

# REMARKS

*No 121*

O. N. A.

## PAMPHLET

INTITLED,

## CONSIDERATIONS

On the Late

## BILL

For Paying the

## National DEBT, &c.

*By Mr William Bruce*

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*He that is first in his own Cause seemeth just; but  
his Neighbour cometh and searcheth him out.*

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# REMARKS

ON A

PAMPHLET, &c.

**T**HE Author having told us, (*p. 6.*)  
 ‘ That it well became those in Au-  
 ‘ thority,’ (and them only, if he  
 meant any thing to his Purpose) ‘ to  
 ‘ consider in what way the Whole, or Part, of  
 ‘ this Money,’ (then in the Treasury) ‘ might be  
 ‘ best applied for the Ease of the People, and for  
 ‘ public Service,’ proceeds to tell us in the  
 next Paragraph, that, ‘ Whether the Proposal  
 ‘ moved from the then Lord Lieutenant, or  
 ‘ from some other Person, that Part of this Bal-  
 ‘ lance should be applied to the Discharge of so  
 ‘ much of the national Debt, he could not take  
 ‘ upon him to say; nor, in his Judgement, is  
 ‘ the Enquiry material:’ Now, to a plain Man,  
 such a Manner of writing as this must necessarily  
 appear not a little extraordinary; it is the whole  
 Burthen of the Pamphlet to prove, ‘ that the King  
 ‘ himself has the sole and exclusive Right of being  
 ‘ the first Mover, in regard to the Application of  
 ‘ all such Redundancies;’ yet he would seem hereto  
 say, that it is no way material who was the Mover:  
 if to get clear of this untoward Appearance, a  
 Distinction shall be taken betwixt the original  
 Mover on the other Side of the Water, and the  
 Person



Person moving it on this, in Pursuance of his Direction; it is much to be doubted, that this Distinction will turn out very little to our Author's Relief: The Lord Lieutenant, when he is in this Kingdom, has the sole Right of declaring what are his Majesty's Directions, and, in his Absence, this Right devolves to the Lords Justices; now, in order to serve the Purpose of his grand Doctrine, it is absolutely necessary for him to prove to a Certainty, that one or other of these was, in Fact, the first Mover in declaring his Majesty's *Consent*, that such an Application of Part of this redundant Money should be made to pay the national Debt; yet he now tells us, that instead of being necessary, it is no way material, whether it was the Lord Lieutenant, or whether it was some other Person who was the first Mover concerning this Application. Surely, if this Author was to be taken at his Word, and that his Word was to be decisive of the Question in Debate, the Cause so strenuously contended for, is, in the most explicate Terms, here clearly given up; for, if a Person not authorized by the King, may yet have a very good Right to become the first Mover in this Kingdom, in regard to the Application of Money lying in the Treasury, it will be pretty difficult to assign a Reason, why the House of Commons, or any one of their Members, may not have as good a Claim to the Exercise of this Right, as any other Person or Persons resident or not resident in this Kingdom.

The Author next goes on in *p.* 7. to acquaint us, 'that whoever was the *first* Mover, it was the 'Attorney-General who moved for this Application 'in the House,' and that he made this Motion without making any Mention of his Majesty's having notified his previous Consent, may be safely taken for granted, not merely from this Author's Silence on that Head, but from the



*ingenious* Apology which immediately comes after; not for the Attorney alone, but ‘ for all the Gentlemen who conducted the Affair on this Side of the Water;’ the Author’s Words are these, p. 7. ‘ As the Occasion was new, it is not to be wondered at, that the Gentlemen who conducted the Affair, on this Side the Water, should not be exact as to the Form in which his Majesty’s *Consent* ought to appear: And, probably, they apprehended that the Return of a Bill for that Purpose, under the Great Seal of *Great Britain*, would be a sufficient Notification of his Majesty’s *previous Consent* to such *Application*.’

