

[XXVIIth Year.]

THE

[No. 1806.]

MARYLAND GAZETTE.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 23, 1781.

To SAMUEL CHASE, Esquire.

THIS address is extorted by a publication in the Maryland gazette of the 1st of last month, under the signature of Censor, of which I presume you to be the author. As the draughtsman of the instructions alluded to in that publication is well known to several persons in this state, and as you were charged him with being guilty of the "unvarious and perfidious conduct of a false friend," he cannot submit to the imputation, and therefore holds himself obliged to lay before an impartial public the motive and occasion of those offensive imputations. Before I enter on this subject, it is proper to premise, that I never knew, till I read the Censor, that the draughtsman had been called upon by you to support the truth of the facts, which are birth to the instructions. I should not have thought it necessary, had I been called upon when the transaction was recent, nor do I think it now incumbent upon me, to prove the facts, with which you were charged by common report. Certain it is that a very general clamour had been raised against you, which was no secret to you, or your friends; and few were ignorant of the occasion. Why was the appeal then made to the public, when the circumstances, which gave colour to the report so injurious to your character, were recent and known to many? Why have you delayed the appeal thus long? A man of nice feelings and honour would not remain a day under the imputation of a breach of duty, were it in his power to convince the public of the injustice of the charge. Perhaps you may urge, that you did not know the authors of the injurious report; probably you did not; nor do I know the author, or authors; but was it necessary to know them, to clear up your character, and refute the calumny. The report, with all its attendant circumstances, was well known to you: the knowledge of the authors of it was not then more necessary, than now; for even now you do not know them. Surely the appeal to the public now made, and the challenge thrown out (not boldly, as becomes innocence, in your own, but under a fictitious name) would have been made with much greater propriety at that time, than at present. I am not singular in this opinion. Mr. Holt, the editor of the New-York journal informed you by a letter published in his paper of the 5th of January 1778, in answer to one he had received from you, that he could not agree with you in opinion, that the name of the author of the pieces signed Publius (A) was at all necessary to your vindica-

tion, which might as well be effected without, as with it. The charge (continues Mr. Holt) is plainly expressed, and if Mr. Chase proves it to be groundless and unjust, his character will be perfectly cleared without his being acquainted with the name of his accuser.

Mr. Holt's observation is pointedly just; and if you were really innocent, and could then have cleared up your character satisfactorily, you were much to blame in not following his advice, but suffering yourself to remain three years under the imputation, which your very silence confirmed.

This by way of digressio; I return to the instructions.

When the assembly met at Annapolis in October 1778, on my repairing thither from the country, I found several gentlemen warm in their complaints against you, as well as upon some other points, in which they conceived this state had been materially wronged. I observed, that public persons should express their opinions publicly, and not waste time in fruitless and obscure complaints; that if they suspected any practices were carried on injurious to the states in general, or to this in particular, by any man, or body of men, they ought to prevent, if possible, the future commission of such practices, by instructions to their delegates in congress, and by thus exposing their grievances, on plain redress, if obtainable. This observation occasioned the appointment of a committee in the senate to draw up instructions; I was chosen of the number, and desired to draw them, in compliance with my duty, as a public man, I drew a set of instructions conformable to the ideas, which had been thrown out in the course of conversation; they were submitted to the consideration and correction of a joint committee of both houses; and, after some alterations, were reported to the house of delegates. The instructions reported, were as much the act of the whole committee, who approved them, as of the person who drew them. I was under no obligation to acquaint you with them, or their tendency. You knew what had been publicly reported of your having divulged to your partners in trade the intended purchase of flour; the general voice, your silence, and the occurrences at that time much spoken of, and now strengthened by the extracts of letters contained in one of the notes, lead me to suspect (and the suspicion is not yet removed) that you were guilty. I say, Sir, my suspicion is not yet removed; in good truth, what have you alleged to prove your innocence, but mere protestations; and may there not be some circumstances, indicating and confirming guilt, which outweigh the strongest protestations of innocence? as for instance the following: A member of congress, Mr. Merchant, complained publicly in congress, that the secret, respecting the purchase of flour, had been betrayed by the delegates of Maryland. Yourself, Mr. Plater, and Mr. Forbes, were present; the last mentioned gentleman rose, and declared that he had divulged the secret; you were silent on this occasion, you who are so apt to be declamatory on most others. When you heard the accusation, and the declarations of Mess Plater and Forbes, why, if innocent, were you silent? Did you not afterwards, out of congress, relate to some member, or members, of that body, that you could account for the divulging of the secret? Did you not mention to that member, that Mr. William Smith of Baltimore-town, had opened a letter from you to the governor and council, by which he came to the knowledge of the intended purchase, and that thus it had transpired? Did you not, when taxed with this piece of ingenuity by Mr. Smith, or one of his sons, declare you had ever invented it (B). To the

