

SERMON,

CONTAINING,

Scriptural Instructions to Civil Rulers,
and all Free-born Subjects.

In which the Principles of sound Policy and good Government are established and vindicated; and some Doctrines advanced and zealously propagated by NEW-ENGLAND TORIES, are considered and refuted.

Delivered on the public F A S T,

AUGUST 31, 1774.

With an Address to the FREEMEN of the Colony.

By *Samuel Sherwood, A. M.*

Pastor of a Church of Christ in FAIRFIELD.

Also, An APPENDIX,

Stating the heavy Grievances the Colonies labour under from several late Acts of the British Parliament, and shewing what we have just Reason to expect the Consequences of these Measures will be.

By the Rev. EBENEZER BALDWIN, of Danbury.

And the chief Captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom; and Paul said, but I was born free.

ACTS xxii, 28.

Sit Denique Inscriptum in fronte unius Cujusque Civis quid De Republica sentiat.

CICERO.

Patria mihi mea vita multo est Cario.

CICERO.

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T O T H E

Respectable F R E E M E N,

of the English Colony of Con-
necticut.

MY DEAR COUNTRYMEN and FRIENDS,

TH E ensuing discourse was delivered on a very solemn occasion, before an auditory apparently serious and devout in their attention; and is now made public at the desire of some of my public spirited friends. Such as it is, I cheerfully offer it as my poor mite, into the public treasury; while others are casting in of their abundance. And I hope and trust that your candor will be such, amidst all the inaccuracies and imperfections that attend such an hasty composition, as to accept it for a real token and proof of my undissembled love and heart-felt concern for my dear country, under the dark and threatening aspects of divine providence on our most invaluable liberties and privileges. While I observe with the most sensible grief, and anxious concern, some of my countrymen, sunk into a state of worse than brutal stupidity and insensibility, who secretly rejoice in the distressing miseries and calamities brought on our suffering brethren at Boston; and ardently wish and pray, in the most profane manner, if I may be allowed the expression, that our charter and birth-right privileges may be taken from us; that we may be ruled by the iron rod of oppression, and chained down to eternal slavery and bondage.

Whose

Whose factious and rebellious leaders improve every opportunity in their power, to impeach a loyal people ; and to send misrepresentations of us to their correspondents that have access to the British court, to hasten our intended ruin and destruction. I say, while these clandestine, mischievous operations are carrying on against us, as black and dark as the powder-treason plot ; it revives my soul, and rejoices my heart to find that the main body of the people, or at least, the most sensible and judicious part of them, are in some degree, awakened by the loud thunders in Providence, and have their eyes opened to the danger and ruin we are threatened with ; that they are so far raised above that infamous herd of vile miscreants, as to know that they are men, and have the spirits of men ; and not an inferior species of animals, made to be beasts of burden to a lawless, corrupt administration. This manly, this heroic, and truly patriotic spirit, which is gradually kindling up in every free-man's breast, through the continent, is undoubtedly a token for good ; and will, if duly regulated by Christian principles and rules, ensure success to American liberty and freedom. No free state was ever yet enslaved and brought into bondage, where the people were incessantly vigilant and watchful ; and instantly took the alarm at the first addition made to the power exercised over them.---They are those only of the tribes of Ifsachar, who keep in profound sleep ; and like strong and stupid asses, couch down between heavy burdens ; that insensibly sink into abject slavery and bondage. It is a duty incumbent upon us at all times, to keep a watchful attention to our interests ; (especially in seasons of peril and danger,) to watch and pray that we fall not.

I do not mean to encourage evil jealousies and groundless suspicions of our civil rulers, the guardians of our liberties ; nor to countenance seditious tumults in the state, so destructive to our civil happiness and peace. I am a firm friend to good order and regularity ; that all ranks of men move in strait lines, and within their own proper spheres : That authority and government be supported and maintained so as

to promote the good of society, the end for which it was instituted; perfectly consistent with which, a people may keep a watchful eye over their liberties, and cautiously guard against oppression and tyranny, which I detest and abhor, and solemnly abjure.

But you, Gentlemen Freemen, have been so well indoctrinated in the principles of loyalty and good policy, have been so constantly taught from your infancy, to fear God, and honor the King, that 'tis needless to add any particular instructions on this head. However, as my heart, at this threatening period, is so full of apprehension of danger, you will not, I trust, take it as any reflection on your understanding and integrity as a body, should I drop the hint, that there may possibly be some here and there in disguise, against whose plausible pretences, and artful insinuations, it might be well for you to guard. Men, (says the truly ingenuous and patriotic Farmer, in Pennsylvania,) who either hold or expect to hold certain advantages by setting examples of servility to their countrymen; men, who trained to the employment, or self-taught by a natural versality of genius; serve as decoys, for drawing the innocent and unwary, into snares; it is not to be doubted but that such men will diligently bestir themselves on this, and every like occasion, to spread the infection of their meanness as far as they can. On the plans they have adopted, this is their course; this is their method to recommend themselves to their patron: they act consistently in a bad cause.---From them we shall learn how pleasant and profitable a thing it is, to be, for our submissive behaviour, well-spoken of at St. James's, or St. Stephen's, at Guild-hall, or the Royal-exchange. Specious fallacies will then be dressed up with all the arts of delusion, to persuade one colony to distinguish herself from another by unbecoming condescensions, which will serve the ambitious purposes of great men at home; the way to obtain considerable rewards.---It will be insinuated to us with

a plausible affectation of wisdom and concern, How prudent it is to please the powerful---How dangerous to provoke them.---And then comes in the perpetual incantation that freezes up every generous purpose of the soul, in cold inactive expectation, that if there is any request to be made, compliance will obtain favourable attention.---Our vigilance, and our union are success and safety.---Our negligence and our division are distress and death; nay, worse, they are *shame and slavery*. The persons here meant, (*says the abovesaid Gentleman*) are those base spirited wretches, who may endeavour to distinguish themselves by their sordid zeal in defending and promoting measures which they know, beyond all question, to be destructive to the just rights and true interests of their country. It is scarcely possible to speak of them with any degree of propriety; for no words can truly describe their guilt and meanness; but every honest bosom, on this being mentioned, will feel what cannot be expressed.

Some of a narrow contracted turn of mind may think that by this quotation, and some other expressions I have used, I aim to point out persons of a certain religious profession, as objects of public odium and contempt. To which I answer, no further than their temper and conduct render them worthy of it. I do not think that piety, public virtue, and a love to one's country, are entailed to, or inseparably connected with any one mode of professing christianity; however some may have the advantage of others, in their tendency to promote these christian and political virtues; yet I believe there may be mean, base and mercenary wretches in every profession, who for one sweet delicious morsel to themselves, might be tempted to sell their country with all its liberties and privileges, as profane Esau sold his birth-right. On the other hand, I believe there are many good men, of sound integrity, of unblemished morals, and truly lovers of their country in every denomination of christians. On this subject, it matters not with me, whether a man be

a stated member of this or that church, whether he be in communion with that established in Old England, or in New; provided he be a good man, actuated by evangelical principles and motives, and will stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made him free. I disdain the low singularities of a party. I desire that every man may think and judge for himself in religion, and enjoy all the sacred rights and liberties of conscience in full. There is but one general distinction that is of essential importance in the cause now depending, and that is to be made by drawing the dividing line between the true friends to the rights of humanity,---our dear country, and constitutional liberties and privileges, civil and religious: And the base, traitorous and perfidious enemies thereto. Let the first sort of such an amiable character be honoured and beloved, and promoted to all public offices and employments in the state: let the latter sort have a public brand of infamy put upon them, to mark them out as the worst of villains, the open and avowed enemies of mankind, and traitors of their country, who are secretly hoping for ministerial favours. If any under pretence of great moderation, or a pacific disposition, stand as neuters in this important cause, skulking as behind the door, and undetermined on which side they can serve themselves to best advantage, sometimes appearing friendly to this party, and sometimes to that; we can have no safe dependence on them in a day of extremity. He that will not stand forth firmly and boldly for his country, when exposed so as to need his help; is no true friend to it. And as there may possibly be some such secret dissembling enemies acting in disguise, among us; it might be well for you, Gentlemen Freemen, to be cautiously on your guard against them: they cannot safely be trusted with the lowest office in the state.---As you have it in your power to choose your own rulers and officers, from a governor even down to a tythingman, the present state of the times makes it requisite and necessary that you be very vigilant and watchful, and get a thorough knowledge

of men's political principles, before you advance them to any seat in government, or any office in the state. If the office oaths had an additional clause to them, in this critical day, it might possibly be a stronger safeguard and security to us, viz. That every person who comes into office, solemnly swear, not only allegiance to the king, and faithfulness in general; but that he will maintain and defend the constitutional rights, and charter privileges of his country. I add but my best wishes and hearty prayers to God for the continuation of these rights and privileges to us, and our children after us, to the latest posterity. I remain your most cordial friend, and devoted humble servant,

The AUTHOR.

Norfield, in Fairfield,
September 8, 1774.

II S A M U E L, XXIII. 3.

*The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel
spake to me, He that ruleth over men
must be just, ruling in the fear of God.*

GOD the fovereign Lord and supreme Ruler of all things, has made men in such a manner, and placed them in such circumstances, as plainly to discover his will, that they should unite and combine into societies for their mutual benefit and advantage. He has not, by the light of nature, nor by any positive declarations of his will, infallibly directed what form of society he would have to prevail, nor prescribed any one particular species of civil government, as more agreeable to him, than another. But has made mankind rational creatures ; and left them to choofe that which they apprehend to be most perfect in its nature and kind, and best suited to their state, situation and circumstances. The divine constitution, and government of God over his intelligent creatures, is fixed ; and it does not become men to exercise their invention or wisdom in seeking any alteration or change in it : but to study the most ready and cheerful submission ; as they may be assured, that whatever God requires, is fit and right for his subjects to comply with. His authority and power over us is unlimited and uncontrollable, and cannot be denied, or opposed without our being guilty of the highest crime of rebellion. But no created being is invested with such absolute, unlimited power, nor qualified for the exercise

cise of it. Error and imperfection belongs to every individual of the human race. The brightest character that was ever justly drawn among mortal men, has this dark shade in it : So that the will of none, is infallibly right in all things, and cannot therefore be complied with in all instances, consistent with a good conscience, and the superior obligations we are under to the sovereign Ruler of the world ; who still maintains his rightful authority over us, and has not given it by delegation, to any one among created beings : all of whom were originally made free-agents ; and considered as in a state of nature, previous to their uniting as members of society, have their liberty and free choice to agree upon such a form of government, and mode of administration in their civil and temporal affairs, as they judge most conducive to their happiness and good : any one of which has no more claim than another to be, *jure divino*, or of divine right, on any other principle, than its being more conformable to right reason and equity, by the eternal rules of which, God has manifested it to be his will, that his rational creatures be governed.

As societies and communities have their beginning and origin in voluntary compact and agreement ; when persons have entered by consent and free choice, into society, they must acknowledge themselves under strict and sacred obligations to act toward one another agreeable to the laws and constitution of that society whereof they are members. There are certain duties required of rulers, as well as of subjects ; and their obligations faithfully and punctually to fulfil them, rise in proportion to the dignity and importance of their high and elevated stations ; and the effect and influence which their conduct has on the rest of the body. A man's being raised to honour and promotion above others, is so far from releasing him from, or lessening his duty, that every step he takes in his advancement, proportionably enlarges it, and adds a

new and powerful obligation to the performance of it. The most absolute of sovereign princes owe something to the meanest of their subjects ; and may be very criminal in the neglect or refusal of it. Subjects have rights, privileges and properties ; and are countenanced and supported by the law of nature, the laws of society, and the law of God ; in demanding full protection in the enjoyment of these rights, and the impartial distribution of justice, from their rulers. And when rulers refuse these, and will not comply with such a reasonable and equitable demand from the subject ; the society is dissolved ; and its fundamental laws violated and broken ; and the relation between the ruler and the subject ceases, with all the duties and obligations that arose from it. For it must be supposed, and every one of common sense will readily allow, that no man would ever have consented to place himself in the state of a subject, on any other consideration or footing than that of his having protection and justice from those to whom he submitted. The good of society in all its individual members, is the end for which it is formed ; and for which government is instituted and appointed. And this cannot be obtained, unless rulers exert their power, influence and authority to protect their subjects in all their valuable rights and privileges ; defend them against their enemies, both from without, and within ; and administer impartial justice among them. *David*, who had, for many years, exercised an absolute sovereignty and dominion over the kingdom of Israel, had no notion of aggrandizing himself, and his nobility, by enslaving his subjects, and stripping them of their property, at his own arbitrary will and pleasure, contrary to *law* and *right* : but considers himself as appointed to serve them, whose rights and privileges were esteemed by him, more sacred and inviolable than those of the royal-scepter and diadem. The best and most illustrious part of his character consisted in this, That he ap-
proved

proved himself the faithful servant of God, and his generation. His ambition and desire was to serve his generation ; not to be served by them in the character of abject vassals and slaves. A king or prince of his noble and heroic spirit could have no pleasure or satisfaction in ruling over their fellow-mortals, degraded to such a low, infamous state, so far beneath humanity. But to rule over men that have the spirit of men, the spirit of loyalty and liberty ; and who possess some property too ; is an honour to the most dignified king or prince. And the more of this spirit of liberty, in conjunction with property among the subjects, the greater is the honour of him that sways the scepter in righteousness over them. This Jewish, or Israelitish prince was very sensible, that kings and rulers were liable to do wrong, unjust actions, as well as others ; that the subjects had rights and properties that might be invaded or encroached upon by them. We therefore find among his last words, the excellent sentence now read, which he spake just as he was leaving his earthly throne and kingdom, and going to appear before a higher tribunal.---*He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.* David himself had been a ruler over men : he was the man who was raised up on high ; the anointed of the God of *Jacob*,---must therefore, from his own great experience and observation, be supposed to have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the subject on which he here speaks with so much seriousness and solemnity, as in the near view of eternity, which consideration adds weight and importance to his expressions ; and might be sufficient to engage the attention of the most dignified rulers, and sovereign princes, to them ; who must be inexcusable if they refuse to receive instruction from them, since a greater than *David* is here : *The God of Israel has said, the Rock of Israel has spoken.* That glorious Being by whom kings reign, and princes decree justice, is the author of this divine sentence
here

here given forth : to whom sovereign rulers are as strictly accountable for all their conduct, as the meanest of their subjects---May therefore properly be called upon, and that, by the authority of the great Lord and governor of the world, to attend to, and conscientiously practice their duty in such plain, important instances of it. *Be wise now therefore O ye kings, says God, be instructed ye judges of the earth ; serve the Lord with fear, rejoice with trembling.* Psal. ii. 10, 11.

