

Connecticut Courant,

AND

WEEKLY INTELLIGENCE.

HARTFORD: PRINTED BY HUDSON AND GOODWIN, NEAR THE BRIDGE.

PROCEEDINGS of the LEGISLATURE of Pennsylvania and the SETTLERS at Wyoming, subsequent to the Decree at Trenton.

NUMBER VI.

WHEN the justices, mentioned in the preceding number, arrived at Wyoming, they exercised wanton acts of oppression—numbers of families were turned out of their houses and possessions by force—widows and fatherless shared promiscuously in the distress—numbers were driven under guard, at the point of the bayonet, into the fort—put into houses unfit for human creatures—obliged to lie down in mud on pain of death—confin'd during six or nine days—dismissed without any crime being charged against them—abused and insulted equally by soldiers and justices—and then their possessions restored to them.

Others were sent to the goal of Sunbury, under pretence of having committed crimes, which were never attempted to be proved—they procured bail and returned home—were re-committed for the same pretended crimes—the justices then offered, if they would take leases under them, they should be released—and some complied with these terms.

In December 1783, the inhabitants presented a petition to the legislature, reciting their grievances and praying for redress. The Assembly appointed the members of Northampton county to enquire into the truth of the charges and complaints of the settlers. They met at Wyoming on the 29th of December and proceeded to an impartial enquiry into the true state of facts and the inhabitants remark, to the honour of these gentlemen, that theirs were the only equitable proceedings on the part of Pennsylvania. They reported early in January session, "That the charges set forth in the petition from the inhabitants of Wyoming were fully supported." The petition was re-committed and a second report made to the same purpose. This report was referred to another committee and shuffled from committee to committee, and finally laid over to the next session. Thus the complaints of the sufferers were acknowledged to be just—but their prayers were rejected and their grievances unredressed.

(This, O Pennsylvania, is the protection of government, which you acknowledge to be the just claim of your new subjects. I will not make any comments myself—common justice and the feelings of men will make the best comments on such intelligible transactions.)

On the 23d of January 1784, Colonel Butler and the other settlers, presented a petition to Congress, complaining that they were disturbed in their rights by persons claiming under Pennsylvania, and praying that a court may be instituted for determining the right of soil. Congress resolved that such a court should be instituted—the day appointed was the fourth Monday in June then following, and notice was transmitted to the executives of Pennsylvania and Connecticut.

After Congress had passed this resolve, Mr. Franklin, as agent for the settlers at Wyoming, petitioned the legislature of Pennsylvania, to be quieted in their possessions, till the event of the trial should be known; but no answer was given.

I have recited a resolution of the Assembly, that a reasonable compensation of lands in some other part of Pennsylvania, be made on easy terms; to the families of those who have fallen fighting against the savages and to such others as actually resided on the lands at Wyoming at the time of passing the decree of Trenton. I will now tell the world what these easy terms were. The inhabitants were to relinquish all their possessions, as the first condition. Above thirty relinquished their claim and prayed lands under the resolution of Assembly: They then directed warrants to be granted out of the land-office, for three hundred acres to each of fifteen petitioners—to be laid out in Northampton county—free of purchase money. But it must be observed that only two or three of the fifteen, held lands under Connecticut claim, and two of the others, were associated with the Indians

† Col. Butler, whose merits as an officer and a patriot are universally acknowledged, was taken, on a visit at Wyoming, stripped of his side arms, and sent under a corporal's guard to Sunbury and confined in goal. This was done while he was an American officer and without the pretence of a crime. Such wanton insults are very rare in the black history of tyranny—in free states, they can find no advocates and deserve no pardon.

and Tories at the destruction of Wyoming. The first design of these collusive proceedings, appears obviously to be an artful attempt to divide the settlers and prevent a trial for the soil. Even those resolutions of the Assembly which wear the appearance of justice and generosity, were totally neglected or the whole effect of them cautiously eluded in the execution.

