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P.P. 344 — Boston 1763

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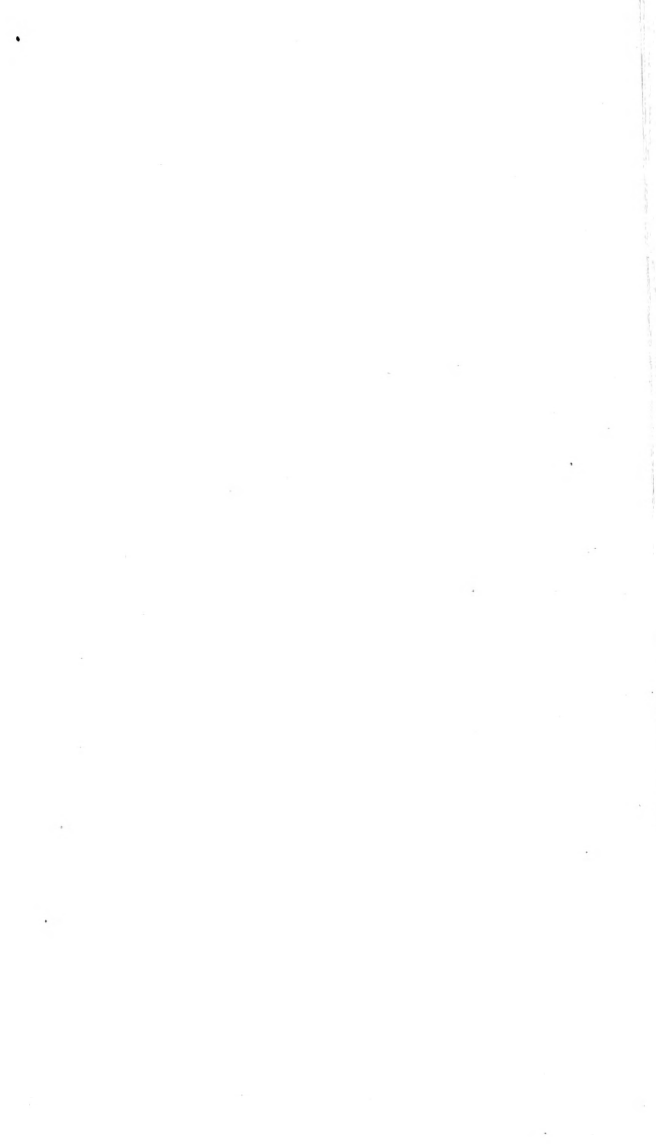
of Harvard College. P.P. 52 Boston 1766

The Slave Trade a true Religious Sermon

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# The Snare broken.

A

## Thanksgiving-Discourse,

PREACHED

At the Desire of the West Church

IN

BOSTON, N. E. Friday May 23, 1766.

OCCASIONED BY THE

R E P E A L

OF THE

### Stamp-Act.

BY

JONATHAN MAYHEW, D. D.

Pastor of said Church.

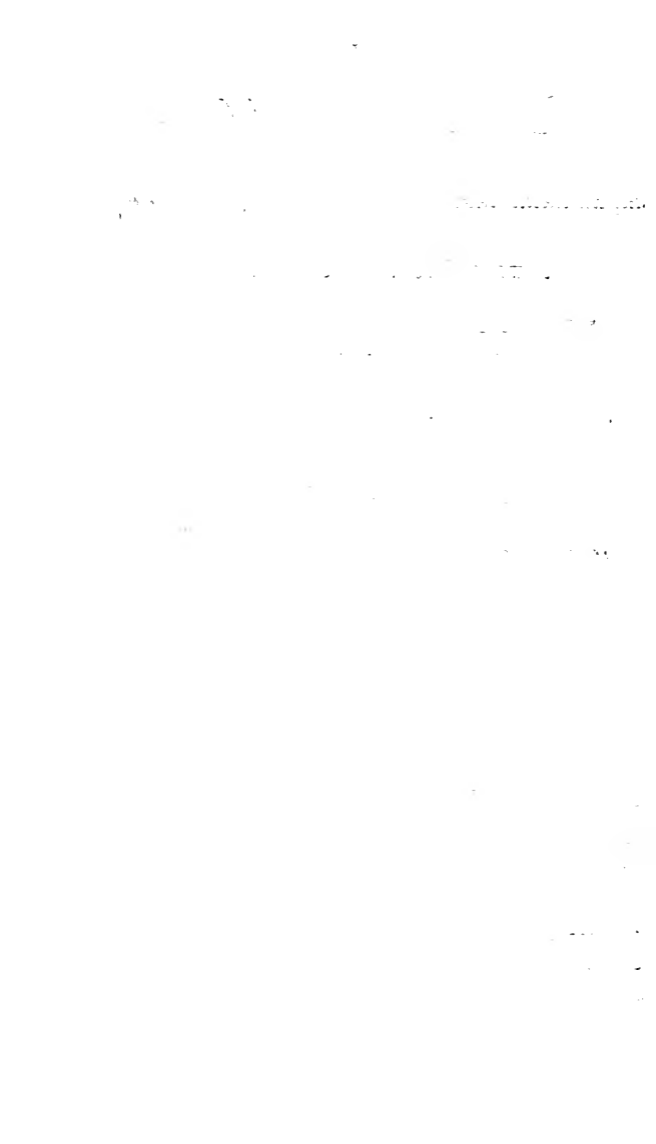
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— *Brethren, ye have been called unto LIBERTY ; only use not LIBERTY for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.* Ap. PAUL.

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THE  
*DEDICATION.*



TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE  
**WILLIAM PITT, Esq;**

ONE OF HIS

**MAJESTY'S**

**MOST HONORABLE PRIVY COUNCIL;**

AND AN ILLUSTRIOUS

**PATRON OF AMERICA.**

*S I R,*

**D**ID not a wide ocean intervene, the Author of the ensuing Discourse would not presume to prefix so great a NAME to a little Performance of his, without first humbly requesting the indulgence, and obtaining it. Nor would he trust to the sufficiency of that apology for taking  
this

this liberty, did not some persons persuade  
 him to hope, it will be kindly and con-  
 descendingly taken as a testimony of that  
 sincere gratitude and high veneration,  
 which not only he but his country has for  
 ONE, who hath twice at least been a prin-  
 cipal Instrument in the hand of GOD, of  
 saving GREAT BRITAIN and her Colonies  
 from impending ruin: Once, by magnani-  
 mously conducting a just and glorious war  
 against foreign nations; and once, by pre-  
 serving peace in His own;—by exerting  
 Himself to prevent a fatal rupture between  
 BRITAIN and her Colonies, and to re-estab-  
 lish such an harmony as essentially con-  
 cerns the welfare of both.

AT the late most important CRISIS, You,  
 SIR, whom no rewards could ever tempt,  
 no frowns of the Great ever dismay, no  
 dangers disconcert; and to whom, so good  
 and great in Yourself, no titles, however  
 high, could possibly add any new dignity or  
 lustre; You, Great Sir, was not “ashamed  
 of our chain”, or reluctant at standing forth  
 to plead the cause of poor AMERICA; and  
 to stem the mighty torrent that was against  
 her,

her, which threatened to end in a deluge of blood ! When it was accounted criminal by many, even to lift but a broken word or two in Her favor, You, SIR, was not ashamed or afraid to pour forth all Your unrival'd eloquence in a strenuous vindication of Her infringed Rights. And, indeed, her cause being supposed good, the more friendless She was, the more She needed, and in some sort deserved, so powerful a patronage. For, surely, great talents were given for great occasions ; to be employed in defence of the innocent and feeble. GOD made some men strong, on purpose to " bear the infirmities of the weak"; that they might be able to assist and support them in their dangers and extremities ; as You, SIR, have ever done, since You adorned the BRITISH senate ; and particularly in a late ever-memorable instance. -

To You, Great SIR, under GOD and the KING, grateful AMERICA chiefly attributes it, that She is now happily re-inflated in the enjoyment of her former liberties and privileges ; that She has, at the same time, a very deep sense of her obligations to other great and illustrious Personages.

