

The PENNSYLVANIA GAZETTE.

Containing the Freshest Ad- vices, Foreign and Domestic.



To the Printers of the PENNSYLVANIA GAZETTE.

GENTLEMEN,
That freedom of the press in which Cato so much rejoices, will induce you, and every other printer of Cato's letters, to do the justice to Cassandra to publish this, with my piece on sending Commissioners to treat with the Congress, in your next papers, which will be a better proof of their freedom than any thing Cato has advanced.

CASSANDRA.

CASSANDRA to CATO.

SIR,
I THOUGHT you had forgotten the fatal 7th of Nov. 1774, on which all your ambitious projects were blasted by a public vote of your fellow-citizens, to divide from the county in their choice of Committee-men, and to hold all future elections by ballot; but I find I was mistaken. While Committees were chosen by holding up of hands, and letters from millers and popular harrangues could be employed to serve the purposes of your party, tho' Cato could write, yet no prets teemed with his lucubrations. But now that public business is carried on in the only way which can secure the people from undue influence, and the party has suffered a total defeat in their electioneering attempts, his masterly pen is called forth into the field of political controversy, and with a few dashes of it he has overset our Committee of Inspection, demolished the whole tribe of patriotic scribblers in news-papers, and laid Common Sense in the dirt, taken a catalogue of all the whigs and Tories in the province, converted 36 Commissioners, about to be sent over to insult us with terms no one can accept, into Ambassadors of peace, and poor Cassandra into an enthusiast, madman, barbarian and drunken independant. Wretched must the lot of that whig be, who falls into the hands of this fiery defender of ministerial stratagems. Daniel may be protected from the jaws of the lions, but alas! who can protect us when Cato is roused? The whole band of us is crushed to atoms with one grasp of his hand. Why did you assure us that no persons need be alarmed, for that no indecent nor angry expression should dishonour your pen? Was it that the suddenness of our destruction might heighten its terror? Well has the scriptures assured us, that the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.

Your grievous paragraph about restraining the press is so notorious a falsehood, that I boldly put you to silence to point out the instance. And when you give the public the names of the few who turned the mode of electing Committees out of the channel of corruption, and thereby excluded you and your colleagues, I will undertake to mention the other few, who, contrary to every principle of our constitution, by a prostitution of the cry of public necessity, are endeavouring to cloak an unbounded hatred to our present cause under an affected zeal for constitutional dependance, and who have nearly effected their malicious purposes of destroying their own liberties, to be avenged of their enemies. But let not Cato too far provoke the MAJESTY OF THE PEOPLE OF PENNSYLVANIA, by the bold flourish of a pen which pays no respect to truth, lest he may find it expedient to end his days on the principles of dependance.

"Few persons," says Cato, "gave themselves any concern about the election of a Committee of Inspection, being well satisfied that any number of respectable citizens, who would take the trouble of such a Committee, should be thankfully indulged with the office, and although it consists of a hundred members, they had not two hundred votes." Cassandra begs leave to inform Cato, that our Committees of Inspection, ever since chosen by ballot, got possession of their office by a more respectable number of voters than any Burgees which sat in the House of Assembly since the first day in which a comparison could be made, as he can make appear by the state of the several elections.

"In carrying on our great controversy with England, Pennsylvania (say you) has no need either to make the least sacrifice of its constitution, nor yet to yield in zeal to the foremost of the colonies." This assertion might pass for truth on the coast of Labradore, or in the Desarts of Siberia; but the PEOPLE of Pennsylvania must have drunk deep of the waters of oblivion, and laid aside all pretensions to recollection, before they can consider such assertions in any other light than insults on their understanding. Can Cato inform them of the single measure that can be pursued in the line of our charter constitution? I should gladly view the paragraph which gives our Assembly the power of legislating without the Governor; and Cato is too well acquainted with the King's Representative, to believe he would ever give his sanction to our opposition. Name the Act of Assembly, Cato, which makes legal tender of the money they have so patriotically struck, and I will believe you have for once strayed into the truth. But because our Representatives can do nothing legal without the Governor, therefore Cato is fiery hot for confining our opposition to them, and not to a Convention, which is under no such restrictions. The interest of the Governor, and not of the people, is plainly Cato's.

"The great privilege (you add) which we enjoy, of giving our free unbiased voice annually in the choice of an Assembly, who from that moment, by charter, become a constitutional body, vested with the authority of the people, and can meet when they please, and sit as long as they judge necessary."—Here, Sir, you prudently drop the consideration of their being a constitutional body. Had you pointed out the advantages of constitutionally meeting and sitting, when they can constitutionally do no more, you had told us something.—But this, alas! was out of your power. So much for your first letter.

In your second you begin by saying, that you know not on what grounds I have satisfied myself that the sole view

of Administration in this Commission is to amuse and deceive, to bribe and corrupt us. It may be so, Sir; tho' I hope you have not the vanity to set up your knowledge as the standard of truth. Did you read the piece, and attempt to pick to pieces the principles and arguments on which my advice is founded? I begin to think you did, and finding them too hard to overturn, you vent your spleen in railing at the author. But do you recollect Lord North's conciliatory plan, and his explanation of it, viz. substantial revenue—divide et impera, &c. Do you remember the King's speech at the opening of the present sessions of Parliament, and the re-echo of both Houses, the extensive plan of warlike operations which he means to carry on against us, and his appointing persons who shall on the spot dispense most gracious pardons to all such as shall acknowledge their faults, and plead forgiveness? A new species of ambassadors, not heretofore taken notice of by the writers on the laws of nature and nations. Do you remember Gen. Gage's plan for disarming the people of Boston, and the faith he observes in treaties, and that Howe, his successor, pursued the same infernal plan? or have you totally forgot what the Prime Minister said, on his declaring that he was ready to restore us to the state we were in before the year 1763, for that we did not then deny the right of Parliament to tax America? or do you forget that every proposal for reconciliation, made by the friends of America in Parliament, was rejected without a division? Had Cato remembered these things, or if he can be brought to remember them, he will have as much reason to suspect the designs of the Commissioners as Cassandra. Perhaps it suits not with Cato's plan to remember these things, tho' he can recollect many others of a much earlier date. Cato may be much better acquainted with our savage neighbours than Cassandra, as doubtless he has traversed the uncultivated woods of America more frequently than he; yet it may not be an easy matter to convince the people of this province, that the dread of losing all hopes of preferment, if the council of Cassandra is taken, has not called forth this champion for an undefined dependance from that obscurity into which he has nearly fallen. It remains a doubt with me, whether the historic page will ever transmit your name to posterity as the first American D---t, if you are not permitted to shake hands with the Commissioners, and allowed the opportunity of explaining your mysterious conduct. I shall not here enter into the various which contain the principles of the laws of nature and nations, before I read of Ambassadors of Peace attended with Acts of Parliament to confiscate, and Royal Proclamations to divide, the property of those they are to treat with, and backed by immense armies of Ministerial cut-throats, to enforce their demands. Cato's great reading, no doubt, can supply the public with a few instances of untutored savages receiving Ambassadors thus attended with respect and hospitality, and smocking the calumet of peace with them. However, until he does, I trust he will grant to Cassandra the liberty of thinking otherwise, and do him the justice to believe that he knows as much about the rights of Ambassadors as Cato. Cassandra confesses that he is greatly concerned for our virtue, lest we should be enjayed, deceived and corrupted. Cato is not so. Corruption may be more familiar to Cato, which will fully account for our difference in sentiment. I am so much of a christian to pray that we may not be led into temptation; this, Sir, may form no part of your devotion. But if Cato is so easy on the score of this treaty, because it is to be managed by men delegated for their integrity and abilities by the voice of the country, why is he enraged at my attempt to confine them to these virtuous Delegates? Cassandra is not afraid of the Delegates; it is to keep our modern Catos from doing us mischief that he is so anxiously concerned. And if Cato has read his proposal, he knows it to be so. But, Cato, had you adopted a signature correspondent with your designs, my present reply might be unnecessary; and if you yet change your present one for Syphax, Setapronius or Iago, I may spare the printer much of my intended lucubrations. I believe the world will readily agree with me, that either of the three would be truly characteristic of your present designs, if not of your general character as a man and a politician.

The cup out of which Cassandra has drunk, was never employed to offer libations at the altar of Royal despotism, or Proprietary influence. He knows no guide but reason and love of mankind, as he neither wishes nor expects to be Prime Minister to any future would be King of Pennsylvania. He is always ready to defend his rights at the risque of his life, and prefers present war to future slavery, being conscious that a great continent will be much happier with the one than the other. Britain has risen triumphant, in a very few years, out of bloodier wars than ever America has been or will be called to, but Egypt has not, for thousands of years, recovered from the yoke of foreign oppression.

Cassandra longs to see your bold declaration made good; but why so long about it, Goddess, and about it. Come to the point Sir! The presses are very open for the reception of your wonderful productions. But I beseech you, dear Sir, to lay aside groundless declamation for the future, and speak a language which facts will support. The people of Pennsylvania, I trust, will ever have the good sense to prefer COMMON SENSE to the appeals of any government tool, which may appear in defence of a union with those who know no law, human or divine, but the law of violence and murder, and who have their Catos in all quarters to delude and deceive, men who sell their consciences for the prospect of future advantages. Dont be angry Cato. Give your name to the public, and I will stand corrected if I have missed my object.

You make a great clamour because we have been constantly enlarging our views, and stretching them beyond the first bounds. But let me tell you Cato, that nothing

can be a greater proof of your iniquitous designs than your present attempt to confine them. Has not Administration first passed a Declaratory Act, then an Act laying duties on Paper, Painters Colours, &c. then their Acts to export their Teas to America, then a Boston Port-Act, an Act to destroy the Charter of Massachusetts, a Restraining Act, &c. &c. Acts to confiscate our property, and levy the most cruel and unjust war against us? Have not they been constantly enlarging their plans to the last of all acts of tyranny, murder and robbery, and are we to remain insensible all this time, and never enlarge our views? Where would be the wisdom of all this, Cato?

You artfully introduce quotations from the proceedings of Congress to lead the people astray, by producing extracts which you know neither can nor do speak the sentiments of Congress on the subject. Congress early spoke their sentiments on that head, but Cato could not recollect the passage. It did not coincide with his plan of imposing on the PEOPLE OF PENNSYLVANIA. "Between these Colonies and the people of Britain," says the Congress, in their address to the inhabitants of the colonies, published in their resolves of September 5, 1774, "till the social band, which we ardently wish may never be dissolved, and which cannot be dissolved, until their minds shall become indisputably hostile, or their inattention shall permit those who are thus hostile to persist in prosecuting with the powers of the realm the destructive measures already operating against these colonies, and in either case, shall reduce the latter to such a situation, that they shall be compelled to renounce every regard but that of self-preservation."—This was the opinion of Congress at that time. I will leave it to Cato to determine, whether both, or either, of the cases there mentioned have not taken place. Cato does not class himself with Cassandra, and the writers on that side of the question. This does not much trouble Cassandra, I assure you Sir, in as much as he can class his own with the sentiments of the celebrated Dr. Smith, who, in his address to the graduates in May last, says, "The glory of every country is its LIBERTY, its INDEPENDANCY, and its Improvements in Commerce, Arts and Religion;" and I believe the sentiments of this Gentleman are as much esteemed among those of your party as the sentiments of Cato.

CASSANDRA.

On sending COMMISSIONERS to treat with the CONGRESS.

THE man who would penetrate all the designs, and thoroughly acquaint himself with the several manœuvres of the British government, ought carefully to attend to two objects. The prime minister is always considered as the central wheel of all government movements, and the eyes of every one are fixed upon him, and his motions alone attended to. But in the present case, where he is confessedly ostensible, the affair is quite otherwise, and he who wishes to distinguish between the measures which proceed from the real minister, and will be prosecuted, and those which the ostensible is directed to hold out, as barrels to a whale, may perhaps find the true clue to guide through the labyrinth in the following observations.

Great-Britain has steadily and invariably pursued one course of conduct towards these colonies for the last twelve years, and yet politicians have constantly charged her with fickleness and a want of a regular plan. He who discerns the true cause of this inconsistent consistency, can point out its nature, end and use, and shew that this fickleness demonstrates the firmest steadfastness, sees into the bottom of the present British policy, and comprehends all her measures. This knowledge I wish every member of the Honourable Continental Congress possessed of, with virtue and spirit sufficient to withstand all their efforts to destroy our liberties.

As soon as the Parliament is called, the King gives certain intimations of his designs, and applies for the approbation and support of the Commons. Here we have a small opening of the designs of the Cabinet, no more being communicated than is absolutely necessary for obtaining a general concurrence and vote of aids from Parliament. This being once obtained by way of Address, a new plan opens, and that spirit, which was roused by this discovery of the real designs of the government, is laid asleep as quickly as possible, and the real minister now retiring behind the curtain, the ostensible one succeeds to his place. You may therefore observe, that as soon as the hands of the secret cabinet are let loose by loyal addresses, things take a new turn in Parliament immediately; and the prime minister, as if totally forsaking the high ground he had lately taken possession of, begins to open new plans of a very different nature from that held out in the speech from the throne, and recommended in the addresses of both Houses of Parliament. The King and his cabal go to work with all the secrecy and vigour they are masters of, and Lord North assumes his new character, which is that of the deceiver of America, and antiser of the nation. And he has hitherto played his part so well, that all has gone on to their mind. He last year rendered them invisible, even to their own party, and had like to lose all by it, so that he was forced to take off the mask and partly discover himself before he could carry matters in the House. Any one, who remembers his motion, will feel the force of what is here related, and he who recollects that said motion arrived but a few weeks before the order for seizing Messieurs Hancock and Adams, which opened the present scene of the war, must perceive that he acted in the capacity I have assigned him. Even they who entertain the most indifferent opinion of the administration, were, by this motion, induced to believe, for a time, that they meant to give up the matter.

[For the Remainder see the Fourth Page.]



TO THE PEOPLE OF PENNSYLVANIA.
LETTER IV.
ALAS POOR CATO!

WHAT a buzz hast thou raised about thine ears? How canst thou proceed in thy lucubrations? If the following Soliloquy can yield thee any consolation, thou art welcome to place it either in front or rear of thy next letter. Thou wilt perceive thyself more indebted for it to William Shakespeare, than to Thy Friend and Reader,
H A M L E T.

To write, or not to write; that is the question— Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to bear Th' unlicens'd wrongs of furious party-zeal, Or dip the pen into a nest of hornets, And still, by teasing, wake them? To write, to answer— No more? And by a single answer end The thousand scorn and heart-aches which an author Is born to suffer—'Tis a consummation Devoutly to be wish'd! To write, to answer, Reply, perchance rejoice—aye, there's the rub! For in replies, and answers, and rejoinders, Who knows what deadly broils and feuds may come, When we have shuffled off this mortal zett Of mutual forbearance. There's the curse That makes calamity of wordy war. For who would bear the scoffing of the times, The Tory's hated name, the Tool of Power, The contumely of the pension'd Slave, When he himself might his quietus make With a dry quill? Who would endure this Pain*, This foul discharge of wrath from Adam's fons Marshall'd in dread array, both old and Young, Their pop-guns here, and there their heavy Cannon, Our labor'd pages deem'd not worth a Rush But that the dread of something worse to come, Some undiscover'd mischief, puzzles thought, And makes one rather court the ancient path Than fly to others that we know not of! And thus the native hue of resolution Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of fear, And enterprizes of great pith and moment With this regard, their currents turn awry.

THE foregoing Soliloquy, my dear countrymen, was really put into my hands by a friend, and I have bestowed some serious thoughts upon its contents. But I had before resolv'd upon my part. The authors, or if I must say author, of what is called *Common Sense* has certainly had fair play. Full time has been allowed him, by the sale of his pamphlet, to reap the fruits of his labours, and gratify that avidity with which many are apt to devour doctrines that are out of the common way—bold, marvellous and flattering. What was intended as a compliment to the public—to give them time to gaze with their own eyes, and reason with their own faculties, upon this extraordinary appearance—the author's vanity has construed wholly in his own favour. He has called repeatedly for answers, and announced his second edition to the world in the following strain of self-adulation, "That as no answer hath yet appeared it is now presumed that none will," and therefore, as may be fairly implied, that he is unanswerable. Why then, when his challenge is accepted, will not he and his seconds fight upon fair terms? Why will they seek to draw the attention of the public from things to men, refusing that quarter to others which the author of *Common Sense* craves for himself? "Who the author of this publication is (says he) is wholly unnecessary to the public, as the object of attention is the doctrine itself, not the man!" Can this sentence be reconciled to all the pother made about Cato, who and what he is; or does it not rather betray some symptoms of fear and cowardice, to beset him at the threshold, and seek to stop him in his march to the field? What, although he attempts to walk forth humbly with his staff in his hand, and has been somewhat late in filling his scrip with stones to meet this GOLIATH; should he therefore be tauntingly defied? If what is called *Common Sense* be really *Common Sense*, it is invulnerable, and every attack upon it will but add to the author's triumph. If it should be proved, in any instance, to be *Non-Sense*, millions will be interested in the discovery; and to them I appeal.

Once more I repeat the design of these letters, in which I conceive a question to be involved of the greatest importance that ever came before us—a question not yet decided, and which ought therefore to be fully discussed. Opprobrious names can prove nothing here, except that they who use them have nothing better to say, and are afraid of their cause. It is probable that some may see their interest upon one side the question, and some upon the other; but that the great body of the people can have any interest separate from their country, or (when fairly understood) pursue any other, is not to be imagined. If Cato may be believed, he can conscientiously class himself with this great body, and can assure his readers that the guesses hitherto made concerning him are rather unlucky.

Great pains have been taken to engage him in a contest with our Committee, but as nothing has been quoted from him which concerns that body in general, he leaves his letters to answer for themselves; and if his comments on the circular letter to the County Committees should appear to the public not to be well warranted, he will submit to their judgment. But he finds it would be endless to answer all the silly queries, and daily scribble, of his opponents; and has learned better than to be drawn from his main object by indulging them in this way. It would be too great a trespass upon the reader's patience. He has viewed the ground on which he stands, and is not afraid to tread it in the sight of the most vigilant Son of

* Some writers, in imitation of our ancestors, yet spell this word Payne.

Liberty; making that free use of the Press which is promised to him, without the least violation of any resolve of this continent; hitherto made.

One side of a great question has been held up to us. We are told that it can never be our interest to have any future connexion with Great-Britain, and are pressed immediately to declare our total separation, for now is the time—and the time has found us. Could it be expected that all America would instantly take a leap in the dark, or that any who had not a predilection for the doctrine, or were capable of reasoning upon it, would swallow it in the gross, without wishing to hear the arguments on the other side? I am sure this is the wish of multitudes of good men, particularly of those who may be principally concerned in deciding the question; and whose earnest desire it is not only to know the sense of individuals, but the clear sense of their country upon it; without which they could not think themselves at liberty to give their decision.

Upon this ground, then, I proceed, and shall rest the cause with my adversaries on the present general defence, which (although I am sorry it was necessary) I have reason to think, will be more acceptable to the public, than the mispending time in private altercation. Those who oppose me, may enjoy for a while (perhaps unnoticed) all the triumph of the answers they may give; and if it is found at last, as has been already hinted, that I have said nothing to the purpose, their side of the question will only be strengthened.

In my remarks upon the pamphlet before me, I shall first consider those arguments on which the author appears to lay his chief stress; and these are collected under four heads, in his conclusion.

"It is the custom of nations, when any two are at war, for some other powers not engaged in the quarrel, to step in as mediators, and bring about the preliminaries of PEACE. But while America calls herself a subject of Great-Britain, no power, however well disposed she may be, can offer her mediation."

Is this *Common Sense*, or common *Non-sense*? Surely, peace with Great-Britain cannot be the object of this writer, after the horrible character he has given us of the people of that country, and telling us that reconciliation with them would be our ruin. The latter part of the paragraph seems to cast some light upon the former, altho' it contradicts it; for these mediators are not to interfere for making up the quarrel; but to widen it, by supporting us in a declaration, that we are not subjects of Great-Britain; a new sort of business, truly, for mediators!

But this leads us directly to the main enquiry—what foreign powers are able to give us this support? Whether they can be persuaded to engage with us? What will be their terms? Is an alliance with them safe; or is it to be preferred to an honourable and firm renewal of that ancient connexion, under which we have so long flourished?

These questions cannot but employ the most serious thoughts of men whose all is at stake, in the resolution of them; and they ought to be answered to the general satisfaction, before we are launched out into a tempestuous ocean, of which we know not the other shore. That a continuance of mutual violence and hate may at last force us upon such an ocean is not altogether improbable; and it is possible that we may gain some port of safety, altho' in a shattered condition. Not a word shall be drawn from me to discredit our own strength or resources, although the accounts given of them, by the author of *Common Sense*, appear incredible to some, I will even go beyond him in expressing my good opinion of our situation. He thinks foreign assistance necessary to us. I think we should but be injured by it. We are able to defend our own rights, and to frustrate the attempt of any nation upon earth to govern us by force—For my part I would risk my all in resisting every attempt of this kind at every hazard.

But let us see what assistance he offers us; and we find France and Spain held out for that purpose, although not as mediators, to "strengthen the connexion between Great-Britain and America," but wholly to dissolve it.

As to Spain, it is well known that the government of her own unwieldy Colonies is already a weight which she can hardly bear; and some profound politicians have thought that, from the first, she has rather been weakened than strengthened by them; and that all her returns of gold and silver from America are but a poor compensation for the lives and cost with which they are purchased. It may well be questioned then, supposing Spain were able to assist us in erecting an *Independent Empire* in America, whether her jealousy would permit her to risk the possibility of our seducing her own American subjects into an alliance with us, for the purpose of a future revolt from herself. But our author mentions France as well as Spain, and thus proposes that both branches of the *Bourbon Family*, so long the terror of *Protestants* and *Freenen*, should now join as their protectors! By what means, or at what price, is this marvellous revolution in the system of politics, religion and liberty, to be accomplished? How are these two powers to divide these Colonies between them? Is their guardianship to be joint or separate? Under whose wing is Pennsylvania to fall—that of the most Catholic or most Christian King?

I confess that those questions stagger me; and till answered to satisfaction, cannot but give every good man the most painful apprehensions concerning the future fate of his country. To be told, by the author of *Common Sense*, that all this is mere prejudice; that we must divest ourselves of every opinion in which we have been educated, in order to digest his pure doctrine; and throw down what our fathers and we have been building up for ages, to make room for his visionary fabric—I say to be told this, is only insult instead of argument; and can be tolerated by none but those who are so far inflamed or interested, that separation from Great-Britain at any risk

is their choice, rather than reconciliation, upon whatever terms.

This, I much fear, is the temper of those who are constantly dinning in our ears the necessity of an immediate declaration of independence, for the sake of procuring foreign assistance, especially that of France. Their real desire is to shut the door against all future reconciliation by this precipitate step.—The matter of foreign assistance is a mere decoy. Can we imagine that if France thought it her interest to quarrel with Great-Britain for any benefits to be derived from us, her delicacy would stand in her way? Was she ever restricted by such delicacy in any of the former civil wars of her neighbours, especially those of Great-Britain? But the truth is that, in the present ruinous state of her finances, and feeble condition of her fleets, she will scarce think it prudent, for any prospects we can yield her, to rush into a new and expensive war, when so ill recruited after the blood and treasure which she lavished so ineffectually in the last.

Would it be wise, then, to risk a refusal from her, or to mix our affairs with those of any foreign power whatever in this contest with Great-Britain? No; I conceive this would only protract our wars, encrease our dangers, weaken our force, and probably end in our ruin. And of all nations in the world; France is the last from which we should seek assistance, even if it were necessary. What kind of assistance do we expect from her? gold and silver she can but ill afford to give us. Her men we have no occasion for; and, in a word, until she has a fleet able to contend with that of England, she can do us no essential service. The want of such a fleet has been the great bar to her numerous projects for universal empire. Can any protestant, can you my countrymen, ever wish to see her possessed of such a fleet, assist her in attaining it, or willingly give her footing in America? Would she then be contented to be the humble ally of these colonies; or would she not, in her own right, resume *Canada*, which, according to the limits she formerly claimed, is larger than all our provinces together? Could we hinder her from introducing what multitudes of her people she might think proper into that country where they have already a great body of their friends to receive them? In that case we should soon be left without room for the encreasing number of our posterity; hem'd in upon the sea shore; and, with armies behind us, and fleets before us, be either crushed to pieces, obliged to submit to the absolute dominion of France, or to throw ourselves back upon the protection of Great-Britain.

This consideration is truly alarming, and France has never shewn herself so worthy of confidence among the nations of Europe, as to induce us to run such risks, by throwing ourselves precipitately into her arms. She is so notorious to the whole world, for her disregard of the most sacred treaties, that *Gallica Fides*, or *French Faith*, is become as proverbial now, as *Punica Fides*, or *Carthaginian Faith*, of old. It could scarce have been imagined, that the author of *Common Sense*, after telling us that "the blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature, cries, 'TIS TIME TO PART"—eternally to part—from the limited monarchy of Great-Britain, (whatever future terms might be offered us) would so soon have recommended to us a new alliance with the arbitrary monarchs of France and Spain. Bloody massacres, the revocation of sacred edicts, and the most unrelenting persecutions, have certainly taught American protestants, and especially our German brethren, what sort of faith we are to expect from POPISH PRINCES; and from nations who are strangers to Liberty themselves, and envy the enjoyment of it to others!

