

is such evident and flagrant Injustice, in *ordinary Cases*, that few are hardy enough to avow it; and therefore, when it really happens, the Fact is disguised and varnished over by the most plausible Pretences the Ingenuity of the Giver can suggest.—But it is alledged that there is a *Virtual*, or *implied Representation* of the Colonies springing out of the Constitution of the *British Government*: And it must be confessed on all Hands, that, as the Representation is not actual, it is virtual, or it doth not exist at all; for no third Kind of Representation can be imagined. The Colonies claim the Privilege, which is common to all *British Subjects*, of being taxed *only* with their own Consent given by their Representatives, and all the Advocates for the *Stamp Act* admit this Claim. Whether, therefore, upon the whole Matter, the Imposition of the *Stamp Duties* is a *proper Exercise* of Constitutional Authority, or not, depends upon the single Question, Whether the Commons of *Great Britain* are *virtually* the Representatives of the Commons of *America*, or not.

The Advocates for the Stamp Act admit, in express Terms, that “ the Colonies do not chuse Members of Parliament,” but They assert that “ the Colonies are *virtually* represented in the same Manner with the Non-Electors resident in *Great Britain*.”

How have They proved this Position? Where have They defined, or precisely explained what They mean by the Expression, *Virtual Representation*? As it is the very Hinge upon which the Rectitude of the Taxation turns, something more satisfactory than mere Assertion, more solid than a Form of Expression, is necessary; for, how can it be seriously expected, that Men, who think Themselves injuriously affected in their Properties and Privileges, will be convinced and reconciled by a fanciful Phrase, the Meaning of which can't be precisely ascertained by those who use it, or properly applied to the Purpose for which it hath been advanced.

They argue, that “ the Right of Election being annexed to certain Species of Property, to Franchises, and Inhabitancy in some particular Places, “ a very small Part of the Land, the Property, and the People of *England* “ is comprehended in those Descriptions. All Landed Property, not Freehold, and all Monied Property, are *excluded*. The Merchants of *London*, “ the Proprietors of the Public Funds, the Inhabitants of *Leeds*, *Halifax*, “ *Birmingham*, and *Manchester*, and that great Corporation of the *East-India* “ Company, *None of Them* chuse their Representatives, and yet are They “ all represented in Parliament, and the Colonies being *exactly* in their Situation, are represented in the *same Manner*.”

Now,