In further discoursing from these words, I shall,

I. Consider the necessity and importance of justice in civil rulers.

II. Shew that the fear of the Lord is the proper, effectual principle, to influence such to the observation and practice of justice.

I. 'Tis highly necessary and important, that civil rulers should be just. Such are concerned in the rules of justice and righteousness, as well as other men ; and indeed, more so, in proportion as they are raised above others ; and have it in their power to do greater good or evil, according as they are inclined. Was the doctrine true, *That all property is vested in the king, or chief rulers ; and that they can do no wrong to their subjects* : Such scripture precepts and directions from the sovereign Ruler of the world as that in my text, would be entirely needless and impertinent ; and seem, on this supposition, to argue his want of wisdom and knowledge, on this important subject. But however bold some conceited, ambitious mortals may be, in censuring others, when advanced a little above them in wealth and power ; yet, I would hope that few or none will dare openly to attack divine revelation, and censure the ruling wisdom of God. *Let God be true, tho' every man be found a liar. Let God be wise, tho' every man be found a fool.* If those that rule over men, must be just ; there is certainly some rule of justice and righteousness for them to observe in this office and character : and it may be infered by just consequence, *That*

That they are capable of doing wrong ; and as liable so to do as other men, --- *That those who stand related to them as subjects, have really something to call their own, --- that they have rights and properties distinct from their sovereign, -- are capable of suffering injustice, oppression and wrong, even from them ;* and that, in a greater degree than from any of their fellow-subjects, in proportion to the greater degree of their strength and power. The aforesaid doctrine therefore, advanced by some, *That kings and sovereign rulers with their ministry, can do no wrong,* is so far from being true, that it is the most false, absurd doctrine that was ever preached in the world ; and of most pernicious bad consequence both to ruler and ruled, directly tending not only to the temporal, but eternal destruction of both. As rulers are capable, when they rightly improve the superiour advantages of their high and elevated stations, of doing more towards promoting justice and righteousness among their fellow-men : so, when of a contrary temper and disposition, that is to say, when they neglect, and refuse to attend to those good laws and rules of equity ; and take it into their heads to act in an arbitrary, tyrannical manner, to oppress and enslave their subjects ; they do the highest injustice and wrong, and the greatest mischief and evil of any men in the world ; and are the biggest plagues, and heaviest judgments upon a society that can be sent upon them.

Corruptio optimi est pessima.

None therefore that are promoted to the office and character of civil rulers, ought to think themselves above the observation of the eternal rules of justice and righteousness, by which they themselves, as well as their subjects, will be tried hereafter, and justified or condemned by the righteous judge of the world.

BUT that I may, to better advantage, illustrate the great necessity and importance of justice in civil rulers, I shall briefly consider them in their several capacities, and shew the necessity of their being just, while acting in them.

Now,

Now, under the name of rulers, are comprehended, both those who enact laws, and those who execute them ; those who are cloathed with legislative authority, and those who have that which is judicial and ministerial.

WHEN men first joined in society, 'twas impossible for them to form at once, a complete, perfect system of laws, to suit all exigences, and particular cases that might happen : they could not foresee all future events, and make provision for them. The body politic, is like the natural body ; subject to a variety of distempers and diseases,---'tis sometimes strong, healthy and vigorous, and every part performs its proper office and function, without impediment or obstruction :---At other times, it declines, grows weak and relaxed in all its nervous parts ; and to use the significant and beautiful language of inspiration, *The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint ; from the sole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no soundness in it.* And as it is liable to be thus sickly and distempered ; so 'tis liable to be dissolved and die.

Now, as a man finds it necessary to regulate himself in regard to diet, exercise, physick, &c. and suit his way of living to the present condition of his body, as will best serve to promote the health and activity of all the members of it ; so there is the necessity of the like wise, prudential methods of administration in government, suited to the different state and circumstances of the body politic. And as circumstances vary, and new and different scenes open to view ; new laws become necessary for the health and benefit of the community. All governments have therefore a legislative authority lodged in some hand or other ; not to be exercised at the arbitrary will and pleasure of one or more individuals ; but in the exercise of it to be restrained and limited, at least by the eternal rules of justice and righteousness, as it is designed, not for the destruction, but for the health and preservation of the body. And as

it is necessary for the well-being of society, that good laws be made ; so 'tis likewise necessary that they be duly put in execution ; and that, both in civil and criminal cases : this being the life of the law, without which it signifies nothing toward answering the end for which it was made. Now, in order to this, some persons must have authority to judge between a man and his neighbour, and to put their judgments in execution.

Thus rulers considered either in their legislative or executive capacity, are designed for the general and public good of the community they serve ; they are the ministers of God, instituted and ordained to attend continually unto this very thing ; and in both these capacities, they must be just. Particularly,

1. There is justice to be observed in making laws. The legislative authority is usually stiled supreme. The power of making laws is undoubtedly the highest in every society. The executive officers are obliged to observe the rule prescribed them by the legislators ; and all the subjects of every order, to yield obedience to their laws ; provided they are not prejudicial to, but salutary and for the good of society ; and do not interfere with the duty they owe to the great Sovereign of all men ; and do not contradict the end for which men unite, as members of society ; nor run counter to the fundamental constitution on which they are settled. While a society subsists, no man, or number of men, have authority to call to account those who are vested with supreme authority : which makes it extremely difficult to correct disorders in a state, when the foundations are out of course. But tho' sovereign rulers cannot, while they continue in their high office and character, be called to account, by any under them ; yet 'tis possible for them, by acting contrary to the design and intention of their office, to dissolve the society over which they rule ; and so, at once lose all their sovereign power and authority : after which, they can have no more than other men, to screen them from
such

such punishment as their crimes deserve. And when such a melancholy event takes place, that a civil society is dissolved, and men return to a state of nature; They have the same liberty they at first had, to form themselves into society again, in what form, and on what terms they please.

BUT notwithstanding the sovereignty of legislators, they are under strict and sacred obligations to observe the rule of justice, in enacting laws. 'Tis a great and very dangerous mistake to suppose, that legislators have a power absolutely arbitrary; or that their authority is under no limitation or restraint at all. Right and wrong, are founded in the nature of things; and cannot be altered and changed, even by the voice of such kings and monarchs as are entrusted with the power of making laws. The Psalmist mentions, *A throne of iniquity which frameth mischief by a law*. And if he had not mentioned such a thing, any person of common sense and understanding, who considered things with the least degree of attention, would soon be convinced, that 'twas in the nature of things, possible to establish iniquity by a law. And any one who is acquainted with the history of former ages; or even with the present state of the world, cannot but know, that this has in fact, been often done. No intelligent friends to the christian institution doubts, but the laws made by the heathen emperors for extirpating christianity, and destroying the professors of it, were unjust. All sound protestants, I suppose, will agree in passing the same sentence on the laws which establish an *inquisition* in some popish countries. And it must be a pleasure to all lovers of liberty and virtue, to observe, that the number of those who wish that no penal laws might be enacted in matters merely religious,---that no person might be liable to any penalty, or lie under any incapacity, on account of any opinion or practice in religion, which does not at all effect the peace and happiness of human society, is daily increasing.

Now,

Now, if there be any such thing as acting unjustly in making a law, 'tis plain that rulers, considered in their legislative capacity, are obliged to observe some rule of justice. For where there is no duty or obligation of this sort, there can be no such thing as acting unjustly.

'Tis a part of justice in legislators to enact such laws as are suited to the circumstances of the society for the regulation of which they are intended: such as conduce to the public good:---And such as, instead of destroying, will secure and protect the just rights and privileges of every individual member:---such as will, in an equitable manner, decide controversies between particular subjects; and defend the weak, and prevent their becoming an easy prey to the strong:---such finally, as may be a terror to evil doers, and an encouragement to those that do well.

THERE is further, justice to be observed between the community and particular persons; under which head, are to be reckoned the granting proper rewards to those who faithfully serve the public in any capacity: paying public debts: and sacredly observing the public faith. Here likewise may be mentioned the penalties annexed to laws. Penal laws are intended for the public good: The great intention of punishing the transgressors of them is, that others may be kept in awe. And legislators have a right to annex such penalties to their just and equitable laws, as are sufficient to maintain their authority, and secure the observation of them. But yet, there is justice to be observed in proportioning punishments to crimes: and no doubt, it would be unjust, cruel and barbarous, to affix the most severe punishments that could be invented, to small and trifling offences.

2. RULERS considered in their executive capacity, as putting laws in execution, must be just. Executive officers are obliged to proceed according to the received and established laws of their country. By these,

these, they are to judge and determine all controversies, both of a civil and criminal nature, which come before them; doing strict, impartial justice to all men, without respect of persons. Their duty is not to oppress: but to deliver the poor that cry to them; the fatherless, and him that hath none to help. They ought to endeavour that the blessing, not the curse of him that is ready to perish, may come upon them: and to cause the widow's heart to sing for joy. It concerns them to put on righteousness, and to clothe themselves with judgment, as with a robe and diadem. They must be eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, and fathers to the poor; and the cause which they know not, ought to be searched out. To them it belongs to break the jaws of the wicked; and to pluck the spoil out of his teeth: to curb and restrain the violent; and let the oppressed go free. But it being so evident, and universally acknowledged, that those who put the laws in execution, ought to be just men, I shall not enlarge upon this head: but proceed briefly to show the necessity and importance of rulers, being just; or to mention some of the obligations they are under to this great duty. And here,

I. THIS is necessary to their answering the design of their office, and promoting the welfare and good of human society. Public good is the end of government of every sort. 'Tis with a view of promoting and securing this, that men enter into society. 'Tis for obtaining this, that some are appointed to rule over others; and that those submit to, and obey them. Now, this important end cannot be obtained, unless rulers act uprightly and justly. When civil rulers, forgetting the end of their institution, and the proper duties of their station, neglect and trample upon the rules of justice; and consult only to gratify their own pride and ambitious humour and passion: when they consider their subjects as an inferior species of beings, made as beasts of burden, for their pleasure or profit; when,

when, instead of observing the reason and nature of things, they make their own mere will and pleasure, the rule of acting ; and govern in an arbitrary, tyrannical manner ; 'tis impossible to describe the evils and mischiefs they bring on mankind. These have been so great and terrible, that some have been ready to question, Whether civil rulers have not done more hurt than good, in the world. When we see an haughty and ambitious monarch, or corrupt Ministry spending the blood and treasure of their subjects, in carrying on an unrighteous quarrel and contention with them, or against their neighbours ; from a mistaken notion of glory ; distressing their towns and cities with their troops and armaments, depopulating their country, and seeming to aim at the universal destruction of mankind ; we may well be shock'd at the sight, and look on such a lawless, arbitrary ruler, as the heaviest calamity and judgment, that a righteous God can send upon a sinful people. But notwithstanding the dark and dismal prospect which a scene of tyranny and oppression affords ; 'tis undoubtedly true, that civil government is designed for the good of men ; and when administered with justice and mercy, it does excellently well answer this design. As tyrants are the greatest of temporal judgments, as being the cause of all the most distressing evils that can be imagined ; so good rulers are the greatest blessings to the world, and the instruments in God's hand, of securing all our other good things. But then, to render them such, they must be just, considered both in a legislative and executive capacity.

2. RULERS are obliged to be just, on account of the great trust reposed in them. Sovereign authority is the greatest trust that can be reposed in any man. The power of making laws is very great, and extensive in its nature, and of the utmost importance in the exercise of it. And next to this, is that of putting laws in execution. The man that is appointed to
judge

judge another, with authority to decide all controversies among his fellow-subjects : to determine and pass sentence upon the lives and properties of such vast numbers of men ; has a very great and important trust reposed in him. And the weight and importance of the trust reposed in any inferior executive officer, is proportioned to the authority vested in him. Now, the receiving such a trust lays a man under very great obligations to faithfulness in the discharge of it. Men in such high places of trust and authority, instead of being releated from the laws of God, and having their obligations to faithfulness in the discharge of duty, lessened and diminished ; have them increased, in proportion to their advancement ; and it is not beneath the dignity of their stations, to attend very seriously to the advice and exhortation of the Psalmist, *Be wise now therefore, O ye kings ; be instructed ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear ; kiss the son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little.* 'Tis of importance, if men have but one talent, that they improve it : but if they have ten, and neglect and refuse so to do ; the punishment will be tenfold greater. If a private man neglects his duty, he, and others connected with him, may suffer. But if a chief ruler is unjust and unfaithful, the whole community or body politic suffers. As much therefore as the welfare and happiness of such a community, or body, is to be valued above, and preferred to the happiness of an individual ; so much higher and greater are his obligations to faithfulness, than the obligations of a private member of society ; and if he refuses to discharge them uprightly and conscientiously, as in the fear of God ; a proportionably heavy and aggravated punishment must he expect to receive, when judged by him.

3. THE exercise of justice is necessary in civil rulers, to their own present comfort, and future happiness. 'Tis a common observation, that the greatest tyrants are the greatest and most miserable slaves. Those ru-

lers who invade the rights and liberties of their own subjects, in an arbitrary, tyrannical manner, and seek to oppress and enslave them ; are always in fear of being themselves destroyed by them. They are obliged, at vast expence, to keep up large armies to distress and enslave their peaceable subjects ; who, under such a grievous yoke of bondage, cannot be easy and satisfied ; but will be naturally struggling after liberty ; and be ready, when it galls their necks, to turn against and depose such oppressing tyrants ; and sometimes, to imbrue their hands in their blood : of which, many instances are to be found in the histories of the Roman, and of the Turkish empire. Whereas, when princes rule in a just and constitutional way, with mildness and benignity ; and seek the good and welfare of their subjects ; they may always put full, unreserved confidence in them, and depend on being supported and defended by them, at the expence of all that is dear and valuable to them ; yea, at the expence of their lives, which will not be thought too dear a sacrifice for the safety and honour of such a worthy prince.

