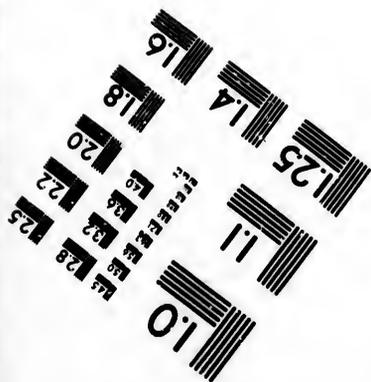
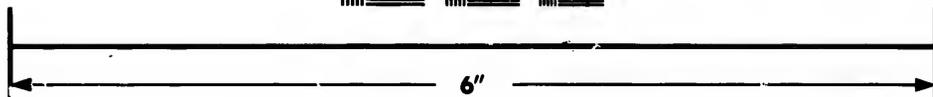
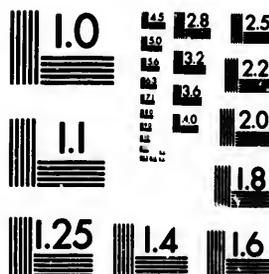


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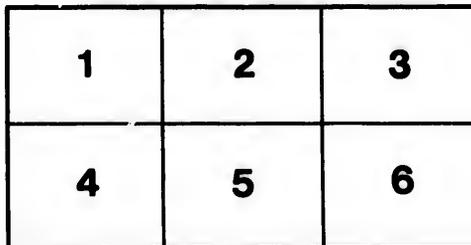
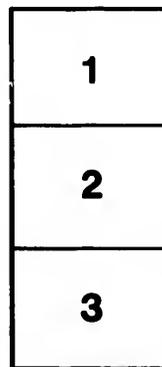
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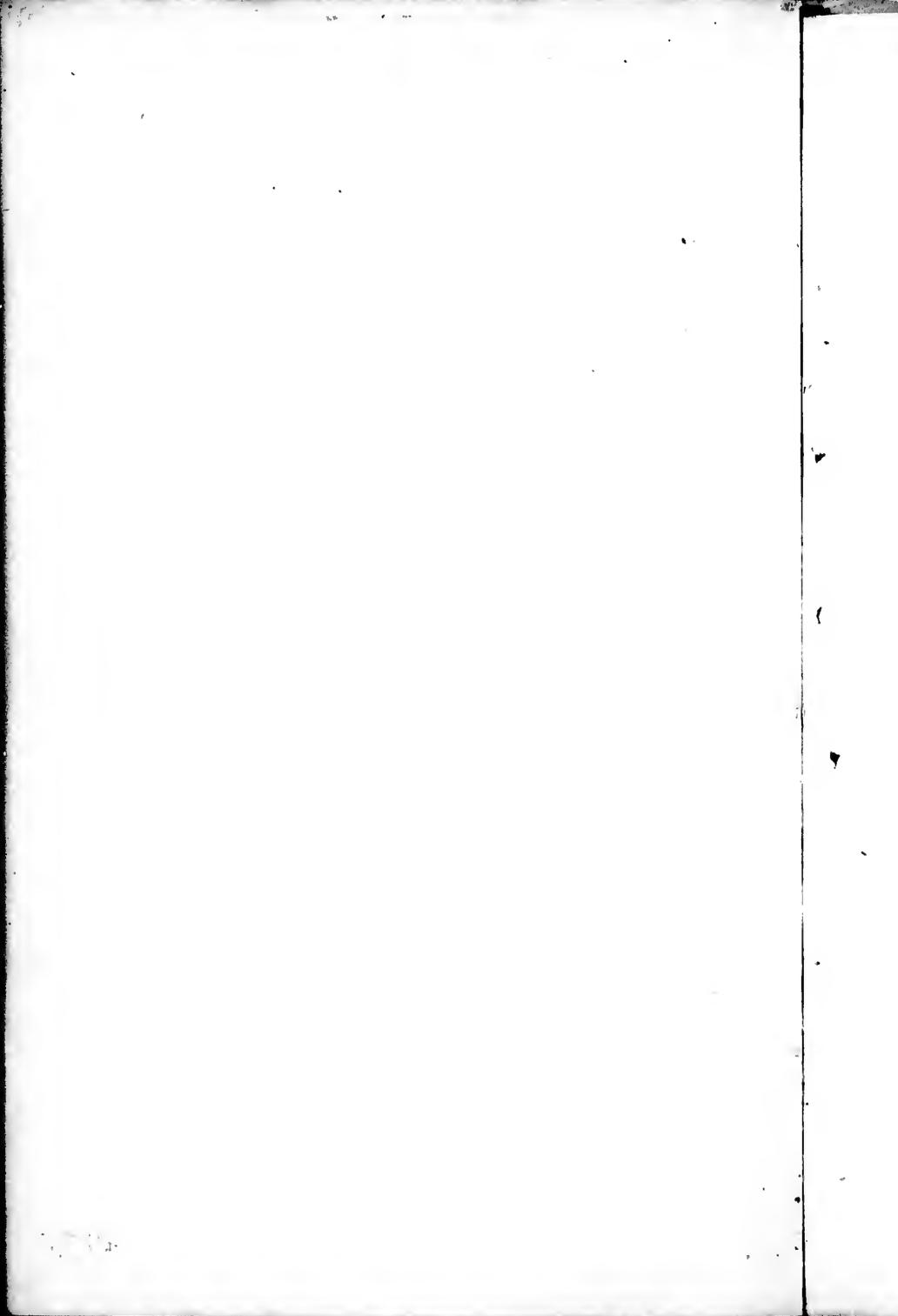
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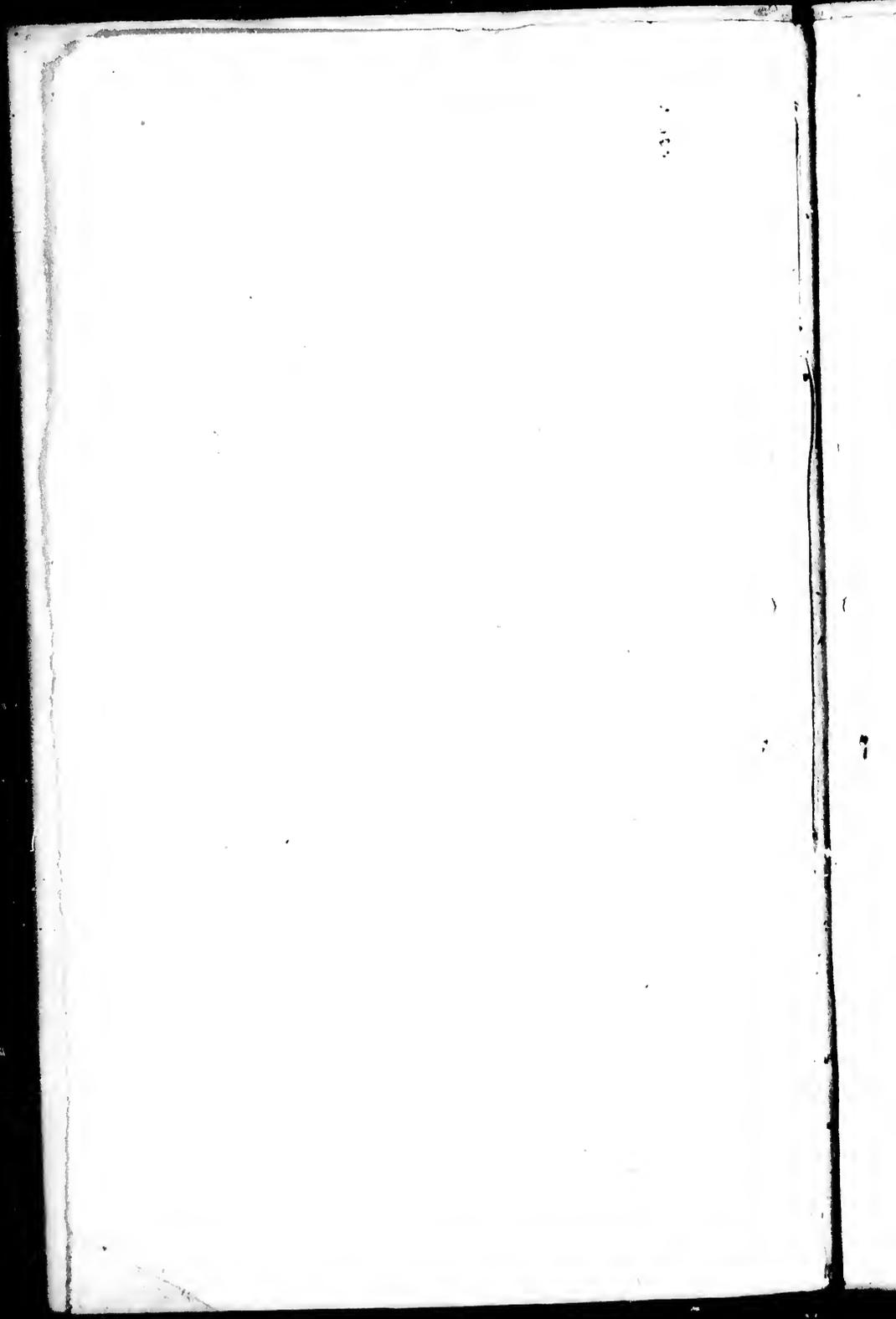
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T H E  
S P E E C H  
O F  
GENERAL CONWAY,  
Es. Es. Es.

