

Royal Gazette, and Miscellany of the Island of Saint John.

CHARLOTTE TOWN: PRINTED BY WILLIAM A. RIND, PRINTER TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

FROM A LONDON PAPER OF JULY 23.

TO THE PRINTER OF THE STAFFORD CHRONICLE.

MR. PRINTER,

AS I find that many gross falsehoods have been circulated through the country, in order to inflame the minds of the people, concerning the meeting held last Thursday, to commemorate the French Revolution, I will beg leave to state what I myself have had occasion to know respecting that subject. Some gentlemen in Birmingham had proposed, by an advertisement in the newspapers, to hold a meeting of the friends of liberty, and of mankind, at the hotel, to commemorate the French Revolution, in the same manner as was done in London, and many other parts of the kingdom. Two days before the time appointed for this meeting, a very respectable gentleman called on me, and said, he came to tell me, that it was the general wish of those who intended to meet, that I should be their chairman on the occasion. I accepted the compliment, and promised to come to Birmingham to attend; never conceiving that a peaceable meeting, for the purpose of rejoicing, that twenty six millions of our fellow creatures were rescued from despotism, and made as free and happy as we Britons are, could be misinterpreted as being offensive to a government, whose greatest boast is liberty, or to any who profess the Christian religion, which orders us "to love our neighbours as ourselves." We accordingly met, and dined with the greatest peace and harmony, and after drinking some toasts, expressive, in the first place, of our loyalty to our own King and Constitution, and, in the second place, of our joy at the happiness which the French have acquired by their new constitution, we dissolved the meeting entirely, in the greatest order, between five and six in the evening, and quitted the hotel, every man retiring separately to his home, or to his private affairs. I returned to my house in the country, nor knew of the disturbances until the next day. The meeting in London was conducted with the same decorum, nor has there been an instance, as far as I know, in the many similar meetings throughout England, of the smallest irregularity attempted by them. Now, Mr. Printer, as actions are the best interpreters of men's intentions, it is evident, that the malicious insinuations, that these meetings were intended to disturb the peace and government of the country, have been, by the event, proved false and groundless.

I have lately heard, that it was reported, that we drank disloyal and seditious toasts. Now the very first toast that was given, was, "The King and the Constitution." I do not know any words in the English language expressive of greater loyalty. And one of the last 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 was never 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 handbill had been distributed by the members of the meeting, on some preceding day. A seditious and truly infamous handbill had been 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 handbill, 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 their disavowal of this handbill, and their own loyal attachment to the King, Lords, and Commons. They also sent handbills, 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 behaviour there. To this purpose it will be sufficient to answer, that Dr. Priestley was not present.

These are all the reports which I have heard, but I doubt not there may be many others, of the truth of which every man of common sense will judge from what I have said of those which have come to my knowledge. Nevertheless, these false reports are all the pretences for the late horrible riots, but the event shews, that they were only pretences, and that the Dissenters were the true object of the fury of the mob, as many of those gentlemen who have suffered from the riots were not present. For the business of the commemoration meetings had nothing to do with religious distinctions, and were, in other parts, composed of Churchmen, Catholics, Dissenters, and Quakers. It is true, that, in Birmingham, the majority were Dissenters, but it is evident, that they did not wish to be distinguished as a party meeting, when they did me the honour to choose me their Chairman, who, it was evident, must have conformed, in order to qualify myself for the commissions which I held in the army, to all the formalities prescribed by the test act, and who never was present in a dissenting meeting above once or twice in England; altho' I have the greatest regard for the dissenting individuals whom I know, among whom are several of the late unfortunate victims, men as peaceful, respectable, and loyal, as any in the kingdom. But as the subject of the commemoration meeting was quite unknown to the ignorant part of the people, it gave an opportunity for raising any lies

that were necessary to inflame the mob to execute their horrid purposes. But that the proceedings of the meeting were innocent, peaceable and honourable, and also free from every subject relative to religious parties, I solemnly affirm.

I am, Mr. Printer, your's, &c.

JAMES KEIR.

West Bromwich, July 26, 1791.

Copy of a Letter from M. Condorcet, (cic-devant Marquis) Secretary to the Academy of Sciences at Paris, to Dr. Priestley.

Paris, July 30, 1791.

Sir, and most illustrious Associate,

THE Academy of Sciences have charged me to express the grief with which they are penetrated at the recital of the persecution of which you have been lately the victim.

They feel how much loss the Sciences have experienced by the destruction of those labours which you had prepared for their aggrandisement.

It is not you, Sir, who have reason to complain; your virtue and your genius still remain undiminished, and it is not in the power of human ingratitude to forget what you have done for the happiness of mankind; they only ought to be unhappy, whose guilty conduct has led their reason astray, and whose remorse has already punished their crimes.

You are not the first friend of Liberty against whom tyrants have armed the very people whom they have deprived of their rights. These are the only means which they can make use of against him, whose disinterestedness of mind, whose elevation of soul, and whose purity of conduct equally shelter him from their seductions and their vengeance.

They calumniate such a person when they can neither intimidate nor corrupt him; they arm prejudices against him, when they dare not arm the laws; and that which they have done in regard to you, is the noblest homage that Tyranny dares to render to probity, to talents, and to courage.

At this present moment a league is formed throughout Europe against the general liberty of mankind; but for some time past another has existed, occupied with propagating and with defending this liberty, without any other arms than those furnished by Reason; and these will finally triumph!

It is in the necessary order of things, that error should be momentary and truth eternal. Men of genius, supported by their virtuous disciples, when placed in the balance