

A
SELF-DEFENSIVE WAR

L A W F U L,

PROVED IN

A S E R M O N,

Preached at *Lancaster*, before Captain ROSS's
Company of MILITIA, in the *Presbyterian*
Church, on Sabbath Morning, *June 4, 1775.*

By the Rev. JOHN CARMICHAEL, A. M.

Now published at the Request of the Author, and corrected by
himself from the Copy printed at *Lancaster*;

Humbly offered to the Perusal of the MILITARY ASSO-
CIATORS of the City, Liberties and County of PHIL-
ADELPHIA.

*Then said he unto them, But now he that hath a purse, let him
take it, and likewise his scrip:—And he that hath no sword,
let him sell his garment, and buy one. LUKE 22: 36.*

UNDIQUE TOTIS
USQUE ADEO TURBATUR AGRIS.

Virgil.

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TO all the brave SONS of LIBERTY,
in *North-America*, but in particular
to the Company of MILITIA in the Borough
of *Lancaster*, known by the Name of ROSS'S
COMPANY, Gentlemen, Officers and
Soldiers, who appeared in their Uniform in
Church, to hear this Sermon, and at whose
Request it is now published, it is hereby most
respectfully dedicated, by

Their hearty Friend,

and very humble Servant,

THE AUTHOR.



A SERMON, &c.

LUKE iii : 14.

*And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying,
And what shall we do? and he said unto them,
Do violence to no man, and neither accuse any
falsly, and be content with your wages.—*

AT a time when the unjust storm of ministerial wrath is discharging itself, in a cruel and ignominious manner, on the noble, patriotic, brave people of the ancient, loyal, important colony of the Massachusetts-Bay, in New-England;—at a time when all the other colonies in North-America, like the true children of a free-born family, are roused to some just resentment of such insults, on their natural and legal rights, taking each other as by the hand, and uniting by the invincible chains of love, friendship, and interest, are determined to
support

support this their elder sister colony, now suffering so gloriously in the common cause, or *sink* together;—at a time when the alarm is sounding from east to west, over this vast continent of North-America, to arms! to arms!—in short, at a time when the minds of *all* are in such a ferment, that they can be scarce composed to hear any subject, but what may have some reference to the present times;—it is but reasonable to suppose, that even the Minister of *the Prince of Peace*, whose business for ordinary is neither *war* or *politicks*, in such a situation, being member of civil society, and interested like other men would improve the times, by adopting their public instructions, to the best service of the people, and not offensive or displeasing to God; whose holy word is a blessed directory in every emergency.

It is also but reasonable to suppose, that every judicious, sober American, being now reduced to the dreadful alternative, either to take up arms, apparently against that very government, which he was wont to revere, and under which he expected protection for both life and property; or submit tamely to the galling yoke of *perpetual slavery*; I say, it is supposable, that every such Christian American soldier will be all ear to wholesome instructions, relative to his present duty.

We

We own it is rare for soldiers to ask counsel of Gospel Ministers; and the more pity—for they are men and sinners, as well as others; but I am not called to address *Red-Coats*, but CHRISTIAN *Provincials*; yet blessed be God, it is not a case wholly unprecedented, for even regulars to apply to a Gospel Preacher for direction; we have an instance in the words of our text.—*And the soldiers demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? and he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your wages.*—

We here find a very important question proposed to a person, every way qualified to solve it; for the mouth of truth itself tells us, that of all who were then born of women, there was not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: Also, the angel who predicted his birth, said, that he should be filled with the Holy Ghost, from his mother's womb. He was therefore deservedly very popular—was raised for the great purpose of introducing the Jewish church to the Saviour of the world; and hence much true gospel light shone round this great Preacher.—The answers he gave the question, may be depended on to be sufficient and conclusive.

But let us hear, what does John say; Does he tell them, to lay down their arms, and throw
then.

them by, as there can be no sort of war lawful; as some would have us believe! . No, no, this is not his answer; John knew better;—he knew the present state of our depraved world would render war in many cases unavoidable, and even necessary.—So that a soldier might serve the end of his being in his place and calling, as well as a plowman or preacher in his.

But then it must be a just war, conducted in a lawful, righteous manner; for the legality of the action, will never justify the illegality of the manner of prosecution.

