

## MARYLAND GAZETTE.

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**HAVE** attempted to lay open several principles of action, which, in certain circumstances, may excite men to co-operate with Britain in her wish to reduce the Americans from a virtuous and wise adherence to the articles of that treaty, into which we have entered with the *United States*. I shall in this paper proceed a little in the same track, and take notice of another great and elastic spring, which may produce the like effect. I mean to speak of the connection of the old trade with Britain.

It was in vain sought for, at the commencement of the debate, in the hatred of the Scotch nation to the name of Wilkes, and their mixing his cause with the cause of America, that the greater part of those that nation on the continent were opposed to our resistance. For though this, in some degree, may have influenced those immediately from Britain, and with the last impressions warm upon their minds, yet the more general and commanding cause was not resentment to any men; but as they were traders, and a war, more especially with Britain, must have been hurtful to them, it was interest.

At the commencement of the debate the greater part of gentlemen of the Scotch nation, at least in the southern states, were traders. They had acted as factors to the companies from Glasgow, and from other cities, or they had embarked on their own ships, and from their connection with friends at home were in a happy way of making, in a short time, splendid fortunes. A war unavoidably cut them off from every prospect of this nature, and therefore, without believing that they were greater devils than their neighbours, we might easily expect that they could not be able to conceive clearly, and without prejudice, the justice of our cause; or if convinced of the justice of it, yet they could not readily and from their hearts engage to support it. It is observable that those of this nation not engaged in trade have not been so warm. The landholders, a few exceptants upon government, and a few under the dominion of a national attachment, excepted, have been pretty generally whigs, and from a certain warmth of temper peculiar to the nation have been impetuous whigs.

One settlement, indeed, upon the confines of North Carolina were, the greater part of them, planters, and yet gave us some trouble in the insurrection quelled in that state. But these men who had just emigrated from their native kingdom, with the recollection of an unfortunate rebellion fresh upon their minds, were too ignorant to be able to distinguish the circumstances and the cause, and were disposed to take part with a king who had beaten Earl Lochiel and other chiefs, and who, in their apprehension, was also able to beat the Americans. Ignorance, with these, was the cause of torquism, but the interest of trade was the cause with the greater part of the gentlemen of that nation resident in these territories.

The same cause operated with the like effect with regard to other men, natives of Britain and natives of America, engaged in trade. It was not, indeed, to be expected that men, old in their connections with the trading houses of London, Bristol and Liverpool, or who had just established a correspondence with these, could be easily induced to give up advantages to be derived from an intercourse in this channel. Yet I acknowledge there are amongst commercial gentlemen, those who early and uniformly have acted in the cause, and of these I entertain the highest sentiments, and am persuaded that the name of the *whig merchant* of America will be ranked with the names of her first patriots. That virtue is ever greatest which has resisted the greatest temptation. But we know that the connection of the old trade with Britain has hung heavy upon the wheels of the affections of many with regard to our exertions, and from the same cause it will still hang heavy on the affections of many persons, when by any offer of Great Britain, the least dawn of a reconciliation may appear.

The dawn of a reconciliation will play upon their minds, and the day of an alliance will immediately succeed it. They will fancy to themselves letters and orders received already from their old correspondents in the trading towns, cargoes consigned to them, and the channel of trade opening the channel of opulence in a full flow of abundant prosperity. For this reason, when Britain shall have come to make her insidious offer of an alliance with these states, I will advise the manufacturers, and mechanics, and farmers of America to beware of commercial gentlemen in the connection of the old trade with Britain. If these gentlemen are serious, their own good sense will teach them that they stand in need to be watched, and if they are whigs, and would prefer the true interest of their country to their own temporary employment, they will wish to continue, to prefer it, and therefore will not take it amiss, that in a case where the bias of immoderate interest may operate upon their minds, and when they are now about to sleep and to numb from the path of reticence, their countrymen should be at hand, and, as we say in familiar conversation, *give them a jog that they may sleep right again*.

I must desire that I may not be mistaken as meaning to insinuate the least idea unfavourable to commerce or commercial gentlemen. On the contrary, I well know that commerce is a great source of opulence to any state, and that commercial gentlemen are amongst the meanest, the most useful, and the most ornamental to society.