In short, I am not able, with all the pains I have taken, to understand what is meant by a declaration of independence, unless it is to be drawn up in the form of a solemn abjuration of Great-Britain, as a nation with which we can never more be connected; and this seems the doctrine of the author of *Common Sense*. But I believe he has made but few converts to this part of his scheme; for who knows to what vicissitudes of fortune we may yet be subjected?

We have already declared ourselves independent, as to all useful purposes, by resisting our oppressors, upon our own foundation. And while we keep upon this ground, without connecting ourselves with any foreign nations, to involve us in fresh difficulties, and endanger our liberties still further, we are able, in our own element, upon the shore, to continue this resistance, and it is our duty to continue it, till Great-Britain is convinced (as the mist soon be) of her fatal policy; and open her arms to reconciliation, upon the permanent and sure footing of mutual interest and safety.

Upon such a footing, we may again be happy. Our trade will be revived. Our husbandmen, our mechanics, our artificers will flourish. Our language, our laws and manners being the same with those of the nation with which we are again to be connected, that connection will be natural; and we shall the more easily guard against future innovations. Pennsylvania has much to lose in this contest, and much to hope from a proper settlement of it. We have long flourished under our charter government. What may be the consequences of another form we cannot pronounce with certainty; but this we know that it is a road we have not traveled, and may be worse than it is described.

C A T O.

TO BE SOLD,

A LARGE Stone House and Stables, and a Lot of Land, containing one acre and a half, with one hundred good bearing apple-trees, and a good draw well in the yard that never fails; there was formerly a large store kept in the said house, as there is a fine shop built for that purpose; it is situate on Chestnut-Hill, about 10 miles from Philadelphia. Any person that inclines to purchase, may know the terms, by applying to MICHAEL BENDOLLER, living in Roxborough township, 8 miles from Philadelphia. March 19, 1776. ¶

April 3, 1776.

NUMB. 2467.

The PENNSYLVANIA

GAZETTE.

Containing the Freshest Ad-

vices, Foreign and Domestic.



LETTER I.
TO CATO.

TO be nobly wrong is more manly than to be meanly right. Only let the error be disinterested—let it wear, not the mask, but the mark of principle and 'tis pardonable. It is on this large and liberal ground, that we distinguish between men and their tenets, and generously preserve our friendship for the one, while we combat with every prejudice of the other. But let not Cato take this compliment to himself; he stands excluded from the benefit of the distinction; he deserves it not—And if the sincerity of disdain can add a cubit to the stature of my sentiments, it shall not be wanting.

It is indifferent to me who the writer of Cato's letters are, and sufficient for me to know, that they are gorged with absurdity, confusion, contradiction, and the most notorious and wilful falsehoods. Let Cato and his faction be against Independence and welcome; their consequence will not now turn the scale: But let them have regard to justice, and pay some attention to the plain doctrine of reason. Where these are wanting, the sacred cause of truth applauds our anger, and dignifies it with the name of Virtue.

Four letters have already appeared under the specious name of Cato. What pretensions the writer of them can have to the signature, the Public will best determine; while, on my own part, I prophetically content myself with contemplating the similarity of their exits. The first of those letters promised a second, the second a third, the third a fourth; the fourth has since made its appearance, and still the writer keeps wide of the question. Why doth he thus loiter in the suburbs of the dispute? Why hath he not shewn us what the numerous blessings of reconciliation are, and proved them practicable? But he cunningly avoids the point. He cannot but discover the rock he is driving on. The fate of the Roman Cato is before his eyes: And that the Public may be prepared for his funeral, and for his funeral oration, I will venture to predict the time and the manner of his exit. The moment he explains his terms of reconciliation the typographical Cato dies. If they be calculated to please the Cabinet, they will not go down with the Colonies; and if they be suited to the Colonies, they will be rejected by the Cabinet: The line of no-variation is yet unfound; and like the philosopher's stone, doth not exist. "I am bold," says Cato, "to declare, and yet hope to make it evident to every honest man, that the true interest of America lies in reconciliation with Great-Britain on constitutional principles."

This is a curious way of lumping the business indeed! And Cato may as well attempt to catch lions in a mousetrap as to hope to allure the Public with such general and unexplained expressions. It is now a mere bug-bear to talk of reconciliation on constitutional principles, unless the terms of the first be produced and the sense of the other be defined; and unless he does this he does nothing. To follow Cato through every absurdity and falsehood in the compass of a letter is impossible; neither is it now necessary. *Gassandra* (and I thank him) hath saved me much trouble; there is a spirit in his remarks which honesty only can inspire, and a uniformity in the conduct of his letter which the want of principle can never arrive at. Mark that, Cato.

One observation which I cannot help making on Cato's letters, is, that they are addressed "To the People of Pennsylvania" only: In almost any other writer this might have passed unnoticed, but we know it hath mischief in its meaning. The particular circumstance of a Convention is undoubtedly Provincial, but the great business of the day is Continental. And he who dares to endeavour to withdraw this province from the glorious union by which all are supported, deserves the reprobation of all men. It is the true interest of the whole to go hand in hand; and dismal in every instance would be the fate of that colony which should retreat from the protection of the rest.

The first of Cato's letters is insipid in its style, language and substance: crouded with personal and private inuendoes, and directly levelled against "the Majesty of the People of Pennsylvania." The Committee could only call, propose, or recommend a Convention; but, like all other public measures, it still rested with the people at large whether they would approve it or not; and Cato's reasoning on the right or wrong of that choice is contemptible; because, if the body of the people had thought, or should still think, that the Assembly (or any of their Delegates in Congress) by sitting under the embarrassment of *oaths*, and entangled with *Government* and *Governors*, are not so perfectly free as they ought to be, they undoubtedly had, and still have, both the right and the power to place even the whole authority of the Assembly in any body of men they please; and whoever is hardy enough to say to the contrary is an enemy to mankind. The constitution of Pennsylvania hath been twice changed through the cunning of former Proprietors; surely, the people, whose right, power and property is greater than that of any single man, may make such alterations in their mode of government, as the change of times and things require. Cato is exceedingly fond of impressing us with the importance of our "chartered constitution." Alas! We are not now, Sir, to be led away by the jingle of a phrase. Had we framed our conduct by the contents of the present charters, we had, ere now, been in a state of helpless misery. That very Assembly you mention hath broken it, and been obliged to break it, in almost every instance of their proceedings. Hold it up to the Public and it is transparent with holes; pierced with as many deadly wounds as the body of *M'Cleod*. Disturb not its remains, Cato, nor dishonour it with another funeral oration.

* The writer intended at first to have contained his remarks in one letter.

There is nothing in Cato's first letter worthy of notice but the following insinuating falsehood: "Grievous as the least restraint of the press must always be, to a people entitled to freedom, it must be the more so, when it is not only unwarranted by those to whom they have committed the care of their liberties, but cannot be warranted by them, consistent with liberty itself."—The rude and uncholical confusion of persons in the above paragraph, though it throws an obscurity on the meaning, still leaves it discoverable. Who, Sir, hath laid any restraint on the liberty of the press? I know of no instance in which the press hath been even the object of notice, in this province, except on account of the Tory letter from Kent County, which was published last spring in the *Pennsylvania Ledger*, and which it was the duty of every good man to detect, because the honesty of the press is as great an object to society as the freedom of it. If this is the restraint you complain of we know your true character at once; and that it is so, appears evident from the expression which immediately follows the above quotation; your words are, "Nevertheless, we readily submitted to it, while the least colourable pretence could be offered for requiring such a submission." Who submitted, Cato? *we Whigs, or we Tories?* Until you clear up this, Sir, you must content yourself with being ranked among the ranket of the *writing* Tories; because, no other body of men can have any pretence to complain of want of freedom of the press. It is not your throwing out, now and then, a little popular phrase, which can protect you from suspicion; they are only the gildings under which the poison is conveyed, and without which you dared not to renew your attempts on the virtue of the people.

Cato's second letter, or the greatest part thereof, is taken up with the reverence due from us to the persons and authority of the Commissioners, whom Cato vainly and ridiculously files *AMBASSADORS* coming to negotiate a peace. How came Cato not to be let a little better into the secret? The act of parliament which describes the powers of these men hath been in this city upwards of a month, and in the hands too of Cato's friends. No, Sir, they are not the *Ambassadors of Peace*, but the distributors of pardons, mischief and insult. Cato discovers a gross ignorance of the British constitution, in supposing that these men can be empowered to act as Ambassadors. To prevent his future errors I will set him right. The present war differs from every other in this, viz. that it is not carried on under the prerogative of the crown as other wars have always been, but under the authority of the whole legislative power united, and as the barriers which stand in the way of a negotiation, are not proclamations but acts of parliament, it evidently follows, that were even the King of England here in person, he could not ratify the terms or conditions of a reconciliation; because in the single character of King he could not stipulate for the repeal of any acts of parliament, neither can the parliament stipulate for him. There is no body of men more jealous of their privileges than the Commons: because they fell them: Mark that, Cato.

I have not the least doubt upon me but that their business (exclusive of granting us pardons) is downright bribery and corruption. It is the machine by which they effect all their plans. We ought to view them as enemies of a most dangerous species, and he who means not to be corrupted by them will enter his protest in time. Are they not the very men who are paid for voting in every measure against us, and ought we not to suspect their designs? Can we view the barbarians as friends? Would it be prudent to trust the viper in our very bosoms? Or to suffer them to ramble at large among us while such doubtful characters as Cato have a being upon the continent? Yet let their persons be safe from injury and outrage—but trust them not. Our business with them is short and explicit, viz. We are desirous of peace, Gentlemen; we are ready to ratify the terms, and will virtuously fulfil the conditions thereof; but we should deserve all and every misery which tyranny can inflict, were we, after suffering such a repetition of savage barbarities, to come under your government again.

Cato, by way of stealing into credit, says, that "the contest we are engaged in is founded on the most noble and virtuous principles which can animate the mind of man. We are contending (says he) against an arbitrary Ministry, for the rights of Englishmen." No, Cato, we are now contending against an arbitrary King, to get clear of his tyranny. While the dispute rested in words only, it might be called "contending with the Ministry," but since it is broken out into open war, it is high time to have done with such silly and water-gruel definitions. But it suits not Cato to speak the truth. It is his interest to dress up the sceptered savage in the mildest colours. Cato's patent for a large tract of land is yet unsigned. Alas poor Cato!

Cato proceeds very importantly to tell us, "that the eyes of all Europe are upon us." This stale and hackneyed phrase hath had a regular descent from many of the King's speeches down to several of the speeches in Parliament; from thence, it took a turn among the little wits and bucks of St. James's; till after suffering all the torture of senseless repetition, and being reduced to a state of vagrancy, was charitably picked up to embellish the second letter of Cato. It is truly of the bug-bear kind, contains no meaning, and the very using it discovers a barrenness of invention. It signifies nothing to tell us "that the eyes of all Europe are upon us," unless he had likewise told us what they are looking at us for; which, as he hath not done, I will: They are looking at us, Cato, in hopes of seeing a final separation between Britain and the Colonies, that they, the *lookers on*, may partake of a free and uninterrupted trade with the whole Continent of America. Cato! thou reasonest wrong.

For the present, Sir, farewell. I have seen thy soliloquy and despise it. Remember, thou hast thrown me the glove, Cato, and either thee or I must tire. I fear not

the field of fair debate, but thou hast stepped aside and made it personal—Thou hast tauntingly called on me by name? and if I cease to hunt thee from every lane and lurking-hole of mischief, and bring thee not a trembling culprit before the public bar, then brand me with reproach, by naming me in the list of your confederates.

THE FORESTER.
Philadelphia, March 22, 1776.

TO THE PEOPLE OF PENNSYLVANIA.
LETTER V.

IN my fourth letter, some notice was taken of the dangerous proposition held up to us by the author of *Common Sense*, for having recourse to foreign assistance, and mixing the virtuous cause of these Colonies with the ambitious views of France and Spain, even allowing that they are either able, or that we could make it their interest, to enter into a war with Great-Britain and her allies on our account. History will scarce give us an example of any people that ever recurred to an expedient of this kind, without having their allies at last for their MASTERS. The fatal consequences of hasty resolutions, in great questions, might be well illustrated by the conduct of the foolish *Danes*, who, to avenge themselves of their nobility, in one dreadful moment, made an irretrievable surrender of their own liberty, and that of their posterity, into the hands of a Tyrant. And had I been disposed to work upon the passions, rather than address the reason of my readers, the mention which was made in my last of the arbitrary governments of France and Spain, their bloody massacres and unrelenting persecutions, gave me an opportunity of entering into descriptions, which would have "harrow'd up the very souls" of Protestants and Freemen.

The Administration of Great-Britain itself, daring as they seem to be, have not yet dared to recur to the desperate measure of calling in foreign aid. But some of our best friends intimate that an example of this kind, on either side, would justify the like conduct on the other. A great majority of the patriotic freeholders of the county of Berks in England, nobly supporting our cause before the throne, compliment us upon this—that we have not thrown ourselves into the arms of other powers, and that "our petitions have yet appeared before no throne but that of Britain. Let not England (say they) set an example which is but too easily copied, by drawing into a free country the insidious and mercenary aid of foreign forces, trained to the support of barbarous Despotism. The moment that a great army of such, or of any foreigners, shall enter your territories, the liberties of your people are at an end.—Strenuous as we are for the honour of our country, we cannot be forgetful of its peace and concord. It is therefore we abhor the idea of encouraging foreigners to make a prey of this nation, and its dependencies, under the miserable and uncovered pretext of discountenancing faction and sedition among ourselves."

It is but too reasonable, then, to conclude, that whichever side, Great-Britain or America, shall first call in foreign assistance, will but force the other into the same desperate measure. In either case, this devoted land would become one field of blood and carnage for a length of years; which, at last, it is to be apprehended, would only be dreadfully closed in our perpetual subjection and slavery to the victorious side, whether allies or foes! It is, indeed, impossible to describe the miseries of that country, which is once made the seat of foreign wars. Torn in pieces by contending armies, subjected to the alternate ravages and oppressions of rival powers, the Merchant, the Farmer, the Peasant, has nothing to call his own. Even the wife of his bosom, and the daughter of his affection, are not safe from the unholy violence of mercenary soldiery, rioting through every corner of a land not their own, insolent in victory, and barbarous in defeat.

Altho' we now sadly bleed under the cruel hand of an unjust administration, who have kindled up a most unnatural war among brethren in their own land, yet (God be thanked) that war hath not reached, and I trust will never be able to reach, much further than our sea shores. A nation, cannot long continue totally blind to all its most essential interests. Our own vigor and virtue have already gone a great way to convince our oppressors of the inanity, as well as the impracticability, of their schemes to govern a great and distant country by force. Perseverance, on our side, will speedily accomplish the rest. Our friends in Britain, unbought by us and uncorrupted by our foes, are yet of more worth to us than whole nations of foreigners, drawn into our assistance by mercenary or interested views. If, by no precipitate or unnecessary measures, we forfeit the esteem of the former, and make them also enemies, we shall prevail by our united strength. The devices of those, who, for ambitious purposes, strive to divide a house against itself, will be finally confounded; and the whole family of Britons, on both sides of the Atlantic, may yet be bound together, by fresh ties of mutual love and interest—for many generations!

But, I repeat it once more—by the former measure of calling in foreigners to decide our quarrels, we shall bleed, not in a few parts only, but at every pore; and the present generation will not probably see the end of the contest. Would to Heaven, that they who press such a measure, as preferable to reconciliation with our ancient friends, upon whatever terms, could but behold the face of Poland, and visit the scenes of havoc and desolation which mark the late footsteps of contending foreign powers in that country; or read the accounts of the like scenes in many parts of Germany! They would not then continue to urge such a measure, till they could clearly prove that the last necessity was come.

[For the Remainder see the fourth Page.]

Pennsylvania Ledger, 9 March 1776

CATO TO THE PEOPLE OF PENNSYLVANIA. — LETTER I.

MY DEAR COUNTRYMEN: The wisdom of some nations has been greatly commended, because they never enacted any new law, nor suffered any innovation in their ancient Constitutions, without first proposing the matter to the people, and giving them a full opportunity to express their approbation or dislike. It is true, we have never come up to the perfection of this rule; yet in the former happy days of the Province, it was a good and salutary custom among us, freely to discuss and examine, all publick affairs, in conversation as well as writing, when occasion required. And although since the commencement of our present troubles, this rule could not always be observed, yet every unnecessary deviation from it has but added to the affliction of many real friends of *America*.

Grievous as the least restraint upon the press must always be to a people entitled to freedom, it must be the more so, when it is not only unwarranted by those to whom they have committed the care of their liberties, but cannot be warranted by them, consistent with liberty itself. Nevertheless we readily submitted to it, while any colourable pretext could be offered for requiring such a submission. Nay, we have done more — we have too quietly yielded to a few who have been claiming one power after another, till at length, encouraged by their success, and prostituting the cry of publick necessity to cloak an ambition which needs as much to be checked in the lowest as the highest, they have now the astonishing boldness to aim at a total destruction of our charter Constitution, and seizing into their own hands our whole domestick police, with Legislative as well as Executive authority.

To prepare the way for effecting this most ruinous design, the majesty of the people of *Pennsylvania* has been grievously wounded in the persons of their legal Representatives, by repeated attempts to intimidate them in the discharge of the great trust committed to them by the voice of their country, and the most scurrilous misrepresentation of patriotick exertions, which have not been exceeded by any other body upon the Continent.

Since the press is at length become so free that such publications are thought tolerable on one side, it cannot but be judged reasonable that it should be equally free on the other side also, especially where charges are to be answered and innocence defended. At all risks I am determined to make the experiment, and to offer one appeal to the remainder of our ancient virtue. Nor need any persons be alarmed; for an indecent or angry expression shall not dishonour my pen, nor yet a single sentiment, which is not calculated to cement all parties in the Province, upon safe and popular grounds, more firmly than ever, in executing the resolves of Congress, and maintaining *American* liberty. So far as our Committees confine themselves to the purposes of their appointment, which are merely executive; so far as they are exerting themselves to effect what is well expressed in the *Evening Post* of last *Thursday*, to have been their original design, viz: “a faithful execution of the Association entered into by the Continental Congress, relieving and assisting those who may suffer by the suspension of trade; promoting reconciliation upon constitutional principles between *Great Britain* and her Colonies; the encouraging the manufactory of such articles as are necessary for our existence, clothing, defence; the preventing manufacturers or venders of goods and merchandise from selling the same at unusual or extravagant profit;” and holding up transgressors of every rank to publick censure, without fear or affection — so far, I say, they ought to have the thanks of their country, for generously bestowing their time and attention

to its service, and ought to be supported by all good men. In this view they deserve the greatest commendation for their late vigorous endeavours to rescue their injured fellow-citizens from the avaricious gripe of engrossers and forestallers.

But if, instead of being confined to such purposes as these, any individuals of our Committees, who, I trust, will never amount to a majority, should, by the bait of power thrown out to them by designing men of this or any other Province, be led out of their line, to interfere in matters foreign to their appointment, I am persuaded, that when they seriously consider what may be offered on this head, they will perceive that such a conduct (as it never can be submitted to by the people of this Province) would give a more effectual stab to our domestick harmony, and to the publick cause, than all the efforts of all the disaffected persons in *America* can give.

In carrying on our great controversy with *England*, *Pennsylvania* has no need either to make the least sacrifice of its Constitution, nor yet to yield in zeal to the foremost of the Colonies. It has been our singular happiness from the beginning, that we have been able to grant, and have actually granted, as large sums for the common service as, any of our neighbours, in proportion. to our numbers; and that these grants, have been made in a way to which the people were accustomed, and to which they have given their sanction, by re-electing the same men, since the contest with *England* had advanced into open war; thereby pledging themselves to submit to whatever mode may be adopted by future Assemblies for sinking the immense sums with which the Province is charged, as well as signifying the fullest approbation of the measures which have been concerted for our defence.

This great privilege which we enjoy, of giving our free unbiased voice annually In the choice of an Assembly, who, from that moment, by charter, become a constitutional body, vested with the authority of the people, and can meet when they please, and sit as long as they judge necessary — this privilege, I say, and the ease and quiet with which our publick business has been transacted during the present contest, have been the envy and admiration of our neighbours, who, enjoying no such perfection in their civil Constitutions, have been driven into the measure of Conventions, and forced to hazard the emission of money, and other acts of state, under disadvantages which need not be mentioned here, as we are yet happily free from them. Would any wise people, enjoying such a Constitution, ever think of destroying it with their own hands? Or does any other Colony, whose Assemblies can exercise their authority, ever think of committing the conduct of affairs to Conventions?

But suppose, our Assembly really chargeable with any other culpable neglect of duty, with what face could those of our present Committee, who are so loud in their clamours against them, pretend to step into their seats? Were they chosen for that purpose? No! They were considered as chosen for the purposes already mentioned; and although they consist of a hundred members, they had not two hundred votes. Few people gave themselves, any concern about the election, being well satisfied that any number of respectable citizens who would take the trouble of a Committee of Inspection, should be thankfully indulged with the office. But would this have been the case, had it been imagined that any among them would ever aspire at the powers vested in an Assembly, fairly and constitutionally elected, to represent two or three hundred thousand people? For, whatever may be pretended about the necessity of a Convention, it is certain, that if such a body were to meet, and could succeed in assuming the powers of Government, they must all at length

be vested, for the sake of execution, in the hands of a few men, who consider themselves, as leaders in the city of *Philadelphia*; and the Province in general have but little to say in the matter.

These are very serious and alarming considerations to many; and, therefore, after discussing a certain point of equal importance in my second letter, I will proceed in the succeeding ones to inquire into the justice of such complaints as have been made against the Assembly, In some instances, probably, these complaints may appear to be well founded. Where they are so, I shall be ready to confess it; and as perfection is not to be expected in the first hasty essays of any publick bodies, providing for new and unprecedented cases, I doubt not they will readily make such amendments as may appear necessary to themselves, or be suggested by reasonable men. In some instances, I shall show that they deserve publick thanks, for refusing to comply with some requisitions formerly made; and that others are now made, which they cannot assent to, without a manifest violation of our Constitution; such as blending the military and civil power, and giving Field-Officers, who may hold their places for life, the power of determining appeals, and discharging assessments, which is now safely lodged in the constitutional way, with Commissioners chosen by the people.

CATO.

Pennsylvania Ledger, 16 March 1776

CATO TO THE PEOPLE OF PENNSYLVANIA. — LETTER II.

As I propose to take my subjects as they rise out of the times, I shall leave to my next letter the further defence of our Assembly, to give room for a matter of very great importance, agreeable to what was hinted in the conclusion of my first letter.

The account which we have already received of Commissioners being appointed in *England*, and ready to embark for *America*, in order to negotiate a settlement of the present unhappy differences, has engaged the attention, and exercised the speculations of many among us. The powers with which they are to be invested, the manner in which they are to be received, how they are to be treated with, or whether they are to be treat

d with at all, have been canvassed agreeably to the different views or judgments of individuals.

Among others, a writer under the name of *Cassandra*, in the *Pennsylvania Evening Post* of last *Saturday* week, has held forth sentiments which I conceive highly disgraceful to *America*, and pernicious to society in general. He pretends to have satisfied himself (but upon what grounds I know not) that the sole view of the Administration in this commission is, to amuse and deceive — to bribe and corrupt us. And because he supposes all of us so very corruptible, he proposes, by way of prevention, to seize the Commissioners upon their first setting foot on shore, and bring them immediately, under a strong guard, to the Congress. I have too good an opinion of the virtue and good sense of my countrymen, to think they will pay any other regard to this advice than to consider the author as an enthusiast or madman

The contest in which we are engaged is founded on the most noble and virtuous principles which can animate the mind of man. We are contending, at the risk of our lives and fortunes, against an arbitrary Ministry for the rights of *Englishmen*. The eyes of all *Europe* are upon us, and every

generous bosom in which the pulse of liberty yet beats, sympathises with us, and is interested in our success. Our cause, therefore, being the cause of virtue, it will be expected that all our steps should be guided by it, and that, where the stock is so fair, the fruit will be proportionably perfect. Let us not disappoint these sanguine expectations by the smallest deviation from those liberal and enlarged sentiments which should mark the conduct of freemen; and, when the faithful historick page shall record the events of this glorious struggle, may not, a single line in the bright annals be stained by the recital of a disgraceful action, nor future *Americans* have cause to blush for the fallings of their ancestors.

I trust that there is not such another barbarian among us as *Cassandra*. I am sure there are none such among our savage neighbours. To what is it that he would persuade us? To receive with contempt, and treat with insult, men commissioned to negotiate with us about matters of the highest concern to *America*, and at least professing peace — persons clothed with the character of Ambassadors, which has been uniformly esteemed sacred by every nation and in every age!

Can a precedent be produced in any country, or at any period, which could be proposed for our imitation, or give countenance to such a proceeding? Let this writer turn over the volumes which establish the principles of the Law of Nations. Let him search the history of every State, both ancient and modern, civilized and uncivilized. He will find none so fierce and rude as not to reverence the rights of Ambassadors, and consider any insult of their persons as the grossest outrage that could be committed. Nay, let him inquire among the numerous tribes of *Indians* that surround our frontiers for some example to countenance him in his proposal. These untutored savages would startle at the question, and wonder that there could be a person so ignorant as not to know that publick messengers, with the calumet in their hands, are entitled to audience, respect, and hospitality. And shall *Americans*, glorying in their attachment to the rights of humanity, be the first to violate obligations which have been thus universally held sacred? No! Let us never give that advantage to those who have been striving to excite the indignation of mankind against us as faithless people, ferocious, barbarous, and uninfluenced by those humane sentiments and finer feelings which, in modern times, have, in some measure, softened the horrors of war. We know that such a charge is as malicious as it is groundless. Instances enough might be produced to refute it, since this contest was carried on by arms; and I trust no future ones will be found which might have a tendency to support it.