---

PRICE ONE SHILLING and SIX-PENCE.



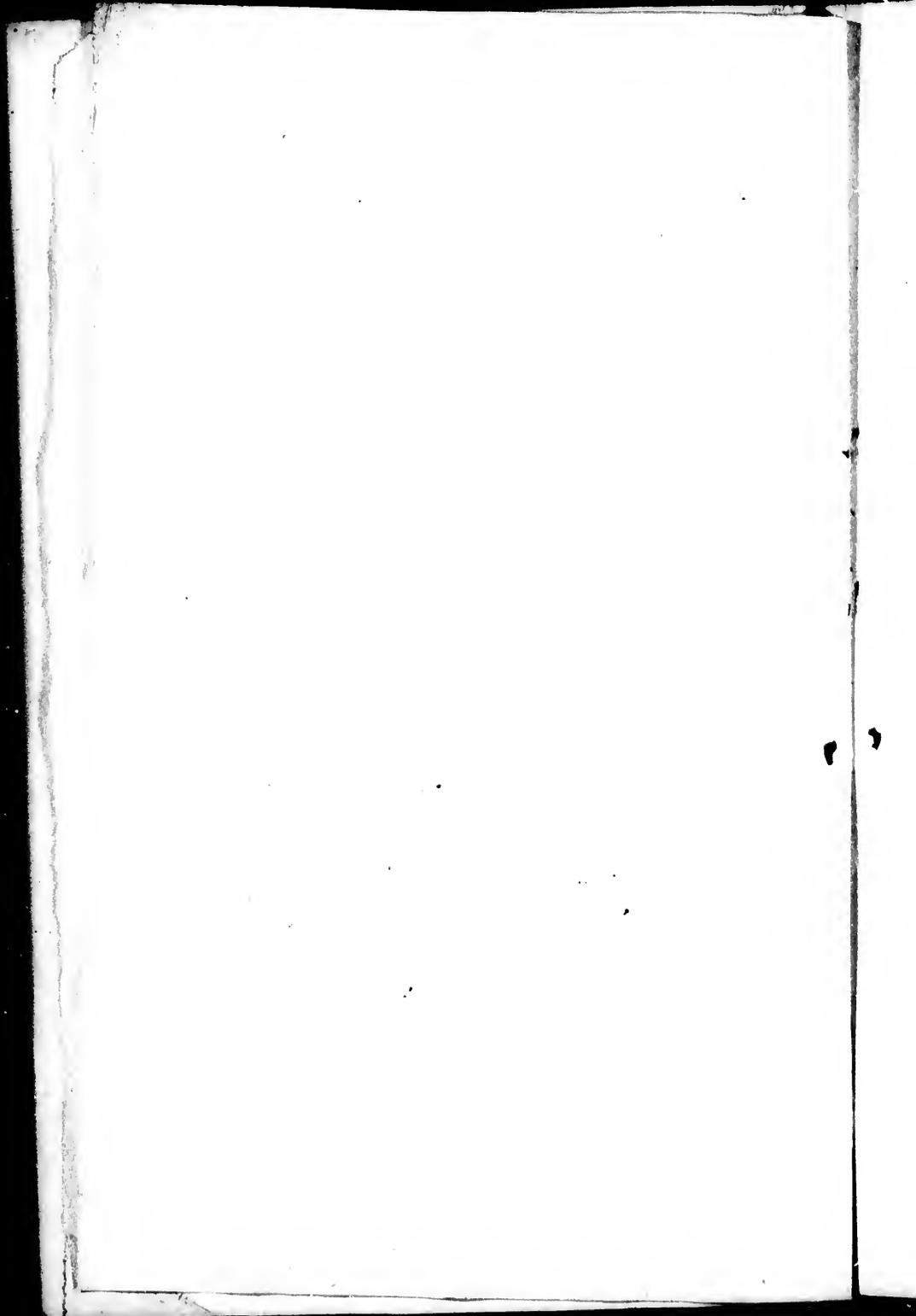
T H E  
S P E E C H  
O F  
GENERAL CONWAY,  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT  
F O R  
SAINT EDMONDSBURY,  
O N M O V I N G I N T H E  
H O U S E O F C O M M O N S ;  
(O N T H E 5 t h O F M A Y , 1 7 8 0 )

“ That Leave be given to bring in a BILL for QUIETING the  
“ TROUBLES NOW REIGNING in the BRITISH COLO-  
“ NIES in AMERICA, and for enabling His MAJESTY to  
“ appoint COMMISSIONERS, with full Powers to treat, and  
“ conclude upon Terms of CONCILIATION with the said  
“ COLONIES.”

