

National Humanities Center

My Neighbor, My Enemy: How American Colonists Became Patriots and Loyalists

**"THE WONDERFUL APPEARANCE of an Angel, Devil & Ghost, to a
GENTLEMAN in the Town of Boston,
In the Nights of the 14th, 15th, and 16th of October, 1774" (Boston, 1774)**

A little known political document, "The Wonderful Appearance" is sort of a colonial American version of *A Christmas Carol* in which three apparitions try to convert a sinner. It was published in Boston in the summer of 1774, the moment of greatest popular rage against royal officials in Massachusetts. It asked the ordinary reader to consider carefully what might happen to someone who tried to remain neutral—or worse, gave comfort to the enemy—during a revolutionary crisis. Although the story contains marvelous humor, it reminds us of the pressure a community could bring to bear on enemies and skeptics.

The narrator, who sympathizes with the British, returns to his room after a supper with some jovial companions and is struck by terror when he hears an awful sound nearby. The noise continues until a "violent rap against" his window signals the entrance of an angel, who pulls up a chair and delivers two messages. First, the angel says, if the narrator does not cease to oppress his countrymen, he will end up in hell. Second, the Devil is going to drop by tomorrow night to tell him so in person. Like Scrooge, the narrator tries to convince himself that his first nocturnal visitor was merely a delusion, but he never quite succeeds. The next night, as predicted, the Devil—a rational, cool-headed gentleman—appears and asks the narrator how he became such an enemy to his country. The narrator protests that he is not an enemy and to prove it describes how he helped to promote the Stamp Act, which, unfortunately, "did not produce those good effects that were intended by it." Asked for more evidence, he proclaims his support of the Townsend Acts, his abhorrence of the Boston Tea Party, and his approval of the closing of Boston harbor. After hearing all this, the Devil, who normally embraces loyalists, warns him that if he does not desist from pursuing "cursed plots," he will suffer immeasurable torment in hell. The next evening, unheralded by the angel, a ghost appears. It is the shade of one of the narrator's long-dead ancestors, who scolds him for betraying the hard work and suffering his forbearers endured to create America. Does the narrator change his ways? You'll have to read the story to find out.

Discussion Questions

1. Who is the audience for this story?
2. Why did the author resort to the ghost story genre?
3. How does the transcriber of the story seek to establish its truthfulness?
4. How would you characterize the narrator?
5. How does the story portray the moral character of loyalists?
6. Does the story show sympathy for loyalists? If so, how?
7. How does the story interpret loyalty to the Crown?
8. What do you make of the fact that both an angel and the Devil endorse the patriot cause?
9. In what ways is “The Wonderful Appearance” a debate between the narrator and the transcriber?
10. Why does the Devil call the narrator a “parricide”?
11. Why would the Devil seek to save someone from hell?

THE
WONDERFUL APPEARANCE
OF AN
Angel, Devil & Ghost,

TO A
GENTLEMAN in the Town of Boston;

In the NIGHTS of the 14th, 15th, and 16th of
October, 1774.



To whom in some Measure may be attributed the DISTRESSES
that have of late fallen upon that unhappy

M E T R O P O L I S,

Related to one of his NEIGHBOURS the Morning after the last Visita-
tion, who wrote down the NARRATIVE from the GENTLE-
MAN'S own Mouth; and it is now made public at his Desire, as a
solemn Warning to all those, who, for the sake of agrandizing themselves
and their Families, would entail the most abject Wretchedness upon
MILLIONS of their Fellow-Creatures.

B O S T O N :

Printed and Sold by JOHN BOYLE in Marlboro'-Street,
MDCCLXXIV. 1774

T H E
P R E F A C E.

FROM the many extraordinary Circumstances which occur in the Course of this NARRATIVE, some will no doubt be led to question the credibility of the Facts therein contained ; and I readily grant they will have reason to without sufficient Evidence to the contrary : Therefore, in order to convince the incredulous that what is here written is not a *Fiction*, but a *real Truth*, I have introduced the joint Testimony of three credible Persons, who were present the whole Time I was writing down the Particulars, as related by the Gentleman, and who were personally acquainted with him.

It is as follows :

“ WE the Subscribers, do testify and declare,
that in the Morning of the 17th Day of October,
ber,

iv. P R E F A C E.

