

what necessity was there for maintaining an army in America, the expense of which must be extorted from the Americans? Precious fruits, truly, had already been gathered from this military parade! the minds of the colonists exasperated, affection converted into hatred, loyalty into a desire of innovation. In other times, had not the ministers obtained from the colonies, by legitimate means, and without such a display of troops, according to the exigency, all the succors at their disposal? Since they had been thought able to furnish subsidies to the mother country, they had never been demanded, except in the mode of requisitions on the part of the crown, addressed by the governors to the different assemblies. By adhering to this mode, the same subsidies might be obtained, without giving offence, and without danger of revolt. But they would exact a servile obedience, in order to introduce, in due time, into the very bosom of the kingdom, the principles and government of the Stuarts! Too certain indications had been remarked of this, the day George Grenville ventured to produce his project of a bill to authorize officers in the colonies to quarter their soldiers in the houses of the citizens; a thing expressly calculated to strike the people with terror, to degrade them by permitting themselves to be trampled upon, and thus prepare them to receive the intended taxes with submission. The murmurs which had arisen, from every quarter, against so shocking an enormity, had indeed alarmed the minister; but it was time to act more vigorously; for it was the duty of every good citizen to oppose these first attempts.

But the ministers were not to be diverted from their plan; either because they were encouraged by the favorites concealed behind them, or from personal obstinacy, or because they believed, in defiance of all demonstration to the contrary, that the Americans would be intimidated by the confusion and dangerous uncertainty which would prevail in all their affairs, if, in their civil and commercial transactions, they did not make use of stamped paper, and thus pay the duty established. Hence the ministers were often heard to say, that the measure proposed should be a law which would execute itself. The memorials, the remonstrances, the petitions, the resolutions, of the American provinces, were rejected. The bill for imposing a stamp duty was therefore submitted to parliament, in its session of 1765. It is easy to imagine with what animation it was discussed. It may be doubted whether upon any other occasion, either in times past or present, there has been displayed more vigor or acuteness of intellect, more love of country, or spirit of party, or greater splendor of eloquence, than in these debates. Nor was the shock of opinions less violent, without the walls of Westminster.