IF, SIR, you could, at this distance, have an adequate conception of the universal joy of AMERICA, preceeded by the most alarming apprehensions for Her liberties: If You could be fully sensible how much we ascribe it to You, that they are not lost; how, next to the KING, we bless You as our common FATHER, and send up ardent vows to Heaven for You; this would, it must give You a sublime, and truly Godlike pleasure. It might even suspend, for a while, the severest pangs of that excruciating disorder, which has so often detain'd you from the BRITISH Senate, to the great detriment of the public; particularly when the late dreadful STAMP-ACT was passed. Nay, it might, perhaps, without any other miracle, give You such spirits and vigor, as to "take up Your bed and walk," like those sick and lame persons instantly cured by the word of Him, who came from Heaven to make us "free indeed".

So universal, so great is our joy; and so much, SIR, are we indebted for it to your good offices! But, alas! what can poor AMERICA do to return? Nothing but acknowledg-

knowledge

knowledge the obligation with as much sincerity as a grateful country ever acknowledged one: Nothing but call you, over and over again, her FATHER, her FATHER; and endeavour to make good Your generous engagements for her prudent, dutiful behaviour towards her Mother-country: Nothing but erect a few marble, brass or copper statues in honor to You; (for AMERICA has but little silver or gold) statues that will be of no service to You, since they will go to decay long before Your name and memory will need any such poor helps to preserve them.

Alas! AMERICA can do no more!—  
 Yes, SIR, there is one thing more: She will pray that You may long live in health, happiness and honor, that if there should be any occasion hereafter, as in time past, You may step in and prevent Her's and BRITAIN'S ruin, when no other man could; and that, when You must, according to the common lot of men, however great and good (O may it be late!) cease to plead the cause of LIBERTY on earth, You may in Heaven, as Your reward, enjoy

enjoy "the glorious LIBERTY of the sons of God"!

I AM, with the warmest gratitude, and highest veneration, Right Honorable and Most Worthy

S I R,

*Your most obedient,*

*Most Dutiful*

*And Most Humble Servant,*

JONATHAN MAYHEW.



PSALM CXXIV. 7, 8.

*Our soul is escaped as a bird from the snare of the fowlers ; the snare is broken, and we are escaped.*

*Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.*

**T**HE late gracious appearance of divine providence for us, in the day of our trouble, seemed so seasonable, so signal, so important ; in a word, so interesting to the present and future generations, that we of this Society thought it expedient to agree among ourselves upon a day, in order to take a particular, religious notice of it ; and to praise the name of the Lord, in whom is our help. If there had been any probability of our being called together for this end by *Proclamation*, as upon some less memorable occasions, we should not have been desirous to anticipate the day ; which might have had the appearance of ostentation. But of that, so far as I have heard, there was very little, if any, prospect. By this perfectly voluntary, and free-

will offering, I hope we shall render to God, in some poor measure, the glory due to his name; and that he will graciously accept it, thro' our Lord Jesus Christ the righteous, our mediator and advocate with the Father. At the same time, it is supposed that, in proceeding thus, we give no just ground of offence to Jew or Gentile, or to the church of God; which we would by no means do. We only exercise that liberty, wherewith Christ hath made us free, being desirous that all other persons and churches should do the same; and not chusing that either they or we should be "entangled with any yoke of bondage."

Having rendered our devout thanks to God, whose kingdom ruleth over all, and sung his high praises; permit me now, my friends and brethren, with unfeigned love to my country, to congratulate you on that interesting event, which is the special occasion of this solemnity: An event, as I humbly conceive, of the utmost importance to the whole British empire, whose peace and prosperity we ought ardenly to desire; and one, very peculiarly affecting the welfare of these colonies. Believe me, I lately took no inconsiderable part with you in your grief, and gloomy apprehensions, on account of a certain PARLIAMENTARY ACT, which you supposed ruinous in its tendency to the American plantations, and, eventually, to Great-Britain. I now partake no less in your common joy, on account of the REPEAL of that act; whereby these colonies are emancipated from a slavish, inglorious bondage; are re-instated in the enjoyment of their



their ancient rights and privileges, and a foundation is laid for lasting harmony between Great-Britain and them, to their mutual advantage.

But when you requested me to preach a sermon on this joyful occasion, I conclude it was neither your expectation nor desire, that I should enter very particularly into a political consideration of the affair. Had I conceived this to have been your intention, I must, tho' with reluctance, have given you a refusal; partly from a conviction of the impropriety of minutely discussing points of this nature in the pulpit, and partly from a sense of my own inability to do it as it ought to be done. I suppose I shall best answer your expectation, as well as most gratify my own inclination, by waving political controversy, and giving you such counsels and exhortations respecting your duty to God and man, as are agreeable to the sacred oracles, to the dictates of sober reason, and adapted to the occasion. This is, therefore, what I chiefly propose to do in the ensuing discourse, as God shall enable me: And may the Father of lights teach me to speak, and you to hear in such a manner, that our assembling together at this time, out of the ordinary course, may be to his honor, and to christian edification.

However, if my discourse is to be particularly adapted to this great occasion, instead of being so general, as to be almost as suitable to any other, you are sensible it is necessary that the occasion itself should be kept in view. I shall therefore briefly premise a few things relative thereto, by way of introduction to the main design; such

things, I mean, as shall now be taken for granted. In mentioning which, my aim will be to express, in brief, what I take to be the general sense of these colonies, rather than to explain my own. For it is on such commonly-received opinions, that my exhortations and cautions will be grounded; leaving the particular discussion of them to others, who are better qualified for it, and to whom it more properly belongs. And if I should be mistaken in any of these particulars, it is hoped candor will excuse it; seeing these are matters out of the way of my profession.

In pursuance of this plan, it shall now be taken for granted, that as we were free-born, never made slaves by the right of conquest in war, if there be indeed any such right, nor sold as slaves in any *open lawful* market, for *money*, so we have a natural right to *our own*, till we have freely consented to part with it, either in person, or by those whom we have appointed to represent, and to act for us.

It shall be taken for granted, that this natural right is declared, affirmed and secured to us, as we are British subjects, by Magna Charta; all acts contrary to which, are said to be *ipso facto* null and void: And, that this natural, constitutional right has been further confirmed to most of the plantations by particular subsequent royal charters, taken in their obvious sense; the legality and authority of which charters was never once denied by either House of Parliament; but implicitly at least acknowledged, ever since they were respectively granted, till very lately.

It is taken for granted also, that the right of trial by juries, is a constitutional one with respect to all British subjects in general, particularly to the colonists; and that the plantations in which civil government has been established, have all along, till of late, been in the uninterrupted enjoyment of both the rights aforesaid, which are of the utmost importance, being essential to liberty.

It shall, therefore, be taken for granted, that the colonies had great reason to petition and remonstrate against a late act of Parliament, as being an infraction of these rights, and tending directly to reduce us to a state of slavery.

It is, moreover, taken for granted, whatever becomes of this question about *rights*, that an act of that sort was very hard, and justly grievous, not to say oppressive; as the colonies are poor, as most of them were originally settled at the sole and great expence of the adventurers; the expence of their money, their toil, their blood; as they have expended a great deal from time to time in their wars with their French and Savage neighbours, and in the support of his Majesty's government here; as they have, moreover, been ever ready to grant such aids of men and money to the crown, for the common cause, as they were able to give; by which means a great load of debt still lies on several of them; and as Great Britain has drawn vast emolument from them in the way of commerce, over and above all that she has ever expended for them, either in peace or war: So that she is, beyond  
all

all comparison, richer, more powerful and respectable now, than she would have been, if our fathers had never emigrated: And both they and their posterity have, in effect, been labouring, from first to last, for the aggrandizement of the mother-country. In this light, that share of *common sense*, which the colonists have, be it more or less, leads them to consider things.

