

MARYLAND GAZETTE.

THURSDAY, JUNE 19, 1783.

[ PAPER No. VIII. ]

Extract of a letter from his excellency general Washington, dated Head quarters, March 12, 1783.

"S I R,

It is with inexpressible concern I make the following report to your excellency:— Two days ago, anonymous papers were circulated in the army, requesting a general meeting of the officers on the next day. A copy of one of these papers is enclosed, No. 1. About the same time another anonymous paper, purporting to be an address to the officers of the army, was handed about in a clandestine manner—A copy of this is marked No. 2. To prevent any precipitate and dangerous resolutions from being taken at this perilous moment, while the passions were all inflamed; as soon as these things came to my knowledge, the next morning, I issued the enclosed order, No. 3. And in this situation the matter now rests. Since writing the foregoing, another anonymous paper has been put in circulation, a copy of which is enclosed, No. 4.

[ No. 1. ]

A MEETING of the general and field officers is requested at the public building, on Tuesday next at 10 o'clock. A commissioned officer from each company is expected, and a delegate from the medical staff. The object of this convention, is to consider the late letter from our representatives in Philadelphia; and what measures (if any) should be adopted, to obtain that redress of grievances which they seem to have solicited in vain.

[ No. 2. ]

To the OFFICERS of the ARMY.

GENTLEMEN, A FELLOW soldier, whose interest and affections find him strongly to you, whose past sufferings have been as great, and whose future fortune may be as desperate as yours—would beg leave to address you. Age has its claims, and rank is not without its pretensions to advice: but, though unsupported by both, he flatters himself, that the plain language of sincerity and experience will neither be unheard nor unregarded. Like many of you, he loved private life, and left it with regret. He left it, determined to retire from the field, with the necessity that called him to it, and not to then—Not till the enemies of his country, the slaves of power, and the hirelings of injustice, were compelled to abandon their schemes, and acknowledge America a terrible in arms as she had been humble in remembrance. With this object in view, he has long shared your toils, and mingled in your dangers. He has felt the cold hand of poverty without a murmur, and has seen the intolence of wealth without a sigh—But, so much under the direction of his wishes, and sometimes weak enough to mistake desire for opinion, he has all lately—very lately believed in the justice of his country. He hoped, that as the clouds of adversity faded, and as the sunshine of peace and better fortune broke in upon us, the coldness and severity of government would relax, and that, more than justice, that gratitude would blaze forth upon those hands, which had upheld her, in the darkest stages of her passage, from impending servitude to acknowledged independence. But faith has its limits, as well as temper, and there are points beyond which, neither can be stretched, without sinking into cowardice or plunging into credulity. This, my friends, I conceive to be your situation. Hurried to the very verge of both, another step would ruin you for ever. To be tame and unprincipled when injuries press hard upon you, is more than weakness; but to look up for kinder usage, without any manly effort of your own, would fix your character, and show the world how richly you deserve those chains you broke. To guard against this evil, let us take a review of the ground upon which we now stand, and from thence carry our thoughts forward for a moment, into the unexplored field of expedient.

After a pursuit of seven long years, the object for which we set out is at length brought within our reach. Yes, my friends, that suffering courage of yours, was active once—it has conducted the United States of America through a doubtful and a bloody war. It has placed her in the chair of independency, and peace returns again to blessings—whom?—A country willing to redress your wrongs, cherish your worth, and reward your services, a country courting your return to private life, with tears of gratitude, and smiles of admiration, longing to divide with you that independency which your gallantry has given, and those riches which your wounds have preserved? Is this the case? Or is it rather, a country that tramples upon your rights, distorts your cries, and insults your distresses? Have you not, more than once suggested your wishes, and made known your wants to congress? Wants and wishes which gratitude and policy should have anticipated, rather than evaded. And have you not lately, in the weak language of entreating memorials, begged from their justice, what you would no longer expect from their favour? How have you been answered? Let the letter which you are called to consider to-morrow make reply.

