

NORTH-CAROLINA GAZETTE.

With the latest ADVICES, FOREIGN and DOMESTIC.

SEMPER PRO LIBERTATE, ET BONO PUBLICO.

L O N D O N, May 7.

Mr. WILKES'S SPEECH in the HOUSE of COMMONS, on the third reading of the two Conciliatory Bills respecting America.

Mr. SPEAKER,

I HAVE not given the least opposition to the progress of either of the Conciliatory Bills, which have been brought into this House by Administration. I thought it the part of candour to acquiesce, to suffer the bills to go through the committee without interruption, and to receive every improvement, which the noble Lord with the blue ribband (Lord North) who first introduced them among us, or any of his friends on the other side of the House, chose to suggest or adopt. We are now, Sir, in possession of a plan, with much care revised and corrected by the *ostensible* Minister here, in the full expectation of its being equally pleasing and palatable on both sides the Atlantick as well as this House. The great outlines indeed, Sir, of *opposition* must approve, for they are undoubtedly their own. They were long ago traced out by themselves, although the spirit of them is now gone. Other means than those of coercion have been long steadily urged. The noble Lord with the blue ribband has as liberally borrowed their ideas, as the Chancellor of the exchequer means to borrow their money on Friday when he opens the budget. The gentlemen on this side the House have frequently proposed a *revision* of all the acts complained of by our American brethren. Above three years ago a parliamentary *revision* of those statutes was warmly pressed on the Minister, and it is not three months since I had the honor of submitting to the House a motion for the *repeal* of those very acts, which, in a less constitutional mode, Commissioners are now to be authorized to *suspend*. I made that motion, Sir, while America was still free to negotiate, still free from all foreign treaties, or solemn engagements, as independent states, with any of the great powers of Europe. There is scarce an idea in either of the two acts, for gentlemen seem to agree to consider them together, which has not been suggested by *opposition*. "The cessation of hostilities on the part of his Majesty's forces by sea and land." "The granting a pardon or pardons to any number or description of persons within the said colonies, provinces, or plantations." "The treating, consulting, and agreeing with any body or bodies, politick and corporate, or with any assembly or assemblies of men, or with any person, or persons whatsoever, of or concerning any grievances, or complaints of grievances, existing, or supposed to exist in the government of any of the said colonies, provinces, or plantations respectively, or in the laws and statutes of this realm respecting the same." "The treating of any aid or contribution to be furnished by any of the colonies, provinces, or plantations respectively." "The not imposing any duty, tax, or assessment whatever, payable in any of his Majesty's colonies, provinces, and plantations in North-America, except only such duties as it may be expedient to impose for the regulation of commerce." All these important considerations have been repeatedly urged to the Minister, while the sword still slept in the scabbard, before the late deluge of the blood of the subjects of the empire, in an unjust and unnatural war. At last more is offered than was asked. A repeal of all the obnoxious acts since the year 1763 only was proposed. The Minister now agrees to sacrifice the statutes of almost another

entire year, for he gives up all the acts since the 10th of February 1763, the infamous æra of the peace of Paris, by which the most valuable conquests of a glorious war were sacrificed. Whence can such a change arise?

I observe, Sir, that several gentlemen have this day mentioned this *conversion*, the æra and cause. A very learned advocate (Henry Dundas, Esq; Lord Advocate for Scotland) has said, that he was *converted* when Sir William Howe was forced to retire from the Jerseys. Another honorable gentleman (Charles Baldwin, Esq; member for Shropshire) tells us that he was *converted* when General Burgoyne capitulated at Saratoga. Washington and Gates, Sir, are certainly very powerful apostles. I should not be surprized, if General Howe himself was at last *converted*. I believe the æra of the noble Lord's conversion, is not far distant. I suspect it happened at the successful moment of the late American negotiation in France, which I greatly fear has established their *independence*. It is impossible not to be charmed with the gentle, meek, supplicating, humiliating tone of the noble Lord at the present moment. We hear no more of the vengeance of the state against daring *rebels*. The harsh discord of war no longer grates on our ears. Peace, harmony, reconciliation with our *brethren*, are the enchanting sounds, with which we are now ravished. The terrible, exterminating minister of wrath no longer alarms the revolted colonists with *quos ego*. The noble Lord, with no less policy than pity, soothes them, and in mild accents, says, *motos præstat componere fluctus*. I much fear however Sir, the colonies will never be gathered together again under his ministerial wing.

The two conciliatory bills are in my opinion more calculated for this country than America. They appear only meant to quiet the minds of the people here, and to amuse this kingdom, not to regain the colonies; but I trust the day of reckoning, and of exemplary punishment, approaches. The present dead calm forbodes a furious tempest. The bills hold out what ministers know to be a fallacious hope, a reconciliation with the colonists on terms short of *independence*. The object is merely to screen ministry from the indignation of the public, and the vengeance of the people. There can be little doubt of this, when the very words of the acts, in the state they first appeared here, are considered. The preamble of one of the acts was, "Whereas the exercise of the *right of taxation* by the parliament of Great Britain for the purpose of raising a revenue in his Majesty's colonies, provinces, and plantations in North-America, has been found by experience to occasion great uneasinesses and disorders, and has by sundry *misrepresentations* been made the means of misleading many of his Majesty's faithful subjects." These words are a kind of second *declaratory act*, in which the *right of taxation* is asserted at the instant you give commissioners powers to *suspend* it. Was this meant as a healing measure? Could ministers really intend to confer a favour, as they affected to think, and yet chuse the most offensive, the most obnoxious, the most galling expressions. The preamble to the other conciliatory bill is liable to the same strong objection. It is, "For quieting and extinguishing of *divers jealousies and misrepresentations of danger to their liberties and legal rights, which have misled many of his Majesty's subjects in the colonies, provinces, &c.* Must not such expressions be necessarily considered by the Congress as the language of high and direct insult? The commisi-