It is taken for granted, that as the surprising, unexampled growth of these colonies, to the extension of his Majesty's dominion, and prodigious advantage of Britain in many respects, has been chiefly owing, under God, to the liberty enjoyed here; so the infraction thereof in two such capital points as those before referred to, would undoubtedly discourage the trade, industry and population of the colonies, by rendering property insecure and precarious; would soon drain them of all their little circulating money; would put it absolutely out of their power to purchase British commodities, force them into manufactures of their own, and terminate, if not in the ruin, yet in the very essential detriment of the mother-country.

It shall, therefore, also be taken for granted, that altho' the colonies could not justly claim an exclusive right of taxing themselves, and the right of being tried by juries; yet they had great reason to remonstrate against the act aforesaid on the footing of inexpediency, the great hardship, and destructive tendency of it; as a measure big with mischief to Britain, as well as to themselves; and promoted *at first*, perhaps, only by persons who were real friends to neither.

But as to any methods of opposition to that measure, on the part of the colonies, besides those of humble petitioning, and other strictly legal ones, it will not, I conclude, be supposed, that I appear *in this place* as an advocate for them, whatever the general sense of the colonists may be concerning this point. And I take for granted, that we are all perfectly agreed in condemning the riotous and felonious proceedings of certain *men of Belial*,† as they have been justly called, who had the effrontery to cloke their rapacious violences with the pretext of zeal for liberty; which is so far from being a new thing under the sun, that even Great Britain can furnish us with many, and much more flagrant examples of it.

But, my Brethren, however unconstitutional, oppressive, grievous or ruinous the aforesaid act was in its nature, and fatal in its tendency, his Majesty and the Parliament have been pleased to hearken to the just complaints of the colonies, seconded and enforced by the prudent, spirited conduct of our merchants; by certain noble and ever-honored patriots in Great Britain, espousing our cause with all the force of reason and eloquence, and by the general voice of the nation: So that a total repeal of that dreadful act is now obtained. His Majesty and the Parliament were far too wise, just and good to persist in a measure, after they were convinced it was wrong; or to consider it as any point of honor, to enforce an act so grievous to three million good subjects, so contrary to the interest of the  
British

† The Book of America, Chap. II. v. 13.

British merchants and manufacturers, and to the general sense of the nation. They have been pleased, in the act of repeal itself, greatly to their honor, implicitly to acknowledge their fallibility and erroneous judgment in the other act, by saying, that “ the continuance of the said act “ would be attended with many inconveniences, “ and *might* be productive of consequences great- “ ly detrimental to the commercial interests of “ *those* kingdoms.” These being the reasons assigned for the repeal, we may justly conclude, that if those *many inconveniences* and *detrimental consequences* could have been foreseen, the act complained of would never have been passed. And as the same reasons will doubtless operate at least as strongly, probably much more strongly hereafter, in proportion to the growth of the colonies, than they do at present, we may naturally conclude also, that an act of the like nature will never again be heard of.

Thus “ our soul is escaped as a bird from the snare of the fowlers ; the snare is broken, and we are escaped ; ” tho’ not without much struggling in the snare, before it gave way, and set us at liberty again. But when I speak of that pernicious act as a *snare*, and those who prepared it for us as *fowlers*, greedy of their prey, let it be particularly observed, that I intend not the least reflexion on our gracious Sovereign or the Parliament ; who must not be supposed to have any evil designs against the colonies, which are so necessary to Great Britain, and by which so many thousands of her manufactur-

turers are supported, who, but for them, must actually starve, emigrate, or do what I chuse to forbear mentioning. No! I apply this, as I conclude you will, only to some evil-minded individuals in Britain, who are true friends neither to her nor us; and who accordingly spared no wicked arts, no deceitful, no dishonorable, no dishonest means, to push on and obtain, as it were by *surprise*, an act so prejudicial to both; and, in some sort, to the *ensnaring* of his Majesty and the Parliament, as well as the good people of America: Being, not improbably, in the interests of the Houses of Bourbon and the Pretender, whose cause they meant to serve, by bringing about an open rupture between Great Britain and her colonies! These, these men, my Brethren, are the cunning *fowlers*, these the *ensnarers*, from whose teeth "our soul is escaped as a bird:" And such traitors will, doubtless, e'er long be caught in another *snare*, suitable for them, to the satisfaction of the King's good subjects on both sides the Atlantic, if his Majesty and the Parliament should judge it necessary for the vindication of their own honor, or for the public good, to bring them to condign punishment.

Let me just add here, that according to our latest and best advices, the King, his truly patriotic Ministry and the Parliament have the interest, particularly the commercial interest of the colonies much at heart; being *now* disposed even to enlarge, instead of curtailing their privileges, and to grant us every indulgence, con-

sistent with the common good of the British empire : More than which we cannot reasonably, and, I am persuaded, do not desire.

These things being premised, let me now proceed to those reflections, exhortations and cautions relative to them, which were the chief design of this discourse. And the present occasion being a very peculiar one, such as never before occurred in America, and, I hope in God, never will again ; I shall crave your indulgence if I am considerably longer than is customary on other occasions, which are less out of the ordinary course.

In the first place then, it is evident from the preceding view of things, that we have the greatest cause for thankfulness to Almighty God, who doeth his will among the inhabitants of the earth, as well as in the armies of heaven. He, in whose hands are the hearts of all men, not excepting those of Kings, so that he turneth them whithersoever he will, as the rivers of water, hath inspired the people of America with a noble spirit of liberty, and remarkably united them in standing up for that invaluable blessing. He hath raised us up friends of the greatest eminence in Britain, in our perilous circumstances. He hath united the hearts of almost all wise and good men there, to plead our cause *and their own* successfully. He hath blessed the King with an upright Ministry, zealous for the public good, and knowing wherein it consists. He hath given the King wisdom to discern, and integrity to pursue, the interests of his people,

at



at the late alarming CRISIS, when so much depended on the measures that were then speedily to be taken ! He hath changed his royal purpose, and that of his Parliament, in a matter which nearly and essentially concerned, at least *our* temporal happiness ; disposing them to take off from our necks that grievous and heavy burden, which, to be sure, was not put upon us but with reluctance, and thro' the dishonest artifices of certain wicked men who, perhaps, intended, if possible, entirely to alienate the affections of the colonists from their common Father the King, and from their Mother-country. O execrable design ! to the accomplishment of which, the pernicious measure aforesaid apparently tended. But blessed be He, who governeth among the nations, that he hath confounded the devices of such treacherous men. To allude to the psalm, a part of which I mentioned as my text ; “ If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us,” and if they could have had their wicked will, “ then they had swallowed us up quick ;”—“ then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul ; “ then the proud waters had gone over our soul. “ Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us “ as a prey to their teeth ;” the ravening teeth of those cunning *fowlers*, from whose treacherous *snare* we have just escaped ; “ our help being in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.” To Him, therefore, we justly owe the undissembled gratitude of our

hearts, as well as the joyful praises of our lips : For I take it for granted, that you all firmly believe, that He who made the world, exercises a providential government over it ; so that the very hairs of our head “ are all numbered by,” and that “ a sparrow doth not fall to the ground without” Him. How much more then, is his providence to be acknowledged in the rise, in the preservation, in the great events, the revolutions, or the fall of mighty states and kingdoms ?

To excite our gratitude to God the more effectually, let us consider the greatness of our late danger and of our deliverance : Let us take a brief retrospective view of the perplexed, wretched state, in which these colonies were, a few months ago, compared with the joyful and happy condition, in which they are at present, by the removal of their chief grievances.

