

HAMPSHIRE GAZETTE.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31, 1787.

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

Mr. PRINTER, Please to infer the following in your useful paper, and you will oblige one of your customers.

PLOUGHMAN to the PUBLIC, No. I.

WAS it not that the Peace Maker breaths yet, and purposes to breath in some future time, I would not have ventured my shins among our country scribblers. But finding myself at the present dismissed from the plough, and hearing a note of war in the camp, think it deserves the attention of every man; but do not expect to reason like some that have gone before me. But in as much as our regulating brethren seem to stand in need of line upon line, I have therefore taken my pen and do mean, in a public manner, to examine the reasons and foundations upon which this mighty Babel is founded, on which they expect to climb to liberty and happiness: and as no gentleman among them has been pleased publicly to offer the reasons of their conduct, yet I doubt not their good will, had they reasons they judged adequate. I am therefore obliged to take their argument where I can find them, and being conversant with them, I have had the best opportunity to hear and receive them; the public may therefore rely upon my fairly communicating their reasons and faithfully examining them to the intent that both the reasons of, and their conduct itself may be properly portrayed upon the wall; and as my business is with my regulating brethren, I accordingly address you: *Friends and Gentlemen*, I hope you will not be angry while I attempt to reason with you, and discover to you the most natural consequences deducible from your way of reasoning and the most natural tendency of your conduct; however they may appear frightful, you first urge—say you,—"We will let the courts know that the power is in the hands of this people." But I query, what do you mean by the power? Do you mean the power of free will so much disputed among the divines both ancient and modern? no, this is too wonderful for you; or do you mean a creating power? no; well then, you must mean the power of making laws and rules, whereby one and all their be governed; but will you force the courts into a belief of this, that the power of making laws is in the hands of the people, at a time when it is delegated from the people? this is diabolical if understood, for you would force the courts to believe a lie; for if A and B have delegated the above mentioned power to C for such a time, then it is no more in the hands of A and B for that time. But you further urge, that if government prevails now, the chains of slavery will be revoked; but is there any truth or reality in this? If government is bad, is it not subject to an alteration for the better in a peaceable way? if government was delegated to certain men in such a way as not to be regained but only by fire and sword, this would justify you; but is it not the reverse? is not the power of government like the Crane and the Swallow, who know the time of their coming? you further say, if government prevails now, we must despair of any relief in this way in future; but this argument seems to be of a strange complexion as it respects future time; for if you have sufficient arguments for your rising against government to day, why do you borrow argument for a future want to justify the present rising? if you have not sufficient reason for rising to day, why do you practice

it? Come I will reason with you upon the same principles; I do not know whether hard drinking is my duty to-day, but for fear I shall be dry in some future time, I will drink to excess to-day. I shall in the next place consider a confession which is in the mouths of one and all of you: for say you, we know that the stopping of the courts at Northampton was a wrong step; but what new thing is here under the sun? is it possible that that conduct which was wrong yesterday, I say is it possible that conduct of the same nature and tendency should be right to-day, without an essential alteration in circumstances and things? but I would ask, what alteration of circumstances has taken place on the side of government? has public burthens been multiplied? no, the reverse; but will you say we mean not that it was a wrong step, but a step too soon; but why too soon? if Inferior Courts are an intolerable grievance this year, was it not even so last? if so, were you not too late? But you will say it was a wrong step only in this, that the county was not so well united: But I query whether your doings are calculated to promote the union; if not, you are wrong yet; but will you say it was none of all this, it was wrong that the General Court had not been properly addressed? but I query again, have they been properly addressed? yet if not, you are wrong yet. But methinks I hear your leaders saying, we know it was a wrong step and therefore punishable, our safety therefore required these later exertions: but what mean you by this? do you expect a series of wrong steps will make proper amendment for the first?—Come then, I will argue upon the same principles and say, I know it was an unrighteous thing for me to trample upon the authority of the State in the manner I did, but since I have done it I may continue to do it and be blameless. I know it was an unrighteous thing for me to smite off my neighbour's arm in the manner I did, but since I have done it I will even smite him through and through, left he rise against me and avenges the quarrel; would you not say that the man that reasons thus & does thus shall surely die? but says Nathan to David, thou art the man.

PLOUGHMAN.

For the Hampshire Gazette.

Mr. PRINTER,

The following may be depended on as an absolute truth, which you will be pleased to insert in your next.