The soldier must do violence to no man—must not accuse any falsely—and must be content with his wages; leading vices these, for ordinary, among *regular* troops; but the CHRISTIAN *soldier* must guard against them, from the genuine principles of true religion, in the heart; and then may hope for heaven, as well from a field of battle, as expiring on his couch in the midst of peace and tranquility.

I now deduce this doctrine from the text, thus explained—Doctrine.

That although war is in itself a very great evil, and one of those fore judgments, by which a holy
God

God punishes the world for sin, therefore to be deprecated, and avoided as much as possible; yet is, at times, by reason of certain circumstances, so unavoidable, that it is our duty to enter into it.—The method I design to pursue, in opening up the doctrine, for improvement, is the following:—

- I. Humbly attempt to shew (with submission to better judgment) when a war is so unavoidable and necessary, that it is our duty to enter into it.
- II. Shew how we should enter into, and prosecute even a just war.
- III. Improve the subject, by the deduction of a few natural inferences from the whole.

You are sensible, my hearers, that there are some Christian people in the world, and some of them in these parts, who merit the regard of the public, by their general character of industry, inoffensiveness and sobriety; yet do maintain it, as a sacred conscientious tenet, not to be dispensed with, *not to go to war, or take up arms on any occasion whatsoever*; and charity, the leading grace of the Christian system, will lead us to deal tenderly with such, as far as we have grounds to believe they are sincere in their profession: We

ought to pity such for their mistake, and, if possible, to convince them; but not by any means to urge them against their avowed sentiments, lest we come under the odious appellation of *persecutors*.

As far as these sober people make use of the Bible, to found their principles on, they rely on such passages as these, Gen. ix, 6. *He that sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed*; and Exod. xx, 13. *Thou shalt not kill*; and in the New-Testament, *But I say unto you, love your enemies*;—*if any smite thee on the one cheek turn to him the other also*;—*for all they that take the sword shall perish by the sword*: Matth. v. 39, 44 and xxvi. 52. and hence conclude, though I think falsely, that all war is unlawful, except the spiritual, with our own corruptions, by the sword of the spirit, in Christ's spiritual kingdom, which is not of this world, else would his children fight.

But if I mistake not, these people regard only such passages of holy scripture, as seem to favour their favourite opinion, let the language of other passages be what they will;—and hence their own imagination is substituted instead of divine revelation, so that when people are determined to keep by a sentiment, be it right or wrong, there is an end of all disputation. —

We

We readily allow, that it would be happy for us all, if there was no moral or natural evil in the world. But how plausible soever such opinions may appear, to the weal of society, they are rather calculated to the condition of innocent, than depraved nature; which now is, and ever has been such, since the fall of our first parents, that there is need of some remedy to curb its evil tendencies, or mankind would scarce be able to subsist in the world; and this our alwise righteous Creator knows; and has therefore set up civil government to keep men from destroying each other: But civil government has no power, if it has not the sword, to be a terror to evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well.—Hence it will follow, that men are under a necessity to part with some of their natural rights, to secure the rest; they must give part of their earnings to such as are chosen by themselves to rule the whole; and then again, they must help the rulers to execute the good and wholesome laws of government, against their violators. Suppose, for instance, a great banditti rise to rescue murderers; if these are not quelled, government is overthrown, if the people do not assist good government, a here then arises a necessity to go to war.

And suppose again, on the other hand, which is very supposable, that the rulers of the people
should

should give way to the many temptations their high stations will lead them to; to indulge the inclinations of a lust for absolute dominion, independent of the people, so that all the barrier of oaths and covenants are broke through, to effect the plan; and the people have no security, for either life or property, but the mere sovereign pleasure of the absolute rulers;—then the people are under a disagreeable, but pressing necessity, rather than be crushed by an iron rod, to re-ascertain their own just rights; and stand forth all of them to oppose such tyranny:—Here then is another instance of self-defence—in which a war is both unavoidable and necessary, and therefore lawful, if self-preservation is lawful; which is the point I shall next, in order, endeavour to prove indisputably, both from the light of nature, and divine revelation; and first from the light of nature.

It is certainly evident, wherever we turn our eyes, on any part of the whole creation of God, that the principle of self-love or self-preservation, or the desire of existence, is deeply engraved on the nature of every creature. And when this great first principle is observed, it is, and must be agreeable to God, as he will love his own work; and so also, the neglect of the exercise of this principle, cannot but displease him, as it is un-

natural

natural and monstrous. Thus the generous vine will extend her arms, to lay hold on the first neighbouring prop, and with her little tender tendants, twine around it, to preserve her clusters from perishing on the cold ground.

