

P R O T E S T. HOUSE OF LORDS, Die Martis, 21<sup>o</sup> Martii, 1775.

THE order of the day being read for the third reading of the American restraining fishery bill, and for the Lords to be summoned.

The said was accordingly read the third time. And several amendments being made thereto, it was moved, "that the bill, with the amendments do pass."

Which being objected to, after debate, the question was put thereon: It was resolved in the affirmative.

Contents, 73 Non-contents, 21 Dissentient,

Because the attempt to coerce by famine the whole body of the inhabitants of great and populous provinces, is without example in the history of this, or perhaps of any civilized nation; and is one of those unhappy inventions to which parliament is driven by the difficulties which multiply upon us, from an obstinate adherence to an unwise plan of government.

Secondly, because the English merchants are punished without any guilt, real or pretended, on their part. The people of the prohibited provinces, though failing in their duty to government, ought to be permitted to discharge their obligations to commerce: without their fishery that is impossible.

Thirdly, because the people of New-England, besides the natural claim of mankind to the gifts of providence on their own coast, are especially entitled to the fishery by their charters, which have never been declared forfeited.

Fourthly, because we conceive that the attempt which has been made to bribe the nation into an acquiescence in this arbitrary act, by holding out to them (by evidence in the bar) the spoils of the New-England fishery, worth upwards of 1,000,000 l. a year to be a scheme full of weakness and indecency.

Fifthly, because we do not apprehend that the topic so much insisted upon by a lord high in office, in favour of this project, namely the cowardice of his Majesty's American subjects, to have any weight itself, or be at all agreeable to the dignity of sentiment which ought to characterize this house.

Sixthly, because the interdiction from fishing and commerce is not terminated by any certain and definitive act to be done by the party interdicted, but its duration depends solely on the will of the government.

SEVEN.

But to deliver over several hundred thousands of our fellow creatures to be starved, at the mere pleasure of persons in certain subordinate situations, and some of them in an office always more or less suspicious and obnoxious, and necessary to be watched and guarded, rather than vested with absolute power over all, and this without any rule to guide their discretion, without any penalty to deter from an abuse of it, is a strain of such tyranny, oppression, and absurdity, as we believe never was deliberately entertained by any grave assembly.

Lastly, because the bill, though in appearance a measure of retaliation only upon a supposition that the colonies have been the first aggressors, by their association not to import goods from Great Britain, yet is, in truth, a most cruel enforcement of former oppressions; and that association is no more than a natural consequence of antecedent and repeated injuries.

- Abingdon, Stanhope, Richmond, Ponfobny, Manchester, Craven, Rockingham, Fitzwilliam, Devonshire, Camden, Cholmondeley, Wycombe, Torrington, Effingham, Abergeaveny.

L O N D O N.

March 22. The following is a copy of the address and petition delivered to his Majesty on Friday at St. James's by four of the principal people called quakers.

To George the third, King of Great Britain, and the dominions thereto belonging, the address and petition of the people called quakers.

May it please the King.

"Gratefully sensible of the protection and indulgence we enjoy under thy government, and with hearts full of anxious concern for thy happiness and the prosperity of this great empire, we beg leave to approach thy royal presence.

"Prompted by the affection we bear to our brethren and fellow-subjects; impressed with an apprehension of calamities in which the whole British empire may be involved, and moved by an ardent desire to promote thy royal intention of effecting a happy reconciliation with thy people in America, we beseech thy gracious regard to our petition.

"From the intercourse subsisting between us and our brethren abroad, for the advancement of piety and virtue, we are persuaded there are not in thy extensive dominions, subjects more loyal, and more zealously attached to thy royal person, thy family, and government, than in the provinces of America, and amongst all religious denominations.

"We presume not to justify the excesses committed; nor to enquire into the causes which may have produced them; but, influenced by the principles of that religion which proclaims peace on earth and good-will to men, we humbly beseech thee to stay the sword; that means may be tried to effect, without bloodshed, and all the evils of intestine war, a firm and lasting union with our fellow-subjects in America.

"Great and arduous as the task may appear, we trust men may be found in this country, and in America, who, properly authorized, would, with a zeal and ardour becoming an object so important, endeavour to compose the present differences, and establish a happy and permanent reconciliation, on that firm foundation the reciprocal interest of each part of the British empire.

"That the Almighty, by whom kings reign, and princes decree justice, may make thee the happy instrument of per- etuating harmony and concord through the several parts of thy extensive dominions; that thy clemency and magnanimity may be admired in future generations, and a long succession of thy descendants fill, with honour to themselves and happiness to a grateful people, the throne of their ancestors, is the fervent prayer of thy Majesty's faithful subjects."