Gentleman in one of the eastern towns in this county, who has distinguished himself in County Conventions and in the late insurrection, has been for some time apprehensive of an excursion of the light-horse, and therefore he has armed himself with two fire locks, and a large sword, which every night he kept at the head of his bed. There was an old Lady who lived at a small distance with her son: at a time when men were called for, upon the great expedition to Rutland; this old lady's son left her to reinforce the venerable gentleman of the East. The old lady was left alone, with a cow, and destitute of any subsistence for her. At length one night she determined to drive her cow to the gentleman whom I first mentioned, to get her kept till her son's return. Before the old lady had got to the house, it began to grow dark; the gentleman with his usual greatness of mind, had retired to his house and locked his doors. His wife went out of the door, and coming in, told him that she heard a noise, like a company of

men; he in an undaunted manner fixed his sword upon his thigh, and retired into the pot-hole (his usual retreat at extraordinary times.) His wife watched the motion of affairs out of doors, and employed her eldest son as a messenger to carry news to the gentleman, in the pot-hole. At length, after some very critical observations, his wife informed him that she could not absolutely discover more than one personage, though she conjectured that she had seen two. After mature deliberation he evaded from the pot-hole, unlocked one of his doors, went out to conquer or die. At first he in a most vigorous manner, with drawn sword assailed the innocent old cow; he fought a while, when he was reinforced by his wife, and after a smart engagement the poor old cow rendered prisoner of war. Elated with his victory he instantly turned his rapier, which was hot from the capture of the old cow upon the good old woman: she was surprised, but having furnished herself with a broom handle to drive the old cow, she opposed the orset with great bravery. The engagement was dubious for a long time; the old lady avoided the repeated thrusts of his rapier with the greatest alacrity, and often pelting him with the butt-end of the broom handle; but unhappily, 'tis said, that the woman fell, but recovered, and as she was rising the gentleman's wife attacked her behind with the tongue (the usual weapon of the sex) and the old woman submitted to an honourable peace, and the matter was settled to their satisfaction. The people of the county of Hampshire are cautioned to keep their wives and cows at home, peradventure they shall be taken and slain for Light-Horse. The public's humble servant,

NUNCIUS.

Excise-Office, Northampton, Jan. 1, 1787.
 LL persons who have been licensed to sell Spiritous Liquors, or that have been permitted to sell other duties articles, in the county of Hampshire, are desired to take an account of the quantity of all such articles, which they have now on hand, as the new system of Excise this day takes place. They are also desired to keep an accurate account, in writing, of all the duties articles that shall in any way come into their hands after this day, agreeably to the last excise act. They are also further desired, as soon as may be, to settle their said accounts to the present time.

ELIJAH HUNT, Collector of Excise for the county of Hampshire.

A Subscription School.

I. CURSON,

TEACHER of the Proprietary School Northampton, begs leave to inform the public, that he intends to open a Subscription School at Hatfield, the first day of January next, where youths will be carefully and expeditiously instructed in various branches of useful Learning. For terms and other particulars, Gentlemen are desired to apply to Col. Chapin at Hatfield, December 16, 1786.

WHERREAS Elizabeth, wife of the subscriber, has departed from this world, and is now in a coffin in the church-yard at Hatfield, and I will pay no more for her funeral, which my hand.

Middlefield, Jan. 9, 1787.

FOR SALE,
 At the Printing-Office in Northampton,
 Webber's Infinitive.
 Watt's Blanks—Blanks of most kinds
 Writing-Paper, and a few copies of Col.
 Humphreys's Poem.

Strong's & Bickerstaff's
 ALMANACKS,
 For 1787, to be sold at this Office.

To the PUBLIC.

