

0303

210-20



F A C T S

AND THEIR  
CONSEQUENCES,

SUBMITTED TO THE  
CONSIDERATION

OF THE  
Public at Large;

BUT MORE PARTICULARLY TO THAT

OF THE  
Finance Minister,

AND OF THOSE WHO ARE OR MEAN TO  
BECOME CREDITORS TO THE STATE.

---

BY JOHN EARL OF STAIR.

---

Venit summa Dies & ineluctabile Tempus  
Dardaniis: fuimus Troes, fuit Ilium, & ingens  
Gloria Teucrorum.

---

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. STOCKDALE, opposite Burlington House,  
Piccadilly. 1782. Price 1s.

---

---

F A C T S

AND THEIR

CONSEQUENCES, &c.

---

**A**LREADY hoarse with playing the  
Cassandra of the State, a few Words  
more, and I have done. What was formerly  
but Prophecy, or at most but well-founded  
Conjecture, is now Demonstration.---But I  
mean to prove, not to declaim, at least not  
'till I have proved: if an honest Indignation  
should then burst forth, I hope it will be  
forgiven.

[ 4 ]

The Year 1781 is now closed, and all the sad Consolation that remains for Millions squandered; for Dominions, Fleets, and Armies lost, is the Reflection that our Enemies, though so superior in all Respects, in Counsels as well as in Arms, were yet so little enterprising; for whatever they attempted they have carried without any Resistance on our Part, either very gallant or very judicious.

This disastrous Campaign has devoured all the Scraps that the Industry of this Jackal Commission of Accounts had provided for the lordly Lion War; and, like spendthrift Heirs, we have anticipated all the Rest; both Possession and Reversion, all is spent, all is gone. The noble Lord at the Head of the Treasury takes the Field for his financial Campaign for 1782, unencumbered with any contingent Remainder of Hope, unembarrassed with any Auxiliary of profitable Expectation, present or distant;  
yet,

[ 5 ]

yet, aided by his two great Allies, public Credulity and private Avarice, who still War on his Side, I make no Doubt but that his Operations will be crowned with their usual Success.---Mine be the humble Task to announce his Triumphs, and to state, according to my annual Custom, the national Account, and to shew nearly how it will stand at the Expiration of 1782.

At this Period, we apprehend, the noble Lord must, whether he will or not, quit all Pride, Pomp, and Circumstance of glorious War: for Money, the Sinews of War, will no longer be to be found.

In this Investigation, the Interest and annual Burthens brought, or to be brought upon the State, are all we shall or need attend to: what, or how enormous the Principal may be, it is Loss of Time to calculate; for no Man is wild enough to expect ever to see a Shilling of it paid.

Of

[ 6 ]

Of these, the first is the Interest and Benefits of the Debt contracted before the present War, amounting annually to nearly Four Millions Two Hundred and Twenty Thousand Pounds. Next follows the Expence of the Civil List Establishment, of which it is hard to say what is the Amount, as what is allotted has never defrayed what is expended, and the Public have always hitherto made good the Deficiency. However, as the Royal Family is numerous beyond Example, the Prince of Wales just of Age, and the Rest following fast; and as those who modify the Sum are not above the Suspicion of expecting a Participation proportionate to the Extent of the Provision that they make, I apprehend Twelve Hundred Thousand Pounds yearly, one Way or other, will not exceed the Truth, at least including the Sums which his present Majesty is empowered, on the Demise of the Crown, to levy on the Public,

[ 7 ]

Public, as a Provision for the younger Branches of the Royal Family.

After these come what the noble Lord has already funded of the Fruits of this propitious War, amounting nearly (the Expence of paying at the Bank included) to Two Millions Five Hundred Thousand Pounds per Annum. Then follow the Debts of this War already contracted, which wait for Funds, and are likely to do so. The First of these is the Navy Debt, as it stood on the 31st of December 1781, which we cannot rate less than Eleven Millions. For were even the whole Three Millions Two Hundred Thousand Pounds of last Year's Supplies applied, the Balance that would remain of the Navy Debt 1780, would amount to Seven Millions One Hundred and Seventy-two Thousand Six Hundred and Twenty-eight Pounds, and the Increase of the Year 1780 having amounted to Three Millions Five

Five Hundred and Fifteen Thousand Six Hundred and Seventy-eight Pounds, Eleven Millions on the 31st of December 1781, will be much below the invariable Progression of this Article of War Expence.