The petition of the unhappy settlers at Wyoming to the legislature of Pennsylvania, dated August 26th 1784, states the following facts: "That in the late war, they were constantly exposed to the savages and that multitudes bled in defence of the frontiers of the state.—That last spring they were strip of their all by an inundation.—That they had been eleven months in a state of anarchy—they had been maliciously represented by their enemies, as a set of litigious, refractory outlaws, although they had been entirely submissive and peaceable.—That on the 14th of May last, they were forced from their habitations, their effects plundered and themselves driven into the mountains.—That they had submitted to all law-processes, but were not permitted to bring suits against their enemies.—That fifteen hundred persons were barbarously expelled from their settlements by Mr. Patterson and Mr. Moore, in which situation many died—returning to secure their effects, they were fired on by order of Patterson and Moore wherever they could be found.—That in this distressed situation they continued three months.—That about the 20th of July, twenty-three of them attempting to gather their grain, and on their way from Kingston to Shawanese, were fired on, two killed and one wounded—and in returning the fire, they wounded two of the enemy.—That provoked by these outrages and standing in their own defence, they surrounded the garrison for several days.—That John Scott and Thomas Howett, Esqrs. as citizens and friends, interposed for a cessation of arms, till the pleasure of government could be known, which proposal the settlers cheerfully complied with.—That two days after came Robert Martin, David Mead and Christopher Gettey, Esqrs. as authorized mediators to stop the effusion of blood.—That being required to lay down their arms, the settlers immediately complied with the requisition.—That the same being required of the garrison, they refused with disdain.—That a repetition of the demand by the mediators in the name of the Commonwealth, was treated in the same contemptuous manner.—That upon this refusal the mediators desired the settlers to resume their arms and go home, which they did and went about securing their grain.—That three days after, Col. Armstrong and the Hon. John Boyd, Esq. came with a large body of Northampton militia, authorized to apprehend all that they found in actual hostilities.—That not content with the proofs that the inhabitants had given of their peaceable disposition, these officers required them to assemble and lay down their arms in their presence, to give them ocular demonstration of their submission, which they consented to do, on a solemn promise of Boyd and Armstrong, that no advantage should be taken of their defenceless situation.—That the inhabitants assembled accordingly and found to their surprize that the garrison and militia were paraded, and that they were obliged to pass between the troops, lay down their arms, and march out, their arms piled and themselves told they were prisoners.—That in violation of the most sacred promise, their arms were secured by the troops, and themselves divided into two parties; one consisting of sixty-four men, was crowded into a dirty house, unfit for brutes, where they continued forty-eight hours.—That they were commanded to lie on the floor all night, and so far from being permitted to go out for any occasion, the sentinel was ordered to fire on the first that should raise his head.—That they had but two half-meals of food for seventy-two hours.—That thirty men were taken and confined in irons, &c. &c."

In addition to this catalogue of injuries and insults, private letters from the sufferers, relate, "That the soldiers pulled down their fences to expose fields of grain, fenced highways, destroyed gardens, fired upon all that came within reach of the fort al-

† We are informed from good authority, that in September 1776, the settlers under Connecticut claim amounted nearly to 5000 souls—and the militia capable of bearing arms, to 1100—more than two thirds of which have fallen by the hands of the savages.

most every week; that people were insulted in the streets, assaulted and beat with clubs, applications of the settlers for legal redress, were rejected, they were forbid to cut wood and timber, their only grist-mill taken from them, the cattle which escaped the floods in the spring were killed by the soldiers for their own use, near two thousand souls were driven almost an hundred miles to seek shelter in the mountains, women and children forced to travel that distance and even old men, tottering on crutches, were doomed to the same fate."

On this description I leave humanity to make its own remarks. Should the truth of the facts be denied, I can easily produce the original letters and petitions, in which the miseries of the inhabitants will appear in their true light—ten fold more numerous, and ten fold more aggravated.

James Read and John Okely, Esqrs. were appointed commissioners to treat with the inhabitants in conjunction with Col. Armstrong. The inhabitants objected to treating with Col. Armstrong, a man from whom they had received so many accumulated abuses. The commissioners declared they had no business with Patterson, and yet they appeared to transact business with no body else. A remonstrance, signed by ninety persons, was to have been thrown in against Col. Armstrong being of the commission; but while it was preparing or before it was delivered, the commissioners had retired, on pretence the fort was attacked by the inhabitants, and their lives were in danger. It can however be proved by hundreds of witnesses, that the settlers had no part in the alarm. The probable fact is, that Patterson or Armstrong had ordered a false alarm to be made, with a view to put an end to the negotiation.