“ber, 1774, we received each of us a Card
“from Mr. ———, desiring our Attendance at
“his Lodgings, at Ten o’Clock that Morning.
“Agreeable to his Request we waited upon him;
“when he acquainted us with what had happened
“to him, and desired us to attend very particularly
“to what he should relate to Mr. W———,
“ (who was then going to take down in writing
“ what he should deliver) lest without proper
“ Attestation it might be disbelieved.”

S—— P——,
J—— W——,
P—— R——.

For very good Reasons, which, if offered, I believe would be satisfactory to all, I have concealed the Gentleman’s Name who related the Story. I was very careful in taking it down, and have added nothing of my own Composition except a few Marginal Notes. It is now made public at his Desire, and I hope will prove a Warning to others, against practising those Vices which appeared so conspicuous in him.

S. W.

Boston, New-England,
Dec: 1, 1774.



NIGHT THE FIRST.

October 4.

AFTER supping abroad among a select company of my jovial acquaintance, I returned to my lodgings; and being somewhat heavy and sleepy, went up stairs in order to go to bed, but before I had finished undressing myself, I heard an uncommon noise, which to me appeared but at a little distance from the house; the sound, though awful, was very harmonious; it continued I apprehend about ten minutes; I was amazingly terrified at it, not knowing how to account for such an unusual sound. However, being very anxious of knowing what it was, I immediately went to the window, opened it, and looked out, but before I was able to unfasten it the noise ceased, though my astonishment still continued.

I stood listening at the window after I had opened it, with the greatest attention for upwards of an hour, the horizon was perfectly serene—all nature seemed to be repósed to rest ;—and not hearing the like sound again, I determined to compose my ruffled senses and go to bed ; which I accordingly did. I endeavored to sleep, but found it impracticable, not being able to chaise from my thoughts this uncommon noise.

AFTER laying about half an hour in the greatest agitation, I again heard the same terrible sound repeated three times in the course of a few minutes ; during which time 'tis impossible for any one to conceive, much less to express the distress I was in ;—a thousand things that before I scarcely ever thought of, (at least not in a serious manner) cróded upon my mind—the curses of thousands of my injured countrymen seemed at once to be heaped upon me, the burden of which I was scarcely able to bear—and I was almost driven to a state of desperation. ¶

THE noise again ceased, and I lay for a while meditating upon what might be the cause of it, but could not hit upon any thing in nature which had a tendency to produce it.

It was about twelve o'clock when I first went up to bed, and just after the town-clock struck
two,

¶ A sense of guilt often occasions fear, when no real danger is nigh.

two, I was more surprized (if possible) than I had been before, by a violent wrap against the window next my bed-side, attended with the same melodious sound which I heard at first.

I now perceived that some dreadful and uncommon occurrence was speedily to take place with regard to myself, and that it was utterly impossible for me to avoid it; therefore I endeavored, as far as I was able, to compose myself, and put that reason in exercise which Nature had bestowed upon me, and be in a suitable frame to give audience to my expected guest, whoever it might be, or in whatsoever form it might appear.

Soon after the wrap against the window, the shutter, which was upon the inside, flew open, and a light burst into the chamber far exceeding that of the sun. About two minutes afterwards a person appeared upon the outside of the window, having on the usual garb of an ANGEL, (*with a sword in one hand, and a pair of scales in the other*) who unfastened it, and entered the room——I immediately accosted him with, “Friend from whence came you?—What business have you with me?” He at first made me no reply, but taking a large chair which stood by the bed-side, seated himself close by me, and said, “Arise man from your bed—put on your cloaths—take a chair and seat yourself down by me—I have something to communicate of the greatest importance—your temporal—your eternal welfare are interested in it.”

In compliance with this command, I arose; dressed myself, and sat down near to the Angel, (as I now supposed it was) and with a resolution, which till now I never imagined myself master of, said unto him, " Now sir, I am ready to hear you." Upon which he began thus :

" I descended from my cæstrial abode into this lower world, to acquaint you, and through you, *all those of your cast*, with the determinations of heaven towards such abandoned, such hell-deserving wretches as you are. Heaven beholds such miscreants—such public-robbers with ineffable contempt : And, unless prevented by a speedy repentance, and restitution being made to the many hundreds who are now groaning under the weight of that oppression you have been instrumental in bringing upon them, you may expect (and that justly) to meet with the severest punishment, if not in this, in the future state, the hottest place in hell being reserved for all those who have proved themselves **TRAYTORS** to their **KING** and **COUNTRY**.

