

THE PROVIDENCE GAZETTE; AND COUNTRY JOURNAL:

Containing the freshest ADVICES, Foreign and Domestic.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1779.

Printed by JOHN CARTER, at the Post-Office, at *Shakespeare's Head*, in Meeting-Street, near the State-House; where Printing in general is performed with Neatness, Accuracy, and Expedition.—Hand-Bills of a common Length done at an Hour's Notice, and all Kinds of Blanks used in this State fold on the lowest Terms.

Mr. CARTER,
You are requested to insert the following Piece in your next Paper.

To the PUBLIC.

MATTERS of public grievance, my fellow citizens, ought not to be slightly passed over. Public injuries ought not to be winked out of sight by public authority, to favour the intrigues of those who are daily walling the public treasure, and making fortunes out of the distresses of their countrymen, that are continually paying taxes to support such speculation and plunder. Complaints of such conduct will bear repeating, and ought to be repeated again and again, until public reformation and redress can be obtained. The Congress, that august body, who are entrusted with the principal management and direction of the safety and welfare of these United States, on the 27th of June last, in a printed speech addressed to them, and first published in Philadelphia, were charged with "having neglected to call for a frequent settlement of the accounts of officers in the Staff Department: That from such neglect have arisen leisure and opportunities for fraud and embezzlement: That this negligence has not only increased the quantity of money, but has been a means of continuing men in office, who, if a speedy and strict scrutiny had been made into their accounts, would long ago have been dismissed from the service of their country." Congress were also told of the large "commissions allowed to the Quarter-Masters and Commissaries, with all their *bells of Deputies*, and that nothing will do without a change in the Staff Department;" and were advised, "quick as the thunder follows the lightning, to let reformation follow abuses, and punishment the crimes of their delinquent officers." Congress, it seems, were previously sensible of the neglect; for, by their excellent Address of the 26th of May last, they "anxiously called upon the good people of these States, for their most vigilant attention to the conduct of inferior officers employed in the public service, with respect to every species of misbehaviour, whether proceeding from ignorance, negligence, or fraud." And, by a resolution of the 7th of June last, expressly say, that "although there is reason to believe, that abuses have been committed by inferior officers in the Quarter-Master, General's and Commissary-General's Departments; yet Congress are persuaded that many of them deserve well of their country, and that measures will speedily be taken to distinguish such of them as have been faithful, from such as have been otherwise, and thereby cause justice to be done to all."—In consequence of which, and conscious that a remedy ought to be immediately applied, by their resolution of the 9th of July last, they "earnestly requested the LEGISLATIVE POWERS in each State, instantly to make the strictest enquiry into the conduct of every officer in the Quarter-Master General's and Purchasing or Issuing Commissary-General's Departments; and in case of any kind of misbehaviour, or strong suspicion thereof, in any such person, not being an officer immediately appointed by Congress, to remove or suspend every such person; and also to enquire into the number of persons employed in said departments, and immediately to discharge such as shall be judged unnecessary."

The Freeman of the town of Providence also, at their meeting on the 21st of August last, sensible of the great abuses that have been committed, Resolved as follows, "That this meeting, impressed with a sense of the absolute necessity of making the aforesaid enquiries, It is therefore Voted and Resolved, That the Representatives of this town be and they are hereby instructed, to use their endeavours that the General Assembly take the most effectual measures for making enquiry, and carrying the said resolves of Congress into execution."

The Honorable the General Assembly of this State, at their last session, through a multiplicity of business,