This Gentleman has not thought proper to give us his Name; but, it is to be feared, that he has, in this Paragraph, set, a very strong Mark, or what, at least, will be called so, of the Country he lives in. The Attorney-General is here introduced as reasoning with himself, and with those in Authority, in good round *Irish*, to the following Purpose: ‘ Though I know very well, and all of us must be sensible, that an Acknowledgment ought to be made by Parliament, of its being an unquestionable Article of his Majesty’s Prerogative, that no Heads of a Bill of this Sort, can be brought into Parliament without a *sufficient Notification* of his Majesty’s previous Consent; and though we have not had any such Notification, nor do the Heads of the Bill, which I have now in my Hand, contain any such parliamentary Acknowledgment, yet shall we be very proper in bringing it in notwithstanding, because the passing it in *England*, about six Weeks hence, and sending it back, under the Great Seal, in the very Words in which it is now expressed, will be a sufficient Notification of his Majesty’s *previous* Consent



‘ Consent to the Application of the Money,  
 ‘ which we are this Day going to propose ; tho’  
 ‘ it is confessed that we can have no Right to  
 ‘ meddle with it, without having had this suf-  
 ‘ ficient Notification some Time before.’ *Risum*  
*teneatis ?* — But Nonsense is too harmless a Thing  
 to be made, merely on its own Account, the Sub-  
 ject of these Remarks. This wonderful Paragraph,  
 though it may be utterly void of any real and  
 determinate Meaning, yet it is not, for that Rea-  
 son, incapable of having some very real and sig-  
 nificant Effects ; it is not, indeed, easy to guess  
 why the Word *Notification* is thus introduced  
 towards the End of it. Notification, to whom ?  
 Not to the House of Commons, for they had  
 done all that was material for them to do, six  
 Weeks before this Notification was given ; and,  
 surely, a *Notification* now, or even at any Time  
 before, could be, in no Sense, an Evidence of  
 a *Parliamentary ACKNOWLEDGMENT of the King’s*  
*antient Right to the Application of the Money in the*  
*actual Receipt of the Treasury*, which yet this Au-  
 thor wants to have it understood, was an essential  
 Article in the *Intention* of this Bill, though the  
 Folks, then in Authority, being *Novices*, did  
 not well know how to express it : There is one  
 Sense, indeed, and it would seem the only one, in  
 which this Word *Notification* might be understood  
 with great Propriety, as well as Truth ; as no  
 Person, whether *ordinary* or extraordinary, could  
 possibly avoid considering the passing of this Bill,  
 wherein no such parliamentary Acknowledgment  
 was made, under the Great Seal in *England*, as a  
 very sufficient Notification to the Parliament of  
 this Kingdom, and, indeed, to all the World,  
 that, in the Judgment of the King, and of the  
 Council in *England*, NO SUCH PARLIAMENTARY  
 ACKNOWLEDGMENT WAS, AT THAT TIME,  
 THOUGHT NECESSARY ; and that, in bringing in



this Bill in the Manner they did, the House of Commons of *Ireland* had done no more than what they were well intitled to do in *Affirmance* of their inherent constitutional and antient Rights.

But, no Matter, with our Author, whether any, or what, Sense can be put upon his Writing, provided he can, by any Means, beguile his Readers into an Opinion that, in this last Session, under Lord *Harrington's* Administration, it was universally understood, that the House of Commons neither had, nor claimed to have, any Right, in Regard to the Public Money redundant in the Treasury, but what was given them in Virtue of his Majesty's previous and notified Consent. The contrary of which, in every Circumstance, is not only notoriously the Truth, but there are the strongest Presumptions that the Author must have known it to be the Truth, though he thus writes.

