

Wilmington Centinel,

AND GENERAL ADVERTISER.

W E D N E S D A Y, DECEMBER 3, 1788.

For the CENTINEL

To the Members who composed the majority in the late Convention.

Gentlemen,

"THERE are certain primary truths, or first principles," says an elegant and enlightened writer, "upon which all subsequent reasonings must depend, which contain an internal evidence, and antecedent to all reflection, on combination, command the assent of the mind: where it produces not this effect, it must proceed, either from some defect in the organs of perception, or from the influence of some strong interest or passion."—This truly feasible Author, in illustrating the foregoing, enumerates a number of mathematical axioms, and then proceeds to mention some in ethics, and politics, as necessary to direct his subsequent reasonings.

In imitation of the above manly procedure, I will lay down the following political axiom, as it frequently presents itself for practice in the letter of the above sciences, and perhaps in the former—that human affairs may be so combined or circumstances that a deviation from our judgment, both individually and collectively in a legislative capacity, becomes necessary, just, and rational.

Under cover of this position, and the secondary one in the quote, I give me leave, Gentlemen, to unburthen a mind, oppressed by your conventional transactions, and still aggravated by your subsequent deportment. You see, Gentlemen, the above principle places your conduct in the most advantageous and admirable point of view possible for investigation.

In addressing you, Gentlemen, I shall speak to the following points.

First. Shew that the adoption of the Constitution would have been your duty, admitting your wisdom to have been superior to all the States that had gone before you in that matter.

Secondly. Examine the grounds and evidences, upon which you have been pleased to pay your abilities a compliment of such astonishing magnitude, then, if excuse the first, you fail to be supported by the examination in the second, I will

Thirdly, examine how the secondary position will fit your case; which is, a defect in the organs of perception, or the predominancy of interest or passion, which prevents the assent of the mind to primary truths: fourthly and lastly, throw out a few reflections which may arise from a consideration of the foregoing particulars. You see, gentlemen, the plan—you will please attend (for your own sake) the progress of its completion.

As to the first point. The great superiority of the ten states who had entered the union prior to the issue of your convention, is a consideration alone sufficient, to enable me to come up to my declaration under the first point; every other consideration is derived from this, and is immediately, or finally, under its government. A goodly number of those states, are greatly superior to North-Carolina, separately considered. What superior energy and decision must then attend their federal exertions? Again, the federal operations diffusing themselves so extensively and minutely, through all the internal transactions of the states, in a united capacity, and also through that reciprocal intercourse which must naturally exist among them, as separate and independent states; so that jarring interests, and clashing pursuits, with respect to us will necessarily ensue; in all which cases, the probability of our ascendancy, is, as but one to ten; (this you see is admitting matters as much to my disadvantage, or to your advantage, as they can possibly bear) from whence it may very clearly be inferred, that the examples of our imbecility and insignificance, would be in proportion as the importance of the Union exceeded us.

When power is at command, and interest in view, what will not be attempted?—Here let experience whisper.—Let the records of time come forth—The power of the Union cannot be disputed, and that we are an interesting object, is not a wild supposition (as yourselves, Gentlemen, in the Convention appeared to be possessed of very exalted ideas of our importance) and that the primary object of the Union, comprehensively speaking, is greatness, or national importance, are positions, Gentlemen, you dare not deny; does it not then follow, that whatever obstructs its advances towards the desired object, will be removed? But it may be objected, that we will not interfere with the towering views of the confederacy. Will we have no need of alliances? Will we not wish to dip into commercial schemes? Shall we have no territorial disputes? Or if they should happen, shall they always issue to our honour and satisfaction? Yes Gentlemen, these things will inevitably ensue, and over which the Union will in every instance prevail. Is it morally possible the Union would foster and cherish a sovereign and independent State in their very bosom? Would it not be a distracted and unprecedented policy, considered in every point of view? Is it not infinitely more likely the Union would find it both for its honour and interest, to swallow up our political existence? Dreadful then, must be the Federal Constitution indeed! Which, rather than adopt, you chose to throw matters into such a predicament, that the dissolution of our existence, as an independent State, became morally certain.