could not minutely enter into this most necessary enquiry.—They however appointed a Committee to draft a bill for that purpose, and report it to the next session; when it is still the hope and earnest expectation of many, more especially the people of this State, that the said enquiry will be "instantly" entered upon, and treated with all that strictness, attention, and despatch, which the importance of it demands, and which is due to the earnest request of the *Great Council of America*.—The Freeman of the town of Providence have a right to expect that their Representatives will strenuously exert themselves, pursuant to their instructions. Perhaps, in the course of said enquiry, among other matters, it might not be amiss to enquire into the propriety or necessity of having a State Issuing Commissary-General in this department, which it, and long has been, within the district of a Continental Issuing Commissary-General, a gentleman of integrity and abilities, but who, by this State's generously undertaking to appoint another person to do his business, has been for many months almost out of employ, though he receives full pay for doing the business of his whole district. A so, whether out half the deputies, clerks, sealmen, waiters, &c. &c. obtruded on the public by said State Commissary, have been at any time necessary? Whether the business might not have been better conducted with a much less number, and with less than half the enormous expence? Whether large quantities of provisions, purchased for the Continent, have not been sold in this department, particularly the article of flour, while the troops were scantily supplied? Whether there was not an express stipulation between Congress and the Court of Versailles, that supplies furnished to Count D'Estaing should be accounted for in France, whether very large supplies of provisions were not lent on board his fleet, while in this State, and whether the State Commissary did not receive the pay therefor, in Continental bills, at a price far below the prime cost? Whether he has ever accounted, or made so much as a single return, either to Congress, the General Assembly of this State, or any other authority, although he has been now about eighteen months in office? Whether the public have not just reason for a strong suspicion of misbehaviour? And, as the Continental Commissary-Generals have ever refused to supply him with money, and declined all connection with him, whether this State, which appointed him, will not be under a necessity of settling his accounts, and eventually be saddled with an enormous debt?

But supposing, for a moment, that the State Commissary had been faithful in the discharge of his duty—that the army had been regularly supplied—that he came fairly into office; and that this State should not be obliged finally to pay any deficiencies that may appear: Yet shall no regard be paid to economy? Will it not be extravagance and folly in the extreme, for this State to continue a man in office, to do that for which the Continent long has and still continues to pay another officer? Is not this department absolutely within the district of SAMUEL GRAY, jun. Esq; of Windham? The fact will not be contested; and were the State Commissary discontinued, Mr. GRAY, who was legally appointed, and who from long experience is every way perfectly qualified for the duties of his office, would be compelled instantly to repair to this department, and take the charge of it; in which case, supplies of money, &c. would be drawn regularly from the Continental Issuing Commissary-General, and the Commissarial business of this department conducted with more propriety and economy.

In vain, my countrymen, may Congress resolve—in vain may we endeavour to stop further emissions of paper bills—in vain may we supply loans to the Continent; if the "LEGISLATIVE POWERS" in each State do not keep a watchful eye over the conduct of inferior officers, frequently examine into the expenditure of the public treasure, dismiss needless officers, and bring to speedy justice such public default-

ers as have violated the confidence reposed in them; and are raising fortunes to themselves, at the expence and on the ruins of their country.

OBSERVATOR.

September 8, 1779.

Philadelphia, August 20, 1779.

Mr. CARTER,

You are earnestly requested to reprint the following address, as being calculated to stir up an enquiry into the abuses practised in the General Hospital Department, and to call public defaulters to account for the amazing expeditures and waste of public money, by which it is so much depreciated, and you will oblige many, particularly your humble servant,

A SPECTATOR.

TO THOSE at the HELM, who have been authorized to grant appointments, and particularly to the Special Committee, chosen to enquire into and reform abuses in the Quarter-Masters, Hospital and Commissarial Departments.

ALREADY has the impropriety of one appointment of a public officer been submitted to your consideration. It was then promised to exhibit other delinquents and other abuses to public notice. Let those in the hospital department at Danbury next claim your attention. A memorial and petition, dated Dec. 14, 1778, has been long since transmitted to Congress, complaining of the iniquity and despotic conduct of Doctor Isaac Foster, Deputy Director General of the hospitals at Danbury (under Doctor William Shi pen, jun. Director General of all the hospital department in America.) The MEMORIALISTS have long impatiently waited the event of that application for a redress of grievances, without receiving any answer. They ask what is become of that memorial? Surely, say they, no private friendship, or family connection, has interposed to screen a delinquent of that magnitude from public justice. It appears by the minutes of Congress as if that memorial was referred to the consideration of the Medical Committee, Jan. 14, 1779. Has the Committee made no report yet upon it? It must then probably be laid under the table to sleep. In order to awaken it into new life, and to quicken an enquiry into it, is the design of this paper.

