

REFLECTIONS on the Rise, Progress, and probable Consequences, of the present Contentions with the Colonies.

§ 1. **H**AD authority determined me which side to take in the important question, how the mother country ought to conduct herself towards the colonies, I would have embraced these sentiments in favours of administration, which happen to be popular and fashionable with the greater part of my neighbours, my nearest relations, my most intimate friends, and the gentlemen with whom I generally think and act in other matters. But no authority, however respectable, can be pled against reason. No names or numbers will warrant my ascribing justice or wisdom to measures, in which my understanding thinks it discerns the reverse.--A fair state of the grounds of my opinion will satisfy the impartial, that I have not formed it rashly : and may furnish many of my countrymen who wish to judge candidly, with some not unuseful information, scattered in books, pamphlets, and periodical publications which they have not opportunity or leisure to peruse, as to the sentiments of the Colonists, their manner of pleading their own cause, and the regard due to some of their pleas

§ 2. One chief circumstance, that hath reconciled a great part of the nation to war with the colonies, is, an apprehension that there was a general desire in them of independence on the mother country. Their extensive territory, wholesome and temperate climate, luxuriant and fertile soil, rapid population, commodious ports, and variety of products, united many of their friends and enemies in the idea that North America would one day become the seat of a flourishing empire. It is not improbable that, in some future period, this would have happened :