

MARYLAND GAZETTE.

T H U R S D A Y, N O V E M B E R 19, 1795.

For the MARYLAND GAZETTE,

Annapolis, Nov. 19, 1795.

Tobe or not *Tobe*.

personage of considerable importance is expected shortly to arrive in this city—No less than the celebrated *Mr. Tobe Let.* He has before this honoured us at times with his company, but as it is thought that he now means to make Annapolis the place of his permanent residence, I have collected some particulars respecting him which may not be undeserving of notice at this time, especially as he seems to be a person of a very extraordinary character. I shall say nothing of his family, and, instead of giving him a title, shall call him plain *Tobe*. Indeed he is so far from being proud that he is remarkable for taking up with other people's leavings, and when a house is deserted by every inhabitant, he immediately takes possession, and (like a footman in a play-house box) keeps it till better company comes.

Tobe is a great lounge, and instead of running about the streets either for the reality or the show of business, he is content to stand quietly at his door, his only show of pride being a desire to be seen, and his behaviour perfectly civil, except his staring in the faces of those who pass by him.

Notwithstanding this innocence of character, it cannot be said that *Tobe* is ever a welcome visitor. On the contrary, though he may have kept a man's house when nobody else would live in it, he is turned off without ceremony or warning when any new comer offers, and is dragged from his station by the landlord with a malicious kind of pleasure. However, he is not often at a loss, but generally finds some hospitable *lady* ready to receive him; nor is he any way scrupulous about returning to a dwelling where he has been so roughly used—All he wants is a house to himself, and he generally discovers by intuition when the rooms are cleared for his reception.

It is hardly necessary to observe that *Tobe* has been a great traveller, though (like most others of a restless and roving disposition) he has not got much richer by his travels. But poverty is no reproach, nor is it even a misfortune to a contented and humble mind, and *Tobe* is not only satisfied to be poor himself, but is willing to associate with that unfortunate class of people. Thus, (like *La Fleur* in the Sentimental Journey) he advances in proportion as our richer friends recede from us.

Tobe is by no means fond of a country life, but has his eye chiefly on large towns, and the more overgrown the better, so that the extent of a certain great City may possibly attract his attention in common with that of other speculative geniuses; as soon as the buildings are ready for his accommodation. Not many years ago, he was very handsomely provided for in a neighbouring town, and had peaceable possession of several commodious tenements, but they have lately contrived, by a variety of means, to procure other inhabitants, and he has been obliged to make himself scarce. They could not perhaps have got rid of him so easily, but they have invented a certain paper engine to frighten him with, which works by deception. This engine (like *Shakespeare's* *Isago*) is not what it seems, and it is the faculty of driving out poor *Tobe* and taking in others. To say the truth they have a couple of them, but are still under such apprehensions that they are trying to build up a third of greater size than both the others put together.

These engines have, within these few years, come very much in fashion, and of course they have got a sort of one to begin with near the Great City. It would be difficult to describe them accurately, because they have a number of internal springs which are known only to the managers within, who, by the advantage of their position, can securely play off their hooks, pocus tricks to the gaping multitude. Like other hollow and empty bodies, they make a great noise, and therefore serve for the present to keep *Tobe* at a distance; but in case of their bursting, which is not at all impossible, he will be within hearing, and will certainly recover his possession. It is probably for this reason that the great men of these great towns, and those in alliance with them, have determined to take other methods with *Tobe*, and by way of cajoling him from his former wandering courses, they have offered him a settlement for life—and where?—In this city, heretofore the abode of elegance and fashion. This city, formed by nature, and embellished by art, as the seat of healthfulness and pleasure, they have seized upon, and set apart for *Tobe Let.*

