

the king to encourage, by every means in my power, the expectations in his majesty's well disposed subjects in this government of every assistance and protection the state of Great-Britain will enable his majesty to afford them, and to crush every appearance of a disposition on their part to withstand the tyranny and misrule which accompany the acts of those who have but too well hitherto succeeded in the subversion of legal government. Under such assurances, therefore, I exhort all the friends to good order, and our justly admired constitution, still to preserve that constancy of mind, which is inherent in breasts of virtuous and loyal citizens, and I trust a very few months will relieve them from their present oppressed, injured, and insulted condition.

England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, have united to place their whole strength, power, and confidence in his majesty's hands. The numerous addressers from all parts of the king's dominions in Europe, speak the loyalty and zeal with which his subjects there engage to support his majesty in asserting and maintaining the just sovereignty of the British empire over all its members.

The British state moves not by sudden and violent sallies, nor wantonly oppresses; she has lenity for her basis, and is distinguished for moderation and forbearance; but when her just indignation is roused, the experience of other nations can testify her weight and force. It cannot be sufficiently lamented, that the conduct of this country has called for so severe a rod; may a timely and dutiful submission avert its stroke.

I have the satisfaction to inform you that a door is still open to such honest, but deluded people, as will avail themselves of the justice and benevolence, which the supreme legislature has held out to them of being restored to the king's grace and peace, and that proper steps have been taken for passing a commission for that purpose, under the great seal of Great-Britain, in conformity to a provision in a late act of parliament, the commissioners thereby to be appointed, having also power to enquire into the state and condition of the colonies for effecting a restoration of the public tranquillity."

W. M. TRYON.

By an express arrived last night from Cambridge, which place he left the 14th, we learn, that general Howe intended a feint of embarkation, in order to draw off our troops from Dorchester point, who intended to attack his lines, which at the same time were doubly manned. The bait did not take, gen. Washington secured the heights with 7000 men, and a reserve of 5000 were ready at Roxbury, to sustain them in case of need. Our army soon increased to the amount of 30,000 men; every thing conspired to render general Howe's designs fruitless, and he has at length been obliged to turn his feint into a real embarkation. He can no longer stay there, as he is inflated on every side.

The admiral's ship, and a number of the transports had left the harbour, and were in Nantasket road. The rest of the army embarking as fast as possible, and there is no doubt but their destination is for New-York.

General Washington has already detached six regiments for this place, who are already advanced one hundred miles towards it. Two thousand men from Connecticut are coming, thirteen other regiments will soon be here, so that we shall in a few days have an army of at least twenty thousand men, to oppose our enemies, and we have a train of two hundred pieces of cannon ready to salute them.

PHILADELPHIA.

In CONGRESS, Saturday, March 16, 1776.

IN times of impending calamity and distress, when the liberties of America are imminently endangered by the secret machinations and open assaults of an insidious and vindictive administration, it becomes the indispensable duty of these hitherto free and happy colonies, with true penitence of heart, and the most reverent devotion, publicly to acknowledge the over-ruling providence of God; to confess and deplore our offences against him; and to supplicate his interposition for averting the threatened danger, and prospering our strenuous efforts in the cause of FREEDOM, VIRTUE, and POSTERITY.

The congress therefore, considering the warlike preparations of the British ministry to subvert our invaluable rights and privileges, and to reduce us, by fire and sword, by the savages of the wilderness, and by our own domestics, to the most abject and ignominious bondage: Desirous, at the same time, to have people of all ranks and degrees duly impressed with a solemn sense of God's superintending providence, and of their duty devoutly to rely, in all their lawful enterprizes on his aid and direction—do earnestly recommend that Friday the 17th day of May: next be observed by the said colonies as a day of HUMILIATION, FASTING, and PRAYER; that we may, with united hearts, confess and bewail our manifold sins and transgressions, and by a sincere repentance and amendment of life appease his righteous displeasure, and through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, obtain his pardon and forgiveness. Humbly imploring his assistance to frustrate the cruel purposes of our unnatural enemies; and by inclining their hearts to justice and benevolence, prevent the further effusion of kindred blood. But if continuing deaf to the voice of reason and humanity, and inflexibly bent on desolation and war, they constrain us to repel their hostile invasions by open resistance, that it may please the Lord of hosts, the God of armies, to animate our officers and soldiers with invincible fortitude, to guard and protect them in the day of battle, and to crown the continental arms by sea and land with victory and success: Earnestly beseeching him to bless our civil rulers and the representatives of the people in their several assemblies and conventions; to preserve and strengthen their union; to inspire them with an ardent disinterested love of their country; to give wisdom and stability to their councils; and direct them to the most efficacious measures for establishing the rights of America on the most honourable and permanent basis—that he would be graciously pleased to bless all the people in these colonies with health and plenty, and grant that a spirit of incorruptible patriotism, and of pure undefiled religion, may universally prevail; and this continent be speedily restored to the blessings of peace and liberty, and enabled to transmit them inviolate to the latest posterity. And