We have next Exchequer Bills, amounting to Three Millions Four Hundred Thousand Pounds. Then follows the Debt to the Bank, amounting to Two Millions.

Now we begin with 1782, the first is the Loan which we cannot in the usual Progression of War Expence, estimate at less, if so little, as Seventeen Millions, the Sum borrowed or raised by Means, that return no more for 1781, being within a Trifle of Fifteen Millions. Next are the Extraordinaries for Sea and Land, for 1782, which, Attention being paid to the never-failing Progression of War Expence, cannot be rated at less than Ten Millions, those for 1780 having amounted,

amounted, within a Trifle, to Eight Millions Eight Hundred Thousand Pounds. Nor will these Extraordinaries, and the Navy Debt, on the 31st of December 1781, amount, we think, to less than the Twenty-one Millions they are here stated at, even supposing, that a Million, or a Million and a half, (and more cannot be spared) are carried from the Supplies of 1782 towards the Discharge of the Navy Debt of 1781.

On a Supposition, that a Peace may take Place in the Course of the Year 1782, the Public must likewise be charged with the vast Arrears that cannot but attend the closing and winding up of a War, of such an Extent and Duration, and of a Profusion beyond all Example, and subject likewise, to so many Claims of Indemnification from our German Mercenaries: these are cheaply estimated at Nine Millions. All these unfunded Debts in 1781, and Debts to be contracted in 1782, put together, make a capital Sum of Fifty-two Millions Four hundred Thousand Pounds.

C

But

[ 10 ]

But to keep within Bounds, and to avoid all Suspicion of Exaggeration, we shall only state it at Fifty Millions, which, if it can be borrowed at 5 1-half per Cent. the rate of the Loan 1781, (and that such a Sum can be borrowed at this rate, or indeed at any rate, implies a Peace.) Fifty Millions at 5 1-half per Cent. brings a further annual Burthen on the Public, (the Expence of paying at the Bank included) of nearly Two Millions Eight Hundred Thousand Pounds, and there will still remain a Peace Establishment to be provided for. This I have, in another Place, proved to Conviction, could not, even before the War be accomplished, for less than Four Millions Two Hundred and Seventy-one Thousand Pounds yearly. The invariable Progression of Expence, and the great Amount of the Half-Pay, at the Close of the War, will increase this Sum to, at least, Four Millions Three Hundred Thousand Pounds, (even deducting what is there allowed for the Interest of the unfunded Debt) yearly.

In

[ 11 ]

In order to bring the foregoing Matters at once under the Eye, we shall recapitulate them in Figures.

|  |   |                    |
|--|---|--------------------|
| The Interest of the Debt before the War amounts yearly to          | - | £4,220,000         |
| The Civil List Establishment, &c. is estimated to amount yearly to | - | 1,200,000          |
| The Funded Debt of the present War, amounts yearly to              | - | 2,500,000          |
| Peace Establishment, will amount yearly to                         | - | 4,300,000          |
|  |   | <u>£12,220,000</u> |

Debts contracted in 1781 waiting for Funds :

|                                      |                    |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Navy Debt, on the 31st December 1781 | £11,000,000        |
| Exchequer Bills                      | 3,400,000          |
| Debt to the Bank                     | 2,000,000          |
|                                      | <u>£16,400,000</u> |
| Unfunded Debt, remaining in 1781     | -                  |

Debt that must be contracted for 1782 :

|  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| The Loan                                 | 17,000,000         |
| Extraordinaries of Sea and Land for 1782 | 10,000,000         |
| Winding up, and Arrears of the War       | 9,000,000          |
|  | <u>£36,000,000</u> |

Total Unfunded Debt for 1781, and what Funded, or Unfunded, must be incurred for 1782, exclusive of any Arrears the Civil List may have fallen into - £52,400,000

