

"Who steals my purse, steals trash; 'tis nothing,
 'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands!
 "But he that filches from me my good Name,
 "Robs me of that which not enriches him,
 "But makes me poor indeed."

SHAKESPEARE.

TO THE PUBLIC.

AT a time of general calamity, it may seem hardly justifiable for an individual to trouble the public with his own particular wrongs and sufferings.

Yet as I am reduced to the sad alternative of either doing this, or of sitting down patient and contented with the character of a scoundrel and an enemy to my country; self-preservation impels me to chuse the former, which I hope will be my excuse.

In an Exeter paper of the 7th of September, (and I know not in how many more papers) is a piece signed by one *John Trumbull*; Deputy Adjutant-General to the northern army, containing an account of my being tried before a general court martial at Ticonderoga, for refusing to go on duty when regularly warned thereto, by the Adjutant of the regiment to which I belonged; that I was found guilty and sentenced to be cashiered and advertised in the public newspapers, as having wilfully neglected my duty with a view of being discharged from the service. And as if this was not enough, the said Trumbull of his own head goes on, and adds:—"Agreeable to this sentence, Jonathan Wentworth of Somersworth; in Strafford County, New Hampshire, late Captain in Col. Poor's regiment, is published to the world as a scoundrel, guilty of neglecting his duty, evidently with a view of being discharged from the service of his country." And he calls on my countrymen to treat me with the "contempt merited by so infamous a conduct." How aggravated must be the offence of disobedience, to deserve all this? How wise must be those judges, who could thus, without hesitation; determine not only upon actions, but upon their motives; even the very inward thoughts and intentions of the heart? And what a polite, candid and impartial gentleman must be the publisher, commentator and embellisher of all this, Mr. Trumbull! Before I make any further remarks on this gentleman, or his publication, or enter more fully into my defence, I will endeavour to give the public the true state of this affair, by telling in a few words, the story, simply as it was.

For some time before this pretended great offence was committed, I had been without a tent; this was rendered still more inconvenient and irksome, by my being in a weak and low state of body, but ill recovered from the small-pox and camp distemper. I often remonstrated on this hardship, but in vain: I still remained without any tent of my own. Thus situated, hardly able to crawl about; without a tent; and chagrined at being so neglected, I was ordered by the adjutant to go on duty; I refused going down: But the manner of my doing it plainly shewed it was rather through haste and passion than a fixed design to disobey orders. But even this would not have been wholly unjustifiable, considering my miserable situation, and necessities for all public duty? However this was eagerly catch'd at, I was complain'd against, order'd to be taken into custody, was attended, disarmed, and a few days afterwards brought before a court martial, tried and sentenced as above. The only evidence that appeared against me on the trial was the testimony of the adjutant, who swore that I replied to his orders—I shan't I words of heat, as I before observ'd, rather than the effect of deliberation; much less of such a mean, unheard of, foolish and ridiculous design, as I am charged with, to get

discharg'd from the service. For admitting I wanted to leave it, (which was far from the case) how easy would it have been to resign my commission? Is not this the common and natural way? How forc'd and strained is the supposition, that I laid a deliberate plan and executed it, to get dismissed from the army with disgrace and contempt. When I could so much easier have effected it, with honour to myself and without the least trouble to any one. But I did not want to leave the service; I was fond of it: I had readily been in it ever since Lexington Battle, and should probably have continued in it to this day, and many days to come, had I been well treated. In this situation and with these sentiments, it could not but be extremely painful to me to be so cruelly handled, first for so venial a fault to be put under guard, tried, condemn'd, and so severely sentenc'd, and afterwards to have my name published, by a young, conceited upstart, as a scoundrel; a person to be abhorr'd and detest'd by all mankind, and especially by my own country. That country for whose protection and defence, I have ever been, and still am, ready to fight, to bleed and to die. I am aware how indispensably necessary it is, that strict discipline should be kept up in the army. That a ready uncontroverted obedience is more requisite in military than in any other government. But was a soldier, even in the British army command'd to do what was impracticable, to rise and run; when he had lost one of his legs, or if he had lost an arm, to load and fire, he would surely be justifiable in disobeying. If I have reason thus to complain of the severity of the sentence, I have still more at the manner in which it is published. I am call'd a scoundrel! this is no part of the sentence; and my countrymen are desir'd to treat me with the utmost contempt. However this language may have been intended to disgrace and ruin me, it is so gross, so wholly unbecoming the style of an officer, and a gentleman, and favours so strongly of malice and revenge, that it reflects more on the court, and indeed on the whole army, which happens to have one in it capable of making use of such language, than it does on me. I do not desire to render railing for railing, or to put myself on a footing with a person I despise; but truth obliges me to say, that the account published by the young lad before mentioned is false; false in those particulars already pointed out, as well as in others which I can also point out, and will if I am call'd upon to do it. Justice to my own character, to the court, (whose mandates have been so far exceeded) and to the whole army oblige me to say thus much. I do not call on every printer on the continent to publish this. I do not think myself of importance enough to require it: and I have no wish to injure even my enemy. But to stand fair with the good and virtuous part of the community to which we belong; to share their esteem and confidence in what every honest man must ardently wish, and is indeed what he is entitled to. This alone prompt'd me to address the public at this important crisis of our affairs; sickness, and the misfortune of losing a parent, have alone prevented my doing it sooner. And I trust it will have the desired effect; that the public in general will consider me as one much injured, and afford me their commiseration, and that my more particular friends will wholly lose every ill impression they may have taken of my character & conduct, and receive me into their wonted esteem and favor.