an ample for public worship, and obtain from service labour on the said day.

By order of congress,

JOHN HANCOCK, president.

Attest. CHARLES THOMSON, secretary.

Extract of a letter from Cambridge, March 10.

"We were last night disappointed in an attempt, made to possess ourselves of Nook's Hill; we were too much elated with the advantages lately gained, and I must think imprudently laid out the ground in the open day, and in the face of the enemy. They took the alarm, and as soon as it was dark began a very heavy cannonade, which was kept up on both sides without intermission until sun-rise. As the fire of the enemy was principally directed to the spot we intended to intrench upon, our people were obliged to be drawn off, after losing three or four men.

"As we are so near the town every shot from our batteries must take place, the rumbling of which I could distinctly hear amongst the houses; some of which this morning exhibit the dreadful havoc made by our last night's work. If the enemy remain much longer, I am of opinion we shall leave very little for Mr. Howe to reek his vengeance on in that devoted city.

"There is less appearance this day of their embarkation than has been for some days past. Their sick and wounded, their heavy baggage, and chief part of their heavy artillery is, by every account we get, already on board; so that I believe we shall soon draw nearer to you, as New-York will probably be their destination; if that should be the case, your gallant associates will have an opportunity of shewing their spirit. We are likely to have a warm night of it—if any thing material happens, and I am left in the land of the living, you shall soon hear it."

To the PEOPLE of PENNSYLVANIA. LETTER III.

WHEN I sat down to address you, a resolve or vote of our committee of inspection for calling a CONVENTION had alarmed many good friends of the province, on account of our charter-constitution; and therefore I determined freely to examine the right of the committee to convene such a body, the necessity of their being convened, the powers which they might assume, and the confusion such a measure must produce. But in the evening of the same day on which my first letter was published, we were acquainted, "by order and in behalf of the committee," that they had recalled their former vote; and therefore, as the resolution for this recall was probably formed before my publication, I shall claim no merit in it. The public seems willing to ascribe it to motives of prudence, suggested by the general disapprobation of the *convention-scheme*—the zeal shewn among all ranks of people for the support of our ancient government by assembly, and the little prospect that any regard would have been paid to the edicts of a body of men, constituted without necessity, even if we could suppose any number of our country committees willing to unite in assuming powers which were never delegated to them.

But those who correspond in behalf of the committee give us other reasons than the above. They tell us, that they have held a "conference with several members of assembly," and have, in behalf of this province, told them their duty—that the said members have promised all future attention to the same—but that the committee, watchful for our good, and not willing to trust them too far, still hold the rod over them, and therefore have not annulled their vote, but have only been graciously pleased to forbear, "for the present, the forwarding the edicts" [or issuing the writs] for "calling a convention."

This is rather spoken in a lordly style, if it be any thing more than the assuming language of the *few* who correspond in the name of the committee. But if there be those who think a back door more honourable for a retreat than the front, I would not wound their dignity, nor throw a straw in the way to retard them. It is probable that our assembly may now be permitted to exercise their own judgment, without further attempts to intimidate them in the discharge of the important trust committed to them by the voice of their country; and therefore, as I would avoid contention at all times, and especially at this dangerous crisis, I shall likewise for the present forbear sending to the press every thing which I had prepared in vindication of our injured representatives, except so far as relates to INDEPENDENCY. But that topic I propose, as occasion offers, to handle at some length. For I find the chief resentment levelled against them, appears to be on account of their instructions to their delegates. These, in the eyes of some men, stand as an insurmountable barrier in the way of their destructive purposes, and I trust will continue so to stand till removed by the clear sense of an uncorrupted majority of the good people of this province. Without full proofs of this, the assembly can neither consent to any change of our constitution, or to make the least transfer of our allegiance; and these proofs ought to be more pure than what can flow through the foul pages of interested writers, or strangers intermeddling in our affairs, and avowedly pressing their republican schemes upon us, at the risk of all we hold valuable. Nor would I be willing to receive these proofs from committees, as proposed in the evening post of the 9th instant, by one who signs himself "A Lover of Order," but should be styled an *Author of Confusion*.