March 23. The Duke of Argyle will set out for Scotland in a few days, to review the troops stationed there before they embark for Boston.

A letter from Ireland mentions, that orders are arrived to stop the embarkation of Preston's dragoons for America; but the regiments of foot are preparing to embark.

Extract of a letter from Gosport, March 20.

"Since my last, all the transports have failed from Spithead for Boston, but they are to stay at Ireland, and there to wait for fresh orders from England."

March 25. The house of commons having sat very late on Wednesday night, when Mr. Burke's resolutions were thrown out, on a division of 270 to 78, there was but a thin house on Thursday, though the report from the American committee of the restraining bill for the southern provinces was to be received; and after receiving reports from committees on private business, every one was anxious for the appearance of Lord North, and it being 4 o'clock, a motion was made to adjourn, which occasioned a droll conversation replete with mirth and good-humour between Mr. Rigby and Col. Barre, and just as the house was adjourning, Lord North entered, and made a short apology for having kept the house waiting for him; he said he did not know that any business was to be transacted that required his presence, and was now totally ignorant what the house had been doing.

It was then moved and carried unanimously, to proceed upon a message received from the house of lords, after a ballot for a contested election. The message relates to the American restraining bill.

So heartily tired do the members of the lower house seem to be of the American business, that after the ballot was over yesterday, the house was reduced to under 100 members, though the amendments from the lords to the abovementioned bill were expected to come on, and notice had been given of it the day before from the chair.

Yesterday a protest was entered in the house of peers against the bill for restraining the trade and fishery of the Massachusetts-Bay.

It is said that in the house of lords yesterday a flaw was discovered in the American fishery bill. It seems the title, as it was sent by the commons, by no means corresponds with the body of the bill, as it now stands amended by the lords. It therefore goes back to the commons to be rectified, and that the lower house may agree to the amendments.

Yesterday at a general meeting of the merchants, traders, and others of the city of London, concerned in the commerce of North-America, at the King's Arms in Cornhill, the chairman acquainted the meeting that the bill for restraining the New-England fishery, &c. having passed both houses of parliament, the committee, according to their direction had prepared a draught of a petition to his Majesty for their approbation; which being twice read, and unanimously approved of, a motion was made, that two of the committee do immediately wait upon the secretary of state with a copy of the petition, and desire to know when his Majesty will be pleased to receive it; which was agreed to and Mr. Mollison and Mr. Bridger being appointed, for that purpose, withdrew accordingly.

The following are the nine resolutions contained in Mr. Burke's conciliatory plan which he offered for the consideration of the house of commons on Wednesday last; all of which passed in the negative; the first on a division, the rest without dividing the house.

1. "That the colonies and plantations of North-America, consisting of 14 separate governments, and containing two millions of free inhabitants, have not had the liberty and privilege of electing and sending knights, citizens, and burgesses to represent them in parliament; which passed in the negative, ayes 78, noes 270.

2. "That the said colonies, &c. have been liable to and bounden by several subsidies, payments, rates, and taxes, given and granted by parliament, though the said colonies and plantations have not their knights, &c. in said parliament of their own election, to represent the condition of their country; by lack whereof they have been often grieved by subsidies, given and granted and assented to in the said court, in manner prejudicial to the commonwealth, quietness, rest, and peace of the subjects inhabiting within the same." Amendment proposed to leave out from the word country to the end of the resolution. Question put, that the words proposed to be left out, stand part of the question; it passed in the negative without a division. Then the main question so amended being put, it passed likewise in the negative.

3. "That each of said colonies, &c. hath within itself a body chosen in part or in the whole, by the freemen, freeholders or other inhabitants thereof, commonly called the general assembly, or general court, with powers legally to raise, levy, and assess, according to the usage of such colonies, duties, and taxes, towards defraying all public services." It passed in the negative.

4. "That the said general assemblies, general courts or other bodies, legally qualified as aforesaid, have at sundry times freely granted several large subsidies and public aids, for his Majesty's service, according to their abilities, when required thereto by letter from one of his Majesty's principal secretaries of state; and that their right to grant the same, and their cheerfulness and sufficiency in the said grants; have been sundry times acknowledged by parliament." Passed in the negative.

5. "That it hath been found by experience, that the manner of granting the said subsidies and aids by those general assemblies, hath been more agreeable to the inhabitants of the said colonies, and more beneficial and conducive to the public service, than the mode of giving and granting aids and subsidies in parliament, to be raised and paid in said colonies." Passed in the negative.

6 and 7. "That the several acts passed in the 7th and 14th year of his present majesty's reign relating to the