

The Massachusetts Spy

Or, American ORACLE of Liberty.

VOL. WORCESTER, WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 1776. (NUMB. 219.)

To the PUBLIC.

THE good People of this County, at a Meeting (some Time since) voted to encourage the Establishment of a Printing-Office in this Place: In Consequence thereof, Application was made to me, then in Boston, to issue Proposals for publishing a weekly NEWS-PAPER in this Town, to be entitled, THE WORCESTER GAZETTE, or AMERICAN ORACLE of LIBERTY: This I accordingly did; since that Time, Things have worn a different Face in our distressed Capital, and it was thought highly necessary, that I should remove my Printing Materials from Boston to this Place, and instead of publishing the intended WORCESTER GAZETTE, &c. continue the Publication of the well-known MASSACHUSETTS SPY, or THOMAS'S BOSTON JOURNAL: I accordingly removed my Printing Utensils to this Place, and escaped myself from Boston on the memorable 10th of April, 1775, which will be remembered in future as the Anniversary of the BATTLE of LEXINGTON! I intend publishing this Paper regularly every Wednesday, and have made an Alteration in the Title, in order to take in Part of that intended for the Gazette.

I beg the Assistance of all the Friends to our righteous Cause to circulate this Paper.—They may rely that the utmost of my poor Endeavours shall be used to maintain those Rights and Privileges for which we and our Fathers have bled! and that all possible Care will be taken to procure the most interesting and authentic Intelligence.

I am the Public's most obedient Servant,
ISAIAH THOMAS.

Worcester, May 2d, 1775.

PROPOSALS

For continuing the Publication of
The MASSACHUSETTS SPY,

American ORACLE of LIBERTY.

CONDITIONS.

I. The MASSACHUSETTS SPY, or AMERICAN ORACLE of LIBERTY, shall be printed on good paper, manufactured in this province, with a neat type.

II. It shall contain four pages, large folio, of the same size of the Boston news-pap. rs.

III. To be published every WEDNESDAY Morning, as early as possible, and delivered to the Subscribers in Worcester, at their houses, and sent by the first opportunity to such as are at a greater distance.

IV. Every subscriber to pay Three Shillings and Four Pence, Lawful Money, at the time of subscribing, and Three Shillings and Four Pence more at the expiration of Twelve Months. The price being Six Shillings and Eight Pence per annum, the same as the Boston news-papers.

VI. Advertisements to be inserted in a neat and conspicuous manner at the lowest rate.

SUBSCRIPTIONS are taken in by the Publisher in Worcester, and by the following Gentlemen, viz. Capt. Asa Whitecomb, and Dr. William Dunmore, Lancaster; Dr. William Jennesson, Mendon; Jedediah Foster, Esq; Brookfield; Col. Learned, Oxford; Capt. Jonathan Tucker, Charlton; Capt. Henry King, and Mr. Amos Singletary, Sutton; Col. Joshua Henshaw, and Mr. J. Allen, Leicester; Mr. Jonas How, Rutland; Mr. John Mason, Haverhill; Capt. Isaac Stone, Oakham; Mr. Levi Brigham, Northborough; Capt. Stephen Maynard, Westborough; Hon. Artemas Ward, Shrewsbury; Dr. John Taylor, Lunenburg;

Capt. David Goodridge, Fitchburgh; Mr. Benjamin Green, Uxbridge; Capt. Samuel Baker, Bolton; Col. Jonathan Grout, Petersham; Capt. Josiah Fay, Southborough; Col. Paul Mendall, Hardwick; Simon Dwight, Esq; Western; Capt. Timothy Newell, Starbridge; Mr. Iracl Nichols, Leominster; Mr. Abiel Sadler, Upton; Capt. James Woods, New-Braintree; Mr. John Child, Holden; Capt. Samuel Jenhelson, Douglas; Mr. John Sherman, Grafton; Mr. Naham Green, Royalston; Mr. Nathan Wood, Westminister; Mr. Jonathan Baldwin, Templeton; Mr. William Bigelow, Athol; Mr. Samuel Easterbrook, Princeton; (all in Worcester County) and by many other Gentlemen in several parts of the province.

