

The Providence Gazette AND COUNTRY JOURNAL.

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[Continued from our last.]

The same Committee, at the same time, also laid before the Town the following Report, in writing, viz.

TH A T they have had under serious consideration the report of the Committee of the Hon. General Assembly on the State debts, and beg leave to lay before the freemen of this town their remarks and opinion thereon.

As the act passed by the General Assembly, referring this report to the freemen at large, does not point out any particular object, or set forth any reason therefor, your Committee found themselves at a loss where to take up the subject, or in what point of view to consider it. In all questions of mere property, there are at least two parties in interest; and where difference in sentiment arises, a third becomes necessary to discharge the office of Judge or of Arbitrator betwixt the other two. In the present case, a certain class of citizens called public creditors form one party, and the general mass of the people who pay taxes form the other. The General Assembly seems charged with the weighty concern of deciding in this affair, and doing justice betwixt the parties; to what purpose then is a reference made of this subject to the people at large, who are a party? Are they to give instructions on this head in their own favour, and thereby to conclude the other party in interest, by fixing and binding the judgment of the General Assembly? Is this reasonable? Is it constitutional? It cannot be, unless the very nature of things has altered with the times.—But if the people at large are only called on as a party to shew cause, if any they have, why they should not pay their debts, or why, in equity, the nominal sums should be reduced, it should seem that the other party in interest, to wit, the public creditors, ought also to be called on with no less formality to shew cause on their part; and, after a candid hearing of both parties, the General Assembly ought to stand perfectly at liberty, unshackled and unfettered with instructions from either party, to determine according to right and justice.

It may be objected, that in calling on the people at large, the public creditors are included—but as the people are only to act by instructions in Town-Meetings, and as the public creditors do not form a majority in any one town in the State, there is no chance for them, in this way, to communicate their sentiments to the General Assembly. They are certain in every case to be out-voted, and out-voted too in a case where the very persons who vote against them are in fact voting for themselves:—And if votes and instructions, obtained in this way, are to decide on their property, they are of all men most miserable.

One observation more on this head. Your Committee conceive it impossible for the freemen at large, even in towns which lie nearest the sources of information, to be so well informed on this subject as the members of the General Assembly are or ought to be—and much less can it be expected in the country towns, where there are few or no public creditors, and where the people only hear one side of the case, that they should be in any good degree capable to judge on the subject; especially as every man must know and feel that he is immediately intereited in the event. Instructions therefore on this subject can only be useful to the General Assembly, as they contain new information or new arguments unthought of before, and not as carrying with them the power of controuling and binding the votes of the members, as in other cases.

Certain it must appear to all mankind, that an almost ten years war, against the most powerful nation in the world, has not been carried on by these States by mere vapour and smoke. Some persons must have parted with a vast deal of valuable treasure, to feed, cloath and transport, such vast armies as filled every part of this country, as well as to procure military stores, a navy, &c. And where can the man be found, so lost to the feelings of humanity, as to openly avow that he is resolved to enjoy the blessings of liberty and independence, without paying the price they cost? Your Committee will presume to much in favour of their fellow-citizens, that it is only necessary for them to be convinced, that particular individuals have really furnished supplies, or rendered services to the public, in order to insure them an adequate compensation therefor. The first enquiry therefore is, what evidence can be required on this head? The present holders of the public securities have settled their accounts long since, or rather the public settled them for them as they pleased, and given them notes for the balance. If this kind of evidence is to be rejected, what kind of evidence is to be admitted, and to stand

finally uncontroverted? What confidence is to be placed in a new settlement, more than has been placed in the old one? Will not the new promise be equally subject to future violations? The paper money issued in 1775 and 1776, and the notes issued for money hired in 1776 and 1777, were all, except the six per cent. notes, made a tender in all cases—yet they were afterwards, in fact, reduced by a scale of depreciation.

The notes ordered in May, 1778, for the State money to be taken out of circulation, were ordered to be reduced by the scale, in November, 1782. All the State debts for paper money before May 1, 1781, were ordered to be consolidated by the scale in June term, 1782.

In October, 1782, an order was passed, for reducing by the scale all the four per cent. notes, agreeable to the date on which the last of them were issued. It is useless to enter into a detail of all the various shapes into which these debts have been thrown; suffice it to say, that after issuing money and notes, made a tender in all cases, they have been reduced to other notes again, by the scale, from time to time, at the pleasure of the public; and now, at this late day, almost five years after the last settlement, the creditors of the public are told, that their notes must be over-haled, and again reduced—and your Committee cannot learn, that it is even pretended, that the present General Assembly are in possession of any new evidence, light or discovery, on the subject, not as fully laid before the General Assembly in October and November, 1782. What then is the amount of the reasons for this over-haling? only that the present General Assembly differ in opinion from the General Assembly of October, 1782.

