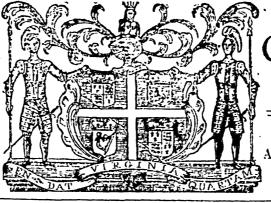
VIRGINIA



GAZETTE.

ALWAYS FOR LIBERTY.

AND THE PUBLICK GOOD.

ALEXANDER PURDIE,

PRINTER.

IN CONGRESS, March 14, 1776. ESOLVED, that it be recommended to the feveral Affemblies, Conventito the feveral Affemblics, Conventions, and Councils or Committees of Safety of the United Colonies, immediately to cause all persons to be disarmed within their respective colonies who are notoriously disaffected to the cause of America, or who have not allociated, and refuse to affociate, to defend, by arms, these United Colonies against the hostile attempts of the British fleets and armies, and to apply the arms taken from fuch persons in each respective colony, in the first place, to the arming the continental troops raised in said colony; in the next, to the arming fuch troops as are raifed by the colony for its own defence, and the refidue to be applied to the arming the affociators: That the arms, when taken, be appraised by indifferent persons, and such as are applied to the arming continental troops to be paid by the Congress; and the residue by the respective Assemblies, Conventions, or Councils or Committees of Safety.

Extract from the minutes. CHARLES THOMSON, fecretary.

To Mr. ALEXANDER PURDIE. SIR,

I HE independence of the colonies daily becomes more and more a topick of very anxious disquisition. The subject appears, in general, to lie under the difficulties of being misrepresented by our enemies, and milunderstood by some amongst ourselves. Without slattering myself that the following remarks will remove either, I shall be obliged by your inferting them.

It may with certainty be affirmed, that among the ends which the colonies, from South Carolina to New York inclusively, had in view, when they began the present contest, independence held no place; and that the New England governments, if they had it in view at all, confidered it as a remote and contingent object. The terrours of immediate oppression engrossed our minds too fully to leave much room for ambition. Admitting this fact with regard to New England (of which, however, I know no proof) it was not the effect of a feditious character in the people, but of a conscionfacts that by their union and populoufness they approached more nearly, than any fingle colony, to that period of power when independence would have become a natural event, and dependence a political abfurdity. That the colonies were proceeding pretty rapidly to fuch a period of power feems to be a point acknowledged, by all dispationate reasoners on both sides. The king's minitters, indeed, have induced him to believe, and to tell his parliament, that our prefellions of attachment and loyalty were meant only to amufe, while we were meditating a general revolt. The heart of an American tells him that the charge is erroneous, and the fingle external evidence of our having begun the war with fo fearty a provition for its fup-port will prove it to to all the unpreju-

diced world. In truth, these profesfions were founded in fuch deep-rooted attachments, that even now, when our lives and properties are the sport and prey of every tender's motley crew, that can catch them, many of our brethren shudder at the name of independence.

The use of words, without settling their determinate meanings, often occasions disputes with men whose sentiments in reality exactly correspond. This appears to be particularly the case in the present

quellion.

In many, the name of independence is accompanied with the terrifying ideas of an everlasting separation from Great Britain, of the destruction of the fimft constitution in the world (as the phrase is) and of the substitution of republican governments in the colonies. Then follow a dreadful train of domestick convulsions in each republick, of jealousies, diffentions, wars, and all their attendant miferies, in the neighbouring republicks; in which form of government, they feem to imagine that nature breeds

All monstrous, all prodigious things, Abominable, unutterable, and worfe Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd,

Gorgons and hydras, and chimeras dire! Under the preflure of real calamities, which, if actually felt, cannot be exceeded, do men find comfort in the contemplation of those that are imaginary; and which, were we fure they would befal us, might claim our preference, by being remote?

