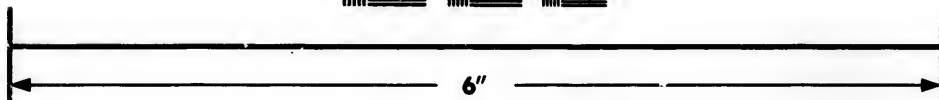
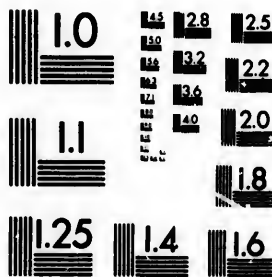


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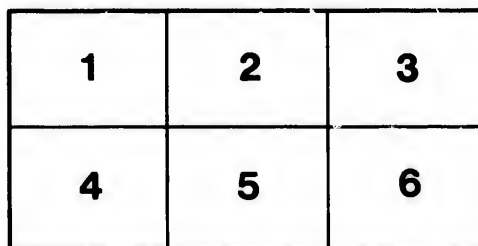
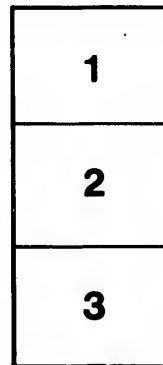
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On the Charges brought against them by

LORD M-----D, and Others,

IN A LETTER TO
HIS LORDSHIP.

Digito monstrari & diciet, Hic est.

L O N D O N:
Printed for J. ALMON, opposite Burlington-House, Piccadilly.
MDCCLXXV.

[Price One Shilling.]

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T H E

PLEA of the COLONIES, &c.

To LORD M-----D.

My Lord,

WHILE you were pleas'd to withdraw yourself from the cabinet, and sit in silence behind the curtain, securely to enjoy the conscious pleasure of guiding the political machine, and giving birth to measures that you did not chuse publicly to adopt, whatever we might think of your Lordship's influence, or that of your noble countrymen and friends, we were not fully at liberty to express our sentiments upon it. It was generally believed that the noble Lord who presides in the Treasury, and his kinsman, the late American secretary, were *not* principals in devising the American war. They held a language, both in public and in private, that might tend to secure them from the charge. They were sometimes observed to unsay, or explain to nothing, what they had said but yesterday; there was such a want of consistence among some of their actions, there was

such a disagreement between the outward and visible face of their conduct, and the inward spirit, which was constantly opposing every healing proposition, and dragging the nation into the road to war, that we could not doubt of a *secret influence* of a real minister, who pointed out the path to the ostensible one, and brought him back whenever he chanced to listen to his own opinion, and step out of the true road; yet when we sought for the person who, deaf to the cries of justice, callous to the feelings of humanity, could think of paving the way to arbitrary domination, by shedding the blood of thousands, we durst not say to the first judge in the kingdom, "*thou art the man.*" The time, however, is at last come when silence is no longer necessary; perhaps not safe: we have crossed the Rubicon, your Lordship's presence may be requisite to animate the troops, and inspire those Britons with martial rage, who might still pause at shedding a brother's blood. While the American dispute was considered as little more than a quarrel with the town of Boston *about drowning a few chests of tea*, the nation could hardly take the alarm; they could not suspect that a capital revolution was intended, or that the liberties of the whole empire were in danger; nor would the consequent steps that seemed to spring from that quarrel, by a *fatal progression of crimes*, give any great alarm to a generous nation, that generally believeth all things and hopeth all things that

that are best, especially as the business still seemed to be conducted by the ordinary ministers: and surely while nothing more was professed than quelling a mob, or punishing a refractory town, your Lordship's counsel was not requisite ;

*Nec deus interfit nisi dignus vindice nodus
Incederit.*

But now that we have smuggled a march, that we are passed over the preliminary steps, and are plunged, God knows why, into the very bowels of a civil war ; now that a political subject of doubtful enquiry is, by the most barbarous figure in rhetoric, committed to the mouth of a cannon, and from a single town the fiery argument has extended so far as to involve fourteen or fifteen provinces, your Lordship has thought proper to step forward and inform us that you are for blood. No plan of accommodation, no terms of peace are to be held out to the Americans, the sword is not to be stayed so much as for an hour ; nothing less than " absolute, unconditional" submission is to be accepted. We should not even talk of peace, for " much is to be done, and little said". The Americans must be absolutely subdued. The reason you have been pleased to give for this severe process is very remarkable. "*The Americans do not wish for peace, they have long been aiming at absolute independence* and will be satisfied with nothing

thing less." As this is the great pillar on which your Lordship and your friends have thought fit to lean ; as this is the general argument by which you have lately agreed to justify the present plan of extirpating the Americans, or bending them beneath the conqueror's yoke, I shall take the liberty to examine it with some attention. That I may do justice to your reasonings on this subject, and through you to the reasonings of the visible ministry, who, on this occasion, are certainly directed by that secret confidential corps which you have formed, I shall collect into one point of view the sum of what you have delivered in defence of the American war, in your noted speech of November last on the capture bill, and in your late memorable speech on the Duke of Grafton's motion ; for they tended to the same object, they were founded on the same hypothesis.

Conscious I am, that in this humble disquisition, in which I appeal to the honest, the virtuous and disinterested part of this nation, I shall come far short of your Lordship in elegance of language, clearness of diction, and flowers of rhetoric ; but I shall, for this reason among others, try to differ from your Lordship in another particular of some consequence ; I shall deal in facts not in conjectures. Though every thing that is offered by your Lordship falls from so great an eminence that it cannot fail to make its impression on the public, yet I shall

shall restrain myself to the outlines and principal arguments of your two speeches, confident that I shall not overlook those particular opinions which you wish the nation should embrace, nor those interesting arguments on which you have justified the present war, and repudiated the very idea of peace.

