

[XXIst Year.]

THURSDAY, March 27, 1766.

[No. 1072.]

By the Brig Oxford, Capt. M^cLean, who arrived in Choptank last Week, we are favour'd with some Dublin Papers to the 20th of January, from which we have taken the King's SPEECH to the Parliament.

FROM THE LONDON GAZETTE.

WESTMINSTER, January 14.

THIS Day his Majesty came to the House of Peers, and was pleased to make the following most Gracious SPEECH:

My Lords and Gentlemen,

WHEN I met you last, I acquainted you, that Matters of Importance had happened in America, which would demand the most serious Attention of Parliament.

That no Information, which could serve to direct your Deliberations in so interesting a Concern, might be wanting, I have ordered all the Papers, that give any Light into the Origin, the Progress, or the Tendency of the Disturbances which have of late prevailed in some of the Northern Colonies, to be immediately laid before you.

No Time has been lost, on the first Advice of these Disturbances, to issue Orders to the Governors of my Provinces, and to the Commanders of my Forces in America, for the Exertion of all the Powers of Government in the Suppression of Riots and Tumults, and in the effectual Support of lawful Authority.

Whatever remains to be done on this Occasion, I commit to your Wisdom: Not doubting but your Zeal for the Honour of my Crown, your Attention to the just Rights and Authority of the British Legislature, and your Affection and Concern for the Welfare and Prosperity of all my People, will guide you to such sound and prudent Resolutions, as may tend at once to preserve those constitutional Rights over the Colonies, and to restore to them that Harmony and Tranquility, which have lately been interrupted by Riots and Disorders of the most dangerous Nature.

If any Alterations should be wanting in the Commercial Economy of the Plantations, which may tend to enlarge and secure the mutual and beneficial Intercourse of my Kingdoms and Colonies, they will deserve your most serious Consideration. In effectuating Purposes so worthy of your Wisdom and Public Spirit, you may depend upon my most hearty Concurrence and Support. The present happy Tranquility now subsisting in Europe, will enable you to pursue such Objects of our interior Policy with a more uninterrupted Attention.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

I have ordered the proper Estimates for the current Service of the Year to be laid before you: Such Supplies as you may grant shall be duly applied with the utmost Fidelity, and shall be dispensed with the strictest Economy,

My Lords and Gentlemen,

I earnestly recommend to you, to proceed in your Deliberations with Temper and Unanimity. The Time requires, and I doubt not but your own Inclination will lead you to, those salutary Dispositions. I have nothing at Heart but the Assertion of legal Authority, the Preservation of the Liberties of all my Subjects, the Equity and good Order of my Government, and the Concord and Prosperity of all Parts of my Dominions.

VIRGINIA, March 1, 1766.

MR. GREEN,

YOUR inserting the following Proceedings of the SONS OF LIBERTY in this Colony, in your very useful GAZETTE, will give Pleasure to many of your Readers.

A certain Archibald Ritchie, of Hobb's Hole, Merchant, having declared publicly at Richmond

Court, that he was determined to Clear out his Vessels on Stamp Paper; at the same Time saying, that he knew where to get such Paper: Enraged at the said Ritchie's matchless Impudence, in making such a Declaration, and alarmed at the dangerous Consequences, that such an iniquitous Practice might be productive of to the Liberty of their Country, if other Merchants should pursue so pernicious an Example; a Number of Gentlemen met at Leeds Town, on the Twenty Seventh of last Month, in the Evening, to consider of what Measures it would be necessary to take, against a Man who was thus attempting to introduce a Law so destructive to the Community. At this Place, they chose a Committee to regulate their Plan of Proceedings, who drew up the following Scheme of an Association, viz.

WE who subscribe this Paper, have Associated, and do bind ourselves to each other, to God, and to our Country, by the firmest Ties that Religion and Virtue can frame, most sacredly and punctually to stand by, and with our Lives and Fortunes to support, maintain and defend each other, in the Observation and Execution of these following Articles.

FIRST. WE declare all due Allegiance and Obedience to our lawful Sovereign GEORGE THE THIRD, KING OF GREAT BRITAIN; and we determine to the utmost of our Power, to preserve the Laws, the Peace and good Order of this Colony, as far as is consistent with the Preservation of our Constitutional Rights and Liberties.

SECONDLY. AS WE know it to be the Birth-Right-Privilege of every British Subject, (and of the People of Virginia, as being such) founded on Reason, Law and Compact, that he cannot be legally tried but by his Peers, and that he cannot be Taxed but by Consent of a Parliament in which he is Represented by Persons of his own chusing, who themselves pay a Part of the Tax they impose on others. If therefore, any Person shall attempt by any Action or Proceeding, to deprive this Colony of those fundamental Rights, WE will immediately regard him as the most dangerous Enemy of this Community, and We will go to any Extremity, not only to prevent the Success of such Attempts, but to Stigmatize and Punish the Offender.