Others, with the ideas of the former, connect fome dark mysterious scheme for tricking us into independence, to which most of our continental measures, however fpeciously introduced, are supposed to be ultimately subservient. These men, my friends, are enemies to harmony. motions of their spirits are dark and dull; and whatever be their professions, or condition, let them not be trusted,

Of a much more numerous and respectable class are those who think that our opposition is founded in a virtuous determination to defend our liberty against a tyranny instant and impending; that no facrifice, no suffering, should divert us from the necessary means of effecting so important a purpose; that if, in the course of events, a declaration of independence flould become effential to our fafety, we should instantly adopt the measure, confidering it not as a primary object of the war, but, in a fecondary view, as a means of conducting it fuece (stully. Now I verily believe this is all that nine tenths of the Congress mean, notwithstanding that the preffes of Philadelphia have lately brought forth Common Senfe, Montgemery's Choft, and other frightful forms, to the no fm .ll terrour of many of his majeffy's liege fullecte.

Without attempting to prove that thefe fears are much of the fime purile caft as those with which the armour of an heroick and affectionate parent imprefied the for of Hector, I shall endeavour to show, that

the propriety of speedily declaring a temporary independence, at least, may be de-rived from a circumstance more universally interefting and folid than from the machi-

nations of the Congress. It is confessed, on all hands, that we cannot continue the war, with very profperous hopes, unless we can be supplied from foreign countries with warlike flores, with many necessaries, of which the restrictions on British trade deprive us, and unless some market be furnished for the productions of our labour. Accordingly men expect with impatience the freedom of exportation, when this trade may be pushed to the utmost extent. But, alas! in the finall effixs we have already made, we have found for eigners referved and cold. They will tell us, "In justice to your veracity, we must believe that you will " be cordially reconciled to Great Britain, " fo foon as certain acts of parliament " fhall be repealed; now, as the cannot carry on a vigorous war without you, " flie must either sit a passive spectator of our triumph, and of her own ruin, or repeal the acts, and, in conjunction with you, take vengeance for our friendly intentions, before we have received any advantage from them. We cannot, therefore, hazard fo much with fo precarious a prospect of an equiva-lent. We insist not that you should declare an everlasting separation form Britain, and thereby cut off all prospect of an honourable renewal of old friendships, but that you will, with the freedom, folemnity, and good faith of fovereign states, enter into a treaty of commerce for a certain time, and into a treaty of neutrality, at least, should cur " efforts to serve you produce a rupture with that power." A commerce thus established would be beneficial, and honourable. Such manly and vigorous conduct would render us respectable to foreigners, and formidable to our enemies. But if we can only venture to fleal a foreign trade, I can fee nothing but disappointment, difgrace, and contempt, from all quarters. In the one case, the malice of our enemies will be awed into moderation, by the increase of our power; in the other, by its decline, they may enjoy, uncontrouled by any other palion, the rich prospect of a revenge infatiable. Here, however, independence steps in to terrify us. For my part, I see no terrour in it; but in an

brave and virtuous. I flancy that many qualms on this fubject would be overcome, if men would more thoroughly confider how very far we have already proceeded in effecting independence; and that many, who have en-gaged in this bafinefs, are irrevocably defined to the cord, whatever voin nepes they may entertain of drawing out a few

unconditional dependence, which feems

at prefent our only alternative, I fee a

thoufand. It wears, indeed, the rugged aspect of virtue; but, ble the slick of Pallas, it petrifies alone the timid and the

bafe: It is the invincible guardian of the

firands from it, by an ill-timed and dangerous moderation. I apprehend that independence could, in no way, be more explicitly announced than by diffolving the government on which it depended, and forming one with which it is utterly incompatible. "Besides the overturning from "which it, governments are dissolved" without, governments are dissolved from within, when the legislature is altered," are the words of mr. Locke. We have not only altered the legislature, but exercised the judicial, the executive, and every other power of independent sovereignty, except the least considerable one, of negotiating with foreign states. have we so unanimously and cheerfully assumed the greater acts of sovereignty, and yet helitate about the lesser? If the absolute necessity of commencing the contest directed us, infensibly, to the former, why tremble when the necessity of continuing it as absolutely directs us to the latter? I am at a loss to give an auswer, except that we shall be obliged to call ourfelves, what for fome months we have really been, independent. In this dread found our terrours feem to be comprehended. And shall we, by silent stealth, draw all its good effects, and stramefully deny our benefactor? I confess this conduct refembles more the dark guilt of rebellion than the manly candour of a righteous refiftance. While Congress, Conventions, Councils of Sasety, military arrangements, courts of admiralty, county-committee courts, colonial sheriffs, &c. are fresh in their memories, will our enemies believe us when we tell them we meant not to be independent? So mean a subterfuge would ferve only to add the infolent lash of contempt to the scourge they have prepared for us.