And what would be the consequence, if all other business, once properly and legally finished and concluded, should be thus liable to a re-examination and over-haling, at all future times, only because the members for the time being should differ in opinion from those who had gone before them? Will not this precedent establish a rule to undo the present doings, and keep all things forever afloat?

From the very severe pressure of the late war on these parts of the country, the citizens of this State necessarily furnished very large and essential supplies towards the common cause.

Provisions of all kinds, food and clothing, as well as military stores, in great abundance, were taken from some of the inhabitants, before and during the time of the late-bill, at very moderate prices—others voluntarily furnished the public with vessel-loads at a time, to the amount of great part of their substance, at reasonable rates; some of them indeed out of good-will, and others to prevent their being taken by force. Many lent their money, but not on their own terms. In every instance the public made one half, and in many, the whole of the bargain; and afterwards too liquidated the very notes they gave in payment. The evidences of all this property now exist in the State securities, in the hands of individuals. As these supplies were chiefly for the common cause, they are charged to the United States, and form part of this State's claims against the Union.

Can it then be right for the State to demand a credit of the Union for these supplies and services, at the rate they were taken from individuals, and at the same time to refuse to pay those same individuals therefor at that rate? Would not a clear profit be made in this way to the State, out of individuals, as really and truly as if the State should take away a man's oxen from him at 40 dollars, and charge that sum to the United States, and afterwards reduce the note given for the oxen, (suppose to 20 dollars, or to any smaller sum)? In short, it does not appear to your Committee how this State can, in equity and good conscience, attempt to charge the Union with any greater sums expended, than the real and substantial value of what the State finally pays to individuals on account of those same expenses.

If indeed a doubt is suggested, whether the public really received the value in the first instance, let that be fully and fairly enquired into; and if any mistake or fraud shall be found, let it be rectified in the security held by the individual; and let it also, at the same time, be set right in the State's charge therefor against the United States: This justice may require, and the latter no less than the former; for good faith, and fair treatment, is as much due to our sister States, in a final settlement with them, as it is to individuals.

After this point shall be once settled, that the public have received the value, there remains no further subject of enquiry.—The debt is acknowledged, and the

public have nothing to do with the security but to pay it; from that moment it becomes private property, and inviolable. It may be a subject of commerce. It may pass at par, or under par. It may be sold, or given away. But when produced at the Treasury, and payment demanded, it will speak for itself.—It is a maxim well known, that no man shall take advantage of his own wrong—and for the same reason no State shall.—It will be readily allowed, that the only reason that State securities have passed at a discount, is the failure of payment. A greater failure of payment would still reduce them to a greater discount: And an absolute resolution never to make any payment at all, might annihilate them. Suppose such a resolution to pass, and the public securities to be considered and to pass for a time as waste paper, would the debt be thereby fully extinguished? Would it be fairly paid off? This, indeed, would be a short and easy, as well as a new way, to get out of debt; but would it not be a very wrong thing to pass such a resolution, and as wrong afterwards to take advantage of it? If so, it must be proportionably wrong to fail in payment, so as to reduce the securities to a discount, and then to take advantage of that discount.

At any rate, your Committee are assured, that, in such a case, the whole is due from the public, and if it is not to be paid to the present holders, it ought to be paid to those unfortunate persons, who from necessity parted with the evidence of their claims at a discount.

Your Committee find that an attempt is made to discriminate the notes issued for the four per cent. notes from the other State securities, and that on this ground that they passed for a time at a discount. And it is even proposed to reduce them to forty for one, because of their having been at a certain time seen in company with Continental money.

On this subject your Committee remark,
1. That these notes were, when first issued, a tender in all cases. If any faith is to be given to paper, so issued, they have all that in their favour.

2. In the act of May, 1778, for calling in all the State paper, no mention is made of these notes. They were not, therefore, considered on the foot of paper money only, but as securities of an higher nature.

3. They were also discriminated from the current paper money, and ordered not to be received in payment of taxes; and so, in this respect, on a footing with other State notes.

4. By the resolution of October, 1782, the Treasurer is ordered to reduce them to their just value by the scale, in specie, reckoned from the date of the last issued. On this occasion, great consideration and debate was had on this subject, and every possible light held out; so that, in the opinion of your Committee, the present Assembly cannot shake that resolution, without a great and manifest breach of public faith; which will operate to the great injury of all such persons as may have been interested in that kind of notes, either as original holders or as purchasers, since that period. For by that act all persons had a right to consider the consolidated notes, issued for the four per cent. on a footing every way equal to the other State notes—and if that is now to be ripped up and set aside, many persons will have reason to complain, that they have been led into a snare, and greatly injured, by that solemn act of government.