---

L O N D O N :  
PRINTED FOR T. CADELL IN THE STRAND.

M, DCC, LXXXI.



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## S P E E C H, &c.

Mr. SPEAKER,

I SOME time ago engaged myself to this House, to bring before them a matter of great importance. But reflecting fully on the difficulties attending it, I almost repent of my rashness, for they are not only the difficulties of the subject, or its importance, great enough to deterr a man of much superior talents, but they are the difficulties of the times, the state of men, and of things ; of parties, and of opinions. I stand besides in the unfortunate predicament of having <sup>adopted</sup> a system, which, differing from the leading ideas on both sides of the House, and having no protection but from my feeble powers, is in danger of being crushed and annihilated between the collision of

B

contending

contending parties, or perhaps held in equal contempt by both.

However, Sir, I hope this once the House will grant me their indulgence, and will pardon my presumption, if animated with an ardent and sincere zeal, and the fullest internal conviction, I almost flatter myself I shall relate such facts, and draw such conclusions from them, as may make some impression on their minds.

Gentlemen know that it is on the subject of the American war I mean to trouble them, and to offer to their judgment a plan of conciliation.

But before I enter into this, I beg leave to make some few observations on the general situation of this country, which I will not say is the most desperate, (I hate the word) but undoubtedly ~~the most~~ dangerous it was ever in, since the existence of the British monarchy. Depressed with debt; exhausted by taxes; our resources, and almost our spirit, failing; with little but our pride and passions left to support

us ; involved in a dangerous and unequal war with the united force of France and Spain, while a fatal rebellion is preying upon our vitals : Such is our general calamitous situation. But this is not all : we have not only many powerful enemies, but we have not one friend. 'Tis not France and Spain alone ; all Europe seems armed, or arming against us. The great powers deride and despise ; even the little ones peck at and insult us. The Dantzickers ; the towns of Lubeck and Hamburg ; even Holland, the *last lingering friend*, seems to have *bid farewell*. We are like the stricken deer, driven out of the herd, and may soon not have a name, or a being, among the powers of Europe. To such a pitch have our faults and our follies, our ignorance and our presumption, brought us. We have deserved, and we have, I doubt, incurred the wrath of Heaven : and though we go on with annual mockeries of prayer and fasting, we shew in our conduct no sign nor symptom of amendment ; sloth and indolence, and indifference, have taken the place of manly exertion and vigilance. But

such are not the means of obtaining divine assistance.

*Ubi socordiae tete atque ignaviae tradideris, nequicquam deos implores; irati infestique sunt.*

But, Sir, it is in this miserable chaos, in this state of darkness, almost under the shadow of death, that it becomes every man, who has a heart feeling for the disgraces and distresses of his country, to see if from no quarter a ray of hope breaks through the gloom. And, if my zeal does not too far betray me, I think there is one which, if now seized and pursued, may lead us out of this labyrinth; may yet restore us to glory and happiness.

The first step to reformation is, repentance; and I would to God I saw in the minds of our governors, those signs of repentance, that conversion which I flatter myself I see in the people. They are at last, I think, started up from that golden dream of conquest, which fallacy and falsehood had painted to their imagination.

The

The scales are fallen from their eyes, they see how they have been sacrificed and deceived; and their songs of triumph are now turned into clamours and bitter lamentations. But, sir, they are not yet the loud cries of rage and resentment; they are the cool complaints of disappointment and apprehension; of fears and just alarms for themselves and their posterity; they behold the fabrick of their great empire, as it were, crumbling, and dissolving all around them; but instead of vengeance against the authors of their calamities, they mildly call for reformation.---'Tis not the fury of a storm, but the calm murmur of a re-fluent tide,

And surely, if ever the voice of the people claimed attention, it is in a moment like the present; it ought to be heard, it must be heard; and, I may say, it will be heard; it has, hitherto, spoken almost in whispers; soon, if not regarded, it may speak in thunder.

This

This nation, sir, is sick with many evils, some of them I have touched upon; and, I am sorry to say, it is also blotted with many vices, and foul corruptions; but I do not mean to enter into them, they are beyond my strength, and they are not the business of this day; and, indeed, "*sufficient to the day is the evil thereof.*" For this day is set apart to the consideration of the American war; an evil in itself so monstrous, that we must soon conquer it, or perish under it;

*Hæret lateri læthalis arundo.*

It is the fatal shaft sticking in our side; piercing to our vitals, and draining almost the last drop of our blood.

In deliberating, therefore, upon the means of restoring peace with America; it seems to me almost a deliberation about our own being. "*Our life and death are both before us;*" and I can scarce help adding the other solemn words of Cato.

"This, in a moment, brings me to

"my end;

"But this assures me I shall never die."

The

The continuation of this distracted war is certain death to us; whereas, a happy and cordial reconciliation with America, upon fair and solid grounds, may fix the greatness of the British empire till time shall be no more.

But, sir, it is a great work; it demands all your judgment to digest, and your utmost vigour and exertion to atchieve. Something must be undone, as well as done; you must renounce many favourite maxims conceived in the hour of happiness, and in the pride and insolence of your power; and trace back again those erroneous steps that have brought you to the brink of this precipice.

I do not mean to go back with much retrospect on the past, nor to dwell much on any invidious or disputable matter; and shall only touch slightly on those leading principles on which this war was begun, and has been pursued, as far as is necessary to lay the subject clearly before you. The avowed principle of this war, sir, was the taxation

taxation of America; a system foolishly, I think, and fatally conceived, equally impolitic and unjust. I shall never forget that fatal night when this House, in a thin Committee, and in a dark and evil hour, like a band of black conspirators, resolved to rob three millions of British subjects of their liberty and property; for a Resolution was then proposed and formed *to tax America*. I was one of the few who opposed that proposition; and then, at that early period, warned my countrymen of the many dangers that attended it; it is fifteen years since; but I now feel inexplicable satisfaction in that remembrance; and shall carry it, with pride and consolation, to my grave.

I will not fatigue and wound your minds by a recapitulation of all the wretched scenes that have succeeded; the faults and follies we have committed; the contradictions, tergiversations, deceptions, and all the train of disgraces that have followed. The miserable system of Taxation was maintained as long as it could be maintained;  
 nay,

may, I may say, even longer; it shewed itself through fifty disguises: first, in the shape of Regulation, then the honour of Parliament, then under the fallacious garb of a conciliatory proposition: though it had been, in the most solemn and express words, renounced by Lord Hillsborough's letter, yet still it was maintained; and, when the substance was given up, professedly, we contested for the shadow. All idea of any other tax but the Tea-duty was disclaimed; but still the Tea-duty was maintained; we quarrelled for the Tea-duty, fought for the Tea-duty, for the Tea-duty was this destructive war with France, Spain and America, positively made. Could solecism, infatuation, and insanity, go farther? the Poet's accusation of our weak first Parent, who

*“ For an apple damn'd mankind,”*

is scarce an exaggerated expression for such folly.