"It would be proper, says he, that the constituents of the congress should declare their sentiments upon that head [INDEPENDENCY] as soon as possible. This may be done by the various committees and conventions on the continent. Their votes and resolves should determine the question in the congress. The first congress was nothing but the ECHO of committees and conventions. In the present important question concerning INDEPENDENCY, the congress SHOULD only, as in the former case, ECHO back the sentiments of the people," that is of committees and conventions. And thus we may be ECHOED and RE-ECHOED out of our liberties, our property, our happiness, and plunged deeper and deeper into all the growing horrors of war and bloodshed, without ever being consulted! for I insist upon it, that no committees were ever entrusted with any authority to speak the sense of the people of Pennsylvania on this question. I have already observed by how few voices our largest committee of a hundred

committee was named by six or seven voices only. At this rate three or four hundred people would take upon them to declare the sense of as many *hundred thousands*, in a matter of the greatest importance that ever came before us! Can you, my countrymen, acquiesce in such a horrible doctrine? or does not the bare mention of it still further convince you that your liberties can be no where so safe as in the hands of your representatives in assembly? "Those who are not inebriated with *Independency* will certainly allow, that the instructions to their delegates were dictated by the true spirit of peace, justice, and exalted policy. Who so proper to instruct them as those chosen by yourselves, not in the hour of passion, riot and confusion, but in the day of peace and tranquil reflection?" These words I borrow from a pamphlet just published under the title of *Plain Truth*; which I would recommend to your perusal, as containing many judicious remarks upon the mischievous tenets and palpable absurdities held forth in the pamphlet so falsely called *Common Sense*.

I have, in my second letter, freely declared my political creed, viz.—"That the true interest of America lies in reconciliation with Great-Britain upon constitutional principles, and that I wish it upon none else." I now proceed to give my reasons for this declaration. It is fit, in so great a question, that you should weigh both sides well, and exercise that good sense for which the inhabitants of these colonies have been hitherto distinguished; and then I shall be under no apprehensions concerning the pernicious, though specious plans, which are every day published in our news papers and pamphlets. The people generally judge right, when the whole truth is plainly laid before them; but through inattention in some, and fondness for novelty in others, when but one side of a proposition is agitated and persevered in, they may gradually deceive themselves, and adopt what cooler reflection and future dear-bought experience may prove to be ruinous.

Agriculture and commerce have hitherto been the happy employments, by which these *middle colonies* have risen into wealth and importance. By them the face of the country has been changed from a barren wilderness into the hospitable abodes of peace and plenty. Without them, we had either never existed as Americans, or existed only as savages. The oaks would still have possessed their native spots of earth, and never have appeared in the form of ships and houses. What are now well cultivated fields or flourishing cities, would have remained only the solitary haunts of wild beasts, or of men equally wild.

That much of our former felicity was owing to the protection of England is not to be denied; and that we might still derive great advantages from her protection and friendship, if not valued at too high a price, is equally certain; nor is it worth enquiring, whether that protection was afforded us more for her own sake than ours. That the former was the case, more especially since the colonies grew into consequence, I have not the least doubt, but that this is a reason for our rejecting any future connexion with her I must utterly deny. Although I consider her as having, in her late conduct towards us, acted the part of a cruel *step-dame*, and not of a fostering parent, I would not therefore quarrel with the benefits I may reap from a connexion with her, and can expect to reap no where else. If by her fleets and armies every nation on the globe is deterred from invading our properties, either on the high seas, in foreign countries, or on our own coasts, ought we not in sound policy to profit by her strength, and, without regarding the motives of her conduct, embrace the opportunity of becoming rich and powerful in her friendship, at an expense far less than it would cost us merely to exist in alliance with any other power?

