

To the P U B L I C.

That the political body, like the animal, is liable to violent diseases, which, for a time baffle the healing art, is a truth which we all acknowledge, and which most of us lament. But as most of the disorders, incident to the human frame, are the consequence of an intemperate indulgence of its appetites, or of neglecting the most obvious means of safety: so most of the popular tumules, which disturb government, arise from an abuse of its blessings, or an inattention to its principles. A man of a robust constitution, relying on its strength, sits in gratifications which weaken the *flamma vite*; the surfeiting pleasures of a few years destroy the power of enjoyment; and the full fed voluptuary feels a rapid transition to the meagre valedudinarian. Thus people who enjoy an uncommon share of political privileges, often carry their freedom to licentiousness, and put it out of their power to enjoy society by destroying its support.

Too much wealth is a disease, which often requires a very strict regimen. *Too much liberty is the worst species of tyranny*; and *wealth may be accumulated to that degree as to impoverish a State*. If all men attempt to become *masters of the mof* of them would necessarily become *slaves in the attempt*; and could *every man on earth possess millions of Loes*, every man would be *poorer than any man is now* and infinitely more wretched, because they could not procure the necessaries of life.

My Countrymen, it is a common saying now, *that the Devil is in you*. I question the influence of the Devil however in these affairs. Divines and Politicians agree to this, to father all evil upon the Devil; but the effects ascribed to this Prince of evil Spirits, both in the moral and political world, I ascribe to the wickedness and ignorance of the human heart. Taking the word *Devil* in this sense, he is *in you & among you* in a variety of shapes.

In the first place, the *weakness of our federal government is the Devil*. It prevents the adoption of any measures that are requisite for us as a nation; it keeps us from paying our honest debts; it throws out of our power all the profits of commerce, and this drains us of *cash*. Is not this the Devil? Yes, my Countrymen, an empty purse is the Devil.

You say you are jealous of your rights and dare not trust Congress. Well, that jealousy is an evil spirit and all evil spirits are *devils*; so far the Devil is in you. You act in this particular, just like the crew of a ship, which would not trust the helm with one of their number because he might *possibly* run it a shore. When by leaving it without a pilot they were certain of shipwreck. You act just like men in raising a building; who would not have a mason-workman, because he might give out orders. You will be masters yourselves, and you are not all ready to lift at the same time, one labours at a stick of timber, then another, then a third. You are then vexed that it is not raised. Why let a master order thirteen of you to take hold together and you will lift it at once. Every family has a master (or a mistress. I ask the Ladies pardon.) When a ship or house is built, there is a master when high ways are repaired there is a master. Every little school has a master. The continent is a great school, the boys are numerous and full of roguish tricks, and there is no matter. The boys in this great school play tru-

ant, and there is no person to chastise them. Do you think, My Countrymen, that America is more easily governed than a school? You do very well in small matters—extend your reason to great ones. Would you not laugh at a farmer, who would fasten a three-inch cable to a plough, and yet attempt to draw a house with a cobweb? "And Nathan said unto David, *thou art the man*." You think a matter necessary to govern a few harmless children in a school or family; yet leave thousands of great rogues to be governed by good advice. Believe me, my friends, for I am serious; you *lose rights*, because you will not give your Magistrates authority to *protect them*—your liberty is despotism, because it has no controul—your power is nothing because it is not united.

But further, luxury rages among you, and luxury is the Devil. The war has lent this evil demon to impoverish people and embarrass the public. The articles of Rum and Tea alone, which are drank in this country, would pay all its taxes. But when we add, sugar, coffee, gazes, silks, feathers and the whole list of baubles and trinkets, what an enormous expence? No wonder you want paper currency. My Countrymen are all grown very tall! Feathers and Jordans must all be imported. Certainly Gentlemen, the Devil is among you. A Hampshire man who drinks forty shillings worth of Rum in a year and never thinks of the expence, will raise a mob to reduce the Governor's salary, which does not amount to three pence per man per ann. Is not this the Devil?

My Countrymen, an *industrious Man* appeared, not long ago, in this paper, informing you how to redress grievances. He gives excellent advice. Let every man make a little box and put into it four pence every day. This in a year will amount to six pounds one shilling and eight pence—a sum sufficient to pay any poor man's tax. Any man can pay three or four pence per day, though no poor man can, at the end of a year, pay six pounds. Take my advice, every man of you; and you will hardly feel your taxes.