" It is not my business now to dilate upon this subject, I only came as a *Harbinger* of the *Person* * who is to pay you a visit to-morrow night, and who is the only proper one to converse with such people as you are. He will make such a frightful—such an awful appearance, that I thought it most adviseable to see you first myself, lest his coming suddenly and unexpectedly,

* The DEVIL.

unexpectedly, you would be unable to survive the appearance, and thereby the good effects intended by these visits utterly defeated."

AFTER the Angel had finished the foregoing, I earnestly entreated him to compleat the business himself, that I might not be obliged to converse with the Devil (a person I could not bear the thoughts of seeing) upon a subject so extremely disagreeable, in which I and the rest of my *brethren* were so deeply interested; but he peremptorily refused my request, adding, that he must quickly be gone, having business more immediately belonging to the angelic sphere, he only came to see *me* in order to introduce *another*, and to prepare me to meet *him* with that composure and moderation which would be absolutely necessary in order to answer the design of his coming—the good of myself and others, who might be tempted as I have been, to sell my country for *unrighteous gain*. †

HAVING said this, he arose from the chair in great haste, and flew rapidly out at the same window into which he came, which was about three o'clock in the morning; and immediately the light vanished, and darkness ensued.

HERE I was left to reflect on what had happened and make a suitable application. Some-

B

thing

† 'Tis apprehended by some, that he received an annual stipend for his *unwearied endeavors* to carry into execution the wicked designs of a *curst Calal*.

times I thought by my future to make amends for my past flagitious conduct. Then again I thought that peradventure what had happened might be nothing more than a delusion, as I had drank a little too freely in company the last evening. After repeatedly revolving these things in my mind, I at last determined whether it had been a delusion or not, to sit up the next night, and if the Devil should chance to come, as the Angel had predicted, to arm myself with courage, and stand, if possible, the combat, like a man of spirit and resolution. And if he did not come, I should hereafter rest satisfied, and go on in the old course for years yet to come without remorse, † imagining that what had given me so much uneasiness, was only the effect of an intoxicated brain.

The dawn now appeared, and I at first thought of communicating this extraordinary event to some of my most intimate friends, and asking them what I had best do under my present situation; but upon a second recollection, thought it most adviseable to keep it to myself.

I continued in my chamber till ten o'clock, my usual hour of rising, then came down and
desired

† Those who are bent upon doing mischief are very loth to meet with a check. They are apt to put the most favorable construction upon every monitory occurrence in life, which hath the least tendency to stop them in their wicked career.

desired my breakfast might be got ready by my return, which would be in about half an hour.

AFTERWARDS I took a walk (which hath lately been my practice) round the camp in the common, having a card of permission;—saw and conversed with some of the gentlemen of the army with whom I was acquainted—enquired of them whether any news in town—asked Captain ——— whether he heard any unusual noise last night—he replied he did not, and asked if I had—I told him I heard a very awful sound, almost as loud as thunder—I believe you are mistaken, said he, for you know you was very drunk last night—So he was, said another, who was standing by, I was in company with him, and assisted in carrying him part of the way home. ¶ So after a little chat upon the times, I returned to my lodgings—eat my breakfast—but such was my state of mind that I could eat but little.

AT twelve o'clock I received an invitation from Col. ——— to dine with him to-morrow; but declined sending him a categorical answer at present, whether I would or not, lest I might not be able to wait upon him; for I could not tell but the Devil in his rage might take me home

¶ If he was so drunk as these gentlemen say he was, 'tis a little surprizing that he so well remembers the conversation that passed between himself and the Angel. I am inclined to think they represented him to be rather worse than he really was; He was no doubt *bad enough*.

home with *him* to night. § I ordered the servant who brought me the billet to tell his master I would send him an answer in the morning—I was now unwell and could not determine.

RESOLVED to tarry at home to day, and unless better disposed than at present, not to go abroad again till this *Devilish Affair* was ended, and which I most ardently wished was well over.

I did not let even the family where I dwell, know the least circumstance that had happened the preceding night, but after breakfast retired to my bed-chamber, and spent my time in reading over the late acts of parliament respecting this government. Upon the most critical observation, I could not discover by either of them that the parliament has any design of distressing the people of America; † they only meant to correct the *errors* and rectify the *behaviour* of a few

§ If he was then sensible what a *Machine of iniquity* he had been, no wonder he was fearful lest the Devil might take him to himself before the morning. Every man who has conducted in the manner he has, may have just reason to expect a visit from his *Infernal Highness* one time or another.

