

NORTH-CAROLINA GAZETTE.

With the latest ADVICES, FOREIGN and DOMESTIC.

SEMPER PRO LIBERTATE, ET BONO PUBLICO.

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My Lucubrations have been perused. Spect. No. 78.

Mr. DAVIS,

AS you favoured the Carolina Planter with a place in your last gazette, and find the generality of your readers this way approve of the subject, it encourages me once more with your further indulgence, to offer the public a few more of my evening's remarks.

The subject of this paper is some consideration on the sudden fall, and diminutive value of our currency, with some discriminations on Tories and Merchants, a set of people that in many respects can hardly be distinguished, and if they may be seperated in a few instances, they have hitherto been jointly pernicious to the public good and well being of the State.

The exigence of the times and natural consequence of war and repelling force by force, occasioned a large emission and rapid circulation of money, the great and sudden plenty must of consequence, in some degree, lessen its value. Soldiers to be lifted and entered into present pay and good quarters. Large bounties given, this made light come light go. The common people rather than follow a diligent employment, chose to go into the army, this raised the price of labour. The demand for ammunition, arms, provision, cloathing, blankets and tents, occasioned vast more sums to circulate among us, and every article in demand commanded something more than common price. But as the circulation of money was so general, the advantages and disadvantages for some time kept on a tollerable even balance; and our currency would have been of good use and reasonable value unto us till this day, but for our *Tories* and *Merchants*.

The unbelieving Tories and Dupes of arbitrary power, whose creed attribute omnipotency to Lord Howe, and pronounced the army under his command invincible, and that nothing was impossible for them to perform, that they had a mind to undertake, forgetting there is an over-ruling providence that rules and over-rules all human strength and contrivance. When independence was declared, and many of them as merchants and in other capacities were possessed and had the command of much money, and as they had bad hearts and cowardly spirits, they beleived, and no doubt many of them wished, we might not be able to support our independency. Therefore made it their diligent care and practice, to give any price for land, negroes, cattle or merchandize, any thing so that at any rate they might turn their money into some other property; have been apt to conceit sometimes it was for fear the Hessian troops would come upon us through Virginia, with their pockets full of tobacco and take all our square dollars from us and light their pipes with them.

The merchants in general without many exceptions, are fundamentally neither whigs nor tories, the object of their adoration is profit, and their short creed is "that gain is godliness." We may compare them to the Jews, as greedy hunters after gain, and that but few of them are real friends to any country. Some of them no doubt were well wishers to the independency. Some lukewarm, and many against it from tory principles, but generally averse to the resistance and opposition made to the arbitrary, and unprecedented mandates of Britain, because the nature of the contest necessarily for a time, would bar up the usual avenues and free intercourse of trade. Many of them upon tory principles, above described, considered our currency as the most precarious interest they could possess, and all, from their aptness to traffick, and coveting of gain, joined in laying out their money freely and without hesitation, for articles they knew would command a great profit, and advance of price.— Thus continued monopolising and advancing the price in buying and selling, untill they have reduced the credit of our currency to the lowest ebb, and made our money of little more value to us than waste paper. It has been a common and just remark among many people for a long time, when they heard of the arrival of one or more vessels with salt, some metasses, &c. that

we should soon hear that the price of those articles would be advanced.

It is through the means and malignant disposition of the tories, our proceedings and intentions as far as they knew was regularly conveyed to the enemies of men's just rights. It has been the tories that poisoned the minds of the common people, and others of weak intellects, filled their thoughts with frightful apprehension and dread of the sovereign power and irresistible prowess, of Lord Howe with his army; teaching the people the danger of being just to themselves. That to insist upon maintaining our rights as free men, was a fundamental error in the human species; that to think for ourselves, or indulge the thoughts of independency, was a crime of the deepest die. It has been the tories, and avaritious people, that occasioned all the confusion that has hitherto been among us, and made the sensible and disinterested part of Europe wonder there could be the least disunion among ourselves. It has been the tories and merchants, depreciating our money, as already described, that this state is brought on the verge of ruin, without suffering the common violence of war; they have been of far more damage to us, than our avowed and open enemies, that spread the terror of their warlike weapons, in the open field. However, some merchants are whigs in principles, in a private capacity, good neighbours, and, divested of their calling, worthy of esteem, but I must neither apologize nor palliate much. I am fully sensible, from an intimate and general knowledge of their disposition (though I have known one that would not, or, if he knew it, carry on trade to the prejudice of the public) that I can venture to say, and refer to the judgement of the people, if there are many among us at this time, but would, if they had it in their power, purchase and export any quantity of provision out of the country, though the sure consequence would be the starving of thousands among ourselves, and a great part of those articles, the support of life, must necessarily without almost a miracle, fall into the hands of our enemies. Indeed by their avaritious practices, provision is come to so high a price, that few will be able to purchase any besides themselves, the consequence is easily foreseen, and will be sensibly felt by the most short sighted persons, before the expiration of many months. I wish I could lay down my pen and quit the subject without observing, as I think I ought, that by the covetous disposition of merchants, so much salt has been frequently laid up, with a view of making profit by felling some of that necessary article in kind, but more particular with intentions of curing provision and shipping the same out of the country. In short, it is owing to avarice, monopoly and spirit of extortion, that the most valuable and necessary article salt, as well as many other useful things, bear so high a price, and do not circulate more freely and general among the people at a much lower rate. *Sequidem pecunie amor est radix omnium malorum.*

If my observations are judged to be right, it is the province of the legislature and in their power alone, to attempt a relief as far as the nature of things and circumstances will admit.— A perfect cure of such deep-rooted evils, must be the work of time, and will require sound judgement, honesty and assiduity, without respect to persons. But I presume that some palliatives ought quickly to be administered, else the body politick will fall into a delirium, that will be followed by violent convulsions. A few more observations upon merchants and merchandizing, and I will conclude.

The Carthaginians provided different residences for merchants, and would not suffer them to live in common with their other citizens. The Grecians did not receive them within their walls; more similar instances I could mention. There was an ancient law among many common wealths, that no merchant should be a magistrate, or admitted into the senate or council. And merchandizing has been condemned by canonical decrees, and utterly forbid by many of the antient fathers, I could mention, but St. Chrystom's words are to the following effect.

Let no christian be a merchant, and if he will be so let him be cast out of the church.

I am, &c.

A CAROLINA PLANTER.