

Wilmington Centinel,

AND GENERAL ADVERTISER.

W E D N E S D A Y, NOVEMBER 12, 1788.

For the CENTINEL.

Messrs. PRINTERS,

SUPPOSE a memorial, like the following, should be sent to the assembly, by a person in the situation therein described, I should think it would consider itself bound to redress the grievances there stated, either by applying a remedy to the particular case, or else (more consistent with dignity) by devising such a plan for the administration of justice, as to prevent our annals being stained in future with such representations.

To the honorable the General Assembly, &c. &c.

The Memorial of ———,
Humbly Sheweth,

THAT your memorialist is a native of the county of ———, possessed of a wife and nine children, with an estate of 400 acres of land and four working slaves—that in the year 1778 he became entitled to a property in slaves and specie of the value of two thousand five hundred pounds, at the lowest computation; which property having fallen into the hands of ———, is withheld by him from your memorialist on sundry pretences—that your memorialist, from his aversion to disputes, suffered himself to be amused for two years, by promises of an amicable settlement and other artifices of the said ———, when he found himself at length under the necessity of instituting a suit, to recover by the interposition of the law what he could not otherwise obtain—that he brought the said suit in the court of his county at the term of November, 1780, and obtained a verdict and judgment in his favour, at the term of August, 1783, from which the said ——— appealed to the superior court of the district, where the cause was continued to the term of ———, in the year 1786, when the judgment of the county court was fully confirmed, establishing your memorialist's right conclusively, as he hoped; but hoped, it seems, in vain; for the said ——— hath carried the suit into the court of equity, where it is now rested, and appears (from the quantity of business in course before it) likely to

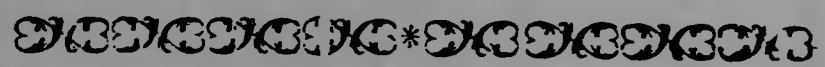
rest in peace during the remainder of his life—that your memorialist is a man of small property, whose constant attention is necessary to the support of his family, with too poor an income to support the charges he hath been drawn into, without the greatest distress to his affairs—that he hath with extreme difficulty, found means to sustain them and the loss of time, in attending at eleven county and ten superior courts upon this suit, till at length he now finds himself utterly exhausted of all further resources for pursuing his just, and to him important claim, while in addition to the cruelty of his situation, he happens to be opposed to a crafty man, who at this time possessing property sufficient to enable him to discharge expences which overwhelm your memorialist, is universally believed to be so involved and declining in his circumstances, that unless justice is speedily obtained against him, he will be without effects wherefrom to procure it.

Whereupon, the whole taken together, the condition of your memorialist is this:—He hath been ten years deprived of his property by a villain who diverts himself with his distresses; he hath sought redress at law for eight years, during which the food, cloathing, and education of his family have been sacrificed to the prosecution of it; and he is at length likely to be turned out of doors by the demands of his witnesses, with the expectation that he will, in some few years, be recompenced for all this, by hearing his competitor read the 40s. oath.

That your memorialist thus having reason to complain of an evil of the first magnitude existing in the government, viz. the amazing delay of justice, he is induced to apply with the greatest deference to your honourable body for relief in his distress, because it is from your wisdom and justice that every citizen has a right to expect good government. A plain labouring man, unversed in politics, he presumes not to attempt at pointing out the cause of this evil, but he represents to you, that he is an indisputable good citizen of the state—that he hath paid due allegiance to it, and performed all the duties of his station with alacrity, and is

therefore entitled to protection; that the chief article of the protection he claims, the great point for which men enter into society, and submit to its restraints, is the certainty for support against oppression, and redress for injuries, not dilatory distant redress, but that which is speedy and effectual. He acknowledges that justice is as attainable by him as by others; for he is not ignorant of the incredible number of honest families, who are pining in want, doubt, and wretchedness, from the effects of the mischief he complains of; but he is forced to apply to the legislature, because he hath sought for justice in the ordinary way and cannot acquire it; he hath not been denied it, but it is delayed, which for many years has, and for as many more may be to him, the same as a denial.

Your memorialist, therefore, having made his grievous situation known to you, and begging leave to remind you that it is only a single instance of similar calamities, so great and numerous as to have become a subject of general complaint, irremediable without your interposition; and considering that it is a common practice to apply to the legislature in such cases as require their assistance, even in concerns trifling to the last degree, when compared to this; and that the assembly pay due regard to such applications—he humbly prays that you will be pleased to take his case into immediate consideration, and grant such relief as to your wisdom shall seem proper—and your memorialist, &c.



Education.

IN order to render himself more extensively useful to Wilmington and its Vicinity,—the Reverend Mr. STEWART proposes opening School, as soon as a competent Number of Scholars offer. He will instruct the Youth that may be committed to his Care, in the learned Languages, the English, grammatically, and the principles of Religion, natural, and revealed.

Wilmington, Sept. 30th, 1788.