The little industrious bee is furnished by her Creator with a sting, to preserve for her own use her sweet honey, the fruit of her toil and industry.

The ox has his horns; and the horse his teeth and hoofs.—The deer her feet for flight, and the fowls their wings to escape danger and preserve themselves. And shall man, the noblest creature in this lower world, be destitute of this necessary principle! which we see engraved by instinct on the irrational creation: Man is blest with reason to direct his enquiries, in search of happiness. His maker God allows him to seek to be as happy as he possibly can, both in this life and the life to come. But since man is a fallen, sinful creature, he has lost his true road to happiness—and can never find it, until his Maker points it out to him in the Holy Bible. Here we are taught how to conduct both in the civil and religious life: We are certain the scriptures allow us to defend ourselves in the best manner we can against an enemy.

Therefore, such passages, as would seem to
speak

speak a different language; such as those already quoted, must be understood, in a consistency with this great law of nature; as well as consistent with other parts of scripture. For Christ came not to make void, or destroy the law, but to fulfil—when therefore we are forbid to shed blood, or to kill; it is innocent blood is meant—but this doth not forbid to execute a murderer. The divine law requires, that a murderer should be executed, and forbids to take a ransom for his life.

Also, when a body of wicked people join together, or a nation unite, to fall upon and destroy without any just cause an innocent people: The insulted, or invaded people, are then to unite together, to oppose, expel and punish the guilty invaders—as in Judges v. 23. *Curse ye Meroz, (said the Angel of the Lord) curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof: Because they came not to the help of the Lord, against the mighty: And Jeremiah xlviii. 10. Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully; and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood: And in Luke xxii. 36. Jesus Christ told his Disciples to arm themselves against approaching danger.—And he that hath no sword let him sell his garment and buy one.*

And since our Lord did not allow the Disciples then to defend themselves by their weapons, for
when

when Peter cut off Malchus's ear he immediately healed it, and bid Peter to put up his sword, to let them know, and the enemy also know, that he was Lord of life and death—and that the Disciples were safe with such a person as Jesus, while the age of miracles continued; I say, since this was the case then, we must understand the passage to intend, that it is both lawful and a duty, for the followers of Jesus Christ, in a time and age, when we are not to expect miracles, to arm ourselves and use our arms for our own preservation against any invading enemy.

Also, it must of course follow, that where our blessed Lord enjoins us, when smote on the one cheek, to turn the other also, he does not mean to forbid us to use lawful and proper means of self-preservation. But the meaning must be as the phrase is proverbial, that we should at no time discover a revengeful or unforgiving disposition; but should be ready to put up with a good deal of ill-usage, before we would create disturbance,—yea that we should do any thing consistent with our own safety. Again, where our Lord enjoins us to love our enemies—he can't possibly mean that we should love them better than ourselves—that we should put it in the enemy's power to kill us, when we had it in our power to save
our

our own life, by killing the enemy. I say, this cannot be the meaning; for that exposition will thwart the original first great law of self-preservation. The meaning therefore must be, that we do not cherish a spirit of hatred towards the enemies, and would be willing to be reconciled again—and would be desirous, the enemy would be convinced of his evil sentiment against us, that we might be again on friendly terms,—that we can be sincere in our prayer to God, to bring such a desirable event to pass. Again,

That a self-defensive war is lawful, I will prove from the conduct of Jesus Christ himself. If civil government is necessary to self-preservation, and war is necessary, at times, in government, as has been already proved; then it will follow, that those who support civil government, do support war, and so of consequence approve of war. But Jesus Christ did pay his tribute money, to the Emperor Tiberius, Matthew xvii, 27. And those who are acquainted with the life of Tiberius Cæsar know that he had frequent wars. Our Lord did here, as in several other places, draw a line of distinction between church and state; the church was his own kingdom, and spiritual in its nature and government, and was not of this world; but the state was a distinct constitution, was of this world, was purely civil, and it was not essential
to .

to the being of an Emperor, of what sort of religion he was of, or whether of any, as was the case of Tiberius, Tiberius was a Pagan; but as the Jews were tributaries to the Romans, and our Lord was a Jew by birth, he paid his tax as a peaceable member of the commonwealth; but had our Lord been a Mennonist he would have refused to pay tribute, to support war, which shews the absurdity of these people's conduct.

