

## THE CRISIS, No. IX.

from the Pennsylvania Packet, June 13, 1780.

HAD America pursued her advantages with half the spirit that she resisted her misfortunes, she would, before now, have been a conquering and a peaceful people; but lulled in the lap of soft tranquillity, she rested on her hopes, and adversity only has convulsed her into action. Whether subtlety or sincerity at the close of the last year, induced the enemy to an appearance for peace, is a point not material to know; it is sufficient that we see the effects it has had on our politics, and that we sternly rise to resent the delusion.

The war on the part of America, has been a war of natural feelings. Brave in distress; serene in conquest; drowsy when at rest; and in every situation generously disposed to peace. A dangerous calm, and a most heightened zeal, have, as circumstances varied, succeeded each other. Every passion, but that of despair, has been called to a tour of duty; and so mistaken has been the enemy of our abilities and disposition, that when she supposed us conquered, we rose the conquerors. The extensiveness of the United States and the variety of their resources; the universality of their cause, the quick operation of their feelings, and the similarity of their sentiments, have, in every trying situation, produced a something, which favoured by Providence, and pursued with ardour, has accomplished in an instant the business of a campaign. We have never deliberately sought victory, but snatched it; and bravely undone in an hour, the plotted operations of a season.

The reported fate of Charlestown, like the misfortunes of seventy-six, has at last called forth a spirit, and kindled up a flame, which perhaps no other event could have produced. If the enemy has circulated a falsehood, they have unwisely aggravated us into life, and if they have told us the truth, they have unintentionally done us a service. We were returning with folded arms from the fatigues of war and thinking, and sitting leisurely down to enjoy repose. The dependence that has been put upon Charlestown threw a drowsiness over America. We looked on the business done — the conflict over — the matter settled — or that all which remained unfinished would follow of itself. In this state of dangerous relax, exposed to the poisonous infusions of the enemy, and having no common danger to attract our attention, we were extinguishing by stages, the ardour we began with, and surrendering by peacemeals the virtue that defended us.

Afflicting as the loss of Charlestown may be, yet if it universally rouse us from the slumber of twelve months past, and renew in us the spirit of former days, it will produce an advantage more important than its loss. America ever is what she thinks herself to be. Governed by sentiment, and acting her own mind, she becomes, as she pleases, the victor or the victim.

It is not the conquest of towns, nor the accidental capture of garrisons, that can reduce a country so extensive as this. The sufferings of one part can never be relieved by the exertions of another, and there is no situation the enemy can be in, that does not afford to

us, the same advantages she seeks herself. By dividing her force, he leaves every post attackable. It is a mode of war, that carries with it a confession of weakness, and goes on the principle of distress, rather than conquest.

The decline of the enemy is visible not only in their operations but in their plans; Charlestown originally made but a secondary object in the system of attack, and it is now become their principal one, because they have not been able to succeed else where. It would have carried a cowardly appearance in Europe, had they formed their grand expedition in seventy-six, against a part of the Continent, where there was no army, or not a sufficient one to oppose them; but failing year after year, in their impression here, and to the eastward and northward, they deserted their capital design, and prudently contenting themselves with what they can get, give a flourish of honor to conceal disgrace.

But this piece meal work is not conquering the Continent. It is a discredit in them to attempt it, and in us to suffer it. It is now full time to put an end to a war of aggravations, which, on one side, has no possible object, and on the other has every inducement which honor, interest, safety and happiness, can inspire. If we suffer them much longer to remain among us, we shall become as bad as themselves. An association of vice will reduce us more than the sword. A nation hardened in the practice of iniquity, knows better how to profit by it, than a young country newly corrupted. We are not a match for them in the line of advantageous guilt, nor they to us, on the principles which we bravely set out with. Our first days were our days of honor. They have marked the character of America wherever the story of her wars are told; and convinced of this, we have nothing to do but wisely and unitedly to tread the well known track.

The progress of a war, is often as ruinous to individuals, as the issue of it is to a nation; and it is not only necessary that our forces be such, that we be conquerors in the end, but that by timely exertions, we be secure in the interim. The present campaign will afford an opportunity which has never presented itself before, and the preparations for it, are equally necessary, whether Charles twon stand or fall. Suppose the first, it is in that case, only a failure of the enemy, not a defeat. All the conquest that a besieged town can hope for, is, not to be conquered; and compelling an enemy to raise the siege, is to the besieged a victory. But there must be a probability amounting almost to a certainty, that would justify a garrison marching out to attack a retreat. Therefore should Charlestown not be taken, and the enemy abandon the siege, every other part of the Continent should prepare to meet them; and on the contrary, should it be taken, the same preparations are necessary, to balance the loss, and put ourselves in a condition to co-operate with our allies, immediately on their arrival.