On the 10th of September last, the Assembly of Pennsylvania resolved, "That it might, and should be lawful for the Executive Council to direct the justices of the peace for the county of Northumberland, to proceed forthwith to put the laws relative to forcible entry and detainer into execution."

(What a laughable resolve! That it might be may more, it should be lawful for the executive officers to execute the laws, and that forthwith! We hardly know whether such conduct, in the supreme power of a sovereign and respectable state, deserves most the pity, the ridicule, the contempt or the indignation of the world. But hear the sequel.) The President informed the agents for the settlers, that orders should be immediately sent to the justices and sheriffs of Northumberland to proceed to Wyoming and put the inhabitants in possession. This revived their hopes; but, on the 20th of October they were still in their dispersed situation and suffering a repetition of wrongs from the garrison. Sheriffs indeed were sent to apprehend Patterson and reinstate the inhabitants. But the culprit refused to surrender himself, and the officer returned twice without success.

Within a few days past we have received information, that Patterson has absconded, that the fort is demolished and the inhabitants reinstated in their desolated possessions. Happy news indeed! But what event has awakened Pennsylvania to a sense of justice and humanity? Doubtless the opinion of the censors, lately published to the world. That council, whose prerogative it is to point out the defects of the constitution, detect the errors of legislation and arraign the administration of the laws, has dared to pronounce the sentence of condemnation against the iniquitous proceedings of the legislature. This has no doubt produced a reverse of conduct and may possibly alleviate the sufferings, though it cannot repair the losses and the injuries of the wretched inhabitants.

When therefore the legislature prove deaf to the demands of justice and hardened against the tears of the oppressed, Pennsylvania ought to felicitate herself, that the liberties of her subjects and the reputation of the state may still find refuge before the tribunal of the censors.

Dr. PRICE'S OBSERVATIONS, continued.

OF PEACE, and the Means of perpetuating it.

CIVIL GOVERNMENT is an expedient for collecting the wisdom and the force of a community of confederacy, to preserve its peace and liberty against every hostile invasion, whether from within or from without.—In the latter of these respects, the United States are happily secured; but they are far from being equally happy in the former re-

fect. Having now, in consequence of their successful resistance to the invasion of Britain, united to their remoteness from Europe, no external enemy to fear, they are in danger of fighting with one another.—This is their greatest danger; and providing securities against it their hardest work. Should they fail in this, America may some time or other be turned into a scene of blood; and instead of being the hope and refuge of the world, may become a terror to it.

When a dispute arises among individuals in a State, an appeal is made to a court of law; that is, to the wisdom and justice of the State. The court decides. The losing party acquiesces; or, if he does not, the power of the State forces him to submission; and thus the effects of contention are suppressed, and peace is maintained.—In a way similar to this, peace may be maintained between any number of confederated States; and I can almost imagine, that it is not impossible but that by some such means universal peace may some time or other be produced, and all war excluded from the world.—Why may we not hope to see this begun in America?—The articles of confederation make considerable advances towards it. When a dispute arises between any of the States, they order an appeal to Congress,—an enquiry by Congress,—a hearing,—and a decision.—But here they stop.—What is most of all necessary is omitted. No provision is made for enforcing the decisions of Congress; and this renders them inefficient and futile. I am by no means qualified to point out the best method of removing this defect. Much must be given up for this purpose, nor is it easy to give up too much. Without all doubt the powers of Congress must be enlarged. In particular, a power must be given it to collect, on certain emergencies, the force of the confederacy, and to employ it in carrying its decisions into execution. A State against which a decision is made, will yield of course when it knows that such a force exists, and that it allows no hope from resistance.

