

AN
ADDRESS
TO THE
INHABITANTS

OF
New-England,

Concerning the present

Bloody Controversy therein.



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An ADDRESS, &c.

My dear Countrymen,

OUR fathers came to this land for purity and liberty in the worship of God ; but now many have drawn their swords against each other, about the affairs of wordly gain, whereby an exceeding dark cloud is brought over us. Instead of being the light of the world, and the pillar and ground of the truth, as those are that obey Him who is the fountain of *light* and *love* ; what a stumbling-block are we to other nations, who have their eyes fixed upon us ? Permit me therefore to lay before you a few thoughts, which I hope may be serviceable in this dark season. If we were as well agreed about the way of relief, as we are about the cause of our present distress, a happy deliverance would soon appear ; as the following facts will shew.

From March to July, last year, the *order of lawyers* in our government, was exposed in the Boston papers, in a very striking manner ; and in the two following months many people arose in arms against our executive courts, in the counties of Hampshire, Berkshire, Worcester, Middlesex and Bristol. Hereupon the town of Boston met, and sent an address to all the other towns in the Massachusetts, earnestly requesting that a redress of grievances might be sought for in a constitutional orderly way only ; and pledging themselves to join their endeavours with the country, in that way, to obtain a redress of any such grievances

ances as really existed. Hereby they intended to have the people stirred up to send in an account of their real grievances to the General Court at Boston ; and after many such accounts had been laid before them, they published an address to the people, November 14, 1786, wherein they say,

“ We feel in common with our neighbours the scarcity of money ; but is not this scarcity owing to our own folly ? At the close of the war, there was no complaint of it ; since that time, our fields have yielded their increase, and Heaven has showered its blessings on us, in uncommon abundance ; but are we not constrained to allow, that immense sums have been expended, for what is of no value, for the gew-gaws imported from Europe, and the more pernicious produce of the West-Indies ; and the dread of a paper currency impedes the circulation of what remains : It is said however, that such a currency would give us present relief ; but like the pleasure of sin, it would be but for a season ; and like that too, it would be a reproach to the community, and would produce calamities without end.—Without a reformation of manners, we can have little hope to prosper in our publick or private concerns.—As the difficulty in paying debts increased, a disregard to honesty, justice and good faith, in publick and private transactions, became more manifest.—Some persons have artfully affected to make a distinction between the government and people, as though their interest were different and even opposite ; but we presume, the good sense of our constituents will discern the deceit and falsity of those insinuations. Within a few months the authority delegated to us will cease, and all citizens will be equally candidates in a future *election*.—Many who disapprove insurrections against the government,

vernment, neglect to afford their aid, in suppressing them ; but to stand still, inactive spectators in such case, is like a man who when his house is in flames, should stand with folded arms, and console himself with this, that he did not set it on fire."

This view of the cause of our distress, perhaps will not be denied by a single person ; but the measures which have been taken since, have moved many to declare their sorrow that we ever revolted from Great-Britain. But I am so far from any such thought, that I fully agree with our General Court, that a paper currency would produce calamities without end. For by it the Court of Britain have been enabled to carry blood and slavery round the world, and to load the nation with a debt of more than two hundred millions sterling, above a third of which was in attempts to bind us in all cases whatsoever ; and so to rob us both of manhood and Christianity. For to have our choice governed by reason, is essential to manhood ; and to have it governed by revelation, is essential to Christianity. Yet so late as Nov. 2, 1780, in a speech from the throne, they said, " We *will* not submit to receive the *laws* from any *power* whatsoever." So the Jews said, *We will not have this man to reign over us.* Luke xix. 14. Therefore God chose their delusions, and brought their fears upon them, because they *always resisted the Holy Ghost.* Isaiah lxvi. 1—5. Acts vii. 8, 48—51. Their fear was that the Romans would come and take away their place and nation ; yet rather than to receive King Jesus, they chose Cesar, who brought that destruction upon them. John xi. 48. xix. 15. Thus God's immutable plan of government determines the *choice* of the worst of men, without the least excuse for their *wickedness.* John xix. 11. Acts ii. 22, 23. And
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if these plain truths were duly regarded, peace would soon take place among us. For our Legislature truly say,

“ Within a few months the authority delegated to us will cease, and all the citizens will be equally candidates in a future *election*.” This is the true nature of our Constitution ; and the command of God is, *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake*. This ought to be a matter of *conscience* with every soul. 2 Peter ii. 3, 4. Rom. xiii. 1—10. His revealed will, enforced in the name of the *Lord our righteousness*, is as clear as *glass*, and as powerful as *fire* ; it being the only *perfect law of liberty*. And teachers of a contrary way, are guilty of *whoredom, stealing, and lying*. 2 Cor. iii. 5—18. James i. 16—25. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6, 14, 29—32. And putting away these evils, in the *valley of Achor*, is our only *door of hope*, of deliverance and happiness. Joshua vii. 11, 12, 26. Isaiah lxxv. 2—16. Hosea ii. 5—15. The comfortable support of his ministers is as really an *ordinance of God*, as any *sacrifice* that he ever instituted ; and those who do not *heartily* obey him therein, *sow to the flesh, and shall of the flesh reap corruption*. 1 Cor. ix. 14. Gal. vi. 6—9, 19—23. No son of Aaron might offer any *sacrifice* any where but upon *God's altar*, nor with any *fire* but that which was received from Heaven. Two of his sons were struck dead for violating this law. Levi. ix. 24. x. 1, 2. And Christ is the only *altar* on which all our *sacrifices* ought to be offered ; and none can have a *right to eat thereof*, who build upon the covenant of circumcision. Heb. xiii. 10—18. Phil. iv. 10—18. For Abraham could not admit any Gentile into it, without buying of him as a *servant*. And God has expressly repealed that covenant. Gen. xvii. 11—14.

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Mat. xxiii. 8. 1 Cor. vii. 19—23. Gal. vi. 15, 16. And, instead of fire from Heaven, the tongues of those who are for *many masters* are a *world of iniquity, setting on fire the whole course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell.* And nothing can quench it, but the wisdom that is from above, which is *first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.* And none can countenance the *natural* distinctions which were in Abraham's covenant, without *partiality, and dissimulation.* James iii. 1, 6, 17. Gal. ii. 12—20.

The way wherein teachers have kept up these evils so long in the world, has been by insisting upon it, that *self-determination* in the *will of man* is essential to moral agency. This doctrine, and the doctrine of *purgatory*, is now carried further in London and in Boston, than it is in Rome. Which is so opposite to the doctrine of Christ, that he says, *I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my father's commandments, and abide in his love.* John vi. 38. xv. 10. And in this way only can we make our *calling and election sure*, and escape the *error of the wicked.* 2 Peter i. 3—11. iii. 17, 18. And that all who are in authority may protect and encourage such a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty, is my earnest prayer.

I S A A C B A C K U S.

Boston, March 28, 1787.