Of which Fifty-two Millions Four Hundred Thousand Pounds, only Fifty Millions (to keep within Bounds) are charged to the Public, at an Interest of 5 1-half per Cent. with the Expence at the Bank included, making yearly - 2,800,000

On a Supposition of a Peace being concluded in 1782, the annual Charge on the Public, exclusive of Collection and Management, will be of Net Money - £15,020,000

[ 13 ]

Fifteen Millions are therefore the very least Sum that will be required yearly, to carry on the Administration of Government in times of Peace, and this on a Supposition, that Peace can be procured in the Course of 1782, and without discharging one Farthing of the Principal of the National Debt, or even any large Provisions being made, for any contingent Expence of Importance; and I dare, and do pledge, any little Credit I may have gained with the Public, that though the individual Sums may vary something from the Truth, yet taken collectively, the Amount is considerably less, than it will be found really to be.

Some of the Sums here set down, might, if I had waited, been authenticated from Papers that will be laid before Parliament, but these are given so Piece-meal, so reluctantly, and so late, that the general State of our Situation, cannot be combined and  
drawn

[ 14 ]

drawn to a Point from them, 'till the Curiosity, and even the Interest the Public takes in it, is grown cold.

A few Months put an End to our Parliamentary Wranglings, the Event of which any Man that is Master of a red Book, may determine with absolute Certainty. The Amphitheatre then is shut, the Masters mount no more; no more they flash and cut in tropes, and die in metaphor. The Oracles, are dumb, all is still, nobody is left but the black Bands of Ministerial Veterans, armed in Proof, to form a House, and at the Nod of their Masters, to vote away the Millions of a Country which is now nick-named, free. The Remembrance of Evils and Enormities that are past, is lost in the Apprehension of those that are to come: Besides, so ruinous is our Situation, that a few Millions of Error on either Side, make no material Difference, and I do again pledge myself, that if there is any  
Error

[ 15 ]

Error to that Extent, it is on the Side favourable to the Public.

Fifteen Millions net Money, yearly, is an awful and an alarming Sum: it therefore much behoves the Noble Lord at the Head of the Treasury, to explain what Inducements he has, to believe so large a Sum can be drawn from the People; with fallen Rents, and a diminished, languishing Trade: Without some satisfactory Explication of this Kind, to profit of the Public Credulity, would be to abuse it; it would neither be fair, candid, or, to speak plain, honest.

These Inducements must either arise from Analogy to the Revenues and Finances of foreign States, or from Domestic Precedent and Experience. Of European foreign States, the Review is short: no State in Europe possesses a Revenue amounting to half of Fifteen Millions Sterling,



ling, France alone excepted. The famed Revenue of France, under the consummate Abilities and indefatigable Industry, of that great and disinterested Finance Minister, Monsieur Necker, appears by the State of it, published at the End of his *Compte rendu au Roy*, to amount to upwards of Nineteen Millions, Sterling Money gross: but he does not inform us what Part of this is expended in Collection and Management, and what Part is applicable to the Necessities of the State: if these Sheets should reach his Eye, he may possibly be so good as to let us know how this Matter stands.

In the mean Time, France having ever been charged with Want of Oeconomy, in the Collection and Management of her Revenues, and Great Britain, on the contrary, being the Theme of Praise of every Tongue, on Account of her Frugality in these Particulars (and in the great Branch of the Excise,

Excise, she stands certainly unrivalled.) Now these Premises being laid down and admitted, and the Collection and Management of the Revenues of Great Britain, costing from Eight to Ten per Cent, it is a fair Conclusion to assert, that the Revenue of France does not bring much more net into the Coffers of the State, than Seventeen Millions, Sterling Money. It is moreover certain, and agreed on all Hands, that no Nation under the Sun, is more oppressed, harrassed, and kept down with Taxes, than the French Nation: and that none is more industrious, or equally ingenious and inventive, in promoting the finer profitable Arts of luxurious Life; by which she taxes the consenting willing World, and receives the large Tribute Fashion pays to Taste. It is likewise certain, that the Population of France is considerably more than double that of Britain, and that their circulating Specie trebles ours. Now all that is above set  
down,