By this force I do not mean a STANDING ARMY. God forbid, that standing armies should ever find an establishment in America. They are every where the grand supports of arbitrary power, and the chief causes of the depression of mankind. No wise people will trust their defence out of their own hands, or consent to hold their rights at the mercy of armed slaves. Free States ought to be bodies of armed citizens, well regulated, and well disciplined; and always ready to turn out, when properly called upon, to execute the laws, to quell riots, and to keep the peace. Such, if I am rightly informed, are the citizens of America. Why then may not Congress be furnished with a power of calling out from the confederated States, quotas of militia sufficient to force at once the compliance of any State which may show an inclination to break the union by resisting its decisions?

I am very sensible that it will be difficult to guard such a power against abuse; and perhaps, better means of answering this end are discoverable. In human affairs, however, the choice generally offered us is "of two evils to take the least." We chuse the restraint of civil government, because a less evil than anarchy; and, in like manner, in the present instance, the danger of the abuse of power, and of its being employed sometimes to enforce wrong decisions, must be submitted to, because a less evil than the misery of intestine wars. Much, however, may be done to lessen this danger. Such regulations as those in the ninth of the articles of confederation will, in a great measure, prevent hasty and partial decisions. The rotation established by the fifth article will prevent that corruption of character which seldom fails to be produced by the long possession of power; and the right reserved to every State of recalling its Delegates when dissatisfied with them, will keep them constantly responsible and cautious.

The observations now made must be extended to money transactions. Congress must be trusted with a power of procuring supplies for defraying the expences of the confederation; of contracting debts, and providing funds for discharging them: and this power must not be capable of being defeated by the opposition of any minority in the States.

In short, the credit of the United States, their strength, their respectableness abroad, their liberty at home, and even their existence, depend on the preservation of a firm political union; and such an union cannot be preserved, without giving all possible weight and energy to the authority of that delegation which constitutes the union.

Would it not be proper to take periodical surveys of the different states, their numbers of both sexes in every stage of life, their condition, occupations, property, &c. ?—Would not such surveys, in conjunction with accurate registers of births, marriages and deaths at all ages, afford much important instruction by shewing what laws govern human mortality, and what situations, employments, and civil institutions, are most favourable to the health and happiness of mankind?—Would they not keep constantly in view the progress of population in the states, and the increase and decline of the resources? But more especially, are they not the only means of procuring the necessary information for determining accurately and equitably the proportions of men and money to be contributed by each state for supporting and strengthening the confederation?

OF LIBERTY.

THE next point I would insist on, as an object of supreme importance, is the establishment of such a system of perfect liberty, religious as well as civil, in America, as shall render it a country where truth and reason shall have fair play, and the human powers find full scope for exerting themselves, and for shewing how far they can carry human improvement.

The faculties of man have hitherto, in all countries, been more or less cramped by the interference of civil authority in matters of speculation, by tyrannical laws against heresy and schism; and by slavish hierarchies and religious establishments. It is above all things desirable that no such fetters on reason should be admitted into America. I observe, with inexpressible satisfaction, that at present they have no existence there. In this respect the government of the United States are liberal to a degree that is unparalleled. They have the distinguished honour of being the first states under heaven in which forms of government have been established favourable to universal liberty. They have been thus distinguished in their infancy. What then will they be in a more advanced state; when time and experience, and the concurring assistance of the wise and virtuous, in every part of the earth, shall have introduced into the new governments, corrections and amendments which will render them still more friendly to liberty, and more the means of promoting human happiness and dignity?—May we not see there the dawning of brighter days on earth, and a new creation rising. But I must check myself. I am in danger of being carried too far by the ardor of my hopes.

The liberty I mean includes in it liberty of conduct in all civil matters—liberty of discussion in all speculative matters—and liberty of conscience in all religious matters.—And it is then perfect, when under no restraint except when used to injure any one in his person, property, or good name; that is, except when used to destroy itself.

In liberty of discussion, I include the liberty of examining all public measures, and the conduct of all public men; and of writing and publishing on all speculative and doctrinal points.

Messrs. PRINTERS.

I Observed in your paper No. 1043, a piece signed A Constant Reader, who has undertaken to give a narrative of the rise and progress of the Small Pox in Sharon. As the piece contains a false scandalous libel, particularly levelled at the characters of the Physicians in this place—I think that justice to myself and them, as well as benevolence to mankind, require a fair candid representation of the matter.