If I may so express myself, they are most safe to the commonwealth, and from them seldom any thing is to

be dreaded hostile to liberty. The merchant, like the balcyon of the shore, loves a calm; like the muse, he loves peace and free government. This adventure of his ship upon the ocean, and the return of her voyage loaded with the wares of different countries, sufficiently engage his hopes, and detach his mind from the great objects of political ambition. It is not always a peculiar malignity of temper that causes one man to aspire to honour, and eminence, and office, more than another, but the want of something to fill his mind, which is stronger and more elevated than his neighbours, and cannot be satisfied with the small concerns of a private life. Ambition is frequently the disorder of the noble mind, and arises from that vastness of conception, which, unless it finds an equal object to exert itself upon, will be restless and unquiet. Now the immense ocean, and the islands that embosom, and the countries that border it, and the commodities imported and exported, and the plans to be meditated, and the correspondencies to be established, and after all the risk of a shipwreck, and the hopes of a safe voyage, occupy and fill the mind, and keep it at a distance from the debates of party, and the desire of eminence by the depression of another.

Commerce is the child of free government, and like a pious child it caresses and supports its parent. It supplies riches and resources wherewith to resist foreign force, and it furnishes an object to the most enterprising mind, and thereby secures the state from the violence of internal faction. I make this observation with the more pleasure, as America bids fair to be a great commercial country, which circumstance forms a happy foundation of my hope that she will be long a free as well as a polished country.

The only case in which the attachments of the merchant may become unfavourable to the interests of the community is where he carries on a trade with a nation, whose ambition or avarice may have prompted them to advance a claim of unjust dominion upon the country of which he is a citizen. His love of peace, and his good will for correspondents on the foreign shore, may dispose him to think too favourably of their intentions, and to concede with too great facility to their demands. If a war should be consequent, waiting the sweets of commerce, and confining her barks to the harbour, he may become too soon weary of it, and fail in his resistance, and be disposed to accept terms of unequal and impolitic accommodation.

A case of this nature would seem to have happened in our intercourse with the nation of Great Britain. Individuals amongst commercial gentlemen, biased by the advantages of trade which a war must interrupt, have been avowedly opposed to our resistance, or have reluctantly engaged in it. The force of an attachment of this nature will more declaredly begin to operate, when Britain shall have come to make her offer of acknowledging our independence on certain disreputable and iniquitous conditions. The merchant, in the connection of the old trade with Britain, will cast a look wishfully upon the ocean, and will desire too anxiously a restoration of peace and of commerce, in the old channel of a close and intimate connection with her island. It will therefore behove every good American, at this juncture, to assist the virtue of his countrymen, the old traders, by keeping a watch upon them, that the memory of correspondents in Glasgow, Liverpool, Bristol, London, and other cities, may not operate too powerfully upon their minds, and cause them to embrace the idea of a reconciliation at the expense of honour and of solid and general advantages, which will result from a firm adherence to that for which we have hitherto contended, and for which, I flatter myself, we shall have the magnanimity through every reverse of fortune to continue to contend, independence, and a free intercourse of trade with the whole world.

THE HONEST POLITICIAN.

WILLIAMSBURG.

In COUNCIL June 16, 1779.

**THE** board proceeded to the consideration of the letters of Colonel Clarke, and other papers relating to Henry Hamilton, Esq. who has about some years past as lieutenant, governor of the settlement at and about Detroit, and commandant of the British garrison there, under Sir Guy Carleton, as governor-in-chief, Philip Dejean, justice of the peace for Detroit, and William Lamothe, captain of volunteers, prisoners of war, taken in the country of Illinois.

They find that governor Hamilton had executed the task of inciting the Indians to perpetrate their accustomed cruelties on the citizens of these states, without distinction of age, sex, or condition, with an eagerness and activity which evince that the general nature of his charge harmonised with his particular disposition. They should have been satisfied from the other testimony adduced, that these enormities were committed by savage acts, acting under his commission, but the number of proclamations which, at different times, were left in houses, the inhabitants of which were killed or carried away by the Indians, one of which proclamations, under the hand and seal of governor Hamilton, is in possession of the board, puts this fact beyond doubt. At the time of his captivity it appears that he had sent considerable detachments of Indians against the frontier settlements of the states, and had actually appointed a great council of Indians to meet him at the mouth of the Tanissee, to concert the operations of this present campaign.