AGAIN. This justice and faithfulness in rulers is necessary to their having peace in their own minds and consciences. Such have consciences as well as other men, accusing or else excusing ; who, upon the faithful discharge of the high trust reposed in them, will have inward peace, security and joy, and heart-felt satisfaction, such as the world can neither give, nor take away. But on the other hand ; if the rules of justice and righteousness be neglected and trampled upon by them, and they practise high handed tyranny and oppression : and seek to enslave and destroy their subjects ; what dreadful horrors of conscience must they necessarily feel, when awakened to any serious reflections on their wicked, guilty conduct, which has been so distressing and ruinous to thousands more innocent and righteous than themselves.

LASTLY. This justice and faithfulness is necessary

to their future happiness. Tho' civil rulers are stiled *gods*, yet must they die like men ; and at last, give an account of themselves to the judge of the quick, and the dead.

I now proceed to the next thing proposed, which was in the second place, to shew, That the fear of the Lord is the proper, effectual principle to influence civil rulers to the exact observance of justice.

HE that ruleth over men, must be just : And that he may be so, he must rule in the fear of the Lord. If we consider human nature, as vitiated by the apostacy ; we shall find, that hardly any thing but the fear of punishment, is able to keep men in awe, and due subjection. That it is thus with subjects, is evident from the many severe laws, and terrible executions of them, which the wisest and most merciful rulers in all nations, have found necessary to preserve the peace, and promote the happiness of civil society. Now, 'tis certain that the essential principles of human nature are the same in all men, whatever external relations they sustain. There is therefore great danger, that rulers will degenerate into tyrants ; and of blessings, become plagues and curses to mankind ; unless there be some way to keep them in awe, some principle to excite their fears, and by that means, keep them within their proper sphere, and engage them to the observation of justice. Now, this is not always to be done by a fear of men. Sovereigns are exempted from the common power of human laws ; there is no ordinary authority that may judge them ; and this their security may prove a strong temptation to them, to neglect the proper duties of their exalted stations. They may trust in their forces and armies to defend them from the resentment of an injured and oppressed people ; and so imagine themselves perfectly secure from punishment at present. And the nearer any subordinate ruler approaches to sovereignty ; the less has he to fear from men, and consequently, the greater prospect has he, of indemnification

fication in acting unjustly. There is therefore the utmost need and necessity, that those who rule over men, should rule in the fear of the Lord; that they should have a firm belief of the being, perfections and providence of God; that they should not only fear his vindictive punishing justice, but beyond this, as the text requires, maintain an holy awe and reverence of him upon their minds; and consider him as that righteous judge to whom they must at last, give an account of the discharge of the great trust reposed in them; and from whom they shall receive a righteous sentence of absolution or condemnation.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

I. WHAT we have heard on this subject, should serve to excite our thankful acknowledgments to the supreme Ruler of the world for his great favour to us, in the happy constitution of government we have hitherto lived under. The providence of God which rules the world, (tho' it does not neglect the lesser affairs of men) especially concerns itself in more important things, which respect more large societies and communities of men. Civil government is one of the principal of these. *God is the judge; he setteth up one, and putteth down another;* and orders all the changes and revolutions that come to pass in the kingdoms and empires of the world: whose providence has been very extraordinary, and in a manner, miraculous, in conducting our fathers into this, once howling wilderness; in preserving them in their weak, infant-state, when exposed to destruction many ways; and leading them to settle on such an excellent constitution of government; which affords such full protection, and ample security to the subjects, of their lives, liberties and properties; and in providing for us in succession down to this day, such a wise, virtuous and upright set of rulers; who we have reason to think, have, in the main, ruled in the fear of the Lord. Our privileges in this respect, are very great, beyond what any other people enjoy,
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in any part of the earth. The bigger part of the world have had their liberties wrested out of their hands ; been oppressed and enslaved by lawless and cruel tyrants : while we are yet in the possession of freedom. May God preserve it to us safe, and hand it down to the latest posterity ! Our fathers went through the greatest perils and dangers to procure these privileges for us ; and we ought to be willing to do our utmost to preserve them, and hand them down to our children and offspring. Our treasure, and our blood too, are not too dear and costly sacrifices for such valuable things.

2. Of what importance is it, that civil rulers be men of uprightness and integrity ; men of real piety and religion ; who fear the Lord, and keep up a proper awe and reverence of him upon their minds ? This is necessary to their own comfort and happiness ; to the peace of their consciences ; and to their having a well-grounded hope of a future crown of glory in the coming world. It is likewise necessary to the good and happiness of the society, over which they are appointed to rule. If a sovereign prince or ruler be destitute of integrity and justice ; and has not the fear of the great God before his eyes : all inferior motives which might have influence on men in lower stations, will be insufficient to restrain him from wicked acts of tyranny and oppression, and keep him to his duty. As such cannot well be arraigned before any human tribunal on earth, to account for their conduct ; if they have no fear and dread on their minds, of appearing before, and accounting to their supreme Judge, the sovereign ruler of the world ; they will be in the utmost danger, not only of ruining themselves both for time and eternity ; but also, of ruining their subjects in all their dear and valuable interests ; and of involving them in the greatest conceivable distresses and troubles. It is so far from being true, *That such can do no wrong* ; that on the contrary, the experience of all ages testifies, that they are capable, when they loose the principles of justice

justice and religion, of doing the greatest mischief and wrong, of any men in the world. *As a roaring lion, and a raging bear*, says Solomon, *So is a wicked ruler over a poor people*. He adds further, *The prince that wanteth understanding is also a great oppressor*.

3. WHAT has been said on this subject, is perfectly agreeable to, and justifies the principles on which the British nation acted, as a body, in deposing king *James* the second, that tyrannical oppressive prince, when pursuing measures tending to their destruction; and in introducing king *William* of glorious memory, to the throne, to sway the scepter in righteousness. This grand revolution happened between eighty and ninety years ago. The kings who have reigned over us, since which period, in succession, can make out no just claim and title to the throne, on any other principles than those advanced in this discourse. If these are not well grounded and established; but fail; they must fall with them, and be deemed only *usurpers*; and the *pretender* on the other hand, the only rightful heir to the crown. If we embrace the abovesaid doctrine, *That kings with their Council and Ministry can do no wrong*; but must be obeyed in all their edicts and commands; we must of necessity, condemn the conduct of the nation in general, in rising up against, and deposing king *James*; and join with the rebels in the highlands of Scotland, in their endeavours to overthrow the present constitution of Great Britain; and to bring in one of the descendents of *James*, as our rightful king; and disown him that now sits on the Throne; and look upon the aforesaid rebels, as the only loyal people in the kingdom; if the nation had no right to oppose the measures of that ancient king, when they evidently tended to deprive the subjects of their dear liberties, and their best rights and properties. If the constitution of England forbids them to resume, and take these things into their own power, when they could not have protection from their Sovereign: if it was wrong
and

and unjustifiable for the people to think and judge for themselves, and seek the best remedy in their power, when they found themselves grievously oppressed by the unrelenting hand of arbitrary power: when they found their chief ruler fail in all the essential points of his high office and character, and to act contrary to the very end and design of its institution; then it will follow, that the very foundation-principles of government have been subverted by the revolution, and all, excepting a few that have been deemed rebels, both kings and their subjects have been upon a wrong, wicked plan, for near a century past. And to get right, we must throw up the present constitution of England and the *Hanover* family, that is in present possession of the throne; and return back in our allegiance to the *Stuart* family; and to their popish plan of government. These are the genuine consequences of the doctrine of *passive obedience and non-resistance*, so zealously preached up by some artful and designing men, who act as creatures of the state, and probably expect high honours and promotions from a corrupt ministry, as a reward for their labours, to be gathered out of the spoils of their country. A doctrine as unfriendly and injurious to the king, as it is dangerous to the rights and liberties of his subjects. The crown and dignity of the king can be maintained and defended, only on these just and equitable principles, on which the rights and privileges of the people are secured and established. He that denies the right which the body of the people have, to take care of their liberties when in danger, does virtually dethrone our present king, and make him only a usurper; and acts the most friendly and favourable part towards a popish pretender. For it was certainly in consequence of the people's taking their rights and liberties into their own hands, that the illustrious house of *Hanover* was advanced to the throne of England.

4. If the rules of justice and righteousness ever
allowed

allowed a people, a right to take care of their liberties and privileges, as all I trust, will readily grant; they are still possessed of this right, and may lawfully use and exert it for those salutary purposes, as they have occasion or call in divine providence. On this sure ground and footing, the wise and judicious part of the reputable inhabitants of *America*, proceed to consult the best measures of safety and preservation in this critical and alarming situation of our public affairs. †

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† I am sensible that the present controversy between Great Britain and the American colonies stands upon a different footing from that between king *James* and his subjects, at the revolution. *That* was a controversy between the king and his subjects: *This* is a dispute between the parliament of Great Britain, and the Colonies. We have no controversy with the king; nor in the least, dispute his regal authority over us.—The king, when at home, presides in person, in the British parliament; but when he goes out of the kingdom (to *Hanover* for instance) he appoints a regent as his representative, to preside in his absence. In *Ireland*, the king presides not in person; but by his representative, the *lord lieutenant*. And in like manner, the king presides in the several colonies, by his representatives, the governors, which are authorised by his charters, or immediate commissions. We have therefore no controversy with our king, whose authority we cheerfully acknowledge, and most loyally obey. But the point disputed is, *Whether his majesty's legislative body in Great Britain, has a right to exercise sovereign authority over his majesty's legislative Assemblies in the Colonies, for taxation, or the regulation of their internal policy.* The kingdom of *Ireland* owes allegiance to the king of *Great Britain*: but their internal policy is constitutionally regulated only by their own parliament. And they have a right to deny the authority of the *British* parliament to tax them; or to regulate the internal policy of the kingdom. And it is a like case with the *American* colonies. We owe allegiance to the king of *Great-Britain*: but this will not oblige us to yield ourselves up to the arbitrary controul of the *British* parliament. The parliament of *Great Britain* has no constitutional right to tax, or regulate the internal policy of the colonies; any more than the legislative body of one colony has to tax or regulate the internal policy of another colony. And therefore the attempts of the *British* parliament to impose taxes on the colonies, may be resisted by the colonies, perfectly consistent with their allegiance to their king. Altho' therefore our present controversy with *Great Britain* is on quite another footing than the contest of the nation in the days of king *James*; yet revolution-principles in their general nature, will fully justify the present constitutional opposition of the colonists to the arbitrary procedure of the *British* court.

The conduct of the several provinces thro' the continent, in sending commissioners to meet in general congress, to secure the threatned liberties and properties of the people, may be justified on these principles. If the people in these American colonies, have really any property, any thing to call their own ; which cannot be denied without the most injurious reflection and insult upon, and abuse of them, and their ancestors, who have been labouring and toiling for this purpose, so many years : if this, I say, be granted ; then they have a right to secure and defend themselves in the possession of it ; and none have a right to take it from them without their consent. But as we hold our properties and privileges by royal charter, has not the king and ministry a right to take this charter from us, and to strip us of all ? I answer. No more than you that have wives, have a right to break the marriage covenant ; and turn them out naked and destitute, and set them adrift. Property is prior to all human laws, constitutions and charters. *God hath given the earth to the children of men.* Our fathers acquired property in this land, and were rightfully possessed of it, previous to their obtaining a royal charter ; as can easily be demonstrated. The charter is the most solemn stipulation and compact between the parties, the sovereign and the subject, on certain terms. “And the breaking
“ of charters, *says a late excellent writer*, is making the
“ worst war upon mankind. It involves the innocent,
“ and those yet unborn. Every thing depends, with
“ men, on their constitution of government. Such a
“ measure is therefore, wantonly laying waste the ter-
“ ritories of the earth, confounding and destroying
“ all private property, and endeavouring to prevent
“ Providence itself to make mankind happy thereon ;
“ unless he shall, for the undoing the works of un-
“ reasonable, ill-judging men, perform immediate mi-
“ racles, and suspend, or counteract the established
“ laws of nature, which is surely, not to be supposed,
“ or expected.”

5. As all human counsels and endeavours may be insufficient for these important purposes of securing and defending the rights and liberties of a people, when in danger of being wrested out of their hands, by the violent exertions of arbitrary power ; we see the propriety, and the reasonableness of the duty of looking to God, in a way of solemn fasting and prayer, at such a time, for deliverance and safe protection. God, the sovereign ruler of the world, has the great affairs of the kingdoms and empires of the earth, in his own hands ; and can dispose of them as seems good unto him. He has the hearts of kings and ministers in his hands, and can turn them, as he turns the rivers of water. In seasons of such danger and distress, our eyes and our hearts should be lifted up to him, for that help and relief that we need. And as we are now called to this important duty, by the pious rulers of the land ; all that are so far above the beasts that perish, as to know the rights, the liberties and privileges that essentially belong to humanity ; and withal, have any belief of the being of a God, and of his governing providence, will, I trust, heartily unite herein, with a very serious and devout frame of mind ; while the ignorant, the profane, and stupid infidals, may probably make a scoff and ridicule of these sacred solemnities.

THE great controversy that has for some years, subsisted between the chief rulers in the mother country, and the English colonies in America, has arisen to a very great height : and let the fault be on which side it will, we have reason to tremble at the consequences ; as we are threatened with most awful ruin and destruction in all that is dear and valuable to us. A neighbouring province begins to feel very sensibly, the distressing effects thereof ; as great numbers of its industrious inhabitants are reduced to a suffering state, and become real objects of charity ; being turned out of the means by which they procured their daily bread. The chief rulers neither feed nor guide them : but are

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using means that tend to devour and destroy them. And no other colony or province on the continent has the least security from having the same cruel, oppressive and tyrannical measures used towards them. All the most judicious and sensible part of the inhabitants thro' the whole continent of America, view themselves as interested and concerned in the consequences of this dispute ; and expect to stand or fall by the issue of it. The port and harbour of *Boston* has, for some time been shut up ; their trade and commerce stopped ; their charter-rights invaded ; the security of their lives, liberties and properties, taken away ; with an armed force in the midst of them, to heighten their distress, and bring on their complete ruin. Which respectable province, and metropolis of New-England, being once enslaved by the cruel exertions of arbitrary power, and stript of their property for which they, and their ancestors have been, for so many years industriously labouring ; some other colony or province will, no doubt, be taken in hand : and so the horrid and execrable scene of tyranny and oppression be vigorously prosecuted from place to place, until it spread over the whole continent. The aspect of our public affairs was never more dark and gloomy, than at the present day. The kingdom under such a load of debt,---in such a distracted, divided and convulsed state, as forebodes its speedy ruin and destruction.---The foundations of government seem awfully out of course ; and the righteous in a state of utmost peril and danger, as they have no sure ground of safety to stand upon.