As we have long professed an ardent desire for peace, let us meet those who bring the terms, with that virtuous confidence which is inseparable from an upright conduct. Let us hear their proposals with patience, and consider them with candour; remembering how deeply the happiness of millions may be concerned in the issue. If what they offer be such as freemen ought to accept, my voice shall be for an immediate reconciliation, as I know of no object so worthy of a patriot as the healing our wounds, and the restoring of peace, if it has for its basis an effectual security for the liberties of *America*. If, on the contrary, the terms which may be offered should be such as we cannot accept, we have only to say so, and the negotiation will be at an end.

But this writer is greatly concerned for our virtue, lest we should be cajoled, deceived, and corrupted. I confess these fears appear to me so groundless, that I suspect their reality. Is it possible, in good earnest, to entertain so ill an opinion of those who have staked their lives and fortunes on this contest, as to believe that they will suffer themselves to be nattered out of their liberties, or induced to sell their birthright for a mess of pottage?

When I consider that this treaty is to be managed, on the part of *America*, by men delegated for their integrity and abilities by the voice of their country, I feel myself quite easy on that score. If the scheme of the Ministry be to try the arts of corruption where their arms cannot prevail, there are other and less suspicious ways of carrying it into execution than by Commissioners in the face of *America*, where they will have the eyes of all fixed upon them, and their conduct diligently watched and severely scrutinized.

Upon the whole, it appears that this writer is more an enemy to the business on which the Commissioners are to be sent, than really apprehensive for our virtue. He seems to have drank deep of the cup of Independence; to be inimical to whatever carries the appearance of peace; and too ready, to sacrifice the happiness of a great Continent to his favourite plan. Among such Writers, I pretend not to class myself; for I am bold to declare, and hope yet to make it evident to every honest man, that the true interest of *America* lies in reconciliation with *Great Britain* upon constitutional principles; and I can truly say, I wish it upon no other terms.

Why the many publications in favour of Independency (with which our presses have lately groaned) have passed hitherto unnoticed, I am not able to determine. But there are certainly times when publick affairs become so interesting, that every man becomes a debtor to the community for his opinions, either in speaking or writing. Perhaps it was thought best, where an appeal, was pretended to be made to the common sense of this country, to leave the people for a while to the free exercise of that good understanding which they are known to possess. Those who made the appeal have little cause to triumph in its success. Of this they seem sensible; and, like true quacks, are constantly pestering us with their additional doses, till the stomachs of their patients begin wholly to revolt. If little notice has yet been taken of the publications concerning Independence, it is neither owing to the popularity of the doctrine, the unanswerable nature of the arguments, nor the fear of opposing them, as the vanity of the authors would suggest. I am confident that nine-tenths of the people of *Pennsylvania* yet abhor the doctrine.

If we look back to the origin of the present controversy, it will appear that some among us at least have been constantly enlarging their views, and stretching them beyond their first bounds, till at length they have wholly changed their ground. From the claim of Parliament to tax us, sprung the first resistance on our part. Before that unjust claim was set on foot, not an individual, not one of all the profound legislators with which this country abounds, ever held out the idea of Independence. We considered our connection with *Great Britain* as our chief happiness — we flourished, and grew rich and populous, to a degree not to be paralleled in history. Let us then act the part of skillful physicians, and wisely adapt the remedy to the evil.

Possibly some men may have harboured the idea of Independence from the beginning of this controversy. Indeed, it was strongly suspected there were individuals whose views tended that way; but as the scheme was not sufficiently ripened, it was reckoned slanderous, inimical to *America*, and what not, to intimate the least suspicion of this kind.

Nor have many weeks yet elapsed since the first open proposition for Independence was published to the world. By what men of consequence this scheme is supported, or whether by any, may possibly be the subject of future inquiry. Certainly it has no countenance from the Congress, to whose sentiments we look up with reverence. On the contrary, it is directly repugnant to every

declaration of that respectable body. It would be needless to quote particular passages in proof of this, as they are to be met with in almost every page of their proceedings. I will refer to a few only, viz: their Resolves, *March 5, 1775*; their Declaration, *July 6*; their Address to the King, *July 8*; their Letter to the Lord Mayor of *London*; and more especially their Declaration for a Fast, *June 12*, in which, with the deepest marks of sincerity, they call upon all *America* to join with them in addressing the great Governour of the world, “humbly beseeching him to avert the desolating judgments with which we are threatened; to bless our rightful Sovereign,” &c; “that *America* may soon behold a gracious interposition of Heaven for the redress of her many grievances, the restoration of her invaded rights, and reconciliation with the parent State, on terms constitutional and honourable to both.” Will any one be so hardy as to say, that either the appointment or observation of this solemn day was a mere mockery of Heaven and earth, or even that any *American* joined in it, who was not sincere? I trust not. But if multiplying authorities were of any use, I might add the sentiments of our own Representatives in Assembly, expressed in the Instructions to their Delegates; the sentiments of *Maryland* in similar Instructions; the Resolves of *New-Jersey* and *New-Hampshire*; nor shall the much injured Province of *Massachusetts-Bay* be left out of the catalogue, whose Provincial Congress, while yet bleeding with the wounds received at *Lexington*, thus addressed the inhabitants of *Great Britain*: “These are marks of Ministerial vengeance against this Colony, but they have not yet detached us from our Royal Sovereign,” &c; “trusting that, in a constitutional connection with the mother country, we shall soon be a free and happy people.” These were the sentiments of the Colony of the *Massachusetts*, signed by that great martyr to liberty, Doctor *Warren*, and soon after sealed with his blood.

The sentiments of sundry other Colonies might be shown to have corresponded with these; but this letter has already reached its full length. I shall take some future opportunity to examine the arguments which have been offered to induce a change of these sentiments; and, upon the whole, I doubt not to make it appear that Independence is not the cause in which *America* is now engaged, and is only the idol of those who wish to subvert all order among us, and rise on the ruins of their country,

CATO.

Pennsylvania Gazette, 20 March 1776

CASSANDRA TO CATO, No. I.

SIR: I thought you had forgotten the fatal 7th of *November*, 1774, on which all your ambitious projects were blasted by a publick vote of your fellow-citizens, to divide from the County in their choice of Committee-men, and to hold all future elections by ballot; but I find I was mistaken. While Committees were chosen by holding up of bands, and letters from millers and popular harangues could be employed to serve the purposes of your party, though *Cato* could, write, yet no press teemed with his lucubrations; but now that publick business is carried on in the only way which can secure the people from undue influence, and the party has suffered a total defeat in their electioneering attempts, his masterly pen is called forth into the field of political controversy, and, with a few dashes of it, he has overset our Committee of Inspection, demolished the whole tribe of patriotick scribblers in newspapers, and laid *Common Sense* in the dirt; taken a catalogue of all the Whigs and Tories in the Province; converted thirty-six Commissioners (about to be sent over to insult us with tern-is no one can accept) into ambassadors of peace; and poor *Cassandra* into an

enthusiast, madman, barbarian, and drunken Independent. Wretched must the lot of that Whig be who falls into the hands of this fiery defender of Ministerial stratagems. *Daniel* may be protected from the jaws of the lions; but alas! who can protect us when *Cato* is roused? The whole band of us is crushed to atoms with one grasp of his hand. Why did you assure us that no persons need be alarmed, for that no indecent nor angry expression should dishonour your pen? Was it that the suddenness of our destruction might heighten its terrour? Well has the Scriptures assured us that the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.

Your grievous paragraph about restraining the press is so notorious a falsehood, that I boldly put you to defiance to point out the instance. And when you give the publick the names of the few who turned the mode of electing Committees out of the channel of corruption, and thereby excluded you and your colleagues, I will undertake to mention the other few who, contrary to every principle of our Constitution, by a prostitution of the cry of publick necessity, are endeavouring to cloak an unbounded hatred to our present cause, under an affected zeal for constitutional dependance; and who have nearly effected their malicious purposes, of destroying their own liberties to be avenged of their enemies. But let not *Cato* too far provoke the majesty of the people of Pennsylvania, by the bold nourishes of a pen which pays no respect to truth, lest he may find it expedient to end his days on the principles of dependancy.

“Few persons,” says *Cato*, “gave themselves any concern about the election of a Committee of Inspection, being well satisfied that any number of respectable citizens, who would take the trouble of such a Committee, should be thankfully indulged with the office; and although it consists of a hundred members, they had not two hundred votes,” *Cassandra* begs leave to inform *Cato*, that our Committees of Inspection, ever since chosen by ballot, got possession of their office by a more respectable number of voters than any Burgess which sat in the House of Assembly since the first day in which a comparison could be made, as he can make appear by the state of the several elections,

“In carrying on our great controversy with *England, Pennsylvania*,” say you, “has no need either to make the least sacrifice of its Constitution, nor yet to yield in zeal to the foremost of the Colonies.” This assertion might pass for truth on the coast of *Labrador*, or in the deserts of *Siberia*; but the people of *Pennsylvania* must have drunk deep of the waters of oblivion, and laid aside all pretensions to recollection, before they can consider such assertions in any other light than insults on their understanding. Can *Cato* inform them of the single measure that can be pursued in the line of our Charter Constitution? I should gladly view the paragraph which gives our Assembly the power of legislating without the Governour; and *Cato* is too well acquainted with the King’s Representative, to believe he would ever give his sanction to our opposition. Name the act of Assembly, *Cato*, which makes legal tender of the money they have so patriotically struck, and I will believe you have for once strayed into the truth. But because our Representatives can do nothing legal without the Governour, therefore *Cato* is fiery hot for confining our opposition to them, and not to a Convention, which is under no such restrictions. The interest of the Governour, and not of the people, is plainly *Cato*’s.

“The great privilege,” you add, “which we enjoy of giving our free unbiased voice, annually, in the choice of an Assembly, who, from that moment, by charter, become a constitutional body, vested with the authority of the people, and can meet when they please, and sit as long as they

judge necessary.” Here, sir, you prudently drop the consideration of their being a constitutional body. Had you pointed out the advantages of constitutionally meeting and sitting, when they can constitutionally do no more, you had told us something. But this, alas! was out of your power. So much for your first letter.

In your second, you begin by saying that you know not on what grounds I have satisfied myself that the sole view of Administration, in this commission, is to amuse and deceive, to bribe and corrupt us. It may be so, sir, though I hope you have not the vanity to set up your knowledge as the standard of truth. Did you read the piece, and attempt to pick to pieces the principles and arguments on which my advice is founded? I begin to think you did; and finding them too hard to overturn, you vent your spleen in railing at the author. But do you recollect Lord *North's* conciliatory plan, and his explanation of it, viz: Substantial revenue, *divide et impera*, &c.? Do you remember the King's speech at the opening of the present sessions of Parliament, and the re-echo of both Houses? the extensive plan of warlike operations which he means to carry on against us? and his appointing persons who shall, on the spot, dispense most gracious pardons to all such as shall acknowledge their faults and plead forgiveness? — (a new species of Ambassadors, not heretofore taken notice of by the writers on the laws of nature and nations.) Do you remember General *Gage's* plan for disarming the people of *Boston*, and the faith he observes in treaties? and that *Howe*, his successor, pursues the same infernal plan? Or have you totally forgot what the Prime Minister said, on his declaring that he was ready to restore us to the state we were in before the year 1763; for that we did not then deny the right of Parliament to tax *America*? Or do you forget that every proposal for reconciliation, made by the friends of *America* in Parliament, was rejected without a division? Had *Cato* remembered these things, or if he can be brought to remember them, he will have as much reason to suspect the designs of the Commissioners as *Cassandra*. Perhaps it suits not with *Cato's* plan to remember these things, though he can recollect many others of a much earlier date. *Cato* may be much better acquainted with our savage neighbours than *Cassandra*, as doubtless he has traversed the uncultivated woods of *America* more frequently than he; yet it may not be an easy matter to convince the people of this Province that the dread of losing all hopes of preferment, if the counsel of *Cassandra* is taken, has not called forth this champion for an undefined dependance from that obscurity into which he has nearly fallen. It remains a doubt with me whether the historick page will ever transmit your name to posterity as the first *American D — t — y*, if you are not permitted to shake hands with the Commissioners, and allowed the opportunity of explaining your mysterious conduct. I shall long turn over the volumes which establish the principles of the laws of nature and nations, before I read of ambassadors of peace, attended with Acts of Parliament to confiscate, and Royal Proclamations to divide, the property of those they are to treat with; and backed by immense armies of Ministerial cut-throats, to enforce their demands. *Cato's* great reading, no doubt, can supply the publick with a few instances of untutored savages receiving ambassadors, thus attended, with respect and hospitality, and smoking the calumet of peace with them. However, until he does, I trust he will grant to *Cassandra* the liberty of thinking otherwise, and do him the justice to believe that he knows as much about the rights of ambassadors as *Cato*. *Cassandra* confesses that he is greatly concerned for our virtue, lest we should be cajoled, deceived, and corrupted. *Cato* is not so. Corruption may be more familiar to *Cato*, which will fully account for our difference in sentiment. I am so much of a Christian as to pray that we may not be led into temptation. This, sir, may form no part of your devotion. But if *Cato* is so easy on the score of this treaty, because it is to be managed by men delegated for their integrity and abilities by the voice of their country, why

is he enraged at my attempt to confine them to these virtuous Delegates? *Cassandra* is not afraid of the Delegates. It is to keep our modem *Catos* from doing us mischief that he is so anxiously concerned; and if *Cato* has read his proposal, he knows it to be so. But, *Cato*, had you adopted a signature correspondent with your designs, my present reply might be unnecessary; and if you yet change your present one for *Syphax*, *Sempronius*, or *Iago*, I may spare the printer much of my intended lucubrations. I believe the world will readily agree with me, that either of the three would be truly characteristic of your present designs, if not of your general character as a man and a politician.

The cup out of which *Cassandra* has drank was never employed to offer libations at the altar of Royal despotism or Proprietary influence. He knows no guide but reason and love of mankind, as he neither wishes nor expects to be Prime Minister to any future would-be King of *Pennsylvania*. He is always ready to defend his rights at the risk of his life; and prefers present war to future slavery, being conscious that a great continent will be much happier with the one than the other. *Britain* has risen triumphant, in a few years, out of bloodier wars than ever *America* has been or will be called to; but *Egypt* has not, for thousands of years, recovered from the yoke of foreign oppression. *Cassandra* longs to see your bold declaration made good. But why so long about it? Come to the point, sir. The presses are very open for the reception of your wonderful productions. But I beseech you, dear sir, to lay aside groundless declamation for the future, and speak a language which facts will support. The people of *Pennsylvania*, I trust, will ever have the good sense to prefer *Common Sense* to the appeals of any Government tool which may appear in defence of a union with those who know no law, human or divine, but the law of violence and murder, and who have their *Catos* in all quarters to delude and deceive; men who sell their consciences for the prospect of future advantages. Don't be angry, *Cato*. Give your name to the publick, and I will stand corrected if I have missed my object.

You make a great clamour because we have been constantly enlarging our views, and stretching them beyond the first bounds. But let me tell you, *Cato*, that nothing can be a greater proof of your iniquitous designs than your present attempt to confine them. Has not Administration first passed a Declaratory Act; then an act laying duties on paper, painters' colours, &c'; then their acts to export their teas to *America*; then a *Boston* Port Act; an act to destroy the Charter of *Massachusetts*; a Restraining Act, &c', &c'? Acts to confiscate our property, and levy the most cruel and unjust war against us? Have not they been constantly enlarging their plans, to the last of all acts of tyranny, murder, and robbery? And are we to remain insensible all this time, and never enlarge our views? Where would be the wisdom of all this, *Cato*?

You artfully introduce quotations from the proceedings of Congress, to lead the people astray, by producing extracts which you know neither can nor do speak the sentiments of Congress on the subject. Congress early spoke their sentiments on that head, but *Cato* could not recollect the passage. It did not coincide with his plan, of imposing on the people of *Pennsylvania*.

“Between these Colonies and the People of *Britain* (says the Congress, in their Address to the Inhabitants of the Colonies, published in their Resolves of *September 5, 1774*) subsists the social band which we ardently wish may never be dissolved, and which cannot be dissolved until their minds shall become indisputably hostile, or their inattention shall permit those who are thus hostile to persist in prosecuting, with the powers of the realm, the destructive measures already operating

against these Colonies; and, in either case, shall reduce the latter to such a situation, that they shall be compelled to renounce every regard but that of self-preservation.”

This was the opinion of Congress at that time. I will leave it to *Cato* to determine whether both or either of the cases there mentioned have not taken place. *Cato* does not class himself with *Cassandra* and the writers on that side of the question; this does not much trouble *Cassandra*, I assure you; inasmuch as he can class his own with the sentiments of the celebrated Dr. *Smith*, who, in his address to the graduates, in *May* last, says: “The glory of every country is its liberty, its independency, and its improvements in commerce, arts, and religion.” And I believe the sentiments of this gentleman are as much esteemed among those of your party as the sentiments of *Cato*.

CASSANDRA.

Pennsylvania Gazette, 20 March 1776

CATO 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 publick seems willing to ascribe it to motives of prudence, suggested by the general disapprobation of the Convention scheme, the zeal shown among all ranks of people for the support of our ancient Government by Assemblies, 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 County 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 letters [or issuing the writs] for calling a Convention.”

This is rather spoken in a lordly style, if it be anything 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 everything 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 Republick 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 [Independence] 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 Independence, the Congress should only (as in the former case) echo back the sentiments of that people;” that is, of Committees and Conventions. And thus we may be echoed and re-echoed put 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 was chosen; and I know some Counties where the whole 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 nowhere be 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 newspapers 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 inquiring 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 connection 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 connection with her, and can expect to reap nowhere 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 a 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 connection 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 our 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.

This, 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 falsify 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 publick 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 attempted 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 nourishing condition of farmers and merchants, for a life, at best, of hardy poverty as soldiers or hunters.

To see *America* reduced to such a situation may be the choice of adventurers who have nothing to lose, or of men exalted by the present confusions into lucrative offices, which they can hold no longer than the continuance of the publick calamities. But can it be the wish of all that great and valuable body of people in *America*, who, by honest industry, have acquired a competency, and have experienced a happier life? Can it be their wish, I say, for such considerations, to have destruction continually before their eyes; and to have enormous debts entailed upon them and their posterity, till at length they have nothing left which they can truly call their own?

I know the answers which will be given to these questions, and am prepared to reply to them, with that temper and gravity which so Serious a subject requires. It will be asserted — indeed it has already been asserted — that the animosities between *Great Britain* and the Colonies are now advanced to such a height that reconciliation is impossible. But assertions are nothing, when opposed to the nature of things, the truth of history, and all past experience. The quarrels of nations, being neither personal or private, cannot stir up mutual hatred among individuals. There never was a war so implacable, even among States naturally rivals and enemies, or among savages themselves, as not to have peace for its object as well as end. And among people naturally friends, and connected by every dearer tie, who knows not that their quarrels (as those of lovers) are often but a stronger renewal of love? In such cases, the tide of affection, reverting to its course, is like that of water long pent back, which, at length bursting the opposing mounds, breaks forward through its native channel, and flows with redoubled vigour and increased velocity, to mix itself with its parent main.

It has been further asserted, that we are able, with our land forces, to defend ourselves against the whole world; that if commerce be an advantage, we may command what foreign alliances we please; that the moment we declare ourselves an independent people, there are nations ready to face the *British* thunder, and become the carriers of our commodities for the sake of enriching themselves; that if this were not the case, we can soon build navies to force and protect a trade; that a confederacy of the Colonies into one great Republick is preferable to Kingly Government, which is the appointment of the *Devil*, or at least reprobated by *God*; that those denominated wise men in our own and foreign countries, who have been so lavish of their encomiums upon the *English* Constitution, were but egregious fools; that it is nothing better than a bungling piece of

machinery, standing in need of constant checks to regulate and continue its motions; that the nation itself is but one mass of corruption, having at its head a Royal brute, a hardened Pharaoh, delighting in blood; that we never can enjoy liberty in connection with such a country; and, therefore, all the hardships mentioned above, and a thousand times more, if necessary, are to be endured for the preservation of our rights.

If these things had been as fully proved as they are boldly asserted by the authors of what is called *Common Sense*, I should here drop my pen, and, through the short remainder of life, take my chance of whatever miseries Providence may have in reserve for this land, as I know of none else to which I can retire. But as these doctrines contradict everything which we have hitherto been taught to believe respecting Government, I hope you, my dear countrymen, have yet kept one ear open to hear what answer may be given in my future letters,

CATO.

TIBERIUS TO CATO.

Philadelphia, March 14, 1776.

Cato, if the designs which you, in your first letter, have laid to the charge of Committees are conceived or adopted by them, they are indeed very dangerous bodies of men, and you have done nobly in exposing them. But, sir, you ought to go further, and support the charge by facts, otherwise the accusation will not gain much credit upon the word of an anonymous author. What are the facts upon which the following charges stand? viz: That a few have been aiming to destroy our Charter Constitution, and seize the Executive, as well as Legislative authority of the Province. In what instance, and by whom, has an attempt been made to Intimidate our legal Representatives, or their patriotick exertions been misrepresented and treated scurrilously? Upon what ground do you rest your charge against Committees of design to step into the seats of the Assembly? And wherefore have you intimated that baits of power have been thrown out by the people of this or some other Province, to lead individuals out of the line of their duty?

For these things you are answerable to the publick; and if you have ground for the charge, speak out, and speak boldly — do not be affrighted; the danger of speaking truth is not so great as you seem to fear. Use yourself to it, and you will soon be convinced, by experience, that there is little risk in it — the danger lies wholly in the uttering of falsehoods.

As to the account you give of the election of the Committee, it is evident you are mistaken; for wickedness itself, with a single grain of common sense mixed with it, would not have misstated the fact where it is well known as you have done. It could have answered no purpose. And, as you may have occasion to mention these things again, give me leave, sir, to remind you that, on the 18th of June, 1774, a Committee was appointed by the publick voice for the purpose of taking into consideration the general state of publick affairs, and sat, with the Committees of the Counties, in General Convention; where the whole state of our publick affairs, (so far as related to the present controversy,) was considered and determined upon. The Convention recommended the continuation of Committees throughout the Province; and authorized the Committee of Philadelphia to call another Convention when they should judge it necessary. In consequence

of this recommendation, an election was advertised by the Committee first chosen, to be held on the 12th of November. Hereupon, a question arose on the mode of election — whether it should be by publick voice, poll, or ballot. And it was determined at a publick meeting, called for that purpose, that it should be by ballot. Two tickets were, by the then two parties, made out, printed, and handed to the publick for their examination and amendment. At the day of election five hundred and seventeen voters, besides the voters from the District of Southwark, gave in their votes; and, upon counting them off, there appeared to be four hundred and ninety-nine for one ticket, with very few exceptions to any one name; and eighteen only for the other ticket — a majority so clear and so evident, that there could not be a doubt how the election would go; which rendered it unnecessary for the voters to turn out so generally as they otherwise would have done. As the conduct of the Committee then chosen had the approbation of all the friends to the present opposition to the wicked measures of Great Britain, at the two following elections few alterations were made, and the persons proposed were so generally approved, it would have been unnecessary to have voted at all, but for the formality and name of the thing. You are also greatly mistaken in the number of voters for the present Committee, and I would set you right herein, if it were at all material in the case. But if you know, anything of our elections, you must know that the circumstance of having but a few voters is common in our elections, even for Assemblymen and Burgesses, where there is little or no change proposed, or where the new candidate has the voice of the people generally in his favour. You are undoubtedly right in your observation, that attempts of unjustly acquiring power should be equally restrained in the lowest as in the highest; and the observation points out the necessity there is for the middle class of men constantly to watch both these orders, and rigorously to exert themselves in the defence of liberty; for upon their conduct will for ever depend the liberty of mankind.

But if your other charges and insinuations are as unjust and groundless as the insinuations respecting the Committee, whatever declarations of regard to order, Government, Charter rights, and liberty, which you may make; and whether your complexion be black, brown, or fair, your conduct and sentiments will resemble a modern (more than an ancient) Cato, who will consent to live a slave rather than to die free.

TIBERIUS.

Cato to Tiberius

greeting. Questions civilly proposed deserve a civil answer, which shall be speedily given to those of *Tiberius*. Urbanity becomes us *Romans*; and *Cato* is proud to correspond with one assuming that character, although he is not fond of the imperial name. He has no quarrel with our Committee as a publick body, and regards many of the members as fit to fill any station to which they may be called by their country. If he cannot support his charges against the individuals who projected the Convention scheme, he will cheerfully acknowledge his mistake. He never expected to finish these letters without opposition. The question is, whether the liberty and happiness of *America* can be best secured by a constitutional reconciliation with *Great Britain*, or by a total separation from it? *Cato* is willing to be judged by his countrymen, when the whole of his arguments shall be submitted to them. Whatever may be insinuated before that time, he will scarce think worthy of regard; and it was rather unbecoming *Tiberius*, so early in the dispute to suggest that “the sentiments (in the letters) may resemble a modern, more than an ancient, *Cato*, who will consent

to live a slave rather than to die free.” The inaccuracy of expression, in making sentiments resemble men, may be passed over; for where a person’s meaning can be picked out, in such a contest as this, *Cato* despises a war about words.