5. In the sales of estates, the property of government, long since the consolidation of the four per cent. notes, specie, or any kind of State notes, were made receivable in payment. Here is a second establishment of these consolidated notes on a footing with all other State notes, and in consequence some of them were actually paid into the Treasury for these estates, in common with other State securities. Can it therefore be right to put a less value on those which remain outstanding, than others have been already received for at the Treasury? If so, ought not those payments also to be over-haled, and the purchasers of such estates obliged to make up the loss on such notes, by the same scale which is to be applied to others?

6. If these notes having passed at a certain time for less than their value is a sufficient reason for reducing them, the same reason will apply now as forcible to all other State notes, none of which will now pass for more than one-third of their nominal value; and they do, in fact, pass daily for less; and therefore, on the same grounds, ought to undergo the operation of another scaling.—But if the passing value of notes on interest is to be established as their just and true value, your Committee cannot avoid asking, why shall not the same rule

A QUIET CONSCIENCE.

CL OSE thine eyes, and sleep secure;
Thy soul is safe, thy body sure;
He who guards thee, he who keeps,
Never slumbers, never sleeps.

A quiet Conscience in the breast
Has only peace, has only rest:
The music and the mirth of Kings
Are out of tune, unless the songs:
Then close thine eyes in peace, and sleep secure:
No sleep so sweet as thine, no rest so sure.

From the WORCESTER MAGAZINE.
To the FARMERS.

GENTLEMEN,

Please to suffer me to communicate unto you the following,
which exhibits how you may raise FLAX on old
ground.

LET your land run over with grass, until the
month of June; then plow it in, and dung the
ground with sheep's dung, or yard your sheep upon
it; plow it eight or nine times more before winter;
early in the succeeding spring plow it three times
more, and at the last time plow in your seed with
some ashes, if you have any; roll a roller over the
ground, to beat it down hard and make it smooth.

To impregnate the ground with nitrous salts, and
generate proper nourishment for the growth of
the flax, let the plowing be done early in the morn-
ing before the dew is off. If you let the plow go
after that time, the nitrous particles will fly off by
the exhalations of the sun. Wet land, where the
water stands in the spring, or after a heavy rain, ought
not to be plowed until it is dry.

The plowing of the land often prevents the gene-
ration of devouring insects. Part of the ground may
be sown as early as the season will admit, and the rest
at or near the full moon in May; you may expect
a good crop from both parts; but if one should fail,
you will, in all probability, have a good one from
the other. I am, gentlemen, your humble servant,
AGRICOLANUS.

April 1, 1787.

LONDON, Feb. 8.

On Thursday se'night died, in Lissey-street,
Dublin, — Barry, Esq; of the county of Cork.
—His death was occasioned by a total suppression
of all evacuation, though he was attended by most
of the faculty in Dublin.—Mr. Barry was sup-
posed to have been the fattest man ever seen in
Ireland, being 41 stone weight, the famous EDWARD
BRIGHT, of Malden, in Essex, being only two stone
heavier.—It was with difficulty sixteen men could
manage the corpse to the hearse, and the grave, in
committing him to which, the rope broke, and the
coffin tumbled in.—It is evident, that his won-
derful accumulation of flesh plugged up the viscera,
and destroyed the peristaltic motion of the intestines.

March 12. The following is an accurate state-
ment of the navy, made on the 23d ult. viz. 157
ships of the line, 19 frigates, 149 frigates, and 119
sloops of war.—The number of seamen, including
marines, borne on the books of the ships in com-
mission, was stated at 27,390 men.

March 13. Thursday died, at his seat in Devon-
shire, Samuel Graves, Esq; Admiral of the White
Squadron in the royal navy, who commanded in
Chief at North-America, at the breaking out of the
last war.

March 14. The French agents are the principal
purchasers of the shipping put up for sale, as well
in the river Thames as in other ports of England.
NEW-YORK, May 3.

The following are the most accurate returns we
have been able to collect of the Delegates appointed
by the several States to meet in General Convention,
at Philadelphia, on Monday the 14th instant, for the
purpose of revising and amending the Confederation of
the United States:

New-Hampshire.—The Hon. John Langdon, John
Sparhawk, Pierce Loné.

Massachusetts.—The Hon. Francis Dana, Elbridge
Gerry, Nathaniel Gorham, Rufus King, Caleb
Strong.