The expectation of peace and reconciliation still fosters the irresolution of some men. The vague, unauthenticated hints of peace, which were the harbingers of my lord North's olive branch, divided our councils, and encreated our preparations for defence. This, it might have been thought, would have furnished us, and on no very reasonable terms, with the wisdom of experience; but some, under an infatuation without example, are now deluded with an artifice of the fame kind. We fondly expect commissioners of pcace. The king, on the contrary, tells us expressly, that he shall fend them to receive the fubmissions of the penitent rebels, and that they shall be accompanied with a very respectable force. This very respectable, very humane, and peace-compelling force, is neither more or less than all which they could at present muster for our destruction. One of his fervants tells us, we may obtain any thing by a conflistutional application; while another, in his presence, who has the sole power of enabling us to try the experiment, should we incline, refults by his concurrence to make it possible. And could this be done by the author of a late pathetick letter? It is adding infult to injury, with a vengeance *.

Their smiles are not to be trusted; their resentment should not be dreaded; the treachery of the first is not less formidable than the effects of the last.

Be affured, my countrymen, that they would,

Under fair pretence of friendly ends, With well-plac'd words of glezing courtefy, Baited with reasons not unplausible,

Wind them into the cafy-hearted man, And hug him into mares.

.1 am, sir, yours, &c.

General Clinton and lord Dunmore, in their late conference with col. Corbin.

CAMBRIDGE, March 21. HE joy of our friends in Bolton, on feeing the victorious and gallant troops of their country inter the town almost at the heels of their barbarous oppressors,

was mexpreniony great. gratulations which foon afterwards took place, between those of the nearest connexions in life, for a long time cruelly rent afunder by the tyranny of our implacable enemies, furpalles description. From fuch a fet of beings, the prefervation of property was not expected; and it was found that a great part of the evacuated houses had been pillaged, the furniture broke and deffroyed, and many of the buildings greatly damaged. It is worthy of notice, however, that the buildings belonging to the hon. John Hancock, etq; particularly his elegant maution-house, were left in good order. All the linen and woollen goods, except fome that might be fecreted, were carried off by the enemy. All the falt and molofles, which they could find, were deflroyed. enemy also defiroyed great quantities of cifects belonging to themfelves which they could not carry off, fuch as gun carriages, and other carriages of various kinds, house furniture, &c. together with a quantity of flour and hay. All their forts, batteries, redoubts, and breaftworks, remain entire and complete. They left many of their heaviest cannon, mounted on carriages, and several of them charged; all of them were either spiked up, or had a trunnion beat off. They also left several of their largest mortars; quantities of cannonthot, thells, numbers of finall-arms, and other inftruments of war, have been found in many parts of the town, thrown off the wharves, concealed in vaults, or broken in pieces. In the fort on Bunker's Hill, feveral hundred good blankets were found. It is faid about 15 or 20 of the king's horses have been also taken up in the town; and it is thought about the fame number of Torics remain behind, all the rest being gone with the sleet.

The prisoners, who were long confined in jail, were cruelly carried off in irons.

Tuesday evening the enemy set sire to the block-house and barracks at the castle, and yesterday they were employed at the fame place in blowing up and demolithing the fortifications.

A part of the continental army are now employed in fortitying Fort Hill, in Befton, to fecure the town against any attacks which may be made by the enemy's flips

The enemy's fleet, confifting of about 100 fail, still lie between the Cattle and Nantalket.