For the MASSACHUSETTS SPY.

NUMBER VIII.

To the INHABITANTS of the MASSACHUSETTS-BAY.

(Continued from our last)

My Friends and Fellow-Countrymen,

FTER making some observations which are nothing to the purpose, unless the colonies are annexed to the realm, which is not the case, nor ever will be, and if they were, it would not follow if Guernsey and Jersey are enslaved, that the Americans must be so.—A clause from our first charter too long to be repeated, respecting incorporation, is recited by our author; upon which he gravely asks this simple question, "Whether it be like a distinct or independent state?" We may fully answer him by another question equally simple, viz. Is there a single word in it that looks like uniting us to the British empire, or subjecting us to the authority of Parliament? If it has not this look, it does not look to the point: For it is demonstration, as there was a time when the colonies were disunited from the realm, and the supreme authority of the parent state, that they are so now unless there is evidence of a subsequent connexion. It is to be wished that those who keep externally harping upon our being annexed to the British realm would point out the process that united us.—There is none in nature: I challenge them to produce any.

The two next adduced paragraphs from our first charter, we have examined in our third and fourth numbers, and have shewn the first exactly to correspond with the rights we contend for, and the latter to be absolutely inconsistent with, and repugnant to, every principle and idea of our being a part of the British empire and subject to its sovereign power.—It is therefore unnecessary to take them up in this place.

The last recited clause from this charter, we have also considered, the substance of which is, that all and every of the subjects of the King of England, his heirs and successors, who should go to and inhabit in the Massachusetts colony, and all their children, born in the said colony, or on the seas should have and enjoy all the liberties and immunities of free and natural born subjects within any of the dominions of the King, his heirs and successors to all intents and purposes whatsoever, as if they were, and every of them, born within the realm.

It is upon this clause, or a similar one in the charter of William and Mary that our patriots have built up the stupendous fabric of American independence." Be it so: The foundation were there no other would sustain the building. It is impossible to undermine it or explain it away.

I have already, says our writer, shewn that the supposition of our being exempted from the authority of Parliament, is pregnant with the grossest absurdities.—No mortal excepting himself has ever been able to fee those absurdities. We have seen what such empty pretensions amounted to in a past paper, and to whom the absurdities were imputable.—Let us now, says he, consider this clause in connexion with

other parts of the charter." Here we are led to expect some important reasoning; however, a recital of his argument is its best confutation. "If, says he, we suppose this clause to exempt us from the authority of Parliament, we must throw away all the rest of the charter, for every other part indicates the contrary as plainly as words can do." This is considering the clause in connexion with other parts. There is no end in contradicting the mere assertions of one who *lets his pen run so freely*. Read the charter, and see if any part indicates the contrary, unless profound silence upon the subject is taken for such an indication.

What is still worse, this clause becomes *self destructive*, and destroys itself; for if we are not annexed to the realm we are aliens, and no charter, grant, or other act of the crown can naturalize us, or entitle us to the liberties and immunities of Englishmen." This is begging the question; it goes upon the old Jacobinist supposition deteriorated: It supposes, that within the realm the subject holds all his rights and liberties of the King, as the original possessor; and that persons out of the realm, in a state of nature possess no rights and liberties as men.—In short, it supposes Great-Britain to be the grand and only store-house of Freedom, the dispenser of civil Blessings, and that no part of the wide world can be entitled to any liberties or immunities but what she, of her special grace and mere bounty, is pleased to grant them; whereas the truth is, we were entitled to all the rights of Englishmen independent of any charters or realms under Heaven, and surely we are not the less so for having them confirmed by compact.

Let us now wave what might be offered respecting aliens allegiance to the King, and the relation that Wales, Jersey, Guernsey and Ireland stand in to the realm of England, as they do not effect the solution of our present question.

