

are much more adventurous, that set everything to the hazard—but there are such numbers of Baronesses that both talk and act with passion, that one would think the nation had lost its senses. Everything has miscarried that has been undertaken, and the worse we succeed, the more is risked—yet the nation is not angry! How can one conjecture during such a delirium? I sometimes almost think I must be in the wrong to be of so contrary an opinion to most men—yet when every misfortune that has happened, had been foretold by a few, why should I not think I have been in the right? Has not almost every single event that has been announced as prosperous, proved a gross falsehood—and often a silly one? Are we not at this moment assured that Washington cannot possibly amass an army of above 8000 men?<sup>12</sup> and yet Clinton with twenty thousand men, and with the hearts, as we are told too, of three parts of the colonies, dares not show his teeth without the walls of New York!<sup>13</sup>—Can I be in the wrong in not believing what is so contradictory to my senses? We could not conquer America when it stood alone. Then France supported it—and we did not mend the matter. To make it still easier, we have driven Spain into the alliance. Is this wisdom? Would it be presumption, even if one were single, to think that we must have the worst in such a contest? Shall I be like the mob, and expect to conquer France and Spain, and then thunder upon America—nay, but the higher mob do not expect such success. They would not be so angry at the House of Bourbon, if not morally certain that those kings destroy all our passionate desire and expectation of conquering America. We bullied, and threatened and begged, and nothing would do. Yet independence was still the word—now we rail at the two monarchs—and when they have banged us, we shall sue to them as humbly as we did to the Congress<sup>13a</sup>—all this my senses, such as they are, tell me has been and will be the case. What is worse, all Europe is of the same opinion—and though forty thou-

12. 'Washington's army does not consist of more than 8,000 effective men, including those on furlough and on different services. . . . He has asked for 10,000 additional troops for the ensuing campaign. Congress has begun the raising of some, but meet with small success' ('Extract of a letter from a Loyalist in Philadelphia to his friend in New York, dated April 3, 1779,' in *London Chronicle* 6-8 July, xlvi. 24).

13. However, the *London Gazette* No. 11994, 6-10 July, and *Whitehall Evening Post* 8-10 July, *sub* 10 July, carried reports of some of Clinton's forces foraging out of New York to capture rebel posts at Verplanck and Stonypoint.

13a. The peace proposal brought by the Carlisle Commission was presented to Congress 13 June 1778 and was rejected 17 June (*OSSORY* ii. 28-9 and nn. 6, 8; *MANN* viii. 400).