JONATHAN WENTWORTH.

BALTIMORE, September 23.
 One of the prize ships, taken by the *Elarie*.

quins, Capt. Woolsey, of this port, is arriv'd at Chiniquetogue, and most of her cargo safely land'd.

NEW LONDON, October 11.

A ship burthen 225 tons, taken by Captain *Thos. Nickerson*, in the privateer *shop America*, belonging to Plymouth, was last week brought into port in this State. The privateer had been only 7 days out when she took this prize, and was left in chase of another. The cargo of this ship is as follows, viz. 200 bogsheads sugar, 100 puncheons of rum, 20 casks of Madeira wine, a quantity of logwood and Mehogany.

Last tuesday two prize snows were retaken by two British men of war in sight of Stonington harbour—one of them was a prize which had been taken by a providence privateer, commanded by James Munro; the other had been taken by a privateer belonging to the State of Rhode Island. We learn that the people got on shore in their boats.

Wednesday a brig bound into this port from the West Indies, was taken by a man of war near Montauk point, but the people got on shore in their boat.

Yesterday the prize ship (*St Catharine*) mentioned in our last to be taken by Captain *Harding*, in the brig *defence*, belonging to this State, arriv'd safe in this harbour.

NEWPORT, October 21.

Capt. *Vickory* 16 days from Hispaniola, informs, that about a fortnight before he sail'd an english frigate took an American vessel near that island; and carried her off for Jamaica; and that a French frigate whose topmasts were ben down, got ready and sail'd in two hours for Jamaica; to demand the American vessel, but had not return'd when Capt. *Vickory* came away; and that no vessel is suffer'd to wear English colours in any French port; but Continental colours are display'd every Sunday, and much admird.

Capt. *Stuart*, who arriv'd here yesterday P. M. from Rye, about 20 miles on this side King's Bridge, informs, that on Friday, under a very heavy fire from a number of ships; the enemy land'd about 10,000 men, at a place call'd *Rodman's Point*; that General Lee sent about 500 men down to attack them, and retreat back to the place where he lay with about 3000 in the front, and the like number as a flanking party. The 500 engaged the enemy, and retreated; the enemy followed till they came within about 50 yards of Gen Lee, till then undisturbed, when his party gave them three very heavy fires, which threw them into great confusion; upon which the flanking party began to play upon them so warmly, that they only gave one or two fires and retreated with great precipitation, being pursu'd by our troops till they got under cover of their ships. The loss on our side was very small, that of the enemy's not ascertained, but supposed to be very great.

PROVIDENCE, October 26.

A letter from Maryland to a gentleman in this town mentions, that a Spanish vessel had arriv'd there from the Havannah, with 10,000 dollars to purchase flour, the captain of which confirm'd the account of a war between Spain and Portugal; and further advis'd, that a Fleet of Spanish men of war and transports was daily expected to arriv at the Havannah with a large body of troops.

The brig *Cabot*, *Elisba Hinman*, Esq. commander, in the service of the United States, has taken two ships from Jamaica, bound to London, laden with Sugar, Rum, Indigo, &c.

Capt. *Stacey*, in the privateer *Diamond*, has taken a ship, bound from Quebec to England, laden with Coal, Copper Kettles, &c.

Capt. *Christopher Whipple*, in the privateer brig *Putnam*, has taken a ship bound from