† Had he not been politically blind, he must have seen that these acts were calculated on purpose to distress us, for he has been himself an eye-witness of the distresses that have come upon many people by the operation of the Port Bill.

few factious and disobedient individuals, who have trampled upon all law and government, and therefore it became absolutely necessary for the Supreme Legislature of the nation to put a final

|| The gentleman might have added here, that if the ~~ly~~ intention of the late acts was to correct the errors of a few individuals, it is much to be lamented that they could not have been framed in such a manner, as that only the persons he mentions, the *factious* and *disobedient*, should be the sufferers by the operation of them: Whereas thousands of *loyal subjects*, who can be charged with no other crime than that of boldly standing forth in defence of their *Constitutional Liberty*, are equally involved in their ruinous consequences.

———Oh ! *Britain*,

Preserve your children ; save the public weal ;
And soon, ah ! soon, these **FATAL ACTS** repeal.
Oh ! can you, can you, thus sit still and see,
Whole colonies involv'd in misery ?
Oh ! 'tis the soul's best attribute to feel
The woes of others, and their wounds to heal.

Behold a melancholy scene display'd,
Of Rights usurp'd, and Charters lightly weigh'd.
These their sole bulwark or infring'd, or lost,
Farewell to Freedom too, their happy boast.
Freedom the noblest blessing man can know,
Since from this source, all other blessings flow.
For this the Romans spent their latest breath,
This was their ruling passion still in death.

And will the American as nobly fir'd ?
Disclaim a virtue, which Rome's sons inspir'd:
Briton, American, 'tis all the same,
To Heaven-born LIBERTY has each a claim.
The common int'rest no distinction knows,
Each share alike of happiness, or woes.
The vassalage of one, must both intral,
And universal ruin wait on all,

Anal period to such abominable enormities as have been committed by those *Sons of Violence*.

At four o'clock * called-down to dinner, but having an indifferent appetite could eat but little—was asked what was the matter with me—answered, I had been troubled with a pain in my head † most part of the day, which was the reason I had lost my stomach—drank but two glasses of Maderia after dinner, only a fifth part of my usual quantity. It was now six o'clock—ordered my bed warmed on account of my supposed illness, and that the family might imagine I was going to bed, and not suspect my intention of sitting up to night. When I left the room all united in wishing I might rest easy.

* Some perhaps may think a mistake is made here in the time of day ; to such I would observe, that four o'clock is the usual hour for *this kind of gentry* to dine. They sit up late of evenings, lay a-bed late in the morning, breakfast at eleven, and dine late in the afternoon.

† The pain however was in his heart, he had some qualms of conscience which made him uneasy.

NIGHT



NIGHT THE SECOND.

October 15.

AFTER getting into my chamber, the girl went out with the warming-pan, and I locked the door.

Now, notwithstanding my determined resolution, my knees, like *Belsazzar's*, smote one against another—I was horribly afraid to see the Devil, having never before had any personal acquaintance with him—but see him I must, if what the Angel told me last night be true, and by my present feelings I have but too little reason to doubt it. The Angel did not tell me the precise time the Devil would make his appearance; therefore I seated myself down upon the bed, took a book in my hand, and endeavored to
divert

divert myself with reading, but could not—
 examination of my conscience respecting my past
 conduct, seemed most natural to my present
 condition. I threw my book aside, and em-
 ployed my time in this business, but to very lit-
 tle purpose, for I could not think I had been *so*
bad as my conscience told me I had. At length
 after six tedious hours, the clock struck twelve,
 —I began now to think I should be excused from
 seeing the Devil, and that the Angel had ne-
 glected to send him ;—but soon, very soon, I
 found myself mistaken : For about half an hour
 after twelve my candle went out, I heard as it
 were at a distance, a most terrible shout, § and
 presently after, to my unutterable astonishment,
 appeared at my chamber door, the most fright-
 ful Form † my eyes ever beheld. I was at no
 great loss to know who it was—I knew no body
 but the Devil could look as he did ; and had he
 have viewed himself in the same light I did, I
 believe he would have been as much frightened
 as I was.

Now my resolution was put to the test.

THE Devil entered the chamber, (*holding in
 his right hand a folio book, and in his left a balter*)
 The first salutation from him was, “ Mr. ———,
 this

§ This shout I apprehend was made at the departure of
Belzebub upon his errand. I call him *Belzebub*, because
 by his appearance, I think he must have been the Prince of
 Devils.

