

been informed by one of their members, had taken every step prudence and patriotism could suggest, to effect the desirable purpose, but were defeated—The Body once more assembled, I was again present; such a collection of the people was to me a novelty; near seven thousand persons from several towns, Gentlemen, Merchants, Yeomen and others, respectable for their rank and abilities, and venerable for their age and character, constituted the assembly; they decently, unanimously and firmly adhered to their former resolution, that the baleful commodity which was to rivet and establish the duty should never be landed; to prevent the mischief, they repeated the desires of the Committee of the Towns that the owner of the ship should apply for a clearance; it appeared that Mr. Rotch had been managed and was still under the influence of the opposite party; he resisted the request of the people to apply for a clearance for his ship with an obstinacy which in my opinion bordered on stubbornness subdued at length by the peremptory demand of the Body, he contented to apply, a committee of ten respectable gentlemen were appointed to attend him to the collector: The succeeding morning the application was made and a clearance refused with all the insolence of office; the Body meeting the same morning by adjournment, Mr. Rotch was directed to protest in form, and then apply to the Governor for a Pass by the castle; Mr. Rotch executed his commission with fidelity, but a pass could not be obtained, his Excellency excusing himself in his refusal that he should not make the precedent of granting a pass till the clearance was obtained; which was indeed a fallacy as it had been usual with him in ordinary cases—Mr. Rotch returning in the evening reported as above; the Body then voted his conduct to be satisfactory; and recommending order and regularity to the People, dissolved. Previous to the dissolution, a number of Persons, supposed to be the Aboriginal Natives from their complexion, approaching near the door of the assembly, gave the War-Whoop, which was answered by a few in the galleries of the house where the assembly was convened; silence was commanded, and a prudent and peaceable deportment again enjoined. The Savages repaired to the ships which entertained the pestilential Teas, and had began their ravage previous to the dissolution of the meeting—they applied themselves to the destruction of this commodity in earnest, and in the space of about two hours broke up 342 chests and discharged their contents into the sea. A watch as I am informed was stationed to prevent embezzlement, and not a single ounce of Tea was suffered to be purloined by the populace: One or two persons being detected

in endeavouring to pocket a small quantity were stripped of their acquisitions and very roughly handled —It is worthy remark that although a considerable quantity of goods of different kinds were still remaining on board the vessels, no injury was sustained; such attention to private property was observed that a small padlock belonging to the Captain of one of the Ships being broke, another was procured and sent to him. —I cannot but express my admiration at the conduct of this People! Uninfluenced by party or any other attachment, I presume I shall not be suspected of misrepresentation.—The East-India Company must console themselves with this reflection, that if they have suffered, the prejudice they sustain does not arise from enmity to them: a fatal necessity has rendered this catastrophe inevitable—the landing the tea would have been fatal, as it would have saddled the colonies with a duty imposed without their consent, & which no power on earth can effect. Their strength and numbers, spirit and illumination render the experiment dangerous, the defeat certain: The Consignees must attribute to themselves the loss of the property of the East-India Company: had they seasonably quieted the minds of the people by a resignation, all had been well; the custom-house, and the man who disgraces Majesty by representing him, acting in confederacy with the inveterate enemies of America, stupidly opposed every measure concerted to return the Teas. —That American virtue may defeat every attempt to enslave them, is the warmest wish of my heart. I shall return home doubly fortified in my resolution to prevent that depreccated calamity, the landing the teas in Rhode-Island, and console myself with the happiest assurances that my brethren have not less virtue, less resolution than their neighbours.

AN IMPARTIAL OBSERVER.



Illustration above did not appear in the original paper.