We have never known so quick and general a transition from the depth of sorrow to the height of joy, as on this occasion ; nor, indeed, so great and universal a flow of either, on any other occasion whatever. It is very true, we have heretofore seen times of great adversity. We have known seasons of drought, dearth, and spreading mortal diseases ; the pestilence walking in darkness, and the destruction wasting at noon day. We have seen wide devastations, made by fire ; and amazing tempests, the heavens on flame, the winds and the waves roaring. We have known repeated earthquakes, threatening us with speedy destruction. We have  
been

been under great apprehensions by reason of formidable fleets of an enemy on our coasts; menacing fire and sword to all our maritime towns. We have known times when the French and Savage armies made terrible havock on our frontiers, carrying all before them for a while; when we were not without fear, that some capital towns in the colonies would fall into their merciless hands. Such times as these we have known; at some of which almost every "face gathered paleness," and the knees of all but the good and brave, waxed feeble. But never have we known a season of such universal consternation and anxiety among people of all ranks and ages, in these colonies, as was occasioned by that parliamentary procedure, which threatened us and our posterity with perpetual bondage and slavery. For *They*, as we generally suppose, are really slaves to all intents and purposes, who are obliged to labor and toil only for the benefit of others; or, which comes to the same thing, the fruit of whose labour and industry may be *lawfully* taken from them without their consent, and they justly punished if they refuse to surrender it on demand, or apply it to other purposes than those, which their masters, of their mere grace and pleasure, see fit to allow. Nor are there many *American* understandings acute enough to distinguish any material difference between this being done by a *single* person, under the title of an absolute Monarch, and done by a far-distant legislature consisting of *many* persons, in which  
they

they are not represented; and the members whereof, instead of feeling, and sharing equally with them in the burden thus imposed, are eased of their own in proportion to the greatness and weight of it. It may be questioned, whether the ancient Greeks or Romans, or any other nation in which slavery was allowed, carried their idea of it much further than this. So that our late apprehensions, and universal consternation, on account of ourselves and posterity, were far, very far indeed, from being groundless. For what is there in this world more wretched, than for those who were born free, and have a right to continue so, to be made slaves themselves, and to think of leaving a race of slaves behind them; even though it be to masters, confessedly the most humane and generous in the world? Or what wonder is it, if after groaning with a low voice for a while, to no purpose, we at length groaned so loudly, as to be heard more than three thousand miles; and to be pitied throughout Europe, wherever it is not hazardous to mention even the name of liberty, unless it be to reproach it, as only another name for sedition, faction or rebellion?

On the other hand, never did the tide of joy swell so high, or roll so rapidly thro' the bosoms and veins of the people in general, on any public occasion, as on the news of **THE RÉPEAL**. "Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing," *when the Lord turned our captivity*; this was received as an *emancipation* indeed, from *unmerited slavery*.

Not

Nor were there ever before so great external demonstrations of joy among the people of America ; not even when all Canada was reduced, or when it was secured to the crown of England by treaty, and our apprehensions of coming under the yoke of France were vanished away. And some there are, who suppose, that France would not have hesitated at allowing such a number of flourishing colonies the exclusive right of taxing themselves, for the sake of a free trade with them, could they have been prevailed on, by violating their allegiance, to put themselves under her protection ; as I am fully persuaded these colonies would not do, for all that France has to give. In my poor opinion, we never had so much real occasion for joy, on any temporal account, as when we were thus *emancipated*, and our soul escaped as a bird from the dreadful *snare*. And I am persuaded it would rejoice the generous and royal heart of his Majesty, if he knew that by a single turn of the scepter, when he assented to THE REPEAL, he had given more pleasure to three million good subjects, than ever he and his royal Grandfather gave them by all the triumphs of their arms, from Lake Superior Eastward to the Isles of Manilla ; tho' so numerous, so great, so illustrious ; and though WE partook so largely in the national joy on those occasions. A PEPPER-CORN \* *a year added to his Majesty's exchequer*, would not surely----- ! But I forbear.

\* See a certain ever-memorable Speech in an august assembly.  
If

If you please, we will now descend to some farther *particulars*, relative to our late unhappy and present joyful circumstances, in order to excite our thankfulness to God, for so memorable a deliverance.

This continent, from Canada to Florida, and the West-India Islands, most of them at least, have exhibited a dismal mixed scene of murmuring, despondence, tumult and outrage; courts of justice shut up, with custom-houses and ports; private jealousies and animosities, evil surmisings, whisperings and back-bitings, mutual reproaches, open railing, and many other evils, since the time in which the grievous act aforesaid was to have taken place. Almost every British American, as was before observed, considered it as an infraction of their rights, or their dearly purchased privileges, call them which you will; and the sad earnest of such a galling yoke to be laid on our necks, already somewhat sore by preceding grievances, as neither we nor our Fathers were able to bear; or rather, as being itself such a yoke, and likely to grow heavier by length of time, without any increase, either of ability or patience to endure it. The uneasiness was, therefore, justly great and universal, except, perhaps, among a few individuals, who either did not attend to consequences, or who expected to find their private account in the public calamity, by exercising the gainful, tho' invidious, and not very reputable office of *task-masters* over their groaning countrymen and brethren;

thren. Even our bought *Negro slaves* apparently shared in the common distress : For which one cannot easily account, except by supposing that even some of them saw, that if *the act* took place, their masters might soon be too poor to provide them suitable food and raiment ; and thought it would be more ignominious and wretched to be the *servants of servants*, than of free-men.

But to return. The general discontent operated very differently upon the minds of different people, according to the diversity of their natural tempers and constitutions, their education, religious principles, or the prudential maxims which they had espoused. Some at once grew melancholy, sitting down in a kind of lethargic, dull desparation of relief, by any means whatever. Others were thrown into a sort of consternation, not unlike to a phrenzy occasioned by a raging fever ; being ready to do any thing or every thing, to obtain relief ; but yet, unhappily, not knowing what, when, where, how ; nor having any two rational and consistent ideas about the matter ; scarce more than a person in a delirium has of the nature of, or proper method of curing the fever, which is the cause of his madness. Some few were, I believe, upon the principles of Sibthorp, Manwaring, Filmer, and that goodly tribe, determined to go no farther in order to obtain redress, than in the way of petition and remonstrance ; and this, even tho' they had been sure of success in some hardy enterprise. Others, who had no religious scruples of this kind, yet thought it extremely imprudent

and hazardous to oppose a superior power in such a manner as might, perhaps, draw the whole weight of its resentment on the colonies, to their destruction. But the greater part, as I conceive, tho' I may be mistaken in this, were firmly united in a consistent, however imprudent or desperate a plan, to run all risques, to tempt all hazards; to go all lengths, if things were driven to extremity, rather than to submit; preferring death itself to what they esteemed so wretched and inglorious a servitude. And even "of devout women not a few" were, I imagine, so far metamorphosed into men on this sad occasion, that they would have declined hardly any kind of manly exertions, rather than live to propagate a race of slaves, or to be so themselves. In short, such was the danger, and in their opinion, so great and glorious the cause, that the spirit of the Roman matrons in the time of the commonwealth, seemed to be now equalled by the fairer daughters of America. The uneasiness of some persons was much increased by an imagination, that the money to be raised by the duty on stamps, would partly be applied to pay certain civil officers salaries; whereby they would become more entirely and absolutely dependent on the crown, less on the people, and consequently, as was supposed, more arbitrary and insolent. Others were anxious, because they imagined, with how much, or how little reason you will best judge, that the money was to be chiefly applied towards maintaining a standing army in America; not so much to defend and secure the colonies



colonies from enemies, of whom they had none, except the aforesaid *fowlers*, as to awe the colonies themselves into an implicit obedience to ministerial measures, however unjust or execrable in their nature. There is no end, you know, to peoples *fears* and *jealousies*, when once they are thoroughly alarmed. And so some suspected, that this money was partly intended to maintain a standing army of bishops, and other ecclesiastics, to *propagate* the importance of certain rites and ceremonies, to which they had an aversion; the divine right of diocesan episcopacy and tythes, with many *et cetara's* of the like sacred and *interesting* importance. These *strange* notions and fears prevailed very much among certain odd people, who liked their old religion, and were not able to see the reasonableness of their paying for the support of any other. I am not accountable for other people's *whimsical* apprehensions: I am here only representing the perplexity, into which peoples minds were thrown by the novel taxation, according to their different views of it; a taxation, which was probably never thought of till a few years ago, when it was proposed to a great and good Secretary of State, who was far too friendly to the colonies, as well as too wise, to burn HIS fingers with an *American STAMF- ACT.*

