

## VII

### CAUSES OF THE AMERICAN DISCONTENTS BEFORE 1768.<sup>1</sup>

The waves never rise but when the winds blow.—*Prov.*

SIR:—As the cause of the present ill-humor in America, and of the resolutions taken there to purchase less of our manufactures, does not seem to be generally understood, it may afford some satisfaction to your readers, if you give them the following short historical state of facts.

From the time that the colonies were first considered as capable of granting aids to the crown, down to the end of the last war, it is said that the constant mode of obtaining those aids was by requisition made from the crown, through its governors, to the several assemblies, in circular-letters from the Secretary of State, in his Majesty's name: setting forth the occasion, requiring them to take the matter into consideration, and expressing a reliance on their prudence, duty, and affection to his Majesty's government, that they would grant such sums, or raise such

<sup>1</sup> This paper appeared in the *London Chronicle* of Jan. 7, 1768, and was reprinted the same year as a postscript to a pamphlet entitled *Sentiments of America*. For the circumstances which led to its publication see Franklin's letters to his son, dated Dec. 19, 1767, and January 9, 1768, and his letter to T. Wharton, Feb. 20, 1768. In the latter letter to his son he complains that the editor of the *Chronicle*, "one Jones," "has drawn the teeth and pared the nails of my paper, so that it can neither scratch nor bite. It seems only to paw and mumble."