N’ B’ The twelve queries in the *Evening Post* are, In substance, the same as the questions of *Tiberius*, and the same answer will serve for both.

Pennsylvania Packet, 25 March 1776

CATO TO THE PEOPLE OF PENNSYLVANIA. — LETTER IV.

The authors — or (if I must say) author of what is called *Common Sense*, has certainly had fair play. Full time has been allowed him by the sale of his pamphlet to reap the fruits of his labours, and gratify that avidity with which many are apt to devour doctrines that are out of the common way — bold, marvellous, and flattering. What was intended as a compliment to the publick — to give them time to gaze with their own eyes, and reason with their own faculties, upon this extraordinary appearance — the author’s vanity has construed wholly in his own favour. He has called repeatedly for answers, and announced his second edition to the world in the following strain of self-adulation: “That, as no answer hath yet appeared, it is now presumed that none will;” and, therefore, as may be fairly implied, that he is unanswerable. Why, then, when his challenge is accepted, will not he and his seconds fight upon fair terms? Why will they seek to draw the attention of the publick from things to men, refusing that quarter to others which the author of *Common Sense* craves for himself? “Who the author of this publication is, (says he,) is wholly unnecessary to the publick, as the object of attention is the doctrine itself, and not the man!” Can this sentence be reconciled to all the pother made about *Cato* — who and what he is? or does it not rather betray some symptoms of fear and cowardice, to beset him at the threshold, and seek to stop him in his march to the field? What, although he attempts to walk forth humbly with his staff in his hand, and has been somewhat late in filling his scrip with stones to meet this *Goliath*, should he therefore be tauntingly defied? If what is called *Common Sense* be really *common sense*, it is invulnerable, and every attack upon it will but add to the author’s triumph. If it should be proved, in any instances, to be *nonsense*, millions will be interested in the discovery; and to them I appeal.

Once more I repeat the design of these letters, in which I conceive a question to be involved of the greatest importance that ever came before us — a question not yet decided, and which ought, therefore, to be fully discussed. Opprobrious names can prove nothing here, except that they who use them have nothing better to say, and are afraid of their cause. It is probable that some may see their interest upon one side of the question, and some upon the other; but that the great body of the people can have any interest separate from their country, or (when fairly understood) pursue any other, is not to be imagined. If *Cato* may be believed, he can conscientiously class himself with this great body, and can assure his readers that the guesses hitherto made concerning him are rather unlucky.

Great pains have been taken to engage him in a contest with our Committee; but, as nothing has been quoted from him which concerns that body in general, he leaves his letters to answer for themselves; and if his comments on the circular letter to the County Committees should appear to the publick not to be well warranted, he will submit to their judgment. But he finds it would be

endless to answer all the silly queries and daily scribble of his opponents; and has learned better than to be drawn from his main object by indulging them in this way. It would be too great a trespass upon the reader's patience. He has viewed the ground on which he stands, and is not afraid to tread it in the sight of the most vigilant son of liberty; making that free use of the press which is promised to him, without the least violation of any resolve of this Continent hitherto made.

One side of a great question has been held up to us. We are told that it can never be our interest to have any future connection with *Great Britain*; and are pressed immediately to declare our total separation; for now is the time, and the time has found us. Could it be expected that all *America* would instantly take a leap in the dark? or that any who had not a predilection for the doctrine, or were capable of reasoning upon it, would swallow it in the gross, without wishing to hear the arguments on the other side? I am sure this is the wish of multitudes of good men — particularly of those who may be principally concerned in deciding the question, and whose earnest desire it is not only to know the sense of individuals, but the clear sense of their country upon it; without which, they could not think themselves at liberty to give their decision.

Upon this ground, then, I proceed, and shall rest the cause with my adversaries on the present general defence, which (although I am sorry it was necessary) I have reason to think will be more acceptable to the publick than the misspending time in private altercation. Those who oppose me may enjoy, for a while, (perhaps unnoticed;) all the triumph of the answers they may give; and if it is found at last, as has been already hinted, that I have said nothing to the purpose, their side of the question will only be strengthened.

In my remarks upon the pamphlet before me, I shall first consider those arguments on which the author appears to lay his chief stress; and these are collected under four heads, in his conclusion: "It is the custom of nations, when any two are at war, for some other Powers, not engaged in the quarrel, to step in as mediators, and bring about the preliminaries of peace. But while *America* calls herself a subject of *Great Britain*, no Power, however well disposed she may be, can offer her mediation."

Is this *common sense* or common nonsense? Surely peace with *Great Britain* cannot be the object of this writer, after the horrible character he has given us of the people of that country, and telling us that reconciliation with them would be ruin. The latter part of the paragraph seems to cast some light upon the former, although it contradicts it; for these mediators are not to interfere for making up the quarrel, but to widen it, by supporting us in a declaration that we are not subjects of *Great Britain*. A new sort of business, truly, for mediators!

But this leads us directly to the main inquiry, What foreign Powers are able to give us this support? Whether they can be persuaded to engage with us? What will be their terms? Is an alliance with them safe; or is it to be preferred to an honourable and firm renewal of that ancient connection under which we have so long flourished?

These questions cannot but employ the most serious thoughts of men whose all is at stake in the resolution of them; and they ought to be answered to the general satisfaction, before we are launched out into a tempestuous ocean, of which we know not the other shore. That a continuance of mutual violence and hate may at last force us upon such an ocean is not altogether improbable;

and it is possible we may gain some port of safety, although in a shattered condition. Not a word shall be drawn from me to discredit our own strength or resources: although the accounts given of them by the author of *Common Sense* appear incredible to some, I will even go beyond him in expressing my good opinion of our situation. He thinks foreign assistance necessary to us. I think we should but be injured by it. We are able to defend our own rights, and to frustrate the attempt of any nation upon earth to govern us by force. For my part, I would risk my all in resisting every attempt of this kind at every hazard.

But let us see what assistance he offers us: and we find *France* and *Spain* held out for that purpose, although not as mediators to “strengthen the connection between *Great Britain* and *America*,” but wholly to dissolve it.

As to *Spain*, it is well known that the Government of her own unwieldy Colonies is already a weight which she can hardly bear; and some profound politicians have thought that, from the first, she has rather been weakened than strengthened by them; and that all her returns of gold and silver from *America* are but a poor compensation for the lives and cost with which they are purchased. It may well be questioned, then, (supposing *Spain* were able to assist us in erecting an independent empire in *America*.) whether her jealousy would permit her to risk the possibility of our seducing her own *American* subjects into an alliance with us, for the purpose of a future revolt from herself. But our author mentions *France*, as well as *Spain*, and thus proposes that both branches of the *Bourbon* family, so long the terrour of Protestants and freemen, should now join as their protectors. By what means, or at what price, is this marvellous revolution in the system of politicks, religion, and liberty, to be accomplished? How are these two Powers to divide these Colonies between them? Is their guardianship to be joint or separate? Under whose wing is *Pennsylvania* to fall that of the most Catholick, or most Christian King?

I confess that those questions stagger me; and, till answered to satisfaction, cannot but give every good man the most painful apprehensions concerning the future fate of his country. To be told by the author of *Common Sense* that all this is mere prejudice; that we must divest ourselves of every opinion in which we have been educated, in order to digest his pure doctrine, and throw down what our fathers and we have been building up for ages, to make room for his visionary fabrick; I say, to be told this, is only insult instead of argument, and can be tolerated by none but those who are so far inflamed or interested, that separation from *Great Britain*, at any risk, is their choice, rather than reconciliation, upon whatever terms.

This, I much fear, is the temper of those who are constantly dinning in our ears the necessity of an immediate Declaration of Independence, for the sake of procuring foreign assistance, especially that of *France*. Their real desire is, to shut the door against all further reconciliation, by this precipitate step. The matter of foreign assistance is a mere decoy. Can we imagine that, if *France* thought it her interest to quarrel with *Great Britain* for any benefits to be derived from us, her delicacy would stand in her way? Was she ever restricted by such delicacy in any of the former civil wars of her neighbours, especially those of *Great Britain*? But the truth is, that, in the present ruinous state of her finances, and feeble condition of her fleets, she will scarce think it prudent (for any prospects we can yield her) to rush into a new and expensive war, when so ill recruited, after the blood and treasure which she lavished so ineffectually in the last.

Would it be wise, then, to risk a refusal from her, or to mix our affairs with those of any foreign Power whatever in this contest with *Great Britain*? No; I conceive this would only protract our wars, increase our dangers, weaken our force, and probably end in our ruin. And of all nations in the world, *France* is the last from which we should seek assistance, even if it were necessary. What kind of assistance do we expect from her? Gold and silver she can but ill afford to give us; her men we have no occasion for; and, in a word, until she has a fleet able to contend with that of *England*, she can do us no essential service. The want of such a fleet has been the great bar to her numerous projects for universal empire. Can any Protestant — can you, my countrymen, ever wish to see her possessed of such a fleet, assist her in attaining it, or willingly give her footing in *America*? Would she then be contented to be the humble ally of these Colonies; or would she not, in her own right, resume *Canada*, which, according to, the limits she formerly claimed, is larger than all our Provinces together? Could we hinder her from introducing what multitudes of her people she might think proper into that country, where they have already a great body of their friends to receive them? In that case, we should soon be left without room for the increasing number of our posterity; hemmed in upon the sea-shore; and, with armies behind us, and fleets before us, be either crushed to pieces, obliged to submit to the absolute dominion of *France*, or to throw ourselves bad; upon the protection of *Great Britain*.

This consideration is truly alarming; and *France* has never shown herself so worthy of confidence among the nations of *Europe*, as to induce us to run such risks, by throwing ourselves precipitately into her arms. She is so notorious to the whole world for her disregard of the most sacred treaties, that *Gallica fides*, or *French* faith, is become as proverbial now as *Punica fides*, or *Carthaginian* faith, of old. It could scarce have been imagined that the author of *Common Sense*, after telling us that “the blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature, cries, ‘tis time to part” — eternally to part — from the limited monarchy of *Great Britain*, (whatever future terms might be offered us,) would so soon have recommended to us a new alliance with the arbitrary monarchs of *France* and *Spain*. Bloody massacres, the revocation of sacred edicts, and the most unrelenting persecutions, have certainly taught *American* Protestants (and especially our *German* brethren) what sort of faith we are to expect from Popish Princes, and from nations who are strangers to liberty themselves, and envy the enjoyment of it to others.

In short, I am not able, with all the pains I have taken, to understand what is meant by a Declaration of Independence; unless it is to be drawn up in the form of a solemn abjuration of *Great Britain*, as a nation with which we can never more be connected. And this seems the doctrine of the author of *Common Sense*. But I believe he has made but a few converts to this part of his scheme; for who knows to what vicissitudes of fortune we may yet be subjected?

We have already declared ourselves independent, as to all useful purposes, by resisting our oppressors upon our own foundation. And while we keep upon this ground, without connecting ourselves with any foreign nations, to involve us in fresh difficulties, and endanger our liberties still further, we are able, in our own element, (upon the shore,) to continue this resistance; and it is our duty to continue it, till *Great Britain* is convinced (as she must soon be) of her fatal policy, and open her arms to reconciliation, upon the permanent and sure footing of mutual interest and safety.

Upon such a footing, we may again be happy. Our trade will be revived. Our husbandmen, our mechanicks, our artificers, will flourish. Our language, our laws, and manners, being the same

with those of the nation with which we are again to be connected, that connection will be natural; and we shall the more easily guard against future innovations. *Pennsylvania* has much to lose in this contest, and much to hope from a proper settlement of it. We have long flourished under our Charter Government. What may be the consequences of another form we cannot pronounce with certainty; but this we know, that it is a road we have not travelled, and may be worse than it is described.

Pennsylvania Ledger, 30 March 1776

CATO TO THE PEOPLE OF PENNSYLVANIA. — LETTER V.

In my fourth letter, some notice was taken of the dangerous proposition held up to us by the author of *Common Sense*, for having recourse to foreign assistance, and mixing the virtuous cause of these Colonies with the ambitious views of *France* and *Spain*, even allowing that they are either able, or that we could make it their interest, to enter into a war with *Great Britain* and her allies on our account. History will scarce give us an example of any people that ever recurred to an expedient of this kind without having their allies, at last, for their masters. The fatal consequences of hasty resolutions, in great questions, might be well illustrated by the conduct of the foolish *Danes*, who, to avenge themselves of their nobility, in one dreadful moment made an irretrievable surrender of their own liberty, and that of their posterity, into the hands of a tyrant. And had I been disposed to work upon the passions, rather than address the reason of my readers, the mention which was made in my last of the arbitrary Governments of *France* and *Spain*, their bloody massacres and unrelenting persecutions, gave me an opportunity of entering into descriptions which would have “harrowed up the very souls” of Protestants and Freemen.

The Administration of *Great Britain* itself, daring as they seem to be, have not yet dared to recur to the desperate measure of calling in foreign aid. But some of our best friends intimate that an example of this kind, on either side, would justify the like conduct on the other. A great majority of the patriotick Freeholders of the County of *Berks*, in *England*, nobly supporting our cause before the Throne, compliment us upon this — that we have not thrown ourselves into the arms of other Powers, and that “our Petitions have yet appeared before no Throne but that of *Britain*.” “Let not *England* (say they) set an example, which is but too easily copied, by drawing into a free country the insidious and mercenary aid of foreign forces, trained to the support of barbarous despotism. The moment that a great army of such, or of any foreigners, shall enter your territories, the liberties of your people are at an end. Strenuous as we are for the honour of our country, we cannot be forgetful of its peace and concord. It is therefore we abhor the idea of encouraging foreigners to make a prey of this nation and its dependencies, under the miserable and uncovered pretext of discountenancing faction and sedition among ourselves.”

It is but too reasonable, then, to conclude, that whichever side — *Great Britain* or *America* — shall first call in foreign assistance, will but force the other into the same desperate measure. In either case, this devoted land would become one field of blood and carnage for a length of years; which, at last, it is to be apprehended, would only be dreadfully closed in our perpetual subjection and slavery to the victorious side, whether allies or foes! It is, indeed, impossible to describe the miseries of that country which is once made the seat of foreign wars. Torn in pieces by contending armies, subjected to the alternate ravages and oppressions of rival powers, the merchant, the

farmer, the peasant, has nothing to call his own. Even the wife of his bosom, and the daughter of his affection, are not safe from the unholy violence of mercenary soldiers, rioting through every corner of a land not their own, insolent in victory, and barbarous in defeat.

Although we now sadly bleed under the cruel hand of an unjust Administration, who have kindled up a most unnatural war among brethren in their own land, yet (*God* be thanked) that war hath not reached, and, I trust, will never be able to reach, much farther than our sea-shores. A nation cannot long continue totally blind to all its most essential interests. Our own vigour and virtue have already gone a great way to convince our oppressors of the inanity, as well as the impracticability, of their schemes to govern a great and distant country by force. Perseverance, on our side, will speedily accomplish the rest. Our friends in *Britain*, unbought by us, and uncorrupted by our foes, are yet of more worth to us than whole nations of foreigners drawn in to our assistance by mercenary or interested views. If, by no precipitate or unnecessary measures, we forfeit the esteem of the former, and make them also enemies, we shall prevail by our united strength. The devices of those who, for ambitious purposes, strive to divide a house against itself, will be finally confounded, and the whole family of *Britons*, on both sides of the *Atlantick*, may yet be bound together by fresh ties of mutual love and interest for many generations.

But, (I repeat it once more;) by the former measure of calling in foreigners to decide our quarrels, we shall bleed, not in a few parts only, but at every pore; and the present generation will not, probably, see the end of the contest. Would to Heaven that they who press such a measure, as preferable to reconciliation with our ancient friends, upon whatever terms, could but behold the face of *Poland*, and visit the scenes of havock and desolation which mark the late footsteps of contending foreign powers in that country, or read the accounts of the like scenes in many parts of *Germany*. They would not then continue to urge such a measure till they could clearly prove that the last necessity was come.

Let it not be said that I am here drawing a horrible picture to strengthen this country into an absolute submission to *Great Britain*. No I persevere in my belief, that, on our present plan of resistance, *Britain* can never force us, either into submission or reconciliation, but upon such terms as the united wisdom of the Colonies shall deem safe and honourable. But, upon the other plan, it is much to be feared that submission, as well as ruin, might be our lot. And were I disposed to give bad names to any persons who may, perhaps, be honestly inquiring after our true interest in this contest, they who advise such a plan, and not *Cato*, might be called inimical to these Colonies. Nor let it be said that the wished-for assistance is not that of armies, but of fleets for trade, and commercial protection. Even supposing that to be the case, will the fleets of any power, who can look those of *Britain* in the face, be content just to take a peep at our fruitful shores, give us their protection when called upon, and then return quietly home? But the author of *Common Sense* (and it is him I am now answering) makes no such distinction; and speaks of the “assistance of *France* and *Spain*” generally — and that for the purposes of a total separation from *Great Britain*. His words are these: “It is unreasonable to suppose that *France* or *Spain* will give us any kind of assistance, if we mean only to make use of that assistance for the purpose of repairing the breach, and strengthening the connection between *Britain* and *America*.”

That the assistance here meant, is not confined to mere naval assistance, in the idea of some who are great advocates for this author’s pamphlet, might have been easily gathered from their

expressions, when we received the late accounts of the arrival of unusual numbers of troops in the neighbouring *French West-Indies*.

But this only alarmed others the more; and I am well persuaded that this writer's idea is not yet adopted by many persons of much consideration in this country, much less by any publick bodies. I consider it only as thrown out to collect the sentiments of *America* upon it, although I cannot but think it a dangerous, as well as unseasonable question at this time, and could have been content that it had not been brought before the publick. But, since it hath been made a question, it ought now to be fairly discussed; for whatever we have left worthy of our attention as freemen, is all involved in this stake; and when important questions are put upon the footing that, if they are not answered, they are to be taken for granted, it becomes, absolutely necessary to examine them.

For my part, the more I consider the matter, (and I have long considered It impartially,) the more I am persuaded that our political salvation can only be worked out by our own united virtue, and upon our own foundation. When it shall clearly appear that we can no longer stand upon this ground; when we shall be generally convinced, by better arguments than declamation, and the abuse of things venerable and ancient, that future connection with *Great Britain* is neither possible nor safe; then we shall be fully united and prepared, at every risk, to pursue whatever measures the sense of the community, fairly collected, shall think necessary to adopt. But even then, before we launch forth, many domestick concerns are to be adjusted.

Under what form of Government are we to confederate? How much of our ancient Constitutions is to be preserved? Who is to settle our clashing Territorial claims? In what cases are the jurisdiction and expenses of these Colonies to be joint or separate? On what terms are we to engage foreign alliances, and yet to secure our liberties in connection with them? Are the Colonies to vote equally in determining these grand concerns? or is a new representation to be formed in proportion to numbers and consequence?

I might propose more questions of this kind; and when the necessity comes, they will rise thick enough upon us, and we must then encounter them all, for the sake of *American* liberty, which I would never desert but with my life. But I am sure that the author of *Common Sense*, who labours to prove that the necessity is already come, offers nothing on this head that can give much satisfaction to the publick in general. Trusting, however, that, in the preceding part of his work, he has levelled the *English* Constitution to the dust, together with all our *American* Constitutions, which are formed on similar models, and that he has thereby led us past the *Rubicon*, he may flatter himself that we will the more readily follow his future direction, and adopt what plans he may offer. But I choose to examine for myself; and having despatched his main argument for Independence, which he founds on the necessity of foreign assistance, I proceed to consider some other parts of Ins work.

His first sections, on the origin of Government and Monarchy, appear to be the strangest medley of inconsistencies and contradictions which were, perhaps, ever offered to the common sense of any people, and calculated only to mislead those superficial readers, who are content to believe as they go, without comparing one part of a writer's doctrine with another.

“Society,” says he, “is produced by our wants, and Government by our wickedness: the former promotes our happiness positively, by uniting our affections; the latter negatively, by restraining our vices. Government, like dress, is the badge of lost innocence; the palaces of Kings are built on the ruins of the bowers of Paradise.”

If the author meant only by this to tell us that if all men were perfectly virtuous, and followed the pure dictates of right reason, human Governments would have been unnecessary, then I could subscribe to his doctrine, and might have paid him a compliment for clothing an old truth in a spruce metaphor. But if he meant to prove that Monarchies were any more founded on the ruins of Paradise than Republicks, he ought, in consistency with himself, to have shown us that, after *Adam* was expelled from Paradise, he and his descendants, as soon as they were “four or five” strong, and “able to raise a tolerable dwelling in the wilderness,” were found erecting some sort of palace for him as their King; and that, after this example, all future Governments were kingly in the first ages. But our author shows us no such thing. On the contrary, when he speaks of the manner of “peopling the world,” and frames a Government out of the state of nature, the first idea he presents us with is, that of a pure Republick.

“Some convenient tree,” says he, “affords a State-House, under the branches of which the whole Colony may assemble to deliberate on publick matters.” They proceed, as their numbers increase, to improve this Constitution, and devise checks that “the elected may not form to themselves an interest separate from the electors.” On these checks (“not on the unmeaning name of King) depend the strength of Government and happiness of the governed.”

How can this be reconciled to what follows? The author has told us that all Government “being at best but a necessary evil, promotes happiness only negatively, by restraining (viz: checking) our vices;” and, in erecting his early Republick, he contrives his checks accordingly; but (*risum teneatis!*) directly forgets himself, and says that no “power which needs checking can be from *God*.” Thus, by his own argument, *God* has as little to do with the powers of Government in the Republican, as mixed forms. But further, lest his readers should also forget themselves, and be carried away by his first assertion, that “the palaces of Kings were built on the ruins of Paradise,” he takes care to tell us, and backs it with the authority of “Scripture chronology, that, in the early ages of the world, there were no Kings;” that the Devil himself, in those ancient times, was but a dull fellow; and that, although “Government by King’s was his most prosperous invention for the promotion of idolatry,” he was a long while in hammering it out; which is but a poor compliment to Satan’s cunning. For being a King himself from the beginning, he might have hit upon it sooner. But I leave our author to make his own apology to his infernal majesty, if he be of his councils, for I have no business to interfere between them.

It is sufficient to show what use he makes of his *common sense*, at the very outset, in refuting his own first doctrine, and proving to demonstration that, instead of palaces for Kings, State-Houses for whole Colonies were built on the ruins of Paradise; nay more, that these ruins, in the case of the Jews, were near three thousand years tossed up and down into various forms, before they were converted into Royal edifices! That I have not misrepresented our author in this argument, his own words will show: “Near three thousand years passed away, from the *Mosaick* account of the creation, till the *Jews*, under a national delusion, requested a King. Till then, their form of Government (except in extraordinary cases, where the Almighty interposed) was a kind of Republick,” &c.

He proceeds, in the next place, to persuade us that he is as well acquainted with the secrets of Heaven as the devices of Hell, concerning the origin of kingly Government; and that the Almighty consented at last to this “most prosperous invention of Satan,” in mere wrath and vengeance against, the *Jews*, as a greater punishment for their ingratitude than could have been inflicted upon them by any other human form of Government. There never was a greater perversion of Scripture than our author has been guilty of in his endeavours to establish this part of his argument, as every man of common understanding, who has his Bible in his hand, may easily perceive.

The bounds prescribed for this letter will not suffer me, at present, to point out his misrepresentations, and to show how he sets himself up, not only against the plain letter of Scripture, but the universal sense of wise and holy men of every age. It is not consistent with my principles to say one word in favour of the divine right of Kings, nor do I believe a word of what others have said in its favour. As little do I believe what has been said concerning the divine right of Republicks, or any other human forms of Government. But the question is, whether *God* hath particularly reprobated any of them. For my part, as the author has set me the example of examining Scripture on this head, I cannot find any moderm Kings particularly rejected by Heaven but *Mounsier*, the King of *France*. It is in the thirty-fifth chapter of *Ezekiel*; and I am sure our author, who is so deeply versed in Scripture, could not have overlooked it, if it had not been for the treaty which he proposes with this King. The reader will readily allow that the application is much more natural than that which the author has made of the 8th chapter of the First Book of *Samuel*.

“Son of man, set thy face against *Mountseir*, (*Heb` Mounseir*, or *Monseur*,) and prophesy against it, (*Heb` him*,) and say unto him, thus saith the Lord *God*: Behold, O *Mountseir* (or *Mounsier*) I am against thee, because thou hast had a perpetual hatred, and hast shed the blood of the children of *Israel* [that is, the *French* Protestants] by the force of the sword: therefore, as I live, saith the Lord *God*, I will prepare thee unto blood, and blood shall pursue thee: sith thou hast not hated blood, even blood shall pursue thee. Thus will I make *Mountseir* (or *Monsieur*) most desolate, because thou hast said these two nations, and these two countries [here Britain and America are clearly pointed out] shall be mine, and we will possess it; whereas the Lord was there:” — as much as to say, You shall not have these two countries, *Monsieur*; the Lord intends them for his own use; they shall be free, Protestant countries.