Connecticut.—Their Legislature are to meet in the
beginning of this month, at which time it is supposed
their Delegates will be appointed.

Rhode-Island.—Has not made any appointment as
yet.

New-York.—The Hon. Robert Yates, Alexander
Hamilton, John Lansing.

New-Jersey.—The Hon. David Brearly, William
Churchill Houston, William Patterson, John Neil-
son.

Pennsylvania.—His Excellency Doctor Franklin,
the Hon. Thomas Mifflin, Robert Morris, Thomas

Fitelimmans, George Clymer, Jared Ingersoll, James
Wilson, Gouverneur Morris.

Delaware.—The Hon. John Dickinson, George
Read, Gunning Bedford.

Maryland.—The Hon. Robert Hanson Harrison,
Charles Carroll, of Carrollton, James Mth Henry. The
other names we have not been able to obtain.

Virginia.—His Excellency General Washington,
Governor Randolph, the Hon. John Blair, James
Madison, George Mason, George Wyth, Richard
Henry Lee.

North-Carolina.—His Excellency Governor Cas-
well, the Hon. Alexander Martin, Wille Jones,
Richard Dobbs Spaight, William Richardson Davie.

South-Carolina.—The Hon. John Rutledge, Charles
Cotesworth Pinckney, Henry Laurens, Charles Pinck-
ney, Pierce Butler.

Georgia.—The Hon. William Few, Abraham Bald-
win, George Walton, William Pierce, William Houf-
toun, Nathaniel Pendleton.

State of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations.
In GENERAL ASSEMBLY, May Session, 1787.

IT is Voted and Resolved, That the Time for the
Holders of the Six per Cent. State Securities,
applying to the General-Treasury for receiving the
Quarter Part of the Amount of such Securities, be
continued until the Second Day of the next Session
of the General Assembly; the Time allowed by the
Act passed at the last Session being so short, that
many of the Inhabitants of the State had no Notice
thereof: And that this Resolve be published in the
Newport and Providence News-Papers.

A true Copy:

Witness, HENRY WARD, Sec'ry.

State of Rhode-Island, &c.

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

KNOW YE, That Joseph Coggeshall, of Mid-
dletown, in the County of Newport, Yeoman, on
the 11th Day of April inst. at my Dwelling-
House in Newport, lodged with me the Sum of
Forty-one Pounds, Lawful Money, due to John
Townsend, of Newport, in the County of Newport,
Cabinetmaker; in full of the Principal and Inter-
est of a Note of Hand, signed and made to the said
John Townsend, by the said Joseph Coggeshall and
his honoured Father Joshua Coggeshall, late of the
same Middletown, Yeoman, deceased, in his Life-
time: That the said Joseph hath in all Respects
complied with the Law respecting the Paper Cur-
rency; and that the said John Townsend hath been
legally and duly notified thereof.

Witness, PAUL MUMFORD, C. J. S. C.

Newport, April 23, 1787.

RAN AWAY from the Subscriber, on Tues-
day Morning last, an Apprentice Boy, named
JOSEPH SIMMONS, between 11 and 12 Years of
Age, is rather small, of a light Complexion, has a
down Look, short brown Hair, the Fingers of his
right Hand have been badly burnt, and a Part of
them gone; had on, when he went away, a new
Felt Hat, a Chocolate coloured woollen outside
Jacket, ragged Trowsers of the same Cloth, a coarse
Towcloth under Jacket, and a white Shirt.—Who-
ever will take up said Runaway, and return him to
his Master, shall receive a Reward of TWO SHIL-
LINGS PAPER MONEY, but NO CHARGES, paid by
SAMUEL THURBER, jun.

N. B. All Persons, who would wish to avoid the
Severity of the Law, are strictly forbid harbouring
said Apprentice.

Providence, May 11, 1787.

THE Managers of GLOUCESTER MEETING-
HOUSE LOTTERY give Notice, that they
expect to draw said Lottery in a short Time—A
few Tickets remain on Hand.—Those whose wish
to become Adventurers, may supply themselves by
applying to the Directors, or to Col. SIMON
THAYER, in Providence.

State of Rhode-Island, &c.

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

KNOW YE, That Joseph Lewis, of Exeter,
in the County of Washington, Yeoman, on the
14th Day of March, 1787, at my Dwelling-House
in North-Kingstown, lodged with me the Sum of
Seventeen Pounds Seven Shillings, Lawful Money,
due to Peleg Kinyon, of South-Kingstown, in the
County of Washington, Yeoman; in full for the
Principal and Interest of one certain promissory Note
of Hand, dated the third Day of December, 1785:
That the said Joseph Lewis hath in all Respects
complied with the Law respecting the Paper Cur-
rency; and that the said Peleg Kinyon hath been legally
and duly notified thereof.