The writer observes, "that the gentlemen of the faculty, it seems, were ignorant of the disorder till it had spread the infection to near thirty persons."—Whereas the truth is, the wife of Mr. Joseph Merchant, who died with the small pox, lived at the north end of the town; a physician from abroad was sent for, and one of the physicians from Sharon consulted till the last day of her illness, when Doctor Rockwell, a young, though ingenious practitioner was applied to, who arrived about thirty minutes before her death. He observed some smooth lived spots on one of her arms, which occasioned an enquiry whether the woman had not been exposed to the small pox—the people of the house informed him she had not been exposed, that the spots appeared at the beginning of her disorder—that she had experienced similar eruptions before—and that the physician who had attended her from the first stage of her illness had assured them it was not the small pox, nor any thing like it. As the attending physician was not present, he made no further enquiry, and the woman soon dying, he took his leave. The next day, in consulting with Doctor Smith, who was more acquainted with the disorder, and informing him of the symptoms, they rather concluded the small pox had occasioned the death of the woman. Upon this Doctor Smith rode up in person and made particular enquiry of those who had been with her in the time of her sickness, and was fully satisfied it was the small pox. He told the people of their danger and warned them to prepare; they however paid very little attention, and made no suitable preparations against that terrible disease. This was partly owing to their confidence in the attending physician, and to the influence of others who insinuated into the minds of some, that it was only a scheme to introduce inoculation, and that there was no probability of the woman's dying of the small pox. From the information I received from Doctor Smith, and others, I fully concurred with him as to the disorder, and in less than a fortnight it appeared that near thirty persons had taken the infection, and as many more from different parts of the town had been exposed by attending the funeral on the Lord's day, the alarm became general and great numbers were inoculated. In the mean time a lad in another part of the town, who attended school, had an eruption which resembled the small pox, and was supposed by some acquainted to be that disorder. The consternation then became universal, and number from every part of the town rushed into the inoculation.—Many who could not well procure a physician, inoculated themselves—upwards of a thousand were sick at one time. There were many, as some thought, who were not proper subjects of inoculation, and who would not have received the infection if they had known how to avoid it; so that great numbers of every description, old and young, pregnant women, &c. were inoculated. In such a state of confusion and universal distress, it cannot be thought strange if many should loose their lives. Near about forty have received the small pox the natural way, out of which number nine have died. Near about twelve hundred have been inoculated, eighteen of whom have died, viz. seven infants, all but one or two sucked infected mothers; six persons from sixty to eighty years of age, who laboured under such bodily infirmity, as rendered them in the opinion of some unfit for inoculation; a woman who was seized with a slow, nervous, putrid fever just after she received the infection, and expired as the small pox began to appear; a lad about four years old, who died with worms; after he had in a measure recovered of the small pox. Matters being so circumstanced, it is surprising more have not died, and the people in this place have abundant reason to sing of mercies as well as judgments.

Your Constant Reader observes, that "taking no hearing to no advice nor council, proceeded to spread the small pox by inoculation;" by which he meant to insinuate that the physicians urged people to inoculate, and undertook, from motives of gain, more than they were able to accomplish; whereby many were neglected, and "the lives of people trilled with," with a view to enrich themselves. Whereas there is not one physician in town, but what in many instances, endeavoured to persuade the people from inoculation. As to myself, I dissuaded near an hundred who made application to me. But the people in gen-