We have fince heard they have all put to fea, by their course supposed to be bound for Halifax.

Two vessels arrived at Portsmouth the beginning of this week, and brought in fix tuns of gunpowder.

We have just learned that between 90 and 100 pieces of cannon, 2 or 3000 buffiels of wheat, and a vast quantity of chal, have been found in Boston, also upwards of 100

NEW YORK, March 28.

BY the Albany post we are informed that letters had just come to hand in Albany, informing that governour Carleton, one morning, had flot 17 of his men, for refusing to fight; that the few forces under his command, as well as the people in general in Quebeck, were much divided: that our forces amounted to 5700 ed; that our forces amounted to 5700 men, and many on their march, which, when joined, would augment our army to upwards of 6000, and that our troops were to form the city the 20th of March.

Extract of a letter from Cambridge.

Col. Mifilin had yesterday an interview with major Small, who informed him that they expected the commissioners to treat with the Congress, and that the cuke of Gration was one of them. alfoinformed, that they (in Boston) heard that general Clinton and his troops were taken."---[Lies all.]

artives here, from Boden; a. 4 Sonaca. laft brigador-e neadst and all Sant at Web's, bena's, there is a root bere from the

fame place, by way of New Lorden.

Part of col. Dayton's Lattilion from Flzabeth Town, and feveral companies from Connecticut, came to town late week alfo; to that we now have here about 8cco men.

Tuefday laft arrived here from Philadelphia brigadier-generalbaron De Woe ake, the tion. Berjania Franklin, and feveral other gentlemen.

By intelligence from Cambridge, of the 24th of March, the whole fleet was lying in Nantalket road.

NEWBERN, Flarch 22.

THE Committee of Safety for this diftrict have ordered col. Cafwell, cemmanding-officer of the Newbern bartaiien of minute-men to march immediately to Brunfwick, to join the other forces of this province in oppoling general Clinton, who is arrived there with confiderable force. The committee have also ordered 750 of the middle of the feveral counties in this diffrict to march under col. Cafwell, and we expect in 12 or 15 days to have 15.000 men embodied againft governour Martin's cut-throat army; for by a depolation of a maller of a velici who lately fell into the hands of capt. Collett, that little atrocious villain, he told him gener 1 Cliaton', army was to spire neither age nor fex, except a few young ladies, who were to be faved for their private ple fures. Americans, rouse, rouse your resentment against the favage brutes, and let your indignation fall with tenfold vengeance on the heads of these murderers, the pious troops of George III. the father of his people.

WILLIAMSBURG, April 12.

AST Saturday capt. James Barron mived in town with despatches from the fecretary of flate for governour Frien of Maryland, which he took from on board a fmall veffel that had been fent by lord Duamore to carry them to Annapolis. They were in the custody of a certain mr. Rofs from Fort Pitt, an old offender, and an affociate of the infamous Connolly.
The packet contained three letters The

first, dated Nov. 10th, only serves to announce his lordflip's fucceeding the earl of Dartmouth as secretary for the American department. The second, of Dec. 23d, enclosed the act of parliament for seizing American property; and affures him of his majefty's being determined, in concurrence with his parliament, to purfue the most vigorous meafures for reducing his rebellious Subjects in North simerica; and then closes with the king's exhortation to the people of his government, couched in terms of the fame import which we have already feen in fundry proclamations from his governours. The third letter, being more interesting, is inserted at full length, and is as follows:

WHITEHALL, Dec. 23, 1775.

SIR,

T was not till the 27th of November that Your despatch to lord Dartmouris, of the 27th of August, was received here, when I had the honour of laying it before the king; and I have it in command from his mejetly to express to you his mejetly's approbation of your real for the publick fervice, and of the virilterable attackment you have the wn to his perfor and government, from the first commencement of the prefent unhappy differes, which have involved his migetly's faithful fereants in the colonies in difficacties and diffres, that are only to be equalled by the fortitude with which they are born.

Your letter contains a great deal of tyry ufeful information, and some confidential communication of the characters of main have