

The act for prohibiting vendues not having had the intended effect, but the evil so justly complained of daily increasing, it appears necessary to make trial of some other remedy; and as a plentiful supply of goods is the surest way of reducing the price of them, I submit to your judgment, whether it may not be expedient to establish a board of commerce for importing such merchandize as may be wanted for the indian trade, and other public services, and for accommodating the inhabitants of this state who are in low or middling circumstances, with the articles most requisite for their own consumption, at reasonable rates.

*Honourable gentlemen of the legislative council,*

*Mr. Speaker and gentlemen of the general assembly,*

A well disciplined militia is so essential to the preservation of freedom, that I cannot avoid earnestly exhorting you to perfect a law which may render our militia alone equal to the defence of the state; and I hope that your zealous and laudable attachment to the liberties of the people, will lead you to such alterations of the militia act as the situation of our affairs requires: True it is, that we may boast of many men amongst us, whose disposition would make a law unnecessary for them, but where is the country in which some untoward persons will not be found? for those it is indispensable. Believe me, a good militia will preserve your liberties; they may be lost without it; nor should the fear of enacting a bad law, prevent the attempting a good one: Let the act be of short duration; a little experience will prove it; if found injurious or oppressive, let it never be revived.

The subjecting vagrants to serve in the continental regiments, might reclaim the idle and dissolute, and make those useful to the states who are now a burthen and disgrace to the community.

Several laws having expired, and others being near expiring, you will consider which of them should be revived and continued, and whether some passed since our late revolution, may not be amended.

It is evident, that during the continuance of the present troubles, extraordinary powers must be exercised by the executive authority in every state; but it is most constitutional that the legislative should determine what are fit to be entrusted to the executive, as it is safer for the people that their representatives should vest such by a temporary law, than that the executive should exercise any under the sanction of necessity only.

Jan. 9, 1778.

JOHN RUTLEDGE.

To his Excellency JOHN RUTLEDGE, Esquire, president and commander in chief, of the state of South Carolina:

The ADDRESS of the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL of the said STATE.

*May it please your Excellency,*

WE the legislative council return your Excellency our thanks for your speech delivered to both houses at the opening of this session.

Fully impressed with a sense of the very momentous and weighty objects therein recommended for our deliberation, we assure your Excellency, that we will proceed on them with that zeal, candour and assiduity, which matters of such real concernment necessarily demand, and from the result of which, we fervently hope, many solid and permanent advantages may flow to the public weal.

We heartily concur with your Excellency on the expediency of forming a well regulated militia, so very essential to the preservation of freedom, and so truly conducive to the happiness and glory of a commonwealth. History does not furnish an instance wherein the strenuous exertions of a people were more pressing for so wise an establishment, than the present glorious contest affords; a contest, which, we trust, will display to posterity the most splendid examples of magnanimity and heroism that ever distinguished human nature.—Thus persuaded and sensible of the adequateness of the present militia-law to the exigency of our affairs, we will readily unite with the general Assembly in endeavouring to model and perfect such a law, and in every other measure that will tend most effectually to the defence and security of the State, and to the perpetual support of its liberty and independency.

*In the legislative council the 14th day of Jan. 1778.*

*By order of the house,*

HUGH RUTLEDGE, Speaker.

HIS EXCELLENCY'S ANSWER.

*Honourable gentlemen,*

YOUR assurances give great reason to expect that those advantages to the public weal, which you hope for, will result from your deliberations: An address which affords such a prospect, cannot therefore fail of being very acceptable to me.

Jan. 14.

J. RUTLEDGE.

To his Excellency JOHN RUTLEDGE, Esquire, president and commander in chief in and over the state of South Carolina;

The ADDRESS of the GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

*May it please your Excellency,*

IT was with great pleasure the general Assembly received your Excellency's speech at the opening of this session, containing matters of transcendent moment, demonstrating your attention to, and solicitude for, the welfare of the people over whom you are appointed to preside. We thank your Excellency for your expressions of satisfaction in meeting us at this season, when our private concerns admit of our paying due attention to the public business; indeed, the climate and local circumstances declare this to be the most eligible season in the year for the dispatch of the weighty affairs of legislation; and we hope the time will not be misapplied.

