

a sovereignty over the Colonies, she certainly has a right, at least, to regulate our commerce; and especially to regulate the importation of such articles of mere luxury, as we can choose whether we will be concerned with, or not, with but little inconvenience to ourselves. Now the present duty on tea is exactly such a regulation.

You allow that this duty is a thing that is but trifling in itself; but then you conceit that you ought to oppose it, because it is a *precedent*, which hereafter may be used to your disadvantage. I am sorry to see that men can be so easily deluded by such sophistry. Can you imagine that Parliament will not do whatever they think right to be done by them, without waiting for *Precedents*? Yet precedents of their own for regulating the trade of the Colonies, are not wanting. Every reign, since the settlement of the Colonies has produced them; in consequence of which you are daily paying duties that, in every view, are as liable to exception, as the duty on tea. From hence it is evident, that you yourselves have no inclination to be governed by precedents, whatever regard the Parliament may be supposed to have for them.

As to the argument that, "If Parliament has a right to take from us one penny, without our consent, it has a right to strip us of our whole property;" altho' so great a man as Mr. LOCKE was the father of it, it appears to me to be weak and sophistical. A right to do what is reasonable, implies not a right to do what is unreasonable. A father may have a right over his son, so far as to send him on an errand, or upon any reasonable service without having such an absolute authority as can oblige him to throw himself down a precipice, or to hang himself. In like manner, cases may happen, in which it would

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