A T a time when uneasiness, and discontent prevail in various parts of the State, which are to be of a serious and alarming nature, it becomes individuals to endeavour to contribute their parts to quiet them. My motive for appearing in public from a remote part of the State, is to contribute my mite in to good a cause. It must undoubtedly appear to every candid and sensible mind, that when public heats arise, to such a length, that arms are taken to vindicate a friend and brother, and brother, friend and cause, consequences, if matters are prosecuted to the utmost of human blood must be very alarming and such as threaten the loss of all those liberties and privileges which can be dear to a rational and benevolent mind. If we consider what the consequences of rising to arms against the constitutional government are—that they have been, and what it is probable they will be in future; it must undoubtedly appear to be a very desperate remedy, which ought never to be applied only to desperate diseases. Domestic contentions have in times past frequently involved nations in blood, strip them of their dearest rights, and left the miserable remains of carnage and slaughter a prey to the ambition of some desperate, who had had the good fortune to be victorious. Instances of this kind are not rare in history. If we trace almost all the monarchies now in the world, to their origin, we find that they arose from the ambitious designs of popular leaders, in whom the people placed a mistaken confidence, on account of their specious pretence of regard to their public good. Instances of the consequences of popular tumults in the Roman commonwealth, occasioned by the designs of popular leaders, which are recorded by credible historians, would almost make a persons blood run cold to read, whole provinces deluged in blood, shrouded to death in cold blood, by the odious and heretofore unheard of cruelty of public proscription, by which upwards of 9,000 Roman citizens were put to death, in the city of Rome alone, upon Sulla's victory over Marius; which tumults with others of a like nature, were the means of reducing that, once the most flourishing commonwealth which ever the sun beheld, into a state of the most abject slavery and vassalage. Undoubtedly every benevolent heart, while it endeavours to realize such scenes as rack which in America, will say, forbid them here! Our feelings as men, and our sentiments as christians, must shudder at the thought. But friends and brethren, are we not precisely in the same path, in which the liberties and kingdoms and nations have been hitherto swallowed up and in which civil discords; the most alarming and extensive have begun? By the late sittings which have taken place in several parts of the State; are not the tempers of the people inflamed in such a manner, as to be prepared in some degree for the horrors of a civil war? whereby consequences, far from the thoughts of any at the beginning may be realized? now, can it be agreeable to our feelings as men or christians, to engage in forces which may probably involve us in such consequences because we suppose a considerable has wronged us? or because, (in our opinion) there is some needless expense in civil government, or because we have taken up an apprehension that the Court of Common Pleas is useless, a grievance? and I am no more advocate for the doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance, in all cases; sometimes resistance to the ruling power is not only lawful, but even an important duty. When tyranny and oppression are reduced into a system, and persevered in against the interests of a country, and the opinions of a respectable majority, and a deaf ear turned to dutiful petitions and remonstrances for redress; but to me appears hardly possible that the time should ever come, which lets that it is already come, when it shall be a duty to apply to the last and awful appeal of resistance, against a magistracy which in every branch of it, depends upon the annual election of the people, for it is an undoubted truth that whenever the time comes when the representative body shall turn a deaf ear to the united reasonable remonstrances, of a major part of their constituents, and force oppression into a system if relief cannot be obtained in an orderly

constitutional way, by petition or remonstrance, a remedy may be easily had in the course of a year, by a new election. And that measure will be oppressive indeed, which it is not better to endure for one year, than to hazard the horrors of a civil war? If we look back to the beginning and progress of the present rising, do they appear to be any thing like the deliberate dispassionate exertions of a people against tyranny and oppression? or, have they not the appearance of a sudden flame kindled by design at a critical moment of the rising at Northampton, from which observations would make, people in general at least in that part of the county where my acquaintance lies, did not complain of oppression; all was calm and contentment, every one having liberty to sit under his own vine and fig-tree, without making him afraid, until from very small beginnings, in some parts of the State, the flame of discord spread like a contagion, carried on by the artful lies and designing misrepresentations of men, who under the mask of friends are without doubt some of the worst enemies of the state; armed bodies of men were collected, and while one cried one thing and another another, the more part knew not wherefore they were come together. This is no designed rebellion upon any of my countrymen, human nature in all has its weakness; and in such critical moments application made to the feelings, and the plausible cry the public good is artfully managed, we are not to wonder if the same things should happen to us, which have happened to many others upon similar occasions. There are undoubtedly critical times to work upon the passions, and when that moment is artfully embraced, 'tis not so much to be wondered that public heats ensue.—But can calm and dispassionate reason give us in, that a representative body, but a few months before, put into place by the voluntary election of the people, should fall at once be changed into a group of villains, who ought to be opposed by the sword, for laying unnecessary burthens on the people, whilst of all the burthens that are laid on, they must bear their full share? are not these symptoms that the present confusion is a sudden heat, than a rational deliberate act?—Further if we attend to the objects of the present rising, even those which are alleged, will not the movement, (considering the consequences with which it may probably be connected,) appear to be a very unjustifiable one? I have taken some pains, in the small circle of my acquaintance, to obtain information of the object, but I must confess myself much in the dark. The common cry is, that it is to obtain a redress of grievances, and to bring matters to a regulation, but as for any determinate object in view, which is of such awful importance as to warrant people to hazard their own lives, or the lives of others, I presume there is none; and so to go into the field with no determinate object in view, and to return back stained with the blood of a friend or brother, is a situation which every person of feeling will shudder at the thought of, while at the same time the spirit of envy and bitterness, which has been kindled already, and which will be further kindled by matters proceeding till on to a crisis, is such as is evidently calculated to destroy and not to effect a regulation. Several things are either supposed or alleged as grounds of the present rising which I crave the indulgence of the public to mention. Is it to evade the payment of public or private debts? Or is it with a view to return under the dominion of Great Britain? Or is it with a view to set aside the court of common pleas, and to introduce a different mode of judicial procedure? Or is it to alter, or to take the present constitution? Or is it to introduce and establish a paper currency? or is it to lower the expense of civil government? These are all the objects which I have heard alleged by those who are either for or against the present rising? As for the riot act, and the suspension of the act called Habeas Corpus; however some may look upon them as grievances now, yet it is evident that they are consequences, therefore cannot be causes of the present rising. Now it is I think exceeding evident, that all these objects are either attainable in an orderly constitutional way, or else they are

