

the Act for Securing the Dependency of the Colonies, or, as a late Secretary of State would have Amended it, the Independence of the Colonies, w<sup>ch</sup> was passed at the same time.

I have already acquainted your Excellency w<sup>th</sup> the Progress of these Two Acts thro' the Commons, & sent you Copys of them as first Introduced. Before they left that House they received some Amendments in the Preambles, as you will see by comparing the different Copys together, but, after considerable Struggles, they made their way to the Lords, by a Majority of near 150; the Dependency Bill, or Bill of Rights, as it has been likewise called, taking the Lead from first to last. When they came to the Lords, & this Latter Bill was brought first upon the Carpet, It was Moved, tho' no Division ensued, to Postpone it to the Repeal Bill, for if the latter should miscarry, the former would be unnecessary, & if the former passed, the Latter would be meer *Brutum Fulmen*, asserting in words & giving up in Deeds, a Ridiculous Farce after a Deep Tragedy. Lord Mansfield treated it as an humiliation of the British Legislature to Pass an Act merely to annull the Resolutions of a Lower House of Assembly in Virginia, & added that Bills of right were only proper between Contending Bodys, Who were Contesting each others authority, but mutually allowed the authority of the Sovereign Power, as when the Commons encroached upon the Lords, or the Lords upon them, or too great an Extension of the Prerogative was aimed at, or in the Contests between the House of Lords in Ireland, & that in England about Jurisdiction, in all which cases the Legislature, to w<sup>ch</sup> the contending Parties alike submitted, Interposed very properly. But here the very question arose upon the Authority of the whole British Legislature, & the Denyal of it by the Americans. It was only assertion against assertion, & whether it rested in meer Declaration, or was thrown into the form of a law, It was still a Claim by one Party only w<sup>ch</sup> the other Dissented from, & having first denyed the Claim, would very consistently Pay as little regard to an Act of the same authority, cutting, instead of untying, the Knot. In speaking of the Stamp Law he treated it as a Proposition, Whether the Parliament of Great Britain had not a right to Tax the Subjects of Great Britain, in all the Dominions of Great Britain in America. He was answered by Lord Camden, who adhered to his former Sentiments against the Authority of the British Legislature, in which he was Joyned by as few Lords as before, but most of them seemed to Incline against the Propriety & utility of the Law, & Lord Chesterfield is said to have Considered it out of doors (for his health would not permit him to attend) tho' a great Friend to the Repeal, that it was Insuring £1 p<sup>r</sup> Cent,