The reader may peruse and apply the remainder of the chapter, which he may do as well as the author of *Common Sense*; and some may say, perhaps, as well as

CATO.

Pennsylvania Packet, 8 April 1776

CASSANDRA TO CATO. — NO II.

SIR: Though the *Common Man's* advice has come rather too late; though his manner of stating the points to be discussed decides to which party he belongs; though he has studiously evaded the main question, and thereby shown the publick that security to our rights forms no share of the debate he wishes to open; and though the manner in which he attempts to expose *Cato* and

Cassandra evidently proves whose faults he is most inclined to conceal, yet I heartily join him in his censure on personal reflections. I thank him, too, for his candour in tacitly informing the publick that you have not come to the point as yet, though you have already published five letters, and heartily close with his proposal of laying aside all personality. I shall therefore proceed to the main point; and if you are willing to enter the lists as a fair antagonist, and meet me on the ground of reason and argument, on that ground will *Cassandra* meet you: but if, contrary to your own proposal, and the advice of your friend; you continue to amuse your countrymen with declamation and assertion, and study to terrify rather than inform, to address their passions rather than enlighten their understandings, I shall still be personal Your talent lies in strong painting and declamation, and you expect to hold up such a terrifick picture to the imaginations of the people, as will effectually frighten them into submission; but the exhibition of your person at the side of your productions will ever prove a perfect antidote to their poison. Giving you this fair warning, I shall now proceed to your third, fourth, and fifth letters, and nothing which can point out the man shall drop from my pen until *Cato* gives occasion for it.

I agree with the *Common Man* thus far, that some propositions he mentions ought, one day, to be discussed; but as there is one point, not only prior to any of them, but of infinitely greater importance than them all, viz: an absolute security for the enjoyment of our liberties, I must and will insist on the discussion of this point first, as not only prior in order, but most essential; and when it shall be fairly proved that our rights can be as effectually secured in a state of dependancy as in an independent state, then, and not before, will be the proper time to examine which would be most to our advantage. We entered the contest with a determination to secure our rights at every hazard. This is, therefore, what we are to provide for. If two ways of equal security should present themselves, then will come on the other question, viz: Which will not only secure our liberties but bring us the greatest advantages besides? Now, when *Cato*, the *Common Man*, or any other man, shall exhibit a plan by which we can absolutely secure our liberties and continue dependant, then *Cassandra* will be ready to enter upon the discussion of this point. But *Cassandra* assures *Cato*, the *Common Man*, and every other man, that no sophistical proposals of any man will turn his eyes from the main object until he sees a way of permanent security to our rights; and he trusts his countrymen, who first armed for this purpose, will still continue of that mind, and then he fears neither the threats nor efforts of *Cato* and the aristocratical junto, who are straining every nerve to frustrate our virtuous endeavours, and to make the common and middle class of people their beasts of burden. Those freemen who nobly refuse to be ridden by a King, Lords, and Commons, will scarcely be tame enough to take *Cato* and his party on their backs. I shall therefore proceed. Passing, for the present, those parts of your letters which contain nothing but the most illiberal abuse and scurrilous invectives against Committees, Conventions, &c', I shall take up your political creed, and examine, with the greatest freedom, the arguments on which you have founded your faith. You believe "that the true interest of *America* lies in a reconciliation with *Great Britain* on constitutional principles; and that you wish it upon none else." Sir, I earnestly entreat you, as you wish not to mislead your dear countrymen, to explain what you understand by a reconciliation on constitutional principles, that I may not mistake your meaning. It will save much writing on both sides to give such definitions of general terms as we are determined to abide by. I wish to see the whole truth laid fairly before the people, that they may coolly consider, and, with the utmost impartiality, weigh every circumstance, and choose that alone which promises the greatest security to their rights and privileges, and affords them the surest prospect of wealth and happiness. I shall, therefore, cheerfully define every term which *Cato* may think dubious, or calculated to mislead; and I demand the same of *Cato*. If he is the honest man he wishes to appear, he will not refuse me.

Let us canvass everything to the bottom; and let not dark hints, unproved assertions, or ungenerous inuendoes, against the designs of incorruptible patriots, be hereafter palmed on the people for argument; but when truth is exhibited to them in the fullest and fairest manner, let them judge for themselves. Upon due information, I doubt not, they will judge right; and that judgment I am resolved to abide by.

But why does *Cato* labour so incessantly to bias his reader by so many and such long and pathetick harangues of the horrors of war, and its powers of desolation? Slavery is certainly a much more terrible evil, in every respect, than war; for the evils of war are both tolerable and temporary; while the miseries of slavery are intolerable and endless. War may cut off thousands in the bloom of their youth; but slavery destroys the very seeds of generation, not only in the animal, but vegetable world. How does it look, *Cato*, in a patriot of your magnitude, to be continually haranguing on the horrors of war, at a time when everything we hold dear and valuable depends on the success of our arms? Were you in your beloved mother country, and the Pretender, with a foreign force, (suppose *Russians*,) ravaging her coasts, would you harangue on these horrors to discourage resistance? I confess myself at great uncertainty what part you would act on such an occasion; but I strongly presume that in case you did, you would be accounted a disaffected traitor, and treated accordingly. But I ask pardon, sir; you do not like to be questioned. Surely, were you in the councils of the enemy, your native appetite for peace would soon put an end to their murderous designs! You are not conscientiously scrupulous, neither; for you declare you will turn out against us if there be any attempt to set the *French* and *English* by the ears. Take no help! Take no help! Fight alone, Whigs, till you are all cut off; and then we Tories will submit and have the whole. This is the language of *Cato*. Now, though I am as confident that your publications are intended to reduce us to slavery as you can be that mine propose a continuation of the war; and though I can more easily prove the one than you can the other; yet I have not endeavoured, by alarming descriptions of the miseries of slavery, to prejudice my reader against the arguments of my opponents. *Cassandra* has no point to carry, and, therefore, detests such shifts. *God* forbid that I should ever consider my own interest as separate from the general interest of mankind! And with equal fervency of devotion I pray that all who have, may be finally defeated in their attempts against these Colonies. You have filled nearly the one-half of the five letters you have already published with horrible descriptions alone. Do you imagine, *Cato*, that we are all affected with nervous complaints, and that you can do more for your cause by alarming our fears than informing our judgments? If this be not your design, pray publish as many, as terrible, and as animated descriptions of the miseries of slavery as you have done on the horrors of war, and then leave the people to judge which they would choose. Do not let us throw them into a panick and confusion, and then desire them to examine with coolness and deliberation. There is a dignity in honesty, and a pleasing fortitude in conscious integrity, which I could wish *Cato* to experience. The subject demands a clear, plain, full, rational, and manly discussion; and it ought to have it. It is certainly worthy of all the labour we can bestow upon it. Liberty or slavery is now the question. Let us but fairly discover to the inhabitants of these Colonies on which side Liberty has erected her banner, and we will leave it to them to determine whether they would choose liberty, though accompanied with war, or slavery, attended by peace.

The present contest is a contest of Constitutions, and the war a war of Legislatures. The common wars of nations are the wars of one crowned head against another, in which the people have little share, and are as little consulted. The crowned head on each side declares war, or negotiates peace, without conferring with them. But this war is a war between the *British* Parliament and the Colonial

Assemblies; it is, in fact, become a war between the People of Great Britain and the People of *America*; and though both have heretofore acknowledged the same King, (and he, in duty, ought to have remained neuter,) yet, as he has joined the *British* Parliament against us, he has become a party in the quarrel. Hence, so far as the present is a contest of Constitutions, the Parliament has evidently won the field; for the whole force of the Legislature of *Great Britain* has been, from the first day of the controversy, armed against us; but we have, in no one instance, been able to call forth the strength of our Legislatures to oppose. Nay, we have constantly had them against us, ready to join the foe. I ask, how happens this, *Cato*? Why are you so in love with such a Constitution? As you are not fond of answering silly queries, I will endeavour to answer them myself: it is, because our Legislatures are dependant on our very enemy, and theirs is independent of us. Our constitutional connection with *Britain* gives her so prodigious an advantage over us, that, if we had strictly adhered to our chartered Constitutions, we would have been enslaved before this time; and it will ever be so as long as we are dependant.

Both the King and Parliament of *Great Britain* are the choice of the People of *Great Britain*; but though our Assemblies are our choice, our Governours are not; they are either nominated by the King of *Great Britain*, or some one of his *British* subjects, which effectually destroys their utility to us in this, and every such controversy, which has already, or is likely hereafter to happen. Their salaries, though the gift of the people, are evidently no counterpoise to their nomination, if facts can prove any thing — and for this plain reason, that, though we grant the wages, yet it rests in the power of the King whether they shall enjoy it or not, as, after the appointment, the continuance of it depends entirely on him.

The King of *Great Britain*, though our King, will ever join the Parliament against us as often as a contention happens. The Parliament are his tools; and their illegal claims are only a specious covering for his endeavours after arbitrary power in the first place; and, in the second place, his Crown, his dignity, and his support, depend entirely upon their grants, and not upon ours. He will, therefore, take part with them on every occasion. On the contrary, his Representatives are not so dependant on us as to oblige them to take part with us. This is not all; for in every Province where they had the power, they not only refused to concur in our measures, but also prevented us from making use of our Representatives, that we might not have the shadow of a Legislature to support us; and even in those Provinces where his power has not extended so far, he has constantly gone as far as he could. This is not all yet; for in many they have corrupted the ignorant and illiterate by bribes, set up the Royal standard against us, and obliged us to fight under every disadvantage. Is it not so, *Cato*?

There is, therefore, a capital defect in our chartered Constitutions; a defect which makes an essential difference between the present state of our liberties and that secured to *Englishmen* by *Magna Charta*; a defect which, if not effectually removed, will oblige us ever to hold our liberties at the point of our swords, or by that most precarious of all tenures — will and pleasure. The immortal Barons were too wise to be duped by fair promises. They drew their swords, determined to obtain absolute security; and they did obtain it. They obtained, by *Magna Charta*, the constitutional right of levying war against the King as often as he should attempt to infringe upon the liberties of the people. Were our Governours the choice of the people, and dependant on them for their salaries, WE would, in the present case, be able to make a constitutional resistance to oppression — to oppose Constitution to Constitution. But this not being the case, the Parliament

has plainly the advantage. It is necessary, therefore, to our security to have our Governours as much dependant on the people of *America* as the King is on those of *Great Britain*, before our Constitutions can be of any service to us against *British* encroachments; or that, when our Governours refuse their concurrence, our Representatives shall have the privilege of setting them aside, and acting legislatively without them. This is a clause as essential to the security of *America* as the clause which grants to the people of *Great Britain* the right of declaring war against the King when he attempts to disturb their privileges. Will *Cato* stand it out till this is obtained?

But as the contest is between us and the Parliament, we ought now to inquire how we can be secured against Parliamentary encroachments? The Constitution of *Great Britain* is such, that what this Parliament does, the next can undo. And it is impossible for one Parliament to pass a bill which will not be liable to a repeal by any future one, without destroying the very essence of its own Constitution. Is there any remedy against this defect, *Cato*? Let us see the constitutional dependant principles, if you are a friend to liberty, which will give absolute and permanent security to our liberties, and not leave us at the mercy of our enemy; and then we will talk further on the subject. We have gone too far, and have too much sense to rest our future safety on the probability of her letting us alone for tile future.

Our constitutional connection with *Great Britain* is the very plea alleged by *Great Britain* for her attempts to enslave us. Now, if this Constitution is the very foundation of her claims; if she, in consequence thereof, had declared us Rebels, which she could not, unless she supposed we violated the Constitution by our resistance; and if it was not in our power to make effectual opposition, in strict conformity to the Constitutions she gave us, why is *Cato* so fond of reconciling us on these principles, and on no other? This looks not like honesty, *Cato*. If you love *America*, and if your attachment to the cause is real, answer to these things. A lover of truth and liberty will be afraid of no queries whatever. You say you have viewed the ground on which you stand, and are not afraid to tread it in the sight of the most vigilant son of liberty. Hero it is. Come forth, then; here I wish to find you. But, I beseech you, examine it thoroughly first; explore its hidden recesses; for I am well assured it contains a secret mine, which, if once sprung, will either blow up you and your party, or our liberties.

This Continent has had a twelve years' constant experience that the Constitution of the Colonies could not protect them from *British* oppression. Can you deny it, *Cato* However it be against your present designs, yet this you must acknowledge. Can you tell the first day a Committee existed on this Continent? Did not that day tell the world we had no Constitution that could withstand *British* oppression? Can you remember the time our Assemblies were first dissolved for attempting to correspond with one another on the subject of our, grievances? Did not that time convince even *Cato* himself that our Constitutions were not equal to the task of protecting themselves? Do you recollect the hour our worthy Governour refused to call our Assembly to consult on ways and means to preserve our liberties? Did not that hour inform you that the chartered Constitution of *Pennsylvania* could do nothing for us? Now, if after so long and so severe a trial of their defects, we should still take up with them on the recommendation of *Cato*, might not the world, particularly that part of it which you say is looking at us, laugh at our stupidity and folly?

Your first argument in support of your creed is, that "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.” I forbear to point out your constant endeavour to separate the interest of the Middle Colonies from the rest, as if the wealth of the whole arose not from the same sources; or as if your description of one or two would not answer for all. I also forbear to mention the care of your party to have your letters, though addressed to the People of *Pennsylvania*, reprinted in *New-York* and *Maryland* papers. When you have gone through the demonstration, how we can have effectual security to our liberties under so defective Constitutions, then, and not till then, I shall call upon you to prove that agriculture and commerce would decay, if the whole world were our market instead of the *British* Islands, and a few foreign ports to which we are most graciously permitted to export a few articles. I will also call on you to convince us that a severe restraint on our trade in many instances, and in some a total prohibition, tends to enrich us. And here it may not be amiss to show how poor the *Hollanders* have grown since they became independent, and were obliged to support all the expenses the *Common Man* has mentioned.

But *Cato* has given uncommon proofs of his attachment to trade, by declaring that he will arm against us as soon as we form any alliance with such powers as are able and willing to draw off the *British* fleets from blocking up our ports. Our ports are now effectually shut by the fleets of *Great Britain*, and there is a total stop put to our exports. We have not yet a fleet which can open them. Our grain is spoiling, and the powers of *Europe* longing for an opportunity of taking it off our hands. All this can be removed by the alliance proposed. But *Cato* sees this would eternally frustrate the designs of his party. He has therefore laboured, by every artifice of cunning, to prevent our taking any step of the kind. He hopes the country will, by this means, be brought to submit, and he will triumph in our folly. But where is the real danger to our liberties, *Cato*, in accepting the assistance of our neighbouring fleet until we have time to fit out one for the purpose? Were we to do this, would not agriculture and commerce flourish as usual?

“That much of our former felicity was owing to the protection of *England*, is not to be denied; and that we might still derive greater advantages from her protection and friendship, if not valued at too high a price, is equally certain,” says *Cato*. I could pardon a few *Israelitish* murmurings and hankerings for the onions of *Egypt*; but to be incessantly called back to what we enjoyed while *Joseph* lived, when behold a *Pharaoh* now reigns who knew him not, is insult not to be endured. *Cato* cannot pretend ignorance of the price of the friendship he so strongly urges us to court. If he does, he is certainly a very dangerous guide for the good people to whom his letters are addressed. *Cassandra* affirms that the price, is no less than an absolute surrender of all our rights, liberties, and property; and these once given up, he would gladly be informed what more is left for any power to invade. All animals, under absolute domination, are nursed only to be fleeced. However problematical may be the question of nursing the Colonies, we have had the fleecing demonstrated with a vengeance.

Cato adds: “If the 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.” Two reasons induce me to think the mode of attack would indeed be altered; for, obstinate as the author of our oppression is, he cannot longer flatter himself of our falling an easy prey to his force, if now incessantly continued. His clemency would then certainly dispose him most graciously to enslave us by his experienced and much more successful method of intrigue. But as *Cato* allows it is not altogether improbable that his force may be employed against us in some future day, *Cassandra*

would gladly be informed by what means we can be secured from that force, when, by the treaty of protection, we are cut off from the right of establishing a force of our own.

Conscious that this poor contrivance is prodigious stale, a thousand times repeated, and as often refuted by most stubborn arguments, founded on twelve years' Invariable procedure, and really despairing to hold the people long in expectation of "former protection," or any more than a mere delusive change of the mode of attack, and that change as ill disguised as any that have preceded it, *Cato* adds, (as if all were one connected proposition,) "If they will not make up on constitutional principles, we have arms in our hands, and virtue enough to use them." As to corruption, *Cato* would have us believe there is hardly a man on the Continent in danger from that quarter. Would to *God* we had abundant evidence of this universal integrity. Respecting the arms, *Cato*, with much devotion I praise the Director of human affairs that we have them in our hands; and I pray and confide in His overruling providence, that we may there keep them till our rights are placed on a firmer foundation than the mere grace of a conniver at the destruction of millions on one side the globe, and contriver of the devastations now daily committing on the other. Well might *Cato* tell us of our arms, for he clearly foresaw that no wise man could conceive himself safe in reconciliation on his principles, without holding them in his hands continually.

This paragraph, after flourishing away on the original ground of the contest, concludes: "And if, hereafter, in fullness of time, it should be thought necessary to separate from the land that gave birth to our ancestors, it will be in our perfect state of manhood, when we can wield our arms, and protect our commerce and coasts by our own fleets, without looking to any nation on earth for assistance." Well said, *Cato*. Here we agree for once. But now that we are on good terms with each other, let me ask you, in a friendly manner, how we are to become masters of this fine fleet? Does *Cato* propose to insist upon it, as a term of constitutional reconciliation with the Ambassadors, that we shall be allowed to build such a fleet? Or does he conceive that when we arrive at just twenty-one years of age, and about to commence as house-keepers, our dear mother country will make us a present of such a fleet to set up with? I confess myself greatly Incredulous of either. If *Cato* can clear up my doubts on these important heads, I will be much obliged to him.

"It has been asserted," says *Cato*, "that we are able, with our land forces, to defend ourselves against the whole world; that if commerce be an advantage, we may command what foreign alliance we please; that the moment we declare ourselves an independent people, there are nations ready to face the *British* thunder, and become carriers of our commodities to enrich themselves; and if this were not the case, we can soon build navies to force and protect a trade," &c. Of this, *Cato* here intimates his suspicion, "because," says he, "it is not fully proved." *Cassandra* will prove the first assertion from unquestionable authority, for *Cato*, in his fourth letter, says: "I will even go beyond him in expressing my good opinion of our situation. He thinks foreign assistance necessary to us. I think otherwise. We are able to defend our own rights, and to frustrate the attempt of any nation upon earth to govern us by force." *Cassandra* hopes, in a short time, to prove every assertion of Common Sense from the same authority. He wishes every position of *Cato* was equally consistent with *Common Sense*.

CASSANDRA.

P' S. As the *Common Man* has called us to a fair discussion of the point, we once for all request every printer on the Continent, who publishes *Gate's* Letters, to publish our replies, and particularly Mr' *Sowers*, of *Germantown*, that the subject may not only have a full diffusion, but a fair hearing.

Pennsylvania Packet, 1 April 1776

FORRESTER TO CATO, LETTER I

To be nobly wrong is more manly than to be meanly right. Only let the error be disinterested — let it wear not the mask, but the mark of principle, and it is pardonable. It is on this large and liberal ground that we distinguish between men and their tenets, and generously preserve our friendship for the one, while we combat with every prejudice of the other. But let not *Cato* take this compliment to himself. He stands excluded from the benefit of the distinction — he deserves it not; and if the sincerity of disdain can add a cubit to the stature of my sentiments, it shall not be wanting.

It is indifferent to me who the writer of *Cato's* letters are, and sufficient for me to know that they are gorged with absurdity, confusion, contradiction, and the most notorious and wilful falsehoods. Let *Cato* and his faction be against Independence, and welcome; their consequence will not now turn the scale; but let them have regard to justice, and pay some attention to the plain doctrine of reason. Where these are wanting, the sacred cause of truth applauds our anger, and dignifies it with the name of virtue.

Four letters have already appeared under the specious name of *Cato*. What pretensions the writer of them can have to the signature, the publick will best determine; while, on my own part, I prophetically content myself with contemplating the similarity of their exits. The first of those letters promised a second, the second a third, the third a fourth; the fourth has since made its appearance, and still the writer keeps wide of the question. Why doth he thus loiter in the suburbs of the dispute? Why hath he not shown us what the numerous blessings of reconciliation are, and proved them practicable? But he cunningly avoids the point. He cannot but discover the rock he is driving on. The fate of the *Roman Cato* is before his eyes; and that the publick may be prepared for his funeral, and for his funeral oration, I will venture to predict the time and the manner of his exit. The moment he explains his terms of reconciliation, the typographical *Cato* dies. If they be calculated to please the Cabinet, they will not go down with the Colonies; and if they be suited to the Colonies, they will be rejected by the Cabinet. The line of no-variation is yet unfound; and, like the Philosopher's stone, doth not exist. "I am bold," says *Cato*, "to declare, and yet hope to make it evident to every honest man, that the true interest of *America* lies in reconciliation with *Great Britain* on constitutional principles."

This is a curious way of lumping the business, indeed! And *Cato* may as well attempt to catch lions in a mouse-trap, as to hope to allure the publick with such general and unexplained expressions. It is now a mere bugbear to talk of reconciliation on constitutional principles, unless the terms of the first be produced, and the sense of the other be defined; and unless he does this, he does nothing.

To follow *Cato* through every absurdity and falsehood in the compass of a letter is impossible; neither is it now necessary. *Cassandra* (and I thank him) hath saved me much trouble; there is a spirit in his remarks which honesty only can inspire, and a uniformity in the conduct of his letter which the want of principle never can arrive at. Mark that, *Cato*.

One observation, which I cannot help making on *Cato*'s letters, is, that they are addressed "To the People of *Pennsylvania*" only. In almost any other writer this might have passed unnoticed; but we know it hath mischief in its meaning. The particular circumstance of a Convention is undoubtedly Provincial, but the great business of the day is Continental; and he who dares to endeavour to withdraw this Province from the glorious Union, by which all are supported, deserves the reprobation of all men. It is the true interest of the whole to go hand in hand; and dismal, in every instance, would be the fate of that Colony which should retreat from the protection of the rest.

The first of *Cato*'s letters is insipid in its style, language, and substance; crowded with personal and private inuendoes, and directly levelled against "the majesty of the people of *Pennsylvania*." The Committee could only call, propose, or recommend a Convention; but, like all other publick measures, it still rested with the people at large whether they would approve it or not; and *Cato*'s reasoning on the right or wrong of that choice is contemptible; because, if the body of the people had thought, or should still think, that the Assembly, or any of their Delegates in Congress, by sitting under the embarrassment of oaths, and entangled with Government and Governours, are not so perfectly free as they ought to be, they undoubtedly had, and still have, both the right and the power to place even the whole authority of the Assembly in any body of men they please; and whoever is hardy enough to say to the contrary is an enemy to mankind. The Constitution of *Pennsylvania* hath been twice changed through the cunning of former Proprietors; surely the people, whose right, power, and property is greater than that of any single man, may make such alterations in their mode of Government as the change of times and things require. *Cato* is exceedingly fond of impressing us with the importance of our "chartered Constitution." Alas! we are not now, sir, to be led away by the jingle of a phrase. Had we framed our conduct by the contents of the present Charters, we had, ere now, been in a state of helpless misery. That very Assembly you mention hath broken it, and been obliged to break it, in almost every instance of their proceedings. Hold it up to the publick, and it is transparent with holes — pierced with as many deadly wounds as the body of *Macleod*. Disturb not its remains, *Cato*, nor dishonour it with another funeral oration.

There is nothing in *Cato*'s first letter worthy of notice but the following insinuating falsehood: "Grievous as the least restraint of the Press must always be, to a people entitled to freedom, it must be the more so, when it is not only unwarranted by those to whom they have committed the care of their liberties, but cannot be warranted by them, consistent with liberty itself."

The rude and unscholastical confusion of persons in the above paragraph, though it throws an obscurity on the meaning, still leaves it discoverable. Who, sir, hath laid any restraint on the liberty of the Press? I know of no instance in which the Press hath been even the object of notice, in this Province, except on account of the Tory letter from *Kent* County, which was published last spring in the *Pennsylvania Ledger*, and which it was the duty of every good man to detect, because the honesty of the Press is as great an object to society as the freedom of it. If this is the restraint you

complain of, we know your true character at once; and that it is so, appears evident from the expression which immediately follows the above quotation: Your words are, “Nevertheless, we readily submitted to it, while the least colourable pretence could be offered for requiring such a submission.” Who submitted, *Cato*? — we Whigs, or we Tories? Until you clear up this, sir, you must content yourself with being ranked among the rankest of the writing Tories; because no other body of men can have any pretence to complain of want of freedom of the Press. It is not your throwing out, now and then, a little popular phrase, which can protect you from suspicion; they are only the gildings under which the poison is conveyed, and without which you dared not to renew your attempts on the virtue of the people.