plainly unjust and unrighteous in themselves; and the obtaining them would be real grievances, whereas the want of them is only an imaginary one. As to the evasion of the payment of public or private debts, this is an object generally disapproved; but from some matters of fact, it appears that this object is not out of view with many of the promoters of the present tumult. Having had an opportunity of examining some things into the grounds of them, in the time of the rising at Northampton in the month of September, I could hear no complaint more frequently mentioned, than this, we cannot pay our debts. If this is objected to, why is often mentioned? But it is plain that an attempt to evade the payment of public or private debts, is unjust and impolitic, and contrary to that impartial protection which is due from government to every citizen, and that equal equity both of person and property, which is essential to a righteous constitution of civil government, and whether this is an object designed by the insurgents or not, no doubt but these tumults have a tendency, and will have more fully perfected in, to weaken public credit; and to lessen our resources; and to provoke our foreign creditors to do themselves that justice which they cannot expect from a government wanting energy, and rent in pieces by faction. No doubt some policy calls for the earliest method, consistent with justice for the payment of public debts, and of this method our legal constitutional representatives are under the necessity of being judges, and are equally interested in it with the rest of the community. As to a designed return under the dominion of Great Britain, though this object is publicly avowed by the popular leaders in the present rising, yet from credible information of British emissaries being actually in the county to forward the design, and from many artful lies and misrepresentations published through the country, subservient to the same ends, and from the predictions of our enemies at the close of the late war, which are now evidently fulfilling, probably by their influence, it gives multitudes of well wishes to the true interests of their country, reason to suspect such a design to be contriving by interested men. But is not such a design similar in many respects to that of the Hircinians when they said, come let us make a Capitan and return into Egypt. Is it not contrary to our own true interest and that of our posterity? contrary to our most solemn engagements to God and one another? contrary to our feelings as men, and to the workings of Divine Providence during our late struggles? As to our true interest and that of our posterity, can it be supposed from the situation, numbers and growing population of the United States, that if they were at present re-united to Great Britain, the connection would long remain, or that the consequences would be any other than a repetition of the horrors of war in a few years? and a final settling of all the dissensions, at a still greater expense of blood and treasure? And can we rationally expect to be eased of our burthens by being again connected with a nation, the annual interest of whose national debt amounts to more than the whole public debt both foreign and domestic of the United States? As to our own solemn engagements, we are undoubtedly sworn either expressly or implicitly to maintain the sovereignty and independence of the United States, and an endeavour to overthrow it is no less than high treason against the community; and an act, which if it should be accomplished, which may heaven prevent! would occasion posterity to curse our memories to the latest generation. As to our feelings as men; doubtless when we reflect upon the wanton burning of defenceless towns, the lawless outrages committed by Indian savages under their patronage, the abuse of our prisoners of war, and the execrable disposition shown by Great Britain, since the conclusion of the peace, particularly in the distresses upon our trade, we must violently contradict our own feelings to desire to return into subjection to such a power. To forgive them is our duty as men and christians, but to trust our former spoiled with privileges to their revengeful arm, must be the height of folly and madness. Independence has cost too much blood and treasure to be thus wastefully given up; and