However ungenerous we may deem this bargain, in forcing such a guest upon us, it must be confessed, that they have given him plausible reasons for it; and have mixed a great deal of truth in their representations. They have drawn such a disgusting picture of one of their towns, as instigated every *sane* that *Tobe* possessed against it, while (with all the appearance of fair dealing) they advise him *lady* to look at the premises and

judge for himself. But they have gone still further—Although we have many excellent dwelling houses, which better men than *Tobe* have long lived in, and some of which he never was permitted to enter, they have offered him the fee-simple of four of the most capital buildings, and have called up his pride, as well as his interest, to induce him to complete the contract. The first (which is to be his principal palace) is placed in an elevated situation, commanding a beautiful and extensive prospect. A lofty dome, which its founders had raised on it, these projectors have artfully dwelt on to enhance the value, and have represented to *Tobe*, that it would be a much more exalted and eligible station, for him to be perched on the top of it, where he could both see and be seen, than to confine himself to the doors of common houses, and especially those in their alleys, which they assured him (and very truly) were too dark and too dismal for any decent person to dwell in.

Few people are entirely free from pride, and *Tobe*, I suppose, felt himself pleased at such a proposal; and as to the interests of those whom he was to turn out, it was not a matter of much moment to either party in the contract. It might produce an inconvenience to some persons who met there once a year to make a few laws, to others who staid there to execute them; and to those who came there sometimes for the administration of justice. But these were trifling considerations. It was *Tobe's* business to get a house, and as for the other party, they were too much taken up with the contemplation of their paper engines to attend to such trifling matters. Besides, they had taken counsel in the business, and the tenants were so be otherwise provided for, it being discovered (upon mathematical principles) that *legislation* was removed further from the people, and *justice* carried nearer to them, it would be the same thing as if both were to remain in the centre. The next building which they have disposed of is inferior in point of size to the other, and some young lawyers advised *Tobe* that he had already a pretty good title to it, having been permitted to lodge in it a few nights in every third year—they further stated; that those who had lived in it were merely tenants for years, and were so certain of being removed, that it would be no new thing to give *Tobe* possession. In drawing a parallel (as they seemed inclined to do) between these characters, they forgot to mention some of *Tobe's* greatest faults, for it may truly be said, that he is the most inhospitable man breathing—He has no fire in his kitchen, and keeps the very reverse of an open house; whereas the other tenants of this mansion have always (some more, and some less) lived in a different style, have kept an open house, and given many a good dinner, and a cheerful glass, to those who are now striving to turn them into the street, or, (what is as bad,) to stow them in some obscure corner among themselves. They may now say with *Darius*, that they are

Deserted in their utmost need.

By those their former bounty fed."

But some of our present reformers prefer *Tobe* for this very reason, and disapprove of the extravagance of the others—though the means which they have hitherto taken to prevent it are rather too much like those of *Lucullus* in *Timon of Athens*—“A noble gentleman 'tis, if he would not keep so good a house I wou'd a time and often I have dined with him and told him out, and come again to supper to him on purpose to have him spend less and get he would embrace no counsel, take no warning by my coming.”

Although *Tobe* never pretended to much learning, these considerate persons have been so zealous for his welfare, that they have set apart a college for his use, that building, which has been so lately turned from folly and consecrated to wisdom, is to be no longer the alma mater of our growing progeny, but is to become the lonely habitation of *Tobe*.

When I figure to myself these insatiable schemes, thus sacrificing the young as well as the old, and immolating upon the altar of speculation the future hopes of our country, I fancy I hear them pressing their plan upon *Tobe* with an improvement on the sanguinary words of *Jaffier* to *Piere*,

“Thy wishes shall be satisfied,
Our children too
Yield up their little throats, and all
To appease thee.”

In this disposition of mind the expulsion of the projectors will not be attended with much remorse, and it is proposed to canton them (like an army at the close of a campaign) in the different parts of the country. Another salvo is likewise found for this, and these *pseudo magi* (instead of reserving this central store house of literature) propose to cut the dykes, and by inundating the counties with the flock that has been deposited, to make the citizens in every corner of the state as wife—as themselves.