Cato's second letter, or the greatest part thereof, is taken up with the reverence due from us to the persons and authority of the Commissioners; whom *Cato* vainly and ridiculously styles “Ambassadors coming to negotiate a peace.” How came *Cato* not to be let a little better into the secret? The act of Parliament which describes the powers of these men, hath been in this city upwards of a month, and in the hands, too, of *Cato*'s friends. No, sir, they are not the ambassadors of peace, but the distributors of pardons, mischief, and insult. *Cato* discovers a gross ignorance of the British Constitution, in supposing that these men can be empowered to act as Ambassadors. To prevent his future errors, I will set him right. The present war differs from every other in this instance, viz: that it is not carried on under the prerogative of the Crown, as other wars have always been, but under the authority of the whole Legislative power united; and as the barriers which stand in the way of a negotiation are not Proclamations, but Acts of Parliament; it evidently follows, that were even the King of *England* here in person, he could not ratify the terms or conditions of a reconciliation; because, in the single character of King, he could not stipulate for the repeal of any acts of Parliament; neither can the Parliament stipulate for him. There is no body of men more jealous of their privileges than the Commons; because they sell them. Mark that, *Cato*.

I have not the least doubt upon me but that their business (exclusive of granting us pardons) is downright bribery and corruption. It is the machine by which they effect all their plans. We ought to view them as enemies of a most dangerous species; and he who means not to be corrupted by them, will enter his protest in time. Are they not the very men who are paid for voting in every measure against us? and ought we not to suspect their designs? Can we view the barbarians as friends? Would it be prudent to trust the viper in our very bosoms? Or to suffer them to ramble at large among us, while such doubtful characters as *Cato* have a being upon the Continent? Yet let their persons be safe from injury and outrage — but trust them not. Our business with them is short and explicit, viz: we are desirous of peace, gentlemen; we are ready to ratify the terms, and will virtuously fulfil the conditions thereof; but we should deserve all and every misery which tyranny can inflict, were we, after suffering such a repetition of savage barbarities, to come under your Government again.

Cato, by way of stealing into credit, says, that “the contest we are engaged in is founded on the most noble and virtuous principles which can animate the mind of man. We are contending (says he) against an arbitrary Ministry, for the rights of *Englishmen*.” No, *Cato*, we are now contending against an arbitrary King, to get clear of his tyranny. While the dispute rested in words only, it might be called “contending with the Ministry;” but since it is broken out into open war, it is high time to have done with such silly and water-gruel definitions. But it suits not *Cato* to speak the

truth. It is his interest to dress up the sceptered savage in the mildest colours. *Cato's* patent for a large tract of land is yet unsigned. Alas, poor *Cato!*

Cato proceeds very importantly to tell us, “that the eyes of all *Europe* are upon us.” This stale and hackneyed phrase hath had a regular descent from many of the King’s speeches down to several of the speeches in Parliament; from thence it took a turn among the little wits and bucks of St James’s; till, after suffering all the torture of senseless repetition, and being reduced to a state of vagrancy, it was charitably picked up to embellish the second letter of *Cato*. It is truly of the bugbear kind; contains no meaning, and the very using it discovers a barrenness of invention. It signifies nothing to tell us “that the eyes of all *Europe* are upon us,” unless he had likewise told us what they are looking at us for; which, as he hath not done, I will: They are looking at us, *Cato*, in hopes of seeing a final separation between *Britain* and the Colonies, that they (the lookers on) may partake of a free and uninterrupted trade with the whole Continent of *America*. *Cato!* thou reasonest wrong.

For the present, sir, farewell. I have seen thy soliloquy, and despise it. Remember, thou hast thrown me the glove, *Cato*, and either thee or I must tire. I fear not the field of fair debate; but thou hast stepped aside, and made it personal. Thou hast tauntingly called on me by name. And if I cease to hunt thee from every lane and lurking hole of mischief, and bring thee not a trembling culprit before the publick bar, then brand me with reproach, by naming me in the list of your confederates.

THE FORESTER.

*The writer intended, at first, to have contained his remarks in one letter.

Pennsylvania Packet, 8 April 1776

CATO TO THE PEOPLE OF PENNSYLVANIA. — LETTER VI.

In the conclusion of my last letter, I charged the author of *Common Sense* with perverting the Scripture, in his account of the origin of the *Jewish* Monarchy. I proceed to offer some remarks in support of that charge.

“Monarchy,” says he, (meaning, probably, the institution of Monarchy,) “is ranked in Scripture as one of the sins of the *Jews*, for which a curse in reserve is denounced against them. The history of that transaction” — either the transaction of Monarchy, or the transaction of denouncing a curse in reserve — “is worth attending to.”

This confused proposition he endeavours to establish by a commentary upon first *Samuel*, chapter 8, full as far-fetched and ridiculous, as he will probably say mine is upon the prophecy of *Mount-Seir*. But this matter must be treated more seriously, for the sake of a country in which (*God* be thanked) the Scriptures are read, and regarded with that reverence which is due to a revelation from Heaven. I must, therefore, endeavour to rescue out of our author’s hands that portion of the sacred history which he has converted into a libel against the civil Constitution of *Great Britain*; and show in what sense the passage has been universally received, as well by the *Jews* themselves as by commentators, venerable for their piety and learning, in every Christian country.

The *Jews* were long privileged with a peculiar form of Government, called a Theocracy, under which the “Almighty either stirred up some person, by an immediate signification of his will, to be their Judge, or, when there was none, ruled their proceedings himself, by Urim and Thummim, directing what course they were to follow in the publick concerns of the nation.”

But they were of an ungovernable temper, fond of pomp as well as. dominion over their neighbours; and being disgusted with the misconduct of *Samuels* sons, whom, in his old age, he had made his assistant Judges over *Israel*, they came to him, and entreated him to appoint a King, who might rule their nation, and avenge them of the *Philistines*. *Samuel*, deeply afflicted at the impious design they entertained of rejecting the divine Government, prays the Almighty for direction, who authorizes him to hearken to their voice, “for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, (says *God*,) that I should not reign over them.” He also instructs *Samuel* to enter a solemn protest against them for their folly and ingratitude, in preferring a human to a divine Government; and to show them the manner of the King that shall reign over them, since they desired a King to judge them like all the nations.

Now, all the nations which they knew, were ruled by Kings, whose arbitrary will stood in the place of law; and it appears also that the *Jews*, since the day that they were brought out of *Egypt*, had still retained a particular hankering after the customs of that country. The Almighty, therefore, by his prophet, not only signifies his displeasure against all such arbitrary rulers, but against every people who would impiously and foolishly prefer such a Government to one immediately under himself, where, in his providence, he might think fit to appoint such an one. And so far I have no difference with our author. But *Samuel* proceeds further to reason with the *Jews*, and, in the twelfth chapter, reminds them of the many deliverances which *God* had given them by the hands of their Judges — *Moses*, *Jephthah*, *Gideon*, &c’, having with a strong hand brought them out of *Egypt*; having subdued the *Assyrians*, *Ammonites*, *Moabites*, and *Philistines* before them; and that, for all this, they preferred a Government even after the most corrupt models, to his just and righteous Government. And to convince them still further of their folly and ingratitude, the prophet appeals to a signal which he would give them from Heaven. He accordingly calls down an uncommon storm in the midst of harvest, and the astonished multitude cry out, “We have added to our sins this evil to ask us a King.”

Here our author erects his standard, and here he compliments himself with the mockery of triumph. “These portions of Scripture (says he, in all the assurance of infallibility) are direct and positive. They admit of no equivocal construction. That the Almighty hath here entered his protest against Monarchical Government is true, or the Scripture is false.” But I will take the liberty to say, that the Scripture is true, and that; this author’s inference is horribly false; nay, further, that from the whole spirit of the passage, as well as the reason of things, it is to be inferred that the Almighty would have as strongly expressed his displeasure against the *Jews*, had they rejected his Government for one of their own appointment, whether it had been monarchical or democratical — to be administered by one man or a thousand men.

The author had said before, that *Samuel* did not show the manner of any “particular King, but the general manner of the Kings of the earth, whom *Israel* was so eagerly copying after.” If he means to confine himself to these Kings, I have given them to him, to make the best of them. But if he means to argue from particulars to generals, and to make the old Prophet extend his protest against

all future Monarchical Governments, such as were to subsist some thousands of years afterwards, however limited and mixed, particularly that of *Great Britain*, (which must certainly be our author's meaning, or he proves nothing to his purpose;) I say, then, if this be his meaning, I cannot so easily part with him; for in this lies our whole difference; and the particular case of the *Jews* cannot be applied to any other nation in this instance, as none else were ever in similar circumstances.

Acherley, in his *Britannick Constitutions*, (and I think our author borrows some of his principles where they can serve his purpose.) says expressly, "that the nations round about *Israel* invested their Kings with absolute power; and that it is a wild imagination to say that the *Israelitish* Kings, who were but copies (of these Kings) should, either in their election or power, be a pattern to *Great Britain*."

"There cannot be found either in the *Old* or *New Testament*, any particular description of the race of men, which are or ever were Kings of this nation." How, then, can there be a Scripture protest against a race of men who are not even described in Scripture? Mark that, *Common Sense*.

Let me add one authority more, from a commentator at least as good as our author, and who, nevertheless, flatly contradicts him — I mean the celebrated *Grotius*. He tells us that *Samuel*, in this passage, does not speak of what our author calls the "general manner of Kings," or the just and honest right of a King to do such things; because his right is otherwise described elsewhere, as shall be shown. The prophet only speaks of such a right as the Kings round about *Israel* had acquired, which was not a true, right; for such is not the signification of the original word *Mishpat*; but such an action as (being founded in might and violence) hath the *effectum juris*, or comes in the place of right.

Grotius, I fear, is too learned for us inferior writers (*Scriptures minorum gentium*) to follow him in this place. But *Sidney* (that great martyr to liberty) adopts the same explanation. "*Samuel's* words (says he) are acknowledged by all interpreters who were not malicious or mad, to be a dissuasion of the *Jews* from their wicked purpose; not a description of what a King might justly do, by virtue of his office, but what those, who should be set up against *God* and his law, would do when they should have the power in their hands."

Both *Grotius* and *Sidney* are well warranted in this interpretation, not only by the *Hebrew* text, but other clear passages of Scripture, and particularly the seventeenth chapter of *Deuteronomy*, where, with the approbation of Heaven, the duty of a good King is described and limited. The *Jews* commonly understood this chapter as containing an absolute promise from Heaven of a Royal Government, and a sufficient authority for the request made to *Samuel* more than three hundred years afterwards. Others understood it conditionally, — that if they did reject the Divine Government, and set up one of their own appointment, *God* would permit them; but their King should be chosen in the manner, and with the qualifications in that chapter described. All this, however, they disregarded when they asked an arbitrary King, like those of their neighbouring nations; and therefore, it is demonstratively certain that *Samuel*, in entering his protest against such Kings, did not protest against Kings or Monarchical Governments generally. Either this remark is true, or one part of Scripture is a direct contradiction to the other. But let the passage to which I refer speak for itself: "When thou art come unto the land which the Lord thy *God* giveth thee, and

shall say, I will set a King over me, like as all the nations that are about me; thou shalt in anywise set him King over thee whom the Lord thy *God* shall choose, one from among thy brethren, not a stranger,” &c. It is further directed, that he shall not be given to covetousness, nor multiply horses, nor wives to himself, nor greatly multiply to himself gold and silver. That when he shall sit upon the throne of his Kingdom he shall write a copy of the law in his book; (which it was understood he was to do with his own hand.) That this book shall be with him, (or always carried about him,) and he shall read therein all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his *God*, to keep the words of the law, and make it the rule of his Government, as well as private life. If he does this, *God* promises a blessing on his Government, to prolong his days in his Kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of *Israel*. Does not this smell strongly of Monarchy, and even of hereditary Monarchy? Is not some sort of approbation, yea and a blessing, promised to both, when religiously administered, notwithstanding all that this writer has said to the contrary?

But he has not the candour to compare Scripture with Scripture; nor does he give a single passage complete, and connected with the parts necessary to explain it, — a clear proof that other craft may be employed as well as Kingcraft and Priest-craft, in “withholding the Scripture from the people,” even in Protestant countries. Had our author proceeded a little farther, or given the passages complete as he went along, it would have appeared that, notwithstanding the just displeasure of the Almighty, and his protest against the *Jews* for throwing off his righteous Government, yet as mercy and forgiveness are his chief delight, and he knows that there is no perfection in man, the matter was pretty amicably settled at last, and the Divine countenance was given to the establishment of Monarchy, even in the person of *Saul*. *God* himself directed his election and appointment; and to prepare him for his office, gave him another heart, and also the spirit of prophecy.

As to the thunder-storm, in which our author exults, as an absolute disapprobation of all Monarchical Government, it was no more than a sign called for by *Samuel*, to convince the people that he spoke in the name of the Lord. But what did he speak in the verses immediately preceding? Not, surely, that *God* had a particular quarrel with Monarchical Government, as such, and that “blood would attend it;” but rather the contrary — that since the *Jews* would still insist upon a Government of their own appointment, the Almighty would yet give them a blessing under that very form, upon condition of their obedience to his law. “If ye will fear the Lord and serve him, and obey his voice, &c’, then shall both ye, and also the King that reigneth over you, continue following the Lord;” to which duty of following the Lord a blessing is always promised in Scripture.

“But if you will not obey, &c’, the hand of the Lord shall be against you.” So it would have been for disobedience had they not asked a King! And, immediately after the thunder-storm, *Samuel* confirms this doctrine, and comforts the people: “Fear not, (said he,) although you have thus sinned, the Lord will not forsake his people. As for me, *God* forbid that I should sin against the Lord, and cease to pray for you. But I will instruct you in the good and right way.” Thus, it seems, a good and right way was yet to be found under Monarchical Government. From all which it is plain, that the Almighty had now pardoned the *Jews*; and the Prophet follows the example, promising still to proceed in the discharge of his duty among them, as a people yet in covenant with *God*. But, as I hinted before, it did not suit our author’s purpose to take notice of such passages

as these; and he has been guilty of still as great a perversion of Scripture concerning *David*, whom *God* undeniably approved of, and appointed to monarchal rule.

“The high encomium given to *David*, takes no notice of him officially as a King, but only as a man after *God’s* own heart.” I know the poor equivocation which the author has here in reserve to offer, for his saying that this character was not given to *David* officially as a King, but as a man. It is true, that when *Samuel* first applied the character to *David*, he had not yet entered on his office; but when it was predicted that the Kingdom should not be continued in the family of *Saul*, because he had violated the law, and intruded himself into the Priest’s duty, which did not belong to him, the Prophet tells him that “the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart,” with the express design of making him the successor of *Saul*, on account of his excellent and God-like disposition. “The Lord hath commanded him (this man after his own heart) to be Captain over his people, because thou (*Saul*) hath not kept that which the Lord commanded thee.” That one man is here rejected from being a King, because of his disobedience to *God*, and another chosen as his successor, because of his goodness of heart and regard to religion, “is true, or Scripture is false.” But one greater than *Samuel*, even. *St Paul*, puts this beyond all doubt, and appropriates the encomium to *David*, not merely as a King elect, but one actually exercising the office. “When he had removed him, (says the Apostle, meaning *Saul*,) he raised up unto them *David* to be their King, to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found *David*, the son of *Jesse*, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will,” namely, in his character of a King.

Numerous are the passages of Scripture which might be brought to show that the Almighty approved of *David* officially as a King, on account of his publick virtues, and that a Divine blessing was given to the *Jewish* Monarchy, under his direction. The reader may consult 2 *Samuel*, v. 10, 12, viii, 16; *Psalms* Ixxviii, 70, 71, 72; *Psalms* Ixxxix, 20, 28.

I have now done with our author on this head, and can return one of his polite expressions — “I despise him,” equally as a perverter of Scripture, and of the fundamental principles of mixed Government. I am threatened with being “hunted from every lane and lurking hole.” Hunt on. I skulk in no such places, but keep the open streets. “Wait a little,” say others, “*Cato* will soon be found tripping, and stumbling upon Tory doctrine, the divine right of Kings, non-resistance, and the like.” Well, gentlemen, wait patiently till it so happens; but let me, in the mean time, have fair play. I claim it of the publick, as being engaged in a cause which is of the utmost importance to them as well as to myself; and while I handle it decently I can rely on their candour. I have got over what some may have viewed as the most thorny part of my way; and, upon the whole matter, I contend for this: That where a people are left to choose their own forms of Government, as has been the case of all the world for some thousand years, there is no particular denunciation of *God’s* displeasure against any form, whether monarchial or democratical, under which such a people may think their civil happiness best secured, and their duty to God best performed.

Acherley shall again shelter me in this conclusion, which is the main purport of the present letter: “*Jesus Christ* left all the potentates of this world and their subjects to decide their several rights by the temporal laws of each nation; and never intimated what form of Government was most convenient or eligible.” This directly contradicts our author, who says that the Almighty has entered his protest against the particular form of Monarchy. Yet *Acherley* was a good Whig, and desired to leave Scripture out of the institution of modern Governments. It might be well for the

author of *Common Sense* to follow the example in his future works, without stirring up an old dispute, of which our fathers were long since wearied.

It has been asked, why does not *Cato* come to the point? he is but yet in the suburbs. Softly, gentlemen. If this be true, why do you, who are in the citadel, make such a noise, and betray such fears? Can you not let me pursue the siege in my own way? I really thought that if I could sap or overturn your foundations, the aerial part of your fabrick would tumble to the ground. You call on me to show my plan. I have done it; and mentioned as such, a safe return to a connection with our ancient friends and kindred, accompanied with all the advantages we have formerly experienced, and perhaps more; which, I trust, are things yet practicable; or, if it should prove otherwise, we can lose nothing by the exercise of deliberation and wisdom in the mean while. But what have you done? Although it was incumbent on you to have shown the advantages of your plan to the great and respectable number of good men who will always be averse to changes, except in the last necessity; although you ought to resolve their honest doubts concerning their future safety and peace, which have been plentifully thrown out to you; in short, although you ought to have counted the cost of your work, and have tried to reconcile with your design a multitude of interests, commercial, political, and economical, — you have only entertained us with some loose declamations upon abuses in the *English* Government; and shocked us, for want of better arguments, by a perversion of things sacred; filling the papers with personal invectives and calumnies against all who cannot swallow, at a venture, every crude notion which you may cook up as the politicks of the day. This will as little agree with the stomachs of others as with mine; although I have declared that, when the last necessity comes, I have no expedient in view but to take my chance with you, for better and for worse.

CATO.

**Lowth's Commentaries.*

**"Mark that, *Cato*" is a favourite expression of our author in the character of the *Forester*.

Pennsylvania Gazette, 10 April 1776

FORRESTER TO CATO, LETTER II

Before I enter on the more immediate purpose of this letter, I think it necessary, once for all, to endeavour to settle, as clearly as I can, the following point, viz: How far personality is concerned in any political debate. The general maxim is, that measures, and not men, is the thing in question; and the maxim is undeniably just when rightly understood. *Cato*, as a refuge for himself, hath quoted the author of *Common Sense*, who, in his preface, says: "That the object for attention is the doctrine itself, not the man;" that is, not the rank or condition of the man; for whether he is with those whose fortune is already made, or with those whose fortune is yet to make, or among those who seldom think or care whether they make any, is a matter wholly out of the question, and entirely confined to himself. But the political characters, political dependencies, and political connections of men, being of a publick nature, differ exceedingly from the circumstances of private life; and they are, in many instances, so nearly related to the measures they propose, that, to prevent our being deceived by the last, we must be acquainted with the first. A total ignorance of men lays us under the danger of mistaking plausibility for principle. Could the wolf bleat like the lamb, the stock would soon be enticed into ruin; wherefore, to prevent the mischief, he ought to be seen as

well as heard. There never was, nor ever will be, nor ever ought to be, any important political debate carried on, in which a total separation, in all cases, between men and measures, could be admitted with sufficient safety. When hypocrisy shall be banished from the earth, the knowledge of men will be unnecessary, because their measures cannot then be fraudulent; but until that time comes, (which never will come,) they ought, under proper limitations, to go together. We have already too much secrecy in some things, and too little in others. Were men more known, and measures more concealed, we should have fewer hypocrites, and more security.

As the chief design of these letters is to detect and expose the falsehoods and fallacious reasonings of *Cato*, he must not expect, when detected, to be treated like one who had debated fairly; for I will be bold to say, and to prove, that a grosser violation of truth and reason scarcely ever came from the pen of a writer; and the explanations which he hath endeavoured to impose on the passages which he hath quoted from *Common Sense*, are such as never existed in the mind of the author; nor can they be drawn from the words themselves. Neither must *Cato* expect to be spared where his carelessness of expression, and visible want of compassion and sentiment, shall give occasion to raise any moral or philosophical reflection thereon. These things being premised, I now proceed to review the latter part of *Cato's* second letter.

In this place, *Cato* begins his first attack on *Common Sense*; but as he only discovers his ill-will, and neither offers any arguments against it, nor makes any quotation from it, I should, in this place, pass him by, were it not for the following strange assertion: "If little notice," says *Cato*, (little opposition he means) "has yet been taken of the publications concerning Independence, it is neither owing to the popularity of the doctrine, the unanswerable nature of the arguments, nor the fear of opposing them, as the vanity of the author would suggest." As *Cato* hath given us the negative reasons, he ought to have given us the real ones; for as he positively tells what it was not owing to, he undoubtedly knows what it was owing to, that he delayed his answers so long; but instead of telling us that, (which, perhaps, is not proper to be told,) he flies from the argument with the following plump declaration: "Nine-tenths of the people of *Pennsylvania* (says he) yet abhor the doctrine." But stop, *Cato*! Not quite so fast, friend. If this be true, how came they, so late as the 2d of *March* last, to elect, for a Burgess of this city, a gentleman of known independent principles, and one of the very few to whom the author of *Common Sense* showed some part thereof while in manuscript? *Cato* is just as unfortunate in the following paragraph: "Those," says he, "who made the appeal, (that is, published the pamphlet,) have but little cause to triumph in its success. Of this they seem sensible, and, like true quacks, are constantly pestering us with additional doses, till the stomachs of their patients begin wholly to revolt." It is *Cato's* hard fate to be always detected; for perhaps there never was a pamphlet, since the use of letters was known, about which so little pains were taken, and of which so great a number went off in so short a time — I am certain that I am within compass when I say one hundred and twenty thousand. The book was turned upon the world like an orphan, to shift for itself. No plan was formed to support it; neither hath the author ever published a syllable on the subject from that time till after the appearance of *Cato's* fourth letter. Wherefore, what *Cato* says of additional doses administered by the author, is an absolute falsity. Besides which, it comes with an ill-grace from one who frequently publishes two letters in a week, and often puts them both into one paper. *Cato* here, *Cato* there, look where you will.

At the distance of a few lines from the above quotations, *Cato* presents us with a retrospective view of our former state, in which, says he, "we considered our connection with *Great Britain* as

our chief happiness. We flourished, grew rich and populous to a degree not to be paralleled in history.” This assertion is truly of the legerdemain kind, appearing, at once, both right and wrong. All writers on *Cato’s* side have used the same argument, and conceived themselves invincible. Nevertheless, a single expression, properly placed, dissolves the charm, for the cheat lies in putting the consequence for the cause; for had we not flourished, the connection had never existed, or never been regarded: and this is fully proved by the neglect shown to the first settlers, who had every difficulty to struggle with, unnoticed and unassisted by the *British* Court.

Cato proceeds very industriously to sum up the former declarations of Congress and other publick bodies, (some of which were made upwards of a year ago,) to prove that the doctrine of Independence hath no sanction from them. To this I shall give *Cato* one general answer, which is, that, had he produced a thousand more such authorities, they would now amount to nothing. They are out of date. Times and things are altered. The true character of the King was but little known among the body of the people a year ago; willing to believe him good, they fondly called him so, but have since found that *Cato’s* Royal Sovereign is a Royal Savage.

Cato hath introduced the above-mentioned long quotation of authorities against Independency with the following curious preface: “Nor have many weeks (says he) yet elapsed since the first open proposition for Independence was published to the world. By what men of consequence this scheme is supported, or whether by any, may possibly be the subject of future inquiry. Certainly it hath no countenance from the Congress, to whose sentiments we look up with reverence. On the contrary, it is directly repugnant to every declaration of that respectable body.” Now, *Cato*, thou hast nailed thyself with a witness! Directly repugnant to every declaration of that respectable body! Mind that, *Cato*, and mark what follows. It appears, by an extract from the resolves of the Congress, printed in the front of the Oration delivered by Dr. *Smith* in honour of that brave man, General *Montgomery*, that he (the Doctor) was appointed by that honourable body to compose and deliver the same, in the execution of which, the Orator exclaimed loudly against the doctrine of Independence; but when a motion was afterwards made in Congress (according to former usage) to return the Orator thanks, and request a copy for the press, the motion was rejected from every part of the House, and thrown out without a division.

I now proceed to *Cato’s* third letter, in the opening of which he deserts the subject of Independence, and renews his attack on the Committee. *Cato’s* manner of writing has as much order in it as the motion of a squirrel. He frequently writes as if he knew not what to write next, just as the other; and jumps about only because he cannot stand still. Though I am sometimes angry with him for his unprincipled method of writing and reasoning, I cannot help laughing at him, at other times, for his want of ingenuity — an instance of which he gives us in kindly warning us against “the foul pages of interested writers, and strangers intermeddling in our affairs.” Were I to reply seriously, my answer would be this: Thou seemest, then, ignorant, *Cato*, of that ancient and numerous order which are related to each other in all and every part of the globe — with whom the kindred is not formed by place or accident, but in principle and sentiment. A freeman, *Cato*, is a stranger nowhere; a slave, everywhere. But were I disposed to answer merrily, I should tell him that, as his notions of friendship were so very narrow and local, he obliges me to understand that, when he addresses the people with the tender title of “My dear Countrymen,” (which frequently occurs in his letters,) he particularly means the long list of *Macks* published in *Donald MacDonald’s* commission.

