

Ante judicandum audi utraque partes.

AS the following letter, which I received, perhaps give some satisfaction to my female readers, whom I understand are somewhat offended at the contents of some of my numbers, I shall insert it as the sixth number of the Critic, which, from its proximity, I shall omit commenting on.

Mr. Trifer,

It is with astonishment and surprise I have perused some of your numbers, and I think the name you have assumed is better adapted to your subject and style than any other word you could possibly have culled from the English language. When I saw your introduction, I was very much pleased, and flattered myself with the expectation of seeing something in the sequel amusing; but how great was my disappointment! Instead of unassuming composition, I have seen nothing but what I really should imagine the production of a schoolboy. You have been very prudent, in my opinion, in concealing your real name behind the rampart of a fictitious one, as a disclosure of yourself to the public would call on you the execration of all your readers. Your intention in writing, no doubt, was good, and your object was to improve yourself in composition, and to afford entertainment to your perusers. For the former I must acknowledge there is great room, but as to the latter, you have failed, and instead of procuring their esteem, you have justly incurred their censure. You have unfortunately pursued the wrong in attacking and endeavouring to point out the weaknets and foibles of the female sex, in exposing the absurdity of their fashions, and delineating the vacillancy of their minds; instead of accomplishing your premeditated design, all your scurrility and abuse pallies by them unheeded as the wind, and they look on you and your production with pity, mingled with contempt. They look on you as a person far sunk in the quagmire of ignorance, trifling indeed, and unworthy the appellation of an author. Instead of attempting to debate and vilify the feminine part of the creation, that part of it which ought rather to be looked upon as celestial than terrestrial beings, you should have passed upon them all the encomiums your fertile imagination could have suggested, without the fear too of their being undeservedly bestowed. But, instead of this, you have done the reverse. You have lost sight of the road of politeness, and descended into the valley of disgrace. You have not been satisfied with making remarks on their external ornaments, but you have even been so indecent as to say "they call in the assistance of a pair of flannel drawers." Is this a fit subject to be defecated on and held up to public view? I apprehend not—and I think the person who does it ought to be branded with infamy. You act like the base assassin, who stabs in the dark, while you are afraid of the thunderbolt of female displeasure. You lurk behind the curtain under a feigned signature, and from thence assail, unseen, the innocent and defenceless. From thence you pour forth billingsgate abuse on that part of society of whom a man of honour and true courage would disdain speaking disrespectfully. In short, such has been your conduct, and such your production, that I deem it almost a degradation to condescend so low as to correspond with you. But to work a reformation, and make you more cautious how you write in future concerning the characters of women, are the motives which actuated me in this letter. It is true you have touched upon the spensers, and endeavoured to depict the ridiculousness of foppery, but this is no reason you should handle in so uncouth a manner the wigs, tails, &c. for in attacking the former, you have attacked those who are placed in a better situation of defence, (if a defence should be deemed necessary); you have attacked those who disregard the assertions of a petty Trifer, and who look upon you with disdain, and unworthy of resentment. Your numbers are better calculated to afford merriment to the giddy multitude than to excite the anger of men of sense, or women conscious of their rectitude and innocence, as unpurified and immaculate as the new fallen snow. They have too just a sense of their importance to be disturbed by the flimsy scribbling of a paltry Trifer, whose treacherous attempts prove fruitless, and whose despicable ridicule falls prostrate and inefficacious at the shrine of beauty, modesty and virtue conjoined. But, before I conclude, let me call your attention to a passage in one of your numbers, which must, I think, if you possess one spark of shame, excite a blush in your cheek; it is a passage which affords a great deal of matter for serious reflection to the person who wrote it, and all who are interested in the feminine characters of the world. In speaking of those whom we should never approach but with the utmost reverence and awe, I mean the women, you describe them in the most opprobrious language, as being "vain, conceited and affected," language which would make a man of feeling shudder at the pronunciation of, and which indicates the vile depravity of your pusillanimous soul. I believe not this to be the real sentiment of your heart, but I rather attribute it to you as an unguarded expression, an expression which you yourself, upon serious reflection, are sorry for giving birth to. Author, whoever thou art, banish from thy bosom such opinions of the female sex, who, though descended from that Eve that damned mankind, are nevertheless the greatest blessing which man, frail man, enjoys in this world of affliction.