The articles of confederation between the United States of America, well demand our early and most serious attention: The subject is stupendously important, and ought to be maturely digested, equally weighed, and critically examined. We shall enter upon the consideration of this business with minds perfectly disposed to a confederated union of the states, upon a principle of equality, delegating only as much of our sovereignty as may be absolutely necessary for the general safety.

The spirit and vigour which our constituents have ever displayed, marking them for a people tenacious of their rights, cannot but instruct us to follow their example, and stimulate us to adopt and pursue such measures as we shall think most likely to establish their independence—the only preliminary that we will ever hear of, leading to a pacification with Great Britain. We are resolved to hazard, and if need be, to lose our all in the prosecution of our endeavour, no less laudable than just, to secure ourselves from the British domination, which as cruelly as ungratefully operated to our ruin; and we shall therefore most cheerfully grant every aid in our power for the service of the United States. Without doubt, the sum asked of us by Congress is more than our proportion of the five millions required of the continent; but we mean to strain every nerve in support of the war; and will leave the due settlement of our proper quota to a time of more tranquility.

Your Excellency may rest assured, that we shall anxiously endeavour to support the public credit at home and abroad, and representation in Congress—to relieve the people from the high rates at which necessary foreign goods are sold—to procure supplies for carrying on the indian trade—to place the militia upon the most serviceable footing—to disburden the state of vagrants, and yet to render such men of some advantage to the community—to revive and continue wholesome laws—and to vest the executive government in this time of imminent danger, with such powers as may tend to enable it to frustrate the machinations of secret traitors, to repel the attacks of the open enemy, and to preserve the state.

*By order of the house,*

Jan. 14.

THOMAS BEE, Speaker.

HIS EXCELLENCY'S ANSWER.

*Mr. Speaker and gentlemen,*

I AM much pleased at your favourable reception of my recommendations, and give you my most hearty thanks for this address, as it is a further demonstration of what indeed has been always fully evinced of your regard for the welfare of the people over whom I have the honour to preside.

Jan. 14.

J. RUTLEDGE.

ON Thursday the 15th instant, a little after 4 o'clock in the morning, a fire was discovered in the bake-house of one Moore, at the north end of union street. The alarm being immediately given, a number of people with the engines, &c. was soon assembled, but the wind blowing fresh at N. N. E. drove the flames with an impetuosity that could not be checked. The fire was so rapid in its progress, that before twelve o'clock it had entirely destroyed all Union street; the south side of Queen street from Mrs. Doyley's house to the bay—greatest part of Chalmers's alley—all the bay, excepting fifteen houses, from Queen street to Granville's Bastion—the north side of broad street from Mr. Thomas Smith's house to the bay; the south side of the same from Mr. Sarrazin's to Mr. Guerard's house—all Gadson's alley—Elliott street excepting two houses—Bedon's alley—the east side of Church street from broad street to Stoll's alley, excepting 5 tenements—and the whole of Tradd street to the eastward of Church street. The crackling of the flames, the dreadful columns of smoke, bearing with them myriads of large fiery flakes, which fell in all parts of the town lying in the direction of the wind; the roar of explosions, the crash of falling houses, the shrieks of the unhappy sufferers, the horror painted in every countenance, the confusion apparent every where, and detecting the infamous wretches (and they were not a few) who availed themselves of the opportunity to pilfer, altogether formed one of the most dismal scenes of woe and distress that can possibly be conceived. Much praise is due to the officers and soldiers quartered in town, who afforded every assistance in their power to the inhabitants; and it was chiefly owing to their extraordinary exertions, that the houses at the south