More distortions, windings and twistings, were never crowded into so small a compass as in the paragraph we are now considering.—The following is diverting enough: "If a person born in England removes to Ireland, Jersey, or Guernsey, and settles there, he is then no longer represented in the British Parliament, but he and his posterity are, and will ever be subject to its authority. So that the inhabitants of the American colonies, do in fact enjoy all the liberties and immunities of natural born subjects. We are entitled to no greater privileges than those who are born within the realm; And they can enjoy no other than we do when they reside out of it." Thus it is evident that this clause amounts to no more than the royal assurance that we are a part of the British empire, and natural born subjects, and as such bound to obey the supreme power of the state." Such a concatenation of ideas we never jumbled up together before. The clause grants to all persons, who were born within the realm, and should come and inhabit in this province from time to time, as well as to all their children born on the seas, or in this colony, all the liberties and immunities of free natural born subjects within any of the King's dominions to all intents and purposes whatsoever, as if they were born within the realm of England. The language of this clause, then, according to our mysticist interpreter, to all those who come from England here, would be this, viz. You who are born within the realm of England, and shall go and inhabit in the Massachusetts colony shall have and enjoy all the liberties and immunities of those who have and enjoy who are born within the realm of England, and shall go and inhabit in America. As great solemn as ever entered the head of man. If the accidental liberties that those persons enjoy, who are only born within the realm, and remove to foreign parts are to measure and point out ours, how shall we ever know them. Is Ireland, or Jersey, the East and West-India, or Turkey, to decide the question and define the rights of all America? For those born in England have gone to, and enjoy different liberties in all these places: And, according to our Logician, if the Americans enjoy as much liberty as those who were born in England enjoy in any of those dominions, even if it be in Turkey, we are entitled to no more.

On Tuesday evening arrived the Albany Snow, Sir William Johnson, Captain Dean, in thirty days from England, and yesterday the ship Simon, Captain Cooper, both which vessels left the Downs to the north, about the 7th of March, and have brought on board passengers, and some accounts by these vessels, that the forces of the gth, and 10th regiments, were eleven regiments of foot, and two of light horse, on board ninety five transports, with fourteen sail of men of war, all valued for twelve months; other accounts relate the forces and ships to about half the above numbers. All accounts, however, agree, that the design of the British is to disorganize the British army, and to destroy the English constitution. They wish to resist to fight for their liberty, desire to be slaves.

From the London Evening Post, February 29. A circumstantial account of the important debates in the American committee on Lord North's treaty, defining an attendance in the House for the next day, was sent to the most active persons in opposition, as well as to all those who support ministry; as Lord North had a motion of importance to make. It is unusual to give notice of such resolutions. Early on Monday it was unexpectedly given out, that Lord North intended to move a conciliatory proposition, which would have a tendency to quiet the troubles that unhappily distract the British Empire.

About four o'clock, Sir Charles Whitworth took the chair in the American committee. Lord North rose first, and after a long, concluded with the following motion: "That it is the opinion of this committee; that when the Governor, Council and Assembly, or General Court, of any of his Majesty's Colonies in America, shall propose to make provision for the support of the civil Government, or for the maintenance of the common defence, such provision to be raised under the authority of the General Court, or General Assembly of such province or colony, and disapproved by Parliament, shall null and void, and the Governor, Council, or Assembly, shall be liable to be proceeded against as if they had violated the laws of Great Britain."

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The principal arguments used by the gentlemen, and particularly by Lord North in favour of the proposition were the following: "That in the late address of the two houses, a promise was given to redress the grievances of the Americans. It was indeed impossible to define what parliament ought to deem a relief contrary to the many felicitous complaints of the Americans. But as there was a determination to put upon the subject, the most generally clamorous, the matter of taxation, it would be proper to come to a fair and indulgent explanation on that subject; and as many new restrictions on the trade of the Americans had already proposed, and as many more were intended, in that situation, the colonies ought first to know what they are to expect, and what is expected from them."