C

It

It was said, however, if this was a folly, it was not the folly of the ministers only, it was the folly of the nation; which I know was, in part, true; but I know too, why it was true: because the people were never rightly informed; because a scene of constant deception was practised to inflame and misguide them; because, “ a flood of  
 “ Treasure, from American Taxation, was  
 “ to pay their debts, and ease all their  
 “ burthens; because the Americans were  
 “ natural enemies to this country; Aliens,  
 “ or Rebels and Independants, by prin-  
 “ ciple; they were Cowards, besides; and  
 “ a few thousand men could, at any time,  
 “ subdue, and drive them off the Conti-  
 “ nent.”---Upon such representations did the people form their opinions; upon the same, were built all those lofty and magnificent principles upon which this war has been pursued; one would have the *Americans at our feet*, another would *reduce them to unconditional submission*, a third would *conquer them by starvation*, a fourth, *by fire and depopulation*: These things were not in the mouths of the ignorant alone; men of the  
 first

first weight, the first dignity, adopted them. All the Law and Learning of the Kingdom were employed to inforce them.

“ *The Rubicon is past, kill them, or they kill you.*”

Such was the sentence of the greatest Judge of the land, and the first Oracle of Government.

With such Authorities to lead, and such Visions to inflame them, 'tis no wonder the people took fire.---This furious spirit thus kindled by the heads of the Party, *In Patriam, populumque fluxit.* The Rage did, I confess, seize almost all ranks and orders of men; but for being more general, it was not more just. It became, indeed, the sin of the people; but was, as I have shewn, the sin of Government first.

“ *Peccavit, et peccare fecit Israel.*”

Even the more sacred function, and the highest orders of it, caught the Frenzy

too, and joined with the deluded people in this *dance of death*.

Neither charity nor justice, nor decorum, in my opinion, were heard; all was passion.

Three millions of our fellow subjects were condemned unheard. Sir, it was a case of blood! By the ordinary rules of the Constitution, those pious sages ought not to have had a part in it. I tread upon tender ground: I know the respect due to those right reverend persons, and for their piety and learning, in their true sacred character, nobody has more: but a little too much zeal for the measures of the day; too much complaisance for the authors of those measures, too often mislead them. In their dioceses I revere them; I would treat them every where with respect; but politicks are not their trade, and don't do them honour: they are a shining body of the nation undoubtedly, and have done the highest honour to it on many occasions; but in the

present times, I doubt, are a faulty, if not a rotten part of the Constitution.

I beg pardon for this little digression, Sir: I said the Americans were condemned unheard. They were truly so, and in that I think were centred and united all the sum and essence of our cruelty, tyranny, and injustice: such a conduct surpasses even the rancour of savages, and is unknown in the annals of civilized nations. In vain did they supplicate, protest, beseech, beg to be heard. You answered, "*They were rebels*, and deserved no attention; that they had formed a determined system of independence, and renounced the authority of the British legislature." They denied the charge, and appealed, in the most solemn manner, to God and their country, for the truth of their assertions. 'Twas in vain; you determined they were Rebels. You chose they should be Rebels, that you might subdue and trample upon upon them as such.

I do

I do not talk from hearsay, or imagination, but from the most publick and authentick testimonials: their numerous memorials and petitions to parliament, and the throne; and their letters to the people of Great Britain and Ireland. These, Sir, were the genuine language of America; formally, properly, and constitutionally before you. In denying the charge of rebellion, *they disproved* it: the renouncing the authority of Parliament, and applying to its power, was a contradiction in terms.

But such was the dominion of passion at that time, that contradictions passed for demonstrations, and the humblest supplications for declarations of war and defiance.

But, Sir, to shew I do neither mistake nor mean to misguide, I beg leave to lay their declarations before you in their own words; for it is essential to know what was, and I believe, as far as human feelings allow,

low, is still the disposition of the Americans.

In the petition of the Congress to the King, in 1775, they say, by removing the grievance above-mentioned,\* “ *the harmony between Great Britain and their Colonies, so necessary to the happiness of both, and so ardently desired by the latter, will be immediately restored.---*In the magnanimity and justice of your Majesty and *Parliament* we confide for a redress of our other grievances, &c.

“ For appealing to that Being who searches thoroughly the hearts of his creatures, we solemnly profess that our Councils have been influenced by no other motive than a dread of impending destruction. Permit us, therefore, most Gracious Sovereign, in the name of all your faithful people of America, with the utmost humility to implore you, for the honour of Almighty God, whose

\* Taxation.

“ *pure*

“ *pure religion our enemies are undermining,*  
“ for your glory, which can only be ad-  
“ vanced by rendering your people happy,  
“ &c. &c.

“ That your royal authority and inter-  
“ position may be used for our relief, and  
“ that a gracious answer may be given to  
“ this petition.”

This petition was allowed to be moderate and reasonable, and was laid before Parliament by Lord Dartmouth, with many other papers that year.

The New-York Memorial to the House of Lords, of the 25th of March, 1775, says, “ We shall always chearfully submit  
“ to the constitutional exercise of the su-  
“ preme regulating power lodged in King,  
“ Lords, and Commons of Great Britain ;  
“ and to all acts calculated for the general  
“ weal of the empire, and the due regula-  
“ tion of the trade and commerce thereof.

“ We

" We conceive this power includes a  
 " right to lay duties upon all articles im-  
 " ported directly into the Colonies, from  
 " any foreign country, &c. &c. But that  
 " it is the undoubted right of our Consti-  
 " tution, that no taxes be imposed on them,  
 " but with their consent, given personally,  
 " or by their lawful representatives.

" We therefore hope your Lordships  
 " will aid and concur in redressing our griev-  
 " ances, removing all causes of dissention  
 " with Great Britain, and establishing our  
 " rights and privileges upon a solid and  
 " lasting foundation."

The representation and remonstrance of  
 the same Colony to the House of Commons.  
 After stating their grievances, they say,

" Nor in claiming these essential rights  
 " do we *harbour the most distant idea of in-*  
 " *dependence*, on the parent kingdom. We  
 " *acknowledge the Parliament of Great Bri-*  
 " *tain necessarily entitled to a supreme direc-*  
 " *tion*

“ *tion and Government over the whole Em-  
“ pire.*

“ *We claim but a restoration of that which  
“ we enjoyed before the close of the last war.  
“ We desire no more than a continuation of  
“ that ancient Government, to which we are  
“ entitled by the principles of the British Con-  
“ stitution.*

“ Attached by every tye of interest and  
“ regard to the British nation, &c. &c. we  
“ harbour not an idea of diminishing the  
“ power and grandeur of the mother coun-  
“ try, or lessening the lustre and dignity of  
“ Parliament. Our object is the happiness  
“ which can only arise from the union of  
“ both countries.

“ Fully trusting that this Honourable  
“ House will listen *with attention to our  
“ complaints*, and redress our grievances,  
“ &c.”