above circumstance, tending to establish your guilt, the following gives additional weight. About the latter end of July, or first of August 1778, (the precise time cannot at this distance be accurately ascertained) several persons began to purchase rye, wheat, and flour: in consequence of so many purchasers employed in different parts of the country, rye and wheat rose from 10s per bushel (the price in August) to 12s, 13s, and 20s per bushel by the 20th of September, and by the 1st of February 1779 the price had risen to 60s. Most of the purchasers, if not all, were commissioned, as was reported and believed at the time, by Mr. John Dorsey, one of your partners in trade. Possibly, some time after, others became competitors in the purchase; but the first purchasers were Mr. Dorsey's agents. Does not this circumstance strongly indicate, that he has been previously informed by you, that wheat, rye and flour would be the most profitable articles to speculate in? Possibly, you did not in direct and explicit terms inform Mr. Dorsey of the purchases intended to be made by the public; but he knowing you to be well acquainted with the wants of the army, and the secrets of congress, would have been well indeed had he not taken an imperfect hint, and improved it to the advantage of the company. That Mr. Dorsey purchased about that time a considerable quantity of wheat and flour you will not deny, or that hearing the complaints of the commissary general, and the clamour excited against your conduct, you sold to Mr. Wadsworth, or his deputy, at double price, the wheat and flour, which had been purchased by your partners. It is painful to descend to these particulars, but if they are brought back to public memory, reflect that you are the cause.

But these facts, even if true, you may say are but circumstances, not proofs of guilt. Although they may not amount to legal proof, yet were they in mine, and the opinions of others, sufficient to induce a belief, that the public report was well founded; and such a belief, grounded on such circumstances, was sufficient as I, and many others conceived, to warrant the instructions complained of. Nothing but the letter written to your partners, or the oath of a credible witness, or witnesses, that they had seen such a letter divulging the design of congress, and advising the purchase, or your, or their acknowledgment of the fact, would, I suppose, be admitted in a court of law as ample and proper proof of the charge. It is not probable, that such proof can be procured, or that any man will vindicate himself.

But if any members of the legislature were imprinted with a belief, originating from the above mentioned circumstances, or from others not known to me, that you were really guilty of a breach of trust, and that such practices would injure the public, were they to wait and suffer in the mean time the continuance of similar frauds, until the authors of them could be legally convicted? Surely, Sir, you who upon many occasions have shewn so much

"You appeared to me to have been abused, and yet I was not so clear in the fact, as to authorize me to write names in conversation with Mr. Forbes, he informed me late y<sup>e</sup> who said you had opened the letter, and circulated the contents; this gentleman is now going to Baltimore, and will be so nice as to take charge of my letter, so him therefore I beg leave to refer you. Believe me Sir, from the first moment I heard the imputation alluded to, I treated it not only with dissent but indignation, and expressed my feelings in the very instant to a particular friend. I know, said I, Mr. Smith's honour and his discretion are never so unguarded, as this imputation seems to imply."

I am authorized to say, that Mr. Forbes made no scruple to declare, at Mr. Smith's table, that Mr. Chase was the member of congress who said Mr. Smith had opened his letter to the governor and council and betrayed the secret intended only for their information. Mr. Smith feeling the injustice done him by this insinuation applied to Mr. Chase, who declared in the most plain manner the whole was without the least foundation in truth and that he would, if desired, give from under his hand to that purpose, with permission to print the same in the different gazettes. Thus we have the testimony of the late Mr. Forbes, a gentleman of character and veracity that Mr. Chase said Mr. Smith had opened his letter to the governor and council by which the secret transpired: we have also Mr. Chase's denial of the allegation, and Mr. Forbes being dead he cannot support it. Who is to be believed, the man interested in denying the accusation, or he, who had no interest in making it?

(A) The author of three letters addressed to Samuel Esq, and printed in the New-York Journal, signed by Mr. Holt at Poughkeepsie. The following passage is taken from the second letter: "When you refused to avail yourself of the extraordinary demand for flour, which the wants of the French fleet must press, and which your official situation early impressed on your attention—to form connexions for monopolizing the article, and raising the price upon the public more than a hundred per cent.—when by your intrigues and dilatory delays you protracted the determination of the committee of congress on the proposals made by Mr. Wadsworth, commissary-general for procuring the necessary supplies for the public use—to give your agents time to complete their purchases—I say, when you were doing all this, and engaging in a traffic infamous and repugnant to your station, and ruinous to your country, did you pause, and allow yourself a moment's reflection on the consequences? Were you insatuated to imagine you would be able to conceal the part you were acting? Or had you conceived a thorough contempt of reputation, and a total indifference to the opinion of the world?" I have quoted this passage to shew, that the charge made against Mr. Chase, by Publius, is not of that vague, indeterminate, and general nature, which is to be discredited, needs only to be denied. The charge is pointedly made, the time, the nature of the offence, circumstances, and several persons who composed the committee of congress, and Mr. Wadsworth the commissary-general, were well known. Mr. Chase might have called upon the committee, and Mr. Wadsworth, to witness, that he had not, either by his intrigues, or studied delays, protracted the determination of the committee, to give his agents time to complete their purchases." He might have called upon Publius to prove, that wheat and flour had been purchased by his partners at that particular point of time; and if no such purchases were then made, he might have evinced, beyond the possibi-

lity of doubt, that the accusation was groundless, and founded in malice and misinformation. Why Mr. Chase did not take these steps, if innocent, is inadvisable, particularly after the peace of friendly advice given him by Mr. Holt.