Justice and policy, he said, required, that every person under any government should be compelled to become tributary to that government, according to his ability, and to the support he derives from it. This principle ought to extend to the colonies, and to all other dependencies of the empire, just as much as to any part of Great-Britain; and the slightest relaxation of any penal or restrictive statute, now made or hereafter to be made, in consequence of their disabilities and contumacy, ought not to be so much as listened to, until they come to parliament, and offer free contributions, as that former right, judge and legislator, they should be their just, and fair proportion towards the common defence of the whole empire; and that this offer must be understood as the condition upon which we are to accept their allegiance."

"This proposition ought not to be settled by a Congress, such a meeting would be a most fatal combination on the colonies; who, as colonies, have no political relation among themselves. They are all the colonies of Great-Britain, and it is through her alone that they have any relation to each other."

"At present the quota which each colony ought to pay, cannot be settled; but the proportions, (when the Americans are not to be the offerers) must depend on the following standard;—the wealth and population of each colony—its advantages relatively to the other colonies—and its proportion to the wealth and other advantages taken together with her burthen, and necessities of Great-Britain."

There had been some talk of the restrictions on the trade of the colonies; but when the goods which they take from this country only because they are the best and cheapest, had been deducted from the account of restriction, the Americans will have but little ground for exemption on that account; and they will be found to much on the part with the inhabitants of this country, as to all other dependencies, that reason and justice require they should be put on a par with their contributors; and to pay (after the above definition) full as much in taxes as the people of Great-Britain. Seventy millions of debt in the last war was incurred solely on their account, and in equity the Americans ought to bear their fair proportion of it. The Americans are employed in the service of Great-Britain in common with the rest of the empire; they ought therefore to contribute both to the army and navy, and when a fleet is sent to the East-Indies, the colonies ought to pay their share of the charges, just as well as when it is stationed on the coast of North-America. From the taxes levied for the common benefit, the colonies are virtually included in the protection derived from it, wherever it is employed."

As to the mode of taxation, provided the substantial supply is obtained, it is our interest to indulge the colonies in this particular as much as we can; partly because we may not be so powerful in America as the Americans are in Europe, and we may apprehend we must only tax to supply, because it has been found almost impossible for parliament to lay taxes there, which would produce any thing in any degree adequate to their purposes."

Lord North confessed that he rather imagined this proposition should not be the subject of an American war, and would not be complied with by several of the colonies. However, if but one of them submitted, that one link of the chain would be broken; and if so, the whole would inevitably fall to pieces. This separation would restore our empire to a state of anarchy, and a more cruel and oppressive state than we are in at present. He thought that the proposition should do no good in America; it will not however fail of doing good in England. First, it will stand as an eternal monument of the wisdom and clemency of the humanity and justice of British government. Secondly, it will show to the traders and manufacturers of Europe, the temper and moderation of parliament,

and the candour and disinterestedness of the Americans; and will of course detach from them under the decayed trade, and all the miseries of war. They will bear with patience all these temporary hardships, when they are assured that they are to receive the benefit of it, and to see their countrymen in the same situation as they are at present possess their industry. Thirdly, it will animize the British and soldiers we send out to America, to vigorous and manly exertion of their native courage, without doubt or scruple, when they are assured they will no longer fight for phantoms, and a vain empire, but for the honest and true benefit of their country. Fourthly, it will relieve her in her greatest exasperation."

"That this is putting the quarrel at last upon a proper ground— a dispute for revenue—a dispute to compel America to come to the relief of Great-Britain. That it was no conceding proposition—but what was more, it was a proposal to give the Americans a right of property in the revenue of Great-Britain. That it is not to abandon the right of property to parliament, but to confirm it; it is to enforce it in the most effectual manner, and for the most essential objects; because the raising power is, by this resolution in the hands of parliament; and to be exercised solely according to its discretion. All the vigorous measures which are proposed by the ministry, are upon an exactly as before; and no further relaxation whatever is intended. This is the ultimatum."

