

Lib. J. R. to be informed by our Ambassador at Madrid that the Spanish
 & U. S. Minister, taking Notice of the Reports Industrious-
 ly spread of an approaching Rupture, had Acquainted him, that
 the King of Spain had at no time been more intent on culti-
 vating a good Correspondence with us; and as the Spanish
 Ambassador at our Court made repeated Declarations to the
 same Effect, we thought Ourselves bound in Justice and Pru-
 dence to forbear coming to Extremities, But the same tender
 concern for the welfare of our Subjects which prevented our
 accelerating precipitately a War with Spain, if it could possi-
 bly be avoided, made it necessary for us to endeavour to
 know with Certainty, what were the engagements and real
 Intentions of the Court of Spain, therefore as we had In-
 formation that Engagements had been lately Contracted be-
 tween the Courts of Madrid and Versailles; and it was soon
 after industriously Spread throughout all Europe by the Min-
 isters of France, that the purport of those Engagements was
 hostile to Great Britain, and that Spain was on the point of
 entering into the War, We directed our Ambassador to desire
 in the most friendly Terms, a Communication of the Treaties
 Lately concluded between France and Spain, or of such
 Articles thereof as immediately related to the Interest of
 Great Britain, if any such there were; or, at least an Assur-
 ance that there were none incompatible with the Friendship
 subsisting between Us and the Crown of Spain. Our Aston-
 ishment & Concern was great, when we learnt, that so far
 from giving Satisfaction upon so reasonable an Application;
 the Spanish Minister had declined answering, with reasonings
 and Insinuations of a very hostile Tendency: And as, at the
 same time, we had Intelligence, that Great Armaments were
 making in Spain, by Sea and Land, We thought it Absolutely
 Necessary to try once more, if a Rupture could be avoided:
 We therefore directed our Ambassador to ask in a Firm but
 Friendly Manner, Whether the Court of Madrid intended to
 join the French, Our Enemies, to act hostilely against Great
 Britain or to depart from its Neutrality; and if he found the
 Spanish Minister avoided to give a clear Answer, to Insinuate
 in the most decent Manner, that the refusing or avoiding to
 answer a question so reasonable, could only arise from the
 King of Spain's having already engaged, or resolved to take
 part against Us, and must be Looked upon as an avowal of such
 hostile Intention, and equivalent to a Declaration of War;
 and that he had Orders immediately to leave the Court of
 Madrid. The peremptory refusal by the Court of Spain, to
 give the least Satisfaction, with regard to any of those rea-
 sonable Demands on our part, and the Solemn Declaration at