This diversity of humours, sentiments and opinions among the colonists, of which I have been speaking, naturally occasioned great animosities, mutual censures and reproaches: Insomuch that it was hardly safe for any man to speak his thoughts on the times, unless he could patiently

bear to lie under the imputation of being a coward, an incendiary, rebel, or enemy to his country ; or to have some other odium cast upon him. In the mean time most of the courts were shut up, and almost all business brought to a stand ; and, in some colonies, wide breaches were made between their several Governors and Houses of Assembly ; those governors thinking it their duty to push the execution of the stamp-act ; and some of them trying to prevent the assemblies petitioning, in the joint manner proposed. In this state of general disorder, approaching so near to anarchy, some profligate people, in different parts of the continent, took an opportunity to gratify their private resentments, and to get money in an easier and more expeditious way than that of labor ; committing abominable excesses and outrages on the persons or property of others.

What a dreadful scene was this ! Who can take a cursory review of it even now, without horror, unless he is lost to all sense of religion, virtue and good order ? These were some of the bitter, and in a good measure, the natural fruits of that unhappy measure which preceded them. Nor were we wholly unapprehensive of something still worse ; of having a more dreadful scene, even a scene of blood and slaughter opened ! I will not be particular here ; but ask you what you think of British subjects making war upon British subjects on this continent ! What might this have terminated in ? Perhaps in nothing less than the ruin of the colonies, and the downfall

of a certain great kingdom, which has long been the support of other states, the terror of her enemies, and the envy and glory of Europe!— If I had myself, once, some apprehensions of this kind, as I confess I had, I was very far from being singular therein. One of the best judges of such matters, that any nation or age ever afforded, as well as one of the best men, and most accomplished orators, speaking on this point in a certain august assembly, is reported to have expressed himself thus. “ On a good, on a sound  
 “ bottom, the force of this country can crush  
 “ America to atoms. I know the valor of your  
 “ troops; I know the skill of your officers.—  
 “ But on this ground, on the STAMP-ACT,  
 “ when so many here will think it a crying in-  
 “ justice, I am one that will lift up my hand  
 “ against it. In *such a cause* your success may  
 “ be hazardous. AMERICA, if SHE fell, would  
 “ fall like a strong man, would embrace the pil-  
 “ lars of state, and *pull down the constitution*  
 “ *along with her.*” Thus the great patron of  
 America.† Even the remotest apprehensions of this  
 kind, must give a very sensible pain to any Ameri-  
 can, who at once sincerely loves his own coun-  
 try, and wishes that the happy *civil* constitution,  
 the strength and glory of Great Britain may be

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† The Right Hon. WILLIAM PITT, Esq;—But the author thinks it a piece of justice due to so great and respectable a name, to acknowledge that he has no better authority for mentioning it on this particular occasion, than that of the public prints, lately spread over America; giving an account of some debates in the honorable House of Commons. He also acknowledges, that this is all the authority he has for citing some other passages afterwards, as from the same illustrious patriot.

as lasting as the world, and still increasing ; as God is my witness, I both wish and pray. If Britain, which has long been the principal support of liberty in Europe, and is, at least *was*, the chief bulwark against that most execrable of all tyrannies, *Popery*, should in destroying her colonies destroy herself ; (Heaven forbid it ! ) what would become of those few states which are now free ? what, of the protestant religion ? The former might, not improbably, fall before the *Grand Monarch* on this side the Alps ; the latter before the *Succeffor* of the apostle Judas, and *Grand Vicar* of Satan, beyond them ; and so, at length, one universal despotism swallow up all ! Some of us had, lately, painful apprehensions of this kind, when there was talk of a great military force coming to *stamp* America into a particular kind of subjection, to which most people here have an *invincible* aversion.

It would, doubtless, have been a noble effort of genius and humanity in the — what shall I call them ? *fowlers* or *financiers* ? — to extort a little money from the poor colonies by force of arms, at the risque of so much mischief to America, to Britain, to Europe, to the world. And the golden temptation, it is said, took with too many, for a while. A Pandora's box, or Trojan horse, indeed !

— O miserî, quæ tanta infania, cives !

Creditis avectos *hostes* ? aut ulla putatis

*Dona carere dolis Danaûm* ? sic notus — ? †

But not to digress. I have now briefly reminded you of our late sad, perplexed, alarming circumstances ;

circumstances; not for the sake of reproaching those who brought us into them, but to excite your gratitude to God, for our deliverance out of them, and for our present happy condition.

The REPEAL, the REPEAL has at once, in a good measure, restored things to order, and composed our minds, by removing the chief ground of our fears. The course of justice between man and man is no longer obstructed; commerce lifts up her head, adorned with golden tresses, pearls and precious stones. All things that went on right before, are returning gradually to their former course; those that did not, we have reason to hope, will go on better now; almost every person you meet, wears the smiles of contentment and joy; and even our slaves rejoice, as tho' they had received their manumission. Indeed, all the lovers of liberty in Europe, in the world, have reason to rejoice; the cause is in some measure common to them and us. Blessed revolution! glorious change! How great are our obligations for it to the supreme Governor of the world? He hath given us *beauty for ashes*, and the *oil of gladness for the spirit of heaviness*: He hath turned our groans into songs, *our mourning into dancing*: He hath *put off our sackcloth, and girded us with gladness*, to the end that our tongues, *our glory may sing praises to him*. Let us all then rejoice in the Lord, and give honor to him; not forgetting to add the obedience of our lives, as the best sacrifice that we can offer to Heaven; and which, if neglected, will prove all our other sacrifices have been but ostentation and hypocrisy, which are an abomination to the Lord.

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The apostle Peter makes a natural transition from *fearing God* to *honoring the King*. Let me, accordingly, in the next place, exhort you, my friends and brethren, to a respectful, loyal and dutiful manner of speech and conduct, respecting his Majesty and his government; thereby making a suitable return to him for the redress of our late grievances. I am, indeed, well apprised of the firm attachment of these colonies in general, and of our own province in particular, to the King's person, and to the protestant succession in his illustrious House; for the preservation of which, there is hardly a native of New-England, who would not, upon constitutional principles, which are those of liberty, cheerfully hazard his life; or even more lives than one, if he had them to lay down in so good a cause. I have not the least suspicion of any disaffection in you to his Majesty: But yet the duty of subjects to Kings, and to all that are in authority, is frequently to be inculcated by the ministers of the gospel, if they will follow the example of the apostles in this respect. And the present occasion seems particularly proper to remind you of that important duty; since we have now before us a recent and memorable proof of his Majesty's moderation, his attention to the welfare of his people, and readiness, so far as in him lies according to the constitution, to redress their grievances, on reasonable and humble complaint. If any persons among us have taken it unkindly, that his Majesty should have given his royal assent to an act, which they think was an infrac-

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tion of those liberties and privileges, to which they were justly intitled ; and if the usual tide and fervor of their loyal affection is in any degree abated on that account ; yet, surely, the readiness which his Majesty has shewn to hear and redress his people's wrongs, ought to give a new spring, an additional vigor to their loyalty and obedience. Natural parents, thro' human frailty, and mistakes about facts and circumstances, sometimes *provoke their children to wrath*, tho' they tenderly love them, and sincerely desire their good. But what affectionate and dutiful child ever harboured resentment on any such account, if the grievance was removed, on a dutiful representation of it ? Hardly any thing operates so strongly on ingenuous minds, tho' perhaps of quick resentment, as the mild condescension of a superior to the force of reason and right on the part of the inferior. I shall make no application of this, any farther than to remind you, that British kings are the political FATHERS of their people, and the people their CHILDREN ; the former are not *tyrants*, or even *masters* ; the latter are not *slaves*, or even *servants*.

