

Gazette of the United States.

PUBLISHED WEDNESDAYS AND SATURDAYS BY JOHN FENNO, No. 69, HIGH-STREET, BETWEEN SECOND AND THIRD STREETS, PHILADELPHIA.

[No. 43, of Vol. III.]

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1791.

[Whole No. 251.]

FROM THE NORTH-CAROLINA GAZETTE.

Mr. MARTIN,
 IN your paper of the 20th of August, No. 293, I observed a very erroneous representation of the tragical affair between Col. George Mitchell and Major Robert W. Snead. It has, no doubt, been misrepresented to you by some designing person, for the purpose of injuring the reputation of Major Snead, who appears by your paper, privately and intendedly to have murdered Col. Mitchell. Nothing is further from the truth. And as I was one of the jury of inquest that was summoned early next morning after that unhappy event, and being no partizan, and altogether divested of prejudice and partiality, I think it necessary, in order to do to that injured gentleman the justice he merits, to relate to you a circumstantial account of it, as it appeared to the jury, where a great number of witnesses gave evidence on oath, but none of which appeared against Major Snead, but on the contrary, every circumstance appeared so much in his favor, that several of Col. Mitchell's best and most intimate friends declared it as their opinion, that Major Snead was by no means blameable, and that they must themselves in his case have acted as he did.

It appeared, that Col. Mitchell and Major Snead were the candidates for representing the county of Onslow in the Senate, and that after the close of the poll, on Major Snead's being declared duly elected, Col. Mitchell appeared very much irritated with him, and had at times often expressed himself, that the one or the other should soon go out of the world, and had determined to fight a duel with him that night. His friends, to whom he had communicated his intention, endeavored to dissuade him from so rash a step, and if possible to get him away to go home—that his intention was altogether unknown to Major Snead or any of his friends—that shortly after, Col. Mitchell came into company where Major Snead was, who appeared (as he did during the whole time of election) to be at peace, cheerful and in good will with every one. Some of the company addressed themselves to Col. Mitchell and Major Snead, and requested them to be good friends in future, and to forget all former ill wills and animosities with each other. Major Snead declared he was very willing to do so on his part; that he did not bear Col. Mitchell the least ill will, but wished to be on good terms with him, and with every one else. Col. Mitchell replied he would be damned, if he made up with him, and asked Major Snead to walk with him, which he did—that in a very little time, Major Snead returned to the company, and Colonel Mitchell went to the house of a Mr. Farr, about an hundred yards distant, as afterwards appeared to borrow a pair of pistols of a Capt. John Cooke—that he soon returned with the pistols, but hid from the company as well as from Major Snead. Col. Mitchell then took hold of Major Snead by the arm, and asked him to walk with him (it then being about half after eight o'clock at night, the moon being three or four hours high) they walked about thirty or forty steps from the company, but still in the court yard, in an open place and not near any thicket, as is mentioned in your paper—that Col. Mitchell then produced a pair of pistols and offered one of them to Major Snead, at the same time declaring that he intended one of them should die that night. Major Snead told him, that if he was determined on that, they had better each of them provide a friend to see fair play between them. Col. Mitchell replied, "No, take it this instant or I will put you to death." Major Snead accordingly took it, and stepped back four or five steps, while Col. Mitchell did the same. Col. Mitchell called on Major Snead to fire, and repeated it with, "Fire, God damn you, fire," and continued advancing up, with his pistol presented—that Major Snead for his own safety was then obliged to fire, which he did, and Col. Mitchell nearly at the same time flung his pistol at Major Snead. He then clubbed his pistol, and advanced up to Major Snead, and struck him with it on his head several strokes, and Major Snead defended himself with his by clubbing it, and returning the blows in the same manner on the head of his antagonist, when they closed and Col. Mitchell fell; at that instant several of the company ran up. On examining the combatants it appeared that a pistol ball had passed at the lower part of Col. Mitchell's throat, grazing the upper part of his breast bone, through his throat and windpipe and out between his shoulders, and a small scar on the head, the skin only being broken. Major Snead's head was wounded; apparently from the blows he received from Col. Mitchell's pistol; his hair and face being all covered with blood.

The testimony that was given to the jury was by Col. Mitchell's friends, as not one of Major Snead's friends had the least knowledge or expectation of any thing of the kind between them till it was decided. But it seems that several of Col. Mitchell's friends knew of his intention, particularly the circumstance of his borrowing the pistols. Kilby Jones, Esq. the brother of Col. Mitchell, knew more of that unhappy affair than any person whatever, and it must be acknowledged, greatly to the honor of that gentleman, that he gave his testimony in the most candid and impartial manner. His testimony was the most in favor of Major Snead, as he had got to the ground where the duel was fought timely to see that he was not blameable for what had happened, and which by the circumstances as before related he declared to the jury.

Your giving this a place in your paper will oblige

A FRIEND TO TRUTH.

Onslow County, September 1st, 1791.

EXTRACT.

(From the Cumberland Gazette.)