We are not now fighting our battles alone, as we were in seventy-six. England, from a malicious disposition to America, has not only not declared war against France and Spain, but the better to prosecute her passions here, has afforded those powers no military object, and avoids them, to distress us. She will suffer her West-India Islands to be over run by France, and her southern settlements taken by Spain, rather than quit the object that

gratifies revenge. This conduct, on the part of Britain, has pointed out the propriety of France sending a naval and land force to co-operate with America on the spot. Their arrival cannot be very distant, nor the ravages of the enemy long. In the mean time the part necessary to us, needs no illustration. The recruiting the army, and procuring the supplies, are the two things needful, and a capture of either of the enemy's divisions, will restore to America peace and plenty.

At a Crisis, big, like the present, with expectation and events, the whole country is called to unanimity and exertion. Not an ability ought now to sleep, that can produce but a mite to the general good, nor even a whisper to pass that militates against it. The necessity of the case, and the importance of the consequences, admit no delay from a friend, no apology from an enemy. To spare now, would be the height of extravagance, and to consult present ease, would be to sacrifice it, perhaps, for ever.

America, rich in patriotism and produce, can want neither men nor supplies, when a serious necessity calls them forth. The slow operation of taxes, owing to the extensiveness of collection, and their depreciated value before they arrived in the Treasury, have, in many instances, thrown a burthen upon Government, which has been artfully interpreted by the enemy into a general decline throughout the country. Yet this, inconvenient as it may at first appear, is not only remediable, but may be turned to an immediate advantage; for it makes no real difference, whether a certain number of men, or company of militia, (and in this country every man is a militia man) are directed by law, to send a recruit at their own expense, or whether a tax is laid on them for that purpose, and the man hired by government afterwards. The first, if there is any difference, is both cheapest and best, because it saves the expense which would attend collecting it as a tax, and brings the man sooner into the field than the modes of recruiting formerly used: And on this principle, a law has been passed in this State, for recruiting two men from each company of militia, which will add upwards of a thousand to the force of the country.

But the flame, which has broken forth in this city, since the report from New-York, of the loss of Charlestown, not only does honor to the place, but, like the blaze of seventy-six, will kindle into action, the scattered sparks throughout America. The valour of a country may be learned by the bravery of its soldiery, and the general cast of its inhabitants, but confidence of success is best discovered by the active measures pursued by men of property; and when the spirit of enterprize becomes so universal, as to act at once on all ranks of men, a war may then, and not till then, be stiled truly popular.

In seventy-six the ardour of the enterprising part was considerably checked by the real revolt of some, and the coolness of others. But in the present case there is a firmness in the substance and property of the country to the public cause. An association has been entered into by the merchants, tradesmen, and principal inhabitants of the city, to receive and support the new State money at the value of gold and silver; a measure, which, while it does them honour, will likewise contribute to their interest, by rendering the operations of the campaign convenient and effectual.

Nor has the spirit of exertion stopt here. A voluntary subscription is likewise began to raise a fund of hard money, to be given as bounties to fill up the full quota of the Pennsylvania line. It has been the remark of the enemy, that every thing in America has been done by the force of government; but when she sees individuals throwing in their voluntary aids, and facilitating the public measures in concert with the established powers of the country, it will convince her that the cause of America stands not on the will of a few but on the broad foundation of property and popularity.

Thus aided and thus supported, disaffection will decline, and the withered head of tyranny expire in America. The ravages of the enemy will be short and limited, and like all their former ones, will produce a victory over themselves.

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, June 9, 1780.

P. S. At the time of writing this number of the Crisis, the loss of Charlestown, though believed by some, was more confidently disbelieved by others. But there ought to be no longer a doubt upon the matter. Charlestown is gone, and I believe for the want of a sufficient supply of provisions. The man that does not now feel for the honor of the best and noblest cause that ever a country engaged in and exert himself accordingly, is no longer worthy of a peaceable residence among a people determined to be free.