“ It was foretold by Davenant, that whenever the American colonies should find themselves of sufficient strength, they would endeavour to form themselves into a *separate independent state*; and this (you say) has been the constant object of the people of New England almost from their earliest infancy. At the conclusion of the late war an idea prevailed, that the Americans should contribute towards the public expence,” (and that the Parliament of England should tax them for that purpose without their consent.) “ *I shall not pretend to say how proper such a measure* might have been, but the stamp-act passed, and nobody opposed it. Next year the declaratory act was also passed without any opposition. On the following year the port-duties were laid while a noble Lord, now in opposition (Lord Camden) presided on the woollack, he never said a word against them. The Boston port-bill also passed the year before last without any manner of opposition. *Of the following acts I shall say nothing*, but if the other acts were justifiable I think the
“ latter

" latter were equally so. I do not think
 " America complains of particular injuries so
 " much as she does of the violation of her
 " rights. The congress sum up the whole
 " of their grievances in that passage of the
 " declaratory act which asserts the right of
 " Great Britain to make laws to bind them
 " in all cases whatsoever. That is the true
 " bone of contention. They positively de-
 " ny the right not the mode of exercising it.
 " They would allow the King of Great Bri-
 " tain a nominal sovereignty over them, *but*
 " *nothing else*. They would throw off their
 " dependence on the crown of Great Britain
 " but not on the person of the King whom
 " they would render a cypher. They would
 " be as Hanover is to England." To this
 state of the controversy you were pleased to
 add, in favour of hostile measures: " The
 " Americans are now at war, they have in-
 " vaded Canada, they are acting on the of-
 " fensive; we are not to enquire who was the
 " aggressor; whether we are right or wrong,
 " we must proceed. We are not to dis-
 " criminate the innocent from the guilty, if
 " we do not kill them, they will kill us."

Of three positions which your Lordship
 has endeavoured to establish, it is hard to dis-
 cover which is best calculated to promote the
 present views of administration. If either of
 them should be fully received, it may be ex-
 pected that the nation will cordially apply
 their

their shoulders to the American war. If either of them should be questioned, some part of the nation may still remain tardy. Your first endeavour is to persuade us that every set of ministers and all parties of men have uniformly agreed in their attempts to tax the Americans ever since that question was first agitated. If that had indeed been the case, we have certainly nothing to gain by a change of men, for the same measures would still be pursued; and if there can be no change of measures, the Americans had best submit in time, since they can never expect more reasonable terms. Whatever the truth may be, your Lordship has certainly heard that the Americans in general view this subject in a different light. They believe that there is a very respectable, a very numerous body of men in this kingdom, who are generally distinguished by the name of Whigs, who are friends to civil liberty and perfectly averse to the idea of taxing their brethren in North-America. They believe, that by some of those men the stamp-act was repealed, a humane, prudent, and magnanimous measure, by which peace was restored to the empire, though the authors of it knew they must be ruined at court.

“Nec profunt domino quæ profunt omnibus artes.”

The Americans, indeed, complain of the declaratory act *as it is explained by their enemies*, for it is now made, and without further ex-

planation may continue to be made, a foundation for every kind of oppression : but they do not believe that the framers of the declaratory act could ever be charged with the desire of taxing them ; since it was notorious that they had introduced that very act as a kind of salvo for the authority of Parliament, in order that they might be enabled to repeal the only law by which America was taxed. The declaratory act was a sword of state, for ornament rather than for use ; it was never to be drawn for the purpose of revenue, nor for any other occasion less important than the salvation of the empire. In this light the Americans viewed it from the beginning, for which reason it had not the least tendency to check those shouts of joy which were heard from every province when the stamp-act was repealed. If we are still at a loss to know whether all classes of men among us are equally obnoxious to the Americans, and whether they consider themselves equally aggrieved by all, let us hear the late declaration of the congress, the very piece your Lordship is pleased to quote. After enumerating the many acts of injustice and cruelty that have lately been practised against them, they add “ fruitless were all the
“ entreaties, arguments, and eloquence of an
“ illustrious band of the most distinguished
“ peers and commoners, who nobly and strenuously asserted the justice of our cause, to
“ stay or even to mitigate the heedless fury
“ with which these accumulated and unex-
“ amplified

“ ampled outrages were hurried on.” The evidence being thus stated, we shall continue to think that peace might be restored to America by a change of measures ; for I am certain that the Americans believe and hope that a change of men shall yet produce such a change of measures. To that alone they still trust for the comfort and advantage of remaining a part of this empire. To their own valour and to God they now trust for the preservation of their liberty.

The second position which your Lordship has endeavoured to establish is, that the Americans do not wish for peace, they would not be satisfied with relief from particular grievances ; they aim at independence, and would throw off their subjection to the crown of Great Britain. As this very charge is circulated through every part of the kingdom by those who would justify the oppressor by casting a darker shade on the oppressed, I have taken much pains to discover the evidence on which it is founded ; but after all my researches I cannot find any better reason for supposing that the Americans desire to be independent, than their own uniform declarations that they do *not* desire it. Davenant, for aught we know, was a very honest man and a good prophet ; but prophecies are not usually adduced in evidence of facts. The arguments that are brought from New England, seem to operate against your Lordship's position ; for if the troubles that appeared in Massachusetts in the reign of William and Mary, give any evidence that inde-

pendence was their object, certainly the loyalty of those people and their unequalled zeal in his Majesty's service, on later occasions, give a more pleasing evidence of their desire to belong to the British empire. Your Lordship is pleased to suppose that the Americans would allow the King of Great Britain a nominal sovereignty over them but nothing else. We flatter ourselves that you do not wish to see absolute despotism established in any part of his Majesty's dominions, and yet we are at a loss to conceive how a British judge should give *the name* of power and *nothing else* to what the Americans have never refused his Majesty. If the power of making peace and war, of appointing their governors and judges, of disallowing or confirming their laws and being their final arbitrator and judge, is to be called *no power*, we should gladly hear what constitutes full power. If it should even be said that the Americans would reduce the power of a British Parliament to a name and nothing else, we should still lament that the author of such a charge was not well informed. Let us hear the Americans on this very subject, in their last address to the people of England. " It has been said that we refuse to submit to the restrictions on our commerce. From whence is this inference drawn? Not from our words; we have repeatedly declared the contrary, and we again profess our submission to the several acts of trade and navigation passed before the year 1763. And we cheerfully consent to the operation

“ operation of such acts of the British Parliament as shall be restrained to the regulation of external commerce for the purpose of securing the commercial advantages of the whole empire to the mother country and the commercial benefits of its respective members, *excluding every idea of taxation* internally or externally for raising a revenue on the subjects in America without their consent.”

