

It is possible we should, but does it follow that we should be so well able to sustain in the greatest Extremity, Exortions might be made, and we then to reduce ourselves to this Extremity? We know of no Reason that can be given for it, but that we might have a greater Opportunity to show our Virtue; and as the Opportunities we have already had have been great enough, it would rather be romantic to wish for any greater. If War has been carried on without Money, it has been in small States, or for a short Time, or under the feudal Tenures, where every Man was a Soldier, and yielded personal Service. But in our Situation Money is undoubtedly the Power of War, and it would be difficult, if not wholly impossible, to carry it on, for any long Time, without it. Your Honours are of Opinion, "that the Sale of the Back Lands will be a Resource to carry on the War, even if internal Loans should not supply the Deficiency of Taxes". We are of the same Opinion. And from this very Circumstance is overthrown your Honours Reasoning with regard to the Property in Question, for if it will prove any Thing it will prove too much, and the Back Lands cannot be confiscated. If they belong to the Native Indians, your Honours will say, that tho' they have made War against us yet their Property cannot be confiscated, for Vattel, a late and celebrated Writer on the Law of Nations, has shown, "that the Rigour of that Law is much softened in this very Point, by present Usage and Practice. If they belong to the Crown of Great Britain, as Trustees for this Nation, as we conceive, and will be called British Property, the Congress, should they adopt the same Way of thinking with your Honours, will not be willing to confiscate it, as it may be made a preliminary Article of the Peace, that it be secured or at least the full Value of it to the original Owners". Nay if they should not adopt the Sentiments of your Honours, but be willing to confiscate it, yet will there not be Danger, in the Opinion of your Honours, that as in the mean Time "the Title must be doubtful, and the Purchase invidious". Engrossers and Speculators will buy it up, and depreciate the Currency still more? For as your Honours would suppose, the more readily Money will buy Land, the more widely it is depreciated. But it lies upon your Honours, who have started these Difficulties in the one Case, to resolve them in the other. For with regard to the Preliminary, of which your Honours are so apprehensive, if it is made a Preliminary with regard to the Property in Question, will it not also be made a Preliminary with regard to the Back Lands, which have belonged to the Crown and People of Great Britain? Nay, will it not ^{more} probably be made a Preliminary with regard to those Lands, than with regard to the Property in Question? In the one Case a solid Emolument will arise to the Crown and to the Nation, in the other to those only who have manifested an Attachment to it. In the one Case Interest will induce the Enemy to make it a Preliminary, in the other a Sense of Honour only; and in Proportion as the Love of Interest is stronger in the British Court than the Love of Honour, so much the more ~~the more~~ ^{will not regard} willing will they be to make one a Preliminary Article, and to neglect the other. We may be assured the Crown will not regard ^{the Property of} those Subjects, of whom we speak, so much as to continue the War a single Day on their Account. Did this Property remain unalienated, and it appeared that the bare Mention of it might obtain it, it is possible that Court might, to save Appearances, be induced to mention it. But when it is applied and gone, they will be silent; for having lost thirteen States, and vast Tracts of Crown Lands for themselves, they will not much contend for others, whom they know only as Potamers on their Army, or the Obnoxious of America. But should we not be willing to make any Preliminary about it, we shall have all America interested with us. Tho' Property of British Subjects, and those of them called Refugees, through the several States, are already in the same Predicament with the Objects of our Bill. The several States of America are therefore with us, and if it must be made a Preliminary at all, let the States make it. But your Honours may rest satisfied, that as the general Interest is concerned, the States will not make it a Preliminary. — From these Principles we must conceive, that the fears and Apprehensions of your Honours are groundless. We have shown that your Reasonings are so, for, through the whole of the Message, every Sentence is at Variance with the rest, and, if we grant what you suppose in the one Case it destroys what you suppose in the other. — There are several other Matters in your Message foreign to the Question, and which we think ought to have been omitted, that deserve our Animadversion, but we shall conclude. We do not think it necessary to send you a Bill to prevent the Removal or Transfer of British Property. The Law of Nations will be as good a Security as any Law we could possibly obtain you Assent to. Whoever attempts to remove a purchase, will be answerable to the State.