SOME little time since I fell in company with a number of gentlemen, who, when I joined them, were closely engaged in canvassing the federal Constitution, and more particularly that part of it which has reference to the qualifications of Senators and Representatives. A young man, who appeared to take the lead, and conversed with much ease on the subject, gave it as his opinion, that there ought to have been a clause making a belief in the Christian Religion an essential qualification for a Senator or Representative—for this is a christian country, and none should have any hand in administering the general government but Christians. But would you exclude Jews, replied an elderly man?—Yes, certainly, continued the young man; for they are no Christians. And I, answered the old man, might upon the ground of your argument, say

that Christians, where there happened to be a majority of Jews, should in their turn have no hand in the administration of government, and merely because they were not Jews. This would be making a man's sect or denomination an essential mark of legislative abilities; which to me appears improper. But why, said the young man, should a Jew, whose religion is so different from christianity, wish to meddle with the government of Christians?—For two reasons, replied the old man—First, though it is true that Judaism and Christianity are in some respects very different, yet in those respects wherein civil government can with propriety expect to be benefited by any religion, they are pretty much the same. And secondly, civil government can extend to nothing but the life, liberty and property of its citizens; and as to these things, Jews are equally interested as Christians in a good administration of the government they live under. And, continued the old man, I cannot but look upon the liberality of the federal government, in this particular, the noblest feature in it. It hereby resembles the Deity, and declares to the world, that of every nation he that fears God and worketh righteousness, shall be protected by it, and equally partake of its benefits—whether they be Jews, Christians, Mahometans, Chinese, Indians, or Hindoos.

LONDON.

DOCTOR PRIESTLEY is arrived in London, not thinking it safe to remain in the neighbourhood of Birmingham. The following Letter from the Doctor appeared in one of the London Morning papers, and our readers will no doubt be glad to see it.

To the INHABITANTS of the TOWN of BIRMINGHAM.

My late Townsmen and Neighbours,

AFTER living with you eleven years, in which you had uniform experience of my peaceful behaviour, in my attention to the quiet studies of my profession, and those of philosophy, I was far from expecting the injuries which I and my friends have lately received from you. But you have been misled by hearing the Dissenters, and particularly the Unitarian Dissenters, continually railed at, as enemies to the present Government, in Church and State. You have been led to consider any injury done to us as a meritorious thing; and not having been better informed, the means were not attended to. When the object was right, you thought the means could not be wrong. By the discourses of your teachers, and the exclamations of your superiors in general, drinking confusion and damnation to us, (which is well known to have been their frequent practice) your bigotry has been excited to the highest pitch, and nothing having been said to you to moderate your passions, but every thing to inflame them; hence, without any consideration on your part, or on theirs, who ought to have known and taught you better—you were prepared for every species of outrage; thinking, that whatever you could do to spite and injure us, was for the support of Government, and especially the Church. In destroying us, you have been led to think you did God and your country the most substantial service.

Happily, the minds of Englishmen have an horror of murder, and therefore you did not, I hope, think of that; though, by your clamorous demanding of me at the Hotel, it is probable that, at the time, some of you intended me some personal injury. But what is the value of life, which every thing is done to make it wretched. In many cases, there would be greater mercy in dispatching the inhabitants than burning their houses. However, I infinitely prefer what I feel from the spoiling of my goods, to the disposition of those who have misled you.

You have destroyed the most truly valuable and useful apparatus of philosophical instruments that perhaps any individual, in this or any other country, was ever possessed of; in my use of which I annually spent large sums, with no pecuniary view whatever, but only in the advancement of science, for the benefit of my country, and of mankind. You have destroyed a library corresponding to that apparatus, which no money can repurchase, except in a long course of time. But what I feel far more, you have destroyed manuscripts, which have been the result of the laborious study of many years, and which I shall never be able to recompense; and this has been done to one who never did, or imagined, you any harm.

I know nothing more of the hand-bill which is said to have enraged you so much, than any of yourselves, and I disapprove of it as much; though it has been made the ostensible handle of doing infinitely more mischief than any thing of that nature could possibly have done. In the celebration of the French Revolution, at which I did not attend, the company assembled on the occasion only expressed their joy in the emancipation of a neighbouring nation from tyranny, without intimating a desire of any thing more than such an improvement of our own constitution, as all sober citizens, of every persuasion, have long wished for. And though, in answer to the gross and unproved calumnies of Mr. Madan, and others, I publicly vindicated my principles as a Dissenter, it was only with plain and sober argument, and with perfect good humour. We are better instructed in the mild and forbearing spirit of Christianity, than ever to think of having recourse to violence; and can you think such conduct as yours any recommendation of your religious principles, in preference to ours?

You are still more mistaken, if you imagine that this conduct of yours has any tendency to serve your cause, or to prejudice ours. It is nothing but reason and argument that can ever support any system of religion. Answer our arguments and your business is done. But your having recourse to violence is only a proof that you have nothing better to produce. Should you destroy myself as well as my house, library and apparatus, ten more persons, of equal or superior spirit and ability, would instantly rise up. If those ten were destroyed, an hundred would appear; and believe me, that the Church of England, which you now think you are supporting, has received a greater blow by this conduct of yours, than I and all my friends have ever aimed at.