down, being allowed (as they of Necessity must be) and considered, it follows by mathematical Proof and Consequence, that if France under the above Circumstances, can only afford a Revenue of Seventeen Millions, Fifteen are infinitely beyond the Abilities of Great Britain. Nothing in Europe will therefore answer our Purpose. The Legends of the East, I do not believe, as little as the fabled Lands, where Peruvian Tories, under a lineal Descendant of the Sun, remote from Spanish Usurpation, tread under Foot that Wealth which holds the Rest of the World in Strife— Had other Tories followed the same Example, America might still have shone the brightest Gem in the British Diadem. Amongst the Eastern Legends, I comprehend the mighty Matters expected from the Participation of Profits with the East India Company. Ministerial Influence, being now added to the discordant Principles of Trade and War, which have already shaken the Foundations of the Company

Company to the Centre, will soon leave us neither Trade nor Empire in India.

Having profitted so little by our foreign Excursions, let us turn Homewards, and try what Precedent and Experience will do for us there.

The Æra, from about the Year 1765, when the Obstacles the War had thrown in the Way of Commerce were removed, to the Year 1775, when this detested War with America began to be felt, I apprehend, gives Ten of the most prosperous Years this Country ever saw. Emerged from a War successful beyond Example, by a Peace if not adequate, at least advantageous; and had the Motives been more noble, the Precipitation less, and the Treatment of our great Ally, the King of Prussia, more just and respectful, the measure was not altogether unwise.---Masters of the Sea, and of a Part of the terraqueous Globe, (which is better than the Whole, because

D cause

cause that part is easier held than the Whole, and it equally answers all the essential Purposes of Universal Dominion by Land,) each Year made a Beggar of the Happiness of that which preceded it; such an Æra of Felicity History cannot match, Imagination can scarce surpass. Yet during all this Flow of Prosperity, the Revenue brought clear into the Exchequer, never amounted to Eleven Millions in One Year, the Average of the Ten Years was considerably less.

It may, I know, be said, that many new Taxes are imposed, many more are intended, and many of the old Impositions are greatly augmented; but, alas! this is no Answer: in Matter of Taxation, if the Ability to pay is wanting, what signify the Sums the Commodity is taxed at, or the Number of Taxes: The Rich are of little Consequence, the Middling Class are something; but by the lower and lowest Orders

ders of the People, the great Weight and Proportion of the Taxes are paid. From their well being, full Employment, and comfortable Situation, even to a little Superfluity, the Riches of a Nation, and consequently of its Revenues arise: These being self-evident Truths, can the Noble Lord expect to wring from the Dregs of Adversity, what the sprightly Runnings of Prosperity could not give. What can he force from the Wretchedness which the War has made? Misery mocks at Taxation; he cannot tax the Bread and Water of the Poor, nor Death, their sad last Refuge from Despair.

Without national Prosperity, Taxes on Consumption cannot be productive, and I have shewn, to Conviction I think, elsewhere, that in the present disastrous Hour, a new Assessment and Modification of the Land Tax (difficult and uncertain at all Times) would prove as unavailing to ad-

[ 22 ]

vance the Revenue, as impracticable in the Execution. Indeed, should this Measure ever be attempted with a Design materially to increase the Revenue of the Public, it must be after the Country is restored to a great Part of its pristine Prosperity, of which I do not see the remotest Hopes.

What was the Crime that laid the Contrivers and Directors of the South Sea Scheme under such heavy Penalties? It was the declaring large Dividends, without any probable Inducements to believe that the Company would be able to pay them. The Case is in Point, and to swindle away the Property of a believing, deluded, confiding People, and then to skulk behind an Act of Parliament, and to barr all Redress, has a Baseness in it, that does not even occur in the Proceedings of the South Sea Directors.