Had our Lord been a Covenanter of the church of Scotland, he would refuse to pay tribute, because the Emperor was not a Covenanter.—I own, it is not essential to the very being of a King to be a Christian, yet it is essential to the being of a good man, to be a Christian; and certainly the more pious and truly godly any Christian ruler is, if he is not a bigot to a party, or certain denomination, but equally regardful of all, the regular, sober, and well behaving, in all his dominions the happier for the people.—In Rom. 13, from the beginning, to the 7th verse, we are instructed at large the duty we owe to civil government, but if it was unlawful and anti-Christian, or anti-scriptural to support war, it would be unlawful to pay taxes; if it is unlawful to go to war, it is unlawful to pay another to do it, or to go to do it: What a foolish trick those people

put on their consciences, who for the reasons already mentioned will not pay their taxes, and yet let others come and take their money, where they can find it, and be sure they will leave it where they can find it handily.

I think I have now proved, from the light of nature, from the reason of things – from the Old and New-Testament, as well as from the example of Christ and his Apostles, that a self-defensive war is lawful.

Now those who deny this doctrine ought, if they would be ingenuous, candid and honest, to place their argument on this footing: Suppose themselves all on some part of our Globe, and without any connection with any people but themselves, they had all the necessaries of life; in such a situation, if they carry with them the common nature of the human species, as it has discovered itself in the world in every age, since the fall of Adam; these good, peaceable, inoffensive people would soon find evil dispositions and practices break out even among themselves; if they would then make no resistance at all, to those evils, but on their avowed principles, when smote on the one cheek, turn the other; there would soon be an end of their society—the evil would soon destroy the peaceable and good out of the world;
then

then the judgments of the Almighty would undoubtedly overtake and cut off the wicked, when there would be none else in the world; and then there would be an end to the being of mankind on the earth. Now this was the result of things in the Antedeluvian age, when there was no civil government at all in the world, the wicked destroyed the righteous, till there was none left but Noah and his Family;—the Almighty saved him by a miracle, and cut off the rest entirely from the globe.—And though Noah was as good a man as any of those people with whom I am now disputing, his posterity degenerated, and the world needed government to keep it in being to this day. It is also equally unfair, to say, *Let us stand still and see the salvation of God*; for if this proves any thing, it proves too much, it proves that we are to use no means at all, for why to use lawful means in our power one time, and not another; we must therefore neither plow or sow; build, raise stock, or do any thing in the use of means, *but stand still and see the salvation of God*: But our reason is given us to use it in a proper manner, to preserve our own lives and the lives of others, as God's servants, in a state of probation in this world; and God will reward every one finally, according to his works; when we have no means in our power, we honor God to trust him,

as Israel at the Red-Sea, and in the wilderness;— but when means are in our power, and we do not use them, we then tempt God, and rebel against his government, which he exercises over the world, in the way of free and moral agency.

Therefore for these people, to argue as they do now, when they are among other societies,— who they know will preserve the state from slaughter or slavery, in the use of lawful means, as has been now proved, is vastly disingenuous, and will undoubtedly subject their opinions to this censure, that it is a sanctuary of sloth—for greed—cowardice, &c.—*for it is easy to stay at home and earn money, to what it is to spend money and expose life, to protect and defend the worldling coward;—it is easy to pay money, to what it is to be slain in battle, &c.* But after all that has been said, I am myself so warm an advocate for the sacred rights of conscience, that if these people will not be convinced of their duty; can not get their eyes open; they are to be pitied, but not persecuted. I beg of all, for God and conscience sake, to let them alone, if they will not in these terrible times, draw the sword *for* Liberty and their Country; surely they will not *against* Liberty and their Country; and if we can do with them, we can without them: O then, let there be no disturbance on that head!

But

But should any of these inoffensive guiltless anti-warriors be detected in assisting Gage or his army with provisions, &c. for lucre or any other motive whatever conscience could not apologize for them but ought to be dealt with accordingly.

I now proceed to the second thing proposed, in this discourse, to shew how a lawful war is to be carried on.