We are certainly threatened with the loss of our precious liberties and privileges, and of all our dear and valuable interests. Allowing that our conduct as a body, has been loyal, dutiful and obedient to our earthly sovereign ; that we have given no just cause or provocation to resolve on such severe, unprecedented measures, as these in the late acts of parliament : yet, can we say, it has been strictly right and justifiable in the sight of the sovereign Ruler of the world ?

Whose hand is to be considered in these dark clouds that hang over, these distressing judgments that are coming on the land. Have we done nothing to provoke his divine displeasure against us? It becomes us, very seriously to inquire, *What meaneth the heat of his anger!* Who, or what has procured the tokens of his wrath and indignation; which some, as instruments, stand ready to execute upon us? And how shall we obtain his favour?---Sins of any kind, when they become common; when they are openly practised, and that with impunity; bring public guilt; and it may be expected, that if men don't testify against them, God himself will do it; and that, by sending distressing judgments on a people. And God's judgments, and threatnings of providence are sometimes of such a nature, as to point out the particular kinds of sin by which he is offended. Let us try this rule in our present circumstances.

THE first disadvantage people in general feel and complain of, from the late judicial system of tyranny and oppression; and the severe, unexampled acts of parliament that have been published in consequence of it, is, That trade and commerce, and the means of increasing our wealth and riches, are obstructed; and great loss and damages sustained; and at the same time, public charges increased, in supporting agents, and commissioners to consult, and look out a way of safety and deliverance for us. Those who live at a distance in the country, from those populous cities and towns that are the chief seat of trade and commerce, are not so immediately affected at first, by the operation of these cruel and inhuman acts.---Yet must, in time, and in a very short time too, feel the distressing and impoverishing effects of them: which, if carried into execution in the full length and breadth of them, will not only diminish our estates; but strip us of all our substance, and reduce us to the condition of slaves that have no possession or property to call their own.

AND does not this point out our sins, as especially provoking to God, and procuring the present tokens of his displeasure? Is it not a plain indication that God is offended with that covetousness, or excessive love of the world which abounds? That inordinate love of money, which is the root of all evil? It is owing to this, that men murmur and complain under that public charge which the present state of things makes necessary; and which, after all our complaints, is nothing like what the generality of men are subject to, in their best times, when they have the greatest peace, and least public expence. It has been represented, that some uneasy, dissatisfied persons, who are disaffected to the privileges of their country, have gone so far as to say, They had rather that the king and his ministry might come, and take away our charter-privileges, and all that we have, than to pay such taxes for the support of government over them. To such, if there are any such among us, I would recommend a serious consideration of the awful sentence God pronounced against the murmuring Israelites in the wilderness. Numb. xiv. 28. *As truly as I live, saith the Lord, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you.* I will here cite a passage from a sermon of the Rev. Mr. Trumbull, delivered at the Freeman's-meeting, in the town of New-Haven, April 12th, 1773, with his note subjoined thereto. Speaking of the advantages of free states, arising from their choosing rulers from among themselves, he observes concerning rulers thus chosen, "Their government is mild and righteous. And as they do not govern *to get their bread*, and advance their fortunes, at the *ruin* of ours; and as they can lay no burdens on us, without bearing the same weight themselves, their government is as remarkable for the little expence of it, as it is for its gentleness, impartiality and righteousness. All our expences, by way of salary to civil officers, do not, I imagine, amount annually, by considerable, to the *one half* of the salary of a king's governor,

vernor, in any of the neighbouring provinces." * On the other hand, the present judgment, and threatening discover God's displeasure against us, for indulging pride and vanity, luxury and intemperance. The plain voice of providence is, that God is awfully offended with all that practise these ruinous and destructive vices.

WE are further threatened with being deprived of all our civil privileges, and brought under a most cruel, arbitrary and tyrannical kind of government. The scheme of government planned out for *Boston*, is in its whole frame and constitution, completely *despotic* and *arbitrary*. The *will* of the chief ruler is *law*; and the subject holds his estate, and even life, only during his pleasure. This arbitrary government will, no doubt, be carried to its greatest extent through all the American colonies, and exercised in all its terrors and cruelties upon them, if the present ministry are permitted to carry the point they are contending for, in such a sanguine manner.

Now, does not this threatening point out some particular sins, as procuring it? We have been greatly favoured

* "The whole amount of the salaries paid annually by the government is only £.580. The Salary of the Governor is £.300. of the Deputy Governour £.100, of the Secretary £.20, and of the Treasurer £.160. The Judges of the Superior Court have no salary from the government. The Chief Judge is allowed 18 shillings per day, and the four side Judges have 17 shillings each per day. This court is obliged by law, to sit 14 weeks annually, and commonly setteth, by adjournment, much longer, and the cost of it is about £.600 per annum. The expence of it for three years and a half past, upon a careful examination, appeareth to be about £.2100, just £.600 per annum. The avails of it, together with the forfeitures, for the same term, with proper allowances for such as may not be recovered, amount to £.2200. So that the Superior Court is of no cost, at present, to the Colony, considered as a Government. In short the whole expence of government in Connecticut is trifling. The cost of the General Assembly annually is about £.1500. A rate of one penny on the pound, on the Grand List, which raiseth about £.6000 per Annum, near the one half of which is annually taken out of the Treasury for Schooling, hath of late years been sufficient to defray all our public charges as a Government." *Mr. Trumbull's Discourse. Page 28.*

favoured of God in respect to the constitution of the government more immediately over us ; and the administration of our public affairs. We in this colony enjoy, not only the full liberties of Englishmen ; but even some peculiar privileges, confirmed by royal charter, which distinguish us from the rest of our fellow subjects in the plantations.---But how far have we been from being truly thankful for such privileges ? And how ready to slight and abuse them ? How earnestly have some wished themselves in the condition of the poor tenants and slaves in a neighbouring province, rather than pay a trifle to support their liberties, and freedom, and real estate, in this ? How apt have we been to despise the persons, and slight the authority of the rulers of our people ? To hearken to, and propagate reports prejudicial to their character ? To countenance and join with the disaffected, and begrudge their reward ; which is far less than magistrates in any other province have ? And after all the murmuring about it, is very inadequate to the public services they perform, and the advantages we derive from their administration. There was something of this disposition in the Jews of old : *They refused the waters of Shiloah that run softly*---they were discontented and unthankful under a mild government, and gentle administration, that allowed them great privileges and liberties ; therefore God threatens to bring upon them *the waters of the river, strong and many*, or to subject them to the tyrannical government of the king of Assyria.

ONCE more. We are awfully threatened with being deprived of the liberty of our consciences, the liberty of professing the important truths of the gospel ; and attending those sacred ordinances which God has instituted with a view to advance the glory of the Redeemer, and promote the salvation of his people. This will most probably be the consequence of carrying those schemes and plans into execution, which the present ministry have projected.---And does not this
loudly

loudly declare, That our having neglected the worship, and turned our backs upon the ordinances of God ; our distrusting and despising the grace of the gospel, and trifling away the day of salvation ; are to be numbered among those sins by which we have awfully provoked a righteous God to anger against us. That omissions and neglects of this kind, have abounded to an unusual, and indeed, to an astonishing degree, cannot be denied. That such sins are provoking to God, and that especially, in a country which, like this, was originally settled principally for the purposes of reformation and religion, cannot reasonably be doubted. And therefore we may justly conclude, that God is testifying against these kinds of sin in particular, and threatening us on account of them. Shame and sorrow, humiliation and abasement become us for these things. We ought, each one, to examine his own heart and life, and enquire what has been done by, or among us, to provoke the Lord to such an awful controversy ; and speedily to return, by gospel-repentance, to his love and service ; and to the steady conscientious practice of all religious duties he requires of us. Let us be deeply affected with the present critical and alarming situation of our public affairs ; and unite in fervent prayers to that God who is higher than the kings of the earth, that he would graciously interpose for our relief ; that he would avert the impending storms of vengeance, and favour us with peace and tranquility, and the full enjoyment of all our valuable liberties and privileges ; that our rulers may feed us according to the integrity of their hearts, and guide us by the skilfulness of their hands.

And let us be at peace among ourselves. It is at all times contrary to the temper and spirit of the gospel ; but especially unsuitable and improper in such a day as this, to be widening differences, laying unreasonable stress upon disputable points, and to set on foot controversies that tend to alienate people's love and affection from each other, and to increase a party separating spirit, to

sow the seeds of discord, and foment animosities. It rather becomes us to fix our attention upon the common cause, the public good and general interest of the land. Our strength, our glory, and our security depend very much upon our friendly agreement and firm union together. If we get divided and broken to pieces among ourselves, what will become of us? What advantage will it give an enemy to our liberties, to bring distressing burdens upon us, and lay such a yoke upon our necks that neither we, nor our posterity can bear. That to which our special attention is at this day called, is not a private by-interest, that concerns the men of one denomination only: but of a general, public nature that concerns men of every persuasion, that are well-wishers to their country's welfare. Even those who have gone off from the scheme and plan of religion professed by the first fathers of this country, have great cause of thankfulness for their liberties and privileges which they enjoy equally with others that still retain it. They have the same advantages from that happy form of civil government; the same protection from it, of their persons and properties; have the same liberty of conscience, worship where they please without controul or oppression; or if they choose to stay at home on the Lord's-day, and join with no worshipping assembly, it is seldom they meet with any interruption or disturbance. What more can they desire? There does not appear the least probability that either they, or we, should gain any advantage on civil or religious accounts, by giving up our privileges; and submitting to a new and different form of government in church and state; with a great additional burden of taxes which would be unavoidably connected with it; under which, who would groan and complain loudest, we cannot tell before trial be made. I hope none of us wish for such a fatal experiment and proof of a public spirit. We all doubtless think, whatever be our peculiar sentiments in religion, that we are sufficiently burdened already. The

poor of the people are groaning under poverty and distress : many have a load of debt upon them, and know not which way to turn for the common daily necessaries : are loudly complaining of difficulties, and looking out for relief, some in one way, and some in another ; plausible schemes are projected for this purpose, and set on foot and encouraged, to serve a present turn, without looking to the consequences ; and very impolitic and imprudent measures taken by many, as a remedy which proves worse than the disease, or will do so in the end, and constantly increase the difficulties complained of. If our taxes at present, are heavy ; they do not grow lighter or easier by the people's breaking into parties and divisions among themselves, and pursuing schemes that are in opposition to the main, standing interest, and public good of the country ; but are evidently increased thereby to the disadvantage and hurt of all. If some few individuals find their account herein, yet 'tis certainly distressing to the *public* ; and must, sooner or latter, be so to all concerned in it. If those who stand in the gap, on whose shoulders the interest of the country stands for its support and defence, should, in any future time, find the burden too heavy for them to bear ; and be over-powered by those who direct them, to promote a contrary interest ; and this building should fall ; the ruin of it would be wide and great.---It might fall like a mill-stone upon some who least expect any evil, and grind them to powder. Or if they survived this sad catastrophe, instead of finding easier times, might be caught under such a yoke of bondage that would be insupportably grievous to them and their children ; from which, no release or deliverance could be obtained. We are at present, (blessed be God) a free people in this land ; and might be as happy as any in the known world, did we duly attend to our public interest and welfare ; and unite in all suitable ways for the security and advancement of it. Had we union and good agreement among ourselves

selves in the management of our civil and religious affairs ; our burdens would grow lighter and easier ; and the poor of the people find comfortable relief in most of their difficulties.

CONSIDERING our present critical situation, it would, no doubt, be our wisdom and prudence to make up, unite, and gather into one common interest, all the good *protestants* in this land ; notwithstanding lesser differences among them ; that we may stand or fall together : and not be devoured one of another ; nor become an easy prey to foreign enemies who may seek our ruin. What are those things worth, that alienate people's affections, and cause divisions ; in comparison to our dear liberties and privileges that are endangered hereby ? It may be the policy of some in power, to encourage such a party-spirit, that we may be weakened and distressed among ourselves ; that the way may be prepared without resistance or opposition, to bring us into bondage, and fasten the chains of slavery upon us. And shall we be so infatuated and blind to our own interest, and that of our children's, as to pursue measures that are destructive of it ? Measures that will rejoice the hearts of our enemies, and forward their schemes, to be put into execution against us to complete our ruin ? Let us lay by passion and prejudice, and seriously and soberly consider this important subject of our common welfare ; meddle with nothing that is inconsistent therewith, any sooner than with the rankest poison. Let our country's interest, glory and prosperity be uppermost in our hearts, and use our best endeavours for the advancement of it. Let all our strength center and unite in this grand point. Let us remember, this is the common interest of all the colonies ; and that each particular inhabitant is concerned herein ; and must expect to share the fate, in some degree, of the body he is connected with. If the foundation of our public liberties and privileges be overturned, all

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will be affected, and must expect to suffer in the sad ruin. Let the melancholy prospect hereof, serve to unite our hearts and hands with all lovers of the rights of humanity, in upholding and defending this most valuable and important interest. Let us love as brethren and dear countrymen, that have but one common interest to pursue. Let us act on principles of moderation, candor and charity ; and endeavour in meekness of wisdom to instruct those that oppose themselves, and their country's good ; and recover them to the paths of truth. Let us prize and well improve our privileges, and use our influence to promote the public good. We should be especially careful that we engage in no measures or counsels, that we attend to no reasonings or pretences, how plausible and specious soever, which are inconsistent with the common interest and public good. So far as any of us have influence on our public affairs, let us use it for the promotion and advancement of the true friends to their country. We want wise, steady, judicious rulers in such a day as this ; men of sterling integrity and real religion. It is of importance that all orders of men be faithful in their several departments, for defending and promoting the public good. Let us keep stedfastly fixed in the good old principles of our fathers, and cheerfully take our lot and portion one with another ; saying as *Ruth* to *Naomi*, Whether thou goest, I will go ; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. The Lord's hand has been very conspicuous in the first settlement, and past preservation of these plantations : He will take care of the generation of the righteous ; and break the yoke of their oppressors ; and give them peace and happiness. Blessed are the people that are under his care and conduct ; yea, blessed are the people whose God is the Lord. AMEN.