Let me farther exhort you to pay due respect in all things to the British Parliament ; the Lords and Commons being two branches of the supreme legislative over all his Majesty's dominions. The right of parliament to superintend the general affairs of the colonies, to direct, check or controul them, seems to be supposed in their charters ; all which, I think,

while they grant the power of legislation, limit the exercise of it to the enacting such laws as are *not contrary* to the laws of England, or Great-Britain; so that our several legislatures are subordinate to that of the mother-country, which extends to and over all the King's dominions: At least, so far as to prevent any parts of them from doing what would be either destructive to each other, or manifestly to the ruin of Britain. It might be of the most dangerous consequence to the mother-country, to relinquish this supposed authority or right, which, certainly, has all along been recognized by the colonies; or to leave them dependent on the crown *only*, since, probably, within a century, the subjects in them will be more than thrice as numerous as those of Great-Britain and Ireland. And, indeed, if the colonies are properly parts of the British empire, as it is both their interest and honor to be, it seems absurd to deny, that they are subject to the highest authority therein, or not bound to yield obedience to it. I hope there are very few people, if any, in the colonies, who have the least inclination to renounce the general jurisdiction of Parliament over them, whatever we may think of the particular right of taxation. If, in any particular cases, we should think ourselves hardly treated, laid under needless and unreasonable restrictions, or curtailed of any liberties or privileges, which other our fellow subjects in common enjoy; we have an undoubted right to complain, and, by humble and respectful,



respectful, tho' not abject and servile petitions, to seek the redress of such supposed grievances. The colonists are men, and need not be afraid to assert the natural rights of men ; they are British subjects, and may justly claim the common rights, and all the privileges of such, with plainness and freedom. And from what has lately occurred, there is reason to hope, that the Parliament will ever hereafter be willing to hear and grant our just requests ; especially if any grievances should take place, so great, so general and alarming, as to unite all the colonies in petitioning for redress, as with one voice. The humble united prayers of three or four million loyal subjects, so connected with Great Britain, will not be thought unworthy of a serious attention ; especially when seconded by such spirited resolutions and conduct of the American Merchants, as they have lately given an example of. Humble petitions, *so enforced*, always carry great weight with them ; and, if just and reasonable, will doubtless meet with a suitable return, as in the late instance ; since Great Britain can scarce subsist without the trade of her colonies, which will be still increasing. And an equitable, kind treatment of them, on her part, will firmly bind them to her by the *threefold cord* of duty, interest and filial affection ; such an one as the wise man says, is *not easily broken* : This would do more, far more to retain the colonies in due subjection, than all the fleets or troops she would *think proper* to send for that purpose.

But to return ; we ought, in honor to ourselves, as well as duty to the King and parliament, to frustrate the malicious prophecies, if not the hopes of some persons in Britain, who have predicted the most ungrateful and indecent returns from us to our mother-country, for deliverance from the late grievances. It has been foretold that, in consequence thereof, the colonies would grow insolent and assuming ; that they would affect a kind of triumph over the authority of parliament ; that they would little or nothing regard it hereafter, in other cases ; that they would give some broad intimations of their opinion, that it was not for want of inclination, but of power, that the late grievous act was not enforced ; that they would treat their brethren in Britain in an unworthy, disrespectful manner ; and the like. Such things as these have been predicted, and, probably, by those very *fowlers* who contrived the *snare*, from which, to their great mortification, our soul is now escaped as a bird. Let us, my brethren, (for it is in our power, and it is our duty) make such men false prophets, by a contrary behaviour ; “ prophets of the deceit of *their own* “ hearts.” This might, probably, vex them sorely ; since it is likely, their chief aim is, to bring about a fixed, confirmed disaffection on our part, and a severe resentment on the other, while the jealous enemies of the growing power of Britain, wagg their ever-plotting and enterprising heads, saying, “ Aha ! so we would “ have it.” Let us highly reverence the supreme

preme authority of the British empire, which to us is the highest, under that of heaven.— Let us, as much as in us lies, cultivate harmony and brotherly love between our fellow subjects in Britain and ourselves. We shall doubtless find our account in this at last, much more than in a contrary way of proceeding. There are no other people on earth, that so “naturally care for us.” We are connected with them by the strongest ties; in some measure by *blood*; for look but a century or two back, and you will find their ancestors and ours, in a great measure the same persons, tho’ their posterity is now so divided. We are strongly connected with them by a great commercial intercourse, by our common language, by our common religion as protestants, and by being subjects of the same King, whom God long preserve and prosper, while his enemies are clothed with shame.

If we consider things properly, it is indeed our great felicity, our best security, and highest glory in this world, to stand in such a relation as we do, to so powerful an empire; one which rules the ocean, and wherein the principles of liberty are in general predominant. It would be our misery, if not our ruin, to be cast off by Great-Britain, as unworthy her farther regards. What then would it be, in any supposable way, to draw upon ourselves the whole weight of her just resentment! What are *we* in the hands of that nation, which so lately triumphed over the united powers of France and Spain? Though it must, indeed,

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be acknowledged, that she did this, in a great measure, by means of her commercial intercourse with, and aids from the colonies : Without which she must probably have made a more inglorious figure at the end, than she did at the beginning of the last war ; even tho' Mr. PITT himself had had the sole direction of it under his Majesty. — Consider how many millions of people there are in other countries, groaning in vain under the iron sceptre of merciless despotism, who, if they were but imperfectly apprised of the happiness we enjoy, would most ardently desire to be in our situation, and to stand in the like relation to Great Britain. Let us not be insensible of our own felicity in this respect ; let us not entertain a thought of novelties or innovations, or be “ given to change.” Let us not indulge to any groundless jealousies of ill intentions towards us in our mother-country, whatever there may be in some designing individuals, who do the devil's work, by sowing discord. It is for the interest of Britain, *as she well knows*, to retain the affection of these growing colonies, and to treat them kindly to that end : And this bond of interest on her part, is the strongest security to us, which we can have in any political relation whatever. We are bound, in honor to the King and Parliament, to suppose, that it was not for want of ability to enforce a late act, and to crush us, that it was repealed ; but from a conviction of the inexpediency, the *dangerous consequences*, and

*many*

*many inconveniencies* of continuing it. And the like reasons will probably operate forever against any act of the same nature, and grow stronger and stronger.

