

We lament, with your honours, that the senate is at this critical period, so thin, and regret that measures, calculated to compel the attendance of the members of the general assembly on the public business, have not met with your approbation, notwithstanding the repeated experience both houses must have had of the necessity of adopting some mode to enforce the observation of duties, to which public virtue and a patriotic spirit have not been competent.

By order,

J. DUCKETT, cl. ho. del.

By the S E N A T E, December 23, 1779.

GENTLEMEN,

ALTHOUGH by our message accompanying the bill for the seizure and confiscation of British property, returned with a negative, we plainly intimated we had not gone into a full consideration thereof, and assigned our reasons for not going into such a consideration at this session, yet, as in your message by Messieurs J. Hall and others, you urge the passage of the bill, and have adduced some arguments to induce us to alter our resolution, permit us to discuss them with that coolness which the importance of the subject requires.

Justice, policy, and necessity, you say, influence your conduct. It not unfrequently happens, that different ideas of justice, policy, and necessity, are entertained by different bodies of men. We are not convinced of the justice of the bill, less of its policy, and least of all of its necessity. We have not had sufficient time to make those strict and full researches into the law of nations, which, you say, you have made. As far as we have examined into the subject,

we