

# Gazette of the United States.

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## THE TABLET.

No. LXXII.

"We often fancy or forge an effect, and then set ourselves as gravely as ridiculously to find out the cause."

FROM a curiosity which is innate in man, he is often hurried into researches after knowledge on such false grounds, as will betray him into deception, in proportion as he extends his pursuits. If we took nothing for granted, that had no foundation in fact; and cherished no principles, that were unsupported by reason, our enquiries would be much fewer, and our reflections much less tedious, than they are. The pleasure of delusion is so captivating that men reluctantly bear restraints upon the imagination. No period of time has been exempt from a variety of popular fallshoods and errors. Even those ages, that have been most celebrated for learning and philosophy, have been agitated with many frivolous disputes, which were deemed important from the characters who engaged in them, and from the vanity and zeal that were exhibited through the discussion. How many men, who have assumed the name of philosophers, have exhausted their lives in examining the absurdities and exploding the heresies of former sects or philosophers! How many persons, who would palm themselves upon the world as wise and learned men, have wasted their days in the most laborious studies, without discovering an important truth, or recommending a useful virtue!

It would be expecting too much from human nature, to hope there ever will be a period, when reason is not liable to be borne away on the wings of imagination, and when truth is not obscured by folly and prejudice. The superstition of past times, however, is so far dissipated by the progress of science, that the road to truth seems to be more open and practicable. We hear few stories of evil spirits; and the doctrine of witchcraft and enchantments is generally exploded. The mind, relieved from the fears and delusions that such imaginary evils suggest, is left more at liberty to contemplate upon things that have a real existence. This gives an advantage to our researches, by turning our attention to subjects that can be examined by rational evidence, and afford some degree of precision and certainty. Our thinking faculty cannot remain still and unexercised. It must have materials for contemplation; and it will create ideal and visionary images if actual ones are unknown or disregarded. For this reason, ignorant people fall a prey to false opinions, and to a thousand imaginary terrors, which an enlightened mind despises and rejects.

Curiosity has such power over the soul, as to make it often delight most in pursuing objects that are new and extraordinary. The uncertainty of the attainment sometimes pushes us further into the dark, and when we are involved in mystery, we do not suspect we have wandered from the truth, but that it is too incomprehensible to be understood. Thus many a man has perplexed his understanding in seeking causes, for what never existed, but in his disordered imagination. Every person should establish it as a rule, when he hears an assertion, to enquire as to the fact alledged, before he troubles himself to explore the cause of it. By this means, a considerable part of the investigations, which puzzle the human mind, would be avoided.

In a country where the people are generally so well educated, as they are in America, they will not easily be duped by magic tales, or deluded by enthusiastic rhapsodies. No pretender to any special communion with invisible beings, whether they be good or evil, can now draw any number of people into a delusion. Those who advance principles that admit not of some clear and rational explication, cannot expect to propagate them extensively; and those, who sport with hypotheses that appear extravagant, will be called to the bar of demonstration to receive their just sentence. Can we then estimate too highly the advantages of the many schools and universities which are interspersed over the various parts of our country? Can any pains or expences be deemed too great, for rearing up a generation of men who will be proof against the absurdities that have characterized past ages of ignorance and bigotry; and who will have knowledge to understand civil liberty, and spirit to defend it? Are any anticipations, too bold and extravagant, of the attainments that will probably result from a state of society so perfect, as that to which we are hastening? How many of the causes, that occasioned the wretchedness and downfall of antient nations, would have been removed, had they been blessed with the institutions, we now enjoy?

## FROM THE SALEM MERCURY.

DECEMBER 1.

THE PRESIDENT of the UNITED STATES, in his late tour through this State, was pleased to honor the town of Marblehead by a short visit. He was received at the entrance of the town, by the Selectmen, the Clergy of the town, and a numerous body of Citizens, and was conducted to the house of Mrs. Lee, where a collation had been provided, of which he very cheerfully partook, with the Gentlemen of his Suite, the Selectmen, Clergymen and other Gentlemen of the town.—The President, afterwards, with that attention by which he encourages every useful employment, visited one of the Fish Yards, and expressed his earnest wishes for the success of the industrious people of Marblehead. On this pleasing occasion, the Selectmen, in the name of the Inhabitants, had the honor to present their ADDRESS; of which, with the ANSWER of the President, we insert the following copies, but lately received.

## TO GEORGE WASHINGTON,

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

SIR,

YOUR presence has inspired the Inhabitants of Marblehead with the most unbounded joy; but they cannot express, as they would wish, their grateful sense of the honor done them on this occasion. The two visible decay and poverty of this town must be their excuse, that they have not offered to the illustrious Character who now visits them, a reception more answerable to his dignity, and more expressive of their own veneration.

The Blessings of Independence and a Republican Government must ever excite our gratitude and affection to so eminent a Supporter of the Public Liberty, whose wisdom and valor have so successfully defended the rights of his country. The establishment, by the United States, of a secure and efficient Government, gives us the pleasing expectation of the gradual revival of our Fishery and Commerce—objects of the industry, and principal means of the subsistence, of the Inhabitants of this place, for above a century previous to the late revolution. In the commencement of the contest with Great-Britain, this Town were early in their exertions in the common cause; and were not discouraged, when they foresaw that reverse of their situation, which the war has necessarily produced. The return of peace did not restore to us the former advantages of the Fishery, which hath remained under peculiar discouragements: and we have yet patiently to expect that attention of the General Government, which may remedy these evils, and which the subject may deserve, from its extensive importance to the commerce of the United States.