AN APPENDIX,

Stating the heavy Grievances the Colonies labour under from several late Acts of the British Parliament, and shewing what we have just Reason to fear the Consequences of these Measures will be ;

By the REVEREND,
EBENEZER BALDWIN,
of DANBURY,

And in every province whithersoever the king's commandment, and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting and weeping, and wailing, and many lay in sackcloth and ashes. Esther.

Behold, we are servants this day, and for the land that thou gavest unto our fathers to eat the fruits thereof, and the good thereof, behold we are servants in it. And it yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom thou hast set over us, because of our sins : also they have dominion over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure, and we are in great distress. Nehemiah.

P R E F A C E.

THE substance of the following Appendix was composed, with a view to enlighten the people of a country town, not under the best advantages for information from the news papers and other pieces wrote upon the controversy, into the true state of the present unhappy disputes between Great Britain and the colonies ; for this reason it still appears in the form of an address to the people. It has been thought the publication of it might answer valuable purposes, to rouse others in the western part of this colony, who are much in the same situation with the people for whose information it was first composed, to a sense of the danger in which their liberties are now involved. The Author is very willing to contribute his mite to the common cause of liberty ; and is very glad of an opportunity to subjoin the following Address as an appendix to a discourse so well adapted (as he imagines the foregoing is) to lead people to a sense of the true nature of civil government, and of the absurdity of many ridiculous whims ; which some among us have the impudence to attempt to maintain in direct opposition to those principles, which have seated the present Royal Family on the British throne.

Should this appendix fall into the hands of any, that have been more awake to a sense of our danger ; than what hath been the case in the western parts of this colony ; the author hopes they will readily overlook the mention of many things, which must be trite and common to them ; as the particular mention of them was necessary to the design in view.

The silence of others on a subject of so much importance, and (as many think) so necessary to be wrote upon at the
present

present time, must plead in excuse of the Clergy, if they write upon a subject by some deemed too political for their province: But let it be remembered that clergymen are free-men as well as others; have civil rights and privileges in common with their fellow subjects; are capable of feeling oppression as well as others: why then is there not an equal obligation on them, as on others, to stand forth in defence of their country, and endeavour to sound the alarm, when they see every thing that is dear and valuable in the utmost danger? Were a house on fire and the family securely sleeping while the flames were surrounding them; would it not be the height of folly, for those that were by, to stand disputing who was the properest person to give the alarm, and awake them from their dangerous repose? Much like this is it, to dispute who are the properest persons, the clergy or others, to point out to their fellow subjects the danger their country is in. The present crisis calls for the vigorous exertions of every rank and order of men.

The Author is not insensible that it is more fashionable to write anonymously upon such subjects as these, and would it equally answer the end proposed, he would very gladly lie concealed: But he thinks the public are liable to be greatly imposed upon on the one side and the other by anonymous publications; as in that case no-body is responsible for what is asserted. And as there are no sentiments in the following composition, which he is ashamed to own; or unwilling the world should believe are his---no facts asserted but what he verily believes to be true. He can't but think it may better subserve the purpose for which it is published, to have his name prefix'd; than to be published without a name.

A P P E N D I X.

NEVER was there a period so alarming to the English American colonies as the present is; never one that called for the careful attention, the prudent, yet vigorous exertion of every freeman in the colonies as the present doth ! For when our lives, and our property are subject to the arbitrary disposal of others ; what have we valuable we can call our own ? The disposal of our property is now openly claimed by others ; by a body, in which we have no representation ; and upon which we have not the least check or controul : and charters, heretofore deemed *sacred* and inviolable ; by which, we have been wont to suppose, was secured to us the quiet possession of our lives and properties, are now wantonly violated without even the form of a trial ; and such modes of judicial proceedings introduced into a neighbouring province, as very much subject the lives of the people to the arbitrary disposal of their governor. And doubtless this is but a specimen of the plan adopted with regard to all the provinces ; which will soon be introduced, if this first attempt succeed. We have to expect, if the measures adopted are carried into execution, we shall hold both our lives and our property in coming time upon the most precarious tenure. These measures you see are carrying into execution by the terror of military force both by sea and by land. And if our lives and our property are to be held by such a precarious tenure as the arbitrary will of those, who may be set over us, what is there in life or property worth the possessing ? Will not the being in constant and perpetual fear of the deprivation of both, imbitter all the comforts of life ? Could you take a view of the nations which are groaning under arbitrary and despotic government ; you would never imagine

gine what I say to be chimerical. We have not (blessed be God) as yet experienced the galling chains of slavery ; tho' they have been shook over our heads. For this reason few perhaps among us, realize the horrors of that slavery, which arbitrary and despotic government lays men under.

Some possibly may think me extravagant in asserting there never was so alarming a period to the English American colonies, as the present is : But I cannot think any one needs any more, than to be thoroughly acquainted with the present state of public affairs, to be wholly of my opinion. We have, it is true, in times past, been alarmed with the horrors of war : the savages have committed shocking murders and made terrible devastations upon our exposed frontiers ; but these were but temporary evils : while the present (if God prevent not) will extend their influence to all succeeding generations. And is the death of a number of individuals in war so great a calamity to the public, as a whole country's being enslaved, and the lives and the properties not only of the present, but of succeeding generations subjected to the caprice of arbitrary rulers ?

Under the administration of *Sir Edmund Andross*, near ninety years ago, very gloomy indeed was the prospect to our fathers : yet in many respects not so gloomy as at the present day. Charters, 'tis true, were *then* taken away ; but they were taken away under colour of law ; upon trial in courts of justice : But *now* they are taken away, without so much as a pretence of law ; without so much as a trial, or hearing of the party concerned, by the almost omnipotent power claimed by the British parliament : And when only the courts of justice are corrupted, there is more hopes things may revert to a right channel ; than when the corruption lies in the supreme legislative body. At *that time* the arbitrary measures pursued proceeded only from an arbitrary prince ; *now*, from an arbitrary parliament.

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Then the nation was awake to the arbitrary measures pursuing : *now* they supinely slumber. *Then* Britain felt the weight of the iron hand of tyranny ; while *now* they imagine their burdens relieved by the oppression of America. Which circumstances rendered the continuance of arbitrary government vastly less likely at that time, than at the present day. It is not therefore, without a cause, that the whole continent seems as it were struck with horror and amazement ; that the attention of almost every American is roused to the present state of our public affairs. And tho' some may be transported with a wild and enthusiastic rage in the cause of liberty, and some others may be stupid and insensible of real danger ; yet all the more sober thinking part feel impressed with a deep and solicitous concern for the event of these things. But in a place remote from public intelligence as this is, few comparatively can have opportunity to peruse the public papers, and other writings, which may open to us the present alarming situation of our country. Many, therefore, are perhaps little acquainted with what our danger is. They do not themselves as yet feel the weight of oppression. They hear the noise of danger echoed round the country, but know very little of what gives the alarm. For the information of such as have not been under advantages for proper intelligence, I will briefly as I can relate to you what hath been done by the British parliament with regard to America, which gives the present alarm.----What the grievances are we labour under from these acts of the British parliament---what we have just reason to fear the consequences of these measures will be---then just hint at a few things proper for us to do in the present alarming crisis.

Here I may premise, that the English American colonies, at least I may say the New-England colonies were settled without any cost to the crown. Private adventurers that they might enjoy the sweets of both

civil and religious liberty, in a great measure denied them in their native land, ventured into this, then a howling wilderness; and at their own expence laid the foundation of these flourishing colonies. All they received from the king was charters securing to them the rights and privileges of Englishmen in this new-found world: here amid numerous wars with the barbarous savages in their infant state, they defended themselves without any expence to the crown. Afterwards when the nation was engaged in war, they complied with every requisition from the king. They exerted themselves beyond their abilities in two expensive expeditions against Canada, in the reigns of William & Anne, which proved unsuccessful. In the war before the last, at their own motion, and almost wholly at their own expence, they took the important fortrefs of Louisbourg, which gave peace to Europe. In the last war 'tis fresh in every one's memory how chearfully they complied with every requisition of men or money from the Crown: for several years near a quarter of the militia of New-England were in actual service. Yet, with what alacrity performed? Who ever heard a murmur or complaint of our expence of blood and treasure, tho' Britain reaped the profit of our conquests, as all the conquered lands were theirs? Britain was so sensible of the spirited exertions of the Colonies at that time;---sensible they had contributed more than their proportion, that they refunded to them a considerable part of their expence. Hitherto they had neither claimed, nor exerted any right to tax the Colonies: and every one, who remembers that time, knows how ardent our affections were to the mother country, we gloried in our relation to Britain---were ready to fight and bleed for her glory and honour.

As America was much the seat of the last war, the troops sent here from the mother country, opened a much freer communication between Great Britain and the Colonies, the state of the colonies was much more

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attended to in England, than it had been in times past. And as in a country like this, where property is so equally divided, every one will be disposed to rival his neighbour in goodnets of dress, sumptuousness of furniture, &c. All our little earnings therefore went to Britain to purchase mainly the superfluities of life. Hence the common people here make a show, much above what they do in England. The luxury and superfluities in which even the lower ranks of people here indulge themselves, being reported in England by the officers and soldiers upon their return, excited in the people there a very exalted idea of the riches of this country, and the abilities of the inhabitants to bear taxes. The ministry soon conceived hopes that a large revenue might be raised from America.---A revenue that would be solely at their own disposal, whereby they might provide for great numbers of their dependants, and mightily enlarge their influence over the parliament, to secure a majority in their measures. Accordingly in a few years after the conclusion of the late war; the British parliament, for the first time, laid a tax upon America, by what was called the *stamp-act* : by which almost every written instrument of a public nature was subject to a high duty. Requisitions of men or money were no longer made as usual from the king to the colonies : but their money is now to be extorted from them by an act of the British parliament. 'Tis doubtless fresh in your memories, what an alarm this *new* claim of parliament gave to the colonies ; what unanimous and vigorous opposition was made to the execution of the act : the stamped papers were either destroyed, or kept from being distributed throughout America : Trade with Great Britain was in a good degree suspended :---In short, a glorious struggle was made against this *first* exertion of a parliamentary claim of taxation over America. The issue of the struggle was happy. The parliament the next session, repealed the act, tho' not upon the principles it could

could have been wished for, i. e. of its being *unconstitutional* ; but upon the footing of its being *inexpedient* and ill-suited to the state of the colonies. The parliament still claimed a right of making statutes to bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever. They still claimed the right of taxing them at pleasure. Duties were accordingly laid upon fundry articles of merchandize payable upon their landing in America, as on *tea, glass, painters colours, &c.* part of which were afterwards taken off by parliament. There are also duties that have heretofore been laid on other articles of trade ; but as they were supposed to be laid only to defray the expences of regulating trade ; the colonies acquiesced in them without any complaint : but the duties on tea, &c. being for the express purpose of raising a revenue to his majesty, and being in consequence of the parliament's claim to make statutes to bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever, excited continual murmurs and complaints in the colonies : however as the tax was inconsiderable, it raised no considerable tumults. Soon after this *new admiralty courts* were erected throughout America. The powers of which courts were extended much beyond what they are in England, or what they had been in America. But as I have not by me, the act of parliament constituting those courts, I can only observe upon them in general as what Americans complain of. An expensive *Board of Commissioners* for managing the revenue were constituted with the most extravagant powers.---They have power to constitute as many under officers as they please ; they are impowered to demand *general warrants* from the judges of courts in America : i. e. warrants to search any body, and any where for contraband goods ; under pretence of which, they may search any man's most private apartments ; not even his desk or drawers, or any thing would be secure. But as I am not possessed of the act constituting this board, I cannot be further particular upon it. The judges of the admiralty and the commissioners have both

both the most extravagant salaries ; the former each *six hundred*, the latter *five hundred* pounds sterling per annum, paid out of the American revenue, besides the perquisites of their offices. And yet it has been reported of one at least of these judges of admiralty, that for two years or more he has had but one case to try. These, with a swarm of petty custom-house officers appointed by the commissioners, exhaust almost the whole of the revenue. It is said, there was but 86% the last year paid into the king's exchequer. So that all the money raised is spent to maintain a set of *idle drones* in ease and luxury, without doing any service to their king or country. The colonies from a reluctance to pay these, as they deemed them, unconstitutional duties, have, it is probable, purchased a considerable part of their teas from the Dutch ; by which means the quantity imported from Great Britain hath been much less since the duty was laid than before ; which caused an immense quantity of tea to lie upon the hands of the *East-India* company. With the approbation, if not by the proposal of the ministry, they resolve to send a large quantity of it to America upon their own risk. Several ships loaded with tea were accordingly sent to several different ports in America. This gave a general alarm thro' the Colonies. They tho't the mother country was now resolved to fasten the chains of slavery upon them ; as they would not leave us at our own option whether we would import the Tea or not ; but were resolved to force it upon us. A general resolution seems therefore to have been come into throughout the colonies, not to suffer the tea to be landed. Accordingly at Philadelphia, New-York and Portsmouth, and I am apt to think from some other parts of America ; also, they persuaded the masters of the ships to return to England, without unloading. At Boston, the governor would not suffer the tea ship to pass the castle without a clearance. A clearance could not be obtained without she entered and unladed. So that there

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was no other alternative, the people must either suffer the tea to be landed or destroy it ; accordingly a number of persons went in disguise and emptied it all into the sea. At New-York also a quantity of the same tea was destroyed in like manner. When news was received in England, of the destroying of the tea in Boston ; the ministry thinking that a proper opportunity now presented, for carrying the designs they had long since formed into execution, immediately hurried thro' the parliament, the act for blocking up the harbour of the town of Boston. This act forbids the shipping or landing any kind of merchandize whatsoever, (except fuel and victuals for the necessary sustenance of the inhabitants of the town) any where within Boston bay. Vessels, bound for Boston with provisions, must first be searched at Marblehead, must take an officer on board, and enter at Salem, before they may proceed to the town. By this act all the trade of the town of Boston is stopped, which was the whole support of the town ; and 'tis calculated to distress them much in procuring provisions. Any attempt to lade or unlade merchandize is punished with a fine of treble their value ; with a forfeiture of the vessels or carriages used in lading or unlading. The officers on the station are to be fined 500*l*. if they so much as connive at any breach of this act : and all forfeitures or penalties are to be recovered in the *courts of admiralty*, where the king is both party and judge. The repealing this act the parliament have put out of their own power, by lodging it with the king ; who when he shall judge that peace is restored in the town of Boston, may appoint so many wharves or landing places as he pleases ; and if any goods or merchandize be afterwards landed upon any wharves or landing places not appointed or licensed by him, the penalties of the act will notwithstanding take place ; and even this, i. e. the licensing any wharves the king is restricted from doing, not only 'till it shall appear to his majesty that satisfaction is made to the East India

dia company for the tea destroyed ; but till the governor has certified that reasonable satisfaction hath been made for all the injuries done to the custom house officers in times past. This bill, so pregnant with mischief, was hurried with the greatest precipitancy thro' both houses of parliament ; the design was for a while kept entirely secret, lest there should be petitions against the bill. They never proposed to the inhabitants of Boston whether they would make satisfaction for the injuries done or not. They never gave them any opportunity to speak a word in their own defence ;--- a privilege allowed to the meanest criminal in every court of justice. Altho' solicited in both houses, they would not so much as suffer their agent to speak in their behalf.