In the Address to the People of England,  
the 8th of July, 1775, they say,

“ They

“ They are accused of aiming at Independence, which they deny, as a charge, supported only by the allegations of our Ministry.

“ Abused, insulted, and contemned, what steps have we pursued to obtain redress? We have carried our dutiful Petitions to the Throne. We have applied to your justice for relief.”

“ It has been said, we refuse to submit to the restrictions on our commerce. From whence is this inference drawn? Not from our words, we having repeatedly declared the contrary.”

They declare “ their readiness to submit to the acts of Trade and Navigation, past before the year 1763.

“ They are ready to submit to any further acts for the regulation of their external commerce----excluding every idea of taxation, internal or external, for

“ *raising a revenue on the subjects of America without their consent.*”

They say, “ they had again presented an  
 “ humble Petition to his Majesty; and to  
 “ remove every imputation of obstinacy,  
 “ have requested his Majesty *to direct some*  
 “ *mode, by which* the united applications of  
 “ his faithful Colonists may be improved  
 “ into an *happy and permanent reconcili-*  
 “ *ation.*”

That was the Petition brought over by  
 Mr. Penn, dated the 4th of *September, 1775.*

In that they farther say, among many  
 other expressions of loyalty and duty,

“ Our breasts retain too tender a regard  
 “ for the kingdom, from which we derive  
 “ our origin, to request such a conciliation  
 “ as might be in any manner *inconsistent*  
 “ *with her dignity, or her welfare.*”

When I reflect upon these things, and upon our conduct in consequence, they seem more like a vision of the night, than a reality, and the public transactions of a great, and formerly wise nation, in the face of day. I know how many false and idle pretences were made; and how we shamefully cavilled at expressions, when matters were in question upon which the very fate of this country depended.---They denied our right to tax them, and they denied nothing else; and they expected the regulation of their internal concerns by their own assemblies, agreeably to the spirit of their Charters, and to the common rights of a Free People. But because they denied any thing, because they refused to be slaves, you called them Rebels; a vain Idol of dignity, the creature of our pride and avarice, was set up: To this, our real dignity was sacrificed (for Dignity cannot consist with Tyranny and Injustice) to this, whole Hecatombs of British subjects were devoted, and the best blood of this country daily poured out. Fitter sacrifices to the beastly  
Moloch

Moloch than to the Genius of this free nation.

This is not a Government for slaves in any part of its Dominions. Philip II. said “ *he had rather have no subjects, than be a King of Hereticks;*” a British monarch should say, “ he had rather not be a King, “ than be a King of slaves.”

I beg pardon sir; I fear I tire your patience, I have dwelt longer on this retrospect of our conduct and situation than I intended; I hope the zeal which has insensibly carried me away, on a subject I have so much at heart, will be excusable.

I now proceed to explain to the House, the plan which I propose to offer, and the foundation upon which I have formed some hopes of its success, should it meet with your approbation.

First, sir, it is a Parliamentary plan. I propose to speak to the Americans by the voice of Parliament; and to lay down  
grounds

grounds and terms of Conciliation previously sanctified and ratified by Parliament.

Several plans of reconciliation have, at different times, been proposed in Parliament; but all, successively, rejected; I should indeed except one, that of the noble Lord below me, very improperly called *a Plan of Conciliation*; for it was, in my humble opinion, the very Antipodes of Conciliation. It was a plan of virtual and effectual Taxation, and consequently totally inadmissible by the Americans; it was a plan for the noble Lord's favourite *dignity*; and consequently not a plan to gain the hearts of our Colonists;

“ *Non bene conveniunt et in unâ sede mo-*  
 “ *rantur,*  
 “ *Majestas et Amor.*”

Such dignity did not consist with the love of that free people; you could not both take their money, and win their hearts; but it was imagined they might be capti-

vated with words, and think the found of freedom, as good as freedom; indeed, to those to whom Liberty is but a name, it may be so; *they* judged by more stubborn principles, they held their own property fast; but *that* sincerely and solidly secured, during all the first periods of the contest, their hearts were yours. This I shall for ever maintain as a demonstration. The scene is undoubtedly changed, and we have now the difficult task before us of retrieving an almost lost game; by so much the more difficult, as to regain the love of a much injured friend, is harder than to win the affections of a stranger.

But, I said this was a Parliamentary plan; it was by Parliament I proposed this great work of peace should be done; by Parliament alone I think it can be done; and surely, sir, it is among the capital follies of the times, that while the Honour of Parliament was ostensibly, indeed ostentatiously, held out as the cause of quarrel, all final settlement was constantly taken out of the hands of Parliament, and  
made

made the business of the Crown and its Ministers;---but, sir, for a Parliamentary settlement, every reason seems to me to militate. The voice of Parliament, speaking by an Act of Parliament, is the voice of the nation; that voice is steady, solid, permanent, not shifting and shuffling, like the voice of Ministers. The voice of Parliament will be trusted by the Americans; the words of Ministers, it is plain, cannot; it is, besides, more for our dignity, that Parliament should declare, and fix the general grounds upon which she means to accept of the friendship of the Colonies, or grant them hers; than that we should wait to hear them from thence. But above all the rest, is the great expediency, almost necessity, of a *sudden conclusion*: our situation will not bear procrastination, the delay of a single year, nay a single month, may be fatal to us, not from the miserable waste and decay of our strength alone, but, as in the present critical disposition of things new events may happen, or new enemies arise to make that situation still more desperate. This plan, sir, is framed

E for

for the speediest conclusion; for it holds out terms which the Americans at large, or any particular province, may accept when they will, and be immediately *at his Majesty's peace*; not a day, scarce an hour, need be lost in that desirable work; no previous negociation is needful; to signify their consent is sufficient.

As to the particular terms, I have followed, pretty nearly, Lord Chatham's plan, but with some variations in the matter and manner; and it is a subject of pride to me, that I tread, though at an humble distance, in the steps of that great man, and true friend to his country.

I mean by it to remove all their just complaints, and to grant them all their just demands; to make their own petitions, in general, the ground of our concessions; to secure them all their rights, their liberty and their property, not grudgingly, but fully and freely; not slightly, nor precariously, but irrevocably; not dependent upon the caprice of any Minister,  
but

but bound by the faith of the British Parliament.

It is a standard to which they may at any time repair; an asylum and bulwark to which they may resort; and a boon and grace given in perpetuity, and which it is not even left to their own failings or weakness to forfeit.

Such is the principle and scope of the Bill I shall presume to offer to the House; and to save their time in hearing a more detailed description of the particular terms, I will, with their permission, though not agreeable, I believe, to strict Parliamentary form, read, or beg the Clerk may be allowed to read, the Bill, as I have drawn it up. It may have, it has, I make no doubt, many defects; but I am not tenacious of particular words, or terms; take from it, add to it, mold it according to your wisdom,---it is yours from this moment, tho' I confess my darling child: I offer it to your care, but let me recommend it to your indulgence.