If the liberties of America, were the destined immolation for that star of ambition, raised by the Philadelphia Convention, and the State of North-Carolina with a sagacity peculiar to itself, had discovered the illusive scheme; even then Gentlemen, I say the adoption of the Constitution would have been your duty, consistent with every idea of true policy: this will appear in a moment from the superiority of the Union—from the counter-progress of our several pursuits—from the certainty of our sinking in every dispute, which particulars I have already clearly demonstrated. There can no possible answer be given to this, unless you meant to suffer martyrdom for your cause; and then you would not have had the honour to have been the first that had died for the cause of ignorance. Upon your own principles, gentlemen, you must admit it to be the necessary policy of Congress, when put in motion, to stop the mouths of those who had so early discovered their ambitious views, and proclaimed their wickedness to the world, thereby implying an invitation to all who might have a sufficiency of penetration to see as you did, to combine against them. If you will allow them consistency, you admit this.

On the other hand, if you had adopted the constitution, you would have had the fairest prospect, in a constitutional way, of opening the eyes of your intimated brethren in the other States, and of exposing the wickedness of the Philadelphia Convention. Strength of reasoning, as well as eloquence, is generally united with that wonderful forecast and sagacity of which you have given the world an unparalleled specimen, and our existence as a State, would have been in as good a situation as the rest; besides, as there were a number of States who wished for amendments, similar it seems to those you desired (the amendments of the most powerful State I believe you substituted in the gross) what might you not have done, when united with the first State in political sentiments, when to their abilities (of which your substitution is a virtual acknowledgment) you had united your sagacity and courage? The other States, also, craving amendments, would have followed at a proper distance; so that you had a moral certainty of having your wishes answered, and a federal government in existence at the same time; but your rejection has absolutely deprived you of those advantages, and your friends of your assistance.

(To be continued.)

JOHN BURGWIN, HAS FOR SALE, At his Store, in Wilmington, A few BALES of Coarse Cloths,

Suitable for the approaching Season,
—Among which are—

BLUE strouds, frize, and fearnoughts.—Also, a package or two of printed linsens and cottons, white, coloured, and checked handkerchiefs, tapes, &c. which he will dispose of by the bale or package, at a low advance for bills or hard money.

He has also for sale, by retail,

A few of White's patent mill saws, improved—salt, rum, molasses, coarse cloths and linsens, men's, women's, and boy's hats, men's and women's shoes, saddles and saddlery, carpenter's tools, iron tea kettles, cotton cards, sets of breakfast china, and one set of very neat plates, dishes, tureens, &c. edged with blue, stone bottles and jugs, with many other articles.

Mr. Burgwin, once more, (and for the last time) Requests ALL PERSONS indebted to him, or to Charles Jewkes & Co. to make immediate payment to him; or to settle their arrearages by new obligations:—Other-wise he will be under the disagreeable necessity of putting their Bonds, Notes, and Accounts in suit, without further notice.

He will sell all his Lands in Bladen and Cumberland Counties, at private sale, and receive Produce in Payment on such credit as may be agreed on.

Wilmington, October 21, 1788.

An EXCELLENT
GUITTAR,
For SALE,
Enquire of the Printers.

The Subscriber has for SALE,
Two Saw-Mills,

On Blunt's Creek, within three quarters of a mile of Fayette Ville. The Mills are new and in excellent order, and on a never-failing stream.

A L S O,

About 2000 acres of well-timbered land, contiguous to the Mills, and several acres of rice and meadow ground.

Cash, negroes, produce, or goods, will be received in payment.

For terms please apply to Mr. Joshua Potts, Wilmington, Mr. Alexander McIver, at Fayette-Ville, or the subscriber in Chatham County.

JAMES PATERSON.

Nov. 12, 1788.

34—37

W A N T E D immediately,
About 7000 Dollars

In Pierce's Final Settlements, for which good Indigo will be given.

Apply to LEWIS DUPRE,
(Brunswick County,
Or CORNELIUS DUPRE
Sept. 15. (Little River.

Bowen & Howard,
Have for Sale at their Office, near the Market,

W RITING Paper, by the Ream or single Quire,
Blank Account Books,
The Chorister's Companion, containing the necessary Rules of Psalmody, a choice collection of Psalm Tunes, Hymns, and Anthems.—Also, The American Singing-Book, containing the Rules of Psalmody, and a large number of excellent Psalm-Tunes.

Wrapping Paper,
Paste Board, for Bonnets,
Sealing Wax,
Ink-Powder,
Ink-Stands, and
Blanks of all Kinds.