

NORTH-CAROLINA GAZETTE.

With the latest ADVICES, FOREIGN and DOMESTIC.

SEMPER PRO LIBERTATE, ET BONO PUBLICO.

ADDRESS of the CONGRESS to the INHABITANTS of
the UNITED STATES of AMERICA

FRIENDS AND COUNTRYMEN,

THREE years have now passed away since the commencement of the present war; a war without parallel in the annals of mankind. It hath displayed a spectacle the most solemn that can possibly be exhibited. On one side, we behold fraud and violence labouring in the service of despotism; on the other, virtue and fortitude supporting and establishing the rights of human nature.

You cannot but remember how reluctantly we were dragged into this arduous contest, and how repeatedly, with the earnestness of humble intreaty, we supplicated a redress of our grievances from him who ought to have been the father of his people. In vain did we implore his protection; in vain appeal to the justice, the generosity of Englishmen, of men who had been the guardians, the assertors, and vindicators of liberty, through a succession of ages; men who, with their swords, had established the firm barrier of freedom, and cemented it with the blood of heroes. Every effort was vain. For, even whilst we were prostrated at the foot of the throne, that fatal blow was struck which hath separated us forever. Thus spurned, contemned, and insulted, thus driven by our enemies into measures which our souls abhorred, we made a solemn appeal to the tribunal of unerring wisdom and justice, to that ALMIGHTY RULER OF PRINCES whose kingdom is over all.

We were then quite defenceless; without arms, without ammunition, without cloathing, without ships, without money, without officers skilled in war, with no other reliance but the bravery of our people, and the justice of our cause. We had to contend with a nation great in arts and in arms, whose fleets covered the ocean, whose banners had waved in triumph through every quarter of the globe. However unequal this contest, our weakness was still farther increased by the enemies which America had nourished in her bosom. Thus exposed, on the one hand, to external force and internal divisions; on the other, to be compelled to drink of the bitter cup of slavery, and to go forrowing all our lives long; in this sad alternative, we chose the former. To this alternative we were reduced by men who, had they been animated by one spark of generosity, would have disdained to take such mean advantages of our situation; or had they paid the least regard to the rules of justice, would have considered with abhorrence a proposition to injure those who had faithfully fought their battles, and industriously contributed to rear the edifice of their glory.

But however great the injustice of our foes in commencing this war, it is by no means equal to the cruelty with which they have conducted it. The course of their armies is marked by rapine and devastation. Thousands, without distinction of age or sex, have been driven from their peaceful abodes to encounter the rigours of inclement seasons; and the face of Heaven hath been insulted by the wanton conflagration of defenceless towns. Their victories have been followed by the cool murder of men no longer able to resist; and those who escaped from the first act of carnage have been exposed, by cold, hunger, and nakedness, to wear out a miserable existence in the tedious hours of confinement, or to become the destroyers of their countrymen, of their friends, perhaps (dreadful ideal) of their parents or children.—Nor was this the out rageous barbarity of an individual, but a system of deliberate malice, stamped with the concurrence of the British legislature, and sanctioned with all the formalities of law. Nay, determined to dissolve the closest bonds of society, they have stimulated servants to slay their masters in the peaceful hour of domestic security; and, as if all this were insufficient to slake their thirst of blood, the blood of brothers, of unoffending brothers, they have excited the Indians against us, and a General who calls himself a christian, a follower of the merciful Jesus, hath dared to proclaim to all the world his intention of letting

loose against us whole hosts of savages, whose rule of warfare is promiscuous carnage, who rejoice to murder the infant smiling in its mother's arms, to inflict on their prisoners the most excruciating torments, and exhibit scenes of horror from which nature recoils.

Were it possible, they would have added to this terrible system, for they have offered the inhabitants of these states to be exported by their merchants to the sickly, baneful climes of India, there to perish; an offer not excepted of, merely from the impracticability of carrying it into execution.

Notwithstanding these great provocations, we have treated such of them as fell into our hands with tenderness, and studiously endeavoured to alleviate the afflictions of their captivity. This conduct we have pursued so far as to be by them stigmatized with cowardice, and by our friends with folly. But our dependence was not upon man; it was upon HIM who hath commanded us to love our enemies, and to render good for evil. And what can be more wonderful than the manner of our deliverances? When the means to prosecute the war have been wanting to us, have not our foes themselves been rendered instrumental in providing them? This hath been done in such a variety of instances, so peculiarly marked, almost by the direct interposition of Providence, that not to feel and acknowledge his protection would be the height of impious ingratitude.

At length that GOD OF BATTLES, in whom was our trust, hath conducted us through the paths of danger and distress to the thresholds of security. It hath now become morally certain, that if we have courage to persevere we shall establish our liberties and independence. The haughty prince who spurned us from his feet with contumely and disdain, and the parliament which proscribed us, now descend to offer terms of accommodation. Whilst in the full career of victory, they pulled off the mask, and avowed their intended despotism. But having lavished in vain the blood and treasure of their subjects in pursuit of this execrable purpose, they now endeavour to ensnare us with the insidious offers of peace. They would seduce you into a dependence, which necessarily, inevitably leads to the most humiliating slavery.—And do they believe that you will accept these fatal terms? Because you have suffered the distresses of war, do they suppose that you will basely lick the dust before the feet of your destroyers? Can there be an American so lost to the feelings which adorn human nature? To the generous pride, the elevation, the dignity of freedom? Is there a man who would not abhor a dependence upon those who have deluged his country in the blood of its inhabitants? We cannot suppose this; neither is it possible that they themselves can expect to make many converts. What, then, is their intention? Is it not to lull you with the fallacious hopes of peace, until they can assemble new armies to prosecute their nefarious designs? If this is not the case, why do they strain every nerve to levy men throughout their islands? Why do they meanly court each little tyrant of Europe to sell them his unhappy slaves? Why do they continue to embitter the minds of the savages against you? Surely this is not the way to conciliate the affections of America. Be not, therefore, deceived. You have still to expect one severe conflict. Your foreign alliances, tho' they secure your independence, cannot secure your country from desolation, your habitations from plunder, your wives from insult or violation, nor your children from butchery. Foiled in their principal design, you must expect to feel the rage of disappointed ambition. Arise, then; to your tents, and gird you for the battle. It is time to turn the head-long current of vengeance upon the head of the destroyer. They have filled up the measure of their abominations, and, like ripe fruit, must soon drop from the tree. Although much is done, yet much remains to do. Expect not peace whilst any corner of America is in possession of your foes. You must drive them away from this land of promise, a land flowing indeed with milk and honey. Your brethren at the extremities of the continent already implore your friendship and protection. It is your duty to grant their request. They