

does not destroy or diminish the rights of the citizen to examine the conduct of public men and the tendency of public measures." He speaks also of the "freedom of investigation" as "the birth right and the boast of every American citizen."\*

In the first sentence of a circular letter, addressed by the Continental Congress to their constituents in 1779, we find the following very just republican sentiment. "In Governments raised on the generous principles of equal liberty, the rulers of the state are the servants of the people, and not the masters of those from whom they derive authority." This being the case it is surely proper, that the people should examine, whether their rulers are faithful. Let me here add another quotation from a firm assertor of American liberty, a distinguished patriot of 1774, already repeatedly referred to. "Believe me, my countrymen, the labor of examining for ourselves, or great imposition, must be submitted to; there is no alternative, and unless we weigh and consider what we examine, little benefit will result from research."†

We clearly perceive, that ON THE PRINCIPLES OF TRUE REPUBLICANISM we have a *right*, and it is our duty, to examine the conduct of our rulers, and the tendency of their measures. We have each of us a right to inquire, examine, and judge for ourselves whether the present war is justifiable, or unjustifiable. To do this, is indeed our indispensable *moral duty*. If some of you have not carefully examined this subject already, let me entreat you to attend to it, as a duty you owe to yourselves, your families, your country, and your God. That you may take an impartial view of both sides of the great question respecting the present war; that you may candidly and clearly judge concerning it; I advise you to read with candor, deliberation, and care on the one side, President Madison's Manifesto and the report of the Committee of foreign relations in favor of a declaration of war.— I also advise you to read on the other side, with the same candor, deliberation, and care, an address of members of the House of Representatives, who opposed a declaration of war.‡ From an attentive perusal of these publications, on both sides, you may obtain far more correct information than can be had from common

\* Charge to the Grand Jury of the city of New-York, July 6, 1812.

† Quincy's Observations &c. p. 27.

‡ I would now further advise a careful perusal and comparison of the publications of the Rockingham Conventions, at Brentwood, and Kingston; in which the statements and opinions of those, on different sides of this great question, in our Country, will be seen. I would also advise the reader to examine such other publications, as may throw light on this momentous subject.