It can answer no valuable end, for us to harbour grudges or secret resentment on account of redressed and past grievances; no good end wantonly and grossly to insult, and thereby to incense any particular powerful persons on the other side of the water, as the supposed enemies of the colonies. To me this seems impolitic at least; as it may perhaps make such persons our enemies, if they were not so before; or, if they were, fix their enmity; and make them more industrious than ever in seeking opportunities to do us mischief. Much less can it answer any good end, to affect to triumph over the power of Parliament: This would, in short, appear equally insolent, disloyal and ridiculous, in the eyes of all sober, unprejudiced men. May God give us the wisdom to behave ourselves with humility and moderation, on the happy success of our late remonstrances and struggles!--We are bound in honor so to behave, not only that we may frustrate the malignant predictions before referred to, but that we may answer the just expectation of our friends in Britain, who so nobly espoused our cause, and, as it were, pawned their own honor, (how great and sacred a pledge!) for our good conduct, if our grievances were removed. By such an engagement they did us honor, as it manifested their candid and kind sentiments concerning

us. This lays us under an additional obligation, in point of gratitude, to that good behaviour, which would have been our duty without it. I cannot but here remind you particularly of the words of that immortal patriot in Parliament, who has now a second time, been the principal means of saving Britain and her colonies from impending ruin.† “ Say,” said he, “ the Americans have not in all things  
 “ acted with prudence and temper: They  
 “ have been wrong’d ; they have been driven  
 “ to madness by injustice. Will you now pun-  
 “ nish them for the madness you have occasio-  
 “ ned ? Rather let prudence and temper come  
 “ first from this side ; I WILL UNDERTAKE  
 “ FOR AMERICA that she will follow the ex-  
 “ ample.” What SON, either of AMERICA or of  
 LIBERTY is there, that has the least spark of  
 ingenuity, who can help being touched and  
 penetrated to the inmost recesses of the heart,  
 by such magnanimous and generous expressi-  
 ons in behalf of the colonies ? Who is there,  
 that would not almost as willingly die, as that  
 THAT illustrious Patron of America should  
 ever have occasion to be ashamed of espousing  
 its cause, and making himself answerable for  
 us ? We had other advocates of distinguished  
 eminence and worth, who generously came  
 under similar engagements for us. God forbid,  
 my brethren, that any one of them should  
 ever have the least reason to blush for his ill  
 placed confidence in us ; as all of them will,  
 if we shew any unworthy behaviour towards  
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† The Rt. Hon. Mr. PITT.

the King, the Parliament or our Mother-country, after this proof of their moderation, and regard for us. And if *They*, our friends, should have cause to blush for us in this respect, what must we do for ourselves ! Where shall we find caverns far enough removed from the light of day, in which to hide our heads ! Or what reason shall we have to expect friends, advocates and sponsors again, how much soever we may need them, if we have no more regard for the honor of those who appeared for us at the late alarming crisis ; when it was accounted almost criminal to say any thing in our behalf ?

Let me subjoin, that as the good people of this province had the honor to lead in a spirited, tho' decent and respectful application for the redress of our late grievances ; methinks they should now be ambitious to have the honor of leading in a prudent, temperate, wise behaviour, in consequence of the success ; and, if need be, as I hope there is not, ambitious of setting an example of moderation and discretion to other colonies. This honor would be equal to the first mentioned ; and would probably recommend us greatly to those, whom it will always be our interest and duty to please ; so long, at least, as we can do it without renouncing our birth-right. It will contribute to remove any impressions that may have been made of late, to our disadvantage. It will at once gratify our best friends, and falsify the slanders of our enemies, who delight in representing us as a seditious, factious and turbulent sort of people, who cannot endure the

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wholesome and necessary restraints of government. May God rebuke them for, and forgive them this wrong!

Let none suspect that, because I thus urge the duty of cultivating a close harmony with our mother-country, and a dutiful submission to the King and Parliament, our chief grievances being redressed, I mean to dissuade people from having a just concern for their own rights, or legal, constitutional privileges. History, one may presume to say, affords no example of any nation, country or people long free, who did not take some care of themselves: and endeavour to guard and secure their own liberties. Power is of a grasping, encroaching nature, in all beings, except in HIM, to whom it emphatically "belongeth"; and who is the only King that, in a religious or moral sense, "can do no wrong." Power aims at extending itself, and operating according to mere *will*, where-ever it meets with no ballance, check, controul or opposition of any kind. For which reason it will always be necessary, as was said before, for those who would preserve and perpetuate their liberties, to guard them with a wakeful attention; and in all righteous, just and prudent ways, to oppose the first encroachments on them. "*Obsta principiis.*" After a while it will be too late. For in the states and kingdoms of this world, it happens as it does in the field or church, according to the well-known parable, to this purpose; That while men *sleep, then the enemy cometh and soweth tares*, which cannot be rooted out again till the *end of the world*, without rooting out the *wheat* with them. 45



If I may be indulged here in saying a few words more, respecting my notions of liberty in general, such as they are, it shall be as follows.

Having been initiated, in youth, in the doctrines of civil liberty, as they were taught by such men as Plato, Demosthenes, Cicero and other renowned persons among the ancients; and such as Sidney and Milton, Locke and Hoadley, among the moderns; I liked them; they seemed rational. Having, earlier still learnt from the holy scriptures, that wise, brave and virtuous men were always friends to liberty; that God gave the Israelites a King [or absolute Monarch] in his anger, because they had not sense and virtue enough to like a free common-wealth, and to have himself for their King; that the Son of God came down from heaven, to make us "free indeed"; and that "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty"; this made me conclude, that freedom was a great blessing. Having, also, from my childhood up, by the kind providence of my God, and the tender care of a good parent now at rest with Him, been educated to the love of liberty, tho' not of licentiousness; which chaste and virtuous passion was still increased in me, as I advanced towards, and into, manhood; I would not, I cannot now, tho' past middle age, relinquish the fair object of my youthful affections, LIBERTY; whose charms, instead of decaying with time in my eyes, have daily captivated me more and more. I was, accordingly, penetrated with the most sensible grief, when, about the *first of November last*, that day of dark-

ness, a day hardly to be numbered with the other days of the year, SHE seemed about to take her final departure from America, and to leave that ugly Hag *Slavery*, the deformed child of Satan, in her room. I am now filled, with a proportionable degree of joy in God, on occasion of HER speedy return, with new smiles on her face, with augmented beauty and splendor.—Once more then, Hail! celestial Maid, the daughter of God, and, excepting his Son, the first-born of heaven! Welcome to these shores again; welcome to every expanding heart! Long mayest thou reside among us, the delight of the wise, good and brave; the protectress of innocence from wrongs and oppression, the patroness of learning, arts, eloquence, virtue, rational loyalty, religion! And if any miserable people on the continent or isles of Europe, after being weakened by luxury, debauchery, venality, intestine quarrels, or other vices, should, in the rude collisions, or now-uncertain revolutions of kingdoms, be driven, in their extremity, to seek a safe retreat from slavery in some far-distant climate; let them find, O let them find one in America under thy brooding, sacred wings; where *our* oppressed fathers once found it, and we now enjoy it, by the favor of Him, whose service is the most glorious freedom! Never, O never may He permit thee to forsake us, for our unworthiness to enjoy thy enlivening presence! By His high permission, attend us thro' life AND DEATH to the regions of the blessed, thy original abode, there

to enjoy forever the "glorious liberty of the sons of God!"—But I forget myself; whether have I been hurried by this enthusiasm, or whatever else you will please to call it? I hope your candor will forgive this odd excursion, for which I hardly know how to account myself.

—There were two or three things more which I intended to say relative to this joyful occasion.

To go on then, these colonies are better than ever apprised of their own weight and consequence, when united in a *legal* opposition to any unconstitutional, hard and grievous treatment; which may be an advantage to them. God often bringeth good out of evil; or what is intended for evil by men, is by him meant for good. So it was particularly in the memorable case of Joseph, whom his hard-hearted, envious brethren sold as a *slave* into Egypt. There he became great, and his Father and brethren were at length obliged to have recourse to him, to keep them and their's from perishing.—And thus, not improbably, may good come out of our late troubles, as well as out of those oppressions, which occasioned the flight of our forefathers into the deserts of America. The great shock which was lately given to our liberties, may end in the confirmation and enlargement of them: As it is said, the stately oaks of the forest take the deeper root, extend their arms the farther, and exalt their venerable heads the higher for being agitated by storms and tempests, provided they are not actually torn up, rent in pieces, or quite blasted by the lightning of hea-

ven. And who knows, our liberties being thus established, but that on some future occasion, when the kingdoms of the earth are moved, and roughly dashed one against another, by Him that "taketh up the *isles* as a very little thing," we, or our posterity may even have the great felicity and honor to "save much people alive," and keep Britain herself from ruin. I hope she will never put it out of our power, by destroying us; or out of the inclination of any, by attempting it.

