

the principal Gentlemen in England, and can they want a sufficient Number of Members to take Care of their Interests in the Parliament? I am for I have no Opportunity of knowing how many Members of Parliament belong to the East-India Company, but am well assured their Number is very considerable. The like may be said of the Proprietors of the public Funds, and as to the other Members to Parliament, I am at a Loss to know the Persons meant: If it be all those who have Money to let at Interest, can it be doubted that there are a sufficient Number of Gentlemen in the House who have considerable Property in Money, to take due Care to regulate the Interest? Besides, all those Persons who have no Votes, especially if they be Men of large Property, have yet an Opportunity of considerable Influence in Elections, as well as to have their Concerns duly attended to, by the Members for contiguous Places. Nor is it difficult for any Men of Fortune, to procure a Right of voting for Members of Parliament—so that the Mention of these Cases, as parallel with that of the Colonies, is wonderfully trifling and impertinent, more especially the Cases of Persons under Age, and Women! As if these were distinct Bodies of People unconnected in Interest with those who have a Right of voting.—What it can be shewn, that the collective Body of Inhabitants, have a distinct Interest from that of Persons of Age, or that the female Part of the Species have a distinct Interest from the Males, then I promise to prove that they have a Right to send Members to Parliament. And must a great Nation be deprived of its most sacred Rights upon such Arguments as these!—When such are brought to justify the tremendous Act, is it not a Proof that no reasonable ones can be found! But is it possible, that a Matter of such Importance, any Man who valued his Reputation as a Man of Sense and Honour, should before the Public, seriously propose Arguments so very trifling and ridiculous! And is it not most wonderful, that those Arguments should be received with Applause, and have sufficient Influence to overturn the English Constitution in America!

The true Reason, I suppose, why those Places and Persons send no Members to Parliament is, that they do not want any, their Interest being sufficiently guarded already by Members for other Places, concern'd in their Welfare, who answer the same Purposes as if sent by their own Votes.

And now, where is the Resemblance between these Places and Persons, who have all the Benefit of Representatives, tho' they, as distinct Bodies, do not send any; and the Colonies, which are at Distances too remote to have the least Influence in the Election of Members, or in promoting or opposing any Matters that concern themselves in Parliament; and are not only unconnected in Interest with any of the Members, but in many Respects entirely opposite—indeed I believe in all Respects, when the Affairs of the Colonies would come before that House; for when has the Parliament meddled with any Matters relating to them, except to lay some Imposition upon them?

It is essential to the Character of a Representative, that his Interest shall be consistent with that of his Constituent, and that he shall have an exact Knowledge of his Circumstances and all his Concerns. Without these, no reasonable Man would choose a Representative. And must the injured Colonies be forced to acknowledge as their Representatives, Persons they never chose nor knew, and who are as little acquainted with them or their Circumstances, and are certainly destitute of the necessary Requisites for such an Office? Must the Actions of such Representatives be acknowledged by the Colonies as their own, tho' the most contrary to their Inclinations, their Interest, and their most valuable Rights!

I should now conclude, having, as far as the Brevity to which I am confined, will permit, finished what I at first propos'd in this Essay; but it seems necessary to consider some other Matters relating to the Subject, which have been often mentioned to justify the Taxation. I have not Time to study in what Order these Matters would most properly fall under Consideration, I shall take them just as they happen to occur to my Mind.

It has been said that the Impositions upon the Colonies have been the more insisted upon, and the more rigorous, from an Apprehension that they were aiming at Independence; and because the Ministry were exasperated at their disputing the Parliament's Right to tax them.

As to the Dependency or Independency of the Colonies, I cannot conceive how these Terms can be applicable to them. They are a Part of the

British Dominions, but, can one Part of a Kingdom be said to be dependant on another, when all have the same common Rights? They have indeed a reciprocal Dependence upon one another for Assistance, Convenience, and Security of their common and respective Rights; but they do not derive those Rights from one another. From the Author of Nature alone they receive them. And no other Power has a Right to infringe them. If the Independency which the Colonies are supposed to aim at, means nothing more, than that they claim the same natural Rights of Liberty and Property, as their Countrymen in England; it is very certain such is their Claim. And as the People in England do not acknowledge that they depend upon the mere Will and Favour of any Power on Earth for their Enjoyment of these Rights; so, neither do the Colonies. And is there any Thing in these Pretensions that can justly offend our Brethren in England? Would they wish us to part with our dearest Inheritance without remonstrating with the honest Boldness and Freedom of Englishmen? Would they wish us, upon such an interesting Occasion, to behave in a Manner unworthy our Relation to them?