1st. Every one that draws the sword, should be well satisfied, in his conscience, that he is called of God to do so;—that, with a good conscience and courage, he may rely on God for strength and protection.—Then it is drawn for these reasons, or else it cannot be lawful; either to oppose a foreign enemy—or to assist the magistrates to suppress a riot, or wicked faction and rebellion that may have broke out, by a lawless set of ruffians, that will be under no restraint of law—or to oppose the unjust, usurped, anti-constitutional claims of mere tyranny on the essential and unalienable rights of the people.

2dly. Every soldier should see to it above all things, that his peace is made with God, by believing in his Son Jesus Christ for salvation; and have some comfortable evidences of the truth of his faith, by his love to Jesus Christ, in keeping
his



his commandments;—else how can he expect a blessing, or success, even in a just cause, if he is himself in a state of enmity and rebellion against that God, in whose hand his life is, and whose are all his ways: For no soldier is so undaunted and truly courageous, as him that on the principles of true religion, is above the fear of death.

To rush forward on death, thoughtless of, and unprepared for, a future eternity, is rather a species of mere madness, than true heroism.

3dly. As the Christian soldier must set out in the fear of God, so he must persevere, fully confiding in, and relying on, the justice and righteousness of the superintendency of Jehovah, over all the fates, and to us unforeseen occurrences, that may or can happen in time; and thus with becoming boldness and Christian serenity, accompanied with true courage, put his life in God's hands.

4thly. The soldier must observe strictly those directions in our text: *He must do violence to no man*; as soldiers carry with them the instruments of death, they are too prone to conduct themselves towards the defenceless with pride and insolence; something of this temper discovered itself,

self, at the time that these *Regulars* asked John in the manner of their asking the question;—others treated John with respect and manners;—the very Publicans called him Master;—but the *Red-Coats* came and *demande*d of him, as if they were his superiors, and he must obey them.—As standing armies are too frequently made up of the scourgings of gaols, and the refuse and filth of the people, who make that the last shift for a living—they are but too often found destitute of either good principles or education, and sunk into every species of dissoluteness and debauchery. We could wish the King's troops at Boston, had not by their cruelty and inhumanity of conduct, given the world too lively and striking a proof of the truth of this observation;—hence the very name of a *Red-Coat* (pardon the expression) *stinks in our nostrils*.

But blessed be the God of heaven, that the gentlemen who now form our militia, in America, are the Americans themselves, whose characters are known to be not such as but just now described; and who we hope, under God, will save this country, and of consequence the British empire from impending ruin.

5thly. Soldiers must not *accuse any falsely*;—
this

this is a certain species of wickedness too common to soldiers;—those of them that watched the sepulchre of our Lord, falsely accused his disciples, *that they came and stole his body while they slept*; they were hired to tell this lye by government, and what will not poor ignorant, sottish, selfish, low-liv'd, ill-bred, graceless creatures, that have no fear of God at all, do for money;—And I wish we may find that the soldiers at Boston, have sent no lies home, or false accusations of the brave Provincials—when they gave them such a severe drubbing in the action of Lexington.

Lastly under this head, as the design of raising armies is the defence of the people, as soon as this is bravely ascertained, the Christian soldier should lay by the sword, and disband the army, lest their existence, when not necessary, should occasion the very miseries, they were raised to avert. A few inferences shall now conclude this discourse.

I. Our subject teaches us deeply to bewail the universal depravity of human nature;—O Adam! in what a deplorable condition is thy family now! what hast thou done!—how many evil passions and appetites rage in the world! Envy, wrath, malice, dissimulation, covetousness, pride, brutal
lusts,

lusts, &c. &c. whence arise those crushing woes and calamities of wars, murder, rapine, slaughter and desolations among mankind. How just it is for a holy God, as the moral Governor of the world, to punish such sinful guilty creatures.

2. We learn hence the exceeding innate evil of sin, if the punishment is not inadequate to the offence, which we are not to suppose; then the offence is very great, because of the great punishment inflicted.

3. We also learn from our subject, to admire the care of divine providence over the human race, to continue men on the earth amidst such deluges of miseries or destruction on every hand. And as civil government, in the hand of divine providence, is subservient here too, we ought to bless God for the institution, and support it while government continues to observe its original sign, *viz.* the protection of the lives and properties of the people.