*“ To you, Sirs, and your honours, I be-  
 “ queath it.”*

Form it, fashion it, as you please; but do not cut the babe in twain; leave it that vital principle; that spirit which alone can make it an honour to its parent, or an advantage to the publick.

There remains now but one consideration more, though that a most important one; namely, what hopes we have any reasonable ground to form of its success: And here, Sir, I know the many difficulties the subject labours under, and how many adverse opinions I have to struggle with: some are for no terms, no offers at all: some will think them too large: some are for withdrawing the troops, and some for giving absolute independence. I know besides the difficulty of obtaining any peace in our present situation; but I beg the House to recollect that if the difficulty is great, the prize is inestimable.

As to withdrawing the troops, or granting independence, I shall say little. The  
 former

former has the air of a poor and cowardly yielding, leaving them all their force uncontrolled, and their league with France and Spain entire." The latter I think a dreadful alternative, for should the Thirteen Colonies be severed from us, we may still, perhaps, exist as a people, never as a great people. In the dying words of Lord Chatham, "*it is a total dismemberment of the* British Empire; that empire which his Majesty received entire from his progenitors, and which was guaranteed to the heirs of the Princess Sophia." "The Prince of Wales (he said) might demand his inheritance."

In short, Sir, it is a step I think little short of despair should drive us to, and nothing without an absolute renunciation of their league with the House of Bourbon.

As to the other, *of offering no conditions at all*, whoever thinks this is a wound *ense recidendum*, to be cured by the sword alone, errs fatally in my opinion; we have tried  
that

that experiment too long, and there is neither common sense nor humanity in it.

But, Sir, I say *the sword alone*, I never denied the use of the sword since the war began ; I never refused any aid to the full employment of it. On the contrary, I have urged, and do now, the employment of it with more activity and vigour.

There is no medium in war, and there is neither honour nor humanity in a lingering one. I would not keep one superfluous man at home, nor delay a moment reinforcing your armies there to the utmost ; ten thousand men at least should immediately reinforce Sir Henry Clinton. I don't know what so many troops are now doing at home, no way wanting to your defence. I would not lose a moment in sending them.

What I desire is, that the alternative may be fully and fairly before them : let the picture of the famous artist be actually and constantly presented to their view ; on the one side, the *horrors of war* ; on the other,  
*the*

*the certain blessings of peace.* Let the golden Hesperian fruit be placed, not only within their fight, but within their reach. For, Sir, they cannot taste of it but we must partake. As to the probability of success, I am not too sanguine. I said, I saw a *ray of hope*; I think I do: but if I could not prove a great probability, it should suffice (to shew the expediency of this measure) that *none is more probable*; that it is safe and honourable, the terms being of your own dictating, and that the experiment, which I have often urged, has never been tried. Great terms, indeed, were offered by his Majesty's Commissioners, but they were not specifically authenticated by Parliament. I think the Americans wanted faith in them, and they wanted subsequent ratification.

Sir, I do not say the Americans will accept these conditions. I am not so presumptuous; yet I think there are many reasons why they may accept them. I described, I think, truly, the wretched situation of this country. But, Sir, the Americans *are not upon a bed of roses.*

If we have difficulties, so have they ; if we have distresses, they are not exempt from them. I don't pretend to measure our mutual disasters, nor to determine which must sink and expire first. I believe their personal distresses are much greater than ours, and their resources much less ; but they have great and potent allies, who support them, and we have none.---But to what degree, and in what manner those allies will continue to support them, it seems essential to know. Will their *great and good ally*, the King of France, assist their credit, and pay their debts ? I hear they already owe three hundred million of dollars ; that they have very little money, and their paper currency excessively discredited.---By a late order of Congress, forty dollars currency are to be paid for one silver dollar.

The quotas now demanded from the different States are very great ; their troops are ill paid, ill fed, and ill clothed ; and from hence a great difficulty in keeping them together. I have been told the men in Washington's army, in the Jerseys, were last winter

ter some days reduced to live on half a pint of peas, and many had not shoes to their feet.

If these things are so, which I am not responsible for, but have some ground to believe, their *good and great ally seems* rather slow in supplying them. And this protection *of their liberties* does not, I believe, prevent much arbitrary proceeding and tyranny in their rulers. Should such distresses therefore continue and increase; should their demands on France be refused, who knows but they too may *wake from their golden dream*, like ourselves, and see in this *Protector of Liberties*, the designing conqueror, and the perfidious ally?

I understand, indeed, that the French are now preparing to send them a corps of troops: But I believe that is not the mode of supply they have most wished for; stores, provisions, necessaries, and above all, money, have been the constant objects of their demands hitherto. That of sending troops has long been a measure of great  
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doubt

doubt and deliberation. I am not sure the Americans do not think, that *when they ask for bread it is giving them a SERPENT*: I know it is the opinion of some French, and many more Americans. I do not speak at random; I have heard and seen opinions of great weight on that head: One I will name to you, Monsieur du Portail, a man of rank and character; and as they are very strong and very apposite, I will quote to you some lines out of as sensible a letter as I ever read; it is a letter from that gentleman to Monsieur de St. Germain, at that time Minister of the War department in France, written above an year ago. His words are:

“ It may be asked, whether it would  
 “ not be better to send a body of twelve or  
 “ fifteen thousand men hither, *Ce seroit le*  
 “ *vrai moyen de tout gâter*. That would be  
 “ the true way to spoil all. These people  
 “ here, though at war with the English,  
 “ hate the French much more than the  
 “ English; and notwithstanding all that  
 “ France has done, or might do for them,  
 “ they would prefer a reconciliation with  
 “ their

“ their ancient brethren.---This (says he)  
 “ we prove every day; and should they for  
 “ a moment consent to French troops com-  
 “ ing among them, their natural antipathy  
 “ would soon disclose itself, and would  
 “ produce the most fatal quarrels.”

And, speaking afterwards of the idea of putting the French in possession of Canada; he adds:

“ The neighbourhood of the French is  
 “ sufficient to give them a dislike to their  
 “ liberty, because they would not expect  
 “ to keep it long: Dependence for depend-  
 “ ence, they prefer that of England.”

He makes many other remarks on the state and disposition of America, very well worth attention, and much confirming some propositions I have already thrown out. He says,

“ They want *stores and necessaries of many*  
 “ *kinds, cloth, linen, leather, cordage, salt,*  
 “ *sugar, brandy, &c.* And that these things  
 F 2 “ were

“ were of the more consequence, because  
 “ these people before the war, though not  
 “ living in actual luxury, had all the con-  
 “ veniences of life in great abundance;  
 “ loved their ease and their indolence;  
 “ their pipe of tobacco, and their tea.  
 “ That they were heartily grieved to be-  
 “ come soldiers all of a sudden, and to be  
 “ plunged into the rigours and hardships of  
 “ war, which they detested.

