

[remonstrance. They sent a committee to acquaint him, they must insist upon the right they had to make it public. He made a very great mistake, and told the committee, that his Majesty had given him the power of the press, and he would not suffer it to be printed. This doctrine would have done well enough in the reigns of the Stuarts. In the present age it is justly exceptionable; although by the liberty of the press we are not to understand a liberty of printing every thing, however criminal, with impunity. The house had no opportunity to take notice of this declaration. Upon another occasion they let him know they had not forget it. The governor was so displeased with the proceedings of the house that he put an end to the session, and they never met again.

(*Anno* 1720.)—We are now arrived to the memorable year 1720. The contests and disensions in the government rose to a greater height than they had done since the religious feuds in the year 1636 and 1637.

The public affairs, in general, were in a very different state. The Indians upon the *e.* frontiers were continually insulting and harassing the English inhabitants, so that but little progress had been made in settling the country since the peace, and this year, most of the settlements which had been begun were deserted and a new war was every day expected.

The trade of the province declined. There was a general cry for want of money, and yet the bills of credit, which were the only money, were daily depreciating. The depreciation was grievous to all creditors, but particularly distressing to the clergy and other salary men, to widows and orphans whose estates consisted of money at interest, perhaps just enough to support them, and being reduced to one half the former value, they found themselves on a sudden in a state of poverty and want. Executors and administrators, and all who were possessed of the effects of others in trust, had a strong temptation to retain them. The influence a bad currency has upon the morals of the people is greater than is generally imagined. Numbers of schemes for private and public emissions of bills were proposed as remedies: the only perhaps effectual one, the utter abolition of the bills, was omitted.

By these calamities the minds of the people were prepared for impressions from pamphlets, courants, and other newspapers, which were frequently published, in order to convince them, that their civil liberties and privileges were struck at, and that a general union was necessary. These did not pass

without answers, attributing all the distress in public affairs to the wrath and resentment, the arts and sinister views of a few particular persons, but the voice of the people in general was against the governor. In the mother country, when disputes arise between the branches of the legislature upon their respective rights, parties are formed, and the body of the people are divided; for in a well constituted government it is of importance to the people that the share even of the popular part of the constitution should not be unduly raised to the suppression of the monarchical or aristocratical parts. From a regard to the common interest, therefore, in a dispute concerning prerogative and privilege, the people, ordinarily, are divided in sentiment. The reason is obvious why it is less frequently so in a colony. There the people, in general, consider the prerogative as an interest, without them, separate and distinct from the interior interest of the colony. This takes their attention from the just proportion of weight due to each branch in the constitution, and causes a bias in favour of the popular art. For the same reason, men fond of popular applause are more sure of success, with less degree of part, in a colony, than in a state not so connected, and consequently men who with unbiassed judgments discern and have virtue enough to pursue the real interest of their country, are more likely to be reproached and vilified.

The first act of the house of representatives was the choice of Mr. Cooke for their speaker. A committee was sent to the governor, at his house, to acquaint him with the choice. They reported at their return, that his excellence said, "it was very well." In the afternoon, the governor being in council, sent the secretary to acquaint the house, that he was now in the chair and ready to receive their message respecting the choice of a speaker. They sent back an answer that his excellency, upon being informed of the choice in the morning, had said, "it was very well," and they had recorded his answer in the books of the house. The governor replied, that he would receive no message from the house but when he was in the chair. The house then proposed, by message to the council, to join with them in the business of the day, the choice of counsellors; but upon the governor's telling their committee, who carried up the message, that no election should be made until he was acquainted who was chosen speaker, the house sent a new committee to acquaint him with the choice they had made. The governor replied to this committee, that Mr. Cooke had treated him]