When we see men diligent in pointing out secret causes of public complaints, or labouring to place them to some account which the parties do not avow, we are apt to suspect a want of candour in the enquirer, or an absence of real and obvious grievance in the persons complaining. If the Americans had gone out of the way to seek for some grievance, if they had gone back to revive some ancient claim, or discuss some doubtful theorem, then indeed we might have said that the ostensible cause was not the true one, and that they sought for something which they did not avow. Nothing of this sort has happened to the Americans. Their complaints immediately followed the injuries they had received; the injuries were not trifling or imaginary, they were gross and palpable, they lay in the very road and must have been removed, else the miserable colonist must have stumbled and fallen into the very pit of despotism. Life and property were at the sole disposal of men who knew them not, who were not touched by their calamities; of men who were to gain by their

loss and prosper by their adversity. Do the Americans seem ripe for a revolt, merely because they complain of such a grievance? or does it follow that a man is not to be pacified by acts of justice, merely because he resists acts of violence and oppression. So far have the Americans been from complaining without cause, that we have long admired their patience in suffering; their steady perseverance and moderation in complaining. I do not indeed say that the Americans have suffered in proportion to the bitterness of the draught that has been prepared for them: I cannot deny that the guardian angel of that country seems to have been present in the British councils, while the demon of discord was dealing out her potions with an unrelenting hand. She has diluted the poison and saved her country. Our statesmen have listened to the council of Ahithophel; they have added cruelty to oppression, and insult to injury; they have followed one act of tyranny by another, with such hasty steps, that they have saved where they meant to destroy; they have roused the most torpid American, they have informed the most scrupulous casuist.

It being once more determined, in an evil hour, to tax the Americans, though the stamp-act had been repealed, and they being resolved in the most peaceable manner to elude the force of such a tax, by not consuming any article on which it was laid, the measure for some time seemed to be defeated; but it was a favourite measure. A new law was framed, by
which

which the usual channel of commerce was altered, in order that you might ensnare the people and oblige them to rescind ; but people who had been thwarted and provoked for some years, were not very tractable. The new measures produced a riot in Boston, and some goods were destroyed by the populace. Instead of enquiring into the matter, or demanding justice in the usual form ; that justice which had never been refused on former occasions, the whole town of Boston, unheard and untried, was immediately condemned to suffer that kind of extreme, inadequate punishment which favours of revenge rather than correction, which resembles the bitterness of an enemy rather than the frowns of a parent. The mischief did not stop there : an indigent, seditious governor had laboured for some years to gain the favour of his superiors, by contriving mischief to his native country, and though he was detected in his schemes, though it was known that he had been disappointed and soured, that he hated his countrymen and was mutually hated by them, yet his counsel was adopted ; to him did you give an attentive ear, as whilom our unhappy grandame listened to the other enemy of our species. The charter of Massachusetts was changed without necessity, without provocation. By that single stroke every other province was informed that nothing was sacred or secure. This was only the beginning of their calamities, for an act was passed which may be entitled, an act to encourage and enable soldiers, custom-house officers, and tide waiters

to murder his Majesty's subjects in America. Why do I mention particulars? They are fresh in your Lordship's memory; but you seem to have discovered no severity nor injustice in them. You do not think they gave rise to the present war. You are pleased to suppose that an abstract theorem, a general declaration, has given more offence to the Americans than all the injuries they have received. May I entreat your Lordship to review this subject without partiality, and judge with candor, so may you expect mercy, when you also shall be judged. Have the Americans no solid cause of complaint? Have they not suffered many severe injuries, and been forced to groan under the hand of oppression? Were not these injuries and that oppression the immediate and true cause of their drawing the sword? When we hear the pensioners and runners of court, the common *stoakers* of civil discord in every coffee-house and public assembly, dealing out the stale charge of malice prepense against the Americans, boldly affirming that they have long been aiming at a state of independence, and that a rebellious disposition gave rise to the present commotions; though the story is founded on fiction, though it was invented for the purpose of deceiving and exasperating a generous people that they may take part in the quarrel and become partakers in the blood of their brethren. When we hear the calumny retailed by such people we are not surprized, for by this story they have their bread; but when your Lordship condescends to travel near the same ground,

ground, and to quote Davenant as a proof that somebody has said the Americans would hereafter strive to be independent; or to quote the declaration of the Americans themselves, as a proof that they ask for nothing more or less than a state of independence, we are in pain for the Majesty of Truth. In a little time we shall not wonder if it is commonly affirmed that the Americans, from their innate love of despotism have been contriving a revolution in favour of an exiled family; we should not even be surpris'd if every recruiting officer was taught to use this argument as the most likely means of rousing the English nation; as for our brethren in the north, their loyalty, at present, does not seem to need any spur. However this may be, I must bespeak your Lordship's patience a few minutes, while I am a little more particular in considering the foundation of that general charge which you have been pleas'd to bring. Whatever any writers have suppos'd might happen to America, by observing what has happened to all other nations, yet I can safely affirm, that whoever was best acquainted with the colonists had least reason to believe that they were looking towards a state of independence. As members of the British empire, they have enjoy'd, till the beginning of the present controversy, (a few impolitic and unprofitable restrictions excepted) as much liberty as was consistent with civil government, or as much as they could possibly expect under a new form. They were conscious of the blessing, they pray'd for its

continuance. They esteemed Great Britain as a parent, they loved her with more than filial affection; they loved every thing that was British; they were to a man zealously attached to his Majesty, if we except a few individuals who migrated to that country in the year forty-five. What could tempt such people to become independent? We have generally supposed that it is more safe, as well as more honourable to be a member of a great empire than of a small one; not that I believe the Americans, as a separate state, have ought to fear from any of the most formidable nations in Europe; but no man would stand alone in a severe contest, who might have a powerful support; and to my certain knowledge the Americans have vainly flattered themselves with perpetual peace, apprehending that by their assistance Great Britain would soon become such a dangerous adversary, that no foreign state might provoke her with safety. In this manner I should have supposed the Americans would reason, and in this manner I know they generally have reasoned concerning their connection with Great Britain; but lest I should be charged with partial judgment or dealing in conjectures, let us hear the general voice of America. I shall not trouble your Lordship by repeating their numerous declarations on this subject, from the beginning of the controversy; I shall confine myself to their latest publications, such as have been made since the destruction of the peasants at Lexington; since General Gage began to waste and depo-

depopulate their country—a period in which we cannot suppose they have used flattering terms, nor professed more than they intended.