eral were under terrible apprehensions—they knew not what to do—each one thought his own life as dear as his neighbour's and his right as good, to inoculate. The physicians gave all the attendance in their power; and in general the symptoms were very favourable. Upwards of twenty pregnant women were carried safely through the disorder. And so far from being in that languishing, deplorable condition, as represented by Constant Reader, upwards of a thousand of those who were inoculated, according to the best information I can attain were able to walk about every day! Your Constant Reader's further remarks, that the inoculated were turned out at large, and suffered to visit infected houses before it was known whether they had taken the infection by inoculation or not; by which means great numbers took it the natural way and lost their lives. This is certainly a gross falshood; for there has not been a single instance of the kind. It is true there was a certain person, who, though opposed to inoculation, took special care to inoculate his own family, and thrust his wife and children into an infected house, where numbers were exercised the natural way, the inoculation not taking, his wife and one or two of the children received it the natural way. This operated so sensibly upon his feeling, and wrought up his passions to so high a pitch, that he could not endure it, but set out upon a long journey, and left them to the mercy of others till the danger was over. This may be thought strange and unnatural by some; but their surprise will cease when they are led to understand that he is a man apt to trust in Providence in such cases, and possibly he might think it an argument of the want of faith, should he afford all that care and attention which people are wont to in similar circumstances. As to money matters, the physicians have to say in their own vindication, that the poor people were inoculated gratis; and considering the general calamity of the town, they mean to be as moderate in their demands as can be reasonably expected.

I trust this representation will satisfy the public as to the amazing spread of the small pox amongst us, which could not have been prevented by any interposition of the civil authority whatever. However the people in general were inclined to order the physicians never exceeded the rules in one instance, and the people but in few. There was but one man of any considerable influence, who made any disturbance.—He pretended indeed, to be a friend to rule and order, and yet contrary to all law and justice, threatened to pull down houses and persuade others to do the same. But the people at large, are as easy and peaceable as in any one town perhaps in the state, and would doubtless remain so, were it not for the insinuations of the certain person already mentioned, who makes it his constant endeavours by injurious misrepresentations to excite disturbance both at home and abroad.

The town voted in inoculation to be conducted by the authority and select men, who have treated the matter with as much prudence and discretion as the nature of the case would admit of. The greatest care is now taking to cleanse infected houses, and to confine the small pox to certain out houses for the inoculation of those who are inclined to inoculate, under such regulations as to prevent its spreading for the future. It is hoped in a short time the town will be so cleansed as that people from abroad may pass and repass without danger.

The foregoing I am abundantly able to support; and if Constant Reader should be inclined to write again, or employ any other person to write for him, I hope he will make some small grain allowance in favour of the truth, and not wholly misrepresent matters as he has done here before.

JOSEPH HAMILTON.

Sharon, January 24, 1785.

ON THE TURK,

Once more Before you Go hence.

The CITY COFFEE-HOUSE,
Opened by THOMAS ALLEN,
In the OLD WAY,
Next door to Captain Joseph Packwood's in the Main-street,
On Thursday the 13th instant,
For the reception of gentleman travellers by land or sea—where constant attendance will be given and every necessary provided, viz.
Drink for the thirsty,
Food for the hungry,
Lodging for the weary,
Good stabling for horses.

ALL old and new Customers, who please to honour him with their company, may depend on genteel and kind treatment; at as moderate a rate as supplies will any way admit of. He proposes keeping up the Marine List, and all intelligences will be kindly received by him of foreign markets, price current, &c. which he flatters himself will be of public utility and beneficial to commerce. He begs the favour of all gentlemen, masters of vessels, &c. who arrive from different quarters, to grant him intelligence of this nature, which shall be cheerfully communicated gratis to the public, and the least favour gratefully acknowledged by Their most obedient, and very humble servants,
T. ALLEN.

City of New-London, Jan. 1, 1785.

Bloomers.

WANTED immediately, three Bloomers, that can be well recommended and understand refining and blooming, may have constant employ by applying to Jacob Hungerford, at the forge in New-Cambidge.
Farmington, February 3, 1785.

THESE may notify the members of the first medical society in the thirteen United States of America; since their independence, that a meeting will be holden at the house of Capt. A. Fuller, in Kent, on the last Tuesday in June next, at 10 o'clock.
Per Order. OLIVER FULLER, Sec'y.

N. B. Inoculation will take place in April next—All necessary accommodations for those who have a mind to apply, &c.
O. L.
Kent, January 22, 1785.

To be Exchanged for Country Produce or Public Securities of any kind,
A Dwelling-House, Barn, and Garden Spot, in East-Hartford, three miles from the ferry on the road to Glaffenbury. Also, 75 acres of Wood Land in the township of Kent, six miles from Litchfield. If applied for soon, a good title will be given.
Hartford, January 31, 1785.
HORATIO VALES.