Our Author goes on, in *p. 8.* to cite Part of the Preamble to this Bill, as it was then brought in, wherein are these Words, ‘Whereas a considerable Ballance remained in the Hands of the Vice-Treasurers *unapplied*, and it will be for your Majesty's Service, and for the Ease of your faithful Subjects of this Kingdom, that so much thereof, as can be conveniently spared, should be *paid*, agreeably to your Majesty's most gracious Intentions, in Discharge of Part of the said Debt;’ to wit, the national Debt; and then immediately proceeds to make the following Remark; ‘From hence an ordinary Person would certainly have understood, that his Majesty's Intentions (which,’ (according to him) ‘*amount to a Consent*) had been signified previous to the Recital:’ Now, fair-minded Reader, please to judge of the Candour of this Author's Procedure: In the former Page he acknowledges, that, in the Judgment of the Attorney-



Attorney-General, and the rest of the Folks in Authority, a sufficient Notification of his Majesty's Consent had NOT been signified previous to the Recital; and here he tells us, that, 'in the Judgment of an ordinary Person,' which must be understood as synonymous with a Person of common and ordinary Sense, such a Notification of 'his Majesty's Consent HAD been signified previous to the Recital: And that his Majesty was allowed thereby to be Judge of what could be *conveniently spared*.' That his Majesty is allowed to be a Judge of all Applications of the public Money, has never been disputed; nor can this Author possibly point to any one Instance, or Circumstance, in which there is the least Appearance of this Right in his Majesty, having ever been brought into Question. In the present Case, the Words are express; his faithful Commons acquaint his Majesty, 'that it will be for his Majesty's Service, and for the Ease of his faithful Subjects of this Kingdom, that so much of the Balance, then remaining in the Treasury, as can be *conveniently spared*, should be paid agreeably to his Majesty's most gracious Intentions, in Discharge of Part of the national Debt,' and then proceed to point out to his Majesty the Sum which, according to their Judgment, might, for the present, be conveniently applied for this Purpose.

All this is just as it should be; his Majesty may, doubtless, at any Time, declare his gracious Intentions in Regard to the Ease of his Subjects, and the Benefit of public Service; and, in a Case of so obvious a Nature as the doing an Act of common Justice, in paying the national Debt, so far as the public Money can, from Time to Time, be conveniently spared for that Purpose, the Intentions of so just and excellent a Prince as his present Majesty may most assuredly



be taken for granted, without any formal or explicit Declaration; whether the former, or the latter, was in fact the Case, in the Instance at present under Consideration, cannot be now determined with Certainty, from any of the general and publickly known Circumstances which attended that Matter; though the latter would seem the more probable of the two, as there was not the least Intimation of these royal and gracious Intentions in the Speech, which at the Beginning of that Session, was delivered from the Throne. But, be this Matter as it will, can any Man insist, that the Mention here made of his Majesty's Intentions, in the Recital of these Heads of a Bill, is equivalent to a PARLIAMENTARY ACKNOWLEDGMENT that his Majesty's previous Consent is NECESSARY, before the House could have a Right to bring in such Heads of a Bill? Might not his Majesty declare his gracious Intentions, without its being *necessary* that he should have done so? And might not the House of Commons have made that Mention of these Intentions which they have done, without having the least Conception, that, by this Manner of expressing themselves, they were making a *parliamentary Acknowledgment*, both of his Majesty's *antient Right* to insist, that no Heads of a Bill of this Sort should be brought in, without a sufficient Notification beforehand of his Majesty's previous Consent; and likewise of their having actually received this sufficient Notification? On the contrary, when the Form, here made use of in this Recital, comes to be carefully looked into, it must appear highly improbable, or rather, indeed, altogether impossible, that they either *could* have received this sufficient Notification, or, that they ever intended to make this *parliamentary Acknowledgment*. It is undoubtedly