THIRDLY. AS the Stamp Act does absolutely direct the Property of the People to be taken from them without their Consent express'd by their Representatives, and as in many Cases it deprives the British American Subject of his Right to Trial by Juries, WE do determine, at every Hazard, paying no Regard to Danger, or to Death, that we will exert every Faculty to prevent the Execution of the said Stamp Act, in any Instance whatever within this Colony; and that if any abandon'd Wretch, shall be so lost to Virtue and public Good, as wickedly to contribute to the Introduction or Fixure of the Stamp Act in this Colony, by using Stamp Paper, or by any other Means, we will with the utmost Expedition, convince every such Profligate, that immediate Danger and Disgrace shall attend their prostitute Purpose.

FOURTHLY. THAT the last Article may be most surely and effectually executed, WE engage each to the other, that whenever it shall be known to any of this Association, that any Person is so conducting himself, as to favour the Introduction of the Stamp Act, that immediate Notice shall be given to as many of the Association as possible, and that every Individual so informed, shall with Expedition repair to a Place of Meeting, to be appointed as near the Scene of Action as may be.

FIFTHLY. EACH Associator shall do his true Endeavour to obtain as many Signers to this Association as he possibly can.

SIXTHLY. IF any Attempt shall be made upon the Liberty or Property of any Associator, for any

Action or Thing to be done in Consequence of this Agreement, WE do most solemnly bind our Ourselves, by the sacred Engagements above entered into, at the utmost Risque of our Lives and Fortunes, to restore such Associate to his Liberty, and to protect him in the Enjoyment of his Property.

IN TESTIMONY of the good Faith, with which we resolve to execute this Association, WE have hereunto put our Hands and Seals, Virginia, the 27th February, 1766.

THIS ASSOCIATION was immediately signed by the whole Company, and by great Numbers since. The Committee also prepared a Declaration to be made, Signed and Sworn to by the said Ritchie, and came to a Resolution, that if he should refuse to Sign and make Oath to the same, his Person should be taken and stripp'd Naked to his Waist, tied to the Tail of a Cart, and drawn to the public Pillory, where he should be fixed for One Hour, and if in that Time he did not comply, that he should be brought up by the whole Company to Leeds Town, there to be farther determined on, as should seem Expedient to the FRIENDS OF LIBERTY.

THE next Day, the whole Company proceeded to Hobb's Hole, where they were joined by a large Number, who had assembled from the adjacent Counties, on the South Side of Rappahannock, in Order to call the said Ritchie to Account for his having presumed to throw out the Threat aforesaid.

THE SONS OF LIBERTY, to the Amount of Four Hundred, drew up in two Lines in the main Street of the Town, whilst the Gentlemen appointed by the Committee for that Purpose, went to the House of the said Ritchie, and, agreeable to their Instructions; Read to him the Declaration prepared for him, and required him to go with them to the main Body, in Order to Read, Sign, and Swear to the same. He at first desired that a Committee might be appointed to reason with him upon the Subject; but the Deputies informed him, that the Expiation required of him was already determined on; and demanded an immediate Answer, Whether he would willingly attend them to the main Body or not? He answering that he would, they immediately conducted him thither; where being arrived, he at first complained that the Terms proposed were too severe, but the SONS OF LIBERTY calling out that they were just, after some little Hesitation, he, in Presence of the whole Company, with his Hat off, and with an audible Voice, first Read, and then Swore to the following Declaration, viz.

" SENSIBLE now of the high Insult I offered this Country, by declaring at Richmond Court lately, my Determination to make Use of Stamp Paper for Clearing out my Vessels; and being convinced such Proceeding would establish a Precedent, by which the hateful Stamp Act might be introduced into this Colony, to the utter Destruction of Public Liberty; I do most submissively, in Presence of the Public, Sign this Paper, meaning to shew my deep Remorse, for having formed so execrable a Design; and I do hereby solemnly Promise and Swear on the HOLY EVANGELS, that no Vessel of mine shall Sail Cleared on Stamp Paper, and that I never will on any Pretence make Use of, or cause to be made Use of Stamp Paper, unless the Use of such Paper, shall be authorized by the General Assembly of this Colony."

Feb. 28, 1766. ARCHIBALD RITCHIE.

THE Company then separated, those in the Neighbourhood returned to their respective Habitations, whilst those who resided at a Distance, retired to the Taverns, where they spent the Evening with great Sobriety: Indeed the whole was conducted with so much Decency and Discretion, that not a single Man, even attempted to introduce Drunkenness, Noise or Licentiousness amongst them.