"If it should turn out to be abandoning the high ground taken in the address, or to be contrary to the assurances so repeatedly given, that no taxes should be laid out on America previous to its submission, it is in vain that we should expect the success of the ministry. The great powers have done it. In the war of the succession it was a fundamental point, that no Prince of the house of Bourbon should ever sit on the throne of Spain. This was several times repeated, and in the most solemn manner—such policies are necessary to gain or to maintain the respect of the world, and to give the people a right to be pleased; and a prince of the house of Bourbon did sit on one of the same throne did now sit on the throne of Spain. In the Spanish war of 1759 we declared that we would never treat with Spain until she had given up the point of search. Yet peace was made without her giving up this article, and the search continued. The same policy was pursued in the late war, and the great powers had abandoned their pretensions, and disappointed the hopes they had held out to their allies."

Such is the substance of the plan, and of arguments used in support of it. The house at first seemed strangely agitated and divided; all of those who were in opposition, having manifested great aversion to the measure, that many apprehended Lord North's division would be found in a minority. On the other hand, several in opposition seemed unwilling to vote against any thing which carried with it, even the name of a conciliation with the colonies. However, at the debate the next day, the true nature and purpose of the proposal were more fully developed. The opposition was divided into different ways, and on totally different grounds. On one side it was supported by Mr. Walpole, Ellis, Vice Treasurer of Ireland; and by the Solicitor General of Scotland; by Mr. Adams, Mr. Ackland, and some others of the ministerial members."

Mr. Pitt declared that he could not differ from every other gentleman, and stand quite single. But he was his opinion the house would be found by the acceptance of the noble Lord's motion, into the lowest state of degradation. A very few days ago no less than three hundred of them had carried up to the Lords an address, declaring all the colonies in a state of rebellion, and one of them in actual rebellion. He said, that the opposition was divided into different ways, and on totally different grounds. On one side it was supported by Mr. Walpole, Ellis, Vice Treasurer of Ireland; and by the Solicitor General of Scotland; by Mr. Adams, Mr. Ackland, and some others of the ministerial members."

"The first line of opposition, was on the side of the gentleman on our side, who opposed the motion upon the principle of its inconsistency with all the former declarations of administration, and with the late address of both houses of Parliament. The gentlemen of the minority, who had opposed all measures of severity towards America, declared, with a marked solemnity, that they would not consent to a single article of the change, until they saw a full resolution of supporting any thing, which might lead in any way towards conciliation—but that they found the proposition altogether indolent in its nature, and therefore purposely rendered to itself a degree of obscurity and perplexity in its language. Instead of being at first intended to propose a total and complete independence, and confusions in America;—and therefore that they never could consent to it."

"On this side the debate was supported with remarkable force and spirit, by Mr. T. Townshend, Mr. Fox, Col. Bane, Mr. Buick, Mr. Dunning, and Lord John Cavendish. They were supported by Mr. Pitt, Mr. Ellis, and with the solicitor General of Scotland, that the proposition was a contradiction to every thing that Parliament had declared; a shameful perversion in ministers; and a mean departure from every declaration they had made. They were however willing to purchase peace by any manner of concession, and they were ready to sacrifice the independence of Great-Britain, for the sake of a peace."

"The second line of opposition, was on the side of the gentleman on our side, who opposed the motion upon the principle of its inconsistency with all the former declarations of administration, and with the late address of both houses of Parliament. The gentlemen of the minority, who had opposed all measures of severity towards America, declared, with a marked solemnity, that they would not consent to a single article of the change, until they saw a full resolution of supporting any thing, which might lead in any way towards conciliation—but that they found the proposition altogether indolent in its nature, and therefore purposely rendered to itself a degree of obscurity and perplexity in its language. Instead of being at first intended to propose a total and complete independence, and confusions in America;—and therefore that they never could consent to it."