It is certainly therefore greatly incumbent on the noble Lord, it touches the Honour

[ 23 ]

Honour of Government, and his own Honour, before he opens his Loan, to declare upon what Grounds and Inducements he concludes the remaining Resources of the State are equal to discharge the Terms of it, in Opposition to what I have here adduced, which appears to me nearly a Demonstration to the Contrary. Upon the most careful, most laborious Investigation I am capable to make, with a strong Bias to Inquiries of this Kind, and a Mind well practised in them, I do solemnly declare my Opinion, that the State is burthened to its utmost Solvency, by the four first Articles of the foregoing Recapitulation, amounting to Twelve Millions Two Hundred and Twenty Thousand Pounds yearly, which we must pay at all Events, and consequently that the Sixteen Millions Four Hundred Thousand Pounds already contracted of unfunded Debt are in Danger, and as to any new Contractions, *caveat Emptor*.

If

If the noble Lord goes on, it seems to me of necessary Consequence that some Part or other of the public Creditors cannot be paid: to reconcile any Class of them to this Necessity, will, I imagine, require all the persuasive Powers of which the noble Lord is so eminently Master. So far is certain, that the public Revenue, though buoyed up by the vast Profusions of the War, and by the new Taxes, has never yet, to the 10th October 1780, reached, or at least has never exceeded Twelve Millions Net in one Year, nor do I imagine that it will ever reach Thirteen Millions Net; and I think the Probability is far greater that it will fall below Twelve, than that it will rise above them.

If this System is to continue, the public Creditors must give down a considerable Part of their Demands on the Public: it is their Interest so to do; for if the System cannot go on, it is hard to say whether they will get any Thing. The System of  
Cor-

Corruption betwixt the executive and legislative Parts of our Constitution must likewise be abolished, for by this, in the open Face of Day, a very great Proportion of our dearest Revenues are consumed; and, what is much worse, by Jobs, by Contracts, and other dark Manœuvres of Favour and Influence, every Expence is inflamed; all Power of Controul or Correction is baffled; and Venality, Languor, and Indifference is spread through every Department of the State. The happy Counterpoise of the different Parts of our Constitution is destroyed; all Responsibility is made a Jest; for, backed by a Majority, paid to support, and paid to applaud their Measures, be they what they may, Ministers gather the Roses without the Cares or the Thorns of Power; and from the Number and Rank, and even Fortunes of the corrupted, Fashion and *Ton* is given to the basest Prostitutions of Principles and of Talents.

The

The noble Lord has much in Possession, more in Reversion; happy in his Family, happy in his Fortune and Abilities, with strong natural and social Affections, no one must drink deeper of the bitter Cup of national Humiliation and Ruin. In his public Line of Conduct I see, or fancy that I see, and in his alone, of all the ruthless ministerial Tribe, some Twitches of Remorse, some Recollections of the fair Feelings of Humanity, some sweet Drops of the Milk of human Kindreds. Oh! let him cherish these opening Dawnings of Grace, these precious Foretastes of Repentance---they are from Heaven.

An honourable Peace is now the Phrase in Fashion with those who guide our Councils. If by an honourable Peace, they mean a Peace adequate to our present distressful Circumstances, and to our gloomy future Prospects, they mean something; if not, nothing at all, but to keep their Places. Involved by Passion and by Pride in a  
Con-

Contest, out of all Proportion unequal, made more so by the Disasters of the last Campaign, it is Folly to expect such Terms of Peace as if we made War on an equal Footing, and with a balanced Success. What signifies it to rant and rave about Rights which, were they as clear as they are doubtful, have been, by us the Aggressors, submitted to the Arbitration of the Sword, and are determined against us? Not the Power, not the Pre-eminence, but the Salvation, the Existence of the State are now brought into Question. The wild Rage of a few Individuals amongst us (either incapable or unwilling to see) in Opposition to the plainest Dictates of common Reason and common Sense, surely should not form the Rule of our political Conduct. Error, so gross in Crime, cannot (at least it ought not) protect them or their Colleagues, who at last say they are grown wiser from Punishments rigorous in Proportion to the Mischiefs they have made.

