with the love of country to im- pel them to the field. Some of them had fled from their farms the very morning of the action, after having beheld the work of a painful industry laid in ruins by the very men they had to contend with; others fought within sight of their smoking dwell- ings. I ask your lordship, I ask any man the least versed in human nature, if it is probable, my possi- ble, that men thus actuated and thus circum- stanced, whose property, connections, and what is dearer than life itself, hung on the fate of the day, should shrink from a temporary danger, and realize their desperate expectations. Repentment supplied the want of discipline, and gave an edge to their weapons, which was felt and lamented by your troops. Their bravery and moderation on this oc- casion will adorn the historic page, when the con- duct of their enemies shall be forgot, or remem- bered with detestation. Your officers, my lord, acknowledged that their orders extended to ex- clude the militia from mercy. Fortune, or rather that Providence which protects the votaries of a virtuous cause, disappointed their horrid designs, and put them into the power of the very men they had devoted to deliberate massacre. What was the conduct of the militia? They forgot the enemy in the prisoner, and humanity gave a lustre to their victory, more splendid than ever graced a British triumph!

What was the conduct of the American regu- lars? They fought against a corps, whose cruelty had become proverbial, and whose leader, a stranger to the tender emotions of pity, and untutored and unpolished by science, had been heard to use ex- pressions, which a savage would blush to own; has been heard to protest, "that he declared war against humanity and rebellion, and that the ex- piring groans of rebels was music to his ear." They triumphed, and were humane; bloodshed ceased with resistance, and the bayonet slept in its scabbard. For the truth of this I appeal to your own officers. Many of those captured on the 17th of January declared, with tears and blushes, "that the treatment they had received both from officers and soldiers, had impressed them with the most lively sentiments of gratitude and admiration, and that they should recommend their example to their army, as a lesson of firmness and humanity, highly worthy of imitation." This was language worthy of soldiers. It is sincerely to be regretted, that there are so few men of liberal sentiments under your lordship's command; but it is not difficult to be accounted for; example is more powerful than precept, and a cruel and illiterate general seldom commands for any length of time an enlightened corps of officers or a humane soldiery!

A man of conscious rectitude will ever promote a free enquiry into his conduct, and no station, however dignified or exalted, ought to screen a villain from the inquisition of truth, or shield his vices from public censure. The glare of a title may dazzle fools, and intimidate vassals, but can never influence those, who have sense to think, and spirit to act for themselves. In forming their judg- ment of a character, they strip it of its borrowed plumes, try it by the unerring rules of right reason, and stamp it with its merited signature. Upon such principles I mean to examine your lordship's conduct, whilst commanding a British army in the southern states. Should the investigation cloud your reputation, or lessen the number of your admirers; should your humanity be found as excep- tionable as your official veracity, and the mirror of truth reflect a monster, I entreat that your lord- ship would not imitate some fine ladies, who quar- rel with their limners and their glasses, for not re- flecting charms which the parsimony of nature had denied.

When you, my lord, moved in a subordinate sphere, and was the satellite to a superior planet, America viewed you through a mistaken medium; she believed you to be a gallant, generous, and veteran soldier, and lamented that such talents and principles should be prostituted in spreading the reign of despotism, a reign destructive to freedom, religion, and the arts and sciences; for every step a tyrant makes towards the establishment of his iron

sway, blasts some useful invention of the human genius, and blots out some amiable virtue of the human heart. The change of your situation, at- tended with the extension of your influence, strip- ped off the mask, and exhibited you in your ge- nuine colours. Transplanted to a southern hemi- sphere, we behold you a comet, dispelling death, and marking its progress with burnings and de- vastations. The history of your transactions in Georgia and the Carolinas is a history of cruelty and injustice, unparalleled in the annals of a civilized country. Enamoured of ambition, to obtain her favours, you have made sacrifices more inhumane than those of the savages to their fallen warriors. To grasp a phantom, you have trampled on the rights of your fellow-creatures, and stained your sword with the blood of innocence. Your blessed administration was ushered in by a proclamation, promising in the most solemn manner free and un- limited pardon, and peaceable and perfect enjoy- ment of property to those citizens, who came in and took the oath of allegiance to government. Deceived by your promises, and deluded by the arts of your emissaries, numbers claimed the pro- fered security and protection; sporting with the sacredness of plighted faith, you violated every en- gagement; instead of personal security, they ex- perience injury and insult; instead of rewards, they have received punishments; those whose pro- perty was an object worthy British avarice, have been deprived of it by the tuborned testimony of their slaves, who have been encouraged to treat their masters with an intolerance more intolerable than death. Your lordship and your officers have grown rich on the spoils of the widow and the orphan; many citizens have suffered as common felons by your orders, whose only crime was an unshaken attachment to their country, and whose fate will stand a recorded satire against your lord- ship and the tyrant you serve, as long as virtue shall have a friend amongst mankind; others, with- out the shadow of criminality, have been dragged from the altars of domestic happiness, thrown into dungeons, and there left to linger out a wretched existence, embittered by every species of distress, without a friendly hand to close their eyes, or lay their ashes in the peaceful grave. Our officers and soldiers, captured on the field of battle, fighting gallantly, have not experienced a milder fate. You have not dared to expose them to a public death, but you have taken as effectual a mode to rob them of life; your prison ships have been more fatal than scaffolds, and the want of bread than the hands of the executioners. Contrary to the custom of war and the usages of nations, you have forced our soldiers to enlist into your service, by reducing them to the melancholy alternative, either to per- ish with hunger, die under the lash, or to embrace their hand in the blood of their friends, relatives, countrymen, and fellow-soldiers. If your lord- ship's heart is not steeled to every humane sen- sation, the recollection of these facts must plant dag- gers in your bosom, and thorns under your pillow! Believe me, my lord, the shouts of victory can never drown the voice of an accusing conscience, or the smiles of royalty soften the pangs of guilt! The trophies of ambition are the badges of cruelty, and a fortune accumulated at the expence of justice and honour is splendid misery!