The congress, in their petition to the King, after declaring their attachment to his person and family, proceed thus, “ Connected with
 “ Great Britain by the strongest ties that can
 “ unite societies, and deploring every event
 “ that tends in any degree to weaken them, we
 “ solemnly assure your Majesty, that we not on-
 “ ly most ardently desire the former harmony
 “ between her and these colonies may be restor-
 “ ed, but that a concord may be established be-
 “ tween them, upon so firm a basis, as to per-
 “ petuate its blessings uninterrupted by any
 “ future dissensions.” In their address to the inhabitants of Great Britain they say, “ Give
 “ us leave most solemnly to assure you, that
 “ we have not yet lost sight of the object *we*
 “ *have ever had in view*, a reconciliation with
 “ you on constitutional principles, and a resto-
 “ ration of that friendly intercourse which, to
 “ the advantage of both, we till lately main-
 “ tained.” If it should be said, that the con-
 gress has not delivered the true motives of its
 own conduct, nor the sense of its constituents,
 we are furnished with copious evidence to the
 same import by the people themselves, who
 have lately been convened on public occasions
 in most of the provinces. I should not trou-
 ble your Lordship by repeating on this occa-
 sion any thing that has been advanced by men
 who from their profession are not supposed to
 be well versed in politics, but we have seen a

short exhortation, published on June last, at New York, by a convention of more than a hundred clergy, from seven or eight different provinces, which contains an observation so remarkable, that it deserves even your Lordship's attention. "It gives us," say they, "the greatest pleasure to say *from our own certain knowledge* of all belonging to our communion, and from the best means of information of the far greatest part of all denominations in this country, that the present opposition to the measures of administration does not in the least arise from a disaffection to the King, or a desire of separation from the parent state." So far are the Americans from wishing to become independent, that some of the most zealous provinces, fearing lest a temporary confederacy, though adopted for the sole purpose of defence, should finally terminate in a separation from the parent state, have expressly instructed their delegates to be cautious in adopting any measures of that kind. The plan of a proposed confederacy (which was to last for two years, or till the grievances were removed) was laid before the provincial congress held at Hillsborough, in North Carolina, 21st August, 1775; when after mature consideration, the congress in committee came to the following resolution.

"That the committee have taken into consideration the plan of general confederation between the united colonies, and are of opinion that the same is not at present eligible; and it is also the opinion of this committee, that

" that the delegates of this province ought to
 " be instructed, not to consent to any plan of
 " confederation which may be offered in an
 " ensuing congress, until the same shall be laid
 " before and approved by the provincial con-
 " gress. That the present association ought
 " to be relied on for bringing about a recon-
 " ciliation with the parent state, and a further
 " confederacy ought only to be adopted in
 " *case of the last necessity.*" The committee
 (of the assembly of Pennsylvania sitting at Phi-
 ladelphia 9th Nov. 1775) appointed to pre-
 pare and bring in a draught of instructions for
 the delegates of that province in congress, re-
 ported an essay for that purpose, which being
 read and considered, was agreed to by the
 house, and is as follows, viz.

" Gentlemen,

" The trust reposed in you is of such a na-
 " ture, and the modes of executing it may be
 " so diversified in the course of your delibera-
 " tions that it is scarcely possible to give you
 " particular instructions respecting it. We
 " therefore in general direct that you, or any
 " four of you, meet in congress the delegates of
 " the several colonies now assembled in this city,
 " and any such delegates as may meet in con-
 " gress the next year, that you consult toge-
 " ther on the present critical and alarming state
 " of public affairs, that you may exert your
 " utmost endeavours to agree upon and re-
 " commend such measures as you shall judge
 " to afford the best prospect of obtaining re-
 " dress of American grievances, and restoring
 " that

“ that union and harmony between Great
 “ Britain and the colonies, so essential to the
 “ welfare and happiness of both countries.

“ Though the oppressive measures of the
 “ British Parliament and administration have
 “ compelled us to resist their violence by force
 “ of arms, yet *we strictly enjoin you, that you, in*
 “ *behalf of this colony, dissent from, and utterly*
 “ *reject any propositions, should such be made,*
 “ *that may cause to lead to a separation from our*
 “ *mother country, or a change of the form of*
 “ *this government. You are directed to make*
 “ *report of your proceedings to this House.*”

Such are the proofs we have received concerning the object of dispute in North America; to adduce more evidence on this subject would be vain tautology: he that can set his face against such declarations, and continue to say that the Americans have engaged in the present dispute through the desire of becoming independent, must have shut his eyes against conviction, and hardened himself in the practice of *saying things which are not*. Your Lordship has discovered, and no common genius could have discovered from the above instructions, that the Pennsylvanians wish to become independent.

Hitherto we have only had occasion to complain that your Lordship has attempted to hurt the Americans by blackening their reputation, and charging them with crimes of which they are *not guilty*. Your third position goes farther; you are not satisfied with painting them in dark colours, in order to sink them in the
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esteem of the most virtuous, and hitherto the most loyal part of this nation, you would follow them to the grave. Without evidence, and contrary to the clearest evidence, you are first pleased to suppose them guilty, you would then proceed to their execution. "The Americans," you say, "have invaded Canada, they are acting on the offensive; we are not to enquire who was the aggressor; we must proceed: if we do not kill them, they will kill us." On this occasion we can hardly say which is the most conspicuous, your Lordship's humanity, or your close attachment to the history of facts; the Americans are acting on the offensive, if we do not kill them they will kill us: this is curious and perfectly new. On what principal does your Lordship suppose we can adopt this story, while we retain a spark of common sense? Have we not seen a map of that country? Have we not read the history of the present war. Your violence commenced by shutting up the port of Boston; a fleet and army were sent to intimidate and distress the inhabitants, till, by the pure dint of compulsion, like beasts and not like men, they should give what they were not suffered to refuse. They seemed to wince under the yoke; you then cut off their fishery, and lest *starvation* should make them more refractory, you sent more troops. All America had been complaining, therefore it was resolved that all America should be reduced to a perfect state of slavery. Their charters were to be abolished, and they were to be held by military tenure. Such was your plan.

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The colonies were to be attacked by sea and land; ships of war, regular troops, and slaves were to destroy them on the sea coast, while the Canadians and savages were to assail them with fire and sword from the wilderness. Never was any devoted people visited, or like to be visited, by such a group of calamities, until cruelty became honourable, until tyranny was digested into a regular system. Does any minister or ministerial man deny the charge? Does he dispute any part of this plan? Let him review general Carleton's last commission; your Lordship has already seen it once too often. For what purpose was he authorized to *arm* the Canadians, and them to *march* into any other of the *plantations*, and his Majesty's rebellious subjects there to attack, and, *by God's help, them to defeat and put to death.*

For what purpose did Guy Johnson deliver black belts to all the Indian tribes in his district, and persuade them to lift up the hatchet against the white people in the colonies? The congress is possessed of those very war belts; they have a copy of governor Carleton's commission: they have long since been possessed of the whole plan. What could they do in this dreadful dilemma? They must either deliver themselves up to general carnage, or try to avert the impending stroke: the latter was most desirable; but how was it to be done? Certainly not by acting on the defensive, in the manner your Lordship could have prescribed, by standing with their hands in their bosom; not by waiting till the Canadians had invested
Albany,

Albany, and the Indians had struck the frontiers, and destroyed eight or ten thousand women and children: that would have been acting in self-defence to some purpose. Is an Indian war to be averted by such means? Is a frontier of 1200 miles to be constantly guarded by a line of troops? It is not possible! The congress had more sense than to attempt it. The sword of governor Carleton was pointed at their bosom; they endeavoured to rush in and disarm him. By that expedition, their hope was, that they should protect their frontiers against the inroads of the savages, by taking possession of the great avenues into their country; that they should take the stores also which are necessary to an Indian war, and thus gain the friendship of the Indians. Surely these were measures which arose from the very idea of self-defence; they were measures that pure necessity had forced upon the congress: for that reason they were not adopted till it was too late in the season; they were afterwards pursued with that species of ardour which seldom arises but in a state of desperation.