E With

With weaker Hands, and with no greater Share of Wisdom, if Causes and Effects have any Connection, what can be expected by continuing the War, but a Campaign more disastrous than the last? A losing Peace must be infinitely better now, than a ruinous One at the End of another unfortunate Year. --- Many of the Consequences of a losing Peace are speculative and remote, and may be visionary. Things may take another and a better Turn. The Ruin, which if the War continues is at Hand, is obvious, is sure. American Independence is held out as incompatible with our holding our Sugar Islands: this is reckoned an Argument for the War not to be answered: to me, the very Contrary seems true; for without American Independence no friendly Intercourse can take Place betwixt America and our Islands: consequently no Supplies of Lumber or Provisions can be received by them, without which they cannot be held with Profit by the Proprietor; and what is held un-

pro-

profitably by Individuals is seldom held long. But the more than threatened Attack, and defenceless State of our Sugar Islands, has probably before this, by the Loss of them, made vain all Arguments about their Safety.

The War on the Continent of America has not been ill-conducted; it is impracticable: the Ministers have treated with great Ingratitude and Injustice the Officers they entrusted with the Management of it. Lord Howe and his Brother, driven by the universal and irresistible Revolt and Defection of a numerous and warlike People from Boston, very judiciously took Post at New York. The Expedition next Campaign, and the subsequent Capture of Philadelphia, the Capital and Seat of Government, was a Measure and Conquest of the greatest Eclat, and of equal Importance, had our Information as to the Disposition of the Inhabitants been good. But when we were in Possession of the very Capital, and no

E 2          Junction,

[ 30 ]

Junction, but of a few Quakers, whining for a Continuance of Power to oppress their fellow Citizens, having followed, if God had not made dark our Understanding, and hardened our Hearts, all Measures of Compulsion must have been laid aside. But the System of Compulsion being still invariably persisted in, and the Inhabitants continuing almost to a Man hostile, the Post of Philadelphia was found too remote from the Sea to be kept with Safety. The Retreat from it to New York was conducted by Sir Henry Clinton with great military Skill, Resolution, and Success. What was called Loyalty, not being to be found in the Northern or Middle Provinces, we went to look for this *Ignis fatuus* in the South, and the Siege and Capture of Charles Town gave additional Lustre to the military Talents of Sir Henry Clinton.

The Disasters of the last Campaign were unavoidable, the Moment the Enemy were  
superior

[ 31 ]

superior at Sea: from that Instant, neither New York, nor York Town, if attacked, were tenable; the Enemy had their Option, but luckily made their Attempt on the Place of the least Importance of the two. Had Sir Henry Clinton known by Inspiration what Washington and Rochambeau were about to do, and the Moment they were to do it, he might, by hanging on their Rear for the few first Days of their March, have retarded the Capture of Lord Cornwallis for a Week; he could do no more: he could not advance far from his Works, without being hemmed in with the combined Army in Front, and in the Rear by a trained exasperated Militia inured to war, and as numerous as they pleased to have them; all ready, all apprized, all in arms, and little, if at all inferior in such a Country (though their Hair may not be so well powdered) to regular Troops; whatever the spruce Soldiers may think, who draw from the Parade in St. James's Park  
their



[ 32 ]

their Notions of a War in America---the probable Consequence would have been, Sir Henry's meeting with the Fate he was endeavouring to avert from Lord Cornwallis. Even General Burgoyne's Expedition was conducted with great Magnanimity, and he struggled with Impossibilities with a manly Fortitude, unconquerable Mind, and patient Endurance, deserving better Success. What the Object of his Expedition was, I know not: but be it as inconsiderable as it may, it cannot be more so than the Marches and Counter-marches through the Wilds of Southern America this Summer; and I am sure the Actions and Encounters were not more sharp and obstinate, nor the Fatigues greater in the Southern than in the Northern Wilderness of America, and the Catastrophe was pretty much alike.. Yet I know not how it happens that the Name of Burgoyne is used as a Word of Reproach, whilst every Tongue is lavish in the Praise of Cornwallis. The Censure or the Praise must be

[ 33 ]

be unjust.---I write Things as they appear to me; I know none of the Parties, not even by Sight.