A FRIEND TO THE FAIR SEX.

title; exclusive of which it is perhaps the only rival, the United States can successfully oppose to the St. Lawrence in all that water communication through the lakes; of which daily discoveries are opening unbounded prospects. Under such impressions and none other, when an act of the legislature of Pennsylvania denying the right of the state of Maryland to grant a half toll on the bed of the river, directed a correspondence on the subject to be opened with him as governor of Maryland, he was unavoidably compelled to maintain the right of the state to the full jurisdiction over the river within her limits; a right which Pennsylvania will hereafter discover to be essential even to her best interests; situated as the Susquehanna is in one corner of the state, the representatives of Maryland will sparingly it is presumed employ the public treasure in improving its navigation; it is to be apprehended that this river must itself pay for all the improvements it will ever obtain; this can only be effected by tolls established under the authority of Maryland. It must be obvious then that to abandon the right of the state over the bed of the river, would be to close up for ever one of the fairest sources of public prosperity; but from the unpopularity which had attended the exercise of this right, in both states, the danger seemed evident that the right itself might be involved in the same fate with the exercise; from this motive at the meeting at Susquehanna he recommended to the company to compromise their claim and relinquish the grant—the company having complied, honour as well as duty dictated the decent terms in which he recommended their proposals to the attention of the legislature, at the moment of handing to them the letter of governor M'Kean. Believing as he does that the morality and happiness of the people must for ever depend on the examples of good faith and justice which are set by their rulers, he will never scruple we are assured to recommend, when within the line of his duty, a religious compliance with a public contract, or the substitution of a fair equivalent by voluntary compromise: but we again assert that he is no otherwise interested in or connected with this particular measure, than as a responsible officer and a citizen of the state.

A Civil Officer of Maryland.

BALTIMORE, March 22.

A very important, and no less singular than important, occurrence took place at the Cape of Good Hope, previous to the sailing of the ship Portsmouth, which arrived on the 15th instant, and it is not a little surprising that it should not have transpired sooner to the public. We have it upon the best authority, that although the Dutch governor was by capitulation to have had possession of the Cape on the 1st of January, the British troops had, notwithstanding, possession of the place at the time of the Portsmouth's sailing.

The circumstances were these: The commander of the British forces had proposed that the Dutch governor should take possession of the forts and works on the 20th December. As, however, the first day of the new year was at hand, the latter preferred postponing it to that day, expecting probably, that the festivity of the moment would give an eclat to his new government among the people. In the meantime the British troops, to the number of 1600, had all embarked, except one company left on shore as a rear guard and to take care of the works till the Dutch, who were then landing to the number of 2500, should march into them. As fate would have it, however, on the night of the 31st December, a vessel arrived with dispatches from England, enjoining it upon general Dundas, if he had not surrendered the place to the Dutch, to retain possession of it. A great bustle immediately took place in the fleet, and early on the morning of the 1st January, the day when the Dutch troops were to have entered the works, the British forces were seen debarking with all the expedition in their power, and marching with fixed bayonets back again to the fortifications, of which they took possession, and kept out the Dutch. This manœuvre occasioned, it may be supposed, no small consternation to the Dutch governor, whose imprudent procrastination may be attended with the final loss of the colony to his country.

How far this occurrence may have connexion with the recent declaration of war by Algiers against France, and be the precursor of a renewal of hostilities in Europe, is left to the speculation of our readers.

March 23.

The legislature of Nova-Scotia have enacted, that any person convicted of stealing from any vessel wrecked on the coast of that province, or the Isle Sable, or of obstructing any person of such vessels in attempting to save his life, shall suffer death. They have also declared it felony, without benefit of clergy, for any person wilfully to cast away or destroy a vessel.

Annapolis, March 31.

Married, on Tuesday evening last, by the rev. Mr. HIGGINBOTHAM, Mr. RICHARD HARWOOD, of Thomas, to Miss SALLY CALLAHAN, daughter of JOHN CALLAHAN, Esquire, of this city.