It this, then, be your treatment, while the swords you wear are necessary for the defence of America, what have you to expect from peace, when your voice

shall sink, and your strength dissipate by division? When those very words, the instruments and companions of your glory, shall be taken from your sides, and no remaining mark of military distinction left, but your want, infirmities, and tears? Can you then consent to be the only sufferers by this revolution, and retiring from the field, grow old in poverty, wretchedness, and contempt? Can you consent to wade through the vicissitudes of dependency, and owe the miserable remnant of that life to charity, which has hitherto been spent in honour!—If you can—GO,—and carry with you, the jest of Tories and the scorn of Whigs,—the ridicule, and what is worse, the pity of the world. Go, starve, and be forgotten! But if your spirit should revolt at this; if you have sense enough to discover, and spirit enough to oppose tyranny under whatever garb it may assume; whether it be the plain coat of republicanism, or the splendid robe of royalty, if you have yet learned to discriminate between a people and a cause, between men and principles—awake—attend to your situation and redress yourselves. If the present moment be lost, every future effort is in vain; and your threats then, will be as empty as your intreaties now.

I would advise you, therefore, to come to some final opinion, upon what you can bear, and what you will suffer. If your determination be in any proportion to your wrongs, carry your appeal from the justice to the tears of government. Change the milk and water style of your last memorial; assume a bolder tone—decent, but lively, spirited, and determined, and suspect the man who would advise to more moderation and longer forbearance. Let two or three men who can see, as well as write, be appointed to draw up your last remonstrance; for I would no longer give it the tinsel, soft, unsuccessful epithet of memorial. Let it be presented in language that will neither dishonour you by its rudeness, nor betray you by its tears; what has been promised by congress, and what has been performed,—how long and how patiently you have suffered, how little you have asked, and how much of that little has been denied. Tell them that, though you were the first, and would wish to be the last to encounter danger: though despair itself can never drive you into dishonour, it may drive you from the field; that the wound often irritated, and never healed, may at length become incurable; and that the slightest mark of indignity from congress now, must operate like the grave, and part you for ever: that in any political event, the army has its alternative. If peace, that nothing shall separate them from your arms but death: if war, that courting the auspices, and inviting the direction of your illustrious leader, you will retire to some unsettled country, smile in your turn, and "mock when their fear cometh on." But let it represent also that should they comply with the request of your late memorial, it would make you more happy, and them more respectable. That while the war should continue, you would follow their standard into the field—and when it came to an end, you would withdraw into the shade of private life, and give the world another subject of wonder and applause;—an army victorious over its enemies—victorious over itself.

[ No. 3. ]

GENERAL ORDERS.

Head-Quarters, March 11, 1783.

THE commander in chief, having heard that a general meeting of the officers of the army, was proposed to be held this day at the new building, in an anonymous paper, which was circulated yesterday by some unknown person, conceives, although he is fully persuaded that the good sense of the officers would induce them to pay very little attention to such an irregular invitation, his duty as well as the reputation and true interest of the army, requires his disapprobation of such disorderly proceedings. At the same time, he requests the general and field officers, with one officer from each company, and a proper representation from the staff of the army, will assemble at 12 o'clock on Saturday next, at the new building, to hear the report of the committee of the army to congress. After mature deliberation, they will devise what farther measures ought to be adopted as most rational and best calculated to attain the just and important object in view. The senior officer in rank present will be pleased to preside, and report the result of the deliberations to the commander in chief.

[ No. 4. ]

To the OFFICERS of the ARMY.

GENTLEMEN, THE author of a late address, anxious to deserve, though he should fail to engage your esteem; and determined at every risk to unfold your duty and discharge his own, would beg leave to solicit the further indulgence of a few moments attention. Aware of the censure with which his last letter would be received, he feels himself neither disappointed nor displeas'd with the caution it has met. Ye well knew that it spoke a language which, till now, had been heard only in whispers, and that it contained some sentiments which confidence itself would have breathed with distrust. But their lives have been short, and their observations imperfect indeed, who have yet to learn, that alarms may be false; that the best designs are sometimes obliged to assume the worst aspect; and that however ynnomous surprise and disaster may be in military phrase, in moral and political meaning, they convey ideas as different as they are distinct.