doubtedly true, that, in Regard to the Application of the public Money, the King has a salutary constitutional Right to judge of *the Occasion, the Time, and the Sum*; not merely in Conjunction with the other Branches of the Legislature, but likewise *separately*, especially in the Intervals of Parliament; and this for the very Reasons which our Author, towards the Bottom of *p. 34.* hath assigned; ‘The Parliament has uncertain Times of meeting, but the Exigencies of Government are daily and hourly. In many Instances they cannot admit of Delay, and would be defeated, if disclosed; and yet all these must be unprovided for, unless such a *Trust* be admitted in the Crown.’ Now, though these Reasons, as they stand connected in the Pamphlet, are evidently intended to support a Doctrine absolutely subversive of all Liberty, yet this doth not hinder but, in the Manner in which they actually stand qualified by their Connexion and Relation to the real Constitution and legal Government of this Country, that they ought to be acknowledged truly cogent and weighty; and surely, no Man, of common Sense and Modesty, will contend, that taking them in this only fair and constitutional Light, such Consequences as the following can, by any candid and legitimate Reasoning, be justly deduced from them. Will it follow, for Instance, that because the King, during the Intervals of Parliament, may, and must, have a Right to judge of what will be most conducive to the Ease of his People, and for public Service, and, in consequence, to judge ‘upon what Occasion, at what Time, and in what Sum,’ the public Money, so absolutely requisite for answering these benign and necessary Purposes, is to be applied, therefore, the Parliament, who raised this public Money, and are now met, and actually



ally sitting in order to raise more, cannot consistently have likewise a Right to judge what will be most conducive to the Ease of the People, and for public Service? Will it follow, that because the King, in the Interval of Parliament, had applied the public Money, in all such Instances as he saw necessary for answering these inestimable and alone salutary Purposes, therefore the House of Commons, tho' possessed of the *best* Opportunities of knowing what would be most conducive to the Ease of his Majesty's Subjects, and, likewise, in many Instances, of what would be most useful for the public Service, are notwithstanding, constitutionally deprived of the Liberty, so much as, to point out any Uses to which Part of this Money may still further be applied, however highly productive of those excellent Ends, without incurring the Imputation of invading his Majesty's Prerogative and his *ancient Right*? Or, will it follow, because more Money is now to be levied off the People by Parliament, for answering these indispensable Purposes, for the two Years to come, that, therefore, they can have no Right to consider, or propose, the unapplied Redundancy, which had been, in the Course of the two Years before, raised off the People, in Virtue of their Authority, and occasioned, principally, by an extravagant Importation of Luxuries, (a most impoverishing, and, of course, the more likely to be a quickly transient Cause,) *as fit to be taken in*, for part of the Supply which would be wanted for answering the Purposes of EASE TO THE PEOPLE, and the public Service, for these ensuing two Years? Or, can it possibly follow, from the King's having a Right to apply the public Money for the Ease of the People, and for the public Service of this Kingdom, and for these



these Purposes only, that, therefore, the Parliament can have no Right to inquire, whether this public Money, solely granted for these two Uses, has been, by his Majesty's Servants, faithfully applied, in Discharge of this sacred and inviolable Trust, reposed in his Majesty, or not?

Doth not every one see, who hath Eyes to *see*, that, if any one of these Consequences, and much more, if the whole of them, were to be admitted, which yet is the governing Intention of this Pamphlet, from one End to the other, this Country can no longer be said to enjoy the Protection of Laws, but to live wholly at Mercy; bereft of all those natural Guards which other Countries have ever esteemed the only valid Securities for the permanent Enjoyment of their Property and Liberties? What doth it avail to say, that the public Money is granted to the King, only in order to be applied for the Ease of the People, and for public Service, if no Inquiry is to be made in regard to this Money, whether the Officers of the Crown have been faithful to their Trust, in confining the Application of it to those Uses, or not?