It seems to be a matter of no consequence, in your Lordship's opinion, who was the aggressor at the beginning of this dispute, "We are in blood step'd in so far, we must go on"—
"unless we kill them they will kill us." You have not been used to reason thus in cases of less importance. Suppose a highwayman should demand your Lordship's purse, and, being armed, you should refuse to deliver, is he not at liberty to consider whether he has a clear
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right to your cash, much less to your life also? Would it not be kind in him to put about his horse and ride off? That would be contrary to your Lordship's plan; he should kill you, lest, while he stayed to enforce his demand, you might chance to kill him. The cases are perfectly similar; you have attempted to tax the Americans; they say you have no right to demand their money. Your demand is followed by threats, it is aggravated by repeated injuries. The American draws his sword, he would die rather than submit to the dangerous claim. What is to be done? Shall we enquire who was first in the wrong? Had we a clear right to tax the Americans? Had they lost or forfeited their ancient privilege of taxing themselves? Is our claim founded on the natural rights of mankind? Is it supported by usage? The case is disputed; it may be doubtful. Had we not best withdraw our troops; by which means we shall preserve the commerce and subjection of America, we shall save thousands from death, and millions from ruin. Your Lordship says, No: we have begun the dispute, and just or unjust, we are bound to persevere. We have crossed the Rubicon; let us now cross the Red Sea; let us wade in blood. In such a cause, my Lord, and with such principles, you may take the field against the Americans, but heaven will not be numbered among your allies.

Without pursuing the disagreeable task of making further remarks on your Lordship's arguments, I am to beg your attention while

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I take a short view of what has already been effected by the American controversy, and hazard a few conjectures concerning its progress; they shall be conjectures founded on some information which I presume you have not received. After all the evidence that has been adduced on this subject, I am certainly justified in saying, that your repeated endeavours to tax the Americans without their consent, has been the sole cause of the present war. To repel that tax and the cruel means of enforcing it, they have taken up arms. You say the tax was trifling, too small a cause to produce such great effects—you never intended to oppress the Americans—you expected no great supplies from them—your chief object was to establish the authority of Parliament. The Americans have no confidence in such declarations; if the tax was too small for them to resist, it was also too small for you to claim at so great an expence; the more zealous you have been in prosecuting that measure, the more cogent was the proof that your small tax would soon become a grievous burden. It was not to be supposed that for a mere bubble, for the name of power which you had no intention to exercise, you should persevere, year after year, to harass your fellow subjects at the expence of millions, loss of much trade and hazard of the empire. Let us speak it out. The Americans say there is such an opposition between your words and actions that you are not to be trusted; they have experienced such a want of candor and want of humanity in

the whole of your conduct, that they would brave the calamities of a civil war, and every other danger, rather than put themselves, in the power of such men. Of your want of candor and want of faith the Americans relate many instances, I shall repeat two or three of them. When the inhabitants of Boston were threatened with famine during the last summer, General Gage promised that he would give them permission to leave the town, with all their goods and effects, if they would consent to disarm; they accepted the terms, and delivered their arms into the General's possession; his fears were then at an end, and he thought no longer of keeping his promise; a few of the inhabitants only were suffered to remove with their effects, to save appearances; a few more were next permitted to remove without their effects; the rest, being three-fourths of all the inhabitants, were not suffered to stir on any terms; the General knew that the day might come, when their goods would prove valuable plunder.

Quid domini facient, audent cum talia fures?

By supporting the General in this single act of perfidy, you give the most invincible proof that you do not wish for peace with America. You tell us, indeed, that you desire peace, but you cannot treat with rebels; the Americans are in arms; till they disarm you will not hear them. Do you seriously think they will disarm, after such a breach of faith, while your armies are among them? If they should, you may, with great propriety, call them fools as well as cowards.

During

During the last winter you exhibited a different kind of proof that you are not to be trusted. On the 20th of February, Lord North moved the following resolution in the House of Commons, viz. " That as soon as
 " the legislative body of any province shall
 " make provision for contributing their pro-
 " portion to the common defence, and shall
 " engage to provide for the support of civil
 " government in that province ; if such pro-
 " vision shall be approved by his Majesty in
 " Parliament, so long as it shall be made, it
 " may be proper for Parliament to forbear to
 " levy any duty or tax, or to impose any fur-
 " ther tax or duty on such province, except
 " for the regulation of commerce." This was called a plan of reconciliation, and strange as it may seem, the very apprehension of peace was like to produce great disorder ; his Lordship was deserted for some time by the household troops, nor did they return to the standard, till they were fully convinced, by a faithful leader, that the motion might be so construed as to mean nothing. With this salvo they suffered it to pass. In their view it was *vox et preterea nihil*. It was a bubble, by which they might amuse this nation ; and it was a trap, in which they might catch the simple Americans. Lest the Americans should not embrace this plan with sufficient eagerness, great care was taken to explain it as a vast concession in their favour. We were taught to believe that whatever sums the American assemblies might *now* offer, if their proposal should

