

NORTH-CAROLINA GAZETTE.

With the latest ADVICES, FOREIGN and DOMESTIC.

SEMPER PRO LIBERTATE, ET BONO PUBLICO.

TRENTON, June 3.

Extracts from his Excellency Governor LIVINGSTON'S MESSAGE to the General Assembly of the State of New-Jersey.

Continued from our last.

THERE are in this state many valuable and conscientious citizens, who are scrupulous of taking an oath in the present form, and with the English ceremony of kissing the book, which they consider as superstitious and a remnant of popery. Amidst that liberality of sentiment, and utter abhorrence of infringing upon the rights of conscience, which seems to mark the present era with peculiar lustre, can it be consistent with sound policy, or the generous spirit of our constitution, to debar an honest man, for a religious scruple, from the privileges of society, which the most profligate and abandoned are permitted to enjoy in the fullest latitude? I therefore flatter myself that our legislature will be so indulgent to this scrupulosity, which is at least innocent, as to authorize the magistrate, in the administration of an oath, to dispense with such part of it as may embarrass the conscience, and is beyond question altogether formal, and in no respect essential to its nature or solemnity.

I have farther to lay before you, gentlemen, a resolution of Congress of the 23d of April, recommending it to the legislatures of the several states to pass laws, or to the executive authority of each state, if invested with sufficient power, to issue proclamations, offering pardon, with such exceptions, and under such limitations and restrictions as they shall think expedient, to such of their inhabitants or subjects as have levied war against any of the states, or adhered to, aided or abetted the enemy, and shall surrender themselves to any civil or military officer of any of these states, and shall return to the state to which they may belong before the tenth day of June next, and recommending it to the good and faithful citizens of those states to receive such returning penitents with compassion and mercy, and to forgive and bury in oblivion their past failings and transgressions.

Though I think it my duty to submit this resolution to your serious consideration, because it is recommended by Congress, I do not think it my duty to recommend it to your approbation, because it appears to me both unequal and impolitic. It may, consistently with the profoundest veneration for that august assembly, be presumed that they are less acquainted with the particular circumstances and internal police of some of the states, than those who have had more favourable opportunities for that purpose. There seems, it is true, something so noble and magnanimous in proclaiming an unmerited amnesty to a number of disappointed criminals, submitting themselves to the mercy of their country; and there is in reality something so divine and christian in the forgiveness of injuries, that it may appear rather invidious to offer any thing in obstruction of the intended clemency. But as to the benevolent religion to which we are under the highest obligations to conform our conduct, tho' it forbids at all times, and in all cases, the indulgence of personal hatred and malevolence, it prohibits not any treatment of national enemies or municipal offenders, necessary to self-preservation and the general weal of society. And as to humanity, I could never persuade myself that it consisted in such lenity towards our adversaries, ei-

ther British or domestic, as was evidently productive of tenfold barbarity on their part, when such barbarity would probably have been prevented by our retaliating upon them the first perpetration, and consequently our apparent inhumanity, in particular instances, have certainly been humane in the final result. Alas! how many lives had been saved, and what a scene of inexpressible misery prevented, had we, from the beginning, treated our bosom-traitors with proper severity, and inflicted the law of retaliation upon an enemy too savage to be humanized by any other argument! As both political pardon and punishment ought to be regulated by political considerations, and must derive their expedience or impropriety from their salutary or pernicious influence upon the community, I cannot conceive what advantages are proposed by inviting to the embraces of their country a set of beings, from which any country, I should imagine, would esteem it a capital part of its felicity to remain forever at the remotest distance. It is not probable that those who deserted us to aid the most matchless connoisseurs in the refinements of cruelty (who have exhausted human ingenuity in their engines of torture) in introducing arbitrary power and all the horrors of slavery, and will only return from disappointment not from remorse, will ever make good subjects to a state founded in liberty, and inflexibly determined against every inroad of lawless dominion. The thirty one criminals lately convicted of the most flagrant treason, and who, by the gracious interposition of government, were, upon very hopeful signs of penitence, generously pardoned, and then, with hypocritical cheerfulness, enlisted in our service, have all, to a man, deserted to the enemy, and are again in arms against their native country, with the accumulated guilt of its being now not only the country that first gave them life, but which hath, after they had most notoriously forfeited it, mercifully rescued them from death. Whence it is probable that a real tory is by any human means absolutely inconvertible, having so entirely extinguished all the primitive virtue and patriotism natural to man, as not to leave a single spark to re-ignite the original flame.— It is indeed against all probability that men, arrived at the highest possible pitch of degeneracy, the preferring of tyranny to a free government, should, except by a miracle of omnipotence, be ever capable of one single virtuous impression. They have, by a kind of gigantic effort of villainy, astonished the whole world, even that of transcending, in the enormities of desolation and bloodshed, a race of murderers before unequalled, and without competitor. Were it not for these miscreants, we should have thought that for cool, deliberate cruelty, and unavailing, undecisive havoc, the sons of Britain were without parallel. But considering the education of the latter, which has familiarized them to the shedding of innocent blood, from the meer thirst of lucre, they have been excelled in their own peculiar and distinguishing excellence by this monstrous birth and off-scouring of America, who, in defiance of nature and of nurture, have not only by a reversed ambition chosen bondage before freedom, but waged an internal war against their dearest connections, for not making the like abhorred and abominable election. By them have numbers of our most useful and meritorious citizens been ambushed, hunted down, pillaged, unhoused, stolen or butchered. By them has the present contest, on the part of Britain,