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cently, not for empty, and a substantial revenue. The manufacturers and farmers will not be so benefited, or so benefited; and the whole frame of the constitution is so affected, and so impugned, and so, who it indeed the ministers confidence. The Americans will not accept. It is oppressive; because it was never the complaint of the American; that the mode of taxation was not left to themselves; but that either the amount and quantum of the tax, or the application of it in the first choice, was not left to them. It was their complaint, and their complaint was just. What else could it be but that by act of a Parliament in which they are not represented, but for Parliament to settle the proportion of the payments, and the application of the money? This is the import of the petition of relief. If an act of Parliament compelled the British subjects, to raise their own application, it is not an American act, it is a British act, without his consent, as if duties to that amount were laid on the duty? To leave them the mode may be of some use as to the collection; but it is no taking from the freedom of granting, in which the colonies are so far from being relieved by this resolution, that their condition is to be no more than the same as it was before. For the ministry, it is intended, that is a far more oppressive mode of raising, than that which hath hitherto used. For here no determination is made. The colonies are to be held in danger by troops, fleets, and armies, until they singly and separately they shall do what? Until they shall offer to contribute to a service which they cannot, know, and a proportion which they cannot give, on a standard, which they are to far from being able to ascertain; that Parliament will hold it to hold it, has not ventured to hint what it is they expect. They are to be held prisoners of war, unless they consent to a ransom, by bidding at an auction against each other, and against themselves, until the King and Parliament shall strike down the hammer, and say as enough."

"This species of auction to be terminated not at the discretion of the bidder, but at the will of the sovereign power, was a kind of absolute tyranny, which they challenged the ministers to produce any example of, in the practice of this or of any other nation. What was to be most like it, in the first instance, all our friends, and our friends as well as ourselves, might be more agreeable to us in some future time, was the tyranny of Nebuchadnezzar, who having found a dream of his, ordered the astrologers of his time on pain of death, not only to interpret his dream, but to tell him what his dream was."

"The impracticability and absurdity of this scheme in the longer light, they asked, in case an entirely made an offer, which should not be thought sufficient by Parliament, was not the business to walk back again to America? and so on backwards and forwards as often as the offer displeased Parliament? And thus, instead of obtaining peace, we should be in a perpetual state of war, which they are to far from being able to ascertain; that Parliament will hold it to hold it, has not ventured to hint what it is they expect. They are to be held prisoners of war, unless they consent to a ransom, by bidding at an auction against each other, and against themselves, until the King and Parliament shall strike down the hammer, and say as enough."

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"The idea of deducing the value of goods supplied to be taken by the colonies, because we find cheapness in them, and to reduce the colonies to make the trial, and by first withdrawing to reduce the property of their paying in nearly an equal proportion with the people of England, (they said) was of a piece with the rest of the policy and the argument of this proposed project. Mr. Pitt, however, strongly declared against any scheme, which began by any mode of extorting revenue. That every benefit, natural or political, must be had in the nature of things, and in its proper place. Revenue from a free people must be the consequence of peace, not the condition on which it is to be obtained. That if we were to offer this offer, we shall have neither peace nor revenue. If we were to demand it, we shall have neither peace nor revenue. The instantaneous effect of the few words spoken by the standard bearer, after Lord North had been five times on his legs, and only made matters worse and worse, was pointed by Mr. Dunning in a vein of the most delicate irony."

The number of the minutes was divided, were 1

Ames 275. —Noes 88.

(For more London News, see the Second Page.)

Silent Wilde, News Carrier,

To Northampton, Deerfield, &c. NOTICES his Customers, that the first five Months of his present Year's Service, ends with the Eighth Day of May Inst. He desires them to remember that on the Account they will be due to him each, ONE DOLLAR and ONE QUARTER, or Seven Shillings and Six-Pence, which Sum was to be paid, as by Agreement, on the first Day of the month of May, and by every term, he will be PUNCTUAL, that so he may be able to continue the Service.

Said WILDE also takes the present opportunity, to entreat those who are in arrears for last year, kindly to confer, that it would be a great favour if each individual would pay him immediately their respective arrears, for he hereby intimates that he will be obliged to have the most considerable part of which is due to the printers, who have cause of uneasiness that they have not now received what is severally due to them.

May 3, 1775.

ALL Persons, who reside out of the town of Boston, that are indebted to the Publisher here for NEWS-PAPERS, are earnestly requested to send him their names to enable him to carry on his business in this place, which may be attended with some good to the Public.

Worcester, May 24, 1775.