But further, a *tender law is the Devil*. When I trust a man a sum of money, I expect he will return the full value. That legislature which says my debtor may pay me with *one third* of the value he received, commits a desperate act of villainy—an act for which an *individual*, in any government, would be honoured with a whipping post, and in most governments, with a gallows. When a man makes dollars, one third of which only is silver, and passes them for good coin, he must lose his ears, &c.

But legislatures can with the solemn face of rulers and guardians of justice, boldly give currency to an *adulterated coin*, enjoy it upon debtors to cheat their creditors, and enforce their systematic knavery with legal penalties. The difference between the man who makes and passes counterfeit money, and the man who tenders his creditor one third of the value of the debt and demands, a discharge, is the same as between a thief and a robber. The first cheats his neighbour in the dark, and takes his property without his knowledge; the last boldly meets him at noon-day, tells him he is a rascal and demands his purse.

My Countrymen, the Devil is among you. Make paper as much as you please—make it a tender in all future contracts, or let it rest on its own bottom. But remember that past contracts are *saered things*—that legislatures have no right to interfere with them—they have no right to say, a debt shall be paid at a discount or in any

manner which the parties never intended. It is the business of justice to fulfil the intention of parties in contracts—not to defeat them. To pay bonds and contracts for cash, in paper of little value or in old hoes, would be a dishonest attempt in an individual; but for legislatures to frame laws to support and encourage such detestable villainy, is like a judge who should inscribe the arms of a rogue over the seat of Justice, or clergymen who should convert into bauby-houses the temples of Jehovah. My Countrymen, the world says the Devil is in you. Mankind detest you as they would a nest of Robbers.

But lastly, mobs and conventions are devils. Good men love law and legal measures. Knaves only fear law and try to destroy it. My Countrymen, if a constitutional legislature cannot redress a grievance, a mob never can. Laws are the security of life and property—nay what is more, of liberty. The man who encourages a mob to prevent the operation of law, ceases to be free or safe; for the same principle which leads a man to put a bayonet to the breast of a Judge, will lead him to take property where he can find it; and when the Judge dare not act, where is the latter's remedy? Alas, my friends, too much liberty is no liberty at all. Give me any thing but mobs: for mobs are the Devil in his worst shape. I would shoot the leader of a mob, sooner than a midnight ruffian. People may have grievances perhaps and no man would more readily hold up his hand to redress them than myself; but mobs rebel against laws of their own, and Rebellion is a crime which admits of no palliation.

My Countrymen, I am a private peaceable man; I have no office of any kind; I have nothing to win or to lose, by the game of paper currency; but I *revere justice*. I would sooner pick oakum all my life, than stain my reputation, or pay my creditor one farthing less than his honest demands.

While you attempt to trade to advantage, without a *Head* to combine all the States into systematic uniform measures, the world will laugh at you for fools. While Merchants take and give credit, the world will call them idiots and laugh at their ruin. While farmers get credit, borrow money and mortgage their farms, the world will call them fools and laugh at their embarrassments. While all men live beyond their income and are harassed with duns and sheriffs, no man will pity them, or give them relief. But when mobs and conventions oppose the course of justice, and legislatures make paper and old hoes a legal tender in all cases, the world will exclaim with one voice, *you are rogues, and the Devil is in you!*

T O M T H O U G H T F U L.

P. S. If any man wishes to know the writer of this odd piece, let him disprove any thing I have said and he shall be welcome to my name.

F O R S A L E.

At the Printing-Office in Northampton, The First, Second, and Third Part of
Webster's Institute.
A L S O,
Watt's Psalms.—Primers.—Blanks of most kinds, and a few copies of Col. Humphreys' Poem.

Where the subscribers being appointed Commissioners of the Hon. Judges of Probate for the County of Hampshire, to receive and examine the claims of the creditors of the estate of ELIZABETH QUEN, alias WALKER, late of South-Hadley, deceased, re-elected insolvent, and who died last of December next is allowed for settling said estate do give notice, that we shall attend said business on the last Mondays of October and December next, at the house of Noah Goodman, Esq. in said South-Hadley, from one o'clock on each day.

NATHANIEL WHITE,
DAVID NASH,
DAVID MITCHEL.

South-Hadley, Sept. 3, 1786.

HAMPSHIRE GAZETTE.

W E D N E S D A Y, N O V E M B E R 11, 1786.

NORTHAMPTON: PRINTED BY WILLIAM BULLER, A FEW RODS EAST OF THE COURT-HOUSE.

A friendly ADDRESS to the Insurgents in the County of Hampshire.