It is to be hoped, the colonies will never abuse or misapply any influence which they may have, when united as aforesaid; or discover a spirit of murmuring, discontent or impatience under the government of Great Britain, so long as they are justly and kindly treated. On the other hand, it is to be hoped, they will never lose a just sense of liberty, or what they may reasonably expect from the mother-country. These things they will keep in mind, if they are wise; and cultivate a firm friendship and union with each other upon equal terms, as far as distance and other circumstances will allow. And if ever there should be occasion, as I sincerely hope and pray there may not, their late experience and success will teach them how to act, in order to obtain the redress of grievances; I mean, by joint, manly and spirited, but yet respectful and loyal petitioning. Setting aside some excesses and outrages, which all sober men join in condemning, I believe history affords few examples of a more general, generous and just sense of liberty in any country, than has appeared in America within  
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the year past: In which time the mercantile part in particular have done themselves much honor, and had a great share in preserving the liberties of the plantations, when in the most imminent danger: Tho' this is not said with the least thought of reflecting on any other body or order of men, as wanting in their endeavours to the same noble end. Had we patiently received the yoke, no one can tell when, or whether ever it would have been taken off. And if there be some animals, adapted by nature to bear heavy burdens submissively, one of which, however, is said, on a certain occasion, to have had the gift of *speech*, and expostulated with his master for unjustly smiting him; I hope the Americans will never be reckoned as belonging to that spiritless, slavish kind, tho' their "powers of speech"† should not, in the opinion of some nameless, heroic pamphleteer-scoffers in Britain, exceed those of the other. However defective they may be in point of "eloquence,"† I thank God they can at least *feel*, and complain so as to be tolerably *understood*.

If your patience will hold out, I will add a few words further, by way of advice, and so conclude. While we endeavour to cultivate harmony and union with our mother-country and our sister-colonies, in all generous and manly ways, we should not, surely, neglect to cultivate the same among ourselves.

There have, I am sorry to say it, but really there have lately been many unwarrantable jealousies,

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† An abusive, superficial pamphlet in favor of the measures of the late ministry.

lousies, and bitter mutual reproaches among the people of this town and province, occasioned by that unhappy measure, which has been so often referred to. Even wise and good men, tho' all equally against that measure, could not, however, agree what was to be done, upon the maxims of prudence, tho' alike concerned for the public welfare. Accordingly some were blamed as too warm and sanguine, others as too phlegmatic and indifferent, in the common and noble cause of liberty. Many were censured, and some, I am well assured, very unjustly, as being freinds to, and encouragers of, the fatal measure aforesaid. But how far these accusations were just or unjust, on either side, I will not take upon me particularly to determine. Be that as it may, is it not best, my Brethren, to let these contentions subside, now the end is obtained, and we have so fair a prospect before us? Are there any valuable ends to be answered by perpetuating these disputes? I cannot readily conceive any: Perhaps it is, because I have less penetration than most others. Be it as it will, I know One, and One whom we all profess to reverence, who hath said, "Blessed are the *peace-*  
*makers*, for they shall be called the children  
 " of God." And, "Let us study the things that  
 " make for peace," said he that was not behind the  
 chief of the apostles, "and the things wherewith  
 " one may edify another." These sayings may apologize for me, if I am wrong in "preaching  
 peace" at this time. And if none will be offend-  
 ed with me for speaking plainly as to this matter,

To me it really seems most prudent, most christian, to bury in oblivion what is past ; to begin our civil, political life anew as it were, from this joyful and glorious æra of restored and confirmed liberty ; to be at union among ourselves ; to abstain from all party names and national reflections, respecting any of our fellow subjects ; and to exert ourselves, in our several stations, to promote the common good, “ by love serving one another.” Let us make allowances mutually for human frailty, for our different views and conceptions of things, which may be in a great measure unavoidable ; for difference of natural constitution, an unequal flow of animal spirits, or strength of nerves : Let no one censure another more hardly, if at all, than the necessity of the case plainly requires. I hope these counsels of peace will not be disrelished by any “ Son of peace,” or any wise and good man, that does me the honor to be my auditor on this occasion ; for I mean not to give offence, but only to do good. Such counsels as they are, I humbly commend them to the God of love and peace, to whose holy will I believe them agreeable, for his blessing ; that they may have their just influence on all that hear them. And you will not forget, that we must all one day give an account to Him ; so that it nearly concerns us to have our ways, motives, and all our doings approved by him. In fine,

Let us all apply ourselves with diligence, and in the fear of God, to the duties of our respective

tive stations. There has been a general dissipation among us for a long time; a great neglect and stagnation of business. Even the poor, and labouring part of the community, whom I am very far from despising, have had so much to say about government and politics, in the late times of danger, tumult and confusion, that many of them seemed to forget they had any thing to do. Methinks, it would now be expedient for *them*, and perhaps for most of us, to do something more, and talk something less: every one "studying to be quiet, and to do his own business;" letting things return peaceably into their old channels, and natural courses, after so long an interruption. My immediate aim in what I now say, being only to recommend industry, good order and harmony, I will not meddle with the thorny question, whether, or how far, it may be justifiable for private men, at certain extraordinary conjunctures, to take the administration of government in some respects into their own hands. Self-preservation being a great and primary law of nature, and to be considered as antecedent to all civil laws and institutions, which are subordinate and subservient to the other; the right of so doing, in some circumstances, cannot well be denied. But certainly, there is no plausible pretence for such a conduct among us *now*. That which may be excuseable, and perhaps laudable, on some very singular emergencies, would at other times be pragmatical, seditious, and



and high-handed presumption. Let all therefore now join with heart and hand in supporting the lawful, constitutional government over us in its just dignity and vigor ; in supporting his Majesty's Representative, the civil magistrates, and all persons in authority, in the lawful exercise of their several offices. No true friend of liberty can reasonably object against this ; and if any persons should, it would shew that, while they speak great swelling words of vanity, making liberty the pretext, they themselves are the servants of corruption, the ignoble slaves of sin. Without this due regard to government and laws, we shall still be miserable, my friends, notwithstanding all that God and the King have done to make us happy. If one had wings like a dove, it were better to fly far away, and remain alone in the wilderness, where he might be at rest, than to live in a society where there is no order, no subordination ; but anarchy and confusion reign. Of these we have surely had enough already ; tho' at the same time I bless God, that there has not been much more, considering the great danger in which we have been, with the general alarm and consternation, by reason of that which is said to make "even a wise man mad," and much more the rash and indiscrete, of whom there is a great proportion in all communities ; considering also the absolute necessity there was, or at least seemed to be, of some very uncommon struggles and exertions, in order to break the *snare*, and the  
 natural!

natural impetuosity of many people's tempers. So important a change in the situation of public affairs, so great a deliverance, has, perhaps, seldom been brought about in any country, with so little criminal excess, unless it were done by God alone, without the instrumentality or agency of men, by nature liable to so many errors and infirmities. But whatever there has been of this kind, ought to be, and I hope is, lamented by all good men. May that God, in whom our help has been, continue to protect us, our rights and privileges ! May he direct our paths thro' this uncertain life, and all the changes of it ; and, of his infinite mercy in Jesus Christ, finally bring us all to those peaceful and glorious regions, where no evil spirits, no wicked *fowlers* will come ; where no *snares* will be spread for us ; no *proud waters* to go over our soul ! And if we hope for admission into those eternal mansions of joy, let every one of us, as the apostle Peter exhorts, " honor all men, love the brotherhood, fear GOD, honor the KING."

A M E N !

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