The present Government of the United States commands our ready submission, and inviolable attachment; and we deem it a peculiar felicity, that the highest dignity of that Government is so properly vested in you; in whom all America repose the most entire confidence; in whose administration, the world will admire the example of a Patriot-Ruler.

Sir, our anxiety for your health and long life is proportionate to our most ardent wishes for the prosperity of our country; and we are well assured, that you will ever partake in the happiness of that numerous people, over whom you preside. May the Divine Providence continue to favor your care and guidance of their most important public affairs, and reward your virtues, which have been so long employed in promoting the happiness of mankind.

In behalf of the Town of Marblehead, October 29, 1789.

Isaac Mansfield,  
Jonathan Glover,  
John Glover,  
Samuel Sewall,  
Samuel Hooper,  
Nath'l Lindsey,  
Burrel Devereux,  
Richard Harris,

Selectmen

To the INHABITANTS of the Town of MARBLEHEAD.

GENTLEMEN,

THE reception, with which you have been pleased to honor my arrival in Marblehead, and the sentiments of approbation, and attachment, which you have expressed of my conduct, and to my person, are too flattering and grateful not to be acknowledged with sincere thanks, and answered with unfeigned wishes for your prosperity.

Avoiding to dwell on the diminution of pleasure, which the mention of your impaired circumstances oc-

casious me, I desire to engage your thoughts on the pleasing prospect presented to all our interests, and particularly to our fishery, in the efficiency of our government, and the invigorated industry of our citizens.

Protected in the exercise of those means, which the beneficent Parent of mankind has furnished for their sustenance and comfort, the citizens of America, animated by virtuous enterprise, and actuated by due obedience to the laws and regulations of their government, may expect, with confidence, to enjoy every blessing which industry can promise, and national union may ensure.

Your attachment to the constitution of the United States is worthy of men, who fought and bled for freedom, and who know its value.

Your anxiety for my health, and your prayers for my happiness, are replied to with solicitude for your welfare, and earnest entreaty to the Author of Good for your felicity.

G. WASHINGTON.

## LONDON.

From WOODFALL'S DIARY.

IN the year 1767, the ships Indian Queen, Duke of York, Nancy, and Concord, of Bristol, the Edgar of Liverpool, and the Canterbury, of London, lay in old Calabar river.

It happened at this time that a quarrel subsisted between the principal inhabitants of Old Town and those of New Town, Old Calabar, which had originated in a jealousy respecting slaves. The Captains of the vessels now mentioned, united in sending several letters to the inhabitants of Old Town, but particularly to Ephraim Robin John, who was at that time a grandee, and a principal inhabitant of the place. The universal tenor of these letters was, that they were sorry that any jealousy or quarrel should subsist between the two parties; that if the inhabitants of Old Town would come on board, they would afford them security and protection; adding, at the same time, that their intention in inviting them was, that they might become mediators, and heal their disputes.

The inhabitants of Old Town, happy to find that their differences were likely to be reconciled, joyfully accepted the invitation. The three brothers of the grandee just mentioned, the eldest of whom was Ambo Robin John, first entered their canoe, attended by twenty-seven others, and being followed by nine canoes, directed their course to the Indian Queen. They were dispatched from thence the next morning to the Edgar, and afterwards to the Duke of York, on board of which they went, leaving their canoe and attendants by the side of the same vessel. In the mean time the people on board the other canoe, were either distributed on board, or lying close to the other ships.

This being the situation of the three brothers, and of the principal inhabitants of the place, the treachery now began to appear. The crew of the Duke of York, aided by the captain and mates, and armed with pistols and cutlasses, rushed into the cabin, with an intent to seize the persons of their three innocent and unsuspecting guests. The unhappy men, alarmed at this flagrant violation of the rights of hospitality, and struck with astonishment at the behavior of their supposed friends, attempted to escape through the cabin windows; but being wounded, were obliged to desist, and to submit to be put in irons.

In the same moment in which this atrocious attempt had been made, an order had been given to fire upon the canoe, that was then lying by the side of the Duke of York. The canoe soon filled and sunk, and the wretched attendants were seized, killed or drowned. Most of the other ships immediately followed the example. Great numbers were additionally killed and drowned on the occasion and others were swimming to the shore.

At this juncture, the inhabitants of New-Town, who had concealed themselves in the bushes by the water-side, and between whom and the commanders of the vessels the plan had been previously concerted, came out from their hiding places, and embarking in their canoes, made for such as were swimming from the fire of the ships. The ships boats also were instantly manned, and joined in the pursuit. They butchered the greatest part of those they caught. Many dead bodies were soon seen upon the sands, and others were floating during the whole of the day upon the water; and including those that were seized and carried off, and those that were drowned and killed, either by the firing of the ships, or the people of New-Town, three hundred were lost to the inhabitants of Old Town on that day.

The carnage, which I have been now describing was scarcely over, when a canoe, full of principal people of New Town, who had been the promoters