The subscribers of that memorial are Magistrates and other principal inhabitants of the town of Danbury, in the State of Connecticut. They set forth to Congress,—that they are very uneasy on account of the conduct of Doctor Isaac Foster, as by his neglect or inattention the sick were entirely destitute of wood in that cold and inclement winter season (of December) the consequence of which was their burning the rails, and laying waste the inclosures of the inhabitants (an act of savage violence, equally hostile and licentious.) They further declare, that the public stores intrusted to him are profusely squandered and wasted; and, that Doctor Foster's arbitrary and tyrannical conduct was accompanied with such meannesses as could not be patiently endured by freemen. As it appeared probable to them, that a new arrangement of hospital matters must take place, or the service suffer amazingly (and Congress has indeed since openly declared the war cannot be supported by emissions of paper money, without the enormous abuses practised in this and the other Staff Departments are corrected) they humbly and unanimously remonstrate against the re-appointment of Doctor Foster to office. So far that memorial. It is further affirmed on very good authority, that a gentleman in office under Doctor Foster was crushed some time ago, to prevent the direful consequences that would ensue to the Doctor, if his enormous expeditures of public money should be made known; and which that gentleman declares he will publish with the vouchers whenever Doctor Foster's conduct is enquired into. "Can it be possible (says an eye witness who has passed through the hospital) that the most pompous

[See the fourth page.]

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entertainments, and orders given upon the public stores, which he knew to be a fact, to the supply of men at pleasure, that are as unconnected with the hospital as the north is with the south, are to be supported at a public charge, under the head of hospital expenditures and regulations?" Go on, good Doctor Foster, in the steps of your great principal and leader. Make friends at the public cost, and you need not fear having a powerful party to support you; for "he (says a great patriot) must be but a poor rogue indeed, who cannot make friends to justify his measures, however disgraciously."

Already has the question been asked by *Old Fashion*, Whether if a person were to exhibit a complaint to Congress, that one of its servants was busy in plundering the public, could we know within a twelvemonth what was done to check and bring the delinquent to justice? I answer, thirty men have exhibited such a complaint, of which no notice is taken six months after. Whether it will within the twelvemonth is uncertain, Congress being overwhelmed with business of the greatest importance, which leaves little leisure for such investigations. Is it because the misconduct of great men, in office, for I dare not call them servants of the public, the violation of the rights of freemen, or the extravagant wastes of public money, of which we hear so much and grow callous upon it, are not objects that merit immediate considerations? What then, are not the names of thirty respectable freeholders, Magistrates and Selectmen, of the town of Danbury, &c. of authority enough to give any weight to the charges, or to require an immediate enquiry into the facts in question? Deserve not those complaints that the accused person should be tried, and that the memorialists be called upon to appear in evidence again him? We have heard of one person condemned and ignominiously dismissed the service, without a trial, and without a single charge brought against him, in that very department, on vague clamours; and now, although thirty freemen unite in specifying the offences committed by this person, and those too of a very capital nature, yet instead of calling the accused to any account, we find, by the minutes entered on their journals, that on the 12th day of June last he obtained a warrant on application for ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS, he giving his receipt to be accountable. Are these assertions true or false? Let the person who can, appear to deny them. And yet Congress gravely tell us, in their address to the public, which is thrown out to prepare the good subjects of these States to furnish six forty millions for the present year, as if it were a small affair to ask, "We hold ourselves in duty bound to declare, that we are not convinced there has been as much diligence used in detecting and reforming abuses, as in committing or complaining of them." Is it possible? I am ready to ask, which of my senses is the lying one; that by which I see, or with which I hear? I reverence Congress as much as any man, but cannot implicitly give into all I hear. I can only reconcile those contradictions by supposing Congress know not that the memorial referred to above was ever before them. Let them consult their own minutes of Jan. 14, 1779, and of June 12.

To return. If Doctor Foster is unjustly accused, why should he not be called upon to make that appear? If justly, why is he still intrusted with so important a charge as the expenditure of public money, and the lives of the sick and wounded, till another campaign is over, in which time the place of the hospitals may be shifted, he may resign, or the evidences against him be removed, or discouraged from appearing? Call him then to a speedy trial. If he is innocent, he will be acquitted. If guilty, let sentence be pronounced, and every virtue that has preyed on the vitals of the public be made to disgorge the unjust prey. Is it not astonishing, or is it not true, that whilst our excellent General and Commander in Chief sets an example of frugality that will do him no less honor than his victories, the Principal of the hospital department, and his eastern Deputy, have lived like eastern Princes, and from the slender allowance of a few dollars a day pay, have had the art to raise lordly estates?

To satisfy every candid mind whether there is reason or not to call for a public enquiry into the conduct of Doctor Foster, the names of the truly worthy gentlemen who subscribed the memorial and remonstrance against him, are here annexed, by

A S P E C T A T O R.