They find that his treatment of our citizens and soldiers, captured and carried within the limits of his command, has been cruel and inhuman; that in the case of John Dodge, a citizen of these states, which has

been particularly stated to the board, he loaded him with irons, threw him into a dungeon, without bedding, without straw, without fire, in the dead of winter and severe climate of Detroit; that in this state he harassed and wasted him, with incessant expectations of death; that when the rigours of his situation had brought him so low, that death seemed likely to withdraw him from their power, he was taken out and attended to, till somewhat mended, and then again, before he had recovered abilities to walk, was returned to the dungeon, in which a hole was cut seven inches square only, for the admission of air, and the same load of irons again put on him; that appearing again to be in imminent danger of being lost to them, he was a second time taken from his dungeon, in which he had lain from January to June, with the intermission before mentioned of a few weeks only. That governor Hamilton gave standing rewards for scalps, but offered none for prisoners, which induced the Indians, after making their captives carry their baggage into the neighbourhood of the fort, there to put them to death, and carry their scalps to the governor, who welcomed their return and success by a discharge of cannon; that when a prisoner brought alive, and destined to death by the Indians, the fire already kindled, and himself bound to the stake, was dexterously withdrawn and secreted from them by the humanity of a fellow-prisoner; a large reward was offered for the discovery of the victim, which having tempted a servant to betray his concealment, the present prisoner Dejean, being sent with a party of soldiers, surrounded the house, took and threw into gaol the unhappy victim and his deliverer, where the former soon expired, under the perpetual assurances of Dejean, that he was to be again restored into the hands of the savages; and the latter, when enlarged, was bitterly and illiberally reprimanded and threatened by governor Hamilton.

It appears to them that the prisoner Dejean was on all occasions the willing and cordial instrument of governor Hamilton, acting both as judge and keeper of the gaol, and instigating and urging him, by malicious insinuations and untruths, to encrease rather than relax his severities, heightening the cruelty of his orders by the manner of executing them; offering at one time a reward to one prisoner to be the hangman of another, threatening his life on refusal; and taking from his prisoners the little property their opportunities enabled them to acquire.

It appears that the prisoner Lamothe was a captain of the volunteer scalping parties of Indians and whites, who went out, from time to time, under general orders to spare neither men, women, nor children.

From this detail of circumstances, which arose in a few cases only, coming accidentally to the knowledge of the board, they think themselves authorized to presume by fair deduction what would be the horrid history of the sufferings of the many who have expired under their miseries (which therefore will remain for ever untold) or who have escaped from them, as yet too remote and too much dispersed to bring together their well grounded accusations against these prisoners.

They have seen that the conduct of the British officers, civil and military, has in its general tenor, through the whole course of this war, been savage and unprecedented among civilised nations; that our officers and soldiers taken by them have been loaded with irons, consigned to loathsome and crowded gaols, dungeons, and prison ships; supplied often with no food, generally with too little for the sustenance of nature, and that little sometimes unsound and unwholesome, whereby so many of them have perished, that captivity and premature death have with them been almost synonymous; that they have been transported beyond seas, where their fate is out of the reach of enquiry, have been compelled to take arms against their country, and by a new refinement in cruelty to become the murderers of their own brethren.

Their prisoners with us have, on the other hand, been treated with moderation and humanity; they have been fed on all occasions with wholesome and plentiful food; lodged comfortably; suffered to go at large, within extensive tracts of country, treated with liberal hospitality, permitted to live in the families of our citizens, to labour for themselves, to acquire and to enjoy property, and finally to participate of the principal benefits of society, while privileged from all its burthens.

Reviewing this contrast, which cannot be denied by our enemies themselves in a single point, which has now been kept up during four years of unrelenting war, a term long enough to produce well founded despair that our moderation may ever lead them into the practice of humanity, called on by that justice we owe to those who are fighting the battles of their country, to deal out at length miseries to their enemies, measure for measure, and to disperse the feelings of mankind by exhibiting to them spectacles of severe retaliation; where we had long and vainly endeavoured to introduce an emulation in kindness, happily possessed by the fortune of war of some of those very individuals, who having distinguished themselves personally in this line of cruel conduct, are fit subjects to begin on with the work of retaliation, this board has resolved to advise the governor, that the said Henry Hamilton, Philip Dejean, and William Lamothe, prisoners of war, be put into irons, confined in the dungeon of the public gaol, deprived the use of pen, ink, and paper, and excluded all converse except with their keeper. And the governor orders accordingly.

Attest. (A copy) ARCHIBALD BLAIR, C. C.

B O S T O N, June 17.

A small armed schooner from this port, named the *Resolution*, with four carriage guns, one pounder, and six swivels, returned yesterday from a short cruise, in