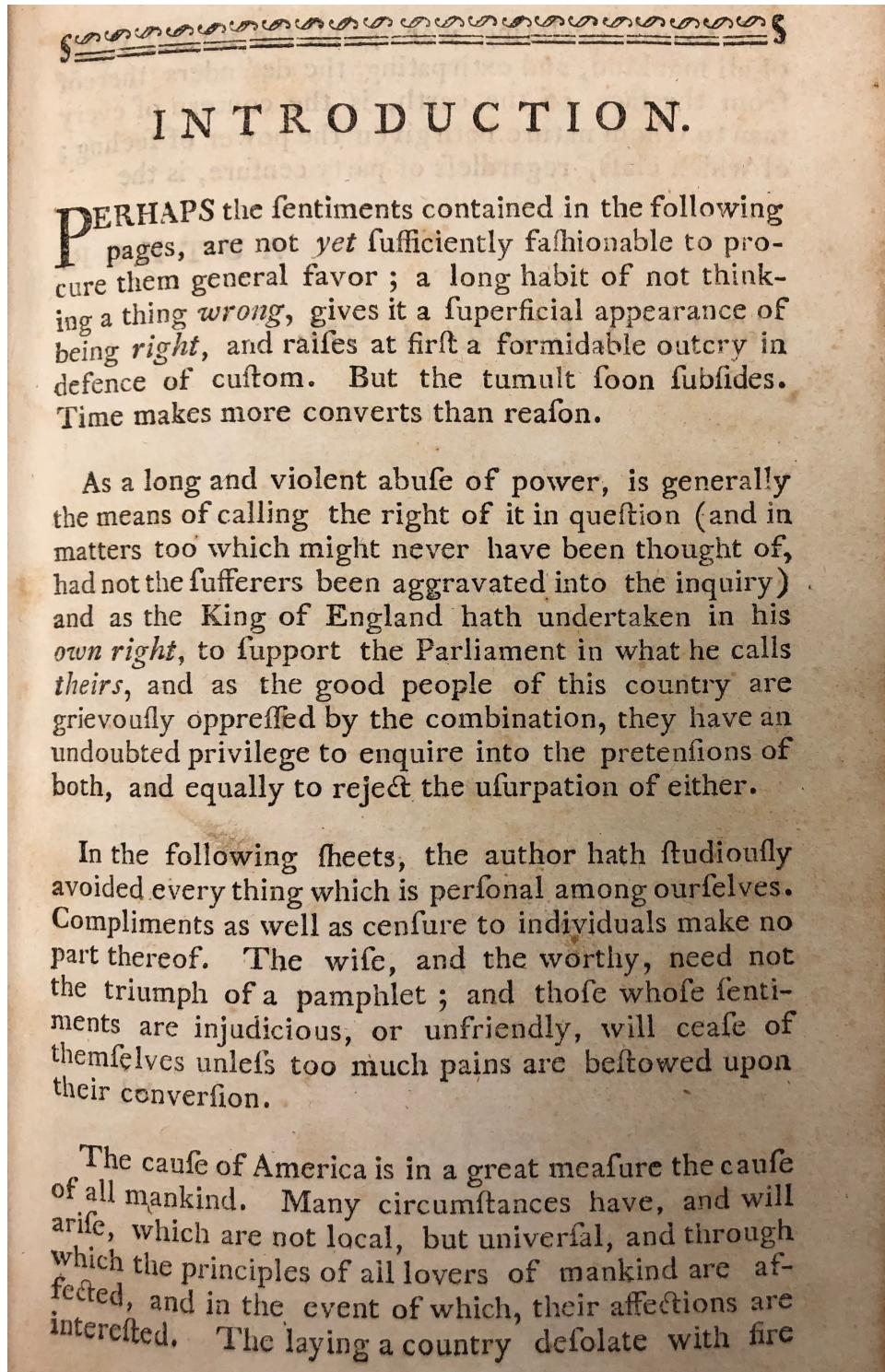