† The reader I believe will be convinced of the truth of
 this if he examines the Plate in the preceding page.

this night I received a command from an Angel, who I understand was with you not long since, to pay you a visit : In obedience to his command I left the infernal regions, and came from thence full speed upon a very important errand. My business now is to converse with you concerning the crimes you have been guilty of towards your country, the punishment to which you have exposed yourself, and the certainty of your not escaping it, if you continue in the same course you have for years past." ¶

I desired him to begin, and I would answer him in the best manner I could : He accordingly began thus :

Devil. PRAY Mr. —, how came you to be such an enemy to your native country ?

Gentleman. You are much mistaken, Sir; if you suppose me to be an enemy to my country, I am one of the best friends the country has.

Devil. WHAT do you call friendship to your country ?

Gent. WHY sir, doing every thing in my power to promote it's welfare.

C

Devil.

¶ 'Tis here to be observed, that the part the Devil acted towards *this gentleman*, was widely different from his usual method of dealing with mankind : He commonly makes use of every artifice he can invent to seduce and lead men to commit all manner of wickedness with greediness, *political sins not excepted* : But here it seems is an instance, where he has thrown aside the *subtilty* of the *Devil*, and put on the *friendship* of a *Man*.

Devil. VERY well defined. And pray sir, have you done every thing in your power to promote the welfare of your country ?

Gent. YES sir, I have.

Devil. BE so kind as to mention a few instances of your friendship, for until I have better proof than your bare assertion, I shall not believe it.

Gent. ABOUT ten years ago, I was unwearied in my endeavours, both by writing myself, and encouraging others to write letters to the British ministry, and to those who were men of influence in the house of commons, to obtain an act of parliament, whereby the inhabitants of the American colonies might be upon an equal footing † with their brethren in Great-Britain. Accordingly the Parliament, in their great wisdom, ‡ thought fit to pass an act in the year 1765, “ For granting and applying certain Stamp-Duties in the British colonies and plantations in America, towards defraying the expences of defending and protecting the same.” In procuring the passing of this act, I flatter myself † in some measure contributed : But unhappily for me and many others of my way of thinking, it did not produce those good effects that were intended by it—it only served to

† In regard to TAXES, I imagine.

‡ How far they discovered their wisdom I will not pretend to determine, but leave every one who remembers the transactions in America after passing the Stamp Act to judge for himself.

to enkindle a *flame* § among the Americans, which none of us from that time to this have been able to extinguish, notwithstanding our utmost exertions.

Now 'tis well known, that the King's subjects in Great-Britain are not only taxed for the superfluities and conveniencies, but even for the necessaries of life—and for many reasons that could be easily mentioned, it is best it should be so; otherwise those who are placed above the common level of mankind, could not be supported in that splendor and magnificence which are so necessary to the well-being of a state. ||

THE subjects in the colonies until that memorable æra were exempt from those necessary burdens—but as they are now become so opulent and flourishing, 'tis highly reasonable they should bear a part in the expence (at least) of their own defence; and therefore the Stamp-act, as it is called, was made for this purpose.

WHEN it was received, how was it treated? Did the people pay that regard to it, which *as a people*

§ It is ardently wished, that this same flame, which he speaks of with so much regret, may continue with unremitting ardour, till we shall be again reinstated in all those **INESTIMABLE PRIVILEGES** which have been violently ravished from us.

|| Those *Court-Favorites* could not be supported in their idleness and luxury, unless a part of the earnings of the common people be applied for that purpose.

people who love their King and Country, they ought to? Did they quietly submit to pay that money which the Supreme Authority of the nation had an undoubted right to demand? No! — They treated the act and all those who were appointed to put it in execution, with the utmost abhorrence and detestation. They formed themselves into unlawful assemblies (vulgarly called mobs) and destroyed the property and endangered the lives of many individuals, particularly our late *worthy* governor H——, lieutenant-governor O——, the honourable Mr. H——, Justice S——, &c. ¶ Men, the latchet of whose shoes the best of them were not worthy to unloose—Men, whose names ought to be held in the most grateful remembrance to the latest period of time—Men, who have done more real service to their country, than any of the most flaming patriots † of the present age, who have professed such an open zeal for their country's good, when at the same time they were influenced by the most fordid motives.