PENNSYLVANIA LEGISLATURE.

WEDNESDAY, February 22.

Mr. Marshall, from the committee appointed the 17th inst. on the governor's communication of the 15th, relative to an act of the legislature of Maryland, which contemplates the making a turnpike road

from Fort Cumberland, in the state of Maryland, to the western side of the Laurel-hill, at or near Union-town in this state; also suggesting the extension of the term for receiving subscriptions, by the company incorporated for the purpose of cutting a canal between the river Delaware and the Chesapeake Bay, made a report, which was read as follows, to wit:

That they have given the subjects committed to them, a due and deliberate consideration, and are of opinion, that it will promote the interest of the state to co-operate with the state of Maryland, in executing the contemplated turnpike road; and also, that it will be proper to extend the time for receiving subscriptions by the canal company above mentioned: they therefore submit the following resolutions, viz.

1. Resolved, That a committee be appointed to bring in a bill, authorising the governor to incorporate a company, who, in conjunction with a company already incorporated by the legislature of Maryland, may be authorised to execute the contemplated turnpike road, from Fort Cumberland to the western side of the Laurel-hill, at or near Union-town.

2. Resolved, That a committee be appointed to bring in a bill, extending the time for receiving subscriptions, by the company incorporated for the purpose of perfecting a communication by means of a canal between the river Delaware and Chesapeake Bay. And

On motion, the said report was read the second time, and the resolutions severally adopted; and, ordered, that Messrs. Marshall, Porter and Kerr, be a committee for the purpose expressed in the first resolution: and that Messrs. Pearson, Harrison and T. Davis, be a committee for the purpose expressed in the second resolution.

Laws of the Union.

An act making a partial appropriation for the naval service, during the year one thousand eight hundred and three.

BE it enacted, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, That the sum of one hundred thousand dollars be, and the same is hereby appropriated towards defraying the expences of the navy of the United States, during the year one thousand eight hundred and three.

SECT. 2. And be it further enacted, That the aforesaid sum shall be paid, first, out of any balance remaining unexpended of former appropriations for the same object; and secondly, out of any monies in the treasury not otherwise appropriated.

NATHANIEL MACON, Speaker

of the House of Representatives.

STEPHEN R. BRADLEY, President

of the Senate, pro tempore.

Approved, January 14, 1803.

TH. JEFFERSON, President of the United States.

An act to provide an additional armament for the protection of the seamen and commerce of the United States.

BE it enacted, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, That the president of the United States be, and he hereby is authorized and empowered, to cause to be built, or to be purchased (if the exigencies of the service shall require it) four vessels of war, to carry not exceeding sixteen guns each, to be armed, manned and fitted out for the protection of the seamen and commerce of the United States in the Mediterranean and adjacent seas, and for other purposes, as the public services may require.

SECT. 2. And be it further enacted, That the sum of ninety-six thousand dollars be, and hereby is appropriated for the purpose aforesaid, out of any monies in the treasury of the United States, not otherwise appropriated.

SECT. 3. And be it further enacted, That the president of the United States be, and he is hereby authorized and empowered to cause to be built, a number not exceeding fifteen gun boats, to be armed, manned and fitted out, and employed for such purposes as in his opinion the public service may require; and that a sum not exceeding fifty thousand dollars be, and hereby is appropriated for this purpose out of any monies in the treasury of the United States not otherwise appropriated.

NATHL. MACON, Speaker

of the House of Representatives.

A. BURR, Vice-president of the

United States, and president of

the Senate.

Approved, February 28, 1803.

TH. JEFFERSON, President of the

United States.

An act for extending the external commerce of the United States.

BE it enacted, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, That the sum of two thousand five hundred dollars be, and the same is hereby appropriated for the purpose of extending the external commerce of the United States, to be paid out of any money in the treasury, not otherwise appropriated.

NATHL. MACON, Speaker

of the House of Representatives.

A. BURR, Vice-president of the United

States, and president of the Senate.

Approved, February 28, 1803.

TH. JEFFERSON, President of the

United States.

ALMANACKS for the present Year for sale at this Office.