

prepare for the defence of our liberties, and all that is sacred with united efforts.—But before we proceed, it concerns us to be well informed, both as to our real danger, and the steps proper to be taken.

Were the Americans actually in a state of oppression, it would shew their wisdom and prudence, to submit with patience to their present condition, rather than to provoke the power that oppresses them, without some fair prospect of obtaining relief. One degree of distress, in consequence of the weight of illegal power, is a grievance; ten degrees of distress are proportionably a greater evil; but bad as it is, he must be an idiot or a madman, who would not prefer them to twenty.

But we are so far from being in a state of oppression, that the proper dispute subsisting between Great-Britain and any of her colonies, excepting that of the *Massachusetts Bay*, is only, *de Lana C. prima*, about an act imposing a duty of *three pence a pound* upon tea. This is the only ground we have for complaining of the administration; and yet this has occasioned, throughout our colonies, such an indecent and violent opposition to government as is truly astonishing. Can such behaviour, on so slight a provocation, proceed from *dutiful and loyal subjects*? No; it is impossible. Whatever we may think, or say, of ourselves; if we had any true principles of *loyalty*, or any tolerable sense of the *duty* that is due to the supreme legislative power, under which the providence of God, and our own consent, have placed us, no trifling considerations could prevail with us to behave towards it in so petulant and disrespectful a manner. But there is too much reason to believe, that our minds are unprincipled, and our hearts disposed for rebellion. Ever since the reduction of *Canada*, we have been bloated with a vain opinion of our own power and importance. Our ease has produced pride and wantonness. We have been intoxicated with such draughts of liberty, as our constitutions would not bear; and under this intoxication, we have conceived that all the privileges indulged us were the effects of fear. From thinking, we have proceeded to speaking, disrespectfully of our mother country; and our language now is—“It is contrary to reason and nature, that the petty island of *Britain* should govern, and give laws to, the extensive and mighty regions of *America*.”

Yet whatever time may produce, at present the petty island of *Britain* is able to govern ten *Americas*, if she will exert her power. But she wishes by lenity and forbearance and indulgence to secure our affections, and to render us sensible, that