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the government in America, and especially that of imposing taxes, a thing most of all desired on the one side of the ocean, and detested on the other. Instead, therefore, of the plan proposed by the Americans, the ministers drew up another, which they addressed to the governors of the colonies, to be offered by them to the colonial assemblies. It was proposed by the ministers, 'That the governors of all the colonies, assisted by one or two members of the councils, should assemble, to concert measures, for the organization of a general system of defense, to construct fortresses, to levy troops, with authority to draw upon the British treasury for all sums that might be requisite; the treasure to be reimbursed by way of a tax, which should be laid upon the colonies, by an act of parliament.'

The drift of this ministerial expedient is not difficult to be understood, if it be considered that the governors, and members of the council, were almost all appointed by the king. Accordingly, the scheme had no success in America; its motives were ably developed, in a letter of Benjamin Franklin to governor Shirley, who had sent him the plan of the ministers. In this letter, the seeds of the discord which followed soon after, begin to make their appearance.*

The general court of Massachusetts wrote to their agent in London, to oppose every measure which should have for its object the establishment of taxes in America, under any pretext of utility whatever. On the contrary, the governors, and particularly Shirley, insisted continually, in their letters to the ministers, that the thing was just, possible, and expedient.

These suspicions, this jealous inquietude, which agitated the minds of the Americans, ever apprehensive of a parliamentary tax, obtained with the more facility, as they found them already imbibed by ancient resentments. They had never been able to accustom themselves to certain laws of parliament, which, though not tending to impose contributions, yet greatly restricted the internal commerce of the colonies, impeded their manufactures, or wounded, in a thousand shapes, the self-love of the Americans, by treating them as if they were not men of the same nature with the English, or as if, by clipping the wings of American genius, it was intended to retain them in a state of inferiority and degradation. Such was the act prohibiting the felling of pitch and white pine trees, not comprehended within enclosures; such was that which interdicted the exportation from the colonies, and also the introduction from one colony into another, of hats, and woollens, of domestic manufacture, and forbade hatters to have, at one time, more than two apprentices; also

* See Note 1