This Act hath been followed by two others respecting that province equally alarming, hurried thro' the parliament with the same precipitant haste as the other ; without notifying the province to appear in their own defence, or allowing their agent to speak in their behalf. The one is intituled *An act for the better regulating the government of the province of Massachusetts-Bay*. Whereby in direct violation of the privileges granted by charter, the appointment of the council is taken out of the hands of the general assembly and veited with the king ; the governor's power is greatly enlarged, so that he may appoint all the judges, justices, sheriffs and other inferior officers, and remove them at pleasure without any concurrence of council. The inhabitants are forbid to assemble in town meeting except by special license obtained from the governor ; only in their annual meeting, and then to transact no other business than just the appointment of town-officers. Jurors, that were before returned by the impartial method of drawing them out of a box, are now to be summoned at the pleasure of the sheriff. And lest all this should not be sufficient to screen the soldiers or the officers either of the governor or of the
customs

custom-house, who should happen to commit murder upon the inhabitants, from deserved punishment : There is another act passed, intituled *An act for the impartial administration of justice, &c.* which impowers the governor upon the indictment of any of the soldiers, officers, &c. for any capital offence, when acting in execution of any of these laws, or under the direction of any magistrate, to remove the trial into any other province, or if he sees fit, into Great-Britain : obliging the prosecutor and witnesses to appear there or to drop the prosecution. This is the substance of the late acts respecting the Massachusetts ; which are now rigorously carrying into execution : A large fleet blocking up their harbour, and six or seven regiments of soldiers quartered in the town of Boston, beside some others in the neighbourhood.

There is another act lately passed in the British parliament, for regulating the government of the province of Quebec, which greatly alarms the nation in general as well as America in particular. Thousands of English people have settled in that province under the faith of a royal proclamation, that the English laws should take place there, and a government like that of the other colonies as soon as the circumstances of the province would permit. But by this act all the *French* laws in being before the conquest are restored---*Popery* is established and provision is made for the legal support of the popish clergy by the collection of tythes---Trials by jury are taken away, and the whole legislative power lodged in a council appointed by the king ; what aspect this may have upon us shall be considered hereafter.

Thus I have related the principal facts with respect to America on which the present grievances and dangerous prospects of the Americans are founded. I proceed now to consider what those grievances are, which we have cause to complain of, from these acts of the British parliament.

The first thing we complain of as a grievance is, that by taxing the colonies for the purpose of raising a revenue, and claiming a right to make laws or statutes in all cases binding on the Colonies, the parliament claim what they have no right to, by the British constitution, and thereby deny us our *natural* rights as men, and our *constitutional* rights as Englishmen. This I will consider somewhat particularly, as 'tis at the foundation of our complaints : for if the parliament have rightfully such a power as this, the Americans only are to blame in the present disputes, that subsist between Great-Britain and the Colonies : In order to which we may with propriety advert a little to the foundation of civil government in general, and the principles of the British government in particular.

That, which induces any number of individuals to enter into compact for civil government, is the greater security of their lives and properties ; which in a state of nature are exposed to every invader, and liable to be taken away with impunity by any one that is stronger than we. In a society formed for the purposes of government, there is the united power of the whole to suppress such injurious invaders. It is the duty of those who thus combine together for government to give up so much of their property into the hands of those who are intrusted with authority, as is necessary to carry on government : But then it would be very preposterous, when they entered into society to secure their property, to give it up to be wholly at the disposal of any one man or body of men : this would be to put their property in a worse state than the state of nature. 'Tis therefore to be presumed that every body of people entering into compact for civil government will keep the disposal of their property in their own hands, and make grants of it to their rulers as the exigencies of government shall require : otherwise they put it into the power of their rulers to exercise every kind of tyranny over them. And thus it is said with

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the greatest propriety, that every man hath a natural right to dispose of his *own* property. And every man hath a natural right to life, unless he hath been guilty of such conduct, that by the laws of nature he forfeits it ; i. e. hath so conducted that it is evident others cannot be secure in the possession of their lives and properties without life is taken from him : Another benefit of society therefore is to have persons appointed, who can be trusted, to judge when this is the case ; that we may not be liable to have our lives taken away at the capricious pleasure of every one, that may judge we have forfeited them ; as is the case in a state of nature : But then as life is our most darling possession, no body of men acting rationally will intrust this power with any man or number of men, without using every precaution for the right exercise of it.

The English constitution most admirably provides for the security both of our lives and our properties. In that great *charter* of liberties, commonly called *Magna Charta*, which our ancestors obtained by the most painful struggles ; 'tis a fundamental article. that no man shall be taxed but by his own consent : But as every individual of the nation cannot meet to grant taxes ; there becomes a necessity of their meeting by representation ; and accordingly the British parliament represent all the people of Great-Britain ; are chosen by them, and the *sole* right of granting money is vested in them : Neither the king nor house of lords have power to raise one penny of money upon the subject : And as the parliament when they grant money to the king, tax themselves in common with others, and as they are exposed to lose their places the next election, if they do not conduct according to the mind of their constituents ; the people have the greatest security that can be, that they will grant no more money than what the purposes of government, the good of the community, and the honour of the nation require. So likewise are our lives most admirably guarded in that charter
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of privileges which our forefathers obtained : In which 'tis provided that no man shall be imprisoned but by the laws of the land---No man's life shall be taken away, (either by the king or judges appointed by him,) but by the voice of his country represented by twelve honest men of the neighbourhood where the crime is committed; called together in some impartial manner; who, 'tis to be presumed, can have no interest in acting otherwise than justly. These two. viz. the right of taxing themselves, and trials by jury, especially in capital cases, have ever been deemed by the people of England their fundamental privileges; the violation of which was the principal cause of that dreadful civil war in England about a century ago, which at last brought an arbitrary king to the block. A violation of these, with other attempts to subvert the constitution, dethroned king JAMES the second, and advanced WILLIAM and MARY to the throne. So jealous have Englishmen ever been of these important rights and privileges. Now the first of these the parliament go directly in the face of. when they lay taxes on the Americans; as we are not represented in the British parliament, and by reason of our distance can never have an equal representation there. When they lay taxes on us, they feel none of the burdens they impose; and we have no influence over them, as the people of England have, by dropping the members of parliament, if they conduct wrong, at the next election. They do in reality take away our money from us by force, and make a present of it to the king. 'Tis not that we are against contributing to defray the expences of government, that causes us to complain of these taxes: But because our money is forced from us in an illegal manner, in direct violation of that fundamental privilege of Englishmen, *a right to tax themselves*. The colonies are represented in their respective general assemblies, and no where else; and whenever the king hath made requisitions to them of men and money, they have ever readily

readily granted them : And would his majesty *ask* his good subjects in America, as he doth the people of Britain assembled in parliament, for money to defray the charges of government, I am bold to say they would readily grant it.

Altho' the privilege of trial by juries is not as yet taken away from the colonies in general ; yet the advantage of it is much lessened in the province of the Massachusetts-Bay ; as it is in the power of the sheriff to pack such a jury as he pleases ; who being appointed *solely* by the governor, it may be presumed will ever be a *creature* of his ; and also by the governor's having power to remove capital trials out of the province, or even to Britain, where a jury cannot be supposed so adequate judges, as one collected from the neighbourhood where the crime was committed. The admiralty courts, 'tis complained of, are in many cases an infringement upon this important privilege. In Canada trial by juries is wholly taken away ; and who but justly fears that this is a sample by which the other colonies may e're long be modelled.

The late acts respecting the province of the Massachusetts-Bay are looked upon by Americans to be *grievous* in many respects ; to that province immediately ; to the other colonies as they afford a precedent of the treatment they may expect to receive, whenever they shall happen to fall under the resentment of the British court, and as it opens to view the adopted plan for the government of the colonies. To begin with that called the *port act*, or the act for blocking up the harbour of the town of Boston.

And first, if we look into the preamble of this act, we shall find the reasons assigned are, that *divers ill affected persons have fomented and raised dangerous commotions, &c. in which certain valuable cargoes of tea were destroyed.*" here you see 'tis supposed that the whole people are not guilty, but only *divers ill affected persons*, yet the whole town is punished, *men, women, and children.*

dren. Why did not the parliament enable his majesty to punish those *ill affected persons*, and not bring ruin on a whole country for the crime of a few individuals? 'Tis not probable that more than a hundredth part of the inhabitants of Boston were concerned in this affair, yet this is the only reason assigned for punishing the whole. Is it not the part of justice to sever between the guilty and the innocent and not to punish all in the lump? And have not other colonies been guilty of thelike conduct? New-York destroyed a considerable quantity of the same tea. Philadelphia forcibly sent back a large cargo to the great detriment of the East-India company; yet Boston only is singled out to be the object of ministerial vengeance. It plainly appears they mean to take but *one* at a time, and thus by dividing the colonies to bring them one after another to submit to the yoke.

Again, if you look further into this monstrous production, you will find that all the immense estates lying in wharves, water lots, &c. clear round Boston bay are really *confiscated* to the king: for if ever satisfaction is made according to the requirements of the act, 'tis expressly left with the king, to license only such wharves and landing places as he pleases. Now wharves are worth nothing, if there may be no landing upon them: their water lots are worth very little, if they may not build wharves upon them; or may not use them when built. So that the property of these estates, all in a manner that is valuable in them, is wrested from the original owners and vested with the king: With equal right might the parliament to vote the king the landed estate of any person in this or any other province: And if because there hath been a riot or mischief done by some individuals, the parliament may vote to the king the estate of any person that happens to lie in the town or country where committed: In what a dreadful situation are we? Here is not only claimed, but actually exercised; not merely
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ly a right of taxation, but of granting our estates, just as the British parliament pleases. A precedent justly alarming to all the colonies !

If you look still further into this oppressive act, you will find it enforced by such penalties as never act was. If any goods are landed or shipped from any wharf or landing-place within Boston bay ; not only the vessel and cargoes, with all the horses, carriages, cattle and every utensil concerned in carrying them are forfeit ; but a fine treble the value of the goods at the highest price is laid upon any person that shall be so much as aiding or abetting. What shocking severity ! And where are these fines to be recovered ? Not in the common courts of justice where there might be a fair trial by jury : but in the courts of admiralty ; where the king, who is to receive the fine, is both judge and jury, as well as party concerned. And the difficulties every vessel is laid under that goes in with provisions, seem as if designed, if not to starve them, at least to raise the price of provisions so high, as to force them to yield. And lest the officers on the coast should have some humane and compassionate feelings towards their distressed fellow subjects in Boston ; a fine of 500*l.* sterling is laid on any one that shall so much as connive at the least breach of the act.

Again 'tis put out of the power of parliament to grant redress to Boston : 'tis lodged with the king when to remove the rigours of the act : yet he is restricted 'till full satisfaction is made for the tea destroyed by, or in behalf of the town of Boston ; but who can it be expected will do it in their behalf ? and the town can do it in no other way than by a tax upon the inhabitants, thus involving the innocent with the guilty. † And

† The following quotation I find in the London Magazine for July 1774. p. 345. From a pamphlet entituled, *Observations on the act of parliament commonly called the Boston Port Bill, &c.* By Josiah Quincy, junr. Esq; Counsellor at Law in Boston. Which, as it contains a further difficulty to the inhabitants of Boston's complying

And not only so, but till the governor certifies satisfaction hath been made to the custom-house officers and plying with the requirements of the act than what had occurred to my mind, I take the liberty to add by way of note.

“ It must again be noticed that no relief is to be had “ until full satisfaction hath been made *by or on* behalf of the inhabitants of said town of Boston.” Now to suppose that any in England or Europe would make satisfaction on behalf of said inhabitants was unnatural, if not absurd ; but what is more to the point, it was certainly *unparliamentary*. The remaining alternative is that satisfaction must be made *by* Boston.

Every person knows that towns in this province cannot raise or appropriate any monies, but by the express provisions and direct authority of law : it is a matter of equal notoriety, that all town assessments of money are expressly confined by the 4 Wm. & Mar. c. 13. to the maintenance and support of the ministry, schools, the poor, and defraying of other *necessary town charges*. A law which received the royal approbation almost a century ago.

Will any now say, that the monies appointed to be paid to the East India house come within the words of *necessary town charges* ? When did the town contract the debt or how are they subject to the payment of it ? Had the Parliament seen fit to enact, that monies requisite to satisfy the India merchants should be so *considered*, two questions (not of quick decision) might then have arisen : the one touching the validity and obligatory force of the statute ; the other, whether it would then come within the intent and design of the province law. For past doubt, our provincial legislators had no such charge (as the one here supposed) in view, when they made the law of Wm. and Mary ; and in this way therefore the matter could not be brought within its provision. Parliament must then make a new act to enable and empower Boston to pay the India company, before the town can comply with the terms of relief of their trade. In the mean while, what is to be the situation of Boston, and the inhabitants of the globe, with whom they have such extensive connections ? But it is very apparent, that the parliament have not as yet exacted the payment of this satisfaction as a *town charge*. They have only placed it in the option of the town, to make that payment or submit to the consequences. That payment, we affirm, *they cannot make, without breach of the law of the land*. New and unheard of therefore is the state of this people. They must sustain the severest afflictions, they must stand the issue of distracting remedies or—violate one of the most known and practised laws of the land. Let us search the history of the world ; let us inspect the records of a Spanish Inquisition ; let us enter the excesses of an ottaman court ; nay, let us traverse the regions of romance and fable—where shall we find a parallel ?

and others for all the abuses they have received for several months before. Now how is it possible to know when they have complied with the requirements of the act ? Let them be ever so much disposed to make satisfaction, no mortal can tell when it is done. They are left wholly at the mercy of their governor ; who by office, if not by inclination (as one expresses it) is supposed to be a mere tool of arbitrary power. Never was there a completer instrument of tyranny, (if any are wicked enough to make such an use of it) than the Boston port act.