should be approved by Parliament, those sums were to stand in the place of taxes imposed by Parliament, and as long as they should be paid, no farther taxes were to be imposed. In a few words, their granting those sums at the requisition of Parliament, to be approved of by it, was to be considered as a good security for the dignity of that body, and future supplies were to be voted by the Americans alone. To view this plan in the most favourable light, very little could be said in its defence. It was to support the imaginary dignity of Parliament, by degrading our brethren; it was to require the Americans to submit to one act of tyranny, in hopes of being suffered afterwards to enjoy freedom. But the Americans viewed the conciliatory plan in a light still more unfavourable; they had received early information of the manner in which it was treated by the *friends* of the court. They saw, indeed, that it had been *suffered* to pass, but they were convinced that it was not honestly intended, that it could not come to good. The result has justified their apprehensions. The assembly of Nova Scotia were pleased to make an experiment on the above plan; they offered his Majesty a certain duty, *ad valorem*, on goods imported into that province, and prayed that it might be accepted. On the 29th of November, sundry resolutions were reported to the House of Commons on the subject of their petition; these resolutions were to be the foundation of a bill which was then ordered; by which a constitution was in some measure to
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be fixed for the province of Nova Scotia ; and through it a sample and security was to be given to the other provinces, of what they were to expect. This was dangerous ground ; for you was compelled on this occasion, a little before your time, to unmask. An honourable member, Sir George Yonge, I think it was, in order to prevent ambiguity in the Nova Scotia bill, proposed the following resolution, in addition to those brought in by administration. “ Whenever the exigences of state “ shall require further supplies from the pro- “ vince of Nova Scotia, such requisitions shall “ be made as have formerly been practised in “ North America.”

A motion more unseasonable for administration could not have been offered. It never had been the design of government to make a single concession in favour of the Americans, nor to give them security for preserving a single vestige of their property. Embarrassed as ministers might be, by speaking out, it now became necessary. They could not adopt the proposition ; the unfortunate bill was smothered in its birth. The resolution of taxing America from time to time and as often as cash may be wanted is now publicly avowed. A very courtly writer has been pleased to suppose that the colonies would be quite *emancipated*, if neither the *MODE of raising taxes* nor the *QUANTUM* is to be left in the power of Parliament.* By such

* Rights of Great Britain asserted, p. 54.

help let us solve the resolution of last year, and it will be found to contain a prodigious favour. It may be thus abridged. If the Americans shall offer certain contributions to be approved by Parliament, while they continue to pay them, no tax shall be imposed by Parliament; *i. e.* If the Americans shall vote and faithfully pay every sum that Parliament desires, and as often as such sums are called for, Parliament will be so good as not to insist upon sums that it does not desire. If these, and such other proofs of insincerity and want of faith, had not been sufficient to deter the Americans from trusting your promises, or putting themselves in your power, the proofs you have lately given of cruelty are of so dark a stain, that every trace of confidence is blotted out. It is both instructive and curious to observe the progress of cruelty, to note by what steps of easy transition the human mind once plunged into vice, may wade and swim onward, till it attains the very abyss of wickedness.

To shut up the port of Boston, and distress, perhaps destroy, twenty or thirty thousand people; to injure them to the certain amount of three or four hundred thousand pounds, in order to repay the loss of seven or eight thousand pounds, the loss still unrepaid, was a wanton act of fruitless barbarity. To restrain the American trade, and cut off the fishery of the northern provinces, for the very purpose of destroying the inhabitants by nakedness and hunger, was no inconsiderable step in the fatal

progression of cruelty. Your next project, of turning the Indians upon the innocent defenceless frontiers, was certainly the project of a mind well trained in vice. It is well known that the American Indians make war, not against stockades and forts; they seldom molest soldiers or armed men, their hatchets are stained with the blood of women and children only. To see 1200 miles of a frontier, whose inhabitants are poor and thinly planted, who are far removed from the scene of politics, and have never offended government; to see them exposed to the nightly incursions of a savage enemy, the paths crowded with thousands of those wretched people, flying to distant towns for shelter, while the face of heaven is darkened by the smoke of their deserted cottages—perhaps the sight might cheer the heart of a British chief justice, to every other person the very idea is terrible. The last step I shall mention in this progress of cruelty is the massacre that was lately attempted in the southern provinces. This is a step that defies all precedents. Nothing like it has ever been practised by any other state. Lord Dunmore is ordered to proclaim freedom to slaves who belong to rebels. The slaves are to be the judges, and, stupid as they are, they must soon discover that their masters are rebels to a man. It must follow that the slaves are all free. How shall they obtain their liberty? There is but one method; they understand it perfectly—they must cut their masters throats. This method of obtaining freedom has often been attempted by

slaves when they were not encouraged or protected by any of his Majesty's representatives. In some parts of Virginia and Carolina, there are four slaves to one white person ; in those places a general massacre might seem very practicable. If the slaves had embraced the measure so clearly pointed out by the governor ;* if they had fixed on some fatal night for shaking off the authority of rebels, and *speedily reducing the colony to a proper sense of their duty*, with the next day's sun Lord Dunmore might have received the joyful tidings that the Virginians were all dead ; What a glorious achievement ! Two or three hundred thousand men, women, and children, butchered in one night. This would have been a stroke worthy a favorite governor : it would have been a scene that Pluto himself might have viewed with pleasure ; to Jefferies it would have been the object of envy. †

Such, my Lord, are the outlines of ministerial conduct towards our unhappy fellow subjects in North America, such have been

* See Lord Dunmore's proclamation.---“ And I do hereby further declare all indentured servants, NEGROES, and others, appertaining to rebels, FREE, that are able and willing to bear arms, they joining his Majesty's troops as soon as may be, *for the more speedy reducing this colony to a proper sense of their duty* to his Majesty's crown and dignity.

† For the mere attempt Lord Dunmore seems to have been rewarded by a seat in the house of Peers. Jefferies, for his bloody campaign in the west, was made lord high chancellor of England.

the true causes of their taking up arms, and such are the reasons why you may be assured they will never disarm, while the British councils are directed by the authors of so much injustice and cruelty. In the mean time, though I am confident that I have pointed out the true source of the present civil war in America, I beg it may be noted, that I shall not take the future conduct of the Americans for any proof of their original intention; on the contrary, as their temper and conduct must ever be formed and regulated by the treatment they receive, I firmly believe that they are already so far alienated, and their indignation so perfectly roused by the late measures of government, that you are in a fair way to lose them for ever. You are pleased to suppose that the Americans have long sought for a state of independence, but they may be compelled by vigorous measures to submit to your discipline; on the other hand, I am fully persuaded that the desire of independence was foreign from their hearts, but your *vigorous* measures will drive them to that refuge, and will, if continued, compel them to remain an independent state. This, however, is an opinion in which I have the misfortune to differ from your Lordship, and may continue to differ, till heaven has been pleased to restore or destroy this empire. In the mean while you will give the Americans leave to say, that *hitherto the Lord hath helped them*. From the beginning of this dispute the spirit of wisdom has forsaken your councils, you have been disappointed in every measure,