In this letter *Cato* recommends the pamphlet called *Plain Truth* — a performance which hath withered away like a sickly, unnoticed weed, and which even its advocates are displeased at, and the author ashamed to own. About the middle of this third letter *Cato* gives notice of his being ready to take the field: “I now proceed (says he) to give my reasons.” How *Cato* hath managed the attack, we are now to examine; and the first remark I shall offer on his conduct, is, that he has most unluckily entered the list on the wrong side, and discharged his first fire among the Tones. In order to prove this, I shall give the paragraph entire. “Agriculture and commerce (says *Cato*) 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.” The reader cannot help perceiving that, through this whole paragraph, our connection with *Britain* is left entirely out of the question, and our present greatness attributed to internal causes — agriculture and commerce. This is a strange way, *Cato*, of overturning *Common Sense*, which says: “I challenge the warmest advocate for reconciliation to show a single advantage which this Continent can reap by being connected with *Great Britain*. I repeat (says he) the challenge. Not a single advantage is derived. Our corn will fetch its price in any market in *Europe*, and our imported goods must be paid for, buy them where we will,” *Cato* introduces his next paragraph with saying, “That much of our former felicity was owing to the protection of *England*, is not to be denied.” Yes, *Cato*, I deny it wholly, and for the following clear and simple reasons, viz: that our being connected with, and submitting to be protected by her, made, and will still make, all her enemies our enemies; or, as *Common Sense* says, sets us at variance with nations who would otherwise seek our friendship, and against whom we have neither anger nor complaint.

The following passage is so glaringly absurd, that I shall make but a short comment upon it: “And if, hereafter, (says *Cato*,) in the fulness of time, it shall be necessary to separate from the land that gave birth to (some of) 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.” But how are we to come by fleets, *Cato*, while *Britain* hath the government of the Continent? unless we are to suppose — as you have hinted in the former paragraph — that our oaks are to grow into ships, and to be launched, self-built, from their “native spots of earth.” It is *Cato*’s misfortune, as a writer, not to distinguish justly between magick and Imagination; while, on the other hand, there are many passages in his letters so seriously and deliberately false, that nothing but the most hardened effrontery, and a cast of mind bordering upon impiety, would have uttered. He frequently forces me out of the common track of civil language, in order to do him justice; moderation and temper being really unequal to the task of exposing him.

Cato, unless he meant to destroy the ground he stood upon, ought not to have let the following paragraph be seen: “If our present difference (says he) can be accommodated, there is scarce a probability that *Britain* will ever renew her late fatal system of policy, or attempt again to employ force against us.” How came *Cato* to admit the probability of our being brought again into the same bloody and expensive situation? But it is worth remarking, that those who write without principle, cannot help sometimes blundering upon truth. Then there is no real security, *Cato*, in

this reconciliation of yours on constitutional principles? It still amounts to nothing; and, after all this expense of life and wealth, we are to rest at last upon hope, hazard, and uncertainty. Why, then, by all that is sacred, “it is time to part.”

But *Cato*, after admitting the probability of our being brought again into the same situation, proceeds to tell us how we are to conduct ourselves in the second quarrel — and that is, by the very same method we have done the present one, viz; to expend millions of treasure, and thousands of lives, in order to patch up a second reunion, that the way may be open for a third quarrel; and in this endless and chequered round of blood and treacherous peace hath *Cato* disposed of the Continent of *America*. That I may not be thought to do *Cato* injustice, I have quoted the whole passage: “But should *Britain* be so infatuated (says he) 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 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 connection with her, to afford and receive reciprocal benefits; but although subjects of the same King, we will not consent to be her slaves.” Come hither, ye little ones, whom the poisonous hand of *Cato* is rearing for destruction, and remember the page that warns ye of your ruin!

Cato, in many of his expressions, discovers all that calm command over the passions and feelings which always distinguishes the man who hath expelled them from his heart. Of this careless kind is the before-mentioned phrase. “Our present differences,” and the same unpardonable negligence is conveyed in the following one: “Although I consider her (says he) as having, in her late conduct towards us, acted the part of a cruel step-dame.” Wonderful sensibility, indeed! All the havock and desolation of unnatural war; the destruction of thousands; the burning and depopulating of towns and cities; the ruin and separation of friends and families, are just sufficient to extort from *Cato* this one callous confession. But the cold and creeping soul of *Cato* is a stranger to the manly powers of sympathetick sorrow. He moves not, nor can he move, in so pure an element. Accustomed to lick the hand that hath made him visible, and to breathe the gross atmosphere of servile and sordid dependance, his soul would now starve on virtue, and suffocate in the clear region of disinterested friendship.

Surely, when *Cato* sat down to write he either did not expect to be called to an account, or was totally regardless of reputation; otherwise, he would not have endeavoured to persuade the publick that the doctrine of Independence was broached, in a kind of seditious manner, at a time “when (says he) some gleams of reconciliation began first to break in upon us.” Come forth, *Cato*, and prove the assertion. Where do these gleams of reconciliation spring from? Are they to be found in the King’s Speech? — in the Address of either House of Parliament? — or in the Act which lets loose a whole kennel of pirates upon our property, and commissions another set to insult, with pardons, the very men whom their own measures had sought to ruin? Either prove the assertion, *Cato*, or take the reward of it; for it is the part of an incendiary to endeavour, with specious falsehoods, to mislead the credulity of unwary readers. *Cato* likewise says; “That, while we continue united, and renounce all thoughts of Independence, 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.” If *Cato* means to insinuate that we have received such an assurance, let him read the conclusion of the preceding paragraph again. The same answer will serve for both.

Perhaps, when we recollect the long and unabated cruelty of the *British* Court towards us, and remember the many prayers which we have put up, both to them and for them, the following piece of declamation of *Cato* can hardly be equalled, either for absurdity or insanity: "If we new affect Independence, (says he,) 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." Art thou mad, *Cato*, or art thou foolish? or art thou both? or art thou worse than both? In this passage, thou hast fairly gone beyond me. I have not language to bring thee back. Thou art safely intrenched, indeed! Rest, therefore, in thy stronghold till he who fortified thee in it shall come and fetch thee out.

Cato seems to be possessed of that Jesuitical cunning which always endeavours to disgrace what it cannot disprove; and this he sometimes effects by unfairly introducing our terms into his arguments, and thereby begets a monster, which he sends round the country for a show, and tells the good people that the name of it is Independence. Of this character are several passages in his fourth and fifth letters, particularly where he quotes the term "foreign assistance," which he ungenerously explains into a surrender of the Continent to *France* and *Spain*. Such an unfair and sophistical reasoner doth not deserve the civility of good manners. He creates, likewise, the same confusion by frequently using the word peace for union, and thereby charges us falsely by representing us as being determined to "reject all propositions of peace." Whereas our wish is peace, but not reunion; and though we would gladly listen to the former, we are determined to resist every proposal for the latter, come from where it will; being fully persuaded that, in the present state of affairs, separation of Governments is the only and best thing that can be done for both countries.

The following case is unjustly put: "There never was a war (says *Cato*) so implacable, even among States naturally rivals and enemies, or among Savages themselves, as not to have peace for its object as well as end." But was there ever a war, *Cato*, which had union for its object? No. What *Cato* means by States naturally rivals and enemies, I shall not inquire into; but this I know, (for myself at least,) that it was not in the power of *France* or *Spain*, or all the other powers in *Europe*, to have given such a wound, or raised up such a mortal hatred, as *Britain* hath done. We feel the same kind of undescribed anger at her conduct as we would at the sight of an animal devouring its young; and this particular species of anger is not generated in the transitory temper of the man, but in the chaste, undefiled womb of nature.

Cato, towards the conclusion of his third letter, (at which place I shall leave him for the present,) compares the state of *Britain* and *America* to the quarrels of lovers, and from thence infers a probability that our affections will be renewed thereby. This I cannot help looking on as one of the most unnatural and distorted similes that can be drawn. Come hither, ye that are lovers, or ye that have been lovers, and decide the controversy between us! What comparison is there between the soft murmurs of a heart mourning in secret and the loud horrors of war — between the silent tears of pensive sorrow and rivers of wasted blood — between the sweet strife of affection and the bitter strife of death — between the curable calamities of pettish lovers and the sad sight of a thousand slain? "Get thee behind me," *Cato*, for thou hast not the feelings of a man.

THE FORESTER.

Pennsylvania Ledger, 10 April 1776

CATO TO THE PEOPLE OF PENNSYLVANIA. — LETTER VII.

The author of *Common Sense* does not trust wholly to his Scripture doctrines for the demolition of Monarchical Government; and, indeed, how could he? For he seems only to have begun his study of the Bible “since the fatal 19th of *April*, 1775.” Before that period, as he eloquently tells us, “no man was a warmer wisher to reconciliation (with Monarchical Government) than himself.” It maybe proper, then, to take some notice of what he offers by way of argument against Monarchy, and particularly the hereditary kind.

“If hereditary successions,” says he, (meaning succession to Monarchical Government,) “did insure a race of good men, it would have the seal of Divine authority.” Thus we find him, with his own hand, affixing the seal of Heaven to what he has before told us the Devil invented, and the Almighty entered his protest against. A strange inconsistency, as well as heterodoxy ! For, if Monarchy be from hell, and reprobated by Heaven, how can a succession to it be sanctified by the authority of everlasting goodness?

He finds another curious argument against the *English* Monarchy, in particular, by tracing it to the rascally original of a *French* Bastard. Yet, in the estimation of many, this will prove as little against the institution itself, as it would prove against this author’s arguments, or mine, in the present controversy, if both of us were discovered, not only to have sprung from bastards, but to be such ourselves. The family escutcheon that is without a blot, must be but of very fresh date. The rest of his arguments appear nothing better than these, even where he displays his whole force, in laying before us the materials of the *English* Constitution, under different heads.

“First. The remains of Monarchal tyranny, in the person of the King. Secondly. The remains of Aristocratical tyranny, in the persons of the Peers. Thirdly. The new Republican materials, in the persons of the Commons.” These, he intimates, may be virtuous; but he should have made them as tyrannical as the others, so far as these Colonies are concerned; else what are we contending for against them?

Alas! what more than *Augean* labour have I undertaken, in attempting to answer a writer, who, under the specious name of *Common Sense*, is constantly dealing out paradoxes, and setting himself up, not only in contradiction to the sober sentiments of the wisest of mankind, but often in contradiction to himself? Can any man expect credit who will gravely assert that a people, long famed for wisdom and love of liberty, would have employed themselves for a thousand years in compounding and rearing up a Constitution out of the materials of the different simple forms of Government, and, all the while, have selected nothing but the tyrannical remains of each? To reason with such a writer would be lost labour. Some assertions are too absurd for the possibility of refutation. The rules of logick cannot lay hold of them.

In such a case, the best answer that can be given is, to lay before the reader a true account of the *English* Constitution, the praises of which have adorned and filled the volumes of the greatest men in our own and other countries. In this part of my work, therefore, I shall have little more to do than to copy them; and as the sentiments of foreigners may be deemed more impartial than our own, I shall take one of the greatest of them — the illustrious *Montesquieu* — for my chief guide.

But as this truly enlightened genius, with the dignity of a profound law giver, delivers himself almost in the concise style of aphorisms, that he may be more useful to men whose clear and comprehensive understanding renders them fit for the like office themselves, in the service of their country, I shall endeavour to convey the substance of his doctrines, in the most familiar style, retaining, as far as I am able, his sense and spirit. I shall likewise venture sometimes to make a few additions, either for illustration, or to bring his general principles more closely home to the *English Constitution*.

There is certainly something too venerable in a fabrick built up with so much care by our ancestors, cemented with so much blood, and to which they have adhered for so many ages, to be lightly given up, upon the partial representations, or general invectives of any writer, or number of writers, arguing from the abuse of things against the use of them. We would not lock ourselves out of an old habitation, till we had provided a new and better one; nor part with a common friend upon the passionate accusations of an avowed enemy, without hearing what he could say in his defence, and giving him a fair trial. For, at this rate, we could have nothing of the least stability or permanency upon earth; and our whole lives would be employed in making and unmaking, building up and pulling down, without ever reaping the smallest fruit of our labours.

The author of *Common Sense* stands singular in his rage for condemning the *English Constitution* in the lump, and the administration of it from the beginning. The immortal *Sydney* himself gives it a different character, and speaks with reverence of the wisdom of our ancestors. “They evidently appear, (says he,) not only to have intended well, but to have taken a right course to accomplish what they intended. This had effect as long as the cause continued; and the only fault which can be ascribed to that which they established is, that It has not proved to be perpetual, which is no more than may be justly said of the best human Constitutions that ever have been in the world. If we will be just to our ancestors it will become us, in our time, rather to pursue what we know they intended, and by new Constitutions to repair the breaches made upon the old, than to accuse them of defects that will forever attend the actions of men.”

Montesquieu himself, in the cool moments of philosophical reflection, unbiased by local prejudices, and remote, both in time and place; from the scenes he describes, has given us an instructive lesson on this head. “A very droll spectacle (says he,) it was in the last century, to behold the impotent efforts the English made for the establishment of Democracy or Republican Government. The spirit of one faction was suppressed only by that of a succeeding faction. The Government was continually changing. The people, amazed at so many revolutions, sought everywhere for a Democracy, without being able to find it anywhere. At length, after a series of tumultuary motions and violent shocks, they were obliged to have recourse to that very Government which they had so odiously proscribed.”

Every Government, in order to be complete, must have within itself the power of preserving its being, as well as pursuing its well-being. And such a power necessarily implies three things: 1st, Legislation, or the making laws and regulations for the good of the community; 2d, The execution of these laws; 3dly, The judging when they are duly executed, and punishing offenders. The great object of the whole is political liberty, which *Montesquieu* defines, “that tranquillity or peace of mind arising from the opinion each person has of his safety. In order to have this liberty, it is requisite that the Government be so constituted, as one man need not be afraid of another,” either

in respect of his person or property. Every man's own feelings can tell him that this is a true definition.

But the union of these three powers — the Legislative, the Executive, and Judicial, in one man, or any number of men, is not liberty, but tyranny complete; because there can be no safety for individuals in such a case, unless goodness were always united with power; which is not to be looked for, except under the perfect government of Heaven. "It is a mistake, (says the great Mr' *Locke*,) to think that this fault (the abuse of power) is proper only to Monarchies. Other forms of Government are liable to it as well as that; for wherever the power that is put into any hands for the government of the people, and the preservation of their properties, is applied to other ends, and made use of to impoverish, harass, or subdue them to the arbitrary and irregular commands of those that have it, there it presently becomes tyranny, whether those that use it are one or many. Thus we read of thirty tyrants at *Athens*, as well as one at *Syracuse*; and the intolerable dominion of the *Decemviri*, or ten men at *Rome*, was nothing better. Wherever law ends tyranny begins."

Even the union of but any two of these powers, the Legislative and Executive for example, in one man, or body of men, would leave no chance for liberty; because they who make the laws, being also to execute them, they would be led to frame oppressive laws for the sake of the power and wealth which they might derive to themselves by carrying such laws into execution.

Again, there is no liberty if the power of judging be not separated from both the other powers. For where the same persons who make the laws are either to execute them, or to judge of their execution, the life and liberty of the subject are wholly at their mercy. These principles are general, and they may now be applied to particular examples.

In *Turkey* these three powers are united in the *Sultan's* person, and therefore the subjects groan under the weight of a most frightful oppression." "In the Republicks of *Italy*, where these three powers are united in a standing body of Magistrates, there is less liberty than in our Monarchies;" meaning those of *France*, *Spain*, &c. "Their Government is obliged to have recourse to as violent measures for its support as even that of the *Turks*." What a situation must the poor subject be in, in these Republicks! The same Magistrates, as a body, are absolute in everything. By having the execution of the laws, they possess whatever powers they are pleased to give themselves in making them. They may plunder the State without control; for they, first of all, in the character of lawgivers, appoint what taxes they please; and, being also the executors of the laws, these taxes come into their own hands, and may be put into their own pockets. Being like wise themselves judges, amidst all these oppressions, no man can have a remedy against them, and "every private citizen may be ruined by their particular decisions. Although in such a State there is no external pomp (such as arbitrary Princes have) that indicates tyranny or despotick sway," yet the people know it by a surer mark — "they feel it every moment." Even at *Venice*, where the power of the Magistracy is said to be somewhat softened, by having different tribunals erected, which temper each other, there is still this mischief, "that these tribunals are composed of Magistrates all belonging to the same body, which constitutes almost one and the same power," unaccountable to any other.

These three powers ought, then, for the preservation of liberty, to be lodged in separate bodies, and made to control each other. *Montesquieu* adds, that for the greater safety, the judicial power ought not to be given to a standing Senate; but that the judges should be of the same station as the

accused; or, in other words, their peers — amenable to the law; only its mouth, and guided wholly by its decisions; that, in criminal cases especially, it is proper the person accused should have the privilege of choosing, in some measure, his judges, (that is, in our Constitution, a Jury,) in concurrence with the law, or at least he should have a right to except against so great a number that the remainder may be deemed his own choice.

The application of these general doctrines to the *English* Constitution, the corruptions that have crept into it, with the power left in the people for bringing it back to its first principles, and rendering it safer for us than any other we can probably substitute in its room, are important subjects, and too copious to be discussed in this letter.

CATO.

**Montesquieu*, B' XI. ch' 6.

Pennsylvania Packet, 22 April 1776

FORRESTER TO CATO, LETTER III.

Cato's partisans may call me furious, I regard it not, There are men, too, who have not virtue enough to be angry; and that crime perhaps is *Cato's*. He who dares not offend cannot be honest. Having thus balanced the charge, I proceed to *Cato's* fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh letters, all of which, as they contain but little matter, I shall dismiss with as little trouble and less formality. *Cato's* fourth, and the greatest part of his fifth letter, are constructed on a false meaning, uncivilly imposed on a passage quoted from *Common Sense*; and for which the author of that pamphlet hath a right to expect from *Cato* the usual concessions. I shall quote the passage entire, with *Cato's* additional meaning, and the inferences which he draws therefrom.

He introduces it with saying, "In my remarks on the; pamphlet before me, I shall first consider those arguments on which he (the author) appears to lay his chief stress; and these are collected under four heads in his conclusion;" one of which is, "It is the custom of nations when any two are at war, for some other Powers not engaged in the quarrel, to step in by way of mediators, and bring about the; preliminaries of a peace; but while *America* calls herself the subject of *Great Britain*, no Power, however well-disposed she may be, can offer her mediation." The meaning contained in this passage is so exceedingly plain, and expressed in such easy and familiar terms, that it scarcely admits of being made plainer. No one, I think, could have understood it any otherwise than that, while we continue to call ourselves *British* subjects, the quarrel between us can only be called a family quarrel, in which it would be just as indelicate for any other nation to advise, or any way to meddle or make, even with their offers of mediation, as it would be for a third person to interfere in a quarrel between a man and his wife. Whereas, were we to make use of that natural right which all other nations have done before; us, and erect a Government of our own, independent of all the world, the quarrel could then be no longer called a family quarrel, but a regular war between the two Powers of *Britain* and *America*, in the same manner as one carried on between *England* and *France*; and in this state of political separation, the neutral powers might kindly tender their mediation, (as hath always been the practice,) and bring about the preliminaries of a peace. Not a union, *Cato*; that is quite another thing. But instead of *Cato's* taking it in this easy and natural sense, he flies away on a wrong scent; charges the author with proposing to call in

foreign assistance; and, under this wilful falsehood, raises up a mighty cry after nothing at all. He begins his wild and unintelligible comment in the following manner: “Is this,” says he, (meaning the passage already quoted,) “common sense, or common nonsense? Surely peace with *Great Britain* cannot be the object of this writer, after the horrible character he has given of the people of that country, and telling us that reconciliation with them would be our ruin. The latter part of the paragraph seems to cast some light upon the former, although it contradicts it; for these mediators are not to interfere for making up the quarrel, but to widen it, by supporting us in a declaration, that we are not the subjects of *Great Britain*; a new sort of business truly for mediators! But this, (continues *Cato*,) leads us directly to the main inquiry, what foreign Power is able to give us this support?” What support, *Cato*? The passage you have quoted neither says a syllable, nor insinuates a hint about support. It speaks only of neutral Powers in the neighbourly character of mediators between those who are at war; and says it is the custom of *European Courts* to do so. *Cato* hath already raised Commissioners into Ambassadors; but how he could transform mediators into men in arms, and mediation into military alliance, is surpassingly strange. Read the part over again, *Cato*; if you find I have charged you wrongfully, and will point it out, I will engage that the author of *Common Sense* shall ask you pardon in the publick papers with his name to it; but if the error be yours, the concession on your part follows as a duty.

Though I am fully persuaded that *Cato* does not believe one half of what himself has written, he, nevertheless, takes amazing pains to frighten his readers into a belief of the whole; tells them of foreign troops (which he supposes we are going to send for) ravaging up and down the country; of their “bloody massacres, and unrelenting persecutions, which would harrow up (says he.) the very souls of Protestants and freemen.” Were they coming, *Cato*, (which no one ever dreamed of but yourself; for, thank *God*, we want them not,) it would be impossible for them to exceed, or even to equal the cruelties practised by the *British Army* in the *East-Indies*; the tying men to the mouths of cannon and “blowing them away,” was never acted by any but an *English General*, or approved by any but a *British Court*. Read the proceedings of the Select Committee on Indian affairs.

From temporal fears *Cato* proceeds to spiritual ones; and in a hypocritical panick, asks, “To whose share will *Pennsylvania* fall — that of his most Catholick, or his most Christian King? I confess, (continues he,) that these questions stagger me.” I don’t wonder at it, *Cato* — I am glad to hear that some kind of remorse hath overtaken you — that you begin to feel that you are “heavy laden” — you have had a long run; and the stoutest heart must fail at last.

Cato, perceiving that the falsehoods in his fourth letter passed unreprieved, ventured boldly on a fifth; in which he continues enlarging on the same convenient bugbear. “In my last, (says he,) some notice was taken of the dangerous proposition held up by the author of *Common Sense* for having recourse to foreign assistance.” When will *Cato* learn to speak the truth? The assistance which we hope for from *France*, is not armies, (we want them not,) but arms and ammunition. We have already received into this Province only, near two hundred tons of saltpetre and gunpowder, besides muskets. Surely we may continue to cultivate a useful acquaintance, without such malevolent beings as *Cato* raising his barbarous slander thereon. At this time, it is not only illiberal, but impolitick, and perhaps dangerous, to be pouring forth such torrents of abuse as his fourth and fifth letters contain against the only Power that, in articles of defence, hath supplied our hasty wants. *Cato*, after expending near two letters in beating down an idol which himself only had set up, proudly congratulates himself on the defeat, and marches off to new exploits, leaving behind

him the following Proclamation: “Having thus (says *Cato*) despatched his (the author of *Common Sense*’s) main argument for Independence, which he founds on the necessity of calling in foreign assistance, I proceed to examine some other parts of his work.” Not a syllable, *Cato*, doth any part of the pamphlet in question say of calling in foreign assistance, or even forming military alliances. The dream is wholly your own; and is directly repugnant both to the letter and spirit of every page in the piece. The idea which *Common Sense* constantly holds up is, to have nothing to do with the political affairs of *Europe*. “As *Europe*, (says the pamphlet,) is our market for trade, we ought to form no political connections with any part of it. It is the true interest of *America* to steer clear of all *European* contentions.” And where it proposes sending a manifesto to foreign Courts, (which it is high time to do,) it recommends it only for the purpose of announcing to them the impossibility of our living any longer under the *British* Government, and of “assuring such Courts of our peaceable disposition towards them, and of our desire of entering into trade with them.” Learn to be an honest man, *Cato*, and then thou wilt not be thus exposed. I have been the more particular in detecting *Cato* here, because it is on this bubble that his air-built battery against Independence is raised. A poor foundation indeed! which even the point of a pin, or a pen if you please, can demolish with a touch, and bury the formidable *Cato* beneath the ruins of a vapour!

From this part of his fifth letter to the end of his seventh, he entirely deserts the subject of Independence, and sets up the proud standard of Kings, in preference to a Republican form of Government. My remarks on this part of the subject will be general and concise.

In this part of the debate, *Cato* shelters himself chiefly in quotations from other authors, without reasoning much on the matter himself. In answer to which, I present him with a string of maxims and reflections, drawn from the nature of things, without borrowing from any one. *Cato* may observe that I scarcely ever quote; the reason is I always think. But to return.

Government should always be considered as a matter of convenience, not of right. The Scripture institutes no particular form of Government, but it enters a protest against the Monarchal form; and a negation on one thing, where two only are offered, and one must be chosen, amounts to an affirmative on the other. Monarchal Government was first set up by the Heathens, and the Almighty permitted it to the *Jews* as a punishment. “I gave them a King in mine anger.” — *Hosea* xiii, 11. A Republican form of Government is pointed out by nature — Kingly Governments by an inequality of power. In Republican Governments, the leaders of the people, if improper, are removeable by vote — Kings only by arms. An unsuccessful vote in the first case leaves the voter safe; but an unsuccessful attempt in the latter, is death. Strange that that which is our right in the one should be our ruin in the other — from which reflection follows this maxim: That that mode of Government in which our right becomes our ruin, cannot be the right one. If all human nature be corrupt, it is needless to strengthen the corruption, by establishing a succession of Kings, who, be they ever so base, are still to be obeyed; for the manners of a Court will always have an influence over the morals of a People.