Witness, S. GARDNER, J. C. P.

North-Kingtown, April 23, 1787.

Ten Dollars Reward.

RAN AWAY from a Sloop, lying at Clark
and Nightingale's Wharf, a NEGRO BOY,
about 17 Years of Age; had on, when he went
away, a small Felt Hat, with a Twine Thread run
round the Brim, and a blue thick Jacket, patched
with Canvas, a Check Shirt, patched Linen Trow-
sers, and a Pair of double-soled Shoes; he is about 5
Feet high, a thick set Fellow, has thick Lips, and
sometimes smiles when spoken to.—Whoever takes
up said Boy, and returns him to NATHAN GREENE,
in East-Greenwich, shall have Ten Silver Dollars
Reward, and necessary Charges.

CHARLES BRIGGS.

N. B. He has a forged Pass, in which is infer-
red the Name of Michael Mth Carter, and signed Capt.
Benedict Smith; his right Name is Thomas Bischoe.
Providence, May 11, 1787.

State of Rhode-Island, &c.

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

KNOW YE, That Caleb Carr, of West-
Greenwich, Yeoman, on the 22d Day of Feb-
ruary, 1787, at my Dwelling-House in Coventry,
lodged with me the Sum of Twenty-one Pounds,
Lawful Money; being the Principal and Interest
of a Sum of Money, due from the said Caleb Carr
to Pardon Tillinghast, of West-Greenwich, Yeoman,
on a Note: That the said Caleb Carr hath in all
Respects complied with the Law respecting the Pa-
per Currency; and that the said Pardon Tillinghast
hath been legally and duly notified thereof.

Witness, S. POTTER, J. C. P.

Coventry, April 1, 1787.

RAGS.

THE highest Price given for clean Cotton,
and Cotton and Linen RAGS, old
SAIL-CLOTH, and JUNK, by Major
JOHN SPURR, at the lower End of the
Town.—Likewise by Mr. BENJAMIN
GLADDING, opposite the Rev. Mr. Snow's
Meeting-House, on the West Side of the Bridge.
Providence, February 16, 1787.

State of Rhode-Island, &c.

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

KNOW YE, That John Whitford, of Exeter,
in the County of Washington, Yeoman, Town-
Treasurer of the Town of Exeter, in his said Ca-
pacity, on the 12th Day of March, 1787, at my Dwel-
ling-House in North-Kingstown, lodged with me
the Sum of Seventy-seven Pounds Four Shillings,
Lawful Money, due to Pardon Tillinghast, of said
Exeter, in the County of Washington, Yeoman; in
full for the Principal and Interest of three promissory
Notes of Hand given by the said John Whitford,
as Town-Treasurer of the Town of Exeter, to the
said Pardon Tillinghast: That the said John Whit-
ford, in his said Capacity, hath in all Respects
complied with the Law respecting the Paper Cur-
rency; and that the said Pardon Tillinghast hath been legally
and duly notified thereof.

Witness, S. GARDNER, J. C. P.

North-Kingtown, April 23, 1787.

State of Rhode-Island, &c.

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

KNOW YE, That Abel Gibbs, of Coventry,
Yeoman, on the 30th Day of August, 1786,
at my Dwelling-House in Coventry, lodged with
me the Sum of One Hundred and Four Pounds Ten
Shillings, Lawful Money; being the Principal and
Interest of a Sum of Money, due from the said Abel
Gibbs to Clark and Nightingale, of Providence,
Merchants, in Company, on two Notes: That the
said Abel Gibbs hath complied with the Law respect-
ing the Paper Currency; and that the said Clark
and Nightingale have been legally and duly notified
thereof.

Witness, S. POTTER, J. C. P.

Coventry, March 10, 1787.

State of Rhode-Island, &c.

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

KNOW YE, That William Slocum, of New-
port, in the County of Newport and State
aforesaid, Mariner, on the 26th Day of March, 1787,
at my Dwelling-House in Newport, lodged with
me the Sum of Ninety Pounds, Lawful Money; it
being in full of the Principal and Interest of a
Mortgage Deed, made to Gideon Sisson, of the same
Newport, Merchant, by the said William Slocum:
That the said William Slocum hath in all Respects
complied with the Law respecting the Paper Cur-
rency; and that the said Gideon Sisson hath been
legally and duly notified thereof.

Witness, PAUL MUMFORD, J. C. P.

Newport, April 8, 1787.