My COUNTRYMEN,
You have laid down the arms which you lately assumed against the government, it may be hoped your passions have by this time subsided, and your minds are now open to the dictates of sober reason. You will therefore permit a fellow citizen, equally interested with you in the happiness of his country, to expostulate with you on the part you have acted. If you have yielded you: Muskets and Bayonets against government, you cannot censure one who uses only his Pen and his Reason in favour of it.

Let me conjure you by your love to our common country, and by your regard to yourselves and your posterity, to lay aside all passion and prejudice, and in the hour of calm reflection review the part you have acted. You surely wish in your dispassionate moments, to disapprove and resolve on a different mode of conduct. I speak with this assurance, because I know many of you are men of property, character, virtue and discernment.

That we are under pressing burdens, none will deny, we all feel them: we all wish them removed. But are they of such a nature as to require or to be removed by the measures you have taken? There is only one case that will justify forcible opposition to our own government; and that is, when our constitutional rights are invaded and other means of redress are ineffectual. This was our case when we ventured on a war with Britain. The grievances then complained of was not the weight of taxes imposed, but the unlimited claim to tax us and legislate for us at pleasure, without the consent of our own representatives. We for years petitioned and remonstrated in vain: we had recourse to arms with reluctance, and only as the last resort.

Our case now, my countrymen, is entirely diverse. We have a constitution of our own, ratified by general consent. We are subject to no taxes or laws, but those which are framed by men of our own choosing—by men subject to the same laws and taxes which they impose on us—by men who are every year to return to private life, in which, without a new election, they must remain. Can human wisdom devise a more effectual security to our liberties? You cannot pretend that the legislature have invaded your rights, or infringed your constitution. You only complain that the constitution is imperfect, burdens are heavy and some particular laws are grievous. This may be all true. But have you petitioned for relief? have you given introductions to your representatives? have you pointed out to the legislature their mistakes? Nothing of this sort has been heretofore done except in a few, a very few instances. The first notice you have given of your uneasiness is by FLYING TO ARMS. And against whom was your force directed? against the ministers of justice, who, if you labour under grievances, were not the authors nor can be the removers of them. You are all sensible that mankind cannot subsist without society, nor society without government. And I dare appeal to your own good sense, whether your late proceedings are not utterly inconsistent with every principle of civil government. You too well know the imperfection of human nature to imagine, that can flourish upon the ideas of becoming the ridicule of the world for such a disgraceful relapse, for such a perille inconsistency. Were a reunion with Britain desirable, how will you effect it? There must be a civil war, for we shall not be all agreed. And will the advantage compensate the expence? Or are you sure that Britain will receive us on any terms, which you would think consistent with the dignity of freedom? If we cannot bear our own government, for three or four years, may we conclude we should not long be patient under her's. She has seen that we are brave in arms—she has expended 150 millions in a fruitless war to subject us. Will the hazard another war for a precarious connection with us? We must submit to be disarmed, or receive a standing army before she will take us under her government. But were she ever so fond of a reunion, will the power

justice. And do you intend to obstruct it still? Are we too virtuous to need it? Alas! (short experience, I fear, will sadly convince the contrary. Will there be no thefts, robberies, burnings, rapes, murders, which in regard to common safety, we shall wish to have punished? Will there be no private injuries and wrongs, which will need to be redressed? Will all be so just as to render law useless? If so, government cannot hurt us. Hitherwise, government will be necessary to our subsistence. If we have not virtue enough to obey and support so good a government as we enjoy, surely we have not virtue enough to live without any. Under a former suspension, we subsisted tolerably for a short space, partly from habit, partly from the influence of committees and conventions, chiefly from a sense of common danger and our union in the common cause: and after all, it was found necessary soon to resume government in form. But if our government is dissolved by our internal animosities, the causes which before operated to our security, can operate no more. It should also be remembered that the war has increased the number of lawless and profligate people among us, especially by the introduction of foreigners, who served in our own army or were recruited or deserted from the British army, and consequently has much increased our danger while government is suspended. Besides, how shall taxes be collected for the discharge of the debt which we owe not only to our own citizens, but to foreigners, who loaned us their money in the day of our distress?