A Republican Government hath more true grandeur in it than a Kingly one. On the part of the publick, it is more consistent with freemen to appoint their rulers than to have them born; and on the part of those who preside, it is far nobler to be a ruler by the choice of a People, than a King by the chance of birth. Every honest Delegate is more than a Monarch. Disorders will unavoidably happen in all States; but Monarchal Governments are the most subject thereto, because the balance

hangs uneven. “Nineteen rebellions and eight civil wars in *England* since the conquest.” Whatever commotions are produced in Republican States are not produced by a Republican spirit, but by those who seek to extinguish it. A Republican State cannot produce its own destruction; it can only suffer it. No nation of people, in their true senses, when seriously reflecting on the rank which *God* hath given them, and the reasoning faculties he hath blessed them with, would ever, of their own consent, give any one man a negative power over the whole. No man since the fall hath ever been equal to the trust; wherefore it is insanity in us to entrust them with it; and in this sense, all those who have had it have done us right by abusing us into reason. Nature seems sometimes to laugh at mankind, by giving them so many fools for Kings; at other times she punishes their folly by giving them tyrants; but *England* must have offended highly to be cursed with both in one. *Rosseau* proposed a plan for establishing a perpetual *European* peace; which was for every State in *Europe* to send Ambassadors to form a General Council, and when any difference happened between any two nations, to refer the matter to arbitration instead of going to arms. This would be forming a kind of *European* Republick; but the proud and plundering spirit of Kings hath not peace for its object. They look not at the good of mankind — they set not out on that plan; and if the history of the creation, and the history of Kings be compared together, the result will be this, that *God* hath made a world, and Kings have robbed him of it.

But that which sufficiently establishes the Republican mode of Government, in preference to a Kingly one, even when all other arguments are left out, is this simple truth, that all men are Republicans by nature, and Royalists only by fashion. And this is fully proved by that passionate adoration which all men show to that great and almost only remaining bulwark of natural rights, Trial by Juries, which is founded on a pure Republican basis. Here the power of Kings is shut out. No Royal negative can enter this Court, The Jury, which is here supreme, is a Republick, a body of judges chosen from among the People. The charter which secures this freedom in *England* was formed, not in the Senate, but in the field; and insisted on by the People, not granted by the Crown. The Crown in that instance granted nothing, but only renounced its former tyrannies, and bound itself over to its future good behaviour. It was the compromise by which the wearer of it made his peace with the People, and the condition on which he was suffered to reign.

Here ends my reply to all the letters which have at present appeared under the signature of *Cato*, being at this time seven in number. I have made no particular remarks on his two last, which treats only of the mode of Government, but answered to them generally. In one place I observe he accuses the writer of *Common Sense* with inconsistency, in having declared, “that no man was a warmer wisher for reconciliation than himself before the fatal 19th of *April*, 1775;” “that is, (says *Cato*.) reconciliation to Monarchal Government.” To which I reply, that war ought to be no man’s wish, neither ought any man to perplex a State already formed, with his private opinions, “the mode of Government being a proper consideration for those countries” only, “which have their Governments yet to form.” — *Common Sense*.

On a review of the ground which I have gone over in *Cato*’s letters, (exclusive of what I have omitted,) I find the following material charges against him:

First. He hath accused the Committee with crimes generally; stated none, nor proved, nor attempted to prove any. N^o B. The pretence of charging the acts of a body of men on individuals is too slender to be admitted.

Secondly. He hath falsely complained to the publick of the restraint of the Press.

Thirdly. He hath wickedly asserted that “gleams of reconciliation had lately broken in upon us;” thereby grossly deceiving the People.

Fourthly. He hath insinuated, as if he wished the publick to believe, that we had received “the utmost assurance of having all our grievances redressed, and an ample security against any future violation of our just rights.”

Fifthly. He hath spread false alarms of calling in foreign Troops.

Sixthly. He hath turned the Scripture into a jest. — *Ez. xxxv.*

These falsehoods, if uncontradicted, might have passed for truths, and the minds of persons remote from better intelligence, might have been greatly embarrassed thereby. Let our opinions be what they will, truth, as to facts, should be strictly adhered to. It was this affecting consideration that drew out the *Forester* (a perfect volunteer) to the painful task of writing three long letters, and occasioned to the; publick the trouble of reading them.

Having, for the present, closed my correspondence with *Cato*, I shall conclude this letter with a well-meant, affectionate address

TO THE PEOPLE.

It is not a time to trifle. Men who know they deserve nothing from their country, and whose hope is on the arm that hath sought to enslave ye, may hold out to you, as *Cato* hath done, the false light of Reconciliation. There is no such thing. ‘Tis gone! ‘tis past! The grave hath parted us, and death, in the persons of the slain, hath cut the thread of life between *Britain* and *America*.

Conquest, and not reconciliation, is the plan of *Britain*. But admitting even the last hope of the Tories to happen, which is, that our enemies, after a long succession of losses, wearied and disabled, should despairingly throw down their arms and propose a reunion, in that case, what is to be done? Are defeated and disappointed tyrants to be considered like mistaken and converted friends? Or would it be right to receive those for governours, who, had they been conquerors, would have hung us up for traitors? Certainly not. Reject the offer, then, and propose another; which is, We will make peace with you as with enemies; but we will never reunite with you as friends. This effected, and ye secure to yourselves the pleasing prospect of an eternal peace, *America*, remote from all the wrangling world, may live at ease. Bounded by the ocean, and backed by the wilderness, what hath she to fear but her *God*?

Be not deceived. It is not a little that is at stake. Reconciliation will not now go down, even if it were offered. ‘Tis a dangerous question; for the eyes of all men begin to open. There is now no secret in the matter; there ought to be none. It is a case that concerns every man, and every man ought to lay it to heart. He that is here, and he that was born here, are alike concerned. It is needless, too, to split the business into a thousand parts, and perplex it with endless and fruitless investigations, in the manner that the writer signed a *Common Man* hath done. This unparalleled contention of nations is not to be settled like a school-boy’s task of pounds, shillings, pence, and

fractions. That writer, though he may mean well, is strangely below the mark. For the first and great question, and that which involves every other in it, and from which every other will flow, is happiness. Can this Continent be happy under the Government of *Great Britain* or not? Secondly. Can she be happy under a Government of our own? To live beneath the authority of those whom we cannot love, is misery, slavery, or what name you please. In that case, there will never be peace. Security will be a thing unknown, because a treacherous friend in power is the most dangerous of enemies. The answer to the second question, Can *America* be happy under a Government of her own? is short and simple, viz: as happy as she please. She hath a blank sheet to write upon. Put it not off too long.

Painful as the task of speaking the truth must sometimes be, yet I cannot avoid giving the following hint, because much, nay, almost everything depends upon it; and that is, a thorough knowledge of the persons whom we trust. It is the duty of the publick, at this time, to scrutinize closely into the conduct of their Committee members, Members of Assembly, and Delegates in Congress; to know what they do, and their motives for so doing. Without knowing this, we shall never know who to confide in; but shall constantly mistake friends for enemies, and enemies for friends, till, in the confusion of persons, we sacrifice the cause. I am led to this reflection by the following circumstance: that the gentleman to whom the unwise and arbitrary instructions to the Delegates of this Province owe their being, and who hath bestowed all his power to support them, is said to be the same person who, when the ships now on the stocks were wanting timber, refused to sell it, and thus, by preventing our strength, to cry out of our insufficiency. But his hour of fame is past — he is hastening to his political exit.

THE FORESTER.

*It is a strange thing that *Cato* cannot be taught to distinguish between peace and union.

†Lord *Clive*, the chief of Eastern plunderers, received the thanks of the Parliament for “his honourable conduct in the *East-Indies*.”

*The following is an instance of *Cato*'s method of conducting an argument: “If hereditary succession, says *Common Sense*, (meaning succession of Monarchal Governments,) did ensure a race of good and wise men, it would have the seal of Divine authority. Thus we find him, (says *Cato*) with his own hand affixing the seal of Heaven to what he before told us the Devil invented, and the Almighty entered his protest against,” — *Cato*'s seventh letter. This is a strange argument indeed, *Cato*, or rather, it is no argument at all; for hereditary succession does not ensure a race of good and wise men; consequently has not the seal of Divine authority.

**Cato* and I differ materially in our opinion of Committees. I consider them as the only constitutional bodies at present in this Province, and that for the following reason: they were duly elected by the people, and cheerfully and faithfully do the service for which they were elected. The House of Assembly were likewise elected by the people, but do the business for which they were not elected. Their authority is truly unconstitutional, being self-created. My charge is as a body, and not as individuals.

*Forget not the helpless *African*.

Pennsylvania Gazette, 24 April 1776

CATO TO THE PEOPLE OF PENNSYLVANIA. — LETTER VIII.

The all-wise Creator having enabled every man to judge, in some degree, what is good for himself, the study of Government is a duty of the highest concern to all the members of a free State. But men, in general, may be said to feel better than they can see; and therefore seldom take the trouble to employ their thoughts on publick affairs while they are tolerably administered; nor is it till oppression becomes flagrant, and even palpable to the sight, that a People are universally roused into a serious attention to abuses in Government.

Numerous are the evils which spring from distractions and convulsions in a State; but they are often productive of one advantage, which outweighs them all. The civil Constitutions of countries, although long neglected through the indolence of the people, and tottering on the verge of dissolution, have nevertheless been thus purged of their corruptions, brought back to their first principles, and made to flourish, with renewed vigour, through many succeeding ages. But as this can only bar the work of heroism, conducted by wisdom, virtue, and prudence, every writer who, upon such great and trying occasions, seeks to exaggerate or conceal facts, to state but one side of a question, to warp the judgment by partial representations, to give railing for reason, invectives for arguments, and to urge a people into hasty resolutions, by addressing the inflamed passions rather than the sober reason — every such writer, I say, insults his country in distress, and is a fellow-worker with its enemies, to hasten its ruin.

Had the author of *Common Sense* considered this, or were he possessed of the least reverence for the judgment or feelings of a great and enlightened people, whom he has thought himself fit to address, his performance would have been of a different nature. It would at least have worn the semblance of argument, and contained something which had a chance to meet the reason of wise men, and to stand the test of their candid examination. He would have listened patiently to their remarks upon his production, and would have coolly replied to their objections. He would not have dared to offer such an indignity to the publick, as to throw out impotent threats, instead of answers, against the meanest of his fellow-citizens, (if fellow-citizens he has in this place,) merely for endeavouring, in a country yet free, to detect his misrepresentations, to supply his defect of materials, and thereby enable a people to judge fairly of their own weighty concerns.

The contest in which America is engaged, was not lightly undertaken. The sword was drawn in defence of our laws and liberties. Till these are rendered safe, let it not be returned to the scabbard; but, still, let not the scabbard be thrown away. If our just rights can be best secured by reconciliation with our own flesh and blood — with a yet powerful nation, whose religion, laws, and manners, in our former happy days, we gloried to call our own — God forbid that we should shut the door against it, by any hasty measure among ourselves. This happy period of our miseries is still hoped for and devoutly wished, not only by multitudes of the zealous friends of America, through all the Colonies, but by whole Colonies, in their publick capacity, regardless of anything that has yet been offered to the contrary. While this continues to be the case, he who seeks to disturb the union which we nobly supported on our former ground, is the worst foe to this country. If the British Administration has a tool here, labouring to forward their ruinous purposes by divisions and distractions, “thou art the man;” even thou, the author of *Common Sense*, who hast started thine ignis-fatuus, to draw the unwary into untried regions, full of tremendous precipices

and quagmires, treacherous to the foot, whither the wise and considerate think it not safe to follow. Couldst thou succeed in this, thou dost effectually confirm all the slanders of our Ministerial foes against us; and instead of America, strong in domestick union, and supported by a respectable part of Britain, thou wilt give us Britain united, and America rent by divisions, amidst the mighty contest. Thou sayest that now is the exact time for adopting thy plan, and boldest up ruin as the sure consequence of the least delay. Thou saidst the same and didst threaten the same, near three months ago, if we hesitated a moment to follow thy advice. Possibly, any time may be thy now, especially if thou shouldst have nothing to lose, and, peradventure, mayest hope to gain something by the change. But when the Almighty shall be pleased to say now, thy interpretations will be unnecessary. He will send conviction along with it, in circumstances so clear and unambiguous, that they who run may read them.

The publick will excuse the occasional notice I am forced to take of the answers hitherto given to my letters. Were I disposed to deviate from my plan, or, by immediate retaliation, to draw the attention of the reader to the “political characters, connexions, and dependencies” of my antagonists, (which the author of Common Sense, in his new character of the Forester, allows to be very essential in such a controversy,) I believe it would add little to the credit of their works; especially if, upon inquiry, it should be found that they have neither “character nor connexions” in this place, and that they are the avowed instruments and dependants of some, who, having no concern in our domestick affairs, are nevertheless constantly intermeddling with them, to the great disturbance of the Province, and injury of the publick cause.

The popular leaders who overturned the Monarchy in the last age, were not themselves friends to Republicks. They only made use of the name to procure the favour of the people; and whenever, by such means, they had mounted to the proper height, each of them, in his turn, began to kick the people from him as a ladder then useless.

Cromwell exercised the power of a King, and of the most absolute King, under the specious name of a Protector. The instrument of Republican Government, which he had at first extolled as the most perfect work of human invention, he began (as soon as he thought his authority sufficiently established) to represent as “a rotten plank, upon which no man could trust himself without sinking.” He had his eyes fixed upon the Crown; but when he procured an offer of it, from a packed Parliament, his courage failed him. He had outwitted himself by his own hypocrisy, and, in his way to power, had thrown such an odium upon the name of the King, that his own family, apprehensive he would be murdered the moment the diadem should touch his brow, persuaded him to decline that honour.

The great Sydney never meant more, by his celebrated work, than to reform the abuses of mixed Government, and to restrain the rapid progress which the nation was making, in his time, towards absolute Monarchy. And he was as much a foe to Cromwell as to Charles the First, considering both as governing above the laws. But he did not write against Kings generally, more than other rulers who might abuse their power.

“Nothing,” says he, “is further from my intention than to speak irreverently of Kings;” and he explains what Kings he means, viz: those limited by law in mixed Governments. He has written a whole section to show that the best Governments in the world have been composed, as the English

is, of Monarchy, Aristocracy, and Democracy. He says God ordained a mixed Government, answering to this in all its parts, and consisting of a single Judge, or chief Captain, (we contend not for names,) a Council of seventy chosen men, or Sanhedrim, and the General Assemblies of the People. Is not this our own form complete?

When he speaks of popular Governments, he uses the utmost precision. “To avoid unnecessary disputes,” says he, “I give the name of popular Governments to those of Rome, Athens, Sparta, and the like; but improperly, unless the same may also be given to many that are usually called Monarchies, since there is nothing of violence in either. As to popular Governments, in the strict sense, (that is, pure Democracy,) where the People in themselves, and by themselves, perform all that belongs to Government, I know of no such thing; and if it be in the world, I have nothing to say for it.”

And more explicitly still, he says: “Being no way concerned in the defence of Democracy, I may leave our Knight, (Filmer,) like Don Quixotte, fighting against the phantasm of his own brain, and to say what he pleases against such Governments as never were, unless in such a place as San Marino, near Senegaglia, in Italy, where a hundred men govern a barbarous rock, that no man invades. As for Democracy, he may say what he pleases of it; and I believe it can suit only with the convenience of a small town, accompanied with such circumstances as are seldom to be found.”

If Sydney understood anything of the matter, we see that every Colony in America is already too unwieldy for such a Government, and therefore it cannot be a model for an immense Continent. In a word, although this great man lived before the Revolution, he laid its foundation, died a martyr to its principles, and, by one of the first acts of Parliament made under it, his attainder was repealed, and a solemn national sanction given to his writings.

The testimony of another professed Whig, nay, an Independent Whig, (the famous Gordon, in his Discourses upon Tacitus,) shall come next: “Monarchy, according to Plato, is the best Government, or the worst; to which opinion (says he) I subscribe, as I do to that of Philip de Commines, that England is the place in the world where the publick is most equally administered, and where the people suffer the least violence. We are blessed with a form of Government which Tacitus mentions as the most perfect, and thinks the hardest to be framed — that happy balance and mixture of interests that secures every interest.”

Polybius, as he is quoted by Montague, on the Rise and Fall of Republicks, agrees with Plato: “The best form of Government (says he) is that which is composed of a due admixture of Monarchy, Aristocracy, and Democracy.”

Of all legislators, he prefers Lycurgus, whom he looks upon rather as divinely inspired than as a man. To perpetuate the Spartan Government, he united the peculiar excellencies of the best forms into one, that neither of the three parts, by swelling beyond its just bounds, might ever be able to deviate into its original inborn defects.

Montague adds: “I cannot help observing, on this occasion, that our own Constitution, as settled at the Revolution, so nearly coincides with Lycurgus’s general plan, that it seems, at first sight, to be formed by that very model.”

And, indeed, in the Constitution of mixed Governments, there is something more substantial than an attachment to the mystical number, three, in this triple union of powers. All power lodged, uncontrolled, in one or many, has been shown to be full of danger. Lodged in two distinct bodies, they may chance to disagree long; but the addition of a third turns the scale; and further additions would only be clogs.

I have not lost sight of Montesquieu, whose sentiments, as applicable to the English Constitution, in practice as well as theory, shall be briefly introduced in my next, to close this part of my work; and then let the author of *Common Sense* combat the arguments of these great men as well as he can; for he has yet said nothing that is in any way applicable to them, and must look for better arguments than those drawn from the nature of the English Constitution, if he expects to serve his cause. For my part, I still stand upon my first ground, and have no sentiment which I wish to hide on this occasion. When it shall clearly appear that we can be no longer free, nor secure in our rights and property, in connection with Britain, or that we can be more secure in any other connection, (and the time which will enable us to judge of this cannot be very remote,) the author of these letters shall not then lisp a word against whatever measures the sense of the majority of this country, fairly taken, shall adopt for the common good; and will he ready to give his best assistance for carrying them into execution. But he must ever bear his testimony against being surprised into publick decisions by misrepresentations, ungrounded suggestions, and delusive arguments, too evidently proceeding from prejudice or predetermination of a question, in which the happiness of a great Continent is involved.

CATO.

Pennsylvania Ledger, 27 April 1776

CASSANDRA TO CATO.

I have engaged in the present political controversy with a design to be of service to my country. On an impartial inquiry into the present state of the *British* Constitution, it appears to me that it is out of the power of the *British* Legislature to give us security for the future enjoyment of our rights and liberties; and on this ground I have opposed a reunion. I have examined everything advanced by you on the subject, and find them wide of the mark. The point with me has ever been, what will secure our liberties? The question of interest is ever determined thereby. National prosperity and national happiness are incompatible with national slavery. It is of small consequence to *America*, whether *God* has granted a King to the People of *Britain* or not, or whether the Constitution of their Government answers excellently to the inhabitants of that Island, if dependance on that excellent form of Government is big with slavery and ruin to *America*.

If you mean not to hold your countrymen in suspense until the day of salvation is past, I call upon you to prove that *Great Britain* can offer any plan of constitutional dependance which will not leave the future enjoyment of our liberties to hope, hazard, and uncertainty, as the *Forester* has finely expressed it; and that if she can, there is a probability she will. If the one is impossible, or the other altogether improbable, yourself must acknowledge it is time to part.

By the Constitution of *Great Britain*, the present Parliament can make no law which shall bind any future one. For as the author of *Lex Parliamentaria*, or Law of Parliament, observes, page 77, when treating of the power and authority of Parliaments, “Though it be apparent what transcendent power and authority the Parliament hath, and though divers Parliaments have attempted to bar, restrain, suspend, qualify, or make void, the power of subsequent Parliaments, yet could they never effect it. For the latter Parliament hath ever power to abrogate, suspend, qualify, explain, or make void, the former, in the whole, or in any part thereof, notwithstanding any words of restraint, prohibition, or penalty in the former. For it is a maxim in the law of Parliament, *quod leges posteriores priores contraries abrogant.*” Therefore should any Parliament give up, renounce, and forever quit claim to the right of making laws to bind us in any case whatever, yet it can constitutionally stipulate for no longer than that one sitting. They have as full power and authority to revive and enforce the claim at their next sitting as if such renunciation had never taken place. Is it wisdom, then, or is there safety in entering upon terms of accommodation with a power which cannot stipulate for the performance of its engagements? If we are foolish enough to do this, must not our future security depend entirely on the will of a *British* Parliament, *i`e`* of a *British* Ministry? This, in my opinion, must form an insuperable obstacle to reconciliation in the mind of every honest man and sincere lover of liberty on the Continent.

A second reason against reconciliation is, that the *British* Constitution is so effectually undermined by the influence of the Crown, that the People of *Britain* have no security for the enjoyment of their own liberties, and therefore *America* can never be safe in being dependant on such a State.

The author of “An Historical Essay on the *English* Constitution,” printed *Anno* 1771, says: “I shall not hesitate to date the decline of our Constitution from the Revolution. *William* the Third and his Parliament began the practice of restraining the elective power of the People, by the Legislative authority — a power that might become ten thousand times more dangerous to the elective rights of the People than the Crown could ever possibly be. For whenever the active parts of a Government, founded upon the common rights of mankind; shall usurp a power to restrain or destroy those rights from whence they derive their authority, that State is not far from destruction.

“Thus the primary law of our Constitution, the first principle upon which it was founded, which had stood the test of twelve hundred years, and been the admiration of ages, was now reduced to the common level of a nuisance, to be corrected by Acts of Parliament. Our Legislative authority is, by its own nature, confined to act within the line of the Constitution, because it is only vested with a trust by the People, to the end they may protect and defend them in their rights and privileges. And therefore it is a contradiction in terms to say they have a right to consent to any that may restrain or destroy them. Their consent to this law was a notorious violation of the trust reposed in them.” For, “upon this principle our Constitution may be one thing to-day, and another thing to-morrow. It is this, and that, or anything that our Legislative authority, for the time being, shall think proper to make it. But the prevailing faction of those days, after sowing divisions among the People to destroy their power and weaken their force, obtained a law, under pretence of providing for the distemper of the times, by which they have lost — nay, what have they not lost? They have lost the distinguishing character between freemen and slaves! They have lost the distinguishing character of *Englishmen*! They have lost what the most tyrannical of Kings of *England* could never force from them! They have lost what their forefathers have been spending their blood and treasure to defend for these thousand years! They have lost the greatest jewel that

ever any People possessed! They have lost their constitutional and natural liberty, their birthright and inheritance derived from *God* and Nature! They have lost their constitutional redress for all their grievances! They have lost their all, their everything, by that damnable Septennial Law.”

To my quotations from this Invaluable essay, I beg leave to add the following, as perfectly applicable to *America*; and the foregoing extracts will not only justify, but enforce the doctrine it contains, to every honest heart: “To deduce our rights from the principles of equity, justice, and the Constitution, is very well; but equity and justice are no defence against power. You must take your constitutional rights under your own protection, and that quickly too, or they will be lost forever. Protect and defend them as the apple of your eye from danger, or as you would your wives and children from destruction. And never desist from using every remedy” in your power, “till you have established them on a foundation nevermore to be shaken, either by King or Parliament.” A Constitution that affords no check against its own servants can yield no security to us.

He who has the nomination of the Officers of Government has the whole power of that Government in his own hand, and may do with it as he pleases. This is abundantly proved by the present ruinous state of Government in every Colony, where the King or a Proprietor had the nomination. Liberty will never flourish in such a Government. “By the Constitution of the *Saxon* Government (says the author first quoted) no officer, either civil or military, or even ecclesiastical, could be invested in his office, or exercise any jurisdiction or authority over freemen, without the free election of those freemen over whom he was to exercise such authority. And it is for this reason, more especially, that the People of *England* were denominated free; for that by the ancient Laws and Constitution of the Kingdom, they had this just and natural right, viz: the free election of their Magistrates and Governours; without which our ancestors thought all our liberties were but a species of bondage. For of what use can liberty be to him whose person or estate is subject to officers, &c’, set over him without his consent?” How different from, and how much superior to our present form of Government, was the *Saxon*, or old Constitution of *England*.

These three considerations form, in my opinion, an insurmountable obstacle against a reunion with *Great Britain*. The man who has not thought upon these points is ill qualified to judge of the necessity of Independence, or the inevitable ruin attendant on reunion.

My objections are radical, reaching to the root of the evil; and if a radical cure cannot be obtained in one way, it ought to be obtained in another. To skin over the wound would be madness. I therefore once more entreat you either to point out a complete remedy for these defects, and prove it more easily attainable than a complete delivery by a Declaration of Independence, or to give no further opposition to the measure. He who cannot see a fair prospect of removing these defects, and yet wishes to see *America* return to a state of dependance, has something else in view than the liberties of his country.

CASSANDRA.

N^o B. No good man can agree to any terms which will not give perfect security; and a division must therefore be intended by every man who attempts to prepare the minds of the ignorant and unwary to accept of anything else. As every writer on the side of dependance has hitherto

studiously evaded the point, it appears they design, if possible, to effect a division. Take care, then, ye good People of *America*, not to be duped by distinguished Tories.