(B) Extract from the letter of the honourable Henry Laurens-president of congress, to Mr. William Smith, dated September 22, 1778.

"It has been acknowledged that a member of congress did give the information respecting the exportation of flour to the eastern states, intending it only for the private information of the governor and council, but that you, my good friend, opened the letter, and let the contents pass under the eyes of several merchants, and others."

Mr. Smith justly offended at this report, wrote to the president denying the charge, and requesting his letter to be read in congress, which the president answered on the 4th of October 1778; the following extract is taken from the last mentioned letter.

having claims against the state of Georgia, are desired to be legally proved; and those who have claims against the state are requested to discharge the same by Samuel Mosh, on the 15th of July, at Kedy's point, near the battery, about 18 feet long, and 12 feet wide, has a ring bolt in her head, and a screw eye. The owner may be seen at the property, and paying...

reservation and sale of forfeited land, in Annapolis, July 26, 1781. Act of assembly, will be sold, in Baltimore town, on the 1st of September 1781, the property of William M. Mosh, who has a ring bolt in her head, and a screw eye. The owner may be seen at the property, and paying...

reservation and sale of forfeited land, in Annapolis, July 26, 1781. Act of assembly, will be sold, in Baltimore town, on the 1st of September 1781, the property of William M. Mosh, who has a ring bolt in her head, and a screw eye. The owner may be seen at the property, and paying...

reservation and sale of forfeited land, in Annapolis, July 26, 1781. Act of assembly, will be sold, in Baltimore town, on the 1st of September 1781, the property of William M. Mosh, who has a ring bolt in her head, and a screw eye. The owner may be seen at the property, and paying...

reservation and sale of forfeited land, in Annapolis, July 26, 1781. Act of assembly, will be sold, in Baltimore town, on the 1st of September 1781, the property of William M. Mosh, who has a ring bolt in her head, and a screw eye. The owner may be seen at the property, and paying...

thirteen and fourteen thousand acres of land, lying near to Baltimore, the property of the Principio company, are erected two convenient flour-grist mills. The land will be put into small and convenient lots on which the furnaces are erected, in order that any person may incline to purchase, with a view to iron-works, may have an opportunity of purchasing such other parts of the land as may be necessary. At the same time will be sold, with interest, in gold and silver, of credit to be emitted, in part of the last session, at their own expense. JO. BAXTER, clk.

FOR SALE. A large tract of land, containing 1000 acres, situated in the county of Frederick, and bounded by the Potomac river on the north and east, and by the land of the late Mr. Samuel Mosh on the south and west. The land is well watered, and is very fertile. The price will be 1000 pounds sterling. JO. BAXTER, clk.

FOR SALE. A large tract of land, containing 1000 acres, situated in the county of Frederick, and bounded by the Potomac river on the north and east, and by the land of the late Mr. Samuel Mosh on the south and west. The land is well watered, and is very fertile. The price will be 1000 pounds sterling. JO. BAXTER, clk.

FOR SALE. A large tract of land, containing 1000 acres, situated in the county of Frederick, and bounded by the Potomac river on the north and east, and by the land of the late Mr. Samuel Mosh on the south and west. The land is well watered, and is very fertile. The price will be 1000 pounds sterling. JO. BAXTER, clk.

FOR SALE. A large tract of land, containing 1000 acres, situated in the county of Frederick, and bounded by the Potomac river on the north and east, and by the land of the late Mr. Samuel Mosh on the south and west. The land is well watered, and is very fertile. The price will be 1000 pounds sterling. JO. BAXTER, clk.

FOR SALE. A large tract of land, containing 1000 acres, situated in the county of Frederick, and bounded by the Potomac river on the north and east, and by the land of the late Mr. Samuel Mosh on the south and west. The land is well watered, and is very fertile. The price will be 1000 pounds sterling. JO. BAXTER, clk.

FOR SALE. A large tract of land, containing 1000 acres, situated in the county of Frederick, and bounded by the Potomac river on the north and east, and by the land of the late Mr. Samuel Mosh on the south and west. The land is well watered, and is very fertile. The price will be 1000 pounds sterling. JO. BAXTER, clk.