4. We may also acknowledge the goodness of God, in abridging the life of man, to 70 years for that is long enough for the wicked to brag and the righteous to suffer —and be absent from that rest that God has prepared for his people. How amazing that the Church of Christ has not been swallowed up, by the united combinations

of all the evil — spirits of darkness, and the wicked in this world in every age! this is the mighty power of God indeed!

5. We learn from this subject, the special need our world stands in of a SAVIOUR, that by the grace of his holy covenant, according to the great rich divine plan he has revealed in the holy Bible, such sinful creatures as we are, may be sanctified and pardoned, and made fit for usefulness in this life, and the enjoyment of God in heaven.

6. Our subject teaches us to be reconciled to the thoughts of death, on the true principles of gospel holiness, whenever it shall please God to call us hence; as all in this sinning, teasing, mortifying, disappointing world, as Solomon justly expresses it, *is vanity and vexation of spirit*; and yet the other hand, we must not repine at the hand of God, if we are continued long even in a state of affliction; — but should say with that old Testament-saint, *all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come*: — It is our great wisdom and interest, to take heed, that we have not with us our good thing here, but would make the best of this present life, as a wilderness passage, through which we would journey to the better country, the heavenly.

7. We hence learn how much it is our duty to
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be both frequent, and very fervent in prayer to God, for the spiritual kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, which consists so much in peace and love, to come with divine power and energy, to check and stop those evils that now rage in the world, as it is well known, by long experience, that it is the holy spirit accompanying a preached gospel, that is the only sovereign remedy, to cure the evils that are in the hearts of men, to qualify them to be real blessings to each other, as members of society in this life, and to put them in a capacity for communion with the holy Trinity and saints and angels in heaven.

8thly And lastly, Our subject teaches us, how much we should deprecate the calamities of war,—especially those of a civil war; the most awful of any, if it could be avoided. And Oh what awful dark cloud, pregnant with all the horrors of civil war, hangs now over this whole continent of British America; and this terrifying thought leads me to close this discourse in two addresses

1st. To all my hearers in general—you are in this town, now at ease, in the lap of peace and plenty; far from any scene of either blood or slaughter—in the heart of a rich province, situated in the center of the whole American Continent—you hear of distress, but you do not yet feel

feel

feel it; and God forbid you ever should, as some of your worthy brethren now do in Boston. But know, my dear hearers, that if you abuse these rich, temporal good things (with which the God of heaven has distinguished you) in luxury, profaneness, Sabbath-breaking, swearing, uncleanness, drunkenness, worldliness, pride and contempt of the sacred and divine instructions of his holy word and ordinances, your sins will find you out, and God will visit you with his chastising rod for your iniquities. Let all then be exhorted by a sincere, unfeigned repentance, for past sins and reformation of life and manners, to fly to the Lord Jesus Christ by faith, as a hiding place from the storm, and a covert from the tempest—be much in prayer to God, to over-rule these unhappy disturbances for his own glory, and the best weal of Zion—pray that they may be brought to a speedy and happy issue on the genuine principles of liberty and true religion—pray that the just attempts of all America, for these great ends, may prove successful—guard against every thing that has the least or remotest tendency, to jar the blessed unison of the whole American harpsicord, as now set to the tune of liberty, by the honourable great artists the CONTINENTAL CONGRESS—Let every denomination of Christians treat each other with love and respect,

spect,

spect, as brethren engaged in, and struggling for the one and same common cause—treat all the officers of civil government in this province with becoming honor and respect—sympathize with your distressed suffering brethren in Boston, both with your prayers and purses. Finally, dread nothing that can befall you, so ruinous to yourselves and posterity in this life, as *slavery*. Therefore use every lawful means to avert it; see then that you most heartily accord with whatever may be the final determination of all America agreed to in the CONTINENTAL CONGRESS.

I now turn myself to the Gentlemen of the *Militia*, Officers and Soldiers that appear before me in Church in their UNIFORM.

By your present appearance you declare to the world, that you are nobly willing to risk your lives and fortunes to save your Country from *slavery*; you are accompanied with the sincere wishes of all good people, for God Almighty to bless you, protect and succeed you in your brave undertakings.