Besides, to abuse those who have no power of making resistance is equally cowardly and brutal, peculiarly unworthy of English-

men, to say nothing of Christianity, which teaches us to do as we would be done by. In this business we are the sheep, and you the wolves. We will preserve our character, and hope you will change yours. At all events, we return you blessings for curses; and pray that you may soon return to that industry, and those sober manners, for which the inhabitants of Birmingham were formerly distinguished.

I am,
Your sincere well-wisher,

J. PRIESTLEY.

London, July 19, 1791.

P. S. The account of the first Toast at the Revolution Dinner in *The Times* of this morning, can be nothing less than a malicious lie. To prove this, a list of the Toasts, with an account of all the proceedings of the day, will soon be published. The first of them was, *The King and the Constitution*, and they were all such as the friends of liberty, and the true principles of the Constitution, would approve.

Mr. Keir who acted as Chairman to the meeting which celebrated the anniversary of the French revolution in Birmingham, in an address to the public, refutes the several allegations against the Company in the following words:

I HAVE heard that it is reported that we drank disloyal and seditious toasts. Now the very first toast that was given was *The King and Constitution*. I do not know any words in the English language expressive of greater loyalty. And one of the toasts was Peace and good will to all mankind, which cannot easily be interpreted to excite people to tumult. I shall hereafter publish a list of all the toasts, which were altogether in the same spirit of loyalty, peace, and charity.

A second report is, that Justice Carles was insulted and turned out of the room. The fact is, that Justice Carles never was in the room, and therefore it is not easy to conceive how he could be turned out. I will add, that I have not the smallest doubt, that if that gentleman had come, he would have been received with due respect.

A third report was that a seditious hand-bill had been distributed by the members of the meeting, on some preceding day. A seditious and truly infamous hand-bill was distributed, it is true, but by whom written or distributed, is not known. It is heartily to be wished that the persons concerned may be discovered and punished according to law. As soon as the gentlemen of Birmingham, who had concerted the Commemoration Meeting, saw this hand-bill, they perceived that the effect and perhaps the intention of it was to inflame the mob against them, and they immediately published in the Thursday's Newspaper, an advertisement declaring that disavowal of this hand-bill, and their own loyal attachment to the King, Lords and Commons. They also sent hand-bills, with copies of this advertisement, all over Birmingham. It was not possible for them to do any thing more effectual to prevent any bad effects from this seditious paper, or to rescue themselves from the calumny of their being the authors of it.

The last false report that I have heard relative to that meeting, is concerning Dr. Priestley's behavior there.—To this I suppose it will be sufficient to answer, that Dr. Priestley was not present.

* Birmingham, Commemoration of the French Revolution.—Several hand-bills having been circulated in town, which can only be intended to create distrust concerning the intention of the meeting, to disturb its harmony and inflame the minds of the people, the Gentlemen who proposed it, think it necessary to declare their entire disapprobation of all such hand-bills, and their ignorance of the authors: Sensible themselves of the advantages of a free government, they rejoice in the extension of liberty to their neighbors, at the same time avowing, in the most explicit manner their attachment to the constitution of their own country, as vested in the Three Estates of the King, Lords, and Commons: Surely no free-born Englishman can refrain from exulting in this addition to the general Mass of human happiness; it is the cause of humanity, it is the cause of the people.

Birmingham, July 13, 1791.

LONDON, July 24.

IT appears from the Parisian accounts, that the National Guards have had the utmost difficulty in mastering the mob, who insist upon the King's abdication being declared; they had at one time near 40,000 of both sexes to contend with; and their discharge of musquetry must have destroyed more lives than reported. Two unlucky creatures the mob first tried to hang, and then decapitated on Saturday; one was an invalid, with a wooden leg, and the other a hair-dresser, who had got under the planks of the ascent to the altar of Liberty in the Camp de Mars, thro which they had bored holes, either to see the legs of the ladies, or whatever else was going forward. When the mob discerned them, they insisted that a small keg of wine which they had with them, was a barrel of gunpowder to blow up the altar, and they were soon sacrificed to their merciless judges.

July 25

Lord Hawkebury has written to Birmingham, to assure the sufferers by the late riots, that eminent counsel shall be sent down under the direction of the attorney and solicitor general, to assist the magistrates in their enquiries, &c. and Mr. Chamberlaine, the solicitor to the treasury, had been recalled from Hampshire, and sent to Birmingham personally to confirm these assurances.

Since the riots in Birmingham, there is not a creature of Administration who has not been ordered to wear plated buckles and buttons, as an encouragement to those loyal churchmen.

Our accounts from Birmingham, received this morning, state, that tranquility was completely restored in that town and its vicinity; that several of the rioters are in custody, and search was