sure, while success has generally attended the steps of the Americans. From these presages they gratefully conclude, that Providence is on their side; while you, neither reasoning like christians nor philosophers, *but like children at play*, are pleased to suppose, that you shall *win last* because you *lose first*. You hope against evidence, and take the frowns of heaven for certain proof that you shall prosper in your iniquity. From the time of passing the Boston port-bill, which was the first unequivocal act that originated in the very spirit of despotism and revenge; from that period the very elements have assisted in defeating your schemes. Instructions to your generals have been long at sea, while the Americans have received quick intelligence; your soldiers, who were destined to shed blood, have been detained by adverse winds; your ships have been severely buffeted by the storms; more of your transports and troops have been lost, from the beginning of this social war, than were lost during the whole of the last conflict with France and Spain; your desire was to cut off trade from Boston and starve the inhabitants; in that very town your troops have been shut up, and almost starved to death. In all your schemes of division, seduction and "*starvation*," you have been defeated; your projects have tended to arm, unite, and strengthen the Americans, who, on their part, have enjoyed such a series of prosperity, as neither bravery nor human wisdom alone could possibly insure. You are pleased to pass all this to
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the chapter of accidents, while the American takes it for the favour of Omnipotence, on which he rests, in sure and certain hope of a glorious escape from the hand of oppression. Let us, however, view this subject in another light; let us suppose that success should, on some occasions, attend your arms, still the prospect of conquering the Americans must be very distant. There are many instances on record, of people contending for liberty; if there had been none besides those of the Swiss cantons and Dutch united provinces, they must have taught us that the battle is not always to the strong. I think there never has been an instance of people being subdued, who fought in such a cause as now inspires the Americans, with such numbers and such advantages on their side. You mean to risque all on a desperate effort. If you could gain a victory or two, and advance a few miles into the country, you are taught to believe that all would be safe. Strange as it may seem, I shall venture to say, that a little success must prove a dangerous thing to this nation. While desolation and the rage of war has not involved the whole continent, the breach might still be healed, if healing measures should be attempted. When you have routed some of their armies, destroyed their chief cities, and laid waste part of their country, the wound may have gone too deep, the disease may be past cure. The time may soon come when Great Britain, of all the maritime states in Europe, shall have the smallest chance of being allied to North America. In-

juries that are done by the hand of a kinsman are not soon forgotten. If Great Britain, presuming on the allegorical name of a parent, will treat the Americans as children and inferiors, it is high time that the Americans were associated with a sister instead of a parent state. If the same wisdom which lately induced the French monarch to grant an arret for re-establishing the edict of Nants, in a particular instance, and granting liberty of conscience to a protestant subject, should continue to preside in his councils, that kingdom must soon flourish; and if the Americans should proceed no further, they may at least say of England and France, with the Tyrian queen,

Tros Tyriusque mihi nullo discrimine agentur.

Much pains has been taken to involve the present dispute in darkness, and conceal the danger that lies in the road, as though it was best that we should die by an anodyne. We are told that neither France nor Spain will assist the Americans. "Will France," says a courtier,* "in the present state of her finances involve herself in a ruinous war? Will Spain give her assistance to raise an independent empire in America? Will she encourage her own American subjects to rise against her authority?" Nothing can be more deceitful than such reasoning. The French certainly have no colonies that can

* Rights of Great Britain asserted, p. 68.

dream of becoming independent; madness itself could not tempt them to think of it. The Spaniards, indeed, have vast possessions in America; but whatever the natives might attempt, the small Spanish colonies, that are scattered over the face of a great country, will hardly think of a revolt: they should rather be considered as so many factories planted by Spain in those golden regions, than as a compact body of men, who might ever attempt to form a separate empire. There are reasons, however, which may prevent France and Spain from viewing this controversy with an eye of perfect neutrality; their safety and commercial interest are at stake, they are blind to neither. Great Britain and her colonies, united as they have been by the cords of interest and mutual affection, must soon have become a dangerous neighbour. The fleets of Britain, and the armies of North America would have left France and Spain no other security for their sugar islands, or their possessions on the southern continent, than the faith of treaties or priority of claim—feeble tenures, when the longest sword is wanting. On the other hand, should the colonies finally shake off their union with Britain, neither France nor Spain could have any thing to fear from either. Great Britain, deprived of her colony trade, and deprived, as she soon would be, of her Newfoundland fishery, must cease to be formidable at sea, and the colonies alone, in that republican form which they are now like to assume, however unanimous and formidable in their common defence,

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defence, would hardly shew the same union or spirit in offensive measures. The commercial interests of France and Spain seem also to mark the independence of North America as an object of great importance. In that country, France will find a prodigious vent for her silks and velvets. Wine also, imported as it may be without the present burdens, will come to an excellent market in a country where it is not made, though the nature of the climate requires a copious use of it. For these, and other manufactures of those kingdoms, the Americans will make remittances in rice, tobacco, flour, naval stores, and the other natural produce of their country. The expence and trouble of a circuitous trade will then be prevented, and a direct intercourse be established between states whose mutual wants seem to point out a friendly intercourse. It would be tedious to describe the advantages which the French sugar islands must derive from the independence of the British colonies. If Great Britain, after this revolt, should retain her sugar islands, she must do it under prodigious disadvantages, by which the price of her sugars must rise at least 30 *per cent*; hence the French sugar would come to a better market in Europe, and the Americans would buy none else. If the sugar islands should fall off with the other colonies, the African trade and other circumstances considered, France must be an equal gainer by your misfortune. Having mentioned the general arguments which may induce the maritime states to wish well to
America

America rather than Great Britain, in the present dispute, I shall not be charged with rashness, in saying that their actions may soon give language to their wishes. By a reasonable supply of military stores and sundry manufactures they may soon deserve that friendship which you have lost by oppression. The want of formal ambassadors will hardly prevent the Americans from receiving the assistance of foreign states: ambassadors are not requisite to point out the most obvious truths, treaties are not requisite to engage men to pursue their mutual interests. However this may be, whether the Americans may receive the smallest assistance from other states, such ideas have they formed of the despotic and cruel temper of those men who now direct his Majesty's councils; such ideas have they of that slavery, worse than death, which is prepared for them should they ever trust in your mercy, that they are fully determined never to confide in your promises, nor sheath the sword while you are in the field. Your Lordship may possibly be surpris'd when I say that the Americans will not even submit to your armies though victory should declare on your side: but I say it on the knowledge of some facts to which you may not have attended; from some intelligence which I presume you have not received. Have you considered that a very small part of America is yet cultivated. About an hundred miles from the sea coast there is a vast ridge of mountains which few people have yet cross'd, for they would not be too far separated from the