So far were the people from paying obedience to that *righteous* act.

Now,

¶ An act was made by the General Assembly of this province in the year 1766, for granting (FULL) compensation to these gentlemen for the loss they sustained in their property.

† Had it not been for some such flaming patriots, we should before this day have been in the most deplorable situation.

Now, Sir, || I have mentioned one instance wherein I think I have proved myself a friend to my country.

Devil. ONE instance is barely sufficient, mention a few more. §

Gent. You are verily tedious, may it please your *Worship*—(*Majesty* I mean)—But I will proceed. Such was the opposition to that act, that it was thought best to repeal it, *merely, as it was said, upon commercial principles*; immediately after which, if I mistake not the same session, the Parliament passed another act “for the better securing the dependency of his Majesty’s dominions in America, upon the crown and parliament of Great-Britain;” wherein it is declared, that the King, Lords and Commons in Parliament assembled, have a right to levy taxes upon the Americans, in that way and manner they may think proper.

VERY soon after, I think in the year 1767, another act was made laying a duty upon the following articles, viz. Glals, Red Lead, White Lead, Painter’s Colours, TEAS and Paper; and the people made such a clamour about this also, that it was again thought adviteable (*upon commercial principles perhaps*) to repeal the duty upon

|| It seems he had a peculiar veneration for the Devil, as he frequently gives him the appellation of Sir.

§ One would think from this social conversation that passed between his Infernal Majesty and this gentleman, that of late *Belshazzar* had become a great *Politician*.

upon every article therein mentioned, the Tea only excepted, which article remains subject to a duty to this day. Many and great have been the struggles of this uneasy people to get it taken off, and because it is not, they still continue in an open and rebellious opposition to the Supreme Authority of Parliament.

No longer ago than last *December*, the *Savage* rage of the people was so great, that upwards of ~~three~~ *three hundred chests* of that valuable commodity ~~was~~ thrown into the sea and wholly destroyed in ~~one~~ *one* night !

PREVIOUS to this catastrophe, application was made by the gentlemen to whom the Tea was consigned, to the governor and council, praying that themselves and property might be protected from the rage of an infatuated multitude. After the destruction of the Tea application was again made by these gentlemen for relief. The governor with great difficulty got the council together and consulted them upon the affair, but they declined having any thing to do with it, alleging, that the law was open for redress, and if the offenders could be discovered the injured might obtain satisfaction. This was saying but little to the purpose, for 'tis well known that for some years past the law has been most flagrantly violated, and the most atrocious offenders have gone unpunished, because none in the executive capacity could be found, or that had fortitude enough in these *perilous times*, to put it in execution.

IN

In this situation of affairs, what was necessary to be done? The gentlemen consignees were imprisoned at the castle, their property destroyed, and no relief or satisfaction was to be obtained for them here. §

AUTHENTIC accounts of these transactions were forwarded to England as early as possible; myself with several others were employed to do it: In consequence of which, together with the E. India company's application for restitution for their loss, the parliament, the only proper fountain to apply to in such cases, took the affair into their serious consideration, and were of opinion, that the most effectual way to bring the offenders to a sense of their duty, and induce them to make *full satisfaction* to all those who have been sufferers in the late distracted times, would be to make an Act for shutting up the Port of
Boston.

§ 'Tis a question with many whether they deserved any. Town-meetings were called from time to time, and committees frequently chosen by the town so assembled, to wait upon them and desire they would send the Tea back to the place from whence it came—they were earnestly solicited by their friends to comply with the reasonable request of the town, but obstinately refused; and of their own accord left the town and made a precipitate flight to the castle, where they remained 'till the troops arrived in *Boston*. Application was afterwards made to the governor that the Tea might be returned to *England*, but he acquainted the committee who waited upon him for that purpose, that he could not grant a permit for the ships to pass the castle, until certificates were produced that they were properly cleared at the custom-house: Therefore, when every legal method made use of for returning that pernicious and destructive commodity had proved abortive, a number of *INDIANS* from *Natick* and elsewhere came in the night and demolished it.