If our present differences can be accommodated, there is scarce a probability that she will ever renew the late fatal system of policy, or attempt to employ force against us. But should she be so infatuated, at any future period, as to think of subjugating us, either by the arts of corruption, or oppressive exertions of power, can we entertain a doubt but that we shall again, with a virtue equal to the present, and with the weapons of defence in our hands (when necessary) convince her that we are willing, by a constitutional connexion with her, to afford and receive reciprocal benefits; but although subjects of the same king, we will not consent to be her slaves. It was on this ground, and not for the purpose of trying new forms of government, "or erecting separate independent states," that America embarked in the present glorious contest. On this ground, and upon none else, the *Continental union* is formed. On this ground we have a powerful support among the true sons of liberty in Great-Britain; and lastly, upon this ground, we have the utmost assurance of obtaining a full redress of our grievances, and an ample security against any future violation of our just rights. And if hereafter, in the fulness of time, it shall be necessary to separate from the land that gave birth to our ancestors, it will be in a state of perfect manhood, when we can fully wield our own arms, and protect our commerce and coasts by our own fleets, without looking to any nation upon earth for assistance.

I his, I say, was our ground, and these our views, universally declared from the origin of this contest, till within a few weeks ago, when some gleams of reconciliation began first to break in upon us. If we now mean to change this ground, and reject all propositions of peace, from that moment we are deserted by every advocate of our cause in Great-Britain. We halcy every declaration which the congress hath heretofore held forth in our behalf. We abandon all prospect of preserving our importance by trade and agriculture, the ancient, sure, and experienced road to wealth and happiness.

In short, if thus contradicting all our former public professions, we should now affect *independency* as our own act, before it appears clearly to the world to have been forced upon us by the cruel hand of the parent state.—We could neither hope for union nor success in the attempt. We must be considered as a faithless people in the sight of all mankind, and could scarcely expect the confidence of any nation upon earth, or look up to heaven for its approving sentence. On the contrary, every convulsion attendant upon revolutions and innovations of government, untimely at empty or finally defeated, might be our portion; added to the loss of trade for want of protection; the consequent decay of husbandry; bloodshed and desolation; with an exchange of the easy and flourishing condition of farmers and merchants, for a life, at best, of hardy poverty as soldiers or hunters.

the choice of advice by men exalted by offices, which the influence of the public of all that great America, who, by his competency, and have he their wish, I destruction continue enormous debts until at length they truly call their own.

I know the answers, questions, and am that temper and requires. It will be asserted—that the colonies and the colonies that RECONCILIATION are nothing, when the truth of history, and of nations, being stir up mutual hatred was a war so implacable and enemies not to have peace among people and every dearer tie, (as those of *lovers of love*?)—In such case to its course is like a at length burnt the through its native vigour and encreased parent main!

It has been further our land forces, to world; that if command what for moment we declare there are nations and become the cause of enriching the case, we can follow a trade; that a conf great republic is pre is the appointment by God; that th own and foreign co their enormities up but *egregious fool*; bungling piece of m stant checks to regul the nation itself is b at its head a royal b ing in blood; that nection with such hardships mentioned more, if necessary, vation of our rights.

If these things had boldly asserted by the *Sense*, I should here short remainder of miteries Providence as I know of none of these doctrines cont hitherto been taught I hope you, my dear open to hear w future letters.

CATTO to TIO

Questions civilly which shall be speedily banity becomes us correspond with one a he is not fond of the rel with our committee many of the members they may be called support his charges rejected the *convention* ledge his mistake. Letters without opposi the liberty and happi cured by a constitution Britain, or by a total ing to be judged by hi or his arguments shall ever may be intimated think worthy of regard Tiberius, so early in the *sentiments*—(in the l more than an and "live a slave, rather racy of expression, in may be passed over; se be picked out, in such a year about words.

N. B. The twelve q in substance, the same the same answer will ser

WILLIAM At a committee held house of John Apra day the 22 of Nover dick, chairman, and BETSEY HUNTER fore this committee, f mother, and brother (Je ng him of the situati that the people were in and that our troops w march down here, and nce, the said Betsey H he did not intend the wrote them for her amu heard the letters rea intended as letters of in American cause.

Ordered, therefore, Th Mary and Martha Will sitting in the said lett appear before this comi papers, and looked o

Last Saturday an expi fety, from the general