

1775.

saïd to have relaxed their operations considerably upon that idea, until they heard the event.

Dec. 6th.  
Declara-  
tion in  
ans. to  
the Roy-  
al pro-  
clama-  
tion of the  
3d Aug.

Towards the close of the year, the General Congress published a declaration in answer to the royal proclamation for suppressing rebellion and sedition, which was issued at St. James's on the 23d of August. In this piece they combated and denied the charges of forgetting their allegiance, of treason, and rebellion, and took particular notice of the dangerous tendency, and indiscriminate nature of a clause, prohibiting under the severest penalties, the carrying on of any correspondence from England, with any persons in rebellion, or the aiding or abetting of such. But not content with critical observations, they conclude with a declaration in the name of the people of the United Colonies, That whatever punishment shall be inflicted upon any persons in the power of their enemies, for favouring, aiding, or abetting, the cause of American liberty, should be retaliated in the same kind, and the same degree, upon those in their power, who have favoured, aided, or abetted, or should favour, aid, or abet, the system of ministerial oppression.

Different  
opinions  
respect-  
ing this  
petition.

We shall of ourselves make no observations on the forementioned petition, but will close this chapter, (as well as the American accounts for this year) with some thoughts of the legislature thereon.—Those who favoured the plan of pacifying by concession, loudly clamoured at the answer of Lord Dartmouth, as calculated to drive the colonies to the last extremities of independence and foreign connection; for this reception, they said, of so dutiful and decent an address, amounted to no less than a renunciation of their allegiance.—On the other hand, the friends of the ministry took it into a different point of view. The petition, they allowed, had a decent appearance. But did they formally admit the rights of parliament? Were they not still  
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