“ This may seem (says he) a strange lan-  
 “ guage; but such is really the turn of this  
 “ people; they act with no energy, vigour,  
 “ nor passion in the cause they have espoused,  
 “ and continue in it only because they have  
 “ been once set a-going in it. *Ily' a cent*  
 “ *fait plus d' enthousiasme pour cette re-*  
 “ *volution cy dans un caffè de Paris, que*  
 “ *dans toutes les Colonies Unies.*

“ There is a hundred times more enthu-  
 “ siasm for this revolution in a coffee-house  
 “ at Paris, than in all the United Colo-  
 “ nies.”

Such

Such, Sir, are the genuine reflections of this gentleman: I do not assert the infallibility of Monsieur du Portail; I do not swear by Monsieur du Portail; but I think he writes like a man of sense; he was then conversant with the Americans; he had an high rank in their army, and he seems by his stile to have been confidentially employed to study, and report to the French Minister the state of things in that country.

I should add too, that after all these observations he urges strenuously the support of the American war in a proper way; and *that*, “because he thinks the independence of America would *annihilate the Marine of Great Britain*, and throw its commerce into the hands of France.”

To some it may seem strange, Sir, that I, professedly a favourer of the Americans, and a determined enemy to this war, should in any degree adopt such language, should express such aversion to the Independence of America, and with a plan of conciliation in my hand, (and God knows at my heart)

heart) should yet urge the increase of our army there, and the more spirited and vigorous prosecution of hostilities.

First then, let me say, that it is because I hate the war that I am for carrying it on with vigour. If I wished to prolong the war, I should be for carrying it on ignorantly and flimsily.

And I desire it may be remembered, that although to America persecuted by our cruelty, and trampled on by our pride; to America, goaded and forced into rebellion, I was an ardent friend, yet to America irrevocably, as her Congress asserts, leagued with France and Spain, our natural enemies, against us, I have long ago declared, if I am a friend to Great Britain, I must be an enemy.

If, therefore, they are determined to be French, and not British Colonies; if they will have unconditional submission from us, bad as our situation may be, I will not think it desperate.

Despair

Despair is a mean and cowardly vice ; destruction for destruction, I would fall manfully at least, and as our great deliverer King William said, “ *Die in the last ditch.*” But, Sir, you have a vast army in America ; I believe the establishment is above seventy thousand men, though we have fought our principle battles with 10, or at most 15,000 ; whereas could we have an army of 30,000 assembled, I am persuaded the Americans never could have drawn, or kept together, one to face them ; we have besides the great advantage of powerful detachments, by means of our navy, for small ones will always be both cruel and ineffectual.

Yet, Sir, I would not have you rely on the war : I would only make it subservient to the great work of peace : if I knew a possible way of making peace without it, I would abandon it.

It is, however, as I have said, but an alternative ; it cannot, I think, be more fairly or honourably offered, and till it has  
 been

been disproved by trial, I cannot but have an hope of its success. For this plan, at the same time that it offers them our friendship, proves our sincerity, and it has this peculiar advantage, that it will be always before their eyes, in all dispositions, under all circumstances: other offers may be made on either side at untoward times, in moments of irritation or partial advantage, and may shift and vary with the moment. This will be out of the hands of Ministers, and out of the reach of caprice; and however rooted the Congress may be in their plan of Independence and French connexion, I cannot but think there is in many of the people a dislike to that connexion, and in many more a cordial affection towards their Parent State, not yet obliterated by our usage.

There are besides, if I am rightly informed, divisions of another kind among them, more particular and personal; divisions of faction, enmity, and ambition; no body knows how far these, or the influence of weighty and able men, in the army or the

provinces, may lead. There are, besides what I have before mentioned, the love of ease, the weariness of the war, and the pressure of distresses.

It is from such causes, and in such situations, that the most sudden and unexpected revolutions have been brought about; no less than five or six in Europe, and within little more than a century past. Two most remarkable in our own country, the restoration of monarchy under Charles the Second, and the happy revolution of 1688. Nor were those of Portugal, Denmark, and now lately of Sweden less sudden, or entire. In all these cases the change was easy and instantaneous, almost like the scenes of a drama.

In all it was a flying from present evils, from the uneasiness and pressure of the moment, and in several a change apparently to a state of less constitutional liberty.

I have tired your patience; I have but one word to add, it is above all things to

G

deprecate

deprecate delay and procrastination ; it is to beg that whatever you resolve, for war or conciliation, may be immediately resolved. The time is critical and precarious ; the scene fickle and shifting ; a moment gained may be your salvation ; a moment lost, your ruin. A defeat at sea ; a disaster in America ; the accession of new enemies, (not an impossible event) I doubt, may disable you from making war or peace. Even while we are debating, important and precious moments are stealing away,

*Dum loquimur fugerit invida*

*Ætas, carpe diem quam minimum credula  
postero.*

I thank the House for the indulgence they have shewn me, and I humbly move, Sir,

“ That leave be given to bring in a Bill  
“ for quieting the troubles now reigning in  
“ the British Colonies in America, and for  
“ enabling his Majesty to appoint Commis-  
“ sioners, with full powers to treat, and  
“ conclude upon terms of conciliation with  
“ the said Colonies.”

# A P P E N D I X.

## A B I L L

F O R

*Quieting the Troubles now reigning in the  
BRITISH COLONIES in AMERICA, and  
for enabling his Majesty to appoint COM-  
MISSIONERS, with full Powers to treat  
and conclude upon Terms of CONCILIA-  
TION with the said Colonies.*

“ W H E R E A S a ruinous and unna-  
“ tural war has for some years raged be-  
“ tween Great Britain and the several British  
“ Colonies in America, destructive at once  
“ of that harmony and mutual affection  
“ which had so long made the happiness  
“ and strength of both countries, and there-  
“ by giving every advantage to the known  
“ enemies of the British empire in all its  
“ parts, the fixed union of which had, by  
“ their cordial and effectual efforts, raised  
“ the name of Britain to the highest pitch  
“ of human renown and felicity ; and had,  
“ during the course of many glorious  
G 2 “ reigns

“ reigns, served as a barrier to the liberties  
 “ of Europe, and as the strongest support  
 “ of the Protestant religion against the  
 “ baneful schemes of Popery and Despo-  
 “ tism.

“ And whereas, in the heat of a conten-  
 “ tion, hastily begun, many pernicious  
 “ maxims have been adopted, and many  
 “ false and dangerous measures pursued on  
 “ both sides.

“ Now, in order to heal the said fatal  
 “ dissensions, and to stop the farther effu-  
 “ sion of fellow-subjects' blood,

“ Be it hereby declared and enacted by  
 “ the King's most excellent Majesty, by  
 “ and with the advice and consent of the  
 “ Lords, spiritual and temporal, &c.