And over and above all this, this act which brings such an heavy calamity upon the town of Boston and the whole province, and establishes such a fatal precedent with respect to the parliament's power over the colonies, was passed without ever allowing the party therein concerned, an opportunity to make their defence, or even so much as their agents to speak in their behalf ; and when (as has been often reported) full satisfaction was offered by the merchants in London for all damage the East-India company had suffered from the destroying of their tea.

“ Here the sons of tyranny in America ; the base advocates for parliamentary power ; may see the blessed fruit of their doctrine : may see a specimen of what the other Colonies may expect from that exorbitant power they are at such pains to justify.” Strange that any should dare to hold up their heads among a free people in defence of such oppressive claims, as are here exerted.

But let us attend to the other late acts respecting the province of the Massachusetts-Bay ; both of which were hurried thro' the parliament with the utmost precipitancy, without ever allowing the province condemned an opportunity to speak in their own behalf. One of these in open defiance of the royal charter, in which the word of the king most solemnly given had guaranteed to them that form of government, they had
enjoyed

enjoyed for near a century past, essentially changes their form of government,---vests the king with a power of appointing another branch of their legislature beside the governor.---Extends the power of the governor to the most exorbitant lengths, and almost nullifies that birth right of Englishmen, trials by jury. If charters, if the solemn promises of kings are to be thus trifled with, what security can we have in any thing? Under the faith of charters solemnly given, our fathers planted this wilderness; built towns and cities---extended the commerce, the power, the glory of Britain. But now these sacred privileges thus solemnly confirmed are to be subject to the caprice of an insolent minister. And then the principle upon which the parliament avowedly proceeded, that whenever they judged it expedient & advantageous to the public, they had a right to set charters aside, greatly aggravates the evil. For upon this principle, if they judge it expedient, they may set aside all grants of land, all patents from the king (for none of these are more solemn or sacred than charters) and thus might cause all our lands to revert into the hands of the king. This principle nullifies all security of our property. In short, upon this principle the parliament may in the plenitude of their power, deprive us of every valuable enjoyment we possess.

The other act, which allows the governor to remove capital trials out of the province even to England, seems calculated with a most barefaced design to screen the soldiers and custom-house officers from punishment, when they should be guilty of any excesses. As tho' a merciless soldiery and those harpies and blood-suckers the officers of the customs would not be rigorous enough in executing these arbitrary laws, without a promise of impunity. For who would run the risk to cross the atlantic, more than 3000 miles to carry on a prosecution against them? Or if adventurous eno', how would it be possible to procure evidence? The language of it therefore is nearly this, let the soldiers commit what murders they please, they shall be liable to no punishment therefor.

Think now what dreadful situation a people must be in, with an army of soldiers quartered among them; with another army of tax-gatherers encamped in all their trading places: both of which know they are sent for the express purpose of bearing down and humbling the people; and that to encourage them in their insolence, they have the greatest prospect of impunity, let them commit what crimes they please. These naturally insolent when under every restraint the civil authority can put them, what may it be expected they will be, when these restraints are taken away, and they as it were invited to be insolent and overbearing to the people? What hopes of redress can a people entertain, let them be injured ever so much? Let individuals in Boston be allowed as wicked as any are disposed to make them; yet surely the people have reason to complain of these acts, which inflict a punishment so far exceeding the crime; involve the innocent with the guilty, and are such complete engines of tyranny in the hands of any that shall be wicked enough to improve them as such.

Again the *Quebec government act* the colonies have just reason to complain of. First as it establishes the *popish* religion: by the articles of capitulation the inhabitants of Canada were indeed to have a toleration, but not an establishment. But *popery* is now established, tythes are collected by law for it's support; which shews such a disregard for the *protestant* religion as we never should expect in the reign of one of the house of *Hanover*, who were called to the British throne to be guardians of the protestant religion. And tho' there are thousands of English settled in that province, yet no provision is made for the support of a protestant clergy; there is only a reserve, that the king may make such provision, if he sees fit. Now when such favour is shewn to the bloody religion of Rome, it argues either a *favourable* disposition in the parliament towards that religion; or that it is done, in order to carry on some other *favorite* scheme. Again trials by juries are abolished

abolished by this act : which is injurious, at least to the English inhabitants, who under the faith of a royal proclamation, promising English privileges have settled there. As the government of Canada is now entirely after the model of the arbitrary government of France, 'tis to be feared this is designed as a precedent for what is to be done in the other colonies ; or at least we may suppose, without much conjecture, that the French inhabitants of Canada are gratified with an establishment of *popery* and a restoration of their former laws ; to engage them to be *true* to the ministry in any future struggles with the colonies : A military government is continued there ; that they may always have a good body of troops at hand, to join the Canadians and Indians to pour down upon the back of us, if the ministry should find occasion to use them. And that this *French* arbitrary government may take in as much of America as possible, it's limits are extended southward to the Ohio, and westward to the Mississippi : so that it comprehends an extent of territory almost as large as all the other provinces. When this vast extent of territory comes to be filled up with inhabitants, near half America will be under this arbitrary *French* government. So that upon the whole the Quebec act doubtless wears as threatening an aspect upon Americans as any act that hath been passed by the British parliament. Thus I have hinted to you some of the principal grievances which the Americans judge they labour under from the *late* acts of the British parliament.

Indulge me a little longer while I endeavour to point out what we have *just* reason to fear the consequences of these measures will be. If we view the whole of the conduct of the ministry and parliament, I do not see how any one can doubt but that there is a settled fix'd plan for *enslaving* the colonies, or bringing them under arbitrary government, and indeed the nation too. The present parliament have ever been (by all accounts) more devoted to the interest of the ministry, than perhaps ever a parliament were. Now notwithstanding the excellency

cellency of the British constitution, if the ministry can secure a majority in parliament, who will come into all their measures, will vote as they bid them; they may rule as absolutely as they do in *France* or *Spain*, yea as in *Turkey* or *India*: And this seems to be the present plan to secure a majority of parliament, and thus enslave the nation with their own consent. The more places or pensions the ministry have in their gift; the more easily can they *bribe* a majority of parliament, by bestowing those places on them or their friends. This makes them erect so many new and unnecessary offices in America, even so as to swallow up the whole of the revenue. The king is not at all the richer for these duties. But then by bestowing these places--places of considerable profit and no labour, upon the children or friends, or dependants of the members of parliament, the ministry can secure them in their interest. This doubtless is the great thing the ministry are driving at, to establish arbitrary government with the consent of parliament: And to keep the people of England still, the first exertions of this power are upon the colonies. If the parliament insist upon the right of taxing the colonies at pleasure, the least we can expect is, to be tax'd as heavily as we can possibly bear, and yet support our lives; for as the members of parliament feel no burdens themselves by what they lay upon us, and are under no danger of losing their places by taxing us, so long as they can persuade the people of England they are lightening their burdens thereby; they are under no motives of interest to abstain from loading us with taxes as heavy as we can possibly groan under. Doubtless they will be cautious enough, to introduce these heavy taxes gradually, lest they excite too great commotions in this country: But let the *right* be once fix'd and established; it will be very easy to keep adding tax to tax; till the loads grow so heavy and are so fast bound, that we can never shake them off. Nothing most certainly but a principle of justice will keep them from it; and what can we expect from this quarter,

ter, when in open defiance of the *English* constitution, they claim a right to tax us, and thus deprive us of our dearest privileges ?

In the mean time we must expect our *charters* will fall a sacrifice to these arbitrary claims. Charter governments have long been disagreeable to the powers in Britain. The *free* constitution of these colonies makes them such nurseries of freemen as cannot fail to alarm an arbitrary ministry. They only wait a favourable opportunity to abolish their charters, as they have done that of the Massachusetts-Bay. We know the principle the parliament have adopted and openly profess to act upon, that they have a right to alter or annihilate charters when they judge it convenient : And we may depend upon it, whenever they shall think it can be done without raising too great commotions in the colonies, they will judge it convenient. Some may imagine it was the destroying the tea induced the parliament to change the government of the Massachusetts-Bay. If it was, surely 'tis very extraordinary to punish a whole province and their posterity thro' all ages, for the conduct of a few individuals. How soon will a riot or some disorder of a few individuals, afford them a pretext for the like treatment of all the other charter governments. I believe, however, it may be made very evident, that the destroying the tea was not the reason for altering the government of the Massachusetts-Bay ; but that it was a fix'd plan long before, and they only waited a colourable pretext for carrying it into execution. It has been reported by gentlemen of unquestionable veracity, that they had incontestible evidence that the two bills for altering the government of the Massachusetts-Bay were ordered by the council to be drawn up by the crown lawyers more than two years ago. Now if this be true (as it undoubtedly is) 'tis quite certain the ministry were only waiting for some colourable pretext for carrying their design into execution. The charter governments are by this precedent reduced not merely

merely to the greatest uncertainty of the continuance of their charters ; but may be quite certain, if the present plan is prosecuted, they will be taken away, and these colonies reduced, (if nothing worse) to the state of the royal governments ; their governors, councils, judges, &c. will be appointed from England, with high and extravagant salaries.

There is great reason to fear the next step will be the vacating all grants and patents of land from the king ; that all our landed property may revert to his majesty ; to be regranted under such *quit rents and services* as those in power shall see fit to impose : Nor will *this fear* appear chimerical to any one that duly considers what hath been already done, and what the plan is, which the ministry are doubtless pursuing. 'Twould be weak policy indeed for an arbitrary ministry to push with all their horns at first. But certainly it doth not require very great sagacity to see that their measures are tending to this. When it was resolved to introduce arbitrary and despotic government into the colonies in the reign of king JAMES 2d. when Sir *Edmond Andross* was governor of New-England ; the *first* step was to vacate the charters ; the very *next* to revoke the grants of land that had been made :|| which was done, in his short administration in a great number of instances ; and people were obliged to take out *new* patents at a most exorbitant price. We see our charters are already struck at ; a claim is advanced by the parliament to dissolve them at pleasure : And what is there more sacred in grants of land, than in charters ; that the former may not be annulled with as much

|| The charter being vacated, the people were told that their titles to their estates were of no value. The expression in vogue was, that "the calf died in the cow's belly." "The fees for the patents varied according to circumstances both of persons and estates. In the complaint to king James, it is alleged that the fees of some amounted to 50l. Prudence was used. Men's titles were not questioned all at once. Had this been the case according to the computation then made, all the personal estates in the colony, would not have paid the charge of the new patents."

much right as the latter. Our fathers when they planted this wilderness, placed equal confidence in the royal word pledged in their charters; as in the patents by which they held their land: and deemed the privileges granted in the former of as much worth; as the property granted by the latter. The principle upon which the parliament proceeded in vacating the Massachusetts charter; will equally warrant them, whenever they shall see fit, to vacate all our grants of lands, i. e. when they shall judge it expedient, or for the good of the nation. If the parliament should once take it into their wise heads, that it is expedient, or for the general good, that all lands in America should revert to the crown, that they may be regranted all upon the same tenure,---upon large *quit-rents* to defray the charges of government; what will hinder their carrying it into execution? And indeed the Boston *port act* doth actually afford us a precedent of the exercise of this power: all their wharves and water-lots round the whole of Boston bay, are really *confiscated* to the king (as we have already shewn.) Now what is this but a vote of parliament to take away our landed property. And that power which hath been once exercised have we not all reason to fear will be exercised again.

And have we not just grounds to fear that all this will not be the completion of their oppressive plan, if the ministry find themselves successful in their first attempts? By the *Quebec-Act* we find the parliament claim a power to establish in *America*, the same arbitrary government that takes place in *France*.---To take away trials by juries:---to set aside general assemblies:---to vest the king with a power to appoint legislative councils &c. Now this act not only respects the *French* inhabitants (who having been long used to slavish subjection, and not knowing the benefit of any other form of government, are possibly well eno' pleased with it, especially as the pill is gilded over with a full establishment of that religion, of which they are such bigotted pro-

professors ;) but it respects thousands of *English*, who have settled there since the conquest, and all such as may settle any where within that vast extended province in future time. By the same right they could establish this form of government over the *English* in Canada ; they may do it in the other provinces. In the province of the Massachusetts-Bay, the important privilege of being tried by a jury, is greatly *lessened* by setting aside the equitable and impartial method by which juries were wont to be panel'd. Viewing the things that have taken place, is it without foundation that I express my fears, that the British ministry will e'er long find our general assemblies troublesome things ?---a hindrance to government and the like, and so set them aside, under a notion of their being *inexpedient*, and lodge the whole legislative power in a council appointed by the king. This is the very thing that took place in *Sir Edmond's* time. The whole legislative power was lodged in him and his council. And since the previous steps are so like what took place then, why may we not expect the consequent ones will be so too ? And very likely the ministry may find *juries* equally a bar to the government they mean to establish ; and so may persuade the parliament, on the footing of expediency to abolish them likewise.