But if the Independency which the Colonies were supposed to aim at, was a Design to throw off their Allegiance to his Majesty and the Crown of Great-Britain, nothing could be more unjust than such a Supposition; for never were Subjects more strongly and affectionately attach'd to their Sovereign, than the Colonies are, without Exception, to his Majesty King George the Third, and his Royal House; never People were more unanimous, and firm in their Adherence to the Laws and Constitution of England, or more ready to risk their Lives and Properties in their Defence. This Affection and Loyalty proceeded both from a Sense of Duty and Interest; for under their lawful Sovereigns, his Majesty's Predecessors, they enjoy'd, and were protected in the Possession of their Rights and Privileges, and found their King ever ready to hear their Petitions and promote their Welfare. While they possess these Advantages, what Motives can the English Americans possibly have to throw off their Allegiance to his Majesty, or desire a Change of Government. Their Rights, Liberty and Property, being fully secured to them by the English Constitution, what can they wish for more under any Government?—Those that are injured and oppress'd under a tyrannical Government, will naturally desire and seek a Change;—but the English Colonies, whose Rights are secured to them by the excellent Constitution of England, can with Respect to Government, form no Wish of Happiness beyond it, and can have no Change but for the worse. If the Colonies were at this Time, or should be at any future Period, entirely unconnected with the People in any other Part of the World, and had the System of their Laws, and their Constitution, now to form; they could no way act so wisely as by adopting the Laws and Constitution of England for their own; and putting themselves under the Protection and Government of a Monarch so powerful and so good as he must be who is an Observer and Defender of the English Laws and Constitution: And therefore, suppose the Colonies ever so great and powerful, they could never desire a Change of Government, because it would be to their own Disadvantage; their Greatness and Power would be, in equal Proportion, the Greatness and Power of England; while the Inhabitants of all Parts of the British Dominions enjoy'd the same common Rights, there would be no Jealousy between them; they would rejoice in each other's Prosperity, and think it an Addition to their own Security and Happiness. Thus much may suffice, to shew that there never can be a Disposition in the Colonies to break off their Connection with the Mother Country, to depart from their Allegiance to his Majesty, to refuse Submission to the English Government, and Adherence to the English Constitution; so long as they are permitted to have the full Enjoyment of those Rights which that Constitution entitles them to, they desire no more, nor can they be satisfied with less.

This brings me to consider the Nature of that Relation that really subsists between the Mother Country and the Colonies. If we suppose the King to act in Behalf of the whole English Nation, which having, by Laws of its own making conferred that Office upon him, is bound to abide by, and acknowledge his Actions in their Behalf, as their own; then there will be an implied Contract virtually subsisting, between the King and the Nation on the one Part, and the Adventurers for settling the Colonies, on the other.

The Lands to be settled are supposed to be not

yet in the Possession of either the King or any of his Subjects; but the implied Contract I take to be this:—That if the Adventurers will hazard their Lives and Properties in acquiring, according to the Rules of Justice, Possessions in the desert Regions of America; far remote from their native Land, and encounter all the Difficulties and Dangers necessarily attending such an Enterprize, that then the King and the Nation will support and defend them in those Possessions; They paying due Allegiance to his Majesty, and holding the Lands of him upon stipulated Conditions; and that they shall lose no Part of their natural Rights, Liberty and Property, by such a Removal; but that they, and all their Posterity for ever, shall as fully and freely enjoy them, to all Intents, Constructions and Purposes whatsoever, as if they and every of them were born in England.

For who would have left their Friends and Country, and travelled into remote inhospitable Deserts, exposed to a Thousand Hardships and Dangers, to make Settlements where they would be less Free than they were at Home?

These Terms and Conditions were certainly implied, in the original Contract, and the Enjoyment of these Rights was expressly granted by Charter.

The Inhabitants of the Colonies then, are as much a Part of the English Nation, as if they had remained at Home; and are, with Respect to their natural Rights, no way inferior to their Brethren in England; for surely they could not deserve to lose those Rights, by exposing themselves to so many Hardships in making Settlements so highly beneficial to their Mother Country.

That the Colonies, as well as the Realm of England, are subject to the English Government, and under the same common Head, they never pretended to deny; on the contrary they esteem it their great Happiness and their Glory that they are so: All that they require is a free Participation of the Advantages that Government entitles them to, in common with the People in England: And this, they think, no undutiful or unreasonable Pretension.

They desire to render their Mother Country all the Respect and Assistance, that can be expected from dutiful and affectionate Children, strongly attached to the Interest of the Country and People from whence they sprung, and interested in their Preservation and Welfare. But certainly the Relation in which they stand, can never require the Colonies to be excluded from their most essential Rights, their Liberty and Property;—Nor can their Mother Country, consistently with that Character, desire to deprive them of this their most valuable Inheritance, the distinguishing Characteristic of Englishmen. This would be to cause an irreparable Disunion between the Mother Country and her Colonies, and effectually cut them off from being the same Nation; for what Union can subsist between Freemen and Slaves? Children have certainly the same Right to Liberty and Property, as their Parents. But if Parents take upon them, by Force, to dispose of the Property of their Children, and to make Laws to bind them without their own Consent,—how then are the Children Free? How are they under the same Constitution as their Parents? No, they are neither.—And from the Moment such a Distinction takes place, the social Bands of Love and Unity between them will be broken; and by whatever Names such Directors may be called, they will be consider'd by those that bear the Burdens, as Task-masters and Oppressors, and will themselves by Degrees lose the Spirit of Freedom, and become like the Slaves they have made.