Boston, which was accordingly done, but as yet hath not answered the good purposes for which it was designed. †

VERY soon after the Act was passed for blocking up the Harbour of *Boston*, two others were made; one "for the better regulating the government of *Massachusetts-Bay*;" the other "for the impartial administration of justice in the said province." These acts instead of regulating, have thrown not only this province, but the whole continent of America into the utmost confusion. Greater mobs have arisen since they were made than ever did before—Thousands have taken up arms against the King's troops (who were sent here to preserve the peace, and protect the friends of government) and have threatened them with immediate destruction. §

Unlawful

† And 'tis thought by many judicious persons among us that it never will: Six months have now elapsed since it took place, and none of the unparalleled demands therein contained have yet been complied with. Though the trade of the town has greatly suffered by the operation of it, yet the inhabitants who were immediately reduced to want have hitherto been relieved by the beneficence of their brethren in the neighbouring towns and colonies.

§ This is a palpable falshood: For, had it been the determination of a people, so resolute as this is, to destroy the troops, there is no doubt but long ere this it would have been effected; but no such design was ever in contemplation. Indeed, when there was a report propagated in some of the neighbouring colonies that *Boston* was besieged, and some of its inhabitants most inhumanly massacred, the people, animated with one soul, took up their arms, and were marching hither to the rescue of their distressed brethren: But, when they found they had been alarmed with a false report, they peaceably returned to their respective homes,

Unlawful assemblies from time to time have been convened in congress (as they call it) to consult upon measures to defeat the operation of those acts, but I flatter myself they will be disappointed in their expectations; for, if 5000 well disciplined troops are not sufficient to carry them into execution, I trust 50,000 are, and Great-Britain, if she regards her honor, will try the experiment.

I think I discover a sincere regard to my country, when I endeavor to persuade people they are doing wrong, tell them they are bringing down the vengeance of their *Superiors* upon them, and unless they lead *quiet* and *submissive* lives, rendering *tribute* to whom *tribute—honor* to whom *honor* is due, they will expose themselves to the severest punishment in this world, and to damnation in the next.

Devil. YOUR system of politics, friend, will never do—So far are you from discovering a regard to your country, that I am *now* convinced you are one of its greatest enemies. Though it has ever been my practice to cherish such sentiments as your's, in those who embraced them, in order to advance my kingdom, and people my dominions; yet, having for long a time been *most intimately connected with you*, and having a *real* regard for your future welfare, I must now acquaint you what punishment awaits such traitors—such parricides as you are.

“HELL the sole avenger of such crimes.”
It is in hell you are to be eternally tormented.
It were better, far better, that you had never
D been

been born, than that you should ever come into the territories of the damned. If you once come within my jurisdiction, you will have reason to curse the day that gave you birth—Curse your father and mother for being the instruments of your wretched existence—Curse those that have led you on, from time to time with their *enticing Mammon*—And curse me for taking you into my possession, who am the only proper person authorized to torment you. Therefore, *friend*, as you value the love and esteem of your fellow-men—as you fear meeting their just resentment in this world—as you dread the excruciating tortures of the next—and as you prize your everlasting welfare—desist, I conjure you desist, before it be too late, from pursuing these cursed plots, which tend to the destruction of that country to which you are under the greatest obligations—Ask forgiveness of all you have injured, and make them all that restitution you are able, lest I come again and snatch you away ere you are aware.

HAVING finished this sentence, he withdrew from the chamber, and departed I suppose to the place from whence he came. I am sorry he went off so suddenly, as I wanted to acquaint him with my intention of becoming a better man for the future, he having in some measure convinced me that heretofore I have been much in the wrong. This privilege I was however deprived of. I had nothing now to do, but to make the best improvement of this visitation, hoping never to have another of the kind.

NIGHT



NIGHT THE THIRD.

October 16.

CONTINUED in my chamber all day, the family apprehending I remained unwell—went to bed early in the evening, hoping this night to rest easy, but to my unutterable grief was disappointed—I however soon fell asleep, and was not disturbed till twelve o'clock, when I awoke, and the first thing that presented itself to my view, was the GHOST of one of my deceased ancestors, standing erect in the middle of the room, *having on a long white gown, and his hair much dishevelled.*

At this dreadful spectre I was more surprized than at seeing *Belzebub* the night before, as the Angel had not given me the least intimation of his

his coming. I lay for a considerable time looking at him with the greatest astonishment, hoping and desiring he would speak to me first ; but he stood mute, looking directly at me. When I found he was not inclined to make himself known, I arose from my bed, put on my cloaths, went to him, and endeavored to take him by the hand, but could not. I then made bold to ask him who he was, and from whence he came. He told me he was one of my venerable ancestors, * and that he came from the regions of the dead to pay a friendly visit to one of his degenerate offspring.

