

brated writer on the law of nations, has shewn, "that the rigour of that law is much softened in this very point, by present usage and practice." If they belong to the crown of Great-Britain, as trustee for the nation, as we conceive, and will be called British property, the congress, should they adopt the same way of thinking with your honours, will not be willing to confiscate it, as it may be made a preliminary article of the peace, that it be secured, or at least the full value of it, to the original owners." Nay, if they should not adopt the sentiments of your honours, but be willing to confiscate it, yet will there not be danger, in the opinion of your honours, that as in the mean time the "title must be doubtful, and the purchase invidious," engrossers and speculators will buy it up, and depreciate the currency still more? For, as your honours would suppose, the more readily money will buy land, the more evidently it is depreciated. But it lies upon your honours, who have started these difficulties in the one case, to resolve them in the other. For with regard to the preliminary, of which your honours are so apprehensive, if it is made a preliminary with regard to the property in question, will it not also be made a preliminary with regard to the back lands, which have belonged to the crown and people of Great-Britain? Nay, will it not more probably be made a preliminary with regard to these lands, than with regard to the property in question? In the one case a solid encroachment will arise to the crown and to the nation, in the other to those only who have manifested an attachment to it. In the one case interest will induce the enemy to make it a preliminary, in the other a sense of honour only; and in proportion as the love of interest is stronger in the British court than the love of honour, so much the more willing will they be to make the one a preliminary article, and to neglect the other. We may be assured the crown will not regard the property of those subjects, of whom we speak, so much as to continue the war a single day on their account. Did this property remain unalienated, and it appeared that the bare mention of it might obtain it, it is possible that court might, to save appearances, be induced to mention it. But when it is applied and gone, they will be silent; for having lost thirteen states, and vast tracts of crown lands for themselves, they will not much contend for others, whom they know only as retainers on their army, or the obnoxious of America. But should we not be willing to make any preliminary about it, we shall have all America interessed with us. The property of British subjects, and those of them called refugees, through the several states, are already in the same predicament with the objects of our bill. The several states of America are therefore with us, and if it must be made a