I shall not pretend to define the Powers that an Assembly of Men chosen by a People to represent them in Parliament, ought to assume; tho' I think it a Matter of great Importance to Mankind, that the just Limits of every Power concern'd in Public Affairs, should be as generally and exactly known as possible; for it is equally dangerous, to yield too much, or to little Obedience; and therefore, we ought to know the exact Measure, due to every Office. Parliaments have frequently thrown such Discouragements upon Inquiries concerning the Boundaries of their Power, that few Persons choose to meddle with the Subject.

I know it is the Opinion of some, that a Parliament's Power is the Foundation of the Law; and that their Act can make any Thing lawful or not, as they please.—But this is certainly a Mistake. No Parliament can alter the Nature of Things; or make that good which is really evil. If they could do this, then they might alter the whole Frame of the Constitution where they are chosen.—They might make themselves in-

dependent of their Constituents, and be perpetual Dictators—or they might do any Thing.—But this cannot be. There is certainly some Bounds to their Power, and 'tis Pity they were not more certainly known.

To make this Tax which we think unconstitutional, a popular Measure in England, and appear to be a just one to us, it has been much insisted upon that great Part of the Expences of the late War, were incurred on our Account;—for our Defence and Protection, &c. And therefore that it would be a Hardship upon Great-Britain to bear all the Expence while we received the Benefit. This Tenderness to the People of England was well calculated to take off their Attention, from the Incroachments upon the Rights of their fellow Subjects in America; in levying Taxes, &c. upon them, without their own Consent, by a Parliament where they have no Representative. It had likewise the Appearance of Equity towards the Colonies, who I suppose would not have been unwilling to bear a due Proportion of the Charges of their own Defence. I shall not pretend to judge whether the Sums they levied on themselves amounted to the proportionable Part of the Whole, nor how that Proportion ought to be ascertain'd. However I must observe, that a small Part only of the Expences of the American War, was on Account of the mere Defence of the English Colonies; the greatest Part was incurred in the Prosecution of a larger Plan of Operations, the Conquest of those extensive Territories now added to the British Dominions: And will not those great Acquisitions be an Equivalent for the Expences that attended them? Must the Colonies, which comparatively receive little or no Advantage by them, be taxed on their Account, when they will in themselves, with proper Management, be to Great-Britain a constant Source of Wealth. I suppose the Advantages Great-Britain receives by her Intercourse with her Colonies, together with the Consequences of their falling into the Hands of a rival Power, were Inducements abundantly sufficient for all She has done for them; why then must so much be charged to their Account? I have not heard that any Reimbursement was demanded of Portugal, nor of other States in Europe, for the Assistance they received from Great-Britain;—Will She treat her Children with less Kindness than Strangers.

But it is not the Tax itself, it is the unconstitutional Manner of imposing it, that is the great Subject of Uneasiness to the Colonies. Whatever Justice there may be in their bearing a proportionable Charge of the War, they apprehend, that Manner of levying the Money upon them, without their own Consent, by which they are deprived of one of the most valuable Rights of British Subjects, never can be right.

Think not, my Countrymen, that these Thoughts proceed from a factious Spirit, or a Heart disaffected to his Majesty's Person and Government, on the contrary, I solemnly declare, that I would freely risk my Life in the Defence of both. I have often taken the Oaths of Allegiance to his Majesty, and always did it with the full Consent of my whole Heart, and these Sentiments, I verily believe, I shall carry with me to the Grave. But I could not see so large a Part of his Majesty's Dominions, so great a Number of his faithful Subjects, and all their Posterity yet unborn, dishonoured, and deprived (as I clearly apprehend) of the most sacred Rights of British Subjects, without declaring my Thoughts with an honest Freedom.

Think not that I mean to stir up a rebellious Spirit, or raise Commotions in the Government. Quite the contrary—my Aim is to increase the Happiness of his Majesty's Reign to himself and all his Subjects.

I have endeavour'd to spread more extensively among my Countrymen, the Knowledge of their Rights; and the most proper Means to obtain Redress of Grievances that I can advise them to, is from every Quarter to send their humble Petitions, and Remonstrances to his Majesty.—He will not be deaf to the Voice of so great a Body of his faithful Subjects.

A FREEMAN.

LONDON, May 13.

AMONG the intended Regulations in Favour of the North American Colony Trade, a Repeal of the Sugar Act, and of the Act for restraining Paper Bills of Credit, &c. is expected to take Place this Session.

One Thousand Pieces of Cannon, we hear, have lately been contracted for by the Spanish Agents at