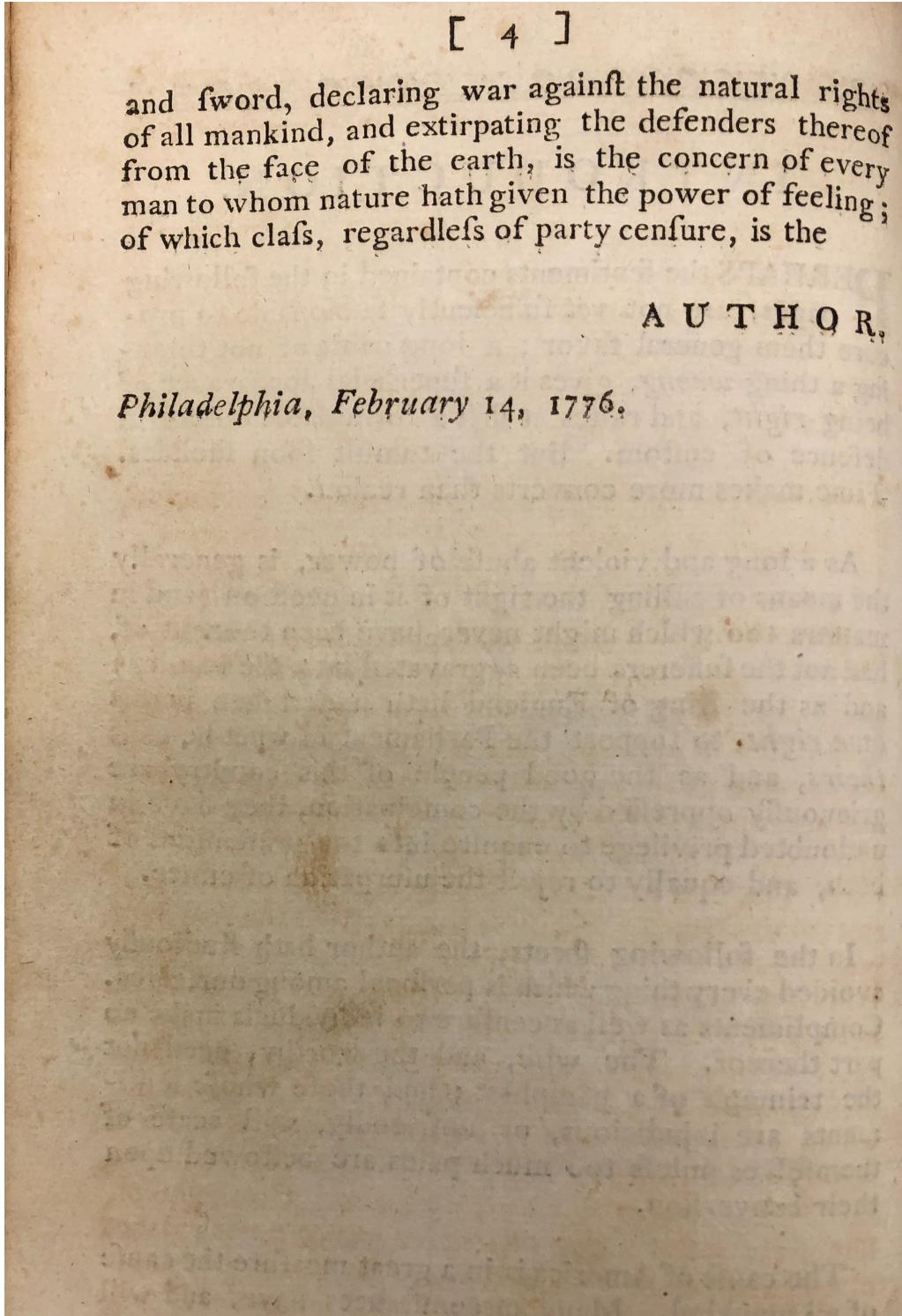


## Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, Introduction & excerpt, 1776 (p. 1 of 5)



Citation: Excerpt from *Common Sense* in *The Writings of Thomas Paine*, Secretary for Foreign Affairs to the Congress of the United States of America (Albany, NY: 1792), Special Collections, Library of Virginia.

## Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, Introduction & excerpt, 1776 (p. 2 of 5)

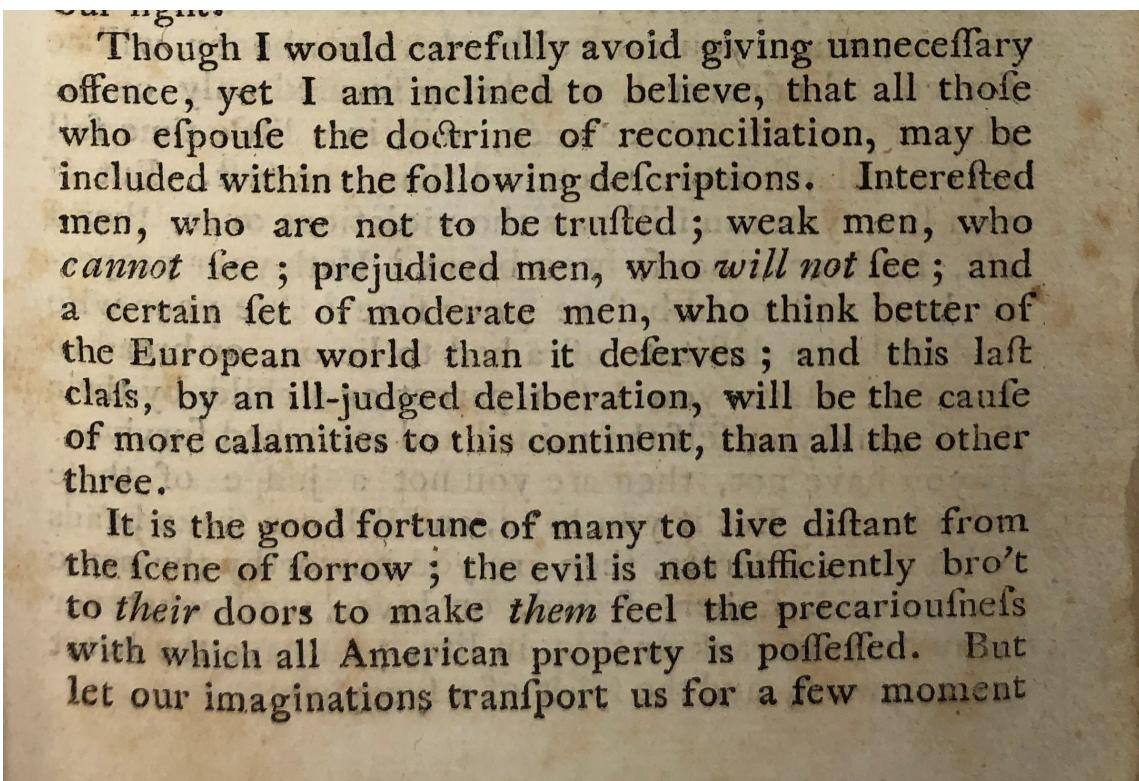


A U T H O R,

*Philadelphia, February 14, 1776.*

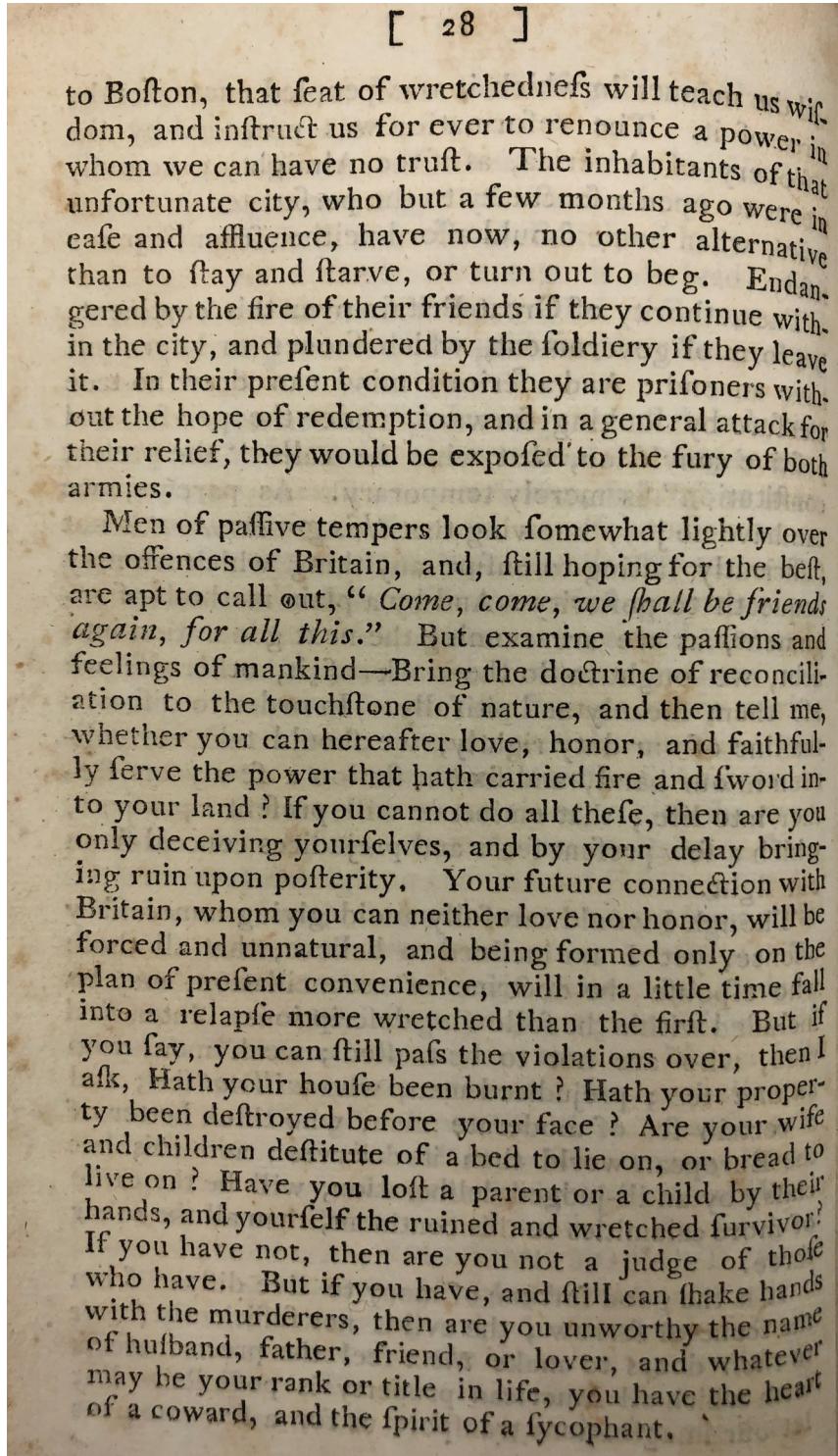
*Citation: Excerpt from Common Sense in The Writings of Thomas Paine, Secretary for Foreign Affairs to the Congress of the United States of America (Albany, NY: 1792), Special Collections, Library of Virginia.*

## Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, Introduction & excerpt, 1776 (p. 3 of 5)



*Citation: Excerpt from Common Sense in The Writings of Thomas Paine, Secretary for Foreign Affairs to the Congress of the United States of America (Albany, NY: 1792), Special Collections, Library of Virginia.*

## Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, Introduction & excerpt, 1776 (p. 4 of 5)



*Citation: Excerpt from Common Sense in The Writings of Thomas Paine, Secretary for Foreign Affairs to the Congress of the United States of America (Albany, NY: 1792), Special Collections, Library of Virginia.*

## Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, Introduction & excerpt, 1776 (p. 5 of 5)

[ 29 ]

This is not inflaming or exaggerating matters, but trying them by those feelings and affections which nature justifies, and without which, we should be incapable of discharging the social duties of life, or enjoying the felicities of it. I mean not to exhibit horror for the purpose of provoking revenge, but to awaken us from fatal and unmanly slumbers, that we may pursue determinately some fixed object. It is not in the power of Britain or of Europe to conquer America, if she does not conquer herself by *delay* and *timidity*. The present winter is worth an age if rightly employed, but if lost or neglected, the whole continent will partake of the misfortune ; and there is no punishment which that man will not deserve, be he who, or what, or where he will, that may be the means of sacrificing a season so precious and useful.

It is repugnant to reason, to the universal order of things, to all examples from former ages, to suppose, that this continent can longer remain subject to any external power. The most sanguine in Britain does not think so. The utmost stretch of human wisdom cannot, at this time, compass a plan short of separation, which can promise the continent even a year's security. Reconciliation is *now* a falacious dream. Nature hath deserted the connection, and art cannot supply her place. For, as Milton wisely expresses, “ *never can true reconcilement grow where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep.* ”

Every quiet method for peace hath been ineffectual. Our prayers have been rejected with disdain ; and only tended to convince us, that nothing flatters vanity, or confirms obstinacy in kings more than repeated petitioning—and nothing hath contributed more than that very measure to make the kings of Europe absolute : Witness Denmark and Sweden. Wherefore, since nothing but blows will do, for God's sake, let us come to a final separation, and not leave the next generation to be cutting throats, under the violated unmeaning names of parent and child.

*Citation: Excerpt from Common Sense in The Writings of Thomas Paine, Secretary for Foreign Affairs to the Congress of the United States of America (Albany, NY: 1792), Special Collections, Library of Virginia.*