What can such soothing, and well-sounding, Words avail, (unless to beguile the unwary) if the Parliament, who have hitherto been accounted his Majesty's supreme Council, are no longer to have the Right, so much as, of advising his Majesty, in regard to the Application of any part of that Money which was wholly raised in Virtue of their Authority; though they must, of Necessity, in many Instances, be allowed the very best Judges of what will be most conducive to the Ease of the People, and to the public Service; Purposes, to which, alone, the *whole of the Application* ought to be confined? If the public Accounts cannot be called for by the House of Commons, of *Right*, but only *desired*,



as a *Direction*, wherein doth such a Description differ, even in Language, from what is to be given of the most despotic State upon Earth? Whatever their Practice may be, no Power, however absolute, will yet publicly avow any other Purpose in taxing the People, but the Protection of the Community, and for the more effectually answering all the other Exigencies of Government: So that in these beguiling Words of this Author's Wisdom, which, with some little Variation, he has artfully scatter'd through the whole of this Work, the attentive Reader must quickly be sensible, that all he has got is a Mouthful of Moon-shine; and, as often as he takes up this Pamphlet in his Hand, must naturally call to mind the Allusion of the Sepulchre, whited without, but when you come to look into it, nothing is to be found but Emptiness at the Top, and Rottenness at the Bottom; some few dispersed and broken Lineaments of Liberty may here and there be found, but the lovely and well-proportioned Form is totally dissolved, and the animating Spirit vanished; never, if the Doctrine of this Author should fatally take Place, never more to be restored.

Can any Thing be more evident, than if our present, good King, *may not*, a bad King, if any such Curse should ever befall these Kingdoms, most certainly WILL NOT suffer his Tax-gatherers, and Keepers of his Treasury, to be accountable to the Representatives of the People for the Application of the public Money after it is collected; and if devising of Taxes, and putting them into a Way of being raised under the Colour of Law, be all the Right which the Representatives of the People are qualified to exercise, in regard to the fundamental Article of the Supplies of Government, it would seem much more for the Advantage of their Constituents, the People themselves,



selves, that those Tax-gatherers should be left to gather in the Taxes without any such Sanction.

But it will be high Time to proceed to the second Purpose of these Remarks, namely, to give an Account of those Facts, which it is essential to know, in order to form a right Judgment of the Merits of this important Question which the Author has ventured to bring into Debate; an Account dictated by Candor, and warranted by Circumstances which cannot deceive; after it has been shewn, in a few Words, ‘ that the Preamble to ‘ the Bill, in the Year 1749, is so far from being ‘ an Evidence, that the Parliament, at that Time, ‘ meant to acknowledge a *Notification* of his Majesty’s previous Consent *sufficient* or insufficient,’ or that they had so much as the least Apprehension of such a Consent being necessary, that, if carefully attended to, it would seem to demonstrate the contrary of both; for however ignorant or awkward they might have been in making their Acknowledgments, a Supposition, which merely the Circumstance of the Occasion being new, is far from justifying in regard to an Assembly, distinguished by Members of as great Abilities, as, perhaps, are to be found in any Assembly in *Great Britain* or *Ireland*, yet it would have been impossible, had there been any such Intention in their Thoughts, that they could have expressed themselves in Words which so evidently imply the very Reverse: After having observed to his Majesty, that there was a considerable Ballance in the Treasury on the 25th of *March*, which remained unapplied, they proceed thus, ‘ And it will be for your Majesty’s Service, and for the Ease of your faithful Subjects ‘ of this Kingdom, that so much thereof as can ‘ be conveniently spared, should be paid, agreeably to your Majesty’s Intentions, in Discharge ‘ of Part of the said Debt.’ Here every Body must