Suspicion, detestable as it is in private life, is the loveliest trait of political characters. It prompts you to enquiry, bars the door against design, and opens every avenue to truth. It was the first to oppose a tyrant here, and still stands sentinel over the liberties of America. With this belief it would illy become me to stifle the voice of this honest guardian; a guardian, who authorized by circumstances digested into proof, has herself given birth to the address you have read, and now goes forth among you with a request to all, that it may be treated fairly; that it may be considered before it be abused, and condemned before it be tortured; convinced that, in a search after error, truth will appear, that apathy itself will grow warm in the pursuit, and though it will be the last to adopt her advice, it will be the first to act upon it.

The general orders of yesterday, which the weak may mistake for disapprobation, and the designing dare to represent as such, wears, in my opinion, a very different complexion, and carries with it a very opposite tendency. Till now, the commander in chief has regarded the steps you have taken for redress with good wishes alone. His ostensible silence has authorized your meetings, and his private opinion has sanctified your claims. Had he disliked the object in view, would not the same sense of duty which forbade you from meeting on the third day of the week, have forbidden you from meeting on the seventh? Is not the same subject held up for your discussion? and has it not passed the seal of office, and taken all the solemnity of an order? This will give system to your proceedings, and stability to your resolves. It will ripen speculation into fact; and while it adds to the unanimity, it cannot possibly lessen the independency of your sentiments. It may be necessary to add upon this subject, that, from the injunction with which the general orders close, every man is at liberty to conclude that the report to be made to head-quarters is intended for congress. Hence will arise another motive for that energy which has been recommended: for, can you give the lie to the pathetic descriptions of your representations, and the more alarming predictions of our friends? To such as make a want of signature an objection to opinion, I reply, that it matters very little who is the author of sentiments which grow out of your feelings, and apply to your wants; that in this instance, diffidence suggested what experience enjoins; and that while I continue to move on the high road of argument and advice, which is open to all, I shall continue to be the sole confidant of my own secret. But, should the time come, when it shall be necessary to depart from this general line, and hold up any individual among you as an object of the resentment or contempt of the rest, I thus publicly pledge my honour as a soldier, and veracity as a man, that I will then assume a visible existence, and give my name to the army, with as little reserve as I now give my opinions.

[ To be continued. ]

BOLOGNA, March 26.

BY letters from Venice we are informed, that that capital had sustained incredible damages by a sudden overflowing of the Adriatic sea, occasioned by a most dreadful storm during the night of the 12th instant. Gondolas were parading in the very streets, and above one hundred sail of vessels, which were then in the canal, were driven off and dispersed by the violence of the hurricane. The greatest losses sustained were at Palestrina, where, about the tenth hour, a shock of an earthquake was felt, accompanied by a most dreadful whirlwind; several of the houses were overturned, and many inhabitants buried under the ruins.

VERSAILLES, March 28.

On the 25th of this month, the king received some official dispatches from M. de Suffrein, which after giving a detail of the late proceedings in the East-Indies between the French and English fleets, as has been already mentioned, conclude as follows: "M. Duchemin died with his arms in his hand, in a battle fought at the gates of Madras against general Munro, a part of whose army was cut in pieces, and the rest fled in the greatest disorder to Madras. M. d'Ortelis, formerly lieutenant-colonel of the regiment of Austruis, and lately appointed colonel, took the command of the French, after the death of their general."

WHITEHAL, April 12.

Extracts of letters from lieutenant-general Sir Eyre Coote, K. B. dated Madras the 31st of August and 25th of September, 1782, received at the office of his majesty's principal secretary of state for the home department, on the 7th of April, 1783.

WHILST I was straining every nerve in advancing the army to the neighbourhood of Chingleput, to counteract the views of Hyder and the French, I anxiously looked to the result of my reference to the governor general, and to the arrival of their orders in consequence, as a period which would undoubtedly restore to me that authority over the southern troops which would enable me to direct them to such a co-operation as might tend equally to facilitate my own movements, and distract the designs of our enemies; but most unfortunately on the 18th of February, long before any answer could come from Bengal, colonel Braithwaite was attacked by Hyder Ally's son Tippoo Saib, and M. ni. Lally, near the banks of the Calleroon, and totally defeated. His whole detachment, consisting of about 2000 infantry.