And when our civil rights and privileges shall have thus fallen a sacrifice to tyranny and oppression, our religious liberties cannot long survive : for where hath it ever been known that civil and ecclesiastical tyranny and despotism have not yet gone hand in hand together. The latter is so necessary to uphold and support the former, that arbitrary princes or ministers of state have ever found their interest in the encouragement of it. And should America be forced to yield in the present struggle for civil liberty, we have no reason to expect but ecclesiastical tyranny, in some shape or other, will like a mighty torrent overspread our land. Those princes on the British throne since the reformation, who have been most disposed to trample
upon

upon the rights of the people, and to rule in an arbitrary and despotic manner; have ever carested the papists and shewn a favourable disposition towards the bloody religion of Rome, as that religion is the surest prop to tyranny and despotism. This is evident during the reigns of all the several kings of the house of *Stewart*. Papists shared in the royal favour and were sheltered under royal protection. Continual attempts were made to bring the church of England to a greater conformity to the despotic church of Rome; 'till James 2d. more adventurous than his predecessors boldly attempts to subvert the constitution both in state and in church; ----to introduce both tyranny and popery: which so alarmed the nation that they dethroned the tyrant; and placed a confirmed protestant on the British throne. Some late transactions shew a very favourable disposition in the present ministry and parliament towards the religion of Rome; how far they may attempt to introduce into the English nation both in Britain and the colonies, God only knows. But thus much we may safely guess, without much danger of erring, that to introduce episcopacy with all those formidable powers with which it was clothed (which indeed were no obscure resemblance of the church of Rome) before the acts of parliament restraining and regulating prelative power and ecclesiastical courts, passed in consequence of the revolution, will be a darling object with the present ministry, if they see a prospect of being able to carry their designs into execution. For ecclesiastical government must be conformed to the civil, and nothing short of this would be in any measure suited to the genius of that civil policy they are evidently aiming to establish in the colonies. And tho' such an establishment might not introduce fire and faggots; yet depositions of the clergy, fines, imprisonment, disfranchisements, confiscations, &c. with various corporal penalties, you may depend upon it, will be its dire attendants. All these things, I make no doubt, will take place one after another, as fast as the ministry can bring their measures

measures to bear ; unless something occur in God's providence to hinder them.

View now the situation of America : loaded with taxes from the British parliament, as heavy as she can possibly support under,---our lands charged with the most exorbitant quit-rents,---these taxes collected by foreigners, steeled against any impressions from our groans or complaints, with all the rapaciousness of Roman publicans---our charters taken away---our assemblies annihilated,---governors and councils, appointed by royal authority without any concurrence of the people, enacting such laws as their sovereign pleasure shall dictate---judges appointed from the same source, without any check from juries carrying their arbitrary laws into execution.---the lives and property of Americans entirely at the disposal of officers more than three thousand miles removed from any power to controul them---armies of soldiers quartered among the inhabitants, who know the horrid purpose for which they are stationed, in the colonies,---to subjugate and bear down the inhabitants---who know what a chance they stand for impunity, tho' they commit the greatest excesses. These will be ready, not only to execute every arbitrary mandate of their despotic masters ; but self-moved (if like others of their profession) to commit every outrage upon the defenceless inhabitants.---Robberties, rapes, murders, &c. will be but the wanton sport of such wretches without restraint let loose upon us.---These will be at hand by force and arms to quell every rising murmur, to crush every rising groan or complaint'er it be uttered. And whenever the iron hand of oppression shall excite opposition or raise insurrections among the people : (which will ever be the case under arbitrary and despotic government, till long use has rendered their necks callous and insensible to the galling yoke) Blood-thirsty soldiers will be let loose upon them. Those who survive their murdering hands and have the misfortune to be taken captive by them, will soon be dragged, by the sentence of more merciless judges, to the place of execution.---Nothing shall

shall then be heard of but executions, forfeitures of estates, families reduced to beggery, orphans crying for bread, and such like scenes of distress. The spirits of the people soon grow depress'd---Industry and public spirit die away---Learning, Virtue and Religion are soon extinguished.--No comfort or happiness to be enjoyed in social life, every one will be jealous and distrustful of his nearest friends and neighbours. To such a dreadful state as this, my countrymen, the present measures seem to be swiftly advancing. What free-born Englishman can view such a state of abject slavery as this, tho' at the greatest distance, without having his blood boil with indignation?

Some perhaps may be ready to think the issue of these measures cannot be so bad as has been described.

No wonder men used to freedom cannot at once realize all the horrors of slavery. But this is no worse a state, than what now actually takes place in a great part of the world: and why will not the same government produce the same effects in America?

Others may think the British ministry cannot have so bad a scheme as this in view, that officers appointed by the crown cannot be so cruel and barbarous as hath been represented. Probably the ministry mayn't have it all in view at present: probably these officers would not at first be so cruel and barbarous, but there is no telling what men will soon become when entrusted with arbitrary power: such power will more surely intoxicate men than the strongest spirits: the best of men cannot be safely trusted with it. Many men amiable in private life have become monsters of cruelty when entrusted with arbitrary power: such were many of the Roman emperors. Should governors and councils appointed by the crown be entrusted with legislative power over the colonies, and be supported by armies of soldiers quartered among the people, I see not what (according to the ordinary course of things) would keep them from even greater excesses than I have mentioned.

Or should the colonies refuse to receive the chains prepared

prepared for them, and the present measures issue in a hostile rupture between Great Britain and the colonies, which God forbid, and which I wish the ministry may not have in view to promote, see what precautions they have early taken either to ruin us, or force us to subjection. To the Canadians who have been long inured to arbitrary government, and so are become fit tools for enslaving others, they have granted an establishment of their religion, the restoration of their former laws, &c. to attach them to their interest :---have continued Canada a military government that they may have store of forces at hand ; that they may let loose these with all the force of Canada and all the northern tribes of Indians upon our exposed and helpless frontiers. What else can they have in view in trying so much to gratify the French inhabitants of that province ?

Now if the British parliament and ministry continue resolved to prosecute the measures they have entered upon, it seems we must either submit to such a dreadful state of slavery as hath been shewn will be the probable issue of their measures, or must by force and arms stand up in defence of our liberties. The thoughts of either of which is enough to make our blood recoil with horror. Can any person survey the events that have taken place, and yet remain so stupid as not to be shocked at the dreadful prospect before us ? Is there a wretch so unfeeling, as not to feel grieved and affected at the injured and violated liberties of America ? Is there that tool of arbitrary power among the free-born sons of America, that will dare hold up his head in defence of such measures as these ? If there be any such, I am sure I cannot find it in my heart to wish them worse, than to feel the iron rod of slavery, that is now shook over America, till they are brought to a sounder mind. †

Having

† Such wretches as can meanly crouch to justify the late measures respecting the colonies may, for aught I know, be justly tax'd by the British parliament, as having given their consent, & could they be separated from the rest, I should have no great objection to their wearing the chains, they are so assiduously seeking to bring upon

Having thus given a brief account of the late acts of the British parliament respecting the colonies ;--of the grievances the colonies labour under therefrom, and of what the probable consequences of these measures will be. I will very briefly touch upon the last thing proposed viz. what can be done by us in such an alarming crisis.---Some perhaps may think me already too bold in speaking thus freely of the acts of the most respectable legislature in the British empire. But the more I consider the shocking tendency of them, the more difficult I find it to restrain myself within the bounds of decency.---I am sure however there is nothing *treasonable* in feeling oppression when oppressed---nor in groaning under the anguish of it---as yet I have done little more than express this.----Surely it cannot be *treason* to feel our burdens and weep and mourn and pray on account of them. To pray to God for redress is certainly innocent, and happy it is we have heaven to go to, tho' our prayers should be denied on earth. God hath once and again in answer to prayer wrought eminent deliverance for the oppressed. Remember how he delivered the Jews from Haman's cursed devices. Oft hath he delivered his people of old ;--oft the people of New-England ;--this affords great encouragement to be fervent in our supplications to the throne of grace. *The king's heart*

upon themselves, at least for a while. This thought, with the mean servility with which some *few* in the colonies justify the late unconstitutional acts of parliament taxing the colonies, &c. brings to my mind a short story related in Rider's History of England, vol. 22, p. 76.

“ When Waller (the poet) was young, he had the curiosity to go to court ; and he stood in the circle, and saw (James the first) dine ; where among other company there were two Bishops, Neile and Andrews. The king with an audible voice proposed this question, Whether he might not take his subjects money when he wanted it, without all this formality of parliament ? Neile replied, “ God forbid you should not, for you are the breath of our nostrils.” Andrews declined giving an answer, as he was not, he said, conversant in parliamentary cases ; but upon the king's pressing him, and saying he would admit of no apology, the Bishop replied with much humour, “ Why then I think your majesty may very lawfully take my brother Neile's money ; for he offers it.”

heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water : he turneth it whithersoever he will. But little will prayer avail us without unfeigned repentance and humiliation before God under the heavy frowns of his righteous providence. We have more reason to be afraid of the vice and wickedness that abounds among us, than of all the arms of Britain. These give us reason to fear lest we have not virtue enough to make use of the properest means of redress, and lest heaven should fight against us. Were a general reformation to take place I make no doubt heaven would find a way for our relief. The present alarming situation of things therefore loudly calls upon us to examine what sins in particular have provoked heaven thus to come out in judgment against us ; and perhaps there cannot be a better rule of determining than to enquire what sins these calamities are properly retributive of, and by this rule will not the enslaving the poor *Africans* in the colonies stand forth in the front of the dreadful catalogue ? Are not the colonies guilty of forcibly depriving them of their natural rights ? Will not the arguments we use in defence of our own liberties against the claims of the British parliament, equally conclude in their favour ? And is it not easy to see there is something retributive in the present judgments of heaven ? We keep our fellow men in slavery---heaven is suffering others to enslave us. Again I must mention worldliness, covetousness, selfishness, dishonesty, disobedience to constitutional authority, and many other vices as contained in the dismal train, and for which we need to repent and humble ourselves before God ; but as this is a topic handled in the preceeding sermon 'tis altogether needless for me to enlarge upon it.

But if ever we would hope for redress from the grievances we labour under ; 'tis not only necessary that we repent, reform and pray ; but that we unitedly prosecute the most firm and prudent measures for the attainment of it. A very little attention must convince every one of the necessity of our being united. If the colonies

are

are divided or the people in the several colonies are very considerably divided, we are undone. Nothing but the united efforts of America can save us : and if united, they must have that weight, which gives me the most sanguine hopes of success. It should then be the concern of every one to labour as far as his influence extends, to promote this necessary union. The determinations of the congress of delegates from the several colonies may be deemed the general voice of America. A concurrence with these we should every one labour to promote. If in every particular we should not be entirely suited ; yet the dreadful consequences of disunion should make us cautious how we let it be known. The Congress we hear have come into a conclusion that we *import* no British goods. This is a measure for redress, of which we may very safely and easily make trial. We can with a little self-denial do without the superfluities we receive from Britain. This will doubtless be distressing to the Mother Country and may convince them of the necessity of continuing to us our dear bought rights and privileges. No friend of his country can hesitate a moment in such a cause to deny himself the superfluities of Britain. And should the Congress agree also upon *non-exportation* ; and extend both this and the other, not only to Great-Britain but to Ireland and the West-Indies ; a general compliance with which, will most certainly, according to the ordinary course of things, ensure us redress, and of which necessity most certainly will be a sufficient justification : Should this I say be agreed upon by the Congress ; none I hope will be so inimical to his country, as to attempt to break the general union by refusing to comply therewith. But should there be any such ; it becomes every one, that hath any regard to the liberties of his country, to treat with deserved neglect and abhorrence the wretch, that thus meanly seeks his own emolument upon the ruins of his country's liberties :----To break off all trade and dealings with such selfish miscreants ; and make them sensible, that without injuring their

lives

lives or property, their injured country can make them feel the weight of her vengeance, and rue the day they ever suffered a selfish spirit to banish all love to their country from their breasts. Here is a sphere in which every one can contribute something to save his sinking country from ruin. Suffer me then to intreat you (of the western parts of the colony of Connecticut) in some proper way to shew your hearty concurrence with other parts of the continent in the cause of American liberty ; and your resolution to concur with, and endeavour to carry into execution the conclusions of the American Congress ; and to open your hearts to commiserate, and contribute to the relief of the suffering poor of the town of Boston. What hath been said I trust makes it sufficiently appear, that they are suffering in the common cause of American liberty. Allowing the conduct of those individuals who destroyed the tea as criminal as any are disposed to make it, yet the punishment is beyond all bounds disproportionate to the crime :---the innocent are involved with the guilty :---the requirements of the act are such, that it can never be known whether complied with or not :---The act is as complete an instrument of tyranny as ever was formed.---If the requirements of the act should be complied with ; yet all their estates lying in wharves, water-lots, &c. will still lie at the king's mercy. So that the act cannot be complied with without giving up the struggle for liberty. The design in bearing thus hard upon one colony is evidently to divide the colonies ; and thus to bring them one after another to submit to the arbitrary claims of parliament. All their means of subsistence depended on their trade, which by this act is wholly taken away. So that without assistance from the other colonies, they must inevitably yield, unless so very patriotic, as to be willing to starve to death. Our turn may soon come when we may want the like kind assistance from our brethren. Only apply the golden rule of "doing to others as we would that they should do unto us," and surely we cannot hesitate to contribute to their

their relief. We in this colony are situated nearer to them and on various accounts are more nearly connected with them than most of the other colonies. Our trade hath been principally with them ;---our religion and manners are very similar to theirs :---We originated mainly from the same ancestors ; most of our towns derive their first inhabitants from that province ; the rest are descended from ancestors that left their native land for the same cause with the Massachusetts planters : So that it will be to our lasting shame, if more backward to contribute to their relief, than other colonies much more remote, and under no such special connections as we are. Many towns in the eastern and northern parts of this colony have sent very generously to their relief, others are now making collections for this purpose. But I hear nothing of any collections for Boston either in Fairfield or New-Haven counties.* I should be very sorry if we in the western parts of the colony should prove the most backward. Providence hath blest us with plentiful crops, and thereby hath amply furnished us with the means of contributing to their relief, if we have hearts to use them. I wish the importance of contributing to the relief of Boston might be duly attended to, and that some measures might be come into in all our towns for trying the generosity of people for this purpose. I am sure they that have a sense of the worth of liberty and the importance of making a firm yet decent and harmless opposition to these oppressive measures, which are calculated to rivet the chains of slavery both upon us and our posterity, cannot hesitate a moment to contribute something generous for the relief of that suffering people. May Americans be united in a just sense of the worth of their civil rights and privileges, and in every laudable and righteous method for obtaining redress ; and God grant their struggles in so glorious a cause may be crowned with happy success.

* I have heard since writing the above, that a handsome collection is likely to be made in the town of Fairfield ; and that subscriptions are opened for the like purpose in the town of Stratford.



Errata in the Sermon.

- P**AGE 1, line last, for *Cario*, read *carior*.
Page. 7, line 17, for *ingenuous*, read *ingenious*.
P. 7, l. 17, from the bottom, for *versality*, read *versatility*.
Page 9, line 2, from the bottom, for *ths*, read *these*.
Page 19, line 2, from the bottom, for *effect*, read *affect*.