must see, that, instead of acknowledging to have received any Notification from his Majesty of *his Consent*, or even *Recommendation*, to make such an Application, the House of Commons, as his Majesty's great Council, *take upon them to inform his Majesty*, that 'such an Application will be for the Ease of his Subjects, and for his Majesty's Service : ' Had they meant to have vindicated their Right, not an exclusive, but a co-ordinate Right of being the first Movers in regard to such Applications, could they have expressed themselves in stronger Terms? Indeed, the Truth would seem to be, that they thus expressed themselves, because it was the natural Manner upon such an Occasion ; not having, at that Time, the least Apprehension that such a Right could ever be called into Question : And that the Manner here used was not Words of Course, or Form, which would have been the same had his Majesty been ever so incontestably the first Mover, happens to be made extremely evident, from the remarkable Variation in the Preamble to Heads of a Bill of the same Intention in the subsequent Session under the present Lord Lieutenant. At the Opening of the Session, 1751, his Grace, in his Speech, having acquainted the House, ' That he was commanded by the King to acquaint them, that his Majesty, ever attentive to the Ease and Happiness of his Subjects, would graciously consent, and recommended it to them that such Part of the Money then remaining in his Treasury, as should be thought consistent with the public Service, be applied towards the further Reduction of the national Debt ; ' the House of Commons, in the Preamble to the Heads of the Bill brought in that Session, instead of saying, ' *that it will be for your Majesty's Service, and for the Ease of your faithful Subjects of this Kingdom,* ' make



make ' thankful Acknowledgments of his Majesty's  
 ' gracious Attention to the Ease and Happiness of  
 ' his Subjects, in recommending the Application of  
 ' the Money remaining in THE Treasury, so far as  
 ' it might be consistent with the public Service,  
 ' towards the further Reduction of the national  
 ' Debt, &c.' the Forms of the two Preambles are  
 totally different, because the Circumstances were  
 different; in the first, it was the House of Com-  
 mons that recommended to his Majesty such an  
*Application* of the redundant Money; and, in this,  
 it is his Majesty who recommends such an Appli-  
 cation to the House of Commons; both Forms  
 alike constitutional, and perfectly correspondent  
 to the real Facts they represent; but both of  
 them utterly repugnant to the Doctrine and Fact  
 which this Author wants the Public to believe,  
*viz.* That a Notification of his Majesty's previous  
 Consent was absolutely requisite, according to the  
 Constitution, before the House of Commons could  
 bring in any Bill relative to this redundant Money,  
 and that the House of Commons were sensible of  
 the Truth of this Doctrine, though they did not  
 know the proper Form in which they were to ex-  
 press it: The former Precedent, in Lord Har-  
 rington's Time, shews most evidently, that they  
 did not wait for any such Notification, or were at  
 all apprehensive that any Kind of Notification was  
 requisite; and the other demonstrably proves,  
 that so far from being sensible of the Truth of the  
 above Doctrine, they purposely withheld making  
 any Acknowledgment for his Majesty's signifying  
 his *Consent*; and thereby as clearly shew, as the  
 Nature of the Thing would permit, that they  
 were alarmed at the Introduction of a Language  
 perfectly new, and consequently could not be  
 thankful for what they apprehended might possi-  
 bly be construed, some Time or other, to the  
 Injury of their Country.

After



After this, there can be no farther Use in pointing out Instances of this Author's Misrepresentation and Design to mislead, and therefore before putting an End to this first Part of the Remarks, it is only desired of the Reader to take a Review of the 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, and 13th Pages of his Pamphlet, and then to judge, whether it is not his evident Purpose to lead the Public into the Belief of two Facts which he as assuredly knew to be false, as that he knows any one Circumstance of the Matter.

The first is, that, in Lord *Harrington's* Administration, the House of Commons did actually intend to make their Acknowledgments of his Majesty's previous Consent and the Intimation thereof, being necessary, before they could think themselves at Liberty to bring in any Heads of a Bill relative to the *Application* of the redundant Money, while yet the whole of their Procedure demonstrated the contrary. The other is, that the House of Commons, in the first Session under the present Administration, did voluntarily and thankfully make their Acknowledgments for his Majesty's being graciously pleased to signify that he would consent, &c. though every Circumstance attending that Transaction, as well after the Return of the Bill from *England*, as before it went over, excepting the single Article of *not rejecting* it, did as clearly demonstrate, as Words and Actions could demonstrate, that they were, in reality, far from being satisfied with any such Language as had, on the other Side of the Water, been put into their Lips.

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*The two other Articles, for compleating the Design of these REMARKS, shall be publish'd in a few Days.*