When *Tobe* is tired of standing in state at his principal building, or indulging himself at the smaller one, he can here enjoy the charms of science without interruption, and by means of a philosophical apparatus, which is about to be prepared for him, may make

some useful discoveries and become a credit to his connexions.

In addition to this anxious concern for his temporal welfare, they have likewise provided for his spiritual comfort, and (inducted by these Simoniacal patrons) he is to become the sole incumbent of that spacious church, which, instead of being frugally adapted to the actual number of the flock, has been so unconstitutionally enlarged and furnished for the accommodation of the public bodies. Then may the rancour even of *Vindex* himself be gratified; and the annual publication of our laws, for the benefit of foreigners who wish to become naturalised among us, may take place without a comment, and no longer be counteracted by the malignant observations that have heretofore attended them.—Leaving *Tobe* in the anticipated possession of these once favoured tenements, I must be indulged in a digression for the purpose of introducing a short story.—A certain sultan, whose improvident reign had brought ruin on many parts of his dominions, was walking with his grand vizir, who pretended to a knowledge in the language of birds, they observed two owls in discourse on the walls of an old castle, and the sultan expressed a desire of knowing what was the subject; the vizir, after listening attentively, informed the sultan that the owls were on a treaty of marriage between their respective young ones, and that the parent of the male demanded twenty ruined villages as the portion of the female, to which the other replied, that instead of twenty, fifty should be given, exclaiming; long live sultan Achmet, for while he lives we shall never want ruined and deserted villages.”

I shall conclude with a short application of this story.—*Tobe*, it may be presumed, will not be deficient in gratitude, and whether at college, or at church, whether reclined in ease at his dwelling house, or standing in state on the pinnacle of the dome, we shall hear him exclaim; huzza for the young lawyers—Long live the present race of reformers; may they be as liberal in their age as they are wise in their youth, and may the blessings of their administration never be forgotten by those who have hearts to feel, or heads to discover them.

CIVIS.

NANTES, August 20.

THE situation of this town is truly dreadful, surrounded by enemies, it encloses within its walls the most cruel terrorists and drinkers of blood! The latter have just renewed the scenes of horror worthy the reign of *Carrier*. Plaited hair was the pretext for the first disturbances, and was afterwards considered as a sufficient motive for being assailed and assassinated.

Citizen *Masilli*, obliged to resist force by force, made use of his pistols, in order to escape fifty assassins, several of whom he wounded. This occasioned a great cry of “to arms! to arms! the Muscadins are going to assassinate us!” To these premeditated exclamations succeeded the favourite cries of the ruffians; “to pillage! to the magazines!” At last the drums beat the alarm, the idea of enemies being before our gates, dispersed the crowds. An armed force of fifty men conducted the prisoners from *Port St. Pierre* to be tried before the tribunal. Six of these prisoners were massacred in the presence of the soldiers who had been sent to guard them. An old man, venerable from his age, who had been taken up as a suspected person at the barriers, was also assassinated in the presence of the municipal and military officers, near the column of liberty. All these victims were afterwards thrown into the river, amidst acclamations and songs. These gangs of miscreants were composed of the inhabitants of Nantes, and a number of women, the scourge of humanity and a disgrace to human nature. Modest women were insulted; the assassins ran through the streets, singing the *Marseilles Hymn*, in order to render the insurrection general. Neither the civil nor military authorities were acknowledged. Did this proceed from weakness or from guilt? The criminal tribunal alone has displayed firmness.

The troops have at last quitted this unfortunate town, and marched to *Challans*. Undoubtedly the country, through which they passed, had witnessed the same horrors, but we have not as yet received any advices from them.

PROCLAMATION

Issued by the military criminal tribunal of the second circuit of the western army, to the general and commanders of the armed force in Nantes, on the 28th, 29th, and 30th Thermidor last.

“CITIZENS!
“What horrors come to strike our frightened looks! What frightful scenes appear again to open the wounds of our still bleeding hearts! Are we to see again the times of horror and crimes, when this city will be found to be nothing but a frightful grave? Why have assassinations taken place in this town for three