“ That immediately upon the conclusion  
 “ of any treaty of conciliation between  
 “ Great Britain and America, all those  
 “ rights, ~~privileges~~<sup>privileges</sup>, and immunities, which  
 “ were demanded by the several associated  
 “ Colonies in their Petitions and Memo-  
 “ rials

“ rials to the King, and to the two Houses  
 “ of Parliament, (and particularly in the  
 “ Petition of the Congress to the King of  
 “ the 8th of *July*, 1775, and in the Me-  
 “ morial of the Colony of New-York to  
 “ the House of Lords of the 25th of  
 “ *March*, 1775; and in the Representation  
 “ and Remonstrance of the General Assem-  
 “ bly of the said Colony of New-York, to  
 “ the House of Commons of the same  
 “ date,) be, and are hereby declared to be  
 “ conceded, and confirmed on the part of  
 “ Great Britain, to the several associated  
 “ Colonies, or to any one or more of them,  
 “ who shall agree on terms of conciliation  
 “ as aforesaid, with any Commissioners ap-  
 “ pointed, or to be appointed by his Ma-  
 “ jesty for that purpose.

“ And that no doubt may remain of the  
 “ sincere and friendly intentions of Great  
 “ Britain, and of her earnest desire to bring  
 “ back the ancient affection of her chil-  
 “ dren, and restore that beneficial inter-  
 “ course which must ever be the true basis  
 “ of their grandeur and happiness;

“ Be it hereby declared and enacted by  
 “ the authority aforesaid, that from the  
 “ day such conciliation, or treaty, shall be  
 “ concluded, all or any of the 13 associated  
 “ Colonies, so agreeing on terms of con-  
 “ ciliation as aforesaid, shall be, and are  
 “ hereby declared to be at the peace of his  
 “ Majesty, and restored to the usual inter-  
 “ course of friendship and commerce.  
 “ And it is hereby farther declared and  
 “ enacted, That no tallage, tax, or other  
 “ charge whatever, shall from thenceforth  
 “ be raised on the freemen of America,  
 “ without their own consent, by their re-  
 “ presentatives duly convened in assembly  
 “ there.

“ That the powers of the Admiralty,  
 “ and Vice-Admiralty Courts, be restrain'd  
 “ within their ancient limits, and the tri-  
 “ al by jury, in all civil cases, where the  
 “ same may have been abolished, restored.

“ That no subject in America shall, in  
 “ *capital cases*, be liable to be indicted and  
 “ tried for the same in any place out of the  
 “ province

“ province where such crime shall have  
 “ been committed; nor be deprived of a  
 “ trial by his Peers of the vicinage.

“ That it shall not be lawful to send  
 “ persons indicted for murder in any Colo-  
 “ ny of America, to another Colony, or to  
 “ Great Britain, for trial.

“ The Judges in the Law Courts in the  
 “ Colonies, shall hold their offices and sala-  
 “ ries as *his Majesty's* Judges in England.  
 “ *Quam diu se bene gesserint.*

“ That the Colonies in America are just-  
 “ ly entitl'd to all the privileges, franchi-  
 “ ses, and immunities, granted by their se-  
 “ veral charters and constitutions; and that  
 “ the said charters or constitutions ought  
 “ not to be invaded or resumed, unless for  
 “ misusage or some legal ground of forfei-  
 “ ture.

“ And for the said, and other good  
 “ and beneficial purposes, it is hereby  
 “ declared and enacted, that the following  
 “ acts,

“ acts, or so much of the same as have  
 “ been represented to be found grievous  
 “ to the subjects in the Colonies as afore-  
 “ said, namely, the acts of 4 Geo. III.  
 “ ch. 15 and 34. 5 Geo. III. ch. 25.  
 “ 6 Geo. III. ch. 52. 7 Geo. III. ch. 41  
 “ and 46. 8 Geo. III. ch. 22. 12 Geo.  
 “ III. ch. 24. 14 Geo. III. ch. 54.

“ Be and are hereby repealed with re-  
 “ spect to all or any of the said Colonies,  
 “ from the day they shall have respectively  
 “ entered into and concluded terms of con-  
 “ ciliation with Great Britain, or with any  
 “ persons authorized by his Majesty for  
 “ that purpose.

“ The said acts also to be suspended, and  
 “ remain, without effect, in like manner,  
 “ should any truce take place for a limited  
 “ time between Great Britain, and all or  
 “ any of the said Colonies respectively,  
 “ during the continuance of such truce.

“ And be it farther declared, that the  
 “ act of 14 Geo. III. ch. 33. for regu-  
 “ lating

“ lating the government of the province  
 “ of Quebec, shall be reconsidered; altered,  
 “ or repealed.

“ And that no future doubt or jealousy  
 “ may remain relative to the rights of the  
 “ Colonies, and the power of their assem-  
 “ blies, lawfully constituted, be it declared  
 “ by the authority aforesaid, that the said  
 “ Colonies, in their said assemblies, shall,  
 “ agreeably to their charters and constitu-  
 “ tions, have full power and authority to  
 “ regulate all matters for the peace and  
 “ good order of their internal government;  
 “ the Legislature of Great Britain reserv-  
 “ ing only to itself the power of ordering  
 “ and enacting such things as concern the  
 “ maintenance of the said charters and con-  
 “ stitutions, the general weal of the em-  
 “ pire, and the due regulation of the trade  
 “ and commerce thereof, upon those prin-  
 “ ciples of equity and sound policy, which  
 “ shall, on full discussion and consideration,  
 “ be found most conducive to the general  
 “ good.

“ And that nothing may obstruct or re-  
 “ tard the great work of peace, his Ma-  
 “ jesty is hereby authorized to appoint  
 “ Commissioners, with full powers to  
 “ treat and conclude, either peace or truce,  
 “ with all or any of the said Colonies,  
 “ upon such other, or farther terms of  
 “ conciliation, as to his Majesty, in his  
 “ wisdom, shall seem fit: always under-  
 “ stood, and the same is hereby again de-  
 “ clared and enacted; that all the several  
 “ privileges, immunities, and advantages  
 “ hereby granted to all, or any of the said  
 “ Colonies as above-mentioned, do serve  
 “ as the basis of such treaty of conciliation,  
 “ and are hereby sanctified and guaranteed  
 “ under the faith of Parliament, as neces-  
 “ sary parts of the same.

“ And farther, be it declared and en-  
 “ acted by the authority aforesaid, that it  
 “ shall and may be lawful for his Majesty  
 “ to empower Commissioners to grant  
 “ free pardon to any person, or any number  
 “ or description of persons, or his full and  
 “ general pardon to the inhabitants of all,

“ or any of the said Colonies respectively,  
 “ for all acts of hostility, and for all things  
 “ done or committed during the present  
 “ troubles, and previous to the signing or  
 “ conclusion of any treaty of conciliation  
 “ as aforesaid ; and the same shall be con-  
 “ sidered, and is hereby confirmed as an  
 “ act of perpetual amnesty and oblivion of  
 “ such acts of hostility, and of all things  
 “ so done and committed during the con-  
 “ tinuance of the said troubles.”

T H E E N D.

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E R R A T A.

- Page 1, The sentence, “ I stand besides in the unfortunate predica-  
 “ ment of having a system,” &c. should be read thus :—  
 “ I stand besides in the unfortunate predicament of having  
 “ *adopted* a system,” &c.
- 44, 3d line from the bottom, for principles, read *privileges*.
- 47, 5th line from the end, for mistakes, read *mistakes*.