David Taylor, Thomas Starr, jun. Z. Taylor, Amos Hoyt, Andrew Comstock, Samuel Gregory, Eleathan Gregory, John Trowbridge, Nathan Starr, Abijah Starr, Nathan Gregory, Levi Stone, Mathew Gregory, Benjamin Starr.
Thaddeus Benedict, Eli Pratt (Justices of Peace)
Stephen Trowbridge, Joshua Knapp, Selectmen for 1777.
Joseph Benedict, Major Taylor, Comfort Hoyt, David Bouton, Elijah Hoyt, Selectmen for 1778.
Zadock Benedict, Thaddeus Barnum, Josiah Starr, Daniel Hecheock, Ezra Dibble, Richard Shute, John Benedict, Selectmen for the year ensuing.

*The Hon. Mr. Laurens, late President of Congress.

CHARLESTOWN (South-Carolina) July 13.
Extract of a letter from a gentleman in Augusta, dated July 5, 1779.

"Colonels Baker and Twigg, with a party of horse, having gone from Augusta towards Sunbury, met on Sunday the 27th of June with M^r Girth at Medway meeting-house, whom Col. Baker attacked and defeated, and took a number of prisoners. Col. Baker hearing that there were a number of Continental officers on parole, going to Sunbury, went after, and retook the following officers, at a place of Mrs. Arthur's, about five miles from Medway meeting-house, viz. Captains Molby, Nash, Bouker, Hicks and Templeton; Lieutenants Davenport, Musby and Mitchell. Col. Baker sent the above officers, and the prisoners taken from M^r Girth, up Conochie; and hearing there was a party sent out from Savannah against him, left Col. Twigg with 60 men at Mr. James Butler's plantation; and followed his prisoners up Conochie. On Monday the 28th, Col. Twigg being then at Butler's house, had information of a body of horse coming up the lane, when he formed about 35 men, being the number then with him, the rest having gone a foraging: The party advanced and attacked Col. Twigg, who beat them off; the British troops then dismounted and formed by a fence; Capt. Muller, their commander, receiving a wound, ordered his men to charge, which they attempted, but being galled by the riflemen, they broke and ran: Col. Twigg then ordered his men to mount the horses left by the enemy, and pursue, which they did, and made prisoners 2 officers and 30 privates. The enemy left on the field 4 killed, and 11 wounded; likewise Capt. Muller, who died, about two hours after the action, of his wounds, and was buried by Col. Twigg with the honors of war. Col. Twigg had only 2 men wounded. The 2 officers, with the wounded, and 30 privates, were permitted to go to Savannah on parole; the rest of the prisoners and retaken officers were brought off by Col. Baker.

"Colonel Baker, whilst he was at Medway, sent a flag to Savannah, offering an exchange of prisoners, which the enemy agreed to; but Col. Baker was obliged to return to Augusta before it could be accomplished.

"Col. Baker's people brought off a number of negroes, horses, and a large quantity of dry goods, which they found at a store on the plantation of Thomas Savage, Esq; on Ogechie."

The prisoners taken in the above action were brought to town on Saturday last, under a proper guard."

State of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, In GENERAL ASSEMBLY, August Session, 1779.

WHEREAS many evil-minded persons, not regarding the ties of their allegiance to the United States in general, and this State in particular, but influenced by the fard principles of avstice, continue illicitly to correspond with and supply the inhabitants of New-Shoreham, in the county of Newport, with provisions, and other articles, to the great detriment and distress of the virtuous inhabitants of this State: And whereas the said town of New-Shoreham hath been for a long time and still is within the power and jurisdiction of the enemies of the United States, whereby they obtain, in consequence of the evil practices aforesaid, supplies for themselves, and intelligence from time to time of the situation of our troops, posts and stores, by which means they are enabled to make frequent incursions, and thereby commit devastations upon and rob the innocent inhabitants of their property, and deprive them of their subsistence:

Wherefore, be it Enacted by this General Assembly, and by the authority thereof it is Enacted, That from and after the rising of this Assembly, if any person or persons whatsoever, being inhabitants of or residents in this State, shall, by him, her or themselves, directly or indirectly, go or send upon the said island of New-Shoreham, or any other place in the possession of the enemy, in this State, or upon Long-Island, or supply the inhabitants or any inhabitant thereof with any article or articles of provision or clothing, or any other article whatsoever, he, she or they so offending, upon being convicted thereof, upon indictment duly presented and found before the Superior Court of Judicature, Court of Assize and General Gaol Delivery, shall forfeit all his, her or their goods and chattels, and the rents and profits of his, her or their real estates during life, to and for the use of this State; and shall also, when the confiscation of their estates shall not be deemed a sufficient punishment, be placed in one of the Continental battalions raised in this State, or on board one of the Continental vessels of war, to serve during the present contest with Great-Britain, provided the criminal be a male, and sufficiently qualified to be a soldier or sailor; but otherwise, should the offender be a female, or not fit for a soldier or sailor, he or she shall receive such corporal punishment as the nature of the crime may require, or shall be banished, at the discretion of the Court.