Having drawn your picture from the life, I shall leave your lordship to gaze on it; for though I should wish Arnold to expiate his crimes on the rack, I should be unwilling to view him whilst agonised with its tortures!

I am your lordship's most humble servant,  
AN AMERICAN SOLDIER.

Annapolis, July 30, 1781.

\* It is a fact, supported by the testimony of some of our officers, who have just come from Charles-town, and several inhabitants of that city, that upwards of 500 American soldiers have been constrained to sufferings to enlist in the British service, and are sent off to the West-Indies; yet retain their senses, and are pre- sently, though one should arise from the dead and say it was just, it would sleep on! Congress have sac- rificed enough to a mistaken humanity; it is high time they should add a spirited and decisive part; for clemency to our cruel enemy has ever been injurious to ourselves, and if continued will justly be imputed to sea. America does not vindicate the wrongs of her officers and soldiers, she will find very few mad enough to bleed or suffer in her cause!

establishment, and then, secure of such a construction to his majesty's that subject, as to restrict the ben- efits of the law. The same argu- ments serve to shew (if it remained) what would be the treatment of the America in it, if his (Germaine's) im- agination were to be realized. No foundation for such a hope, to estimate the value, and regret the loss of the former submissions, discharge from their service, without held out formerly, those whom they to be instrumental in accomplishing conquest. Lord G. Germaine speaks of Georgia as totally reduced, doubt but that Virginia must im- mediate to the activity and enterprise of Lord Clinton to push it with vigour. It to send a number of troops to the day to act against Maryland and Penn- sylvania, to establish a place of security for the loyal subjects in those states. The to the southward hath probably execution of this plan, and I hope the operations there, and elsewhere, will my totally to abandon it. It appears in my letters, that they intended to fix at Elizabeth river. These letters are dated the 7th of March.

George's county, July 15, 1781. I ED to my custody as a runaway man named BOB, who says he is a black man, 5 feet 7 or 8 inches high, his cloaths are so indifferent as not necessary. His matter is desired by and pay charges.

THOMAS WILLIAMS, sheriff. Annapolis, June 9, 1781. To give public notice, that the sub- scribe to petition the general assembly at their next sitting, to enable him by deed for fourteen hundred acres of land in that county, and a house and five acres of land in said county, being part of Jonathan Nagar, late of the county of St. Mary's.

DANIEL HEESTER, jun. The subscriber intends to petition the next assembly of this state, for an act to record a deed, and make it valid, notwithstanding the same was not acknowledged according to the law; it was executed by Mr. James Moore town, in the beginning of the year 1779, and was no civil magistrate acting under a commission just then formed.

NAHANEL RAMSEY. Foreclosure and sale of forfeited lands in Annapolis, July 18, 1781. SOLD at VENDUE, the lands of Bever-dam and Chaprico, in that county, in parcels, as tenanted by the tenants, or otherwise, as may be most convenient for the purpose intended. Many of the parcels are for lives yet in being, and some are for terms unexpired. The sale to begin on Thursday the 6th of September next, at Leonard-town. The money to be paid in three equal parts, the first on the 1st day of September 1781, the second on the 1st of September 1782, and the third on the 1st of September 1783. New bills of credit to be emitted in the month of the last session, at their actual value of payment.

of these manors is finished, the manors of St. Mary's, and the three manors of St. Anne's, will be exposed to public sale.

2 JO. BAXTER, clk. Annapolis, July 9, 1781. The subscriber is indebted to the estate of Joseph Baxter, deceased, for dealings in the partnership between him and the said Joseph Baxter, which was in the year, 1779, are requested to make payment to the subscriber, or the law- fully appointed agent, and all their claims against his estate, are desired to be legally authenticated, to ANNE SELBY, executrix.

Apply to W. SANDERS.

Charles-Street.