To talk of Rome and Roman Firmness, is mere School-boy Declamation. Britain resembles Rome, just as much as the holy Father and his College of Cardinals resemble the Consuls and Senate of Rome, in the virtuous Days of the Republic. I will give a Precedent of later Date, and more in Point. France, though proud, and highly jealous in national Point of Honour, though not forced to it by Circumstances so disastrous as those in which we find ourselves, nor nothing near it, France, I say, in the End of last War, stooped to sue for Peace, and bought it by the Surrender of large Territories and essential Advantages in Trade; and above all, submitted to have the Seizure of her Ships before the Declaration of the War passed unheeded by, after she had pledged herself to her own Subjects, and to all Europe,  
never

[ 34 ]

never to make Peace 'till ample Retribution, Acknowledgement, and Excuse, had been made to her on that Head. However, she submitted to an Insult, of which the Success that followed has varnished, not altered the Injustice.

France professes, and has uniformly professed, that she has no Object in the War but to obtain Independence for America. France is considered by Europe as the Champion of Freedom; the Wishes of Europe are with her. Let us try if this Moderation is true or false. If France flies off from her Professions, the Jealousy of Europe will be awakened; and she will, moreover, afford us the only good Reason in fact that can be given to our own People for continuing the War, viz. the Impossibility of obtaining a Peace. Should France prove true to her Professions, and American Independence procure a Peace, Peace costs nothing; for America is independent already:

[ 35 ]

ready: and whenever the War ceases, it is highly probable that much of the antient Intercourse betwixt this Country and her American Brethren will be renewed, perhaps on a Footing not much less advantageous than formerly; provided always that Pride, Passion, Insolence, Injustice, and Inhumanity shall cease to be, as they have hitherto been, the ruling Principles of our Conduct towards them. Public Generosity is public Wisdom: without it Success meets with no Praise, Misfortune with no Pity.

Obstinacy and Insensibility are Counterfits of too base a Metal to pass current with the Public for Firmness and Magnanimity. A Set of big Words got by Rote and pedant Declamation, deceive nobody but the shallow frothy Fools amongst ourselves. Yet I am very sensible, that in a Situation so desperate, some Deception may be necessary, and that I deal in Truths  
F danger-

dangerous to be revealed; I do it reluctantly; and had I perceived any Remorse, any Shame, any Contrition (which must precede Amendment) in our Ministers, or in the efficient Powers of Government, reside they where they may, I should have respected the public Misfortunes, and the Sorrows of the Authors of them; and remained silent in Hopes of better Things to come. But no Communications to the Public, can be so hazardous as a tame Acquiescence in the present Delusions, which leads to certain and immediate Ruin.

It is now too late in the Day, to think to benefit ourselves by a Change in the Mode of War. A War of Posts and Cruizers, is still a War; and a War in America. On a Coast of an Extent so vast, and in every Part accessible to Shipping, this System of War can produce but very partial, very remote, and very un decisive Advantages.

New

New York, the only Place of Importance that we hold in our present weakened State, ceases to be a Post of Advantage; it requires an Army to defend it, and likewise a decided and constant Superiority at Sea, without which, it will only prove to some future Commander what York Town has proved to Lord Cornwallis. Such a Change of System if it is really meant, would be but changing Madness for Folly, Lunacy for Idiotism. Our Superiority at Sea was the Charm that bound fast and harmonized the jarring Elements that composed this great but artificial Empire; that now dissolved, it crumbles into Pieces, and every varying Wind will bring sad Tidings

Of Loss, of Slaughter, and Discomfiture;  
 Guienne, Champaign, and Rheims and Orleans;  
 Paris, Guyfours, Poictiers, are all quite lost. —  
 What sayest thou, Man, before dead Chatham's Corse?  
 Speak softly, or the Loss of those great Towns,  
 Will make him burst his Lead, and rise from Death.

The

The Line of public Policy and of public Conduct that we have to pursue, is plain and obvious: in a Situation so desperate, all (if so much) that remains in our Power is, among Evils to chuse the least: Pressed in Front by foreign Enemies, to whom we have Nothing of nearly equal Force to oppose, goaded behind by domestic Indigence, and the well-grounded Apprehensions of public Bankruptcy, and its sure Consequences, Anarchy and civil Commotion, no Peace, short of absolute Ruin, can be pronounced a bad one: all but this, is either Phrenzy, Folly, or Flattery.

London, Jan. 1782.

F I N I S.