Provided nevertheless, That nothing in this act shall extend or be construed to extend to such persons as shall act by virtue of special permits of this Assen-

bly, or the Commander in Chief in the military department; they conforming themselves strictly to the tenor thereof.

And be it further Enacted, That the act heretofore made, inflicting a penalty of Thirty Pounds for offences before mentioned, be and the same is hereby repealed.

And it is Resolved, That this act be published three weeks successively in the Providence papers.

A true copy:
Witness, HENRY WARD, Secretary.

State of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations

A LIBEL is filed before me, by James Munroe, Commander of the armed brigantine of War called the Saratoga, for himself and all concerned therein, against the Schooner HARLEQUIN, of the Burthen of about 70 Tons, and her Appurtenances which the Libellants say they have lately captured and taken, and have brought the same into said State for Trial and Adjudication.—The Justice of the said Capture will be tried at the Maritime Court, to be holden at the State-House, in Providence, on the 20th Day of September, 1779, at the Hour of Ten in the Forenoon: When and where the Owner or Owners, or any Person or Persons concerned therein, may appear and shew Cause, if any they have, why the said Schooner and her Appurtenances should not be condemned, agreeable to the Prayer of the Libellants.
JOHN FOSTER, Judge of said Court.

Three Hundred Dollars Reward.

LOST in the Street, last Saturday, about 1 o'Clock, near or at the Door of Mr. Ebel Brown, in Providence, a black Leather Pocket-Book with a Brass Clasp, containing upwards of Seven Hundred Dollars, several Receipts, and an Order of Mr. John Demout for 48l. with several other Papers, of Value to the Owner. Whoever has found and will return said Book, Money and Papers, to the Subscriber, shall receive as a Reward Three Hundred Dollars, paid by EMOR OLNEY Johnston, September 2, 1779.

RAN away from the Subscriber, on the 20th Day of June last, Mulatto Man, Servant, called Primus, about 25 Years of Age, a likely well made Fellow, speaks good English, had on, and took with him, when he went away, a Pair of Leather Breeches, almost new, two Pair of Linen Trowsers, two Linen and two Woollen Shirts, three Flannel Waistcoats, two Pairs of Hose, one Pair of good Shoes, a new Beavers Hat, one Irish Linen Shirt, a Suit of green Cloaths, not much worn, and a old Great-Coat; also took with him a considerable Sum of Money. All ran away the last Evening, a Mustee Apprentice Boy, called Primus Watt, alias Toby, aged about 14 Years; had on when he went away a Linen Shirt, Flannel Waistcoat, a thick homespun Jacket over it, a Pair of Shoes, and a small old Hat, lopped, and pieced round the Brim. If either of them will return to their Master, before taken up, they shall be forgiven their Crimes; but whoever shall take up said Servant, and convey him to his Master at Warwick Neck, in the County of Kent, shall have Twenty Dollars Reward; and whoever shall take up said Apprentice, and return him to his said Master, shall have Ten Dollars Reward, and all reasonable Charges, paid by BENJAMIN GREENE.

N. B. All Masters of Vessels, and others, are cautioned against harbouring or concealing said Servant or Apprentice, as they would avoid the Penalty of the Law, in such Cases provided.

Warwick-Neck, September 2, 1779.

To be SOLD,

At public Vendue, to the highest Bidder (if not sold at private Sale before on Monday the 13th of September next,

A FARM, in Smithfield, containing about 150 Acres of Land, having two Dwelling-Houses, three Orchard which will cut 35 Tons of Hay yearly and will pasture 20 Head of Cattle, and 40 Sheep. The Sale to be at GREGG ANGELL's, on the Premises, at 10 o'Clock in the Forenoon. Whoever inclines to purchase, may know the Terms by applying to said Angell.
Smithfield, August 28, 1779.