

“**I COME, I COME!**” Nor were these the words of disappointed ambition; nor dictated by any sudden start of party zeal. He had weighed the contest well, was intimately acquainted with the unalienable rights of freemen, and ready to support them at every peril! He had long foreseen and lamented the fatal issue to which things were hastening. He knew that the sword of civil destruction, once drawn, is not easily sheathed; that men having their minds inflamed and the weapons of defence in their hands, seldom know the just point where to stop, even when they have it in their power; and often proceed to actions, the bare contemplation of which would at first have astonished them.

It was therefore his desire rather to soften than enflame violent humors, wishing that America, in all her actions, might stand justified in the sight of God and the World. He foresaw the horrid train of evils which would be let loose by the stroke which should sever the ancient bond of union between Great-Britain and us. It was therefore his wish that such a stroke should never proceed first from the hand of America. Nor did it so proceed.

THE resistance made at LEXINGTON was not the traitorous act of men conspiring against the supreme powers; nor directed by the councils of any public body in America; but rose immediately out of the case, and was dictated by *self preservation*, the first great law of Nature as well as Society. If there was any premeditated scheme here, it was premeditated by those who created the dreadful necessity, either of *resistance* or *ruin*. For could it be expected that any people, possessing the least remains of virtue and liberty, would tamely submit to destruction and ravage—to be disarmed as slaves; stripped of their property and left a naked prey even to the insults of surrounding savages?

WAS this an experiment worthy of Great-Britain? Where was the wisdom of her counsellors? Had their justice, their moderation quite forsaken them? Could they