“ You, said he, sprang from a reputable family, some of whom were driven from the place of their nativity by persecuting hands—they, with many others, for the sake of enjoying that liberty which was denied them at home, were content to leave every thing else that was dear behind, and seek it in the inhospitable wilds of America. Here they sat down—here they were exposed to the rage of the most savage beasts, and still more savage men, the aboriginal natives—Here they fought—here they conquered—here they bled, And did they do all this for themselves ? No ! They who were so fortunate as to survive the conflict, could expect but little enjoyment from the fruit of their toils ; it required a much longer time than they had to live, to bring forward

* He did not know by the countenance of this Ghost, that he was one of his ancestors, he having deceased many years before the gentleman's birth.

a comfortable settlement——It was for those who were to come after them, their beloved children, that they underwent so many and so great difficulties.——Heaven forbid that their children should ever give up the dear-bought inheritance—that inheritance which cost their renowned progenitors so much blood and treasure;

- “ Now is the time they are in a peculiar manner called forth to exert themselves in the defence of their liberties and properties, which were transmitted to them by us, their predecessors, and which they ought to maintain and transmit to *their* posterity inviolate, even at the hazard of their lives and fortunes.

“ WHAT now brought me from the world of departed spirits, my dear friend, was a sincere and affectionate regard for your welfare, both here and hereafter. You have lent, (sorry I am to say it) you have lent a busy hand in bringing about the difficulties under which *New-England* is now labouring—You have endeavored to frustrate the intentions of your pious ancestors.—You have prostituted those abilities with which the God of nature hath endowed you, to destroy the happiness of your fellow-men.—You have laboured to create jealousies among brethren who were engaged in a righteous cause, the salvation of their country—You have in private companies villified and aspersed the characters of the most worthy men in the community—In a word, you have left nothing undone which you were capable of doing, to introduce *confusion* and *bloodshed* among mankind.

“ AND

“ AND can you think, unhappy man, that heaven will overlook your perfidy?—Can you think that all these things the Author of your being will never call you to account.—O yes! depend upon it, that you, and every other man that goes on in the same evil course, and perseveres therein to the end, will hereafter meet with their just demerit.”

HAVING said thus, I addressed him as follows,

VENERABLE SHADE! 'Tis true, (with shame I acknowledge it) I have gone on in the way you have described; but believe me, I never till the last night had the least apprehension that I was doing wrong, I sincerely thought I was serving the interest of my country.

Then he replied,

“ O guilty mortal! I am sorry you have so long deceived yourself. If you have the least spark of gratitude still remaining—if there is any deference due to the memory of your departed friends—if you regard the welfare of your immortal soul, instantly repent of your mighty wickedness—ask forgiveness in the most public manner of all those who are now suffering through your means—make them restitution, if possible—and, having done this, intercede for the pardon of HIM who is able to forgive the most atrocious offenders.”

This said, he vanished from my sight.—
Think, reader, what anguish now possessed my
soul—

foul—all my villiany came fresh to mind—I was scarcely able to bear up under the weight of my accumulated guilt—I was fully convinced I had been a very great offender against the country that gave me birth, and determined, if I could withstand the *shining temptation*, to be once more an *honest man*.——

THUS terminated this most extraordinary—most miraculous affair; which I think I have taken down with the greatest precision. Whether the *gentleman* will make that good improvement of the event which he promises, time only can determine. 'Tis however hoped, that whether *he* does or not, it may prove a solemn warning to all into whose hands this Relation may chance to come, not to be guilty of that capital crime, *Treason against the State*, lest, e're they are aware, they plunge themselves into remediless ruin :

“ For hell is no enthusiastic dream,
 No statesman's trick, nor poet's fab'lous theme :
 No pious fraud, or mercenary lye
 Of subtile priests, to gain the conscience by ;
 'Tis all too sadly true which they maintain,
 And far beyond whate'er the poets feign,
 Of streams of liquid fire, and burning lakes,
 Infernal gibbets, and eternal racks, }
 Gorgons, chimeras, furies, and their snakes ; }
 No mortal can a just conception frame,
 Nor find for half the terrors there a name :
 Then shun the flow'ry paths that downward tend ;
 To hell they lead, and in damnation end.”

T H E E N D.

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The Wonderful Appearance of an Angel, Devil & Ghost.

Boston, Boyle, 1774. 31 pp.

AAS copy.