Will France, Spain and Holland submit to be defrauded? or will they tremble at our country insurrections? Or is it your aim to subvert the present constitution, that you may establish a better? But let me ask, Are you already agreed on a new constitution? have you proposed it for general deliberation? when you have established it, are you sure none will dislike it? may not the dissentients in their turn take up arms to subvert it, with a fairer pretence than you to subvert the present? and when and where is the war to end? Or did you mean only to awaken the attention of government to your complaints? you ought then to have made known your complaints. The government would have heard you and granted relief, if in their power, for they share in the common burdens. At the worst, you needed only to wait a few months, when the legislature would have been constitutionally changed, and probably would have been, if the people were generally dissatisfied with their conduct. Would not this have been a more safe and easy method of redress, than open violence? It has been suggested, with how much truth I know not, that your insurrection originates from the influence of British emissaries, and that your ultimate design is the introduction of British government? Can this be so? have you endured all the horrors of a few years' war in opposing that government, only for the sake of returning to it as soon as the war was ended? Many of you I know have distinguished yourselves in the cause of independence. And will you renounce your dear-bought independence before you have fairly tried it? and fly back to the government, which you have so long opposed with your blood, as soon as you have escaped from it?

One would think the pride of a brave American should spurn the idea of becoming the ridicule of the world for such a disgraceful relapse, for such a perille inconsistency. Were a reunion with Britain desirable, how will you effect it? There must be a civil war, for we shall not be all agreed. And will the advantage compensate the expence? Or are you sure that Britain will receive us on any terms, which you would think consistent with the dignity of freedom? If we cannot bear our own government, for three or four years, may we conclude we should not long be patient under her's. She has seen that we are brave in arms—she has expended 150 millions in a fruitless war to subject us. Will the hazard another war for a precarious connection with us? We must submit to be disarmed, or receive a standing army before she will take us under her government. But were she ever so fond of a reunion, will the power

of Europe vainly suffer it? France has assisted us in the war with a view to diminish and weaken the British empire; and will France silently behold its members replaced and its strength restored? An attempt for a reunion will probably issue in a dismemberment of our own empire, and a distribution of these states among the nations of Europe, not at our option, but their sovereign pleasure. But admitting we could effect a complete and peaceable reunion, what are we to gain? not a more free government: this is nowhere to be found: and probably not one more cheap: for we must bear our part in all the British wars. If you will examine you will find that our burthens arise not from the expence of our internal government, but from the long war in which we have been engaged. And are you disposed to exchange this burthen for your quota of the British debt? A woful exchange! Our foreign debt, as lately stated, is about ten millions of dollars; the domestic national debt about three times so much nominally: our state debt may be about equal to our share of the continental debt: perhaps the debt of other states will be nearly the same with ours, compared with their abilities. We will suppose the whole ten (which is a high calculation) to be 17 or 18 millions of pounds sterling. Now 7/8ths of this debt is internal, and may be paid in facilities much below the nominal value in silver. Probably we may discharge our whole debt as easily as we could pay a foreign debt of six or seven millions. We have immense tracts of unappropriated lands, some part of which is surveyed and nearly ready for sale, and which, as fast as sold, will sink the principal & diminish the interest. There must be time for such resources to produce their effect. But if we can only have patience, and join with it a proper degree of industry and frugality, we shall undoubtedly find relief. Now consider the British debt. This their own accounts state to be 280 millions; and they have no such resource as unappropriated lands. And would you chuse to take on you a share of their debt, rather than of our own? Perhaps we should not be better pleased with their appointment of our share, than we are with the taxation of our own courts.

Our grievances are now under the consideration of the legislature. Give them every information in your power, and believe they will give you all the relief in their power: but imagine not that they can work miracles. After all they can do a debt will remain, for the discharge of which we must, for a time, apply our own industry, prudence and frugality. We had better submit to some (several) and live below that stile which our habits would fix for us, than plunge into slavery or war. Judge not of matters rashly, nor without full information. We at a distance from the seat of government, cannot at once know the difficulties that our legislators have to contend with, nor all the reasons on which they act. We cannot all be politicians. We must put some confidence in rulers. If we chuse not able and virtuous men, men in whom we can confide, it is our fault. A watchful jealousy is a political virtue, but a total distrust is inconsistent with government. Much of your uneasiness I well know has arisen from misinformation. How often have I heard complaints of the unwisdom of our government, who is said to have exacted the payment of his salary every quarter, that he might put his money on interest, when it is a fact ascertained by the best authority, that since he has been in the chair, he has not received so much as half his first year's salary and but part even of that in specie. The whole that he has received has fallen considerably short of his own taxes.

Many other misrepresentations might be mentioned. On the whole, my friends, let me intreat you to think calmly, examine fairly, judge dispassionately, and conduct virtuously. Let not private views, but the general good dictate your measures; be well assured your measures are just, before you attempt to carry them into execution.

October 19, 1786.

PACIFICUS.