Your own improved understandings will lead you to apply the several instructions suggested in this Sermon, relative to your duty as warriors; should we be all so unhappy, as that you should
be

be ever called to action on account of the present struggles for liberty. In the mean time allow me to require of you, to do your utmost to preserve and maintain the good order and peace of this province inviolate; for it is certain, that nothing next to *slavery* is more to be dreaded, than the anarchy and confusion that will ensue, if proper regard is not paid to the good and wholesome laws of government. And should we be subjected to such evils, we will, and must blame our Militia for no men have it so much in their power to keep the peace and good order of society as the gentlemen of the sword.

You must still continue to revere royalty, and observe your allegiance to the King, on the true principles of the constitution. Your drawing the sword now must not be against the person of his Majesty; but the mal-administration of his government, by designing, mischief-making ministers. Your present appearances must then be not of choice, but of necessity. While his Majesty George the third will observe his own coronation oath, and the principles of the revolution, the support of which against all Jacobite factious and Tory plots of popery, his ancestors of illustrious line of Brunswick were placed on the throne of Great Britain, do you observe your allegiance.

I am

I am happy, that I can with a good conscience, congratulate you and myself this day, on the certainty we have, for the justice and goodness of our cause: The angry tools of power who mislead government, may call us American “rebels, who “would throw off all government,—would be independent and what not.”—But we can now, with great confidence, appeal to God that that is false—we desire no such things—we desire to be as we were in the beginning of the present unhappy reign—we have tried every lawful, peaceable mean in our power—but all in vain!—we would love them if they would suffer us—we would be peaceable, obedient, loving subjects if they would let us; but it would seem as if the present ministry were determined to cram disloyalty, and disobedience down our throats—and then call us all rebels—then confiscate our country and sell it, to pay their 140,000,000 of debt, or else we know not what they would be at.

do in America all declare ourselves the subjects of King George the third, but we never swore allegiance to the Parliament of Great-Britain: or else we would have above 500 Kings—these are our fellow-subjects, chosen by the freeholders of that island to legislate for them, as our Assembly doth for Pennsylvania; but if their present claims are admitted, we may give up our Assemblies—and our Charters are cyphers!—

In

In the close of the last war, the King had not in all his dominions so many more affectionate subjects than the Americans—and in every valuable enterprize which would exhaust both treasure and blood the brave New-Englanders took the lead—and by our industry and trade with England, the nation rose to her present eminence; and now the very power we helped to give her, is retorted on us with redoubled vengeance and unheard of cruelty—but if they beat down our trading Cities and oppress us all they can, we will have our woods and liberty; for as we are the descendants of Britons, *we scorn to be slaves.*—We are now come to our *ne plus ultra*—the sword, the last argument must decide the controversy. Therefore, you can, GENTLEMEN SOLDIERS, appeal to G O D, for the justice of your cause, he is the judge of all the earth, and will do right, the final determination of all matters is in his righteous, y, powerful hand. When England went to war with France and Spain in the time of last reign, they invoked the aids of the God of heaven by fasting and prayer—and then government discovered no leanings to popery—But now, when they are going to murder and butcher their own children in America, that have been so obedient, useful and affectionate—we do not hear that

that

that they ask counsel of God—but if they do not let us ask counsel and assistance from the God of heaven—he is on our side, we hope, and if God is on our side we need not fear what man can do unto us.

We have all the true friends of virtue; of liberty and righteousness on earth on our side—we have all the angels of heaven on our side—for we have truth and justice on our side—therefore we have the God of truth and justice on our side, although for wise purposes of divine providence, a good cause is permitted to be for a time under a cloud—to try the patience and faith of God's people, that the deliverance may finally appear, as it ever will be God's own work; God will never forsake his own side of the question—*Courage then! courage, my brave American soldiers, if God be for, who can be against you?*—Equip yourselves, and to be equipt for this warfare—put on, Gentlemen, the gospel armoury—*have your feet shod with its preparation—for your helmet salvation—for your shield, faith—and be girt with truth*—this, Sirs, is a gospel uniform, that well becomes the Christian soldier—and thus go forth in the name of the Lord of hosts, and may he protect you, bless you, and succeed your

very laudable and grand undertaking, in connection with all the Militia of North-America; and may God grant that out of these present tumults, disturbances and commotions, a great and mighty empire may rise up in this western world, for King JESUS, as well as a *protestant* King built on the solid principles of liberty and true religion; and the glory shall be given to his holy name, now and for ever more, *Amen.*

F . I N I S .