parent state ; beyond those mountains is a country of prodigious extent, more fertile than what has yet been cultivated, healthy, pleasant, abounding in minerals, and fit for producing every thing that is grateful to the taste. Hither the Americans will retreat, hither more than a million of them are determined to retreat in the last extremity. No acts of Parliament can hinder the sun from shining, or heaven from shedding its dew upon them. They will form a league with the Indians and wild beasts, who are less cruel and less dangerous than you ; in a few years they will become a formidable republic. That very herd of crouching slaves who may remain on their present possessions, must forever hate you with a sincere hatred ; *they must, as your friend J—nk—n has expressed himself, be governed as the Romans used to govern their provinces, by a standing army.* Your mercenaries must be scattered through every part of the old provinces ? Upon these the confederated Americans will pour down like so many bands of Scythians or Tartars. How long will your provinces be worth keeping on such terms ? How long will you be able to keep them ? Have the French no account to settle with Britain ? Have they forgot what they owe to national honour ? Is Great Britain like a polypus ? Can she remain whole after her limbs are cut off ? Can she retain her naval strength when the employment ceases for half of her shipping ? Will she be a match for France, when the colonies are thrown into the other scale ? The Americans, you know, are already
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become dextrous in the manufacture of fire-arms and gunpowder ; these arts, with such as they formerly possessed, must render them perfectly independent : but these people will prosper by the very effort of your cruelty. You are now sending manufacturers among them of every kind, from Great Britain and Germany, in the garb of soldiers. Do you believe that mercenaries will prefer your interest to their own ? Will they trudge and sweat under a brown musket and knapsack, or stand in a trench to be shot at for a farthing an hour, rather than desert from your service, when they may follow their respective trades, and enjoy affluence and ease in a pleasing hospitable country ? These, however, are circumstances that have only been mentioned by the way, as they may chance to accelerate the fate of the present war ; not that the Americans have placed the least dependence on such aids. By their native strength and resources they will find sufficient employment for your troops, till a foreign war, or some other fortunate event, shall rescue them from your hands. While you are pleased to cut off their trade, and reduce them to the condition of Algerines, they may possibly invent some other amusement for your ships of war than stealing sheep, or burning defenceless towns ; your trading ships may demand their assistance ; the distress of your sugar-islands may also be felt by more people than West-India planters. The decrease of trade and increase of taxes ; the loss of your armies, and other calamities which hang over this na-

tion, will presently teach the people at large to execrate the men who have plunged them in debt, under the pretence of gaining a revenue ; who have degraded them in the eyes of all Europe, while they affected to secure the dignity of Parliament.

Your Lordship will do me the justice to believe, that I have not troubled you with this letter, from the vain apprehension that it was in my power to say any thing that might tend to alter your opinion, or rather your conduct respecting the Americans; wherever the weight of argument or of truth may lie, your Lordship must be consistent. We have long since been told, by an insect of power, at "*Delenda est Carthago*," the American must be extirpated. They breathe the spirit of liberty with too much freedom; and though the larger creatures of power, who are better taught and better trained, may speak their sentiments with more reserve, there is not the least reason to doubt whether you are all of one mind. My only attempt has been to state the conduct of our American brethren in its proper light, before the unprejudiced, uncorrupted part of this nation; and to rescue them from the charge of an intractable, rebellious temper, with which your Lordship and your friends have been pleased to load them.

It appears, unless I am greatly mistaken, from the evidence that has been produced, compared with other notorious facts, that the Americans have constantly been some of his Majesty's most affectionate and most loyal subjects. They have
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loved Great Britain with the utmost sincerity; they have wished, and to this hour they continue to wish, that their union with her may be perpetual. While they were required and permitted, like free men, to contribute to the public expences, in men or in money, they did it cheerfully; but the very first explicit attempt to deprive them of that freedom, produced discontent and universal complaints. The nation was soon afterwards blessed with a set of ministers who could listen to the cries of humanity and justice; a public calamity was averted; it was delayed, but not prevented; for a change of ministers produced a second attempt to tax the Americans, and they exhibited new proofs of universal discontent. They complained, they besieged the throne with their petitions, they did every thing that can be done by loyal subjects who have the misfortune to be oppressed. Their prayers were not heard; in vain did they appeal to former proofs of liberality and zeal; in vain did they pray that they might not be degraded below the rank of his Majesty's other subjects in Britain or Ireland; that they might be permitted to judge of their own abilities and dispose of their own property; that they might be governed as they had been for near two hundred years: but times were changed; instead of listening to their reasonings or complaints, new grievances were added; a fleet and army was also sent to reason them into submission. This argument was not conclusive, for the Americans also appealed to the sword: they would rather perish than submit to those *new demands*.

Such

Such are the steps by which a civil war has been kindled in America. To a seditious temper, or any desire of independence, we are not to look for the origin of this calamity; a more cogent reason stares us in the face. He is a bad philosopher—he is a bad politician, or a dishonest man, who seeks for two causes when one is sufficient to produce the effect. The whole body of the Americans have frequently said in general congress, that the exercise of taxation, and the injuries which arose from that source, are the sole cause of their resistance. They declare that they do not wish to become independent. The several provinces declare the same thing, and the individuals in those provinces, in all their harangues, and in all their writings, declare that they covet nothing more ardently than a perpetual union with the parent state. Against this group of evidence, against this full demonstration of the true causes of the present social war, the enemies of America, and perhaps I may say the enemies of Great Britain, are pleased to set up their simple assertion. In the cause of oppression, in the last scene of a gloomy tragedy, in their attempt to distress or extirpate the inhabitants of a great country, they suspect that a generous nation will not follow them; hence they have recourse to fiction and fraud; they would conceal the true cause of the war, and substitute one that never existed. This modern baseless fabrick is like the hedging of a gambler; it is a story that may be converted to any use: at present it serves to inflame

in flame the nation, and engage them heartily in a civil war, in order to destroy or crush the Americans. This is doubtless the great object of the minister, but as the success of these measures is not absolutely certain, while it is very certain that the Americans, if they have prudence or spirit, must soon be driven by these measures to a state of independence, that they may the better be able to defend their liberties and lives, and as such a step may terminate in the absolute loss of that country, the ministry are prepared for that event—they have foretold it, and the ruin of this kingdom will appear to be nothing more than a proof of their sagacity. The men who are now labouring with admirable success to dissolve the union between Great Britain and her colonies, will presently assume great merit in having discovered that the Americans were ripe for a revolt.

F I N I S.

