

Wilmington Centinel,

AND GENERAL ADVERTISER.

W E D N E S D A Y, NOVEMBER 5, 1788.

MISCELLANY.

From the New-York Daily Advertiser.

THE state of North-Carolina, by not adopting the new constitution, is lately become the subject of such criticism and censure. In this instance, having done what is supposed to be wrong, it is hardly admitted that ever she did any thing that was right. We are told, that during the war, her exertions were but trifling—that she had never contributed to the national expence—and that she now refuses to confederate, from a desire to promote the fraudulent tender of paper money. Charges against the unpopular are usually listened to with avidity, but happily none of their charges are well founded, however current they are in circulation. During the whole of the late war, whenever the neighbouring states were invaded, North-Carolina was sure to lend them assistance. We have seen in the course of one campaign, six or seven thousand men of the North-Carolina militia in one of the neighbouring states, or on their march to its relief; and she now counts three or four thousand of her citizens who fell a sacrifice in Georgia or South-Carolina, to their zeal for the welfare of the Union. We say nothing of her continental line, nor of those who fell within the state while the enemy pervaded every part of it.—Is it probable that such armies could be supported without money? Surely not.—But North-Carolina has uniformly paid and supported her own militia, though they were in the continental service, and she has furnished provisions to a considerable part of the continental troops in the southern armies. Who has paid for the vast stores that have been consumed by such bodies of armed men? In other states, commissioners have been appointed to settle the claims of individuals against the United States, and certificates for many a million, have been issued by these commissioners; but no such officers have had occasion to settle accounts in North-Carolina, because she has taken upon itself all the debts that were due to her citizens by the

Union, except a small balance that was due to her continental line—Those debts have amounted to several millions. Some part is already paid—there is a large balance remaining.—From the public accounts it would appear, that in the years 1782 and 1783, North-Carolina had paid nothing towards the specie requisitions, while South-Carolina had paid her quota, but this is a difference only in appearance—for the state last mentioned, has a specie credit for all supplies furnished the army from the beginning of 1782, while North-Carolina, that furnished large supplies, stands without any credit, because she has not brought up her accounts. For several years North-Carolina has been oppressed by discharging the debts she had assumed, to her continental line, and some others of her citizens; but she has lately begun to make effectual payments into the national treasury. On the last year she paid one hundred dollars in specie; and we are told, that she has another large payment ready to be made. It is true, that paper money has been issued in that state, and it was made a legal tender, but it is also true, that the general sense of the people is not in favour of fraudulent payments—on the contrary, it is common for juries, in actions of debt, to consider the depreciation, and assess damages accordingly. Has the virtue of their citizens done the same thing in other states, where bad money is a legal tender? But North-Carolina has not adopted the new constitution, and therefore it is alledged that she is anti-federal, and an enemy to good government. This is the last charge, and like the rest, it is worse founded than people are apt to believe. It is now generally agreed, that the new constitution will admit of some amendments; they have been pointed out. It will also admit of several explanations or alterations, by which it may be rendered yet a better system, but a safer one against the machinations of wicked men. Some of those explanations will doubtless be made by the general concurrence of the states, because they obviate powers which no man can advocate. But North-Carolina has pro-

posed one amendment, marked No. 7, which others of the states may not be disposed to make, and yet experience has taught her as well as Virginia, that such amendment is extremely proper. The state wishes to see the alterations made which she has pointed out, and for this very reason she wishes to see the new government commence. If eight states only had confederated, when the convention of North-Carolina sat, perhaps they ought to have made the ninth, but ten states had confederated, consequently the general system was secure.

The pause that North-Carolina has made can occasion no delay in the necessary measures, and no state, except herself, can be injured by it. We are told, indeed, that she ought to have adopted the new system, that so she might have assisted in making the proposed amendments; but she replies, that, if other states are seriously desirous to make any considerable and profitable alterations, they can do it in a short time without her assistance; but if they are dissembling—if they are about to drop the spirit of accommodation, and to hold by majorities what they have gained by accident, she is safest where she stands. A cautious politician has little faith. Let us attend to the Convention. On the 2d of August it was thus determined “Whereas this Convention has tho’t proper neither to ratify nor reject the Constitution proposed for the government of the United States; and as Congress will proceed to act under the said Constitution, ten states having ratified the same, and probably lay an impost on goods imported into the said ratifying states; Resolved, That it be recommended to the legislature of this state, that whenever Congress shall pass a law for collecting an impost in the states aforesaid, this state enact a law for collecting a similar impost on goods imported into this state, and appropriate the money arising therefrom to the use of Congress.” It was also on the same day “Resolved unanimously, That it be recommended to the